

Information-seeking behaviour of undergraduates: A case study at a private university library in Sri Lanka

M. P. M. K. De Silva¹, S. D. Somaratna²

¹*Informatics Institute of Technology*

²*Science Library, Faculty of Science, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

Understanding the information-seeking behaviour of undergraduates is essential in the contemporary higher education landscape. While studies on information-seeking behaviour in academic libraries in Sri Lanka have mostly focused on state university libraries, there is limited research on private university libraries, which rely more on digital resources and online scholarly databases. Consequently, this study explores the information-seeking behaviour of undergraduates at a private university in Sri Lanka. The target population comprised 406 students from the 2024 mid-year intake, and a sample of 196 was selected using the Krejcie and Morgan table. The study employed a survey method with a random sampling technique, and data were collected through questionnaires to examine demographics, library usage patterns, resource preferences, user satisfaction, and barriers faced when accessing library resources. The response rate was 67.35%, with 132 responses received. Results indicate that most library users are Computer Science undergraduates (67%). They visit the library frequently, with 89.5% regularly using library facilities. Additionally, all respondents (100%) access the library's digital resources daily. The most requested materials are research papers (53%) related to computer science, mainly for assignments. Students reported high satisfaction with the accessibility of library resources (73.6%). They also expressed satisfaction with staff support in accessing information. The main barriers to accessing online library resources were poor internet connectivity (84.2%) and the limited availability of subject-specific journals. The study recommends enhancing student experience by focusing on two key areas: expanding digital resources with 24/7 access and creating new learning spaces within the library, including reliable Wi-Fi facilities. These strategic interventions aim to better align library services with the current academic and research needs of students.

Keywords: *Private university libraries, Information-seeking behaviour, User preferences, User satisfaction, Digital resources*