**The right time to think: challenges of serving older adults in public libraries services in Colombo Municipal Council, Sri Lanka**

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The primary objective of a public library is to provide resources and services to each category of its community members. The older adults are a significant category in the jurisdiction of the public libraries, yet the provision of services to them seems to be deficient. Studies show that public libraries pay insufficient attention to older adults than the children and youth. Although, it is the right time to pay proper attention, libraries struggle to provide essential services to this population segment. In this background, the objective of the present study is to examine the challenges that the public libraries confront when providing services to the older adult users. Three public libraries; Colombo (CPL), Kotehena (KPL) and Sri Sucharitha (SPL) within the Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) limits, were selected based on the proportion of elderly population density. The interpretive approach was used, employing indepth interviews and focus group discussions to gather information from library administrators and library users. The interview guidelines were prepared based on the American Library Association's guidelines for elders' public library services. Thematic analyses were done of the transcribed interviews by using Nvivo software. The result revealed that none of the surveyed public libraries have any specific services for older adults. Even though the public libraries understand and identify the elders' service requirements, inadequate space, lack of professional staff and awareness, limited budgeting and outdated policies are vital challenges that they face in providing specific services to the elderly population. Therefore, this study recommends that the public libraries enhance their services to this particular group by overcoming the challenges mentioned above by collaborating with relevant authorities in the government and non-government sectors.

Keywords: Public library service, Older adults, Colombo Municipal Council, Sri Lanka