



# **15<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka**

**Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation:  
What's Next in Librarianship?**

## **PROCEEDINGS**

**University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka  
Colombo, Sri Lanka  
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What’s next in the Librarianship?”***



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**02<sup>nd</sup> October 2025**

**Galle Face Hotel,  
Colombo Sri Lanka**

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“Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What’s next in the Librarianship?”

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## **International Conferences held by the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka**

1. **“e-information for Teaching, Research and Learning: Options for a University Consortia”**  
1<sup>st</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2005 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.
2. **“Information Best of Two Worlds”**  
2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.
3. **“Libraries in Higher Education: partners in K4D?”**  
3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June 2007 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.
4. **“Libraries as Centres of Excellence”**  
4<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.
5. **“Research for Impact (R4I)”**  
5<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.
6. **“University Librarianship: An Academic Challenge and an Opportunity”**  
6<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2010, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010 at Ceylon Continental Hotel, Colombo.
7. **“Contribution of the Academic Librarians Towards a Knowledge Society”**  
7<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2011, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.
8. **“Libraries as Partners of Knowledge Sustainability”**  
8<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2016, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at University of Jaffna. Jaffna.
9. **“Academic Libraries as Research Saturation Centers: Reshaping the Libraries for Tomorrow”**  
9<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2018, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018 at Golden Rose Hotel, Boralesgamuwa.
10. **“Reinvigorating Libraries: Smart Responsiveness for Sustainability”**  
10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2019, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at Mount Lavinia Hotel, Colombo.

11. **“Scholarly Publishing & Open Access for the Enhancement of Research Visibility”**  
11<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2021, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021, Virtual Conference
12. **“Connecting People through Transformative Libraries”**  
12<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2022, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at Hotel Miraj, Colombo.
13. **“Transforming Academic Libraries for a Sustainable Future”**  
13<sup>th</sup> International Conference of University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2023, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at Mount Lavinia Hotel, Colombo.
14. **“Artificial Intelligence Revolutionizing the Library Services: Challenges and Opportunities”** 14<sup>th</sup>  
International Conference of the University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, ICULA 2024, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024, at Galle Face Hotel, Colombo.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF GUEST



**Professor Indika Mahesh Karunathilake**

Vice Chancellor

*University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

We live in an era where information is more abundant and accessible than ever before. However, this abundance brings significant challenges. Disinformation and misinformation spread rapidly through social media, digital platforms, and even artificial intelligence systems. Such falsehoods can distort research, undermine trust in institutions, and mislead the public. Addressing this issue requires not only technological solutions but also education, ethical practice, and cultural awareness.

Librarians play a pivotal role in this endeavour. You are not merely custodians of books; you are guardians of truth and educators who help society distinguish fact from fiction. Your gathering for this international conference demonstrates your dedication to maintaining the integrity of knowledge and preparing for the future.

The subthemes of this conference resonate closely with our national priorities. Some key highlights include:

- **Research and Development:** Robust libraries are essential to strong universities. By providing reliable access to resources, promoting research ethics, and collaborating with faculty, librarians contribute directly to innovation and knowledge creation.
- **Digital Transformation:** Artificial intelligence, metadata practices, and digital archiving are powerful tools, but their effectiveness depends on skilled professionals who ensure authenticity, accuracy, and digital citizenship.
- **Education and Curriculum Development:** Library education must prepare future professionals not only in technology but also in critical thinking, ethics, and sustainable practices to address contemporary challenges.
- **Resilience and Sustainability:** Recent global crises—from pandemics to economic disruptions, highlight the importance of libraries as pillars of stability. Sustainable practices, resource sharing, and effective crisis management ensure libraries remain strong even in uncertain times.

Most importantly, librarianship must reflect enduring human values. In a world where algorithms increasingly shape what people read and believe, librarians must champion fairness, inclusiveness, and integrity, qualities that technology alone cannot guarantee.

This conference is more than an academic exercise; it is a call to action. Combating disinformation requires collaboration among ministries, universities, libraries, and global partners. We value the diversity of perspectives represented here and look forward to fruitful exchanges of knowledge and experience. Let me assure you that the universities values and supports your work. We see libraries not as relics of the past but as active agents shaping the future. Librarianship is gaining new relevance in the digital age, with an expanded mandate: to be innovators, educators, and defenders of truth.

On behalf of University of Colombo, I wish this conference every success. May your discussions lead to practical strategies, stronger partnerships, and a renewed vision for libraries worldwide!

Thank you.

## MESSAGE FROM THE GUEST OF HONOUR



### **Senior Professor O. G. Dayaratna-Banda**

Department of Economics and Statistics  
*University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

Chairman  
*Standing Committee on Library and Information  
Sciences (SCOLIS)*  
*University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka*

It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to the organizers and all participants of the Conference on *Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What's Next in Librarianship?* The 15<sup>th</sup> International Conference, organized by the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka, creates a vital platform for dialogue and collaboration by librarians, teachers, policymakers, publishers, and vendors from Sri Lanka and abroad.

In an era where information is abundant yet often contested, the role of libraries and librarians as trusted guides is more important than ever. The proposed discussions on research support, digital citizenship, digital transformation, AI tools, digital archiving, metadata practices, and research ethics are both timely and essential.

The UGC fully endorses these deliberations and remains committed to supporting libraries and librarians in strengthening their services, embracing digital transformation, and safeguarding ethical standards in information use. We recognize that combating misinformation and disinformation is a national priority, and libraries have a central role to play in fostering an informed and resilient society.

I commend the University Librarians Association for this timely initiative and wish the conference every success in achieving its objectives.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR



**Dr. (Mrs.) Pradeepa Wijetunge (Conference Chair)**

President

*University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka (ULA)*

Librarian

*University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

It gives me immense pleasure to extend my warm wishes to all participants of the 15<sup>th</sup> International conference of the University Librarians Association, held under the theme “*Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What’s next in Librarianship?*”

The modern information landscape provides us with extraordinary opportunities for sharing knowledge. Although this is perceived as a tremendous advantage, it can also lead to disinformation and misinformation, threatening the social connectedness and the democratic process of society. Disinformation and misinformation are a formidable challenge to libraries which are the trusted gatekeepers of knowledge. This conference provides us with an opportune forum to reflect on these challenges and envision strategies to overcome them.

We are honored to host an eminent group of invited international presenters, together with around 20 national presenters at this conference and we strongly believe that their valuable contributions will undoubtedly enrich our collective insight into this forum. Especially, sharing of practical experiences of the international scholars will inspire us to re-evaluate our professional responsibilities and to think afresh.

I extend my deep gratitude to Prof. Indika Mahesh Karunathilake, the Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo, for gracing this occasion as the Chief Guest. Also, I’m sincerely thankful to the two renowned keynote speakers, Prof. Roshan G. Ragel of University of Peradeniya and Dr. Simon Burnett of Robert Gordon University, all presenters, participants, reviewers, and all members of the ULA Executive Committee and organizing sub committees, for their profound commitment and dedication to making this event a successful reality. I also convey my sincere gratitude to our sponsors and supporters, without whom this endeavor would not have come to a reality.

As we continue our discussions today, let us reaffirm our role as Librarians and Information Professionals to sustain the values related to authenticity, transparency and accuracy of information which must be shared equitably across every layer of society. This effort will truly contribute to shape the university libraries in Sri Lanka and will continue shaping libraries as pillars of reliable knowledge in society.

Hereby, I extend my warm wishes to the conference to achieve every success while looking forward to the thought-provoking discussions that will emerge.

## MESSAGE FROM CONFERENCE SECRETARY



**Mr. T. Ramanan (Conference Secretary)**

General Secretary  
*University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka (ULA)*

Senior Assistant Librarian  
*University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of responsibility that I extend my warmest greetings to our distinguished delegates, invited speakers, and professionals who garnished the 15<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka, gathered under the theme of *Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What's Next in Librarianship?* which addresses the current challenges and their potential strategic solutions in the AI-driven world of information.

The theme of this conference reflects the transformative role of libraries in higher education and society at large. In an era defined by rapid technological change, the advancement of artificial intelligence, and shifting global knowledge landscapes, university libraries are necessarily required to reimagine and reengineer their resources, services, and partnerships. We are no longer passive custodians of information but active enablers of learning, research, innovation, and authentic dissemination of information.

Therefore, ICULA 2025 provides a unique platform for promising dialogue, continuing collaboration, and sharing of best practices across various domains. It is also an opportunity to showcase Sri Lanka's commitment to advancing library and information services that support strengthening the legal framework on AI applications, sustainable development, and the creation of knowledge societies to navigate the hazy zones of transitions in the information era.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to our chief guest, guest of honor, keynote speakers, presenters, and participants for their invaluable contributions toward the success of this conference. I am equally grateful to the Organizing Committee, our invaluable sponsors, and partners whose tireless efforts and resources have made this event possible with flying colors.

May this conference inspire new collaborations, strengthen professional networks, and chart pathways for the future of university libraries in Sri Lanka and beyond. On behalf of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka, I extend my best wishes for fruitful deliberations and a memorable conference.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE EDITORS



**Dr. (Mrs) P. K. S. Manatunga**

Editor, ULA

Senior Assistant Librarian  
*University of Colombo*



**Dr. Chiranthi Wijesundara**

Training Officer, ULA

Senior Assistant Librarian  
*University of Colombo*



**Dr. M. P. Lakmini Rajika  
Marasinghe**

Senior Assistant Librarian  
*University of Kelaniya*

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the 15th International Conference of the University Librarians Association (ICULA-25), held under the timely and critical theme, “Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What’s Next in Librarianship?”

In an era marked by the exponential growth of information alongside the spread of disinformation and misinformation, academic librarians bear the profound responsibility of guiding users to critically navigate and utilise information. Our role encompasses not only the management and dissemination of knowledge but also the promotion of research integrity, ethical scholarship, digital literacy, and sustainable information practices.

This year’s conference brings together a diverse array of scholarly contributions, reflecting the multifaceted dimensions of contemporary librarianship. The sessions cover critical themes ranging from information integrity and research ethics to digital innovations, user experience, library services, capacity building, and historical perspectives on library practices. Notable contributions include studies on sustainable development goals integration in university libraries, bibliographic data mining frameworks to recognise research excellence, real-time altmetrics analysis, collaborative course design, digital inclusion initiatives, citizen science awareness among librarians, and historical analyses of libraries during World War II. These presentations underscore the evolving roles of librarians in fostering informed academic communities, advancing knowledge creation, and responding to societal and technological challenges.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all authors, reviewers, session chairs, and contributors for their dedication and invaluable insights, which have greatly enriched this conference. The knowledge shared here not only highlights current best practices and innovations but also charts the future trajectory of librarianship in navigating complex information landscapes.

May ICULA 2025 serve as an inspiring platform for scholars, practitioners, and students alike, fostering excellence, collaboration, and innovation in the field of library and information science.

## ABSTRACT OF THE KEYNOTE SPEECH (I)

### Libraries in the Age of AI: Safeguarding Truth and Empowering Knowledge



**Professor Roshan G. Ragel**

*Department of Computer Engineering  
University of Peradeniya  
Sri Lanka*

In an era where information is abundant but trust is fragile, libraries face one of the most significant challenges in their history: navigating the twin threats of disinformation and misinformation. The rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) has created both new vulnerabilities and unprecedented opportunities for the Library and Information Science (LIS) community. While AI-driven tools can amplify misinformation at scale, they can also serve as powerful allies in strengthening libraries' core mission: ensuring equitable access to authentic, reliable, and ethically curated knowledge.

This keynote will explore the evolving role of libraries in the digital age, where archives are no longer confined to shelves but extend into algorithmic systems and intelligent discovery tools. It will highlight how AI can enhance cataloguing, metadata practices, and knowledge discovery, while also empowering librarians with tools for fact-checking, automated summarization, and user-centered research support. At the same time, it will caution against the risks of algorithmic bias, over-reliance on generative systems, and the erosion of trust when machines are left unchecked.

The discussion will position libraries not merely as service providers but as guardians of digital truth and enablers of digital citizenship. By embracing AI responsibly, libraries can become active partners in combating disinformation, supporting research integrity, and fostering sustainable education practices. Drawing on Sri Lanka's digital transformation journey, including the efforts of the Lanka Education and Research Network (LEARN) and the Multidisciplinary AI Research Centre (MARC) at the University of Peradeniya, the keynote will emphasize the importance of collaboration between computing experts, educators, and LIS professionals.

Finally, the speech will outline a forward-looking agenda for Sri Lanka's libraries: developing AI literacy among professionals, investing in sustainable infrastructure, and shaping ethical guidelines for AI adoption in knowledge ecosystems. The goal is not only to help libraries survive the age of AI but to position them at the forefront of safeguarding truth, empowering researchers and learners, and ensuring that the principles of equity, inclusivity, and trust remain central in the digital era. In doing so, libraries can reaffirm their timeless role, serving as pillars of knowledge, while stepping boldly into a future where truth itself must be defended and redefined.

## **ABSTRACT OF THE KEYNOTE SPEECH (II)**

### **Navigating the Shadows: Misinformation, Disinformation, and Dark Knowledge**



**Professor Simon Burnett**

School of Law and Social Sciences  
Robert Gordon University  
UK

We live in an era which is being defined by instability and uncertainty, and driven by geopolitical unrest, climate crises, and rapid technological advancements, notably the rise of artificial intelligence. Paradoxically, despite unprecedented public access to information, individuals and institutions struggle with informed decision-making. This keynote argues that this uncertainty stems from a profound shift in how we engage with and understand ‘truth’, and how concepts of truth and knowledge are being adversely shaped by information pollution.

This paper examines how misinformation (unintentional falsehoods), disinformation (deliberate deceptions), and dark knowledge (obscured or suppressed information) act to distort epistemologies. Misinformation and disinformation, amplified through media channels and echo chambers, create bespoke realities that blur the line between fact and fiction. For instance, disinformation health campaigns during the COVID-19 epidemic in social media channels highlighted how manipulated narratives undermine informed decision-making and erode societal trust.

This paper suggests that these dynamics demand a paradigm shift for information professionals who have traditionally focussed on normative information management processes and conceptualisations of information and knowledge. This paper argues that information professionals need not only to act as custodians of information and knowledge, but as guards against epistemic sabotage caused by dark knowledge as a generator of information pollution. This involves curating credible, transparent information sources, integrating digital literacy initiatives to combat misinformation, and advocating for open access to counter dark knowledge in proprietary or suppressed systems.

This keynote paper explores these challenges by drawing on existing and new research, to highlight the need for information professionals to reflect on their roles in safeguarding knowledge, and in empowering societies to navigate and thrive within this unstable, uncertain and complex environment.

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## Building AI Literacy in Libraries: A Framework for the Future

Leo S. Lo  




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Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the ways knowledge is created, accessed, and evaluated. For libraries, this is not simply a technological shift but it represents a profound change in the skills our staff and users need to thrive. Just as librarians pioneered information literacy, we are now called to lead in developing AI literacy. This presentation introduces a practical AI literacy framework designed to guide libraries in this emerging domain. The framework highlights five essential components: technical knowledge, ethical awareness, critical thinking, practical skills, and societal impact. Together, these elements help library professionals not only use AI tools effectively, but also teach their communities how to engage with AI critically and responsibly. Findings from three national studies of library workers in the United States provide evidence for the framework's importance. These surveys reveal enthusiasm about AI's potential, but also highlight barriers such as uneven access to training, lack of confidence, and ethical concerns. They show that while some librarians are already experimenting with AI tools, many feel unprepared to support users in navigating AI-generated content and its risks. By grounding the framework in real-world data, the presentation makes the case for libraries to adopt AI literacy as a core mission. The talk will share practical strategies libraries can take, from low-barrier training initiatives to integrating AI literacy into public programming. In doing so, libraries can extend their longstanding leadership in information literacy into the AI era, positioning themselves as central hubs for preparing communities to live and work in a world where AI is pervasive.

**Keywords:** *AI Literacy, Libraries, Ethics, USA*

## Metadata Practices in Libraries: Case Studies from India

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The current paper presents metadata practices from two individually different studies. The first study describes the experience of assigning metadata for multilingual manuscript collections using Dublin Core Metadata Initiative at the Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Centre (HPMSLRC) in India. This study involved extracting metadata written in three languages (Arabic, Urdu & English) from printed descriptive catalogues of approximately 4000 manuscripts. The researchers shared their experience based on key components such as the selection criteria of metadata elements for manuscripts, standards consulted, software and hardware considerations, and challenges faced in working with multilingual metadata content. The second study demonstrated the metadata practices in libraries of two premier academic institutions from India viz. the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) and the Indian Institute of Ahmedabad (IIMA). This study involved critically evaluating the approaches of these libraries in facilitating the discovery and access to their collections using the subject approach. Both libraries use Koha as the Integrated Library Management Software since Koha follows MARC21 as the default metadata standard, where field 600 was analyzed to find out the best practices adopted by the libraries. Key components studied were the scope of use within the 600 field, use of controlled vocabulary tools, use of indicators, and the quality of the subject catalogue. The study provides significant takeaways as solutions to the challenging task of subject metadata control. These two case studies, involving academic and research institutions, present an overview of current metadata practices in India. The studies showcased the adherence to global standards and adoption of open-source software and open standards for metadata generation and management. The study proposes to enhance librarians' knowledge of metadata management that adds to the larger body of global metadata literature.

**Keywords:** *Metadata, DCMI, MARC21, Metadata Standards, India*

## Library Metadata as Cultural Asset: Inclusive Practices for Trustworthy AI

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Metadata is often presented as a neutral description of library collections. Yet every cataloging decision, from transliteration to subject headings, reflects cultural values, interpretive judgments, and subjective choices. Viewing library metadata as a cultural asset highlights that cataloging is never purely technical. It is also social, historical, and political. This study examines how inclusive metadata practices enhance equitable access to global collections and improve the quality of open data that is used to train artificial intelligence. Cases from Thai collections inside and outside of Thailand illustrate how subjectivity shapes even seemingly objective descriptive tasks. Decisions about translating titles, representing multiple authorships, and recording contextual details directly affect both human discovery and machine learning. Three sets of practical strategies are presented. The first is empowering local expertise through collaboration, staff exchanges, and multilingual cataloging to ensure insider perspectives are retained. The second is rethinking metadata frameworks and technologies through linked data models, flexible standards, and machine translation with human oversight to address systemic exclusions. The third is treating metadata as cultural assets by documenting provenance, acquisition histories, and curatorial perspectives to enable critical engagement with collections. Inclusive cataloging extends beyond improving access for human readers. As library metadata increasingly enters AI training datasets, the subjectivity and inclusivity embedded in cataloging practices influence the quality, fairness, and reliability of artificial intelligence. Recognizing library metadata as a cultural asset is therefore essential for both equitable access to knowledge and the development of trustworthy AI.

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Cataloguing, Library Metadata, Cultural Assets, Artificial Intelligence, Thailand*

## Navigating Digital Roles: A Literature Review on University Librarians' Social Media Practices

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University librarians' use of social media remains notably understudied compared to faculty and students. While digital engagement in higher education has been widely explored, limited attention has been paid to librarians' distinct roles and challenges in online professional spaces. This review addresses that gap by synthesizing research on how academic librarians engage with social media. Using Kemmis' practice architecture framework, it examines how institutional structures, cultural norms, and individual agency shape librarians' digital practices, aiming to identify strategies that support ethical and effective online engagement. As higher education becomes increasingly digital, librarians are expected to serve not just as information curators but also as visible digital communicators. Yet, scholarships have largely overlooked how they build and sustain professional digital identities. This review contributes to the library and information science (LIS) field by highlighting the complexities of librarians' online presence. It emphasizes the need for institutional support, digital training, and clear policy frameworks to address role ambiguity and enhance engagement. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective strategies that empower librarians in academic digital environments. A thematic synthesis approach guided the review, focusing on peer-reviewed articles, conference papers, and case studies from the last decade. Sources were retrieved from databases including Scopus, Web of Science, and Library & Information Science Source. Keywords included "university librarians," "social media," "digital identity," and "academic communication." Studies were analyzed through the lens of Kemmis' framework to explore how material, cultural, and social contexts influence online behavior. Thematic coding identified key patterns, tensions, and research gaps. Several consistent themes emerged. Librarians commonly use social media for professional networking, promoting digital collections, and supporting information literacy. However, practices vary based on institutional culture, administrative backing, and personal digital confidence. A recurring challenge is the lack of clear guidelines or training, which leads to hesitant or inconsistent engagement. Many librarians feel torn between institutional expectations and their own professional autonomy, especially when they are seen as public representatives without clear directives. These findings echo broader calls in higher education for better digital governance. When supported by policies and training, social media can serve as a strategic tool, positioning librarians as central figures in academic communication and innovation. In summary, university librarians play a vital yet often unrecognized role in academic digital spaces. Their engagement is shaped by complex institutional and personal factors, frequently without formal guidance. Institutions should consider developing clear social media policies, offering professional development, and encouraging librarians to lead digital initiatives. Future research could explore cross-cultural comparisons and long-term trends in librarians' digital identities, helping to shape inclusive and strategic policies in higher education.

**Keywords:** *University Librarians, Social Media Practices, Higher Education Practice, Architecture Information Behavior*

## Disinformation and Misinformation in Libraries: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategic Responses

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In the contemporary digital environment, information is both plentiful and contested, creating complex challenges for institutions traditionally entrusted with the stewardship of knowledge. Libraries, long regarded as neutral and reliable repositories of information, now operate in a landscape saturated with disinformation such as content deliberately designed to mislead, and misinformation either false or inaccurate content shared without malicious intent. These phenomena not only threaten the integrity of knowledge systems but also reshape the ways in which communities engage with information. This paper examined the dual nature of disinformation and misinformation in library contexts, highlighting both their risks and potential benefits. On the one hand, unchecked circulation of false information within library collections or digital platforms can erode public trust, consume scarce institutional resources, and expose communities to harmful narratives, particularly in areas such as health, science, and civic life. On the other hand, the presence of misinformation and disinformation also offers opportunities for libraries to expand their educational role. They can be employed as tools for developing critical thinking, fostering information literacy, and supporting scholarly inquiry into the social and psychological dynamics of false content. By analyzing these contrasting dimensions, the study underscored the necessity for libraries to adopt proactive and strategic responses. These include the integration of digital literacy programs, partnerships with fact-checking bodies, transparent collection development policies, and the use of technological tools for identifying and contextualizing dubious content. Ultimately, the paper argued that libraries must move beyond passive custodianship to become active mediators of knowledge, guiding communities in navigating contested information landscapes. In doing so, libraries not only mitigate the dangers posed by misinformation and disinformation but also strengthen their role as essential institutions for sustainable knowledge management and informed civic participation.

**Keywords:** *Libraries, Disinformation, Misinformation, Information Literacy, Knowledge Management, Civic Engagement, Digital Literacy, Knowledge Dissemination*

## **Leveraging Digital Tools for Research Impact: Academic Libraries as Agents of Progress in Pakistan**

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The contemporary academic landscape is increasingly characterized by an exponential growth of information, coupled with the pervasive challenges lying in information silos and the imperative for greater research transparency and discoverability. This research explored the multifaceted role of Pakistani academic libraries in enhancing research impact through the strategic leveraging of digital tools being used in academic research. This research exerted significant implications for academic libraries and research community. In an era where researchers face unprecedented volumes of information and the need for rigorous data management, libraries are uniquely positioned to provide indispensable support. In this regard, academic libraries significantly contribute to overcoming information fragmentation, improving the integrity and reliability of research. Since this study aimed to provide rich, in-depth insights into the complex interactions among Pakistani academic libraries, digital tools, and research practices, researcher employed qualitative research design. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews from librarians, researchers, and relevant administrative staff, along with the observation method. Results indicate that Pakistani university librarians are well aware of digital tools and they provide training to their research and user communities on a regular basis. Furthermore, findings show that active use of digital resources correlates with higher research output, particularly in engineering and thesis work. On the other side, the staff of the college sector libraries are not very much familiar with these tools and not actively providing research services to their users. The major challenges were the funds and technological infrastructure according to the findings. Training provided by university libraries to enhance essential research practices were on software such as SPSS, NVivo, EndNote, and techniques like systematic literature reviews, Meta analysis. Hence, Pakistani university libraries play a significant role to boost research culture. However, college libraries lag behind university libraries, which are becoming more proactive, due to their limited visibility, poor technology infrastructure, financial constraints, and lack of competent staff. Funding, training, and cooperation between these libraries are necessary to improve research culture.

**Keywords:** *Digital tools, Academic Libraries, Digital Transformatio, Research Community, Pakistan*

## **A Study on the Individual Research Consultation Services of the Library, Eastern University, Sri Lanka**

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Research consultation services of a library provide expert guidance and support for various research-related activities in a university setting. These services can help undergraduates with everything from designing research studies to writing reports. The general objective of the study was to explore the research consultation services provided by the Health-Care Sciences Library to the Medical (MBBS) and Nursing students (BSc Nursing) of the Faculty of Health-Care Sciences, Eastern University, Sri Lanka, from 2021 to 2025. Data were sourced from an MS Excel spreadsheet detailing the research consultation services offered to those two groups of undergraduates during 2021 to 2025. The dataset includes the year of consultation, the number of MBBS and Nursing students, the total students and consultations, the mostly and highly discussed topics, and their feedback. In addition, the records duplicating research topics also were checked. The quantitative data was descriptively analyzed using MS Excel, and the feedback was analyzed for word count and sentiment using NVivo software. A total of 253 consultations were conducted over the period from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021- 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2025. Total student participation in the consultation services peaked in 2022 (128 students). Nursing students outnumbered MBBS students after 2021. The most discussed topics varied over the period concerned. The most frequently discussed topic was data analysis, appearing in nearly 25% of all cases, followed by sample size calculation, research topic, and methodology. According to the sentiment analysis, positive sentiment is the highest, indicating that the overall user experience was favorable. The word cloud of the feedback shows that the users highly value clear explanations provided during consultations. Future research is recommended to focus on quantifying the impact of individualized research consultation services. The limitation includes that the research was based solely on existing student records, which may not accurately represent the entire student population. In addition, the analysis was primarily based on personal opinions of the respondents, not on a standard assessment method. Since it is proven to be a valuable service, it can be extended to other faculties, and similar services can be implemented at other universities as well.

**Keywords:** *Research Consultation Services, Individual Research Consultation (IRC), Library Services, Health-Care Sciences, Undergraduates*

## Collaborative Course Design: Assessing the Role of Librarians in Curriculum Development

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The evolving role of librarians in universities is currently more complex than ever before, and it goes far beyond resource management. With the growing need for information literacy, the librarians' role in collaborative course design remains under-explored. This study aimed to explore the current practices, challenges and opportunities for Sri Lankan university librarians to actively engage in curriculum development along with the faculty members. This study is expected to contribute to the LIS field by recognizing the librarians not as mere resource managers or resource providers, but also as facilitators of university curriculum. It also aimed to showcase that how involving librarians in curriculum design significantly affect the quality of the educational programs. This study employed a qualitative approach using semi-structured interview schedule targeting 60 academic staff members and 10 librarians and assistant librarians of selected Sri Lankan Universities, where sample was selected using purposive sampling technique. Thematic data analysis was applied supported by NVivo software to identify patterns and themes related to the study. The results indicated to what extent and in what capacity the university librarians are involved in curriculum development and potentiality of librarians be a part of the curriculum designing process. The challenges and barriers which prevent the librarian collaborating deeply with the faculty for curriculum development were also identified. The perspectives of the academic staff and the librarians on collaborative curriculum designing were figured out through the interviews data. Furthermore, the study suggests recommendations to strengthen collaborative practices among the librarians and the faculty, while developing a conceptual framework or model for effective librarian-faculty collaboration. This study further proposes that librarians' skills should be identified by the respective faculties and they should be engaged in the academic tasks of the university, and policy documents should be developed to emphasize on librarians' capabilities and interests to be involved in all academic matters, specifically in curriculum designing. Further research could focus on the impact of students' learning experience and academic success through collaborative curriculum models.

**Keywords:** *Librarian-faculty Collaboration, Curriculum Development, Information Literacy, Higher Education, Academic Libraries*

## Citizen Science Awareness Among University Librarians in Sri Lanka: A Pilot Study

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Citizen Science (CS) has emerged as a valuable strategy for involving the general public in scientific research, however, its awareness and adoption in academic library settings are still lacking. This study examined the present level of Citizen Science awareness among Sri Lankan university librarians to identify the knowledge gaps and potential avenues for future involvement. Knowledge of information literacy, community outreach, and research support services have placed academic librarians in a unique position to support Citizen Science initiatives. For this reason, this study is crucial to comprehend the potential for library engagement in Citizen Science initiatives. Using a structured questionnaire, 45 librarians from state universities in Sri Lanka participated in a cross-sectional survey. In addition to demographic details, the survey looked at familiarity with Citizen Science terminology, sources of knowledge acquisition, conceptual understanding, current institutional practices, perceived barriers and facilitators. The study involved librarians of all levels, where 96% are holding postgraduate qualifications and 60% having more than 15 years of experience. A notable 60% have partial familiarity with "Citizen Science" terminology and 15.6% reported full familiarity, whereas 24.4% were unfamiliar. Nonetheless, 66.7% correctly identified the definition of CS, showing stronger conceptual understanding than familiarity with terminology. Academic literature was the main source of awareness. Librarians recognized a higher future value of CS (44.4% "very important," 35.6% "important") but current institutional engagement is still low. The most acknowledged role of librarians in CS was information provision. Meanwhile, other aspects such as collaboration, data management, hosting events and promoting CS were also considered significant. The most interest was shown in environmental monitoring (26.8%) and public health related (25.3%) projects. The main obstacles were lack of resources (22.6%), lack of experience (21.9%), and lack of funds (21.2%). To address these issues, 91% of the respondents suggested training programs, while others stated partnership opportunities (71%) and funding support (64%). Prioritized training areas include project planning (82.2%), knowledge on types of projects (80%), and citizen science fundamentals (62%). University librarians in Sri Lanka demonstrate moderate awareness but strong conceptual understanding of citizen science, with low current engagement yet high future expectations. The discrepancy between conceptual understanding and familiarity of terminology suggests a need for targeted trainings. Given their strategic institutional position, libraries could serve as significant citizen science hubs. Other recommendations include formal training, sustainable funding, creating educational material, and implementing institutional support framework to bridge knowledge gaps and support the implementation of citizen science initiatives.

**Keywords:** *Citizen Science, Academic Libraries, University Librarians, Public Engagement, Scientific Literacy, Open Science*

## Assessing the Extent of Implementing SDG-Integrated Practices in Sri Lankan University Libraries

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Academic libraries play a key role in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the extent of engagement of Sri Lankan academic libraries is unknown. This study aimed to assess the extent to which Sri Lankan university libraries have implemented SDG-integrated practices and to evaluate how these practices align with the SDG-related objectives articulated in institutional strategic plans. This study provides an evidence-based perspective on how academic libraries can transition from support units to strategic SDG contributors. This study enriches LIS discourse by identifying institutional and policy-level gaps, offering insights to strengthen advocacy, planning, and sustainable development alignment. This study employed a qualitative, two-phase design. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of university library professionals. This included head librarians or their representatives from all 17 Sri Lankan university libraries under the purview of the University Grants Commission. It was followed by a content analysis of their respective strategic plans. Data were thematically analyzed using a framework derived from global literature to assess the extent, nature, and strategic alignment of SDG-related practices within library operations and planning. The study found robust engagement with SDG-aligned practices across Sri Lankan university libraries, particularly in access, ethics, and environmental initiatives. However, strategic plans rarely reflected these efforts, with only one explicitly referencing to SDGs. Most initiatives appeared as routine services rather than structured programs. This under-documentation mirrors global findings that underscore a persistent gap between operational practice and strategic framing. It limits visibility and institutional support. The results highlight the need for improved institutional recognition, stronger policy integration, and formal assessment frameworks positioning libraries not just as enablers, but as visible drivers of the SDG agenda. Sri Lankan university libraries actively support SDG-related initiatives, though these efforts are inconsistently reflected in strategic planning. Bridging this gap requires intentional integration of SDG objectives into library strategy, clearer and effective documentation, and institutional recognition. Libraries should advocate for formal inclusion in university SDG agendas, develop structured programs, and enhance impact visibility. Establishing dedicated sustainability units and assessment frameworks may further position libraries as strategic leaders in advancing sustainable development goals.

**Keywords:** *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Academic Libraries, Strategic Planning, Evaluation, Sri Lanka*

## University Libraries in World War II: A Historical Thematic Analysis of Scholarly Literature from JSTOR and Google Scholar

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This historical study thematically analysed scholarly publications on how the university libraries responded to World War II. Academically recognized and peer-reviewed scholarly publications appearing in Google Scholar and JSTOR were used for this analysis. The study focused on identifying thematic roles of university libraries during World War II with a comprehensive interpretation on each thematic role, highlighting the lessons important for the present-day context. This study explored how university libraries remained resilient during the adverse conditions of World War II. The world is currently witnessing a potential onset of World War III, which can cause an unprecedented destruction. Historical studies alike can rule out fundamentals in maintaining resilience during such devastating conditions. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis method was used to analyse the scholarly articles on university libraries during World War II. Out of 200 initial records retrieved via Google Scholar and JSTOR, 25 peer-reviewed, authentic scholarly papers were selected for the thematic analysis. Manual coding was conducted. Rayyan QCRI Software was used to process the data. Recurring concepts such as institutional responses, librarians' roles and post war recovery were used for initial coding. Five key thematic roles of university libraries during World War II were identified, namely (a) 'Evidence for the provision of special war time services to maintain academic continuity;' (b) 'Acting as guardians of intellectual freedom through discrete means despite censorship;' (c) 'More female-cantered leadership roles in the university libraries;' (d) 'University libraries as custodians of material having educational and cultural value during the wartime;' and (e) 'Reconstruction of the university libraries with post-war international aid'. This study revealed that university libraries were not passive role players or had remained idle during one of the most deadliest challenges in human civilization. The five key thematic roles identified from this study can be considered as lessons for the future generations who are tackling modern-day threats such as cyber warfare and collapse of digital infrastructure. Building hybrid collections in protecting materials having cultural value and contingency planning to support the higher educational structure of a country are some of the lessons identified in this study. This study represents only the university libraries in the western world, which is a major limitation, therefore, further research is recommended to focus on non-western university libraries as well as public libraries.

**Keywords:** *University Libraries, World War II, Historical Thematic Analysis, Google Scholar, JSTOR*

## Beyond Citation Rates: A Real-Time Impact Analysis of University of Jaffna Research Publications Using Altmetrics

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Citation based indices are mostly accepted and important indicators for assessing academic performance and research excellence. Citation based evaluation metrics are evaluating the long term effect of a research output. Alternative metrics (Altmetrics) are used as non-traditional metric for assessing the visibility and the societal impact of research publications. The objectives of this study were to evaluate the overall social media visibility and societal impact of research publications from the University of Jaffna using Altmetric data, and to identify how major online platforms and open access status contribute to shaping their Altmetric Attention Scores. The study further sought to compare disciplinary variations in online attention while examining the relationship between Altmetrics and traditional citation-based indicators. Finally, the study aimed to analyze the policy influence of University of Jaffna research outputs by investigating their presence in national and international policy documents. This study adopted a quantitative approach to analyze the online mentions and social media visibility of research publications affiliated to the University of Jaffna using Altmetric data. Analysis of the Altmetric Attention Score (AAS) shows that, University of Jaffna research publications received 2,512 total mentions among those 1,972 mentions from social media, 254 news and blogs, 182 mentions in policy, patents and guidelines etc. Seventy-five (75) publications were mentioned in World Health Organization (WHO) policy sources. Open access publications received more AAS than closed access and among the open access, bronze open access received highest AAS and dimension citation. Trend of AAS shows fluctuating pattern and in general it increased over the time. Among the different social media platforms, X-mentions (formerly Twitter) is a dominant platform to publicize University of Jaffna publications. Psychology (n=25.83) and biomedical clinical sciences (n= 22.03) received highest average AAS it indicates the strong social media interest than other research publications by University of Jaffna. Research output related to psychology also perform well in dimension citation and it reflecting academic impact. It observed that there were considerable mismatches in some research areas that are highly cited academically may not get proportionate attention in Altmetric and vice versa. Highest number of policy mentions were received by article titled *Starting Mental Health Services in Cambodia* authored by D. J. Somasundara, attached to Faculty of Medicine. Among 15 policies, 6 policies are from WHO. Same article received good number of dimension citation (n=60) and 6 AAS. Article titled *War and Suicide in Northern Sri Lanka* received the second highest number of policy mentions (n=09) indicating significant influence on policy making. The result significantly shows the usage of research outputs by the national and international level policy documents. It bought as a valuable indicator of real world influence especially these publications have been cited in global health policies published by WHO. This study highlights the multidimensional impact of University of Jaffna research, demonstrating that Altmetrics complement traditional citations by capturing immediate societal and policy influence. The study recommends strengthening open access publishing and researcher engagement on social media while incorporating Altmetrics into institutional evaluations to enhance visibility and societal impact.

**Keywords:** *University of Jaffna, Altmetric Attention Score (AAS), Dimension Citation, Social Media Impact, Societal Impact*

## **A Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Approach to Library and Information Science Education in Sri Lanka: A Case Study**

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Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a vital teaching method that can be used to teach real-world problem solving to undergraduates. It is also considered as a strategic approach used in higher education to help them find answers to their problems. Since Library and Information Science (LIS) education focuses on real-world scenarios as a professional subject, this study identifies how PBL can be implemented in undergraduate-level LIS education in Sri Lanka. Hence, the main objectives were to identify the best practices of PBL applications in teaching and learning processes and assess the impact of identified practices on classroom performance. The study adopted qualitative research methodology, and employed a case study approach to provide a focused and contextualized understanding using multiple cases and multiple unit designs. The study selected 139 undergraduates (2022/2023 academic year) from the Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS), University of Kelaniya using purposive sampling method. Seven specific course units were chosen to represent the different academic levels and capture various teaching and learning contexts within the undergraduate syllabi. Syllabi, personal reflections, opinions and insights, participatory observation and interviews in the classroom were used to gather data. Descriptive analysis was used for objective 1, and 5 Likert scales were used to measure the impact on classroom performance in objective 2. Of 139, 128 participated in the study. According to the findings, best practices of the PBL applications were 10-minute student presentations, case study, literature survey activities, small group projects, role plays, poster presentations, debates, peer teaching, and assignments. Some activities were also mentioned in the LIS syllabi. And all these activities are supported to develop students' skills as indicated in the K-SAM model. When assessing the impact of classroom performance, 95% “strongly agreed” and 5% “agreed” that PBL had a greater impact on their performance than the traditional learning method. In conclusion, PBL was effectively applied to improve the performance of DLIS undergraduates in the selected courses and it helps to maintain constructive alignment in the teaching and learning process. Therefore it is recommended to use PBL in the LIS education in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** *Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Library and Information Science Education, Sri Lanka, Case Study, Active Learning Methods*

## **Utilization of Online Resources by Agricultural Scientists: Three Main Research Institutes in Sri Lanka's Plantation Sector**

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Agriculture is the backbone of the Sri Lankan economy, substantially contributing to the country's Gross National Product (GNP). Within the plantation sector, three main research institutes the Tea Research Institute, the Rubber Research Institute, and the Coconut Research Institute play a crucial role in conducting research and advancing agricultural productivity and sustainability. This study aimed to evaluate the patterns, purposes, and challenges associated with the utilization of online information resources by agricultural scientists affiliated with these institutions. The research involved a survey of 50 agricultural scientists from the three plantations research institutes. Findings revealed that Google Search Engine and Google Scholar are the most commonly used information sources since 72% of researchers relying on these platforms. In contrast, e-audio-visual resources were used by 16% of respondents. The usage of online databases varied notably, with Elsevier's Science Direct being preferred by 62% of scientists. Meanwhile, specialized databases such as BMJ (8%), ASCE (4%), and ASME (4%) were minimally used, likely due to their limited relevance to agricultural research. Challenges in accessing online information resources are gaps in digital literacy and training, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to essential databases. To address these issues, the study recommends implementing targeted digital literacy programs, increasing institutional funding for information access, expanding database subscriptions, and establishing dedicated support services to enhance the effective use of online resources by agricultural scientists.

**Keywords:** *Online Resources, Online Databases, Agricultural Scientists, Plantation Sector, Sri Lanka*

## **Awareness and Application of Research Ethics Among Final Year Students: With Special Reference to Faculty of Social Sciences**

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This study investigated the awareness and application of research ethics among final-year students of the faculty of social sciences at CINEC Campus. Research ethics are fundamental to maintaining integrity, credibility, and accountability in academic work, particularly in social sciences, where human subjects and sensitive data are often involved. A quantitative research design was adopted for this study to systematically collect and analyze numerical data. A structured questionnaire was administered to gather data from a purposive sample. The total population identified was 241 and according to Krejcie and Morgan table, the sample size determined was 148 of final-year undergraduate students within the faculty of social sciences. Key areas examined include students' understanding of core ethical principles such as informed consent, plagiarism, data protection, authorship, and ethical review procedures as well as how these principles are applied in their academic research. The findings revealed that while most of the students demonstrated moderate awareness of research ethics, however, a few gaps remain in their comprehensive understanding and consistent application, particularly in relation to formal ethical approval processes and responsible authorship practices. The results highlight the urgent need for structured ethical education and capacity building programs at the undergraduate level. Based on the findings, recommendations were made to integrate mandatory ethical training into the undergraduate curricula and to establish clear institutional guidelines and support mechanisms for ethical research conduct.

**Keywords:** *Research Ethics, Undergraduate Research, Social Sciences, Ethical Awareness, CINEC Campus*

## A Bibliographic Data Mining Framework to Recognize Research Excellence

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Sri Lankan university libraries are actively involved in evaluating the research performance of higher educational institutes, relying on publication data-driven approaches. The National Research Council (NRC) of Sri Lanka also evaluates publications and patents based on Scopus data without inviting individual applications for a scrutiny procedure. This study presents an initiative by the University Library and the Senate Research Committee (SRC) of the University of Moratuwa to introduce a multi-source data mining framework based on publication metrics to identify research excellence. Bibliometric data sources, such as Scopus, Scimago, Web of Science Core Collections, and Google's top 20 subcategory rankings, have been utilized to develop a semi-automated scoring system. A total of 639 publication records extracted from an affiliation search for the calendar year 2023 on the Scopus database, were subject to manual data mining. From the identified departmental - level publications, 383 individual - level publications were retrieved and the information was converted into text files. A Python script was used to map the Scimago Journal Rank, Web of Science Core Collection, and Top 20 Google Scholar metrics to categorize them according to pre-established evaluation criteria provided by the SRC. The datasets were cross-referenced with current quality indicators, including Scimago journal quartile (Q1–Q4), Google Scholar rankings, and Web of Science indexing (AHCI, SCIE, SSCI, ESCI). After adding binary flags and ranking categories, publications were assigned a code system based on quality metrics. Award categories were assigned to individuals based on their publication scores and consistency in quality, where the results were compiled into an MS Excel file for reporting. The analysis identified 17 recipients for the Vice-Chancellor's Award and 142 for Outstanding Research Awards, of which 62 were Distinctions. It was also found that 68% of the articles are in the Q1 quartile and 17% in the Q2 quartile; 49.78% included in SCIE and 31.72% in ESCI. A replicable, semi-automatic framework developed to assess the quality of research publications from large datasets can be applied at different scales to provide a comprehensive evaluation that surpasses any single-platform approach that is currently in use. This novel approach can be utilized to identify and reward the high-calibre research without requiring an individual application/submission process. It has potential for institutional research and cross-collaboration assessments intra-departments, inter-departments, inter-faculty, local and international), for resource allocation, and strategic planning beyond the research excellence.

**Keywords:** *Publication Evaluations, Bibliographic Information, Data Mining*

## Library Stock Verification at the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo: A Case Study

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Accurate stock verification is fundamental for effective collection management and service delivery in academic libraries, yet many institutions face inconsistencies in procedures and reporting. This case study examines the stock verification process at the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM), University of Colombo, undertaken in compliance with the University Grants Commission (UGC) Circular No. 01/2022. The primary objective was to assess whether the PGIM Library's verification practices align with national guidelines and to identify areas for improvement in accuracy, accountability, and resource management. A mixed-method verification approach was employed, combining digital tools such as the KOHA Library Management System and barcode scanners with manual cross-checking against accession registers. Sub-survey committees were established to evaluate specific categories, including lost, damaged, withdrawn, and transferred items, as well as special collections and e-resources. Data were systematically organised using an Excel-based balance sheet model aligned with UGC reporting requirements. The results revealed discrepancies such as missing and perished materials, cataloguing errors, and inconsistencies in accession numbering. Implementation of the UGC-recommended procedures improved record accuracy, enhanced transparency, and established a replicable reporting format. The study emphasised that structured verification not only strengthens accountability but also ensures optimal use of library resources for postgraduate trainees and medical professionals. It is recommended that academic libraries institutionalise periodic verification through Board of Survey Committees, adopt hybrid manual, digital approaches, and maintain standardised reporting frameworks. This will foster greater consistency across university libraries, safeguard valuable resources, and contribute to sustainable and user-centred collection management practices.

**Keywords:** *Library Stock Verification, Collection Management, Academic libraries, UGC Circulars, Resource Evaluation*

## **From Margins to Markets: Digital Inclusion and Economic Opportunities Among Youth with Special Reference to the St. Coombs Tea Estate of Sri Lanka**

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Tea estate communities in Sri Lanka have historically faced systemic marginalization, characterized by limited access to education, infrastructure, and employment opportunities. Within this context, youth experience multiple forms of exclusion and restricted upward mobility. Although digital inclusion is globally recognized as a catalyst for social and economic integration, there remains a limited understanding of how digitally connected youth in Sri Lanka's tea estates leverage technology for livelihood development. This study addresses this gap by examining how digital inclusion fosters economic opportunities among marginalized youth in one tea estate (St. Coombs tea estate) purposively selected as the research site. The study adopted a qualitative methodology to capture the depth and complexity of participants' perspectives. Within this framework, a phenomenological research design was employed to explore the lived experiences of youth (ages 15–29) with digital inclusion in the St. Coombs tea estate. Data were collected through 30 in-depth interviews, with 10 participants from this group contributing to photovoice. Data were collected using the snowball sampling technique, which enabled the identification and recruitment of participants through referrals from initial respondents. Gathered data were thematically analyzed using thick description techniques to capture the nuanced role of digital technologies in their everyday economic lives. Findings revealed that digital inclusion has enabled youth to launch home-based businesses, access formal jobs, and enhance self-employment through digital learning. Young women used platforms like Facebook to market cultural skills, while others leveraged YouTube for agricultural innovation and cost-saving techniques. Additionally, many youths engage in digital finance and online marketplaces, increasing financial independence. These practices generate income and shift social status and autonomy within their families and communities. The results underscore how digital access and informal digital learning are key enablers of grassroots economic transformation in excluded regions. Digital inclusion is reshaping economic trajectories in marginalized tea estate communities. It enables agency, innovation, and household contribution among youth. Policymakers and LIS professionals should promote community-based digital literacy initiatives and gender-sensitive interventions to ensure equitable access. Future research should explore gendered digital experiences, inter-regional comparisons, and the role of institutions like libraries and telecentres in fostering digital competencies.

**Keywords:** *Digital Inclusion, Economic Empowerment, Tea Estates, Youth, Marginalized Communities*

## **An Analysis of Information Services in Special Libraries of Sri Lanka: A Case Study of Selected Institutions**

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Special libraries are unique information repositories that serve specific needs and are service-oriented. The data of information services they offer to their users can be utilized to determine how effectively the library represents. Inconsistencies in service delivery have been brought about by a lack of collaboration with national-level library development institutions such as the National Library and Documentation Centre of Sri Lanka (NLDC) and the lack of standardized service models. This study aimed to identify and analyse the types of Information Services currently provided by special libraries in Sri Lanka and their relationship to the service quality. The study employed mixed research methods, while the multiple case study design was used as a research strategy. The population of this study consisted of 65 special libraries in Sri Lanka related to the government as well as private institutions and organizations. Using judgmental sampling, the sample of five libraries was selected to ensure representation from various special library types based on service relevance and institutional diversity. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, and the analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel. The study identified online database services (100%), Current Awareness Service (CAS) (100%), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) (100%), reference services (100%), literature review services (100%), referral services (100%), indexing services (80%), abstracting services (100%), and lending services (80%) as the services mostly provided by the special libraries. This suggests a strong commitment to core academic support but highlights a critical gap in multilingual information accessibility. It was found out that translation services are not effectively implemented in any of the libraries. The results highlight the necessity of interlibrary partnerships and enhanced collaboration with parent institutions in order to standardize and improve services. These findings highlighted the importance of collaborative networks and institutional integration in enhancing service reach and user engagement.

**Keywords:** *Special Libraries, Information Services, Standardization, Translation Services, Collaboration*

## Evaluating User Satisfaction with Digital Library Services: A Case Study of the Medical and Clinical Libraries at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

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Academic libraries have embraced electronic resources and digital platforms, particularly in higher education, to cope up with unprecedented challenges such as pandemic or economic crisis. As digital library services become essential in teaching, learning, and research, understanding user satisfaction is vital for ensuring their effectiveness and sustainability. Based on the DeLone and McLean Information Systems Success Model, this study examined user satisfaction with digital library services in a developing country context, addressing common challenges such as outdated resources, usability issues, and limited use of institutional repositories. The study aimed to: evaluate the influence of information quality, system quality, and service quality on overall user satisfaction; identify challenges affecting current digital library services; and propose strategies to enhance service delivery and user experience. A quantitative research design was adopted, using a structured questionnaire distributed to 250 undergraduate students and 30 healthcare professionals at the Medical and Clinical Libraries of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Stratified random sampling was used to draw fairly representative samples from both groups of users, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. Results revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between system quality and user satisfaction ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and service quality and user satisfaction ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Information quality also showed a moderate but significant relationship ( $r = 0.54$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) indicating that while content is valued, users are more influenced by system functionality and responsive support services. The findings highlight the need for libraries to enhance digital content relevance, optimize user interface design, and improve service responsiveness. It is recommended that libraries adopt user-centered strategies and integrate emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to meet developing academic needs. Future research is proposed to include longitudinal studies, comparisons between medical and non-medical faculties, and cross-country analyses to broaden applicability.

**Keywords:** *Digital Library Services, User Satisfaction, Information Quality, System Quality, Service Quality*

## **Role of University Library Services in Supporting Practical Subjects in Sri Lanka: A Case Study of Drama and Performing Arts at the University of Kelaniya**

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This study investigated the role of the University of Kelaniya Library in supporting practical and performance-based subjects, with a particular focus on Drama and Performing Arts. Unlike purely theoretical fields, these disciplines demand more than access to textbooks or scholarly articles. Students and lecturers working in performance-based areas need a wider range of resources, including play scripts, stage design materials, video recordings, reviews, and digital archives, to effectively teach, learn, and practice their craft. Recognizing these requirements, this research aims to assess how far the university library meets such unique needs and how its services could be improved. The study adopted a qualitative approach where data were collected using (a) semi-structured interviews with lecturers, students, and library staff; (b) direct observations of how students use available library facilities; and (c) an analysis of key documents such as course outlines, catalogues, and service reports. This combination of methods made it possible to capture not only the services that exist but also how effectively they are used and perceived. The data were then analyzed thematically, allowing for patterns and challenges to emerge clearly. Findings show that the library does provide useful resources such as textbooks, general reference materials, and some multimedia items. However, there are significant gaps in the availability of updated and subject-specific collections for the performing arts. There is a shortage of latest video recordings, performance reviews, and stage-related materials. The study also highlights the limited digital access to global performance resources and notes that staff members often lack specialized training in arts-related support services. Despite these shortcomings, students and lecturers value the library as a key academic partner and acknowledge its potential to contribute more actively to creative learning. The research concludes that, to remain relevant and effective, the University of Kelaniya Library must strengthen its support for practical subjects. Recommendations include expanding digital and multimedia collections, introducing targeted staff development in arts-related areas, and fostering closer collaboration between the library and academic departments. By implementing these measures, university libraries in Sri Lanka can move beyond their traditional roles and establish themselves as vital partners in bridging the gap between theory and practice in higher education.

**Keywords:** *University Libraries, Drama and Performing Arts, Practical Subjects, Library Support Services, Higher Education*

## Bibliometric Analysis of Conversational AI and Chatbot Use in Academic and Public Libraries

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Recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing, particularly with generative AI tools like ChatGPT, demonstrate how AI can produce human-like responses, facilitate decision-making, and integrate seamlessly into everyday applications. This study aimed at exploring the research trend on conversational AI and chatbots in academic and public libraries, through bibliometric analysis of Scopus-indexed publications from 2015 to August 2025. After refinement and filtering, 39 relevant documents were identified, including journal articles, conference papers, reviews, and book chapters. Collectively, the documents have accumulated 717 citations and an average of 18.4 citations per document. Data analysis was conducted using the Bibliometrix R package and its extension, Biblioshiny. Findings showed a sharp growth in publications after 2018. India leads in output, while smaller countries such as Qatar and Singapore achieve high citation impact. The field is strongly interdisciplinary, linking library science with computer science and natural language processing. Keyword and thematic mapping highlight *chatbots*, *artificial intelligence*, *natural language processing*, and *academic libraries* as core themes, with AI appearing as a mature topic and chatbots as an evolving research front. Overall, the study suggests that conversational AI in libraries is expanding but remains in its early stages. By charting current trends, the study points to the critical need for sustained, collaborative, and comparative research to shape the next generation of conversational AI in academic and public libraries. Future research should prioritize consistent keyword usage, clearly distinguish library-focused studies from broader chatbot research, and strengthen collaboration between high-output and high-impact countries. Comparative investigations between academic and public libraries are also recommended to better understand differences in user interaction and knowledge navigation.

**Keywords:** *Conversational AI, Chatbots, Libraries, Bibliometric Analysis, Artificial Intelligence, Natural Language Processing*

## From Gatekeepers to Guides: Reimagining the Librarian's Role in the Age of Misinformation

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The rapid expansion of the digital environment has reshaped how information is created, shared, and consumed, but it has also triggered a critical crisis characterized by the spread of misinformation and disinformation. The circulation of fabricated news, conspiracy theories, and algorithm-amplified distortions has diminished public confidence in democratic institutions, widened social divisions, and undermined collective decision-making. This paper explored the changing functions of librarians in responding to these challenges. Drawing on concepts from information disorder, media literacy, and civic trust, and it is argued that librarians must transform from playing their traditional role as custodians of knowledge to proactive facilitators who guide information communities through complex digital landscapes. The discussion of this study reviewed the historical values of librarianship, examined the psychological dynamics of information consumption, and outlined practical measures libraries can employ, such as literacy initiatives, collaborations with fact-checking networks, and the careful use of artificial intelligence. Findings also enlightened on the ethical issues librarians face, particularly the tension between professional neutrality and civic responsibility. The study concludes with recommendations for policy reform, professional development, and global cooperation, positioning libraries as vital institutions for protecting truth and democratic resilience in the twenty-first century.

**Keywords:** *Misinformation, Disinformation, Librarianship, Information Literacy, AI, Information Ethics*

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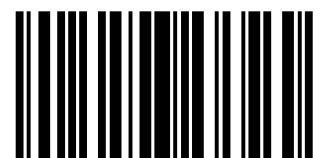
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