

A study on Information needs of Academic staff members of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (RUSL)

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Abstract

This paper describes the information needs of Academic Staff members of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. The main objective of the study was to identify the information needs of Academic staff in RUSL. It also examined their purposes of getting information, current needs and methods of obtaining information and use of different types of information resources. Finally the study aimed at finding out solutions for difficulties indicated in order to enhance the library services of RUSL. A survey was carried out. Total population consisted of 216 Academic staff members. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample which was 158. A questionnaire was used as the major data collection instrument and Interviews, observations and secondary sources were also used. The response rate was 94.3%. Data analysis was done using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. “P” values were used to check the accuracy of the results. Among the findings, major needs for academics of RUSL were for teaching purposes (91.90%), for research activities (86.40%) and for carrying out higher studies (58.40%). Most have fulfilled their information needs through university library (56.40%) and also through personal collections 26.80%. Use of print resources (books = 47.70%) was higher than the use of electronic resources (e-books = 2.00%). Shelf labels of the library (47.00%) were used for reaching to information resources and use of searching tools was comparatively low (7.40%). For quick information needs, majority preferred to search through Internet. (40.30%). Most of them (85.91%) have indicated that the services provided by university library are not sufficient. Major suggestions were; make aware and practice the use of information tools for information searching and develop the collection of university library with information resources related to teaching and research activities, increase the availability of electronic resources, consortia purchasing of high cost resources. Other suggestions were to enhance the efficiency of library services, introduce Current Awareness Services, proper system for Inter Library Loan requests and need of expert systems acting as virtual librarian.

Keywords: Information Needs, Information Seeking Behavior, University Academics, Rajarata University, Sri Lanka.

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