

RARE

USAGE OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES
PROVIDED BY REGIONAL CENTRE LIBRARIES OF THE
OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA: WITH SPECIAL
EMPHASIS ON DISTANCE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the usage of library and information services provided by regional centre libraries of the Open University of Sri Lanka. It attempts to find out how academic users (distant learners) feel about the library staff/library services, what are their actual needs, expectations and library usage of the library. An extensive review of related and relevant literature that includes previous and present studies was also involved.

The population studied was drawn from students (1550) of three selected Regional Centre Libraries of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). Data were collected using self administered questionnaires and interviews with Assistant Librarians of three RC libraries. Microsoft excel 2007 was used to record and analyze the data collected through the questionnaires. As for the interviews, important and relevant comments and suggestions were collated and incorporated in the study.

The study concludes that users are not really getting the full benefit of the library services and some of the services are under-utilized. The major causes or reasons for this problem are the lack of comprehensiveness of the library collection, insufficient space for reading area, non availability of adequate training for users to use the services and the lack of computers and internet facilities in the library.

The study found that users are satisfied with overall library resources, services and facilities available. But it is further found that library resources and services are not being fully utilized by users. Based on these findings, it is recommended that a comprehensive information literacy program should be conducted to promote awareness and use of electronic information resources. It is also recommended that the library should order multiple copies of reading material extend the lending period for a period of one month in Rcs. Increase the no of computers for users and provide online access facilities.

Key word: Distance learning, Academic library, Library services, Library facilities, Library usage