

**Influence and Impact of Internet on the Learning Behavior upon the Conventional
University Library system: Study Conducted Using OUSL
Library Virtual Resource Centre**

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ABSTRACT

Introduction

The Internet now spreads dynamically around the world by giving distinctive advantages to human beings. The technological reduces the barrier between the knowledge domain and knowledge users by providing superhighway.

Furthermore, Internet is a superhighway for many services as Internet telephone, File transferring, Chat, World Wide Web etc. The World Wide Web or simply web is one of the most prominent services used by layman. Owing to the popularity of the service, people refer the Web services as Internet. The Web has its own unique characteristics of attractiveness, hyperlink features and the freedom.

Today, Web is evolving aggressively, the easiest, and cheapest knowledge – harvesting platform and it attracts more to Internet for knowledge harvesting than for the conventional libraries.

Problems and Issues:

The Library of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is supposed to be an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) university supporting distance and remote users. However, it was observed that the library functions in traditional norms rather than a distributed library system, hindering the remote users coming into information arena in distance mode. It was observed that the modern learner is always preferred to use the information for their study purposes using remote Web based access. In this paper, it is expected to discuss the issues and challenges created by the Web and to evaluate the involvement / effectiveness of Web for academic activities of distance learners.

Following research question were considered in the study:

- With dynamic change of the technology, how the users can adopt the Web conveniently?
- Is the learners concern the Information Reliability of the Web?
- Why the ODL users prefer Internet content than the conventional library resources?
- Is learner concern the copying right of the material?
- Is proficiency of English is essential for refer the extract resource form the Web?

Objectives

Objective of the study is to explore influence and impact of Internet to ODL Learning behavior upon the Conventional University Library System.

Study Frame

For the study, 150 library users were used as survey sample. The samples a stratified in nature and represent different strata of the university (The Open University of Sri Lanka) population as undergraduate students, postgraduate students and academic staff. Other than the survey, 20 users were interviewed and the observed behavior of 20 library users for the syudy.

Data Collection Methods

Data Collected by sample survey, observation and the interviewing of the library users.

Findings

According to the study conducted, significant numbers of undergraduates' students, use Web as main tool for studying and the strongly believe reliability of the site content.

However, in the case of postgraduates students prefer the conventional library than Web. They use the Web as supplementary tool for knowledge harvesting and not relies of the information provide by the Web. However, they belive the web is good entry point for the knowledge.

Significant numbers of users strongly agreed providing Internet facilities in the library. They preferred using the computers for Internet in a scattered layout in open space rather using in the computer lab identified for internet access. It was also observed that higher percentage of users access Internet in the library for study purposes and to use the e mail. Most of the users have the computer knowledge, Web searching and using OUSL E – Learning system with out any support from the library staff.