

## Internet usage in Sri Lankan special libraries

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### ABSTRACT

In the ICT- dominant modern world, Internet is playing a very pivotal role in speedy exchange of information. As a result, modern Sri Lankan libraries are using this facility to provide effective and efficient services to the user. This study discusses about the Internet usage within the Sri Lankan Special library sector.

Three main objectives of this research are identified as; 1) Usage of internet in Sri Lankan Special libraries, 2) Identify the difficulties encountered in the usage, 3). To explore the suggestions to overcome those difficulties. Twelve Sri Lankan special libraries selected as the sample out of 76 Special Libraries, and a questionnaire used as the method of data collection.

The present study indicates that a majority of users utilize the internet as their main source of acquiring information. The result revealed that 75% of the libraries were using Internet facility within the libraries. Accordingly, 66.6% and 8.3% respectively mentioned that their Internet access methods were through the parent organization terminals and external Internet service provider (ISP). Further, the results revealed that 16% and 58.3% used ADSL connectivity and Leased Line connectivity respectively to obtain internet access. E-mail (75%) and World Wide Web (75%) identified as a high level internet access tools. 66.6% of the special libraries used internet facility to search Online Public Access Catalogue (OPACs) as well as e-mail (50%) and bibliographic search (50%). The study also shows that Google is the most preferred Search Engine with 91.6 % responses. E-Book/e-Journals (91.6%), e-News (91.6%) were the most visited websites as compared to others. Library staff can access the internet free of charge.

Several decisive problems pertaining to the usage of internet were lack of knowledge about internet usage, lack of internet accessing facilities, lack of uninterrupted power supply, limited number of computers and slow internet downloading speed .To overcome these issues, it is necessary to gain sufficient knowledge about internet, should have extended internet facility within the library, should have adequate number of computers with internet connection.

**Keywords:** Special Libraries, Internet Usage, Online Public Access Catalogue, Search Engines