

**A comparative study of library use by the members
of the academic staff of five universities in Sri Lanka**

A thesis submitted

By

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Abstract

This study evaluates the library use of the academics in science and technology comparatively with the academics in the other subject fields. Their information seeking behaviour, information needs and the extent to which these needs have been fulfilled by the university library system, its staff and its services are some of the aspects taken into account. In addition, the research projected itself to know the adequacy of physical resources, facilities and services in university libraries and also it seeks the academics' suggestions for effective library services in universities.

The population for the study was taken from the University of Colombo, University of Peradeniya, University of Sri Jayawaranapura, University of Kelaniya and University of Moratuwa. The overall population was 1848 representing all the departments from the categories of Senior Professor, Professor, Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer grade I and II and lecturer both confirmed and probationary. Each department was taken as strata and 40% academics were selected from the above population as sample by using random sample technique and the quantity of the selected actual sample was 731 (39.55%). The study was mainly based on a pre-tested questionnaire.

This study shows that the academics were engaged in research works. But they spent a little of their office time in the library seeking literature and information and for reference. It reveals that they were not able to keep in touch with latest information due to certain reasons. Their book borrowing also was not satisfactory

since the university libraries could not satisfy user demands as required by them. It was found that they were not satisfied with the available information sources and services and with the library equipments. On the other hand, the availability of Internet facilities for most of the academics and their dissatisfaction regarding the information sources, services and equipments in university libraries has caused a decrease in the library usage.

Further, the results expose that the academics' information generation was not satisfactory. They published least publications into the fields they had specialized since they do not spend adequate time on research activities. Also, the study discloses that the academics were not aware of inter-library loan systems and they were not encouraged to request for inter-library loans. But the majority of academics were satisfied with the acquisition policies of university libraries and they were regularly informed when the new publications arrive in relation to their subject areas. In addition, the results found that the university academics were satisfied with the university library staffs' knowledge regarding the library services, sources and equipments. But they were unsatisfied with the attitudes of the university library staffs. However, the results showed that the academics' overall assessment about the effectiveness of their institutional libraries in meeting their information needs was somewhat positive.