

## **A case study on awareness of interlibrary cooperation among users of Sri Lankan university libraries**

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### **Abstract**

It is necessary for libraries to be self-sufficient with information specially in the current era where significant changes have taken place in the world in relation to technology, politics, economy, society and so forth. However, this is a challenging task for libraries to fulfill due to influx of information we receive on daily basis. To overcome this obstacle, the best is to libraries to work cooperatively. “Cooperation” serves as a mechanism in developing and promoting library services in the present scenario. “Cooperation” has contributed for smooth functioning of university libraries providing stellar made service to library users without being isolated and lamenting on lack of resources. Through interlibrary cooperation, libraries have been given chances to provide information which is not available in a particular library. However, it is observable that the use of this facility among users of Sri Lankan university libraries is minimal at present.

This study aimed at investigating users’ awareness of functioning of interlibrary cooperation. In addition to that, identifying level of users’ awareness on the service, studying the level of usage of the service, understanding how the service works with the university libraries presently and getting users opinions and views on this mechanism were studied.

The survey method was applied for achieving the aims of this research. Primary data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. The snowball rule sample method was applied for the sample. Three university libraries were used as the sample. They are, University of Peradeniya, University of Colombo, and University of Kelaniya. The population of the study consisted of two groups. 15 Academic staff members from the selected three university the study

as the first population. The second group consisted of 75 final year students were studying in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Management and Faculty of Science covering all three universities. The data which were acquired by questionnaires were analyzed using Ms Excel software. The tables, charts and the bar charts presented the collected data.

After conducting the study, it was noted that the user's knowledge on cooperation is 20%, and awareness on usage of the cooperation was also 20%. It was suggested by readers that the knowledge of user education should be promoted by 100%.

The research concluded that the level of making awareness of users on this facility remained at a low level. The users possessed a very low understanding, and therefore took a very minimal advantage of the aforesaid service. Thus, the paper arrived at a conclusion where it noted that the interlibrary cooperation functioning among university libraries was at an inefficient and unproductive state. It was suggested that university libraries ought not to follow a unique procedure. The paper recommended that there ought be more effective way of enhancing user awareness of interlibrary cooperation as a service provided by university libraries.

**Keywords:** cooperative storage centers, efficiency, inter-library loan, library cooperation, library networking cooperation.