

Bibliotherapy: Tracing Its Global Evolution and Exploring the Contemporary Research Landscape in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Bibliotherapy, the use of literature for therapeutic purposes, has gained increasing attention globally as a complementary approach to mental well-being. Bibliotherapy is a form of creative arts therapy that involves telling stories or reading specific texts and implementing personal connections to the content of books as a therapy. Mainly, there are two types of bibliotherapy as clinical bibliotherapy and developmental bibliotherapy. Clinical bibliotherapy is employed by mental health professionals to address emotional-behavioral problems and achieve therapeutic goals. Developmental bibliotherapy, used by educators, librarians and healthcare assistants and it facilitates to address milder psychological issues. The idea of bibliotherapy is not a new one and it has undergone a dynamic evolution. At early stages, bibliotherapy is developed as ‘reading therapy’. There are various anecdotes scattered throughout the ages that concerning the value of reading. It has been around for centuries, and have been referred to by different terms, depending on the time period. The objectives of this paper were to examine the global evolution of bibliotherapy from its historical roots to the present and to explore the contemporary research landscape of bibliotherapy in Sri Lanka. The methodology based on this study was literary survey. Accordingly, the paper attempts identify the contemporary research landscape in Sri Lanka while revealing global evolution of bibliotherapy. Challenges and possibilities affecting bibliotherapy researches in Sri Lanka are also discussed.

Keywords: Bibliotherapy, Evolution, Guided reading, Reading therapy, Sri Lanka

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Introduction

In recent years, the field of library and information science in Sri Lanka has witnessed a growing interest in research on bibliotherapy. This emerging focus highlights the growing recognition of the potential of bibliotherapy in supporting psychological well-being through literary engagement. It is important to contextualize this within the broader global scenario, where bibliotherapy has a longstanding historical tradition extending over several centuries. Globally, bibliotherapy is a subject area of interest not only across the field of Library and Information Science but also diverse fields including Health Science, Education, Religion, and Psychology.

Exploring Bibliotherapy

The term ‘Bibliotherapy’ is synthesis of two words as *Biblio* + *therapeia*. Both of these terms have their origins in Greek. The meaning of term *biblus* is ‘book’ and *therapeia* refers ‘therapy’, ‘treatment’ or ‘healing’. [Altunbay \(2018\)](#) states that, bibliotherapy helps individuals identify with the literature they read, using works of high literary and aesthetic value. This process empowers them spiritually by offering solutions to their personal problems.

According to the available literature, bibliotherapy has been referred to by a plethora of other names and terms, including the following; Biblio-counseling, Biblio-education, Biblio-psychology, Litera-therapy, Biblio-prophylaxis, Biblio-guidance, Book-matching, Guided reading, Reading therapy, Library therapeutics. Even though all the above expressions mean the same thing, the term 'bibliotherapy' is much more popular and is widely used in professional literature. Typically, persons habit to use literature with the intention of teaching or entertaining. However, the use of literature in bibliotherapy extends beyond informal applications; it is a structured intervention with established guidelines and procedures. Bibliotherapy is

intentionally designed to address the needs of its recipients and support to promote personal growth, skill development and mental-wellbeing.

As stated by [Agustina \(2020\)](#), bibliotherapy in the librarianship primarily focuses on selecting appropriate books for children in their developmental stages. Further books that can be used as preventative and remedial solution to problems. Books are often intended to captivate or comfort the reader, which can be identified as the therapeutic quality of a book ([McCaffrey, 2016](#)). As well as, bibliotherapy is one approach that manages mental well-being through the structured use of literature. Bibliotherapy is also seen as an effective and cost-efficient therapy, offering a novel method for delivering cognitive behavioral therapy in clinical settings ([Hogdahl, 2013](#)). When the facilitator recommends specific reading materials, clients are guided to recognize their distorted thinking, express emotions, and gain insight into their own circumstances. These stages promote greater awareness of realistic ways to reframe their understanding, ultimately motivating individuals to develop a positive mindset and attitudes ([McKenna et.al., 2010](#)).

Bibliotherapy has a somewhat indescribable definition ([Eich,1999](#)). Because the term bibliotherapy cannot be easily defined in fact of its diversity usage. Certain researchers ([Hynes & Hynes, 2012](#)) have classified it as a problematic term. “It is problematic because researchers, scholars, practitioners and professionals of varied fields have defined bibliotherapy in divergent ways and have differing views on its usage” ([Camp, 2015, p. 9](#)).

Definitions of bibliotherapy also vary depending on the types of literature used and the specific field of study. For instance, some restrict its use to non-fiction and self-help literature, while others expand the scope of bibliotherapy materials to include fiction, such as picture books, chapter books, and graphic novels. The idea of the [Gavigan \(2012\)](#) abides by the [Camp \(2015\)](#) as “it is

difficult to develop consensus on a definition of bibliotherapy because the technique has been used across a range of disciplines, such as medicine, education, psychology, human services, and other social sciences”.

Bibliotherapy is also described as using literature to offer insight and promote emotional healing. ([Forgan, 2002](#); [Heath et al., 2005](#); [Tunnel et al., 2012](#)). [Agustina \(2020\)](#) acknowledged bibliotherapy as an expressive therapy that involves with reading specific literature for healing determinations. Utilizing relationship of individuals with the contents of books, poetry, and other written words as therapy.

[Katz & Watt \(1992\)](#) describe bibliotherapy as guided reading that is always intended to create a therapeutic outcome. They suggest that supplementary reading allows the client to learn and relate to other people's experiences. [Favazza \(1966\)](#), a senior medical student provides another definition of bibliotherapy as “a program of selected activity involving reading materials which is planned, conducted, and controlled under the guidance of a physician as treatment for psychiatric patients and which uses, if needed, the assistance of a trained librarian” (p.138).

[Yusuf & Taharem \(2008\)](#) define bibliotherapy as a method for fostering interaction between clients and therapists, where they share literature to address the client's therapeutic needs. [Prater et.al \(2006\)](#) simply defined bibliotherapy as helping people to solve problems with books. [Russell and Shrodes \(1950\)](#) define bibliotherapy as "a process of dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and literature" (p.16). They further stated that it is an interaction that can be used for personality assessment, adjustment, and growth. Another scholar defined bibliotherapy as an individual's effort to enhance their mental and emotional well-being by using reading materials to address needs, alleviate stress, or support personal growth ([Hoagland, 1972](#)).

Traditional definitions of bibliotherapy appear to emphasize reading as a form of therapy or the use of books with therapeutic purposes ([Camp, 2015](#)).

With technological advancements, the means used in bibliotherapy have evolved. Consequently, the definition of bibliotherapy has also shifted to include "the use of written materials or computer programs, as well as listening to or viewing audio and videotapes, to gain understanding or address issues related to a person's developmental or therapeutic needs" ([Marrs , 1995, p. 845](#)).

The [Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science \(2011\)](#) defines bibliotherapy as "the use of books to address issues that people may face at any given time." As a result, bibliotherapy is considered a modern approach that helps individuals connect with their issues, explore others' experiences, and contemplate various solutions to resolve conflicts ([Jack & Ronan, 2008](#)).

Through all afore-mentioned definitions of bibliotherapy, three fundamental elements emerge, namely:

1. Self-help reading
2. Therapeutic intention
3. Personal improvement

The literature employed for bibliotherapy encompasses a wide range of materials, including fabrications, non-fiction, self-guided books, rhymes, song lyrics, narratives, chapter books, and other printed works. Therapeutic intention is mainly based on the characters of the selected literature. Personal growth is mainly roofed with modeling behaviors, mental healing, and problem solving etc.

Achieving a consensus on the definition of bibliotherapy is challenging due to its application across various fields, including medicine, education, psychology, human services, and other social sciences ([Camp, 2015](#)).

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the historical and contemporary evolution of bibliotherapy on a global scale.
2. To explore the current research landscape and developments in bibliotherapy within Sri Lanka.

Methodology

This qualitative study employed a literary survey method in means of gather data. The collected data was then analyzed comprehensively in pertinent to the research objectives. The literary survey involves systematic exploration and synthesis of existing literature from various scholarly sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and other relevant publications available in both print and electronic formats. As the global evolution of bibliotherapy has evolved over the centuries, four distinct time frames have been used to present the data in an accessible and clear manner.

Findings and Discussion

The collected data underwent a thorough analysis using four distinct time frames to assess the global evolution of bibliotherapy. Meanwhile, the current research landscape in Sri Lanka has been explored. The findings pertaining to these main objectives are revealed as follows.

The Global Evolution of Bibliotherapy

The idea of bibliotherapy is not a new one and it has undergone a dynamic evolution. At early stages, bibliotherapy is developed as ‘reading therapy’. There are various anecdotes scattered through-out the ages that concerning the value of reading. It has existed for centuries and has been known by various names depending on the time period ([Aiex, 1993](#)). According to the existing literature, bibliotherapy has a lengthy history and “it has been simmering in the pot for about 200 years” ([Forrest, 1998, p. 158](#)). However, bibliotherapy was not used with children until nearly fifty years later, in 1946 ([Myracle, 1995](#)). The following section outlines key historical events and influential figures who support to nourished the development of bibliotherapy. Consequently, the relevant information is presented conferring to distinct time frames as follows.

In Early Time

The ancient Greeks and Romans were the pioneers in acknowledging that texts could function as potential therapeutic instruments. Around 300 BC, an inscription including "The Healing Place of the Soul" was discovered in the library of Thebes in Alexandria, Egypt ([Jones, 2006](#)). [Gervay, \(2011\)](#) as cited in [McCulliss \(2012\)](#) states that other similar inscription was found in the Medieval Abbey Library of St. Gall in Switzerland including “The Medicine Chest for the Soul,” As a result, various artists and philosophers have explored the impact of literary texts on the spiritual and moral aspects of human existence. For example, Aristotle introduced the concept of catharsis (Greek = “kátharsis”) in his work, ‘Politics’ ([Marx et al., 2017](#)). The cathartic effect of poetry has also been emphasized by Hindu and Buddhist poets ([Martinec et al., 2022](#)). Greek historian Diodorus Siculus in his monumental work, *Bibliotheca Historica*, mentions that above the entrance to the kingdom where books are stored by King Pharaoh Ramses II of Egypt, there was the oldest

motto known by libraries in the world, ‘the healing place of the soul’ in Alexandria Library in Egypt during BC in the 300s. [Nystul \(2003\)](#) also concurred with this and he says that the earliest use of bibliotherapy goes back to the Grecian times. Further in Rome, Aulo Cornelius Celso associated reading with medical treatment ([Vélez & Prieto, 2018](#)). In 1272, reading the Quran was prescribed in Al-Mansur Hospital in Cairo, Egypt as a medical treatment ([Rubin, 1978](#)). Further in 8th century in Baghdad, sick people were instructed to read the Quran day and night ([Martinec, 2015](#) as cited in [Martinec et al., 2022](#)). A French writer and physician, François Rabelais (1494–1553) prescribed literature for his patients as part of their treatment ([Schneck, 1944](#)).

In 18th Century

Beginning of the eighteenth century, libraries became as an integral place and books were utilized to calm the mental condition of the mentally ill patrons. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a pioneer of American psychiatry in the 1800s, and Dr. John Minson Galt, revealed at a conference held in 1802, the act of reading in the hospital as a part of patients’ therapy and treatment ([Tews, 1970](#)). In 1811, a hospital in Boston, decided to provide Bibles and other suitable religious' books to patients in each ward and then religious group throughout the country continued to donate religious literature and small libraries or "reading rooms" to hospitals. Therapeutic value of reading is discussed in a publication of ‘Society of Friends’ at New York in 1883. Further in 1840, the initial documented use of bibliotherapy as an intervention technique was reported ([Afolayan, 1992](#)). This is regarding the selection of books for mentally ill patients ([Sturt, 1990](#)). In 1853, The first publication on the therapeutic role of literature was published in the mid-19th century by John Minson Galt, an American writer and superintendent at the Eastern State Hospital in Virginia. He mentioned the principals and applications of reading therapy one of his publications ([Panella, 1996](#)) and further wrote about the

benefits of reading for mental patients. In late eighteenth century, Dr. Philippe in France offer books to heal different types of mental illnesses and that modality referred to today as moral therapy. a leading campaigner for humane treatment of the insane. At the same time, Dr. Daniel Hack Tuke began providing books as a means to address various ailments in England.

In 19th Century

In the 19th century, the practical uses of bibliotherapy grew considerably ([Marx et al., 2017](#)). In 19th century, the reading of religious texts was recommended in prisons and psychiatric hospitals in Europe ([Beatty, 1962](#)). In addition, the American Medical Association (AMA) established the first Council on Bibliotherapy in 1939.

E. Kathleen Jones, a library administrator at the Mclean Hospital, Massachusetts in 1904, became the first qualified professional librarian. He perceived the primary function of the librarian as administering book therapy to the patients of that hospital. A program was conducted by Jones with combination of psychiatry and library science ([Hendricks et al., 1999](#)).

In accordance with [Silverberg \(2003\)](#), [Russell & Shrodes \(1950\)](#) assert that bibliotherapy was officially acknowledged as a facet of librarianship within that field as early as 1904. [Vélez and Prieto \(2018\)](#) noted that there is evidence suggesting that doctors in the nineteenth century asserted that reading was one of the most effective methods for improving the condition of in-patients.

Another significant advance of bibliotherapy took place in 1916. Samuel Mchord Crothers writes a paper for an issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, in 1916. It was the first published article including the word ‘bibliotherapy’. By reason of this, bibliotherapy is first coined by Samuel Mchord Crothers. The

aim of that was to produce explanations by using literature in the treatment of individuals suffering from mental problems. There, Samuel discussed a technique of prescribing books to patients who need help understanding their problems, and he labeled this technique as “bibliotherapy” ([Crothers, 1916, p. 291](#)). By means of this evidence, it is predicated that bibliotherapy has dates back at least to the early nineteenth century ([Pardeck & Pardeck, 1998](#)).

Book therapy became more and more popular, especially after World War I, around 1918. Because of the World War I, resulted in millions of deaths and disabilities, and countless people struggled with economic, social, and political depression in its aftermath. Alternative methods and new applications were utilized to treat the trauma and breakdown this environment caused in the human spirit. One of these is bibliotherapy ([Altunbay, 2018](#)).

In 1919, a librarian wrote an article on bibliography, making a new revolution in librarianship. The librarian co-authored the publication with a neurologist. Its name was ‘The therapeutic use of hospital library’ ([Noordin et al., 2017](#)). Medical officers at the Crichton Royal Asylum in Dumfries, USA carried a book catalogue and prescribed a book for each patient to read during their daily medical practice ([Forrest, 1998](#)). Bibliotherapy made a significant advancement in 1941 when its definition was included in the 11th edition of Dorland’s Illustrated Medical Dictionary as “the employment of books and the reading of them in the treatment of nervous diseases.”

In the 1920s, a librarian named Sadie Peterson-Delaney worked at the Veteran’s Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama. Delaney used to discuss bibliotherapy extensively in her literary works and carrier. She defined bibliotherapy as, “the treatment of patients through selected reading” ([Dictionary of American Library Biography, 1978](#)). 'Bibliotherapy as an Aid to Rehabilitation' and 'The Place of Bibliotherapy in a Hospital' are her leading

writings on bibliotherapy. she had success in the outstanding program that was related to bibliotherapy towards physically disabled African – American war veterans and veterans with mental or emotional issues. The School of Library Science at Western Reserve University started the first training programs in bibliotherapy in the 1920s ([Panella, 1996](#)). Another notable event occurred in 1939, when the American Medical Association formed the first Council on Bibliotherapy.

During the 1950s, bibliotherapy became an interactive therapy. [Shrodes's \(1950\)](#) dissertation, *Bibliotherapy: A Theoretical and Clinical-Experimental Study*, is considered a landmark publication in the field of bibliotherapy ([McCulliss, 2012](#)). Psychiatrists Jack J. Leedy and Sam Spector used guided reading as a catalyst ([McCulliss, 2012](#)). The Graduate School of Library Science at Villanova University presented a bibliotherapy course in 1970. Towards the end of the 19th century, librarian [Rubin \(1978\)](#) helped establish clear guidelines for bibliotherapy by creating two categories as developmental bibliotherapy and therapeutic bibliotherapy.

In 20th Century

The therapeutic use of books has increased in recent years. Bibliotherapy became popular in the 20th century as an all-ages; children, young adults, adults and seniors' therapy. Bibliotherapy is recurrently employed as a therapeutic technique and is often integrated with other therapies, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). Today, bibliotherapy continues to be utilized by librarians and psychologists, and has also expanded into various other fields such as social work, healthcare, education, counseling, and parenting. While it initially focused solely on books, it now encompasses a broader range of media, including literature, poetry, self-help books, movies, comic books, art, music, dance, and storytelling.

By the 20th century, there was a tendency to use the Internet more and more among the majority of people living in the society, regardless of children and adults. Accordingly, going beyond the traditional printed media (books) utilized for bibliotherapy activities, Web-based bibliotherapy was brought into practice for many psychological problems by using Web-based materials by various researchers all over the world of academia ([Carlbring et al., 2006](#); [Noruzi & Alireza, 2007](#); [De Jesús-Romero et al., 2022](#)). Polygonal terms found in the literature for the concept of web therapy are web counseling, web guidance, web psychology, web therapeutics, e-therapy, internet therapy, online therapy, e-mail therapy, and cyber therapy ([Barathi et al., 2016](#)).

[Pehrsson & McMillen \(2005\)](#) created a “Bibliotherapy Evaluation Tool” to help counselors incorporate literature into therapy. This tool included 15 self-assessment questions based on key selection criteria, which were developed from a review of existing literature and clinical experience.

[Tukhareli \(2014a\)](#) wrote a detailed book titled *Healing Through Books: The Evolution and Diversification of Bibliotherapy*. This book offers an extensive overview of contemporary theories and practices in bibliotherapy, highlights trends in the field's development in the 21st century, and explores how these trends align with recent developments in healthcare and social sectors.

In the years after 2010, extensive research has focused on enhancing the practice of creative bibliotherapy for various stakeholders, such as health professionals, librarians, educators, and social service providers. Creative bibliotherapy can be incorporated into support groups, offering a secure and motivating environment for self-exploration and social interaction ([Montgomery & Maunders, 2015](#); [Calla et al., 2017](#); [Troscianko, 2018](#); [Tukhareli, 2014b](#)).

Alternatively, bibliotherapy programs have been launched for individuals who living with HIV/AIDS, and cancer. The bibliotherapy program was designed to alleviate the isolation experienced by individuals with HIV/AIDS and cancer, raise their awareness about the disease, and enhance their well-being. [Trasmontano et al. \(2013\)](#) conducted a study to explore how patients with HIV/AIDS perceive the relationship between their spirituality and their experience of the illness. Several other research papers examine the role of bibliotherapy within library settings and identify specific bibliotherapeutic approaches to support individuals affected by HIV/AIDS ([Tukhareli, 2011](#); [Roche, 1992](#); [Roberts 2015](#)) and some other researchers ([Malibiran et al., 2018](#); [Bálint & Magyari, 2020](#); [Roghani et al., 2021](#)) believe that bibliotherapy is acceptable as an intervention tool for cancer patients. [Roberts \(2015\)](#) applied a psycho-educational self-help intervention program to assess its efficacy for cancer patients. The COVID-19 pandemic extended its spread nearly every corner of every country. The onset of COVID-19 has caused fear and stress, resulting in emotional and psychological issues due to social and physical distancing, as well as economic downturns. In this regard, the intervention of bibliotherapy is very positive, as evidenced by research ([Stip et al., 2020](#); [Monroy-Fraustro, 2021](#); [Rahmat et al., 2021](#); [Adeyeye & Oboh, 2022](#)) conducted from 2019 to 2023. In fact, bibliotherapy can be regarded as an intervention that can be adapted to meet the demands of the present day. Thus, throughout the 20th century, the scholarly exploration of bibliotherapy's theoretical aspects has transformed into a practical approach for addressing everyday needs.

Contemporary Research Landscape on Bibliotherapy in Sri Lanka

The available literature reveals that intervention of bibliotherapy is quite new to Sri Lanka, compared to several other countries. But from a practical point of view, it is not a new phenomenon to Sri Lankan society. In ancient times, our forefathers also got the same comfort through reading literary works such as *Jātaka*, *Yashodaravata*, *Dhammapadaya*, *Pujavaliya* etc. It appears that the term 'bibliotherapy' is generally not well-known among them. Further, there is no evidence available concerning the publication of any literature related on bibliotherapy.

But, as per the contemporary publications, there seems to be a positive tendency in bibliotherapy studies and publications in Sri Lanka. A recent publication ([Senevirathna & Lansakara, 2022](#)) deliberates the potential challenges in applying bibliotherapy to the context of Sri Lanka. They introduced the explanations for challenges as; well-trained Bibliotherapist/ bibliotherapy professionals are required, the need for government involvement to strengthen the bibliotherapy programs, and increase the awareness of the general public regarding this therapeutic tool. A feature article has written by [Gunawardhana \(2022\)](#), a university librarian as “*Bibliotherapy in Practice: Initiated a new service at the University System of Sri Lanka*”. She has introduced a bibliotherapy process with for component as; 1) Initial Stage 2) Mirroring 3) Insight 4) Follow up (IMIF). Another study led by [Somaratna \(2021\)](#) to assess “*the perception of student counsellors regarding the initiation of bibliotherapy services in a university setting*”. The result indicates that there is insufficient literacy among the student counselors regarding the process of bibliotherapy. [Premarathne \(2016\)](#) writes a concept paper discussing “*bibliotherapy as a tool for reducing the study behavior issues among undergraduates*”.

[Arulanantham & Navaneethakrishnan \(2013\)](#) conducted a study introducing bibliotherapy to improve the health and social conditions of post-war communities. They evaluated the effectiveness of bibliotherapy in public libraries and assessed librarians' attitudes towards taking on the role of bibliotherapists. [Attanayake \(2012\)](#) writes a paper on 'Bibliotherapy: Through *Yasōdarāvatha* (The story of *Yasōdarā*)' with purpose of promoting bibliotherapy in Sri Lanka with help of ancient Buddhist literary works. *Yasōdarāvatha* is suggested by author as recommended reading for bibliotherapy, since it promotes tolerance, love, acceptance, and solace.

When considering the authorship of the above-mentioned researches, it is clear that most of studies were conducted by librarians. Furthermore, only a small number of psychiatrists in Sri Lanka seem to have shown any interest in bibliotherapy. Professor Harischandra, a famous psychiatrist, Dr. Tolusha Harischandra, and Dr. Jayatunga are given precedence in this regard.

Professor Harischandra writes a book under the title of "Psychiatric Aspects of *Jātaka* Stories" and makes a comprehensive study on a practical and active therapeutic means for the cure of psychiatric disorders. In chapter VII, he discusses the therapeutic uses of *Jātaka* stories relating to bibliotherapy but only with limited explanation. He states, that "I would say that *Jātaka* book serves a bibliotherapist as a comprehensive pharmacopeia" ([Harischandra, 1998, p. 114](#)). Further he discusses under the titles of various psychological treatments, how *Jātaka* Stories can be mobilized in therapeutically.

The aforementioned studies demonstrates that research landscape on bibliotherapy is still in its early stages in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The idea of bibliotherapy dates back to ancient civilizations, where reading was viewed as a source of comfort and healing. Notable milestones in the evolution of bibliotherapy include its use in military hospitals during World War I, the development of reading programs in libraries, and the integration of bibliotherapy into psychotherapeutic practices.

The modern notion of bibliotherapy began to take shape in the early 20th century with the recognition of its therapeutic potential by healthcare professionals, counselors, librarians, teachers, etc. Accordingly, bibliotherapy has expanded globally, with diverse applications in clinical and non-clinical settings. Research has demonstrated its effectiveness in addressing various mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and trauma. The integration of digital platforms has also broadened access to bibliotherapy resources.

When consider the contemporary research landscape on bibliotherapy in Sri Lanka, have seen a growing interest in bibliotherapy within the Sri Lankan academia. Research studies have explored the effectiveness of bibliotherapy, potential challenges in applying bibliotherapy to the Sri Lankan context, recommended readings for bibliotherapy, bibliotherapy process, initiating bibliotherapy service etc. When considering the authorship of these contemporary researches, it is clear that most of studies were conducted by librarians. Furthermore, it seems that only a small number of psychiatrists in Sri Lanka have shown some interest in bibliotherapy.

Currently, most of the existing research literature on bibliotherapy produced by researchers in Sri Lanka is in English, which limits its accessibility to those more comfortable with local languages. Hence, it is

crucial to conduct research and disseminate knowledge about bibliotherapy in Sinhala and Tamil languages to facilitate wider adoption of this effective therapeutic tool in Sri Lanka.

Sinhalese literature is predominantly infused with Buddhist teachings, underscoring the importance of expanding research initiatives on bibliotherapy within this literary tradition. Conducting localized research to comprehend the specific needs of Sri Lankan populations can enhance the efficacy of bibliotherapy. Moreover, fostering collaborative research efforts is crucial to promoting bibliotherapy in the Sri Lankan context. Encouraging interdisciplinary collaborations among mental health professionals, educators, librarians, and counselors aims to deepen the understanding and application of bibliotherapy, enriching its impact.

The findings of this study contribute to a broader understanding of the global evolution of bibliotherapy and the contemporary research landscape on bibliotherapy in Sri Lanka. ongoing research will be crucial in shaping its integration and ensuring its benefits are maximized for diverse populations. It is crucial for advancing future research and practical applications across various populations and within indigenous literature.

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