

Use of library resources by the Humanities and Social Sciences undergraduates: factors associated with information seeking in the main library of University of Peradeniya.

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The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that are associated with the use of library resources among undergraduates and their relationship. A survey research method was applied. A close-ended questionnaire developed by Mohammadamin, Abrizah and Karim (2012) was used with the Likert Method. After the pilot survey conducted in February 2015, the main survey was carried out in September 2015. The sample was selected from the 2nd – 4th year undergraduates in different departments in the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya and 209 cases were selected by considering ten percent from each academic year. The study revealed the following results. Out of the total sample, 80.3% of the library users were female and less than 20% were male. According to the study, 80.8% used the Sinhala language, 15.4% used Tamil and only 3.8% used English as the medium of communication. Regarding the use of library resources, less than 50% of undergraduates used databases, electronic information media, ICT and other resources in the library. More than 50% undergraduates agreed that they were unfamiliar with information resources and that they feel anxious when using them. Another factor identified was the use of computers: the Internet barrier and ANOVA indicated that there weren't any significant differences during the academic year. Another factor measured was the barriers relating to the library: from that scale, 41.3% indicated that the temperature inside the library is uncomfortable. Moreover, 45.7% have anxiety when searching for information. With regards to the factors related to technology, 51% are suffering from mechanical issues during information seeking and another factor they have difficulties with is generating topics for search (41%). The study indicated that a great majority of the students are still in a critical condition in terms of the use of library facilities and services available in the university. Students need more awareness of the library resources and it is necessary to provide hands-on training in the use of OPAC, computers and internet resources to get reliable results when searching for information within the library. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct relevant and useful user education programs based on the consideration of the study. Moreover, other awareness methods are also needed to promote the use of the library resources for students' academic endeavors.

The University of Peradeniya Research Grant RG/2014/66/L is acknowledged.