

Digitization of resources in Sri Lankan libraries

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When documents are used many times for references as well as for duplication, they tend to deteriorate fast due to wear and tear. So that microfilming method is used to preserve these materials. But retrieving of information from microforms create difficulties.

To overcome such problems and facilitate retrieval of information and also obtain copies, one of the best methods is digitization. Digital information gives us worry-free preservation, it is asserted, because an exact copy of a file can be made with the click of a button. Information in digital format can be retrieved quickly and easily through PCs, Lap tops, Palm tops, and wireless reading devices.

Today many government institutes and private institutes in the world are involving in digitizing their document with the purpose of providing ease of access and preservation as well. Digitization is being done in Sri Lanka government institute and private institute also. Meanwhile the digitization has been attempted in library materials also.

The objective of the study was to find out that to which extent digitization is used for library resources preservation and accessibility in the Sri Lanka library system

Sri Lanka National Library and Documentation Centre, Department of National Archives, Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka National Museum, Colombo Public Library, American Centre, British Council and Sri Lanka University Libraries were selected for the research according to judgment sampling.

Data for this study was gathered from secondary sources of each institute. Primary data was collected by the two structured questionnaires and interviewing.

Data analysis has been done by using cross tabulation methods. Analyses were represented by tables and graphs.

It was found that the digitization of library resources for preservation and accessibility can be seen to some extent in the above selected libraries. Lack of qualified personnel, lack of sufficient equipment, and high cost of the capture capability are affected to some institutes. Restriction of the current copyright law to digital copies is also an issue for some institutes. Possibility to erasure of information, upgrading of software in the future and rapid change in hardware and software configuration are also affected issues in the digitization.

Key words: Digitization, Preservation, Library resources, Accessibility, Retrieval

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