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OF  
SRI LANKA

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23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017

ABSTRACTS

Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka  
96, Ananda Coomaraswamy Mawatha  
Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

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# Nature of Duties of Teacher Librarians in Government School Libraries

Jayasekara P.K.<sup>1</sup> Senevirathna R.A.P.S.<sup>2</sup>

School libraries play a vital role in enhancing the quality of education in the school system and laying the foundation to create a society accustomed to reading books. In the Sri Lankan education system, school libraries still have to face some challenges. To manage the school library properly and provide a quality service, teacher librarians must have freedom to perform library-related duties. Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore the nature of duties of teacher librarians in government schools. To collect primary data, a questionnaire was posted to a randomly drawn sample of fifty teacher librarians in Akuressa educational zone. The response rate for the questionnaire was 72%. A very large majority (80.6%) of teacher librarians have to teach a few subjects while covering the duties of teacher librarian. Less than a third (30.6%) of teacher librarians teach for 11-15 hours per week. A minority of teacher librarians are teaching in the classrooms for 6-10 hours (16.7%) and 16-20 hours (13.9%) per week. When considering about library opening hours, just over a half (52.8%) of school libraries were open for six hours per day. A minority of school libraries were open for three hours (13.9%) and 5 hours (13.9%) per day. Unfortunately, there are few (8.33%) school libraries open for less than an hour per day. Teacher librarians cannot perform library-related duties when they are teaching in the classrooms. Thus, their teaching hours directly affect the library opening hours. The Library is not just storage of books. At least, libraries must be open during the school time for students to use. Opening a library for a few hours during school time restrict the access to resources in the library. The results reveal that teacher librarians do not have sufficient freedom to perform library-related duties. Thus, to enhance the quality of teacher librarianship, the Ministry of Education has to define the duties and responsibilities of a teacher librarian. Government must also pay attention to recruit skilled individuals as teacher librarians instead of appointing a teacher to cover duties of a librarian.

**Keywords:** School Libraries, School Librarians, Teacher Librarianship, Sri Lanka

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