Need of Policies for Access, Management and Preservation of the Palm-Leaf Manuscripts Related to Traditional Medicine Available in the Library University of Jaffna

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The modern University libraries are concentrating more on dissemination of information than the preservation of library materials. Palm-leaf manuscripts are irreplaceable and considered as historically valuable research material. Library of the University of Jaffna have a remarkable collection of Palmyra palm leave manuscripts related to traditional medicine. It is imperative to document and preserve existing collection to safeguard them over the generations. The intention of this study is to insist the need to formulate strategies and policies related to preservation of these palm leave manuscripts. Objective of this study is to identify the current status and need of policies for access, management and preservation of the Palm-leaf manuscripts. Descriptiveresearch method is used in this study to explain the identified policy implication aspects. Findings of this study revealed that the library have lack of a clear policy statement identifying acquisition principles of palm-leaf manuscripts. Support of the University administration is less than the other materials in selection of palm-leaf manuscripts related to traditional medicine. There is no specific allocation of money made annually to acquire, preserve and digitize the palm-leafs. Lack of Knowledge and training for staff for handling sophisticated machinery, equipment and tools also observed. There is neither regular condition survey of palm-leaf collection noproper climate control system was observed. This study emphasizes on the need of the Standard policy palm-leaf manuscripts of the Library University of Jaffna with the establishment of well equipped Conservation, Preservation and Digitization Unit.

Key Words: Traditional medicine; Palm leave manuscripts; Conservation; Preservation; Collection development policy