

A Case Study of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Collection of the National Library of Sri Lanka

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The cultural heritage of a society extends beyond tangible features, reflecting its life, evolution, and continuous community development through intangible elements such as beliefs, attitudes, behaviour, and knowledge transmitted across generations. The identification, documentation, preservation, promotion, and transmission of this heritage are essential to safeguard it effectively. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and developing a national collection are responsibilities that libraries can undertake in preserving and curating cultural knowledge in the evolving social systems. Hence, National Library of Sri Lanka is a place for community knowledge management. This study aims to analyze the existing ICH collections housed in the National Library, identify their usage, assess the challenges and issues in collecting and organizing and finally to create the inventory for the ICH collection. This case study adopted a qualitative approach. Primary data was collected through an interview. The participatory observation was undertaken to compile an inventory of the existing ICH collection. To analyze the data gathered through interviews, thematic analysis was used. Findings indicated that ICH collection of National Library of Sri Lanka included 523 books, 03 significant files including 23 newspaper clipping articles, and some CD/DVD materials related to *Dalada Perabera*, and *Baila* etc. Developing the inventory list for the ICH collection of the National Library of Sri Lanka supports the systematic organization, identification, and accessibility of ICH resources, contributing to preserving and promoting Sri Lanka's cultural heritage. This ICH collection was developed based on the legal repository rule in Sri Lanka; there was no proper collection method to collect and record ICH. The usage of ICH collection in the National library was very low due to the users' unawareness of the collection. It is notable that the ICH collection of the National library was isolated. It is recommended to build an ICH collection hub interconnecting with other units of the library, especially library preservation section etc. Also, proper mechanisms must be initiated to safeguard the ICH.

Keywords: *Cultural heritage; Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH); Knowledge management; Library collections; National libraries*