Initiating the "Research Commons" in University Libraries in Sri Lanka: Exploratory Review

Gunawardhana, D.N.T. and Weerasooriya, W. A.

gunawardana.nayani@gmail.com, sooria29@yahoo.com

Abstract

Enhancing opportunities for research works is a premier objective in universities due to researches contribute in many ways for knowledge creation. Serve and meet the needs of researchers are considered as a foremost aim of university libraries. Newly introduced non-traditional resources and services create many openings for researchers. University libraries have being focusing more strongly on learner-centered and researcher-centered services today. Information commons, research commons, human library projects, counseling and consultation services, digital resource collections are new services in libraries. Research Commons is a very important concept among them and it has become "one-stop shopping" model for researchers in foreign universities. There is no Research Commons experience yet in Sri Lanka and it need to be developed in all libraries. Research Commons is a "knowledge-creation space" than "learning space". Reviewed research articles, books, and web sites relevant to this concept were facilitated to conduct this study very much. Objective of this research work is to introduce the concept of "Research Commons" and discuss the approaches to initiate Research Commons in university libraries in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Reader services, Research commons, Research centered services, Information services, University libraries

Introduction

Research Commons is a space that arranges a collaborative environment for researchers (students, lecturers, other parties). They can discuss research works, share their knowledge, present their output, and get support from other researchers. Research Commons is a very important place that supports to research works from proposal writing to publishing research output. Searching, writing, data collecting, data analyzing, connecting, presenting, publishing, funding and other services are available under one roof here. Workshops and Seminars, Research Cafe, Research Consultations, Citation Search Service, Help Desk for computing and reservation needs, Workstations with computers, Conference meeting rooms with collaborative workstations, Printing and scanning services, Information consultation by appointment are some of the services that could be provided through Research Commons. Academic libraries provide many services that enhance the research and publications of their organization (staff and students). These services are located in different divisions and places and not under one umbrella. Research units of the universities provide some services and they