

**A STUDY TO EXAMINE
THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF LIBRARY USE
BY STUDENTS WHO ARE ENGAGED
IN HIGHER STUDIES WHILE EMPLOYED**

**(A SURVEY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO STUDENTS IN
THE INSTITUTE OF WORKERS' EDUCATION)**

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to find out the nature and extent of use of library by students engaged in higher studies while employed. To achieve this objective, a sample of students studying for the first degree was compared with two groups of students, one made up of regular undergraduates of the University of Colombo and the other made up of employed persons doing their post graduate courses at the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The sample used for the study comprised of three groups of University Students. The Group I was the students of the Institute of Workers' Education who were employed and studying for their first degree. The Group II comprised of students of the Faculty of Graduate Studies doing their post graduate courses while employed and Group III consisted of students of the Faculty of Arts in the University of Colombo following regular undergraduate courses.

The objectives of the study were as follows :

1. Examining how the library is used by the students in the IWE.
2. Comparing their patterns of library use with that of students in the Faculty of Arts and F.G.S.
3. Studying the nature of their information seeking behaviour.
4. Examining whether there are any special library use needs of those students through employing new strategies and techniques.

A questionnaire was used as the major instrument for data collection. The following is a summary of the findings of the survey.

1. The results showed that the students of the three groups come to the library mostly to borrow a book, read them, read materials like newspapers and to study notes. 67.2%, 75.7% and 74.3% of the students from the three groups respectively use the library regularly and there's no big difference in library use of the three groups. The majority of the employed students are interested in reading than watching T.V. and doing various other activities.
2. The majority of the three groups find books by browsing among the shelves and asking members of the library staff and checking the catalogue are the other popular ways used by the sample in finding books.
3. Office work and the time the library is kept open have been major barriers in using the library for the employed people. But they have not considered various responsibilities of the family as a major problem hindering the use of library.
4. Developing the collection, air-conditioning the library and giving instructions in using the library have been suggested by the sample to improve the service and library use.