



University of Colombo
Sri Lanka

Library Research Symposium 2020



Proceedings

“Rethinking of Library Services in the Knowledge Era”

23rd December 2020

THE LIBRARY NETWORK



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To support the university's vision in building synergies between knowledge, education and research, by striving to create an environment conducive to learning, teaching and intellectual advancement.

Our Mission

To underpin the mission of the university, by providing high-quality service for the staff, students and the researchers to satisfy their quest for knowledge.

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Programme
23 December 2020
4.00 p.m. to 6.45 p.m. via zoom

National Anthem & Traditional Lighting of the Oil Lamp

4.00-4.05 pm.

Welcome Address

Dr. (Mrs.) Pradeepa Wijetunge

Librarian, University of Colombo & Conference Chair

4.05-4.20 pm.

Address by the Guest of Honour

Senior Professor Premakumara De Silva

Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo

4.20-4.35 pm.

Address by the Chief Guest

Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne

Vice-Chancellor, University of Colombo

4.35-4.40 pm.

Introduction of the Keynote Speaker

Dr. (Mrs.) Pradeepa Wijetunge

4.40-5.10 pm.

Keynote Address

Prof. Ramesh C. Gaur

Library as a learning space: Rethinking Roles, Rethinking spaces

Dean, IGNCA & Director (Lib. & Inf.) & Head - Kala Nidhi
Division at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA),
New Delhi, India

5.10-5.50 pm. **Technical Session 1**

Chaired by: Dr. N.D. Wijayasundara, Librarian, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Mr.R. Maheswaran, Librarian, University of Peradeniya

	Title	Presenters
1	An evaluation of usage statistics to upgrade the British Library Document Supply Service (BLDSS) introduced by the Consortium of Sri Lankan Academic Libraries (CONSAL)	<i>P. Wijetunge K.K.N.L. Perera</i>
2	Human Library and its application: an educational innovation approach at the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo	<i>P.K.S. Manatunga A. Silva S.M. Adhikari</i>
3	Implications of the social media usage on education performance of undergraduates; Case study based on University of Colombo	<i>S. G. N. C.Senanayake</i>
4	Bibliometric analysis of research publications in the Journal of National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka between 2010 and 2019	<i>S. S. Johoran</i>

5.50-6.20 pm. **Technical Session 2**

Chaired by: Dr. C.C. Jayasundara, Librarian, University of Kelaniya

Mr. W. J. Jeyaraj, Librarian, Eastern University

	Title	Presenters
5	Global research on depression among university students due to impacts of COVID-19 outbreak: A scientometric review using PubMed database	<i>M. A. Lankathilake</i>
2	Analysis of usage statistics of content page services provided to academic staff members of the University of Colombo	<i>T. Sriharan</i>
3	The right time to think: challenges of serving older adults in public libraries services in Colombo Municipal Council, Sri Lanka	<i>S. Alikhan</i>

6.20-6.30 pm. **Q & A**

6.30-6.40 pm. **Vote of Thanks**

Dr. Chiranthi Wijesundara

6.45 pm. **Closing of the Symposium**

MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARIAN

Dr. (Mrs.) Pradeepa Wijetunge

Librarian

University of Colombo

Sri Lanka



It has been a great honour and I am greatly excited to welcome you all to our first online Library Research Symposium (LRS-2020) of University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. This year our theme was “Rethinking of Library Services in the Knowledge Era” and it was greatly reflecting the current global pandemic issues.

COVID-19 has posed unprecedented challenges to academic activities of universities around the world let alone Sri Lanka. However, we thrived to continue our information services and research endeavours. In this regard, rather than waiting for the cloud to pass, the Library Network of the University of Colombo accepted the COVID-19 challenge and transitioned ourselves to prosper in academic excellence.

Technical sessions of the symposium were gracefully started with the insightful addresses of the Guest of Honour, Senior Prof. Premakumara De Silva, Dean, Faculty of Arts and the Chief Guest Senior Prof. Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne, Vice Chancellor of the University, and the Keynote Address delivered by Professor Ramesh C. Gaur, Dean, & Director (Lib. & Inf.) & Head - Kala Nidhi Division at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, India. Following were two technical sessions, each chaired by eminent university librarians. There were seven interesting presentations covering various topics including document supply services through consortium, human libraries, use of social media, content page services, etc.

My heartfelt thanks go to our Chief Guest, Vice Chancellor of University of Colombo, Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne. I also thank our Guest of Honour Senior Professor Premakumara De Silva, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo and the Keynote Speaker Prof. Ramesh C. Gaur.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the presenters and participants for their contribution which made the LRS 2020 a great success. The organizing committee and all the staff of the Library Network deserve a standing ovation and kind appreciation for organising the symposium in a grand and effective manner.

Successful accomplishment of LRS 2020 has opened up new horizons for us to communicate research findings on digital platforms like Zoom and Google Meet. We are looking forward to exploiting the cutting-edge technologies for our future efforts, too.

Finally, I wish everyone an academically successful, healthy and Happy New Year 2021.

Thank you.

December 2020.

INTRODUCTION TO THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Prof. Ramesh C. Gaur
Dean & Director (Lib. & Inf.)
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Prof. (Dr.) Ramesh C. Gaur is presently the Dean, Director (Lib. & Information)& Head - Kala Nidhi Division, at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Ministry of Culture New Delhi, India. He has been recently appointed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India as the Officer on Special Duty for setting up of the Indian Institute of Heritage and is one of the senior-most faculty and officials in the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts.

As a Dean, at the Centre, he is responsible for the management of various academic programmes including 9 PG Diploma Courses, 5 Certificate courses, and 4 Online certificate courses in various disciplines like Cultural Management, South Asian Studies, Buddhism, Digital Library & Data Management, Cultural Informatics, Conservation, Folklore, Tribal studies, Research Methodology, Ethnographic Documentary making and Screen Writing etc. His past assignments include being the; University Librarian of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, Librarian of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai Management Development Institute(MDI), Gurgaon and IMT Ghaziabad etc. A Fulbright Scholar, Prof. Gaur has visited over 20 countries in relation to various assignments related to Digital Library and allied areas.

His International and National Honors and Awards include: IASLIC- S M Ganguly Best Librarian award for year 2007, Satkal Young Librarian award for year 2009, SRFLIS India Professional Excellence Award 2013, Professional Excellence Award 2015 by ADR Publications', NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal design Award 2017, Turnitin Global Innovation Awards 2016: Honorable Mention Category, Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) India, Librarians Choice Award to Dynamic Librarians in recognition of his contributions towards the LIS Community in India, India CSR Dr. Velaga Memorial Award for Innovative Library Services (Leadership) for the year 2019 for the promotion of Library & Information Services and for providing leadership for various Innovations in the field, Emerald Highly Commendable Research Award and the felicitation by U .P Library Association in 2007.

Prof. Gaur is the first Indian nominated to be a Member of the International Advisory Committee of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme (2018) and a member of the UNESCO Global Task Force on Indigenous Languages (2020). He is the National Coordinator of the Experts' Group on Memory of the World (MoW) Programme in India, and a member of the Research Council of the National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR), New Delhi, member of various Committees of the International Federations of Library Associations (IFLA), including the IFLA Programme Advisory Committee on Global Cultural Heritage, member of the Databib Advisory Board, USA and the Academic Advisory Board of many major publishers including Elsevier, Springer, Royal Society of Chemistry, EBSCO, PROQUEST, OUP, and CUPetc.

Prof. Gaur has also served as a member of the Expert Consultation Committee for setting up of International Centre on Documentary Heritage (ICDH) in South Korea and Consultative Committee on Digital Dunhuang, China, a member of the Governing Council of INFLIBNET, a member of the National Advisory Board-E-Shodh Sindhu National Consortia and a member of the UGC committee on Plagiarism Regulations 2018.

He is currently serving and has served in many Library Advisory Boards / Committees of various Universities/Institutions in India. He is a Member of Editorial /Advisory Board / Guest Editor in several International and National Journals including the Journal of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka. In over 31 year's professional career, he has authored and edited 10 books, has written over 70+ papers and has delivered over 600 talks in various national and international conferences, webinars, workshops, etc, and organized a number of national and international conference and other events.

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Prof. Ramesh C. Gaur

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It is with great honour and pleasure I share my experience and knowledge across this symposium, under the theme “Rethinking of Library Services in the Knowledge Era.” I congratulate University of Colombo for having such an interesting symposium topic to talk during the current pandemic challenges. Obviously, library services and directions have been changing constantly. In this light, let me shed my views and thoughts under the topic “Library as Learning Space: Rethinking Roles & Rethinking Spaces.”

Libraries are not just spaces of getting reading materials but these are spaces where enhancement of knowledge through creative learning takes place. In this context, I would like to talk about the Internet of things (shortly known as IoT). IoT is moving more interactive, more specific and more connected to the personal life. Evolution from industry 4.0 emerged the Education 4.0 from which Library 4.0 is appearing. Therefore, libraries need to redesign and rethink their services aligning with Education 4.0. New education policy in India, being aligned with the way as to how man and machine function together, to harness the potential of digital technologies, personalized data, open source contents, etc. What else the Education 4.0 could bring about – a blueprint for the future of learning – lifelong learning from childhood to continuous learning from workplace as adults – to play a better role in society – not only good professionals but also noble human beings. This entire great journey starts from foundational learning from schools to lifelong learning. Libraries’ roles are important here at every juncture of this lifelong journey.

Thus, what technologies should the libraries rethink in adapting to this changing world of learning is of great importance now. There is no compulsion to go to libraries in person since users are connected online with their library resources, either subscribed or digitized or both. Therefore, it is the library that has to reach out its patrons through remote access, discovery tools, and so on.

Another important thing is personalization. Tech savvy users barely expect the libraries to help them download articles or to access to databases rather they expect the librarians to deliver flexible and personalized services with specific connections of resources. Thus, librarians and teachers need to transform into mentors especially to cater to millennials who are always anxious about information overload. Besides, new user communities are more interested in practical application than theoretical knowledge. They demand modularizing and repackaging of contents. Most importantly student ownership is the key as our existence depends on theirs.

Education 4.0 facilitates remote, personalized, and self-paced learning. Flipped classrooms encourage blended learning where learners bring their own devices or learn outside their classrooms. Libraries should support project-based learning using courseware platforms to assess the students' competencies so that students would gain real world skills that directly represent their jobs. And, mentoring as I said before is fundamental to learning.

Libraries need to provide resources to enhance active learning, and make the library ambience and services attractive and exciting, respectively. Let the library be a place of socializing. In this line, librarians rethink their role to be facilitators of learning, along with their multitude of roles in the era of digital education and information. Many libraries are hesitant to take up the changing roles; rather they depend largely on faculties for their directions and recommendations. Users may need everything in the library but it is our role to decide on relevance and quality of materials to be delivered. Then, the users must be educated about those resources through information literacy.

Efficient resources-sharing through well-guided system is important. Virtual referencing became useful during pandemic and work from home options. Through media and digital literacies libraries can build an information literate research community-e-research literacy and mutual learning. Libraries need to cater to the students of special needs or falling under social justice.

Next, rethinking of spaces in libraries is a big change. Learning spaces connected with libraries with no boundaries to promote interactive/collaborative places for researchers. Learning resources and spaces should be designed wisely. Maintain silent zones depending on the need/demand. Therefore, libraries are becoming learning laboratories, place of communities, flexibility, fostering active learning and places of contemplation for students. In Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) I created huts with Wi-Fi connections and power outlets

outside the library where students can work individually or together to learn and have access to e-resources. In addition, I created JNU student forum for mutual learning where library-faculty - students - three stakeholders, collaborate and organize lecture series/seminars. In these events, we exchange our roles, for example student becomes the teacher and teachers take learners role. And, this forum encourages Inter-university activities and interdisciplinary learning. Students share their learning experiences and initiate various activities on this platform.

There is strong connection between learning resources and learning spaces, based on highly active and engaging user communities in your libraries which accommodate collaborative zones, social learning zone, individual study zone, and learning commons to classrooms. Be selective and creative when it comes to designing the learning commons especially for school and public libraries.

Libraries serve as the best place for self-learning. Albert Einstein once said that he does not teach his pupils but provide the atmosphere for learning. All education is self- education and teacher is just a guide.

Mutual learning is facilitated by libraries however many libraries in south Asian countries lack spaces for group learning. Libraries are places of lifelong learning where all sorts of literacies and infotainment take place.

Integrate reading and learning – I proposed to have a set of suggested reading for each course curriculum at JNU. Books and articles recommended by teachers posted on library websites. Learning is relevant only after the teaching and the memory of learning strengthened only when reading is taking place after the classroom learning.

During pandemic lockdown everything moves towards online teaching and learning. Even after retrieving normalcy after the pandemic is over, we need to focus on blended learning, combining both classroom and online learning. How libraries can be an integral part of blended learning? Connect teachers and resources and students.

E-learning – new area – librarians are the promoters of e-learning and avail the resources from content creators/teachers/authors to the end users. Consider the advantages of e-learning over traditional learning. Digital learning- databases and e-books are made access via remote access and discovery tools. Libraries promote open access resources. Digital library services

depend on ICT infrastructure, quality of content and digital culture. Apply Artificial Intelligence (AI) and virtual reality in libraries.

Experiential learning is important and library plays an important role in connecting people with resources. Information on the Internet is overloaded thus what is authentic and useful is the question. Searching on Google may not give users everything they need. So the Internet cannot be digital library not even a substitute for library. It may lead to building of misinformation or disinformation, fake info, since predatory publishers pop up on Google search. Since first hits from search engines may not be relevant advice the users to use deep web search tools.

Policy makers should be aware that not everything on the Internet would be useful and credible. Search strategies need to be developed by librarians as knowledge navigators. And, educate the user to use deep web search engines. Help students with learning disabilities – create or design resources and services to overcome these issues. Rename the libraries as learning resource centres thus policies are designed to promote learning spaces in libraries as reading spaces. Therefore, librarians take up facilitators and teachers' role in this digital era.

Thank you.

December 2020.

THE LIBRARY NETWORK

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An evaluation of usage statistics to upgrade the British Library Document Supply Service (BLDSS) introduced by the Consortium of Sri Lankan Academic Libraries (CONSAL)

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The Consortium of Sri Lankan Academic Libraries (CONSAL) established a Document Delivery Service through the British Library Document Supply Service (BLDSS) in the year 2017. This service was funded by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka and was co-ordinated by the University of Colombo. The objective of this service was to find scholarly literature, which was not locally available, and was expected to cater to the needs of all the academics attached to the state university sector. Electronic download formats were used to disseminate the articles. Initially, a trial project was implemented by depositing 2500 GBP with the commercial document supplier- British Library. The total number of articles, which have been requested through this service from 11th of November 2017 to 25th of November 2020, was eighty-four (84). Out of them, 37 (44%) were fulfilled through the British Library; 19 (23%) articles were found via other networks and 26 (31%) of the articles were unavailable. Only six (06) state universities; Peradeniya, Jaffna, Colombo, Sabaragamuwa, Sri Jayewardenepura and Moratuwa have made article requests so far. Among them, the University of Peradeniya has made the highest number of requests (56%).The majority of the requests (69%) have been made from the field of Medicine. The article delivery statistics indicate that this service is yet to be fully utilized by the scholarly community belonging to different educational streams, attached to the state university sector. A user satisfaction survey must be conducted to gather suggestions to improve the usage of this service. As there is a considerable percentage of unavailable scholarly material in the British Library, a mechanism should be developed to utilize the existing funds to access this inaccessible content by collaborating with many commercial document suppliers similar to British Library and developing an online payment system to purchase scholarly material from direct publishers.

Keywords: Document Delivery Service, British Library, CONSAL, Usage statistics

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**Human Library and its application:
an educational innovation approach at the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo**

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The Human Library concept was introduced to the Sri Lankan university sector by the Main Library, University of Colombo in 2016. Since then, the Human Library has been a calendar event of the Library Network of the University of Colombo. The literature on how the students and experts were influenced by the Human Library projects is available in the global context, but it is very rare in the Sri Lankan context. The present study attempts to fulfil the existing gap and thus the research will add new knowledge to the respective knowledgebase. The overall objective of this study is to evaluate the possibility of using the Human Library as a new approach for learning. The study was conducted during the 3rd Human Library programme conducted as part of the orientation programme for the undergraduates of the Faculty of Arts in 2019. A mixed-method approach was adopted in the present study. A self-designed, structured questionnaire was the main research tool for data collection followed by interviews with selected participants. The total population was 800 students, and based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, a sample of 260 was selected. Thirty-five human experts were purposively selected for the event from different Social Science disciplines. Both human experts and the students had favorable attitudes towards the Human Library approach, which they considered to be well-suited to gain a broad spectrum of knowledge on Humanities and Social Sciences. Although 97.3% of the students expressed that, this was the first experience as a reader in a Human Library, 76.9% were highly satisfied with the concept and 74.2 % were highly satisfied with the selection of experts. Eighty percent accepted Human Library as a new initiative to get familiarize with the learning environment and as an innovative learning approach. With respect to the experts, for 50% of the respondents this was the first experience as a Human Book. All were highly satisfied with the concept. The experts identified the benefits of being living books that can positively influence the students. All the Human experts agreed that the concept of Human Library can be applied as a novel innovation for education, and they agreed to continue it as a calendar event. The present study suggests that the Human Library is beneficial for interactions between the subject specialists and the students reducing the gap and should be deployed as a new learning approach in the Faculty of Arts.

Keywords: Human Library, Learning approach, University of Colombo

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**Implications of the social media usage on education performance of undergraduates;
Case study based on University of Colombo**

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Global connectivity becomes fast and advanced with the introduction of social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Viber, and Imo. This study investigated the social media network participation and the academic performance among university students at the University of Colombo. The data collection methods used were a structured questionnaire and participatory semi-structured online interviews. Through the structured questionnaire, the basic information was gathered, and the participatory online interview was used to collect in-depth data about the time spent on education and social media. The study population was all the undergraduates (600) in the Faculty of Arts, who are following ICT as a subject. A sample of 234 undergraduates was randomly selected on the recommendations on sample size by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). There were no gender differences in this regard. The highly used social media is WhatsApp (92%) followed by Facebook (78%), and YouTube (67%). Out of the total respondents, 60% stated that they use social media for academic works such as academic discussion groups in WhatsApp and Facebook. According to Pearson's correlation analysis, academic performance is related with social media usage by undergraduates ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.000 < 0.05$). Also, all the dimensions of social media usage are positively correlated with academic performance; frequency of access, time spent on social media and type of information shared/posted by indicating statistically significant, moderate to substantial positive relationship with academic performance. The relationship is statistically significant too. The findings confirmed that all the determinants have an impact on the academic performance and that there is a moderately positive relationship between the social media usage and the academic performance. It can be concluded that, social networking sites, especially WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube can be used successfully to support collaborative learning.

Keywords: Collaborative Learning, Social media, Education performance, Undergraduates

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Bibliometric analysis of research publications in the Journal of National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka between 2010 and 2019

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Bibliometric analysis of 358 research articles published in the Journal of the National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka was carried out by considering 40 issues published during 2010-2019. Year-wise distributions of papers, authorship pattern and degree of collaboration between authors have been analyzed. Only the research articles (358) in 40 issues were selected and others were excluded from the study. The data were collected manually from the Journal published online in the Sri Lanka Journals Online. The data were analyzed using MS-Excel 2013 software package. The results demonstrated that the highest number of research articles (54) were published in 2018. Out of 358 research publications, 335 articles (93.6%) were multi-authored and only 23 articles (6.4%) were single-authored. In 2013, there was no single-authored publication. The highest number of multi-authored articles (50) were published in the year 2018. The years 2018 and 2019 were significant in producing more number of multi-authored articles. The average Degree of Collaboration is 0.93 from 2010 to 2019, and it clearly shows that there is a high level of collaboration between the authors. Out of 358 research articles, 230 articles (64.25%) were published by Sri Lankan authors, 42 articles (11.73%) were published by Sri Lankan authors collaborated with international authors and 86 articles (24.02%) were published only by international authors. It seems that there was a minimal collaboration of Sri Lankan authors with foreign authors. Authors from 28 countries have contributed to this journal, and the highest amount of author contribution is from Pakistan with 37 publications followed by the United States and India with 12 publications each. The study revealed that the majority of the research contribution is from Sri Lankan authors and multi-authored publications, and there is a high degree of author collaboration. This study may help those who wish to map the bibliometric patterns of journals.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka, Journal, Authorship pattern, Degree of collaboration

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Global research on depression among university students due to impacts of COVID-19 outbreak: A scientometric review using PubMed database

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COVID-19 that emerged in the latter part of 2019, became a global pandemic by early 2020. All community groups suffered as a result, including the university students. They have been experiencing residential lockdowns, postponement of classes, delays in graduation, increased cost on connectivity and devices, loss of income etc. These issues could have adversely affected their mental health leading to depression. The aim of this study is to map the research on depression among the university students due to COVID-19, based on the articles indexed in the PubMed database. The articles related to the above topic dated from January 2020 to December 2020 were retrieved from PubMed. Accordingly, 150 search results were obtained. Out of the total number of results, seventy-five (75) articles that are directly related to the study population were selected, excluding the studies relevant to general public, primary school children, high school students, etc. The citations were saved as a csv file and exported to the Rayyan QCRI systematic review application for further support of analysis. The total number of 75 articles have been published in 50 journals. 'International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health' was identified as the most productive (6 articles, 8%) journal, followed by 'Journal of Affective Disorders' (5 articles, 6.67%). Researches related to the topic were carried out in 28 countries. China was leading with the highest number of articles published (20 articles; 26.67%), followed by the USA (12 articles; 16%). The maximum relative growth rate of 1.1 was recorded in February, followed by 0.77 in June. The highest Doubling time is 8.31 in December, followed by 3.11 in August.

Keywords: PubMed, Scientometric Analysis, Depression, COVID-19, University Students

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Analysis of usage statistics of content page services provided to academic staff members of the University of Colombo

T. Sritharan

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This study presents the analysis of the usage statistics of content page service provided to the academic staff members of University of Colombo. The content pages of 25 subscribed journals are forwarded to all the academic staff members of the Faculties of Law, Education, Management and Finance and Arts, once the journals are received by the periodicals section. Based on these content pages the academic staff can request articles. The number of articles requested by the academic staff members based on this service during the period from October 2019 to October 2020 were used as data for this study. The data were collected by analyzing the email records of the requests made by the academic staff. A separate register was also maintained to record the details of the articles forwarded, including the name of the requester, article details, department and the faculty. The objective of this study is to analyze the usage pattern of the service. The analysis of data depicts that the majority of the articles were requested from the Faculty of Arts (227 or 51%). Faculty of Management and Finance requested 89 (20%) articles during this period, the Faculty of Law requested 83 (19%) article sand the Faculty of Education requested 43 (10%) articles. During the months of May and June 2020, more number of articles (196) have been requested by the academic staff members. Articles from “Demography” (86) and journals subscribed from American Economic Association (63) were highly requested by the Department of Demography and the Department of Economics. This study recommends that since the content page service is provided only to the above four faculties stated in this study, and is acknowledged and extensively used (total number of 442 articles have been requested) by the staff members of these faculties as evident in the data provided in this study, expanding this service to the staff members of other faculties and the students would be beneficial. This study also recommends to send the content pages of all the subscribed journals. To increase the quality of the current content page services and to get the level of satisfaction on this service, a survey must be conducted among the academic staff members of University of Colombo.

Key words: Content Page Services, Subscribed journals, Reference services, Usage statistics

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**The right time to think: challenges of serving older adults in public libraries services in
Colombo Municipal Council, Sri Lanka**

Sakeena Alikhan

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The primary objective of a public library is to provide resources and services to each category of its community members. The older adults are a significant category in the jurisdiction of the public libraries, yet the provision of services to them seems to be deficient. Studies show that public libraries pay insufficient attention to older adults than the children and youth. Although, it is the right time to pay proper attention, libraries struggle to provide essential services to this population segment. In this background, the objective of the present study is to examine the challenges that the public libraries confront when providing services to the older adult users. Three public libraries; Colombo (CPL), Kotehena (KPL) and Sri Sucharitha (SPL) within the Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) limits, were selected based on the proportion of elderly population density. The interpretive approach was used, employing in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gather information from library administrators and library users. The interview guidelines were prepared based on the American Library Association's guidelines for elders' public library services. Thematic analyses were done of the transcribed interviews by using Nvivo software. The result revealed that none of the surveyed public libraries have any specific services for older adults. Even though the public libraries understand and identify the elders' service requirements, inadequate space, lack of professional staff and awareness, limited budgeting and outdated policies are vital challenges that they face in providing specific services to the elderly population. Therefore, this study recommends that the public libraries enhance their services to this particular group by overcoming the challenges mentioned above by collaborating with relevant authorities in the government and non-government sectors.

Keywords: Public library service, Older adults, Colombo Municipal Council, Sri Lanka

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