

**IMPORTANCE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY BUILDINGS AND  
INTERIOR ARRANGEMENT FOR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE  
USER SERVICES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

**K.R.N. Harshani**

*Library, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihinthale,  
Sri Lanka  
wimukasi@yahoo.com*

The university library users can be categorized as undergraduates, post-graduate and research scholars. They are expected to be engaged in academic research work in their quest for universal knowledge and the dissemination of knowledge. The library building is an important part and a concern of the library as it provides services from generation to generation. The construction of a library has to be done professionally in consultation with professionally qualified architects having a wide knowledge and experience, because it completely differs from building a house to satisfy the needs of a family. As such, there are main features to be considered seriously in setting up a library building. The university libraries of Peradeniya, Colombo, Kelaniya, Sri Jayawardenepura and Moratuwa established in 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, respectively were selected for the study. Only the undergraduate (first year and final year) students were selected as respondents. They were given the opportunity to comment freely on positive as well as negative features observed in their interaction with the library.

The specific objectives were to study the favourable factors that contribute towards the design and completion of university library buildings in Sri Lanka and, to explore the steps that can be used for achieving the efficient and effective user services for the university library system in Sri Lanka. This study will help the libraries concerned to improve the effectiveness of their services and provide guidance for the university libraries and other libraries. It is also expected to provide some form of knowledge to professional librarians as well as architects who are interested in the construction of libraries. Survey research methodology was used to conduct this study. Primary data were collected through observation, questionnaires, interviews and field visits. The library plans, floor plans and annual reports were used to obtain secondary data.