



**An Explorative and Comparative Evaluation of  
Social Science Periodicals Information Services of  
University Libraries in Sri Lanka**

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## Abstract

Periodicals are the prestigious communication media among the scientist in the world. Social Scientists are also widely used periodicals to communicate information on the results of scholarly research or on current events. Researchers of Social Sciences are always keen to follow recent advances and improvements in their disciplines. In this sense studies /research on services provided by university libraries in disseminating information related to periodicals is a must to library professionals.

This research study is to explore and comparatively evaluate the status of information services related to social science periodical literature of university libraries in Sri Lanka. The researcher is therefore to study the present situation of periodical information services adapted by university libraries in Sri Lanka.

To assess the services provided by university libraries and the barriers and problems faced by university library professionals in providing such services, information has been collected from periodical librarians of each four selected universities and analyzed. In the user survey detail information regarding services, user needs and their problems and expectations were collected from academics and undergraduates who teach and read special degree programmes in the selected disciplines of Social science. Evaluation has been done under effect of service (personnel, organizational), facilities of periodical section, arrangement and organization, subscription and collection sufficiency, accessibility, barrier-free access, library visit and usage of periodicals.

All four libraries under this study provide some of the specific services such as current awareness, photocopy service and some types of user education programmes. Most of the services such as Individual article supply, document delivery, ILL, SDI service, Abstracting and Indexing services, information repackaging and literature search service, etc. are poorly been done or not performed effectively. This is due to lack of manpower, budget constraints and poor infra structure facilities (for instance low bandwidth of network) and less intention of the library staff. However, well established university libraries provide periodical information services better than the newly established

universities. The information obtained from the users also showed that dissemination of information related to periodical literature has to be improved.

The study has also discovered that the electronic journal access is at its preliminary stage in all three universities except UOC where the users use e-journal to a higher rate. However, there is a tendency in advancement in utilization of available e-journals under PERI programme.

Considering the Social Science periodical collection all four university libraries have to be improved. The study has also discovered that UOC only spends 50% of its annual book vote for subscription of periodicals, while the others spent comparatively very less amount for this purpose.

The research study has produced some recommendations on improving periodical information services in university libraries and ways and means of solving the problems identified in the cause of this study. Further, this has given suggestion to improve the Social Science periodical collection, accessibility and customer care in order to fulfill the objectives of university libraries.

