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LIBRARY NEWS

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January - March 2000

**Special volume to commemorate 10th anniversary
of the
*National Library and Documentation Centre***



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of the
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(1990 - 2000)**



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Library News

The Newsletter of the National Library and Documentation Services Board

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Editorial

This special issue of Library News is published to commemorate the 10th anniversary (1990-2000) of the National Library and Documentation Centre (NLDC), the institution popularly known as the National Library of Sri Lanka. A number of educational and cultural events have been planned in this connection including the publishing of a few other publications.

The majority of the articles in the issue were meant for inclusion in a special publication which was to be issued in 1995 on the 25th anniversary of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), the parent organisation of the National Library. This attempt was not a success. Though we were in a position to bring out the publication after a considerable delay, the consensus of opinion was that the publication should now coincide with the 10th anniversary of the NLDC, which is considered another significant event in the country's library annals.

We were fortunate to receive contributions from leading professionals in the library and information field including the Director of the National Library of India for the publication. I thank each one of them for their contribution and the patience shown in awaiting the publication of the articles. As a result of the delay, information and statistics appearing in some articles are not current, but in general it has no effect on the professional standards of the articles. This will no doubt be an important addition to the country's growing literature in the library field. The editorial advisory committee is reluctantly compelled to leave out some valuable contributions to keep the size of the publication at the level suitable for a periodical. They will be published in the forthcoming issues of Library News with the consent of the respective authors.

Ms C Nethsinghe and Ms V B De Silva, two stalwarts in Sri Lanka's library field assisted us in the editorial work with help from Ms H N J Fernando, Deputy Director and Ms C D Daniel, Assistant Librarian from our own staff. Ms G M Geetha Ranjani did the type setting of the issue. Mr Nelson Peiris and staff of the Publication Division helped in the printing and publishing of the issue. I thank all of them.

Uditha Alahakoon
Editor

April 2000

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The First Decade of the National Library of Sri Lanka

M.S.U.Amarasiri
Director General

National Library and Documentation Centre

The inauguration of the National Library of Sri Lanka on 27 April 1990 marked an important juncture in the fields of education, culture and library and information science in Sri Lanka. This new institution was established under the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board (SLNLSB).

The main responsibilities of the SLNLSB, established in 1970, were to advise and assist in the development of library services in Sri Lanka and to establish the National Library of Sri Lanka as the apex library in the country. Compared to most countries in the Asian region Sri Lanka was a late starter in establishing the National Library. The UNESCO sponsored National Library expert meeting held in Colombo in 1967 and its recommendations played an important part in establishing the SLNLSB and the National Library.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BUILDING

After the National Library Services Board was formed in 1970 it initiated work on establishing the National Library as a priority project. The SLNLSB was fortunate to secure a suitable land in the old race-course premises facing Independence Avenue in the heart of Colombo to construct the National Library. Besides providing 2½ acres of prime land the Government with assistance from UNESCO also obtained the services of an architect for building design. The architect, Professor Michael Brawne from the University of Bath, United Kingdom designed the National Library building with assistance from architects attached to the Buildings Department. The building was completed in 1988 at a cost of Rs55 million. It comprises of five floors with a floor area of 125,000 square feet, which is sufficient for the National Library and for office space for the SLNLSB. The

National Library building has facilities to store 500,000 books and other library items and can be expanded up to 1,000,000 items if required by using the office space of the SLNLSB. It also has three reading rooms with the capacity to seat 320 readers, a main lobby cum exhibition area, a medium sized auditorium for 125 people, a seminar room and a cafeteria.

During the last 10-year period a number of shortcomings in building design were detected of which it has been possible to rectify some of them. The moat surrounding the building was conceived to beautify the building as well as to be a security measure. However, as unforeseen cracks appeared on the long walls thereby adversely affecting water retention it has not been possible to use it for the purposes meant. On advice of consultant it has now been decided to fill it and extend the garden area up to the outer walls of the building. The security aspect of the National Library has not been adequately dealt with during the design stage. To meet standard security requirements subsequently partitioning work had to be done both in the core area where books are stored and the reading and staff areas. The main reading rooms are hidden from public view and this has deprived the library of free publicity. Since the library collection is securely deposited in the middle core area of the building, away from readers the reading rooms are the only major signs of the library.

The National Library Bookshop and extra store facilities were added to the original building during the last decade. The seminar room was redesigned to give it a modern look. Undoubtedly the auditorium was the most heavily used facility and a new auditorium with a seating capacity for 250 persons has been planned.

NATIONAL LIBRARY LEGISLATION

The Ceylon National Library Services Board Act No. 17 of 1970 provided the legal base for the National Library at its initial period. It was apparent from the beginning that this was inadequate and a new set of legislation was an urgent requirement for the proper functioning of the new National Library. A special committee comprising senior librarians, representatives from the Ministries of Public Administration and Education and Higher Education and Department of Legal Draftsman was appointed to prepare the draft legislation for this purpose. The services of an international consultant were also obtained for this purpose. Mr. Stephen Parker, a well-known library consultant and the present Director General of FID prepared the draft legislation with the assistance of the committee. In this process the committee studied national library legislation of a number of countries and the evolution of national library services in Sri Lanka during the past few decades. Hon Dr Richard Pathirana, Minister of Education and Higher Education submitted the draft legislation to Parliament in 1997 and it was approved in 1998 as the National Library and Documentation Services Board Act No. 51 of 1998.

The enacting of the new library legislation, a complex task, can be considered one of the most important achievements of the National Library in its first decade of existence. The new legislation basically provides a strong foundation for the National Library. The titles of the Board and the library have been changed to reflect the functions and the responsibilities of the institutions. While providing the legal base for the National Library to exist as a separate entity, the Act also modified the role of the parent body to suit present day requirements.

THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Most of the old and well established national libraries house the main national collection of their respective countries. Since the National Library is a recent creation in Sri Lanka, the main national library collections are scattered in a number of older libraries such as the National Museum Library and the National Archives. The Newspaper Ordinance (1839) and the Printers' and Publishers' Ordinance (1885) were revised in 1976 to enable the National Library to receive a copy of all publications published in the country. As a result of this facility and the aggressive policy for acquisition followed by the NLDL during

the last decade, it possesses a comprehensive modern Sri Lankan collection, a representative collection of old national publications and some excellent basic reference tools.

The National Library does not intend collecting old publications that are already deposited in a number of major libraries in the country. When attention became focussed on the deteriorating condition of the National Museum Library collection in mid 1990s the National Library offered to house a part of this collection with the intention of protecting this national treasure for the benefit of the future generations. Sadly the then museum authorities did not accept this offer and they retained the collection. In hindsight this was also a blessing in disguise for the new National Library. Had it taken over even a part of the massive museum library collection, it would have been necessary to spend its entire meager resources – both financial and human – on the restoration of an already severely damaged collection. While collecting comprehensive modern Sri Lankan collections and occasional rare materials the National Library is more than happy to let others be the custodians of national collections which is undoubtedly an herculean task. The National Library will actively engage in bibliographic control and documentation activities and expect those who have the custody of national collections to do their utmost to protect the collections.

A number of organisations and individuals volunteered to deposit their important collections in the National Library after inspecting its facilities and understanding its mission. The Government Printing Department donated its entire gazette collection (from inception (1881) to date) which is an invaluable addition to the collections. The Department of External Resources donated copies of reports prepared by local and foreign consultants on almost all the development projects during the last few decades. The Drama Panel of the Arts Council has donated the drama manuscripts received by them during the past few years. Continuous offers are received from various sources for book donations but the National Library is not in a position to accept most of them as they do not comply with its acquisition policy.

About Rs6 million is spent annually to acquire library material for the National Library. This is augmented by publications received under the deposit system, publication assistance projects and standard numbering projects of the Board, gifts and exchanges.

When purchasing library material attention is paid to collect foreign publications pertaining to Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan rare books and basic reference material.

The National Library also houses a complete collection of newspapers published in the country since September 1976 and a micro film collection of certain newspapers prior to that. Other major collections of the National Library are periodicals, government publications, maps, library and information science, folklore, publications of a number of international organisations including the UNESCO, Asian Development Bank and personal collections of leading Sri Lankan academics. The complete collection of gazettes published from 1881 to date is one of the highlights of the collection. Personal collections of Martin Wickremasinghe, Professors D E Hettiarachchi, Tikiri Abeysinghe and M H Peter Silva, Drs E M Wijerama and P B Sannasgala, Theja Gunawardena, Gunapala Senadhira and a number of others increase the value of the national collection.

In 1999 an agreement was reached with universities and other higher educational institutes in the country through the University Grants Commission facilitating the deposit of Ph.D. and M.Phil thesis in the National Library. The National Library makes a payment of Rs5,000 for a thesis and already a large number of academics have deposited their theses in the library.

ORGANISATION

The National Library has six major divisions, namely, (i) Acquisition (ii) Reader Services (iii) National Bibliographic Services (iv) Documentation Centre (v) Conservation and Preservation and (vi) Information Technology.

ACQUISITION PROGRAMME

The main responsibility of the acquisition division is to acquire suitable material for the library and to develop the National Library collection. The acquisition policy is to obtain copies of all publications published in the country, material on Sri Lanka published in foreign countries, material published by Sri Lankans in foreign countries, basic reference materials and library and information science publications. Three copies each from every publication pertaining to Sri Lanka are purchased. As mentioned earlier copies of the majority of local publications are received under the legal deposit system free of charge.

Local publications are also acquired through various publication assistance projects of the NLDSB including the ISBN project. The Internet, national bibliographies of other countries, special and trade bibliographies and book lists are used as sources for identifying publications pertaining to Sri Lanka and publications of Sri Lankans in foreign countries. The library material exchange programme with a number of national libraries is also an important source of acquiring material.

READER SERVICES

The National Library is open from Tuesday to Saturday and all Sri Lankans are eligible to use its many services. Foreigners too are able to obtain short-term membership. No fee is levied for short-term membership of up to seven days. The annual membership fee is Rs100.00 and readers are also able to obtain membership on a pro-rata basis either for three months or six months. Library resources may be used only for reference purposes. Photocopying and Internet facilities are available at concessionary rates. Both the card catalogue and computerised catalogue are available for readers to assist them in their search for material. Readers are not allowed to go to the stack area, but are provided with the required material on request. Inter library lending facilities are available to obtain material from other libraries both in and outside the country. Facilities are available to use microfilm, microfiche, CD-ROMs, etc.

The information desk on the ground floor guides newcomers to the library and assists them to enroll either as temporary or permanent members. The three service counters located on the ground, first and second floors are the strategic centers of the Reader Services Division. The staff at these service counters assists users and complies with their numerous requests by providing the required library material and other library services. Each floor deals with different collections. The ground floor houses the basic reference collection, newspaper collection and periodical collection while the first floor has the main Sri Lankan collection, legal deposit collection, maps, thesis, palm leaves, IT material and Internet services and Government publications and the second floor has library and information science, UNESCO, gazette, folklore and report collections. Photocopy service is available at all three floors and the inter library lending requests are dealt with at the first floor counter.

The Reader Services Division is responsible for popularising the National Library among prospective users. A number of brochures explaining the resources and services of the library have been published and distributed. Regular advertisements are published in national newspapers and professional journals. Special lists giving details of reference tools of the library e.g. encyclopedias and dictionaries have been published. Content page service covering journals in social science, science and technology and library and Information science fields is a regular feature. Conducted tours of the National Library are arranged on request. Book exhibitions are held in the exhibition area of the library regularly and these have become very popular. The monthly National Library lecture series attracts people from different backgrounds to the library. A large number of National Library publications ranging from the national bibliography to the revised edition of Pujavaliya, a well known ancient Sri Lankan classic, has helped the National Library become one of the leading academic institutions in the country.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICES

The Sri Lanka National Bibliography (SLNB) published monthly contains details of recent Sri Lankan publications. The bibliographic details of each publication are given in the bibliography which also contains indices for author, title, series and subject. The SLNB because of its comprehensive coverage, scientific presentation and up to date nature is considered one of the best national bibliographies in the Asia and Oceania region. The SLNB started at the Department of National Archives in 1962 was transferred to the SLNLSB in 1976. The annual cumilation volume is also available.

The Periodical Article Index, a quarterly publication, provides detailed information on periodicals published in the country and bibliographic details of each article. This is a valuable source of information for researchers as the periodical articles contain recent research findings and current materials. The Periodical Article Index also carries details of articles on Sri Lanka and those authored by Sri Lankans in foreign journals to some extent.

The Retrospective National Bibliography covers those publications printed prior to the commencement of the National Bibliography in 1963. The first volume covering the period 1737 (the year

in which printing was introduced to the country) to 1884 was published in 1997 and the second volume covering the period 1885-1900 has just been published. Compilation of the retrospective national bibliography is a strenuous and challenging task as the publications are scattered in a number of institutions that are not easily accessible and some of the publications are deteriorated. However, the National Library is justifiably proud of being able to publish the retrospective national bibliography giving bibliographic details of the publications in the first 163-year period since the introduction of printing to the country. According to the strategic plan of the National Library the bibliography covering the rest of the period will be compiled within the next few years.

The Children's Bibliography, an annual publication, provides details of all children's books published in the country. There are also a number of other bibliographies covering various fields including Sinhalese novels of the last 100 years, translations of the past 50 years and various special topics.

DOCUMENTATION SERVICES

The compilation of the National Union Catalogue is a unique project providing bibliographic details of the holdings of 54 major libraries in Sri Lanka. Users of the National Library can check for required library material from the union catalogue and obtain them to the National Library for reference purposes through inter library loan facilities.

Compilation of the newspaper article index and conference index enables researchers to source required material in an easy manner. Researchers and librarians have continuously praised these indexing projects as being very useful tools for information retrieval. The directories of government publications, social scientists in Sri Lanka, libraries and documentation centres and publishers are also published and regularly updated by the National Library.

The National Library is the national centre for International Standard Book Number (ISBN), International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and International Standard Music Number (ISMN) projects. These numbers are provided to respective publishers free of charge and it helps the publications and the authors to have an international recognition. The standard numbering projects and other publication assistance projects of the NLDSB make it the centre

of publishing activities in the country. This as mentioned earlier not only facilitates the collection of national literature for the National Library but also improves its image among the academic community. Recently the activities of these centres were extended beyond the shores of Sri Lanka. The National Library has been requested to assist Bhutan to establish its ISBN centre and the necessary training and guidelines were provided to them recently.

The Documentation Division also coordinates activities of library networks in the library and information field in Sri Lanka. Presently a number of library networks are in operation in the fields of science and technology, agriculture, health, education, culture and social science. These networks are organised by various institutions in the respective fields which act as the nodule centre of the network. While coordinating the activities the National Library also assists the networks whenever necessary. It also publishes the Natnet Lanka newsletter that carries news on new projects, services and other information pertaining to the networks.

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

Conservation of books and other library material is one of the major challenges faced by librarians today. The problem is aggravated in tropical countries like Sri Lanka where basic problems of inferior quality of printing paper, polluted air, dust and other micro organism, lack of suitable accommodation and trained staff exist. The Conservation Division of the National Library takes various steps to meet this challenge. The National Library collection is stored in an enclosed and air-conditioned area with humidity control facilities and is cleaned and inspected regularly for dust and insects. Newly acquired old book collections are fumigated before they are deposited using both thymol and pospene fumigation methods. Books are bound at the bindery as a precautionary measure. De-acidification and paper restoring facilities are also available at the conservation centre. A part of the newspaper collection has been microfilmed. As a result the National Library collection has been receiving praises from both local and international visitors. A few years ago the head of the USIS office in New Delhi who was a regular visitor to Sri Lanka and other South Asian countries, delivering a National Library lecture said that according to his experience the

National Library collection of Sri Lanka is the best kept collection in the whole South Asian region. The National Library assists other libraries in the country by providing technical assistance, advice, training and material in the conservation field.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES

The Information Technology Division of the National Library is extremely active in a number of projects in the information technology field. It helps to maintain and regularly update the National Library web site (<http://www.slt.lk/nlib>). It also took the initiative to automate a number of activities in the National Library and presently the entire National Library catalogue and part of the union catalogue are computerised. All sections of the library are linked through a local area network (LAN). Regular training programmes are conducted for staff to improve IT awareness. Readers are able to seek assistance for surfing the Internet and using CD-ROMs and the computerised catalogue. The National Library is eagerly waiting to link up with other major libraries in the country and develop a comprehensive national online database. Unfortunately library automation has been very slow in Sri Lanka and even the major libraries make only halfhearted attempts to embrace the new technology.

CONSTRAINTS

Looking back at the last decade the National Library can be proud of its achievements. Undoubtedly it could have achieved more had there not been the few major obstacles it had to face. Recruitment and retention of senior professional staff became the biggest single problem faced by the National Library during the period. The recruitment standards and required qualifications for professional staff are similar to those applicable to university libraries. The special salary increase received by university employees had a negative effect on the National Library and the NLDSB. After prolonged discussions with the Government the NLDSB received a favourable salary revision compared to other state sector organisations. Since the university sector is considered as a special category the salary difference still remains. The scarcity of senior professionals in the field aggravates the situation. Despite several attempts to fill vacancies 60% of senior posts have been vacant during the period severely restricting its activities. The junior

professionals too after obtaining their professional qualifications are eager to look for greener pastures.

The National Library is an organisation without a special clientele unlike university, research or other type of libraries. Although the library is being used continuously usage has not been up to expectations. There seems to be a lack of interest in pursuing knowledge that is rather disturbing. For most people the National Library is still an unknown institution. This may be the main reason for under usage of its resources. The lack of pressure from users is one of the inhibitive factors that hamper the progress of the library.

plitates the collection of national literature for the National Library but also improves its image among the academic community. Recently the activities of these centres were extended beyond the shores of Sri Lanka. The National Library has been requested to assist Bhutan to establish its ISBN centre and the necessary training and guidelines were provided to them recently.

The slow development of other libraries in the major sectors has had a negative effect on the National Library. As mentioned earlier due to various reasons even main libraries are reluctant to modernise their services using IT. This severely hampers the efforts taken by the National Library to develop a national library network and national database with modern information retrieval facilities.

Favourable developments, which have a positive effect on modernising and improving library services, have been occurring outside the library field. During the last decade the Government has invested heavily on expanding and modernising telecommunication infrastructure in Sri Lanka. Both the Government and the private sector have launched a number of programmes in computer and information technology field through which the usage of IT has been widespread in many crucial sectors. Computers have been introduced to schools and computer education facilities are available in both public and private sector educational institutions. The Internet usage is becoming popular by day and Internet service providers are looking forward to a competitive and lucrative market. Education reforms presently being implemented emphasise on school libraries and also on inculcating information skills among school children. The market economy demands youth with high IT skills. Rural electrification schemes enable

new technology to reach all parts of the country.

These new trends will either force libraries to modernise or if librarians continue to resist or have an indifferent attitude, new facilities such as Internet will take over functions of libraries. Already there are signs that the world is ready to go forward without librarians. It is somewhat sad that this noble profession that was in the forefront in stressing the importance of information a few decades ago is on the verge of being neglected in the information age.

The intellectual climate in ancient Sri Lanka as seen through references to books and learning in the Mahavamsa

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ABSTRACT

Mahavamsa is the best known chronicle, that gives a continuous history of the island, from its beginnings in the 5th century B.C. up to the end of the Sinhala monarchy. The writer portrays the intellectual activities of the island, as seen in that chronicle, by alluding to the more significant references therein to writing, writing materials, scribes, the nature of the books and writings referred to, religion and religious factions, scholar monks and scholar monarchs, medical literature and other such works, pirivenas, libraries, archives and the incidences of destruction caused to written material up to the year 1815. An extract showing references to literary and other productions elsewhere, provides a glimpse of comparison to the type of literature that had been available, and the intellectual activities that had taken place in the late Chou period of China, yet another ancient civilization in Asia.

Sri Lanka has had a continuous and recorded history of around 2300 years. This chronicled history has been largely substantiated by other local and foreign evidence.¹ The earliest inscription in the island dates back to the 3rd century B.C.,² but the latest archaeological discoveries have pushed back the date of the script,³ even to an anterior date than the traditionally assigned 3rd century B.C.

Out of the chronicles which record the island's history the best known is the Mahavamsa (Mhv.)⁴ It is in several parts, written at various periods of time. Its first part was written in the 6th c.A.D., covering the period 5th c.B.C., i.e. from the arrival of Vijaya, to the 4th c. A.D. Since then, it has been continually updated and now it has been brought up to 1956.⁵ However, this article will examine the Mhv of the ancients, which deals with the period from its earliest beginnings to the end of the Sinhala monarchy, in 1815.

The Mhv chronicles the activities of the island's kings, with an emphasis on their religious works. The general evaluation of a king's reign is seen to be on the basis of whether it was beneficial or otherwise to the 'official' religion of the island, i.e. Theravada Buddhism.⁶ The references in the Mhv to intellectual activities, i. e. to books, learning and scholarship too is seen to have been made, mostly, in the context of this avowed objective.

Writing is a basis for intellectual activity. The Mhv first mentions writing in the island, when it refers to Vijaya (483-445 B.C.) sending a letter through his messengers, to the Pandu king in Madura⁷ and thereafter to his brother.⁸ However, there is no available evidence to substantiate, that writings of such nature were known in the island during that period; hence that reference has to be taken as a throw back of contemporary knowledge of a later period, to an anterior date.

The next reference to writing is in connection with the king at Kalyani, who discovers a secret letter,⁹ and then the sending of letters by Dutugamunu (101 -77 B.C.), in the course of this levying warrior¹⁰, and a letter sent by his ministers to him.¹¹ The reference which is seen thereafter, is of some importance, as it refers to a land - grant written on a Ketaka leaf, and given to a vihara by Vattagamani Abhaya (44, 29 - 17 B.C).¹² It is the first such reference in the Mhv. By that time regular writing had been known in the island for more than two centuries.

However, the reference to writing of the Tripitaka and the Atthakathas,¹³ also during the time of the same Vattagamani Abhaya is the most famous reference to writing in the Mhv. In this instance, the Mhv does not mention, where it was written, who wrote it, on what material it was written, or any other details of that very important activity. The details that are known have come from the 14th c. work known as the Nikaya Sangraha.¹⁴

Material used for early writing had differed, broadly speaking, between regions. It seems to have depended on what material had been readily available to the scribes, and also on the level of technological development of a particular country/ region or of a particular period of time. Thus it is seen, that in the 7th c. B.C., the Library of Ashurbanipal of Nineveh, had thousands of clay tablets, although mostly archiva in character.¹⁵ In an earlier period, the papyrus leaf¹⁶ was the commonly used material in the ancient civilizations of Egypt, and later in ancient Greece and for early Roman literature. Still later, the use of parchment¹⁷ is seen, evidencing the changes in the type of material used, and the technical knowledge that would have been available to prepare such writing material.

In the Far East, particularly in China, it is seen that bone and tortoise carapaces had been used for early writing.¹⁸ Tens of thousands of "bone- writings" are available from about the 12th c.B.C.¹⁹ and even the first use of paper²⁰ has been credited to them, as it had been in use during the period of the Hun dynasty (202-221 A.D)

As noted earlier, the first writing material referred to in the Mhv is to a Ketaka leaf. Geiger has identified it as *Pandanus odoratissimus*,²¹ i. e. Screw - pine or in Sinhala, *Vatakeyya*.

The extant writings of ancient Sri Lanka are

known today from stone inscriptions, and those on plates of gold and copper. Mhv refers to the writing of the *Tripitaka* on gold plates during the time of Sena II (851 - 885 A.D).²² the *Abhidhammapitaka* on tablets of gold during the reign of Kassapa V (913 - 923 A.D)²³ and *Suttantas* written on a gold book, commanded by Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747-1782 A.D).²⁴

However, from what is known today, the material in common use for writing, would have been palm - leaf or ola - leaf. It is of interest to note that, the Mhv does not specifically refer to the use of palm - leaf. The reference to the ' leaf', in Dhatusena (460 - 478 A.D) giving a leaf for Moggallana²⁵ could be taken to mean any one of the more pliable materials noted here, but one could not be certain what that material would have been. Two other references, namely the incident referred to, as "Many books known and famous they tore from their cord and strewed them hither and thither"²⁶ during the infamous period of rule by the invader Magha (1214 - 1235 A.D.), and the copying of 30,000 leaves²⁷ during the time of Viravikkama (1542 A.D.) could be understood as referring to palm - leaves. This inference would be possible, not only from the nature of the two references itself, but also because manuscripts, on such material dating back to the 13th c. are extant today.²⁸

The reference to a 'scribe' in connection with Dutthagamani's (101-77 B.C) *punna potthaka*,²⁹ and later on the reference to a daughter of a scribe³⁰ during the time of Mahasena (334 - 361 A.D.), may perhaps show that from the earliest times of Sri Lanka history, scribes would have had an identity of their own. Mahala Sen, during the time of Kassapa V (913 - 923 A.D.), is described as a Grand Scribe.³¹ A reference is seen during the time of Gajabahu (1137 - 1153 A.D.) to the 'instruction of boys in the art of writing'³². During the period of Bhuvanekabahu I (1273 - 1284 A.D.), is seen a reference to skillful scribes copying the Tripitaka and preserving them here and there,³³ scribes copying the Digha Nikaya in one day³⁴ is referred to during the time of Kirti, Sri Rajasinha (1747 - 1782 A.D.) and also his giving money to scribes, for copying books.³⁵ Thus, the knowledge we already have of the 'scribe' having an honourable place in the society of ancient Sri Lanka, is perhaps seen confirmed by an almost continuing sequence of references to them in the Mhv.

Most of the references to 'writing' and 'copying' of books in the Mhv, are in connection with the three - pitakas, suttas and other sacred texts, such as the Kesadhatuvamsa,³⁶ Dhammadhatu,³⁷ Abhidhamma pitaka,³⁸ Vinaya,³⁹ Saratthasangaha,⁴⁰ Digha - nikaya,⁴¹ Samyuttanikaya,⁴² books on monastic discipline⁴³ and the like. These references span the period from Vattamani Abhaya (29 - 17 B.C) to Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747 - 1782 A.D.) There is also a general reference to 'books copied'⁴⁴ during the time of Kassapa I (478 - 496 A.D.) and to the writing and distribution of the 550 Jatakas⁴⁵ during the reign of Parakramabahu IV (1302 - 1346 A.D.).

References to false doctrines,⁴⁶ schisms⁴⁷ and reforms of the order⁴⁸ are mentioned at almost regular intervals from the reign of Valagambahu (29 - 17 B.C) to that of Virabahu II (1405 - 1411 A.D.) Although such activity, as to be expected, would not have met with the approval of the hierarchy of the day, yet, they attest to the spirit of inquiry and independent thought, and to the existence of a vibrant intellectual society.

Similarly, the Mhv has many references to learning and learned theeros. Some such are the translating of the *Sihala* commentaries to Magadha,⁴⁹ those who had mastered the Abhidhamma,⁵⁰ scholars who had come from Jambudvipa,⁵¹ Brahmanas versed in the Vedas,⁵² Cola bhikkhus versed in the Tripitaka,⁵³ learned theeros,⁵⁴ learned Grand Thera Visuddhacarya,⁵⁵ spans a period of nearly 1400 years from Mahanama (409 - 431 A.D.) to Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747 - 1782 A.D.).

Apart from the royal patronage that had been given to all intellectual activities mentioned in the Mhv, there are also a number of kings who have been specifically mentioned for their learning and learned activities.

The kings so mentioned are, Buddhadasa (362 - 409 A.D.), physician and surgeon, who had made a summary of the essential contents of all medical text books,⁵⁶ Moggallana II (611 - 617 A.D.) who had poetic gifts,⁵⁷ Kassapa V (913 - 923 A.D.) who was deeply learned, and a reader of the Tripitaka and a readyspeaker,⁵⁸ Vijayabahu I (1059 - 1114 A.D.) a poet,⁵⁹ Gajabahu (1113 - 1153 A.D.), learned in the laws and who had lightning like intelligence,⁶⁰ and was versed in 'numerous books of the Victor (Buddha), in the works on politics as in that of Kotalla and others,

in grammar and poetry, together with the knowledge of vocabulary and ritual,'⁶¹ Parakramabahu I (1153 - 1186 A.D.) versed in Ayurveda,⁶² Vijayabahu II (1186 - 1187 A.D.) who composed in Magadha tongue, an excellent letter,⁶³ Parakramabahu II (1236 - 1271 A.D.), a very learned king, who was given the title, Kalikala Sahicca Sabannupandita⁶⁴ Parakramabahu IV (1302 - 1346 A.D.) who composed the Dalada Sirita,⁶⁵ Rajadhirajasinha (1780 - 1798 A.D.) who was acquainted with various literary works in Pali and Sanskrit.⁶⁶

In the light of the number of kings who had reigned in the island, the number of kings who had the distinction of being specifically mentioned for their learning in one field or the other, is seen to be rather limited. Yet, it is to be noted that it speaks of a literate tradition among kings, for a very long period of time in history.

As noted so far, the Mhv references to learning or other intellectual activities have been mostly in respect of religion and religious subjects.

Apart from religion, the subject of medicine has had an honoured place in the Mhv. In addition to the references already seen, the chronicle mentions the writing of a commentary to Bhesajjamanusa,⁶⁷ on the invitation of Narendrasinha (1707 - 1739 A.D.), which principal work itself, is said to have been composed during the time of Parakramabahu II (1236 - 1271 A.D.). There is also a further reference to Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747 - 1782 A.D.), appointing physicians well schooled in the medical art.⁶⁸

In the area of medicine, an 'elephant's physician'⁶⁹ is mentioned in connection with the wars of Dutugamunu (101 - 77 B.C.), and Buddhadasa (362 - 409 A.D.), is said to have appointed physicians, for elephants, horses and soldiers⁷⁰. Although the combination in the latter reference looks curious, perhaps it should be taken to mean the appointing of veterinary and medical personnel, as elephants, horses and men would have been the regular components forming the army. Again, in the same field of veterinary science, there is a reference to Parakramabahu I (1153 - 1186 A.D.) getting physicians to treat a crow, however unlikely the circumstance of the 'patient's arrival would seem to be.⁷¹

Of other subjects mentioned, there are two references to legal works, namely, to as the law of the

nobility⁷² during the reign of Gajabahu (1137 - 1153 A.D.) and a text book on law⁷³ done during the reign of Queen Kalyanawathie (1202 - 1208 A.D.)

It is also interesting to see that references to parivenas abound in the Mhv. The parivena or pirivena has been associated from the very beginnings of Sri Lankan history with the imparting of knowledge to both bhikkhus and the laity. Although a temple and a pirivena would have existed in every village in ancient Sri Lanka - as it does almost to date what is recorded in the Mhv are obviously, only those pirivenas, that had received royal patronage or that of the nobility. The significance of that patronage of royalty and nobility given to the pirivena, would be the prestige, such patronage would have conferred on that institution known as the pirivena.

In the Mhv the references to pirivenas are seen from the time of Kanitthatissa (227 - 245 A.D.) to that of Parakramabahu VI (1410 - 1468 A.D.). Of such, the reference to Ganthakaravihara⁷⁴ where Buddhagosha had lived, and the reference to the restoration of its pirivena⁷⁵ during the reign of Kassapa V (913 - 923 A.D.); the reference to a pirivena where Dhatusena (460 - 478 A.D.) himself had dwelt;⁷⁶ Mahinda IV (956 - 972 A.D.) converting Sitthagama, where he had lived, to a pirivena;⁷⁷ Mana, during the time of Kitti (1041 A.D.) constructing Uttaromula pirivena, and setting 600 bhikkhus there;⁷⁸ the better known Vijayabahu pirivena,⁷⁹ of Vijayabahu III (1232 - 1236 A.D.) and the Sunetradevi pirivena⁸⁰ of Parakramabahu VI (1410 - 1468 A.D.), are significant references, spanning a period of nearly 1200 years. That viharas and pirivenas held a large number of bhikkhus, is also known from foreign sources,⁸¹ as well as through knowledge gleaned from archaeological finds⁸²: what has been shown here are some significant references in connection with royalty.

It would perhaps be a permissible conclusion, that this extensive network of pirivenas would have imparted the basic knowledge of reading and writing, as well as higher learning to those who desired such, in ancient Sri Lanka. The Sigiri verses of the populace, during the period 6th to the 10th c.⁸³ are eloquent testimony to the standard of literacy of the Sri Lankan population of that period; it was perhaps due to the basic learning they would have received in the pirivenas.

It is also rather curious, that although there are abundant references to pirivenas as well as to religious texts, references to 'libraries', are not seen as frequently as they should have occurred in the chronicle. In fact there is only one reference to 'libraries' in the Mhv, and that is during the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153 - 1186 A.D.). Therein, in the list of buildings that had been restored by Parakramabahu, are 'one hundred and twenty - eight houses for books.'⁸⁴ Even though it is a single reference, it is significant, in that, what Parakramabahu had done, was not to build libraries anew, but to restore, what was existing. Thus, it shows, that libraries were not something which were introduced during his period, but that they had been common buildings among the social/ religious structures of ancient Sri Lanka.

Apart from references to books, libraries and general learning, the Mhv has also references to the keeping of archives. Herein, it is to be noted that the Mhv itself is a result of the keeping of records of activities of the kings of the island.

However, the earliest reference to an item in the Royal Archives is the reference to the Punnapotthaka or Book of meritorious Deeds of Dutthagamani (101 - 77 B.C), which was summoned to be brought and read aloud at his death - bed⁸⁵. The next reference is during the reign of Udaya I (792 - 797 A.D.), to the writing of judgements and preserving them in the royal palace, 'to see that ancient charters are not annulled.'⁸⁶ The third reference, is seen in the account of Vijayabahu I (1059 - 1114 A.D.), where it is stated 'from the time, he was yuvaraja, the vice Prince, the best of men, had seventeen years chronicled in writing.'⁸⁷ Geiger had noted that it was an important passage, as it shows that annals were kept at court of the events during each year of the reign.'⁸⁸

That books and archives which had been written and maintained respectively in ancient Sri Lanka, would have met with destruction, over the centuries, is evident from the paucity of such material evident today.

Some evidence for that destruction is to be seen in the Mhv itself. It had noted the destruction of books during the time of Magha, as we had seen earlier.⁸⁹ Further on, Vijayabahu III (1232 - 1236 A.D.), grieving that, 'so many books that dealt with

the true doctrine had been destroyed by the alien foe' made arrangements to get them rewritten.⁹⁰ The only Sinhala king on record to have burned sacred books, is Rajasinha I (1581 - 1593 A.D.), and that is attributed to his adopting the religion of Siva.⁹¹ Vijayarajasinha (1739 - 1747 A.D.), is noted as having destroyed the books of the Parangis,⁹² i.e. the Portuguese.⁹³, and it is recorded that during the reign of Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747 - 1782 A.D.) the Dutch⁹⁴ had destroyed the sacred books in the city of Kandy.⁹⁵

The foregoing references to literature and learning gleaned from the chronicle, do not provide evidence to a varied repertoire of books, nor to the pursuit of learning in varied fields.

This lacunae is seen even stranger, in the light of still existing monuments of excellent architecture, stone-craft, inscriptions, irrigation works, the forming of huge reservoirs of water, and available written evidence in local and foreign sources, for administration, diplomacy, trade and commerce and in many fields of science and technology.⁹⁶

The known monuments and other remains seen in the island, would have required methodical and scientific/ technical applications, for which rules and regulations, norms and standards would have been a *sine quanon*. The extent to which such activities are seen to have been prevalent would have also necessitated developed reference facilities for regular study and research. But the paucity of even references to such scientific/ technical works remains an enigma.

This lack of available knowledge either in the form of extant works or as referred to in other works stands in contrast, for instance, to the varied Chinese literature, known to have been available during the Chou dynasty (1122 - 256 B.C)

It has been said that 'Even before the 770s B.C there was a certain amount of literature produced, but little besides some of the odes of the people and part of the annals of the royal house has survived. By the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. and on to the end of the Chou dynasty, there was a steady increase in writing :poetry historical anecdotes, belles - lettres, political theorizing, laws and works on music, mathematics, medicine, divination, agriculture, arboriculture and horticulture. Some of the greatest minds that China has ever produced wrote and taught and argued about the way to solve problems of their day.'⁹⁷

The latter part of the Chinese period referred to, coincides with the early period of Sri Lankan history. The material evidence for the excellence of the ancient period of the island's history, as noted earlier, is still to be seen, even after a lapse of more than two thousand years.

However, even over the years, Sri Lanka had seen no evidence, forthcoming, for the type of treatise, dissertation and the like, or on scientific inquiry or of recording natural phenomena,⁹⁸ as evidenced, for e.g. in China.

Thus when the references to books and learning in the Mhv, and the corpus of literature that is known by other means,⁹⁹ are taken together what is seen is an intellectual climate and a literature predominantly literary and religious in character. As far as the Mhv is concerned, this picture would be consistent with the attitudes and approach evident in its historiography.

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6. Mhv 38.50 : In concluding the chapter on Mahasena (334-362 A.D.), it said, "Thus did he gather to himself much merit and much guilt" See the last verse at the end of every chapter.

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| 7. Mhv 7.15 | 38. Mhv 52.50 |
| 8. Mhv 8.3 | 39. Mhv 54.35 |
| 9. Mhv 22.15 | 40. Mhv 97.57 |
| 10. Mhv 23.25, 33,35 | 41. Mhv 99.31 |
| 11. Mhv 24.16 | 42. Mhv 99.33 |
| 12. Mhv 33.50 | 43. Mhv 100.73 |
| 13. Mhv 33.101 | 44. Mhv 39.19 |
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p.1032. | 46. Mhv 36.41,111; 45.31,73.5, 80.75, 82.19, 98.19,
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| 16. EBVol. 17, p. 297 | 47. Mhv 33.95 -6, 38.76-7, 39.15, 41; 42.42, 51.52,
52.17, 52.21 |
| 17. EBVol. 17 p. 337 | 48. Mhv 44.17, 74-79; 52.44, 73.13-22, 78.6-27, 91.10-
11 |
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| 31. Mhv 52.33 | 62. Mhv 73. 44 |
| 32. Mhv 90.37-38 | 63. Mhv 80.6 |
| 33. Mhv 99.31 | 64. Mhv 82.3 |
| 34. Mhv 99.31 | 65. Mhv 90.78 |
| 35. Mhv 99.33-35 | 66. Mhv 101.12 |
| 36. Mhv 39.49 | 67. Mhv 97.58 |
| 37. Mhv 41.37,40 | 68. Mhv 99.177 |
| | 69. Mhv 25.34 |

70. Mhv 31.147
71. Mhv 73.50
72. Mhv 67.91
73. Mhv 80.41
74. Mhv 37.243
75. Mhv 52.57
76. Mhv 38.60
77. Mhv 54.6
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86. Mhv 49.21
87. Mhv 59.7
88. Mhv 59.7 f.n
89. see supra 25
90. Mhv 81.41
91. Mhv 93.10
92. Mhv 98.83
93. 1505/ 1515-1656/1658; mostly in the Western coastal belt of the island, and for sometime in the Jaffna peninsula.
94. 1640/1656-1796; first succeeded to the Portuguese held territory, and in 1766, acquired a league around the coast of the island; surrendered to the British in 1796
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Sri Lanka National Bibliography and the Bibliographical Tradition of Sri Lanka: a short history

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ABSTRACT

National bibliographies are primary in the national bibliographic control in any country and can therefore be considered as corner stones of Universal Bibliographic Control.

Sri Lanka is one of the first Asian countries to commence a national bibliography under the auspice of Unesco. Since its beginning in 1962, the Sri Lanka National Bibliography (SLNB) has passed a quarter of a century, growing parallel to the development of the publication industry of the country as well as to the international standards of bibliographic control.

The objective of the present paper is to record the history of the Sri Lanka National Bibliography (SLNB) and the bibliographical tradition of Sri Lanka in brief.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bibliographical tradition of Sri Lanka as well as the SLNB are hitherto unreported fields. Although Goonetilleke¹ has listed nearly all bibliographies, catalogues and indexes since the introduction of printing to the country up to 1978, being a bibliography his work does not provide enough details of these works except for short annotations regarding some of them. Wanasundera's recent bibliography adds nothing new to the listing of Goonetilleke except for the period after 1978. An unpublished paper of Goonetilleke³ has touched the subject. Although this paper describes certain bibliographical tools that are important landmarks in the bibliographical tradition of Sri Lanka, it is not a comprehensive study of the subject. It is only very recently a serious attempt has been made to trace the bibliographical tradition of Sri Lanka in detail.⁴

Literature on SLNB is also scarce. Apart from Senadeera's⁵ brief description of the early history of the SLNB and short evaluations of Gorman⁶ and Bell⁷

* This article is based on chapters 2 and 3 of the author's thesis "Sri Lanka National Bibliography: a historical and critical study", submitted to the University of New South Wales, Australia for the degree of Master of Librarianship in 1994

nothing has been written on the subject in English till 1994. To fulfil this lacuna in literature the present author has researched into the subject during the period 1992 - 1994⁸. In 1995 Punyawardana has made an addition to the subject.⁹

In Sinhalese there are only five short articles written by Weerasinghe¹⁰, Gunasekara¹¹, Punyawardana¹², de Silva¹³ and Amarasiri¹⁴ on SLNB. The first two are in complete attempts to record certain event relating to the SLNB. The first two are in complete attempts to record certain events relating to the SLNB and have little or no research value. While Punyawardana gives an account of the Retrospective National Bibliography Project, de Silva attempts to discuss in the SLNB in the wider context of world national bibliographies. So far only Amarasiri has attempted to record the history of the SLNB in some detail in Sinhala.

Related literature to the field is also rare. Piyadasa¹⁵ gives some valuable information on bibliographical tradition of the country, but his work is a study on history of libraries in Sri Lanka. Certain information can be picked up from de Silva's¹⁶ booklet on printing and publishing in Sri Lanka. Unpublished articles by Amarasiri¹⁷, Wimalaratne¹⁸,

Ralapanawa¹⁹, Senadeera²⁰ and Hemapala²¹, though they are not products of extensive research, are attempts at analysing the legal deposit legislation of the country.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL TRADITION OF SRI LANKA

Unlike many Third World countries Sri Lanka possesses a remarkably long library history. With the advent of Buddhism in the 3rd century B.C. there sprang up an intellectual tradition that has flourished for centuries under the influence of Buddhist monasteries in the major cities of the country. Indeed, learning and scholarship had been centred around these monasteries and temples²². Hence, they quite naturally became centres for the production and protection of books. Recorded evidence shows that there had been several monastic libraries since the 5th century A.D. Although no information is available on these libraries, except the fact of their existence, it can be assumed that they were involved in bibliographical activities such as the organization and listing of their collections²³.

Despite the fact that there were books, libraries and scholarship in ancient Sri Lanka, no information is available of the bibliographies, catalogues or book lists of this period. Presently available records allow the tracing of the bibliographical tradition of the country only after the seventeenth century.

Sri Lanka came under the influence of Western powers for the first time in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese arrived in 1505 and ruled over the maritime zone of the island until the Dutch captured it from them in 1658. Perhaps the "mindless destruction of places of worship sacred to other faiths" by the Portuguese²⁴ might have tolled the death knell of any local library tradition. It can be assumed, however, that there were libraries run by Portuguese missionaries for the purpose of religious instruction.

Sri Lanka entered the era of printing during the period of Dutch contact of the country. The first Sinhalese printed book from the Dutch Press in Colombo, entitled, "Singlesch Gebede (Book)" appeared in 1737.²⁵ This printing press was taken over by the British when they became the ruling power of the maritime zone of the country in 1796. Using this press the British started publication of the

"Government Gazette" in 1802.²⁶

It was at the dawn of the 19th century under the British occupation, that a library movement on modern lines began to grow in the island.²⁷

In addition to this library movement, the rise of nationalism in the latter half of the 19th century became a strong factor in the development of bibliographical activities in the country. The rise of nationalism was closely associated with the revival of Buddhism. The great five debates between 1865 and 1873 between the Buddhists and Christians, led to the establishment of a number of printing presses and the publication of a number of books, periodicals and newspapers in the Sinhalese language.²⁸

The revival of traditional oriental learning based on Buddhist monastic principles, with the establishment of two famous Buddhist monastic universities, the Vidyodaya Pirivena in 1874 and the Mahabodhi Pirivena in 1876, created "a vast band of oriental scholars, deeply learned in Sinhala, Pali and Sanskrit and dedicated to the traditional methods of learning"²⁹. As a result there was a public need to establish indigenous libraries to collect valuable manuscripts and books pertaining to oriental studies, for the use of scholars which the Colonial Government of the period could not neglect.³⁰ On the other hand the Colonial Government was urged by the British media to collect and preserve the literary heritage of the country.

Due to these reasons it became necessary to prepare catalogues/ bibliographies for the (1) library holdings (2) manuscripts and (3) the national imprint of the country.

A large number of printed library catalogues and bibliographies including bibliographies of national literature were in vogue before the commencement of the SLNB in 1962. They can be divided into the following categories: (1) Catalogues of academic/ research libraries (2) printed catalogues for manuscripts (3) Catalogues of national imprint (4) Subject bibliographies (5) Publishers' catalogues³¹.

This bibliographical tradition which began in the nineteenth century consisted of "Printed book catalogues" for printed books as well as for manuscripts. It encompassed the collections of the libraries of the country at the time as well as the overseas libraries such as the British Museum Library. Most importantly, a number of these

catalogues have dealt with the national imprint since 1885.

From an international perspective it has been observed that:

" the nineteenth century is an interesting period in the international history of cataloguing theory and practice, as an interim stage between the " every man his own cataloguer" approach to the highly standardized approach, on an international scale of cataloguing codes, classification schemes, and subject headings lists of the twentieth century. It was a time of change, from each librarian creating his own catalogue independent of activity elsewhere even within the same city, to the eventual acceptance on the necessity for cataloguing codes on a national and ultimately international scale."³²

In conformity with this universal trend, the nineteenth century printed catalogues of Sri Lanka seem to be individual and independent productions created by different compilers in different institutions. Hence uniformity in cataloguing practice relating to the elements in bibliographical description, name forms and arrangement of entries, can hardly be expected. Given the fact that there was little library cooperation or any professional forum to share common problems this appears to be a natural outcome. The absence of internationally accepted cataloguing codes can also be considered to be a contributing factor.

However, it is to be noted that some of the compilers of these early catalogues were not unaware of international developments in the field. For example, the catalogues of the Colombo Museum Library and the Royal Asiatic Society Library compiled by Gerard A. Joseph show the influence of Cutter's code. Similarly the catalogue of the Sinhalese Printed books in the Library of the British Museum by D.M. de Z. Wickremasinghe followed the rules laid down by the B.M. Code. In general it can be assumed that the compilers of all these catalogues were aware of the printed book catalogues in English libraries at that time. M. Willis, the compiler of the catalogue of the Library of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya explicitly stated that the general plan of her catalogue " is similar to that of

the Cambridge University Library."³³

The systematic recording of the national imprint started in 1885 as a part of the Government Gazette and appeared to be an official government duty quite separate from the existing bibliographical system of the time. At the beginning this listing in the Government Gazette did not follow even the least "helpful sequence", alphabetical arrangement, in its compilation. Yet, from the point of view of modern descriptive cataloguing, it contained more information than any other catalogue of the period. The descriptive elements regarding each publication were contained under fourteen headings. Translated versions of vernacular titles seem to have been the biggest problem area in the early issues of this catalogue. At a later period it evolved into a broad classified list and eventually, just prior to the commencement of the national bibliography, into a well arranged "alphabetico - classed catalogue."

This listing was based on legal deposit and it was compiled by the Department of Government Archives. In 1962, the same authority started the Sri Lanka National Bibliography on the same basis as a separate project. The Sri Lanka National Bibliography can therefore be considered as a natural extension of this long - standing tradition of listing.

It is apparent by the time of the commencement of the Sri Lanka National Bibliography, Sri Lanka had enjoyed a fairly long bibliographical tradition that could sustain a project of this nature. In addition to general "bibliographical awareness," Legal deposit, the most important prerequisite for a national bibliography, was also there. Only organization of the project and the training of personnel were necessary for this new development.

GENESIS OF THE SRI LANKA NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

The necessity of a national bibliography prepared according to modern bibliographical lines had been in the minds of the authorities responsible for the bibliographical control of the country since the beginning of the second half of this century. The long absence of a well arranged list of the national imprint, including sound recordings and films, was accepted by this time.³⁴

There were some factors that might have contributed to the "national bibliography awareness"

of the authorities.

Since the beginning of the 1940s, Sri Lanka, at that time Ceylon, had been undergoing a number of social, political and economic changes.

Among the social changes, those resulting from educational reforms of the period are of prime importance. The educational reforms caused an expansion of the school system and this led to the rapid growth of an educated population throughout the island. The first University of the country, The Ceylon University, was established in 1942. It is observed that "the educational reforms and political changes in the decade beginning from 1940 contributed to an advancement in education at all levels resulting in an enhanced need for access to information"³⁵

On the other hand, this period saw a significant increase in the number of printing presses throughout the island as well as the number of local imprints.³⁶ Furthermore it should be mentioned that the country became an independent state in 1948. It can be assumed that the general enthusiasm and the necessity of revival in various aspects of social and cultural fields, in a newly independent state, might have caused the authorities of the Department of Government Archives to consider the matter of the national bibliography as a national need.

The establishment of Unesco in 1946 has undoubtedly played an important role in the creation of the Sri Lanka National Bibliography (SLNB). Sri Lanka became a member state of Unesco in 1949 and a National Commission was set up in 1950 under the Ministry of Education. In November 1950, Unesco held its first Conference on Bibliographical Services, with the intention of "preparation for the national and international development of bibliographical services."³⁷ The Unesco/Library of Congress survey report on Bibliographical Services, prepared as a preliminary document to the Conference, was sent to Sri Lanka National Commission for comment. K. Sellaiah, the Librarian of Jaffna College, represented Sri Lanka at this conference.³⁸ The conference resolved "that all members should be asked to give early consideration to the publication of current national bibliographies and lists."³⁹ It is not unreasonable to think that this Unesco initiative influenced "national bibliography awareness" in Sri Lanka through the National Commission.

The commencement of British National Bibliography in 1950 might also have contributed to the enhancement of this awareness. As a British Colony that had recently become an independent state, Sri Lanka still tended to follow British models. Indeed, the administration report of the Government Archivist for 1954 strongly suggests this indirect influence.⁴⁰ It should be noted here that it was under the direction of A.J. Wells, the founding editor of the British National Bibliography, that the Sri Lanka National Bibliography commenced in 1962.

Continuous encouragement by Unesco during the 1950 seems to have been the immediate reason for the Commencement of the SLNB. A Sub Commission on National Bibliography, consisting of four members, was appointed by the Unesco National Commission in Sri Lanka in 1952. This Sub Commission in turn appointed a Sub Committee" to study the question fully from the point of view of scope and other implications.⁴¹ The National Commission was active on the problem and took the necessary steps to achieve the goals of Unesco on national bibliographies, according to the guidelines received by it from time to time.

The report of the "Sub Committee was studied by the Sub - Commission and they observed that Ceylon has been very slow in the extension of library facilities for its people and that they are glad of the opportunity of providing a report on what is considered an ancillary service to the provision of libraries."⁴²

The Sub - Commission, while supporting the idea of establishing a separate organization to prepare a comprehensive bibliography of books on or about the country irrespective of place of origin, recommended a cost saving method for the purpose. Their suggestion was to amalgamate the existing Quarterly Statement of Books in the Government Gazette with the details of books on Sri Lanka published abroad that appeared in the monthly new accession lists of the University of Ceylon Library.⁴³

According to the administration report of the Government Archivist for year 1954:

"Unesco has made a suggestion that a comprehensive bibliography of books on or affecting Ceylon, whether produced in the Island or abroad, should be put in hand. The scheme has been considered and a proposal put

forward that a separate bibliographical center should be set up to compile an annual catalogue of the decimal classification type giving details of all books, newspapers, periodicals and articles, whatever their language and place of printing, if they contain reference to Ceylon. This will entail additional funds for a new office and a larger staff, preferably located at Colombo and working in close touch with and partly dependent on the librarians of Ceylon University and the Colombo Museum. A detailed estimate of the cost of his cultural project is being worked out."⁴⁴

In the following years, the Government Archivist strived hard to achieve this goal, but with very little success due to financial restrictions. His report for the year 1956 states: "the need has been recognized for a national bibliography which would include in the first instance books printed in the island as well as those produced abroad which have any bearing on Ceylon; and in the second place periodicals and magazine articles, whatever their language or place printing with reference to Ceylon."⁴⁵

Indeed, the commendable goal of the Government Archivists seems to have been highly unrealistic and far too ambitious even today in the context of financial, technological and manpower capabilities available for the purpose in Sri Lanka. However, he pursued this unrealistic goal persistently. Thus in 1956 the librarian of the Government Archivist Department was sent abroad on a Unesco fellowship for special training in bibliographical activities. The intention of the Government Archivist was to set up a special bibliographical center in Colombo with a full time officer to work in collaboration with the Registrar of Books and Newspapers, the University Librarian, the Museum Library and the various public libraries in the country, in order to assemble bibliographical data to produce a comprehensive bibliography covering the collections preserved at all those places. He also prepared a detailed estimate of costs of the intended project.⁴⁶

In spite of the earnest and strong nature of his intention the Government Archivist was never able to achieve his goal. By 1958 he was still struggling to arrange and classify the existing Quarterly Statement of Books on "scientific" bibliographical lines again with very little success, due to lack of staff.⁴⁷

Growing awareness of and public interest in a national bibliography during the period is evident from the following statement of the Special Committee on Antiquities, which was comprised of non-library personnel. The Committee recommending the establishment of a national library stated:

"The registry of 'Books and Newspapers' should be separated from the Archives Department and run along with the National Library as a National Bibliography. The national bibliography will contain copies of all books and newspapers published in Ceylon. Suitable amendments will have to be introduced to the Printers and Publishers Ordinance and the Printing Presses Ordinance to bring this scheme into effect."⁴⁸

In 1960, an effort was made once again by A. Devaraja the Government Archivist to launch the national bibliography project. His administration report for the year states:

"Ceylon is one of the countries in the world which does not have a National Bibliography. At present a Quarterly Statement of Books printed in Ceylon seems to be what comes nearest to being a national bibliography. It has been suggested that the Office of the Registrar of Books and Newspapers should form the nucleus in setting up a national bibliography. In fact a great attempt was made in 1960, pursuing the scheme which has engaged the attention of the Department for the last six years, to get a national bibliography out. Although the proposal was accepted by the Ministry a postponement was advised owing to financial stringency.

However, it is proposed to execute this scheme as early as possible and provide the public with a national bibliography, and to precede it with a monthly publication. The latter is proposed to contain all books and pamphlets published during the particular month, with perhaps an account of each publication."⁴⁹

In 1961 a further step was taken towards the commencement of the national bibliography. The administration report of the Government Archivist for 1960 - 61 records that.

"Provision has been made in the current estimates for additional staff to man the proposed National Bibliography Branch. An application has been made to UNESCO requesting grant to purchase equipment, etc., for this branch. The work will commence as soon as the necessary funds are received."⁵⁰

Finally, in 1962 the dream of the national bibliography became a reality when the Department of Government Archivist was able to obtain the consultancy of the Unesco expert A.J. Wells, the General Editor of the British National Bibliography for a period of six months. Documenting the culmination of this long delayed national project with a brief historical note, the Government Archivist states in the introduction to the first issue of the Ceylon National Bibliography:

" This is the first issue of the Ceylon National Bibliography..... with this first issue the efforts of the Unesco National Commission for Ceylon the Government Archivist and the Librarians of this country over the past ten years have borne fruit.....

In 1954 a proposal for establishing a national bibliography for Ceylon was first made to Government. Owing to financial exigencies, the carrying out of the proposal was delayed until 1962, when the Government asked Unesco to make available to the Department of Government Archivist the services of an expert in bibliography for a period of six months. In October 1962, the Government secured the services of Mr. A.J. Wells, the General Editor of the British National Bibliography under whose direction this now famous work has achieved world - wide recognition for its outstanding merit among bibliographies"⁵¹

The commencement of the Ceylon National bibliography marked the pinnacle of a joint effort by a number of personnel and institutions. The influence and encouragement of Unesco through its National Commission seems to have been the stimulating factor behind the whole project. However, it should also be mentioned that without the persistent effort and commitment of the Government Archivist that the Sri Lanka National Bibliography would not have become a reality.

Also S.C. Blok, the University of Ceylon librarian at Peradeniya, has played an important role

throughout the project, by advising the Government on matters related to the bibliography.

It is important to note here that the social and cultural revival that began after 1956 was still active during this period and was conducive to the commencement of a national project of this kind. The Government also took an interest in library matters through the newly formed Department of Cultural Affairs. In 1960 the Ceylon Library Association, the first professional body of librarians in the country, was formed. In 1962 the Government secured the services of Harold V. Bonny, a Unesco expert, to receive recommendations for the development of library services in the country. It can be assumed that all these supportive factors helped to create a climate conducive to the commencement of the national bibliography.

The original proposal was to establish the national bibliography in the principal office of the Department of Government Archivist, Nuwara Eliya, with four clerks under the supervision of the Assistant Archivist responsible for the receipt of items deposited under the Printers and Publishers Ordinance.⁵² However, on 1st November 1962 it was temporarily set up in a room of the University Library at Peradeniya, at the suggestion of Wells.

Certainly in the organization of the bibliography this had several advantages. In Wells's own words:

" the University had one of the best stocked and best arranged libraries in the island: it had a staff of professionally trained librarians with competence in Sinhala, Tamil and English who could give occasional assistance to the Editor, and it had, in the academic staff of the University, specialists in almost all fields of knowledge in which the Editor might have to construct new systems of classification. In fact these proved to be very real advantages when work actually started on the national bibliography and there is no doubt that both I and Editor obtained great help and benefit from discussing our problems with the Library and the Academic staff. It is therefore, my strong recommendation that the National Bibliography Branch should remain at the Library of the University of Ceylon until such time as a new National Library is working effectively" ⁵³

ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY AND THE ORIGINAL EDITORIAL POLICIES.

Wells's report contains a few proposals about the organization of the National Bibliography Branch. They are:

(1) The Branch should consist in the first instance of an editor and three clerks / typists.

(2) The Branch should be temporarily housed in the Library of the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya until such time as a new National Library is available to accommodate it.

(3) the Branch should be administered temporarily by the Department of Government Archives until such time as a Department responsible for the National Library and National Library Services is set up.

(4) The Branch should operate at Peradeniya as self - contained unit as far as possible so as to ensure the minimum of delay in the publication of monthly issues. The staff of the Branch should be responsible for the cataloguing of the books, preparation of copy, the cutting and duplication of stencils and the make - up dispatch of copies of the monthly issues.

The Branch should also be responsible for preparation of copy for the annual volume and for reading proofs. The dispatching of annual volumes might be done by the Government Publications Bureau.

(5) The monthly issues of the national bibliography should be published in cyclostyled form until such time an adequate provision can be made for regular printing. The aim should be to publish an issue at the end of each month.⁵⁴

Having established the Branch with an Assistant Archivist (N.Amarasinghe) to be trained as a full time editor and a clerk/ typist (K. Weerasinghe), arrangements were made by the Government Archivist to send the University Library copies of books deposited with the Registrar of Books and Newspapers, regularly each week.

In the organization of the bibliography Wells firmly believed that the National Bibliography Branch should be from the start in the hands of a competent and professionally qualified person⁵⁵. Hence, during his stay in Sri Lanka he instructed the newly appointed editor in the "basic principles of cataloguing and classification" and recommended him for a Unesco

Fellowship in order to attend the Course on Bibliography and Librarianship at the London University with practical training at the British National Bibliography. Furthermore he instructed S.C. Blok, K.D. Somadasa, and D.S. Devasirvandan, Members of the Ceylon University Library staff, in the details of cataloguing and classification for a national bibliography.⁵⁶

Apart from the organization of the National Bibliography Branch, Wells was confronted with the problem of the preparation of editorial policies suitable for the newly conceived national bibliography. It is said that Blok, the Librarian of the University of Ceylon and the President of the Ceylon Library Association at that time, had a great deal of influence in forming the policies of the national bibliography.⁵⁷

According to available information, the following policy decisions were taken at the beginning of the national bibliography:

COVERAGE

It was originally decided that " the national bibliography should list every item published in the country. It should list the publications of both commercial publishers and the Government in one sequence. The editor should not exercise any censorship or critical evaluation over the matter included in the national bibliography, which should aim to be as complete a record as possible (The regular or monthly issues of periodicals need not be recorded, but the first issue of a new periodical should be included)⁵⁸

However, in practice the listing of "every item published in the country" was not possible. Indeed, the listing was limited only to those materials received under legal deposit. It was also decided to exclude certain classes of publications even from this source. These were:

(a) Periodicals and Newspapers (except the first issue of a new periodical and the first issue of a periodical under a new title);

(b) Maps;

(c) Ephemeral material, such as trade catalogues, telephone directories, reports and financial statements of companies and publicity pamphlets.⁵⁹

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STANDARDS

The Anglo - American cataloguing rules: author and title entries, 1908 code was adopted for the cataloguing of items for the national bibliography. In addition to the general bibliographical description specified in this code it was decided to include the price, legal deposit registration number and an abbreviation for the type of binding for each book.⁶⁰

The 16th edition of the **Dewey Decimal Classification** was adopted for the classification of items and for the classified arrangement of the bibliography. A policy of 'in depth classification' was favoured and the subject content of each publication was minutely analysed and the precise subject was rendered in DDC notation. When the DDC schedules were not sufficient to analyse a subject minutely, new sub - divisions and notations were created in the following two ways.

(1) Creating new sub - divisions using Arabic numerals for the expansion of existing schedules. For example, new schedules were prepared for subjects that were not minutely covered in the DCC 16th edition, such as the history and geography of Ceylon, Sinhalese/Tamil language and literature, Buddhism, Hinduism, the Ayurvedic system of medicine and parapsychology.

(2) Using an arbitrary numeral (1) with verbal extensions.

For example 301.44 (1) - Castes. Karava. Ceylon, where 301.44 stands for castes and [1], for the verbal extension "Karava caste in Ceylon."

CURRENCY AND FREQUENCY

Wells was particularly concerned about the currency of the national bibliography. He expected that National Bibliography Branch should operate as a self contained unit as far as possible so as to ensure minimum delay in the publication of monthly issues. To avoid printing delay he suggested cyclostyled printing. The aim was to "publish an issue at the end of each month, recording those items received by the Registrar of Books and Newspapers up to the end of the previous month. "Also it was envisaged to" publish annual volumes regularly by April of each year." ⁶¹

It was originally proposed to compile and publish the national bibliography in two monthly lists, one for Sinhala works in the Sinhala script and

another complete edition containing works in all three languages (Sinhala, Tamil and English) in Romanized script. Three quarterly cumulations and three annual volumes arranged in classified subject order with alphabetical indexes after the style of the British National Bibliography were also envisaged. The three quarterly cumulations and the three annual volumes were to consist of cumulations of the two monthly lists plus an additional set of quarterly and annual volumes in Tamil script for Tamil works. It was hoped to print this series instead of the Quarterly Statement in the Government Gazette, in the Government Press.

However, it was realized that this process was too ambitious and unnecessary and it was abandoned at an early stage in favour of a single issue and one annual volume. However, due to the predominance of works in Sinhala it was suggested that a Sinhala section in the Sinhala script should be included in this monthly, fully classified by subject with author, title and subject indexes. Also, it was decided to include two appendices, one for English works and the other for the Tamil works in the Tamil script. The annual volume was to consist of three sections, Sinhala, Tamil and English, all fully classified and indexed. ⁶²

ARRANGEMENT

The bibliography was to be in two sections: an alphabetical section, and a classified subject section. The alphabetical section, consisted of authors, editors, translators, titles, series and subjects that appeared in the classified subject section, with relevant classification numbers to guide the users back to the classified section for details. ⁶³

In the classified section the "chain indexing system" was to be used to display the principal subject fields of a particular title. ⁶⁴

TRANSLITERATION

To cope with literature published in three different languages with three different scripts it was decided to have a comprehensive monthly issue of all publications by transliterating Sinhala and Tamil into Roman script, in addition to the monthly issue in Sinhala script for Sinhala works. It was agreed to use the system of transliteration adopted in the **Dictionary of Sinhalese language**, published by the University

of Ceylon for works in Sinhala and the system used in the **Tamil lexicon**, published by the University of Madras for Tamil works.⁶⁵

It is clear that most of the policy decisions were modeled on the British National Bibliography. For example, policies regarding the coverage, cataloguing, classification and indexing are a repetition of BNB policies.⁶⁶ Given the fact Wells was the General Editor of the British National Bibliography from 1950, this would seem to be an inevitable outcome.

SRI LANKA NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT ARCHIVIST: 1962 - 1972

The first two issues of the national bibliography produced by the National Bibliography Branch of the Department of the Government archivist, were based on the material deposited in November and December 1962 under the legal deposit law (Printers and Publishers Ordinance, Cap. 179). They were compiled under the direction of A.J. Wells, by N. Amarasinghe, the Assistant Archivist who functioned as the editor. They were published in 1963; these two issues, described as "complete editions," can be considered as being sample issues of the bibliography. Publications in all three languages were arranged in a single transliterated sequence in Roman script. The issues consisted of two sections:

- (1) an alphabetical author, title, subject index section and
- (2) a classified subject section

At the same time, two separate volumes were also published in Sinhala for Sinhala publications, their arrangement being similar to that of the Romanized transliterated version.

The two issues for November 1962 were published in printed form, while the issue for December 1962 was published in cyclostyled form.

The bibliography began to appear from January 1963, volume, 1, number I, on a monthly basis. A major change from the initial design by Wells was the abandonment of the practice of Romanized transliteration from this issue. Instead, this issue was in three separate sequences for the three languages in their respective scripts, in a single volume. Each

sequence was to contain an alphabetical index and a classified subject section. However, it is to be noted here that, in the first three issues, only the Sinhala sequence was provided with an alphabetical index.

Publication of the bibliography temporarily stopped with the third issue for 1963. (vol. 1 no. 3 March) Without filling the gap, the work was resumed in 1964 with vol. 2, nos. 1-3, January - March on a quarterly basis. However, from vol. 3 no 1, 1965 to no.8, September of the same year it appeared as a monthly publication. From October - December 1965 (vol. 3. Nos. 10 -12) to January - March, 1967 (vol. 5 nos. 1-3) it was published as a quarterly. For the April - December, 1967 period, a single volume was issued as vol. 5,4-12. From vol. 6 no. 1, January 1968 to vol. 10, no. 4, April 1972 it again became a monthly publication, except for the period October - December, 1969, when it appeared as a quarterly (nos. 10 - 12)

Even though the compilation of the national bibliography has been vested in the Ceylon National Library Services Board since April 1973, the Department of Government Archives continued to be involved as publisher until 1979, in which year vol. 11 Nos. 1 -12 covering the year 1973 was published by the Department for the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board.

Although those volumes of the national bibliography that were compiled and published by the National Bibliography Branch of the Department of National Archivist for ten years from 1962 are authoritative and comprehensive, according to the broadest sense of definitions of the term national bibliography⁶⁷ they do not show any substantial improvement with regard to coverage, frequency and currency.

No expansion of coverage was made during this period. The authorities were well aware of the fact that many printers and publishers did not comply with the provisions of the Printers and Publishers Ordinance due to a variety of reasons and as a result legal deposit gave an incomplete version of the national imprint. Yet, no attempt was made to cover those publications that did not come via legal deposit to the national bibliography.

However, it seems the National Bibliography Branch had undertaken the "compilation of bibliography of these literature by Ceylonese scholars

covering the period from earliest times to 1965" and the " compilation of an annual catalogue of local translations for and on behalf of Unesco"⁶⁷ in 1968, independently of the national bibliography. ' The bibliography of these never became a reality under the Department of Government Archivist; it was finally published in 1978 as a separate publication.

The exclusion of certain materials such as maps, trade catalogues, telephone directories, reports and financial statements of companies, reprints that are not new editions from the national bibliography seems to be a further shrinkage of an already incomplete and limited coverage. In a country like Sri Lanka, where the national imprint is very small in quantity, there is hardly anything that should be excluded from the national bibliography. Such a policy of exclusion may well be suited to a national bibliography of a country that has a very large national imprint and also has additional resources for the listing of excluded items. It could obviously be a disadvantage for a small country where the generation of information is minimal and every bit of published information in any form could become a major source of original research in the future.

During the period under review, the frequency and currency of the national bibliography has always been a serious problem. Although " it was hoped to publish issues more frequently and, more punctually"⁶⁸ the Ceylon National Bibliography was far behind this goal throughout the period. Not a single issue was published for the period April - December 1963 and the delay of publishing was often considerable, ranging from one to five years. For example, Vol. 10, nos. 5-12 of 1972 (The last volume produced by the Department of Government Archives) was published five years later, in 1977. As described earlier, the frequency of the bibliography was highly irregular, contrary to the original expectation of monthly issues. In addition, except for the sample issue no. 1 of November 1962 and vol. 1, no. 1, January 1963 all other issues upto vol. 2, no. 1 of 1965 were published in a poor quality cyclostyled form. According to the Government Archivist the non availability of funds compelled him also to stop this mode of publication in 1963⁶⁹. It is observed that " beginning as a printed monthly, the Ceylon National Bibliography petered out quickly into a quarterly issue in cyclostyled form, and then has veered back and forth between being a

monthly and a quarterly in printed form"⁷⁰

Although it has not been specifically mentioned by authorities it can be assumed that the cumbersome procedure together with a number of difficulties involved the printing, especially by a Government Press, was one of the major reasons for both the delays and the irregular frequency of the national bibliography.

It is clear that the Ceylon National Bibliography began as a "watered down" and miniature version of the British National Bibliography, under the tutelage of Wells and the editor was trained in the London Library School. As a result, the influence of the British National Bibliography on the Ceylon National Bibliography was very great and it seems that latter blindly followed the former in many aspects. Indeed, only a few differences can be seen between the early issues of the Ceylon National Bibliography and the British National Bibliography. Based on the same theories, both followed the same format except for the alphabetical author, title and subject index that appeared at the beginning of the Ceylon National Bibliography; the British National Bibliography had it at the end of the publication.

Unfortunately, certain useful features in British National Bibliography do not appear in the early Ceylon National Bibliography; for example the preface of the early Ceylon National Bibliography does not contain " hints for tracing information" and the item by item explanation of the elements of the bibliographical description. An explanation of this nature would perhaps have been more useful to users in Sri Lanka than to the British users at the time. Also an outline of the Dewey Decimal Classification system such as appeared in the British National Bibliography would have been useful to users, if included in the early issues of the Ceylon National Bibliography. It should be noted here that such an outline was included in the Statement of Books compiled by the Department of Government Archives since the 1960 s.

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the overall performance of the national bibliography under the Department of the Government Archives was in general rather poor. The Department of Archives never had facilities adequate for the compilation of a good national bibliography. For example, it did not have a well resourced library or

enough trained personnel in the field of library and information science. It seems that its being the receiver of legal deposit was the only facility it did have to commence a project of this nature. Funding of the project had always been a problem and a number of new proposals had to be abandoned due to lack of funds. Finally, it would perhaps be unfair to expect a perfect national bibliography from a Department of Archives whose main functions involved "the collection and conservation of archives, their organization for use, and the theoretical and practical studies of such procedures,"⁷¹ but did not involve national bibliographical control.

THE SRI LANKA NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY UNDER THE SRI LANKA NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES BOARD, 1973 - 1994

The compilation of the national bibliography was vested in the Ceylon National Library Services Board (CNLSB) from 25th April 1973. The CNLSB, established in 1970 by Act, No 17 of 1970, was to be responsible for the establishment and the maintenance of the National Library. The compilation and publication of the national bibliography was considered as a basic function of the National Library. The transfer of the national bibliography activities to the National Library had also been envisaged in Well's report.⁷²

At the time of the transfer, a number of issues of the bibliography from volume 9 no.5. May 1971 were in arrears. However, according to the years of publication that appear on the individual issues it seems that the backlog was from vol. 9 no 10, October 1971. It was decided to publish current issues commencing from 1975 while also covering the backlog. It took about a decade to complete the publication of the backlog.⁷³

The first issue compiled under the authority of the CNLSB was vol. 10, nos. 5-12; this covered the period from May to December 1972. However, it was published by the Department of National Archives in 1977. This volume has a particular importance as it was the first issue that appeared under the new title **Sri Lanka National Bibliography**. The first issue that was both compiled and published by the CNLSB covered the first three months of 1975. Although its

year of publication is not mentioned, it appears to have been published in 1978, according to official files of the national bibliography. It abandoned the usual volume and number sequence and was designated as 1975 (1-3)

The period beginning from this issue up to no. 2 of 1977 can be considered as an era of radical and rapid changes in the Sri Lanka National Bibliography, although these changes were not long - lasting.

The modification of the hitherto practised "chain procedure" in the classified file of the bibliography and the resulting changes in the subject index are two such major changes. Under the new arrangement of the classified file the specific subject heading of an entry together with its broad subject heading was given instead of displaying the fullest sequence of a class number step by step from the broad class to specific, as was done in previous issues. It seems that this practice was influenced by that of the British National Bibliography and the Singapore National Bibliography at this time. It should be mentioned here that there is an interrelation between the classified file and the subject index. British National Bibliography followed chain procedure in the classified file as the subject index was also based on the chain indexing method. It dropped chain procedure from the classified only with the introduction of the new indexing system PRECIS, which was quite independent from the classification system. Although the Singapore National Bibliography did not display the full chain in the classified section, its subject index seems to be a simplified version of the chain indexing system. However, the arrangement of the classified section of the Sri Lanka National Bibliography during this period shows an ambiguous relationship to the subject index.

The adoption of the Anglo - American Cataloguing Rules, 1967 (British text) for the cataloguing of the bibliography commenced with this issue. The use of the diagonal slash (/) to separate the title from the statement of responsibility suggests the influence of the ISBD (M) format. Another deviation from previous practice was that this issue gives the address of the publisher within brackets in the imprint statement, between the place of publication and the name of the publisher. In the case of individual private publishers the name and address of the printer was also given in the entry.

The adoption of DDC 18th edition for the classification of material in SLNB also commenced with this issue. While the earlier modifications made for Buddhism, Sinhala/ Tamil literature etc., were still in use, a new device of using an asterisk mark in place of the area notation for Sri Lanka as well as the division of long class numbers with apostrophe marks can be observed.

The order of arrangement of the bibliography was also changed; in a deviation from previous practice, the classified section took precedence over the alphabetical index section, from this issue.

A change in the coverage of the national bibliography can also be observed during this period. According to the editor, items received by the Bibliographical Division in addition to the legal deposit were also recorded. Annuals were included but ephemera were, with a few exceptions, excluded. At the same time an exclusion of periodicals (even the first issues) can also be observed and mimeographed items were included when it was considered necessary. Theses presented to the University of Sri Lanka as well as books pertaining to Sri Lanka published elsewhere were also included.

The last issues for 1975 (1975, 7-12) and 1976 (1976, 7-12) contained two annual indexes; (1) author/ title (2) subject in all three languages. Though there are inadequacies this is a commendable attempt at the compilation of an annual index and it is unfortunate that this useful feature was abandoned in later years.

The inclusion of a list of publishers in the bibliography from the first issue for the year 1976 was another important development during the period. However, this valuable feature was abandoned after 1977 and was never resumed.

Furthermore, it was proposed to publish the bibliography in multilingual single classified sequence instead of the existing format of three separate sequences for the three languages.⁷⁴ It is evident that this proposal was modeled on the arrangement of the Singapore National Bibliography. However, this was not put into practice although a few specimen entries were printed.

It seems that an attempt was made to compile a separate list of current periodicals by the National Bibliography Division during this period. This might have been envisaged as being in compensation for the exclusion of periodicals from the national

bibliography. Although a formal request was circulated among many publishers of periodicals and a considerable amount of information was gathered for the purpose, the list of current periodicals was never published.

The changes in the SLNB between 1975 - 1977 seem to have been highly influenced by the example of the Singapore National Bibliography. Indeed the SLNB during this period closely followed the Singapore National Bibliography as it had followed the British National Bibliography prior to 1975. The changes in coverage, classified arrangement and cataloguing as well as the features such as the annual author/ title and subject indexes, list of publishers and the proposal to have multilingual single classified sequence etc. were modeled on the practices of the Singapore National Bibliography.⁷⁶

Most of these changes were abandoned after the change in editorship by the end of 1977, yet it is worthy to reconsider them at least for the purposes of evaluation.

The theoretical basis for the changes in the subject index is not clear, as it is neither chain indexing nor a complete deviation from it. It seems to be a "bastardized" index in which certain elements of both PRECIS and the chain indexing systems are mixed up. It should be mentioned here that the disadvantages of chain indexing, such as the non co-extensive nature of entries with the actual subject until the final entry is made⁷⁷ as well as "unsought" and "false" links⁷⁸ in the chain seems indexing either requires a rigorously controlled and consistent classification scheme, or failing this an extremely flexible application of the principles involved to circumvent the inherent inadequacies of the classification".⁷⁹ In 1971 the British National Bibliography abandoned chain indexing after 20 years of practice. It can be assumed that this state of affairs might have prompted the editor of the SLNB to adopt a system of indexing other than chain procedure. Although the new system was a failure due to the lack of any theoretical foundation, it was, according to the editor, an experiment in the "search for an index suitable to our needs"⁸⁰

Changes in the policy of coverage, except for the exclusion of periodicals, can be considered as an improvement but the inclusion of theses as well as materials related to Sri Lanka published outside the

country has been criticized. According to Goonetilleke "these classes have no place in such a record, and need to be presented outside the confines of a strict national bibliography. The main task is to concentrate on the imprints within the island, and to cover them exhaustively and swiftly.⁸¹ It is true that "the basic criterion in determining the perimeters of a national bibliography is territorial, " yet, "the National Bibliographic Agency may choose to include records which reflect the country's national collection as well as its national imprint. This may include records of publications and articles about the country published elsewhere, and/or of publications by national authors published elsewhere, and or of publications in the language(s) of the country published elsewhere"⁸²

The introduction of annual indexes and a list of publishers are useful new features. An annual index is no doubt an easy guide to the whole national imprint during a particular year and saves the user much time, as he would otherwise need to peruse a number of individual issues for that year. The inclusion of a publishers' list in a national bibliography has an additional advantage to its users." This has a special value in a country where no publishers' organizations as yet exists, and is particularly useful for users outside the country as part of the acquisition process'.⁸³ The abandonment of this useful feature after 1977 seems to have been an unwise decision; it was later suggested by Gorman and Mills that a "directory of publishers should be provided" in the SLNB.⁸⁴

The adoption of the DDC 18th edition and the AACR (1967), British text, for classification and cataloguing can be considered as desirable in placing the bibliography in conformity with the international bibliographical standards of the day.

From the first issue of 1978, under new editorship, most of these new policies and changes seem to have been abandoned in favour of policies prior to 1975, except for the following:

- (1) Use of the AACR (1967), British text, for cataloguing
- (2) Use of the DDC 18th edition for classification
- (3) Arrangement of the bibliography with the classified section preceding the

author/ title index.

- (4) Inclusion of titles pertaining to Sri Lanka published elsewhere

With this issue, publications on Buddhism were classified according to DDC 18th edition instead of the modified Decimal classification schedules used previously. Similarly, area notation was added only to specify countries other than Sri Lanka.

The adoption of ISBDs for bibliographical description was the most important feature that commenced with the first issue of 1978. Although it was mentioned that both ISBD (M) and ISBD (S) were adopted, the application of the latter is not obvious.

To avoid further delays in printing, this issue was mimeographed and it was decided to adhere to the same format until the bibliography was brought upto date.

In the meantime, volume 11 of the SLNB covering the backlog for the year 1973 was published in printed form by the Department of National Archives for the SLNLSB. This annual cumulation, prepared according to the policies prior to 1975, is in effect a retrospective volume since it covered the national imprint of the year 1973.

Until volume 20, nos. 1-3 the first issue for 1982, no changes in editorial policies or in the format of the bibliography can be observed. The adoption of the **Anglo American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd edition (1978)** for the cataloguing of materials in the national bibliography started with this issue.

Vol. 22, nos. 7-9 issue of 1984, published under new editorship marked an improvement in the alphabetical index section of the bibliography. From the first issues of the SLNB this section had contained author, title, series and subject entries in a single alphabetical sequence. With this issue it was divided into two parts, namely (1) author/ title series, and (2) subject.

It is interesting to note here that " in order to understand actions that have to be taken to improve the quality and the marketing of the SLNB" a survey was carried out by the Assistant Director, National Bibliography Division of the SLNLSB in 1982.⁸⁵

A change in the editorship of the bibliography can be seen from the vol.23 nos. 7-9 issue for the year

1985. It seems that between 1985- 86 a retrospective volume of the bibliography covering the year 1974 was issued; no year of publication is given in the volume. This cumulation follows AACR2 in cataloguing and DDC 16th edition in classification.

A change in the editorship is again noted in vol. 25, nos. 4-9 issue for 1987. It was with this issue that International Standard Book Numbers were added to the bibliographic description.

From 1985 a marked development in the outward appearance of the national bibliography can be seen. It began to appear in offset printed form using better quality paper and with a new cover. However, it became a bi - annual publication from 1988.

An expansion of the sources of coverage of the bibliography can be seen from the issue for the second half of 1989 which was published in 1991. According to the Acting Director of the SLNLSB:

"Though the publications received by Sri Lanka National Library under the legal deposit law constitute the main source material in the compilation of the National Bibliography, it is not practicable to depend entirely on this collection as a comprehensive coverage is not given and delays are also encountered in the receipt of publications covered by the legal deposit law. This has become a setback to the timely publication of the National Bibliography. As it is impracticable to depend entirely of these publications, many other source materials have been incorporated into the compilation of the national bibliography from 1990. Publications acquired by the National Library, publications which have been received under the National Library Publication Assistance Programme and those deposited under the International Standard Book Numbering Project are some of these sources. This has facilitated in the compilation of an up to date and comprehensive National Bibliography"⁸⁶

The most important feature begun with this issue was the inclusion of a list of forthcoming publications. This appeared as a special section of the bibliography printed in a different colour. The compilation of this section was based on information obtained from publishers. Entries for this useful addition consist of (a) heading of the entry (b) title

and statement of responsibility (c) edition statement (d) publication details (e) ISBN (f) price.

The first cumulated volume of the SLNB was also published in April 1991. Certainly this is an achievement in the history of the SLNB since annual cumulations of the bibliography had been an unrealized dream from its beginning upto this issue.

The adoption of DDC 20th edition for classification and the revised edition of the AACR 2 for both descriptive cataloguing and the construction of author/ title headings can be seen from Vol. 29, nos. 1-6 of 1991.

With the formal opening of the Sri Lanka National Library in early 1990, an overall growth in the activities of the SLNB can be observed. The official documents pertaining to the national bibliography during this period display an unprecedented air of enthusiasm and interest. In an attempt to streamline the work flow of the national bibliography, perhaps for the first time in its history according to the available information, a document entitled " Guidelines for cataloguing and classification of the retrospective and current national bibliography" was prepared by the National Bibliography Division.⁸⁷ In the same year a detailed document of the compilation procedure of the SLNB was prepared.⁸⁸ A new advisory Committee on the SLNB, consisting of seven members, was also appointed in 1992.

"The compilation and editing processes of the issues for 1991 (7/12) and 1992 (1/3) have been completed. The compilation of 1992 (4/6) issue is now in progress. A retrospective volume for 1962 is ready for printing and steps are being taken to reduce delays in publication to a minimum of six months".⁸⁹

Until 1994 the progress of the SLNB regarding its currency was not satisfactory. Since January 1994, it has become a monthly publication. At the moment the delay in publication is less than one month and therefore the SLNB has now become an ideal current national bibliography. A marked development in the physical format can also be seen. The current programme of the national bibliography includes the computerization of the compilation process. The preparation of retrospective volumes covering the period before 1963 has also been envisaged.

However, it appears that even under the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board, the legitimate body for the compilation of the national bibliography, the SLNB has not improved enough with regard to its coverage, currency, frequency and physical format until recently to impress critical evaluator although developments can be seen in the adoption of international standards in cataloguing and classification.

In general it can be concluded that throughout its thirty years of history the SLNB has been struggling hard to achieve the goals set up in 1962, but with very little success. In publication it has always been less current than retrospective. Its frequency has been sporadic and annual cumulations have not been done until recently. This rather unsatisfactory state of affairs may be difficult for an ordinary observer to understand when he sees that it has, since its inception, been operating as part of a State institution that has generally been well provided with funds and staff.⁹⁰

However, a close examination of the existing records related to the SLNB suggests certain reasons that might have contributed to this situation.

THE ABSENCE OF CLEARLY STATED POLICIES

Although the general policies regarding coverage, the cataloguing and classification systems adopted have been given in the introductions to each issue of the bibliography, the SLNB still does not have any detailed policy statement for the national bibliography, to be observed in both the compilation and the publication processes.⁹¹ However, it is evident that there was a set of guidelines prepared by Wells in the beginning but this document was not transferred from the National Bibliography Branch of the Department of the Government Archives to the Ceylon National Library Services Board in 1973.⁹²

In spite of the failure to obtain these original policies, the National Bibliography Unit has never tried to prepare its own guidelines. In this absence of clearly stated policies or guidelines it was therefore inevitable that personal interests have been influential instead. As there were no detailed policies or guidelines it seems that each new editor has prepared his/ her own. They were also compelled to learn the compilation process by studying previous issues and by observation of the work of the cataloguing

assistants in the section.⁹³

The sporadic changes in the policy of coverage is an example of the changes made according to the personal opinions of the editors. In the beginning periodicals and newspapers (except for the first issue/new title), maps and ephemeral materials were excluded. However, from the first issue of 1996 reprints that were not new editions were added to this list of exclusions. (This statement of further exclusions appears only on the introduction to the Sinhala section of the bibliography. In the other two sections no statement has been made!) The introduction to the first issue for 1975 states that it includes reprints and certain ephemeral material, but periodicals seemed to have been excluded without any mention in the introduction. According to the preface of the last issue of 1975, it includes first editions and revised editions of books as well as annuals, but ephemera are excluded with a few exceptions. These were included from 1977. From 1975 - 1978 it would appear that school text books and small Government publications have been excluded but without any mention in the prefaces. It is obvious that these changing policies are the results of personal decisions. The making as well as changing of policies in a national project of this nature should be done by a committee of experts in the field. Although there was an advisory Committee from the 1970s, according to available evidence, it seems that it was only in 1992 that a newly appointed Advisory Committee took steps to formulate policies regarding coverage, classification, cataloguing and indexing, layout and the printing process of the national bibliography. However, the task has not been completed yet.

THE LACK OF COMPILATION AIDS

The compilation of a national bibliography is essentially a scholarly work. To make its records as authoritative and comprehensive as possible a number of compilation aids are needed. Reference materials such as dictionaries, bibliographies, encyclopaedias and other tools such as cataloguing and classification codes, subject heading lists as well as authority files are some of these. It is very important, therefore, that the national bibliography is always linked to a well resourceful library. Wells was so aware of this factor

that he started the bibliography in the University Library and expected it to be there until the National Library was commenced. However, it was very soon moved to an institution where library facilities were insufficient. Even now, the National Library, being a newly established institution, does not contain all those reference materials that may sometimes have to be consulted in the compilation process of the national bibliography.

For the preparation of authoritative bibliographic records of the national imprint, the maintenance of national authority files of authors' personal names and the authoritative forms of names of official and corporate bodies is extremely important.⁹⁴ However, the SLNB still does not have any authority files of this nature for use in the preparation of its bibliographic records. Although one "Authority list of headings for corporate bodies in Sri Lanka" was prepared by the editor of the SLNB in 1982 and published in mimeographed form for the National Library,⁹⁵ it has not been used in the subsequent period. It is said that there was another authority list or uniform titles prepared by the same author and published in the same form in the same year. Neither of these lists are in use now and copies of them are not available in the National Library. Other than these publications, even up to now, no attempt has been made towards the compilation of national authority files. As a result, a number of errors in the use of personal and corporate headings are apparent in the SLNB.

STAFFING PROBLEMS

The following staffing problems have affected the performance of the SLNB over the period. They are: (1) inadequacy of staff in terms of expertise (2) lack of training facilities (3) inability to retain qualified staff.

Given the fact that the SLNB is a tri - lingual publication that deals with three different languages with three different scripts, it must have staff members not only well trained in bibliographical methods but also well versed in each language. The inadequacy of staff has always been felt in the compilation of the Tamil language section of the bibliography. As there have been no staff members at the editorial level with Tamil language competency, dependency on cataloguing assistants and outside personnel has

become a common practice in the compilation of this section.

During the thirty year history of the SLNB, only two editors have been given scholarships for training abroad, in 1962 and 1982. No other staff members have received any such opportunity. Although most of them have obtained local professional qualifications, opportunities for proper training in bibliographical activities seem to be rare.

Trained staff members with professional post - graduate qualifications have never stayed long in the SLNB. Every editor of the SLNB has left it for more rewarding employment.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Like many third world countries, Sri Lanka too does not have an efficient Library system. Except for academic and research libraries most of the public and school libraries are not in a developed stage. It is quite natural under the circumstance that the need for bibliographical tools such as national bibliographies has not been felt by the majority. Indeed, Sri Lanka is the best example of a country that sustained a national bibliography without a well developed library system. Therefore it can be said that the efforts of the compiling agencies (National Archives and the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board) have been the major factor behind this success.

The present situation of the SLNB is not unsatisfactory when compared with its recent past. Indeed, still there are a number of deficiencies with regard to coverage, authoritativeness, annual cumulations and indexing of the SLNB. However, in terms of cataloguing and classification standards as well as currency, it now has surpassed many third world national bibliographies. With regard to other aspects such as printing and layout also it is above many national bibliographies of the region.⁹⁶ Considering the socio economic and other numerous problems that have to be confronted with it can be concluded that the SLNB is a successful national bibliography.

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The Colombo Public Library System

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ABSTRACT

In 1925 two subscription libraries, the Colombo Library and the Pettah Library were merged to form the Colombo Public Library as a department of the Colombo Municipal Council. Originally the Colombo Public Library had three departments i.e. the Reading Room, the Lending Library and the Reference Library. Now it has grown into a library system with 14 branch libraries, a Mobile Library Service, a Book Box Library Service, and various other services. After the opening of the present building at Ananda Coomarasamy Mawatha in 1980, it now has a number of new services in addition to the general library services that existed earlier. The Audio Visual Services and the Visually Handicapped Services were introduced, and the Reference, the Children's Services, the Study Services and the Lending Library facilities were further developed. At present the library has approximately a registered membership of 145,000 and a bookstock of 600,000 approximately in Sinhala, Tamil and English. The Colombo Public Library provides guidance and practical training in Librarianship to both students and working librarians.

The Colombo Public Library which was situated at Edinburgh Crescent was run as a department of the Colombo Municipal Council. It was established in 1925 in pursuance of a resolution of the Council in May 1923, which was moved by the late Mr. E.W. Jayawardane for the establishment of a library for the free use of its citizens. The library functioned at Edinburgh Crescent (presently Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha) until it moved to the new building situated in close proximity to the Vihara Maha Devi Park on December 17th, 1980. The renovated old building is now used as the official bungalow of the Mayor of Colombo.

The "ancestry" of the Colombo Public Library can be traced to the early 19th century; the two subscription libraries functioning in the city of Colombo, the Colombo Library and the Pettah Library merged to form the Colombo Public Library in 1925. These libraries were the forerunners of the Colombo Public Library. The United Services Library,

the oldest library of the libraries, established in 1813, functioned till 1824 until it merged with the Colombo Library. At first it was solely for the use of civil and military officers of the government and it was housed in a military building opposite Queen's House, which was demolished when the General Post Office was built and later became a subscription library for members by election. In 1924 this library consisted of a collection of 10,000 volumes.

The Pettah Library was established in 1829 by a group of English educated elite of Lawyers, Civil Servants and other prominent persons in Colombo. It is interesting to note that in addition to normal library services, the library organized public lectures and debates for the benefit of its members. One such lecture was John Ferguson's "The early days of the British Rule in Ceylon." The Governor was the President and he served as the Chairman at meetings frequently. In 1925 this library had a collection of 6000 volumes of books.

The Colombo Library and the Pettah Library

had to face the problem of funds to maintain their services, due to withdrawal of government grants after the first World War. These libraries would not any longer exist in their subscriptions due to the large amount of arrears due from members. In 1924 when the problem became critical, the authorities of the two libraries were compelled to accept a proposal of the Colonial Secretary at that time, Mr. Cecil Clementi, to hand over the libraries to the trustees of the Sri Chandrasekera Fund and through them to the Colombo Municipal Council. The Colombo Municipal Council accepted the above proposal at its meeting on October 1st, 1924. "Sirinivasa" in Edinburgh Crescent was chosen to house the library on an yearly rent of one rupee. The Municipal Council bought the premises in September 1940 for Rs. 90,000

SOCIAL & CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE CITY OF COLOMBO

Colombo is a fascinating city with a rich heritage. Its friendly inhabitants comprise people from a diversity of social, cultural and religious backgrounds. Though the national languages are Sinhala and Tamil, English is understood and spoken by many people.

Although the capital now is Sri Jayewardenepura (Kotte), the City of Colombo remains the financial and commercial centre for the country and still retains a major part of its network of offices, establishments and institutions etc. The growth of Colombo continues to be dynamic and it has a very wide influence beyond its geographical limits extending over the greater metropolitan area.

POPULATION

The present population is about 700,000. This represents nearly 40% of the national total population and 15.5% of the national urban population. There is a floating population of about 400,000.

ETHNICITY

Colombo is a multi racial city and the (1989) distribution of population by race is as follows: (Estimated population)

Sinhalese	321,892
Ceylon Tamils	142,634
Ceylon Moors	134,925
Malays	15,418
Burghers	8,351
Others	19,250
Total	<u>642,470</u>

Source: Achievements: Addendum to 1990 Budget Colombo Municipal Council

The Colombo Public Library is run by the Colombo Municipal Council and the general policy of the library is to meet the information needs of the residents of Colombo, non - resident city workers and students by means of a network of branch and mobile libraries managed from a comprehensive central library facility and providing a full range of library services.

FUNCTIONS

To collect organize and disseminate information by means of printed and audio visual material needed for the progress of the community.

To offer facilities for informal self education

To enrich and further develop the subjects on which individuals are undertaking formal education.

To encourage wholesome recreation and constructive use of leisure time

To give support to local leisure groups

To participate in any appropriate national and international networks of library services.

PRESENT SERVICES

The Colombo Public Library commenced its services in 1925 with three departments; the Reading Room, the Lending Library and the Reference Library. Late Mr. S.C. Blok served as Librarian and there were six other members in the staff. The Library served mainly the English educated elite class. The Sinhala and Tamil Sections were established only in the middle of the 20th Century. Now the Library has grown into a system with 14 branch libraries, a mobile library service, a book box library service, the audio visual service and various other services. (see table no. 1)

After the opening of the present library building at 15, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha on 17th December 1980, it now has a number of services in

addition to the general library services that existed earlier. With the shifting to the present building, the audio visual services and library facilities for visually handicapped were introduced. An Exhibition Hall, a Conference Room and a large Auditorium were added to the main building, providing facilities for exhibitions, seminars, conferences, introducing programmes for new books etc. The Lending Library, Reference Library, Study Service, Children's Library and Periodical Section were further expanded. In addition to the above services, a Depository Library for F.A.O. publications also commenced in 1981.

In 1925 the Colombo Public Library started its services with a book stock of approximately 16,000 and there were no books in Sinhala and Tamil. At present the Library has a book stock of approximately 608,802 in Sinhala, Tamil and English and the number of registered members is approximately 145,076.

Library usage - Book Lending (1993)

Central Library	249798
Children's Library	70415
Branch Libraries	99996
Mobile Library Service	37865
Book Box Library Project	44200
Total	502274

Total book issues in 1982 were 255,975. The increase clearly indicates that there is a growing demand for books and information. However the new titles published in Sinhala and Tamil specially in Science and Technology and books for young adults are not adequate.

The new accessions for the year 1993 were 37,963.

Sinhala	20280
Tamil	4631
English	13052

Total accessions for the year 1982 - 16130.

The percentage of books lent as percentage of media Sinhala, Tamil and English during Jan - June 1993 (see table no.2) are as follows.

Table no. 2

Sinhala Books	59%
Tamil Books	8%
English Books	33%

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Reference Library was divided into two sections in 1980 i.e. General Reference Library and Special Collections. General Reference Library is open to everybody and consists of general reference books including dictionaries, encyclopedias, year books, annuals etc. Good coverage is given to all subject fields in Sinhala, Tamil and English. During the year 1993, approximately 80,665 persons used this section.

The Special Collections Section of the library is open to research workers, scholars and any interested readers. This section consists of valuable and rare books on Buddhism, Ceyloniana, Latin and Greek books, Books on Fine Arts and Law. Analytical entries for some periodicals published in Sri Lanka, and newspaper article clippings are also available here. In 1993 approximately 8500 research workers and scholars used this section.

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS SECTION

Newspapers including weeklies and Government Gazettes are housed on the ground floor and the periodicals, including learned journals are available in the periodicals section on the 1st floor. At the end of 1993 the total number of periodicals subscribed were 125 titles and there were 67 newspapers both local and foreign. In addition to these, there are approximately 160 titles of journals and newspapers received as gifts from institutions both local and foreign. These two sections are very well partitioned and during the year 1993 approximately 118,060 persons used these sections.

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY SERVICE

The Children's Library Service started in 1968 and 1969 in the Branch Libraries of Borella and Kirulapone respectively. Prior to that, the Public Library Service was opened to adults only. In 1972, the Children's Section of the Central Library started and improved rapidly despite limited space. In 1980 when the Library moved to the new building, Children's library services were further improved and sufficient space was provided to expand the services.

Extension activities have become popular. These activities include drawing, handicrafts, story telling, stamp circle etc. In addition to these, there are

video shows for children held during weekends. Similar extension activities are held once a month at Kirulapone, Sucharita and Pedris Park Libraries. Every branch library or Mobile Library, contains a corner for children's books. Approximately 152,304 children used the children's services of the Library System and approximately 70,415 books were issued in the Central Library during 1993.

STUDY SECTION

This was opened in 1958 with 132 seats and was very well patronized. This section was further expanded in 1980 and it has 320 seats for study purposes. Patrons are allowed to bring books of their own or those borrowed from the library. Providing this facility is a long felt need for the readers who reside in an urban environment.

The patrons of this section include students who sit for public examinations, professional examinations, university examinations and the general public, who find it difficult to study at their residences. Immediately before public examinations, users of this section can be seen waiting in long queues to obtain a seat. Approximately 408,568 patrons used this section in 1993.

The Colombo Municipal Council has decided to expand this service with more space by constructing a new three storied building with capacity of approximately 600 seats.

AUDIO - VISUAL LIBRARY

This service started in 1980 with the opening of the present library building. The Audio Visual Library provides a music library consisting of gramophone records, cassettes, tapes etc. It will not be confined only to music, but will include speeches, poems, plays, stories, folktales etc. The patrons of the music library could listen to records or a cassette chosen by them. There is a television and a video room which permits viewers to see either television programmes or pre - recorded programmes. The Audio Visual Service has proved to be very popular among both children and adults, as well as students. Video and film shows are held every Saturday and Sunday for the members of the Audio Visual Library. Special video shows are provided occasionally irrespective of any membership. Prior to public examinations, selected video shows are

provided for the use of students at their request. This service is combined with the extension activities of the library; organizing special programmes for children and adults such as exhibitions, video shows, film shows etc.

Audio Visual Library had 703 registered members at the end of 1994. 4066 patrons attended the Audio Visual Library when video shows were screened for their benefit in 1993. 54 Video shows were held for the members of the Audio Visual Library and 60 video shows were held for the benefit of children.

BRANCH LIBRARIES

The Public Library has grown into a Library System with a network of branch libraries scattered throughout the city. At present there are 14 branches. Pedris Park Library at Havelock Town is a Children's Library. There are separate children's sections at Kirulapone library and Sucharita Library. The other branch libraries are mainly for adults. However special attention is given to provide a children's corner with a collection of children's books in every library. Most of the branch libraries are housed at the community centre buildings and are experiencing difficulties for want of space for expansion,

As regards to the establishing of branches, proper planning is necessary to have an efficient and cost effective service. It is advisable to have large branch libraries with sufficient resources rather than having small libraries with inadequate resources in close proximity. This results in unnecessary duplication and poor service. For example, branch libraries at Gunasinghe Park, Sucharita Mawatha, Mihindu Mawatha and Belmont Street are all located less than half a kilometer from each other.

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

The mobile library service commenced in 1975. The main objective of this service is provide a library service to the urban community at their residential places or at their work places, as they find it difficult to visit the central library or a branch library. Mobile Library Service helps to foster the reading habit of the community and enables them to make use of their leisure time in a useful manner. At present, the mobile library service operates in 53

centres in the city. The service points are located in various office complexes, industrial sites, housing schemes Jathika Pola etc.

The service is very well patronized. During the year 1994 a total of 41,503 books were issued to members. In 1982 total number of book issues was 12,792.

BOOK BOX LIBRARY SERVICE

This service is also a mobile library service and books are kept in boxes in small vehicles, to serve the underprivileged children in the city. This service, known as the Book Box Library Project was inaugurated in December 1983 with the assistance of UNICEF. It provides books to the underprivileged children below 16 years of age living in slum and shanty areas in the city. The main objective of this service is to inculcate reading habits in the children for the upliftment of their educational and social level. The Public Library is assisted by the Public Health Department of the Municipal Council in organizing this project.

At present, this service is extended to 80 service points in slum and shanty areas of the city and by the end of 1994 the membership was 7474. The number of books issued in 1993 was 44,200. Book issues in 1990 were 23,502.

IN SERVICE TRAINING IN LIBRARIANSHIP

As the premier Public Library in Sri Lanka the Colombo Public Library rendered a yeoman service to offer leadership, advice and guidance to the public libraries of all other local authorities in the country. In service training is provided to librarians in local bodies, to the student members of the Sri Lanka Library Association, government departments, non governmental organizations and others interested in entering the profession.

33 students of the Sri Lanka Library Association were given practical training Librarianship in 1993 and 8 working librarians were also given in - service - training in librarianship in the same year.

FORMER LIBRARIANS

The late Mr. Soloman Cecil Blok served as the

first librarian of the Colombo Public Library from 1925 to 1949. He was totally committed to the library services in this country and can be considered as the father of librarianship in Sri Lanka. Late Mr. D.C.G. Abeywickrama served as the librarian from 1949 - 1960. The period of Mrs. Ishvari Corea who served as Librarian from 1961 to 1986 was very significant in the history of the Colombo Public Library. During this period the book stock grew rapidly (Sinhala, Tamil and English) and most of the present library services were introduced due to her initiative. These include the Children's Library Service, Mobile Library Service, Audio Visual Library and Library to visually handicapped.

Mrs. Ishvari Corea is the author of the books "A basic manual for school librarians" and "Manual of public libraries in Sri Lanka". She also edited several books in Librarianship. "Libraries and People" "Roads to Wisdom" "Treasures of knowledge" are some of the books.

THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLOMBO PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM.

1. Prevailing space problems in the existing branch libraries.
2. Existing vacancies in the library staff. Specially due to the government retirement scheme, many of the qualified librarians retired. Due to the poor salary structures, librarians are reluctant to remain in the service.
3. High cost of books and periodicals published in Sri Lanka and abroad.
4. Poor quality of some books published in the country. Due to the poor quality of paper and printing, books can be used for a limited period only.
5. Poor supply of books published in Sinhala and Tamil, specially, Science and Technology and also books for teenagers and young adults.

PLANS TO IMPROVE THE PRESENT SERVICE

1. Steps have been taken to construct a new Study Hall to provide more facilities for students for

their studies as the present study section is inadequate to meet the existing demand.

2. Expansion of the branch library service by constructing new branch libraries. e.g. the Wanathamulla Branch Library, and a new two storied building for the Kotahena Library expansion of Kirulapone Branch Library.
3. Opening of new service points for the Mobile Library Service and the Book Box Library Service, to encourage reading habits with a view to serving the general public, who still do not read or use books in a purposive way.
4. Expansion of the library extension services towards attracting the potential reader.
5. Service to schools not having adequate library facilities and efforts towards inculcating reading habits in school children.
6. Steps to encourage adult education by co-operating with other agencies in this field.
7. Expansion of the present computerization programme to provide an efficient and effective service.

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University Libraries in Sri Lanka - trends in their development

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ABSTRACT

The premier University Library of Sri Lanka was set up in 1942 when the University of Ceylon was established in the same year. Upto 1959 there was only a single university and a single university library. During the decade 1960-1970 three university libraries were established and each one of them had certain characteristics of the parent organization. By 1986 there were nine university libraries and each had a subject field in which it could support a scholarly activity.'

While improvements have taken place in certain aspects of university librarianship such as library resources and training facilities for staff during the last few decades, there has been no balanced development of university libraries in Sri Lanka. There are no statutes to spell out the objectives and mission of libraries. Most of the university libraries do not have well laid down collection development policies. Moreover the lack of proper buildings has been a brake on university library development in Sri Lanka. Above all there is not much recognition of the significance of the library within the university. The Librarian enjoys the status and the privileges of a professor but he is not a member of the highest academic body viz. the Council. However there has been an improvement with regard to the training and education of the senior staff of university libraries. In a period of rapid and dynamic change in all fields of higher education, the place and function of the university library have yet to be considered by those responsible for the conduct of university education and administration.

INTRODUCTION

It is appropriate to start with the often quoted statement made by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Great Britain in its report of 1921 - 'The character and efficiency of a university may be gauged by its treatment of its central organ - the library. We regard the fullest provision for library maintenance as the primary and most vital need in the equipment of a university.' This statement could be regarded as true today after seventy four years as it was when it was written though there have been changes both in structure and function of universities and their

libraries. There is an increasing recognition in western countries for the educational function of the university library: the two major functions being to support the teaching and research programmes of the university by acquiring print and nonprint materials, processing them and making them available for use.

The functions of university libraries in Sri Lanka are more or less the same as enunciated by the UGC of UK in 1921. The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya in 1974 spelt out the objectives of the library in the following terms: 'undoubtedly a

University Library is built to serve the triple interest of study, teaching and research of its staff and students.² These objectives of the premier university library in Sri Lanka perhaps remain as the objectives of the university libraries established subsequently. However, there has been no clear cut definition given on the objectives of the university libraries in Sri Lanka thereafter and, probably this may be a reason for the underestimation of the role of the library within the university structure. The premier university library in Sri Lanka, the library of the University of Ceylon was founded in 1942, with a collection of nearly 80,000 volumes and was housed at 'Villa Venetia.' In 1952, two major faculties - Arts and Oriental Studies along with the library was moved to Peradeniya. It was temporarily housed at the Arts Building and was shifted to its permanent building in 1960 where it remains upto date.

1942 - 1960: THE FIRST PHASE:

The first phase in University library development in Sri Lanka is the period from 1942 - 1960. The University of Ceylon, established by Ordinance No. 20 of 1942 remained the only institution of university status till 1959 when two other universities were established. Since its establishment in 1942, the growth of the library had been satisfactory judging from its books and periodical vote - Rs. 110,000 in 1952 and the collection reaching 80,000 volumes in the same year. R.S Enright, the first librarian well provided the stewardship that was needed during the library's infancy. In 1954 the book vote had risen to Rs. 170,000 and the stock was approaching the 100,000 mark and in 1960 it reached 140,000. A characteristic of the early period is the due recognition given for the library and the priority given for the allocation of funds for books and periodicals. The librarian also enjoyed the privileges of a Dean and had the same status.

1960 - 1970 THE SECOND PHASE

The second phase, 1960 - 70 has been called the decade of library consciousness. The library awareness that was ushered in after 1960, started with the arrival of Harold V. Bonny, a Unesco library expert from Australia, who submitted a report on the library services of Sri Lanka covering national,

university, special, school and public libraries. Bonny's main recommendation was the setting up of the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board (SLNLSB) as a forerunner for the establishment of the National Library. His recommendation regarding university libraries was that these would provide resources for instruction, research and extension, and there should be integration with other national and international library resources. Bonny's arrival coincided with the formation of the Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) and it was he who delivered the inaugural address. The university librarians along with others took the initiative in the formation of the SLLA and S.C. Blok, the librarian of the Peradeniya University was the Founder President. In the following year A.J. Wells, General Editor of the British National Bibliography, spent six months in the island and under his guidance the Ceylon National Bibliography Office was founded. In December 1967 the meeting of experts on national planning of library services in Asia, organized by Unesco was held in Colombo and at this meeting a plan for a unified library service for Sri Lanka was outlined. The Commission on the University of Ceylon, which submitted its report in 1959, urged that the university library should be given its due place and stated that 'if university research is to be given greater emphasis, the development of the library for basic research must also be given emphasis.'⁴

THREE NEW UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

During the decade three new universities and their libraries were set up and this was a direct result of the increasing student numbers seeking university admission. The introduction of national languages as the media of instruction and the consequent switch over from English was to take place in such a way that the first batch of students in Sinhala and Tamil media were to enter the university in 1960. The Vidyalankara University was established in 1959 and the second new university was the Vidyodaya University which was inaugurated in February 1959. Both these institutions possessed rich collections on Buddhism and other oriental studies and these became the nucleus of their libraries which were set up subsequently. The third university, the University of Colombo, was established as an independent university in October 1967. The library at the Colombo

University was earlier a branch library of the University of Peradeniya Library and since 1967 it became an independent library. The Library was shifted to a semi - permanent building called the National Pavilion and in December 1986 it was shifted to the ground floor of the Law Complex building where it remains today.

The second phase of the development of the university libraries is also the period of their rapid growth. Their funding has been steadily increasing, and as a result there has been an increase in staffing and acquisition of materials. The libraries started training programmes for their staff and they were staffed by trained personnel. The library of the University of Peradeniya had built up a substantial collection of book stock and has also reached a stage of maturity being the premier university library. Apart from its early start and having legal deposit rights, the library of the University of Peradeniya had several other advantages such as trained staff and a rich basic collection. It maintained the highest accession rate of 10,000 volumes per year followed by the University of Jayewardenepura with 4,000 volumes per year. The university libraries also acquired special collections during this period. In 1968 the library of the University of Peradeniya enriched itself by acquiring the Muhandiram D. P. E. Hettiarachchi collection and the D.R. Wijewardene collection. The University Libraries of Jayewardenepura and Kelaniya also relied heavily on benefactors to enhance their special collections during this period. The library of the University of Colombo, spent a high proportion of the book fund on the undergraduate library. However there was an overspending on the faculties of Medicine and Natural Sciences at the expense of other faculties. Though the importance of having a competent library staff was realized by university administrators by the early 1960's, the growth of several university libraries in such a short period made the problem of staffing acute. However it could be said that steps were taken to ameliorate the conditions of the library staff and to retain services, though some qualified staff had been attracted by jobs in other organizations or abroad. It was also during this period that attempts were made to train the senior staff locally and the Post - Graduate Diploma course in Librarianship was started by the professionally qualified librarians. However the

course lasted from 1961 to 1964 and the practice of sending junior staff for training abroad continued.

1970 - 1993 THE THIRD PHASE

The period 1970 -93 saw further progress in libraries and librarianship which resulted from the coming to maturity of institutions established in 1960's. The SLNLSB soon after its establishment in 1970 initiated schemes to develop and improve school and public libraries and also undertook such services as compiling the national bibliography and union catalogue. The SLNLSB has also promoted co - operation among all types of libraries. As mentioned earlier for information and library services of Sri Lanka the decade 1960 -70 was a period of rapid growth. This decade has been followed by a period of maintaining the status quo. By 1968 Sri Lanka's economy was deteriorating and this trend continued until 1976 and in those years there was a deduction in the funding of all welfare activities including education. The funding of the universities was seriously affected during the early 1970's and it was recovered to some extent by 1980. From 1987 onwards funding has been maintained at a satisfactory level in spite of heavy expenses on defence.

ONE SINGLE UNIVERSITY

Reforms in higher education resulting in the University Act No. 1 of 1972, brought four existing universities and the College of Technology at Katubedda under one single 'University of Ceylon' and also had their repercussions on university libraries and their resources. One of the main arguments for a single university was that 'Under the present system there is much wasteful duplication of departments and courses of studies, often not, in keeping with the needs of the country and the existence of the same course of study in several universities had also led to the duplication of library materials at a time when funding was limited'³. For an example there were three departments of education in three separate universities, but after the Act only one Faculty of Education was established at the University of Colombo with one library incorporating the three collections of books on education.

In 1972 the Ceylon College of Technology, Katubedda, was raised to the status of a campus of the University of Ceylon and its library was upgraded to

a campus library. The library of the Department of Architecture and the existing collection of the College of Technology was the nucleus of the library of the present University of Moratuwa. The Universities Act No. 1 of 1972 established the University of Jaffna as a campus of the University of Ceylon. The Jaffna College library which was started in 1823 as a seminary library of the missionary priests of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, formed the nucleus of the present library. The third university to be established during the period 1972-93 was the Open University which was established under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. The existing institutions: the External Services Agency (ESA) of the University of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Institute of Distance Education (SLIDE) were incorporated to form the Open University and the library was started in a part of the main building at Nawala, Rajagiriya in 1981. When the university was shifted to its present building in 1994, the library too was moved to its present location. During the period 1972 - 93 there has been a noteworthy growth in higher education. The total number of undergraduate students has increased during this period. Five libraries were started and the total number of university libraries reached nine. The last two university libraries established during this period are the library of the University of Ruhuna in 1984 and the library of the Eastern University in 1986. These libraries have enriched their collection to a greater extent and in 1992 the University of Peradeniya library had 550,000 volumes followed by the University of Colombo 475,000 volumes. The contribution of university libraries to the national resource in terms of book stock has also increased substantially during the period.

The fields in which the libraries can support 'scholarly activity' and the fields they proposed to strengthen had become apparent by the early 1980's. The University of Moratuwa which specialises in engineering has regarded its collection on Hydrology as its special collection, while in the University of Kelaniya Library its special collection on Buddhist Studies is regarded as outstanding. The Sri Lanka Collection at the University of Peradeniya Library can be considered as the most comprehensive collection with four private collections, the legal deposit collection, the manuscript collection and the

Collection of theses. The University of Colombo has the best law collection which comprises several donations of eminent Dutch jurists, its collection of medical books at the library of the Faculty of Medicine is one of the best collections in the South Asian region.

In spite of drastic budgetary cuts the university libraries have continuously subscribed to foreign periodicals. The number of periodicals received in exchange and as donations have increased over the years. Modern Ceylon Studies, The Ceylon Journal of Humanities and the Ceylon Journal of Science are three of the Journals used by the University of Peradeniya for exchange. In the University of Sri Jayewardenepura library, the journal Vidyodaya has been used extensively for exchange purpose. In the University of Colombo the library has made much use of the Ceylon Journal of Medical Science and the Colombo Law Review in its exchange programme. Prompt and regular publications of journals by the universities would enable their libraries to enrich their periodical collections without much financial strains.

One of the main tasks of the university libraries is to provide research materials for members of the teaching staff and postgraduate students. The University of Peradeniya library, as observed earlier has the largest resources for a research library in social sciences and the humanities, The University of Colombo library has the best research materials on legal studies while the University of Kelaniya library and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura library have important collections on oriental studies. The Jaffna University Library also has some valuable material on languages. On the recommendation of the Committee on the Reorganization on Higher Education in 1971, the university teachers were encouraged to undertake postgraduate studies in Sri Lanka. But little effort has been made to organize the research in the university libraries though it is a prerequisite for undertaking research locally.

STATUS OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY STAFF

The librarian remains as an ex - officio member of the Senate and the other senior staff enjoy the same status as the teaching staff. The senior staff also have the same conditions of sabbatical leave, tenure of office and annuity benefits as the academic staff.

They have also been entitled to leave to attend seminars or to participate in conferences, to serve in survey teams and to serve as consultants for outside agencies either local or foreign. The salaries of the library assistants and other categories have also been revised in 1993 by the UGC. However, in the case of the intermediary staff consisting mainly of library assistants due consideration has not been given for professional qualifications obtained from the SLLA when they are being upgraded.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

There were several improvements with regard to the education and training of senior staff of the university libraries. On the recommendation of the Committee on Higher Education appointed in 1972, it was decided to encourage university teachers and assistant librarians to undertake postgraduate studies in Sri Lanka. As a result, a Department of Library Science was established in 1973 and it served the purpose for which it was set up until 1987. The Department ceased functioning in that year, mainly due to the shortage of full time lecturers. However in 1993, the Department of Library Science was reorganized and courses have commenced. The University of Colombo inaugurated a Masters Programme for the first time in Sri Lanka in 1993. The purpose of the programme is to train librarians and professionals in allied fields to manage changes in technically oriented society.¹⁴ Since its inception the Masters Programme has trained the assistant librarians in the universities and other organizations who had been stagnating without any promotional prospects. The Masters Programme has fulfilled an important role in the professional development of the senior staff of university libraries.

CONCLUSION

The university libraries of Sri Lanka had three distinct phases in their development. During each phase there has been an improvement in one or several aspects of university librarianship. In the third phase of growth there was a marked improvement in the provision of education and training for the senior as well as for the intermediary staff. Further there has been an enormous increase in library resources. But there has been no balanced development of university libraries in Sri Lanka.

Most of the problems faced by university libraries in Sri Lanka at present are common to most developing countries. As in some of the developing countries the university statutes in Sri Lanka do not spell out the functions and the mission of the library. The lack of proper buildings has hampered the growth of university libraries in Sri Lanka to a great extent. The significance of the library within the university has not been well recognized in Sri Lanka. The Librarian is not a member of the highest academic body namely the council though he has the same status of a professor. His presence in all academic bodies is a requisite if he is to be given his due place. The university libraries of Sri Lanka are at the cross-roads of development. They together constitute the nation's largest bibliographical resource, their staffing is at highly professional level and they are being heavily used by the staff and students. It is rather depressing that their significance has not been fully realized yet.

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TRENDS IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES & INFORMATION CENTRES

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ABSTRACT

Discusses briefly developments in the past 25 years. Draws attention to the need to attract science qualified persons to the profession; the need to publicise the value of information, to attract funding from the private sector and income from government lotteries. Describes bibliographic and nonbibliographic databases and stresses the importance of total quality control. Discusses changes in publications. Recommends stronger interaction with user and the identification of a national coordinating body to plan and monitor information services.

There has been considerable progress in the field of special librarianship in Sri Lanka during the past 25 years. The former concept of special libraries as storehouses with a custodial function and manned by Storekeeper/ Librarians has been replaced. Special libraries are now considered as access points actively providing information to end users.¹ Several special libraries and information centres were set up in the public sector, especially by statutory bodies. NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations), especially those in the fields of Gender, Ethnic, Environmental Studies, Rural Development, acquired specialized literature with partial foreign funding. The need for upto date trade information arose after the re-orientation of the government's economic policies towards competition and market orientation. The EDB (Export Development Board), several Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Associations of Exporters in various sectors, set up special collections to meet this need. Some of these collections are accessible to individual and corporate members only. Development, finance (banks and financial institutions), and advertising (e.g Phoenix) were other areas which recognised the usefulness of in-house special libraries. In the private sector however, except multinational firms (e.g. Unilever) which receive

confidential research reports from their parent companies, organised specialised collections are not known.

These developments however, have been on an ad hoc basis, without planning and / or coordination. The result - gaps as well as duplication of resources and services.

The following statement² however applies to some libraries - 'shortages of trained staff, impoverished collections, inadequate library premises and equipment - incapable of meeting users' needs.' Users of such libraries turn elsewhere for information needs and libraries of their own institutions are further neglected - a vicious circle.

The Ceylon Institute of Scientific & Industrial Research (CISIR) merits special mention. Here, successive Chairmen and Directors gave priority to the library in allocating funds for resources and equipment. Today, the CISIR Library³ (now called the Information Services Centre), with its greatly expanded resources and services can be considered the ONE STOP for Science & Technology (S & T) information in Sri Lanka.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

In 1995, four Institutions advertised for science graduates for their information centres. There will be

increasing job opportunities not only for science graduates but also for GCE (A Level) science qualified personnel for information work. A promotional campaign needs to be undertaken to attract such persons to the information science profession. Senior librarians could serve as role models, participate in career guidance seminars to attract youth to the profession.

One of the problems faced is the lower salary scales applicable to information science personnel, when compared to other professionals. At CISIR, in 1985, the designation of library staff who were graduates was changed from Assistant Librarian to Scientific Officer (Information) and recruitment qualifications and salary scales equated to that of research staff - again an example of recognition by the CISIR management.

If the present shortage of science qualified personnel for information work continues, there is a danger that institutions unable to fill their vacancies will turn to Computer Science or Mass Communication qualified personnel.

Contracting out of some areas of special library work can be considered, where contract workers are allowed to work during weekends and holidays. At present, contracting out is confined to creation of databases and often mainly in cases where foreign funding is available.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES:

Except in the case of CISIR and Tea Research Institute funding for special libraries has been very low: While some special libraries have experienced zero growth, very large sums of money have been gifted by the private sector for promotion of Sports and Music. There are also large sums of money collected by the Government as income from national lotteries, Isn't it possible for even a small fraction of this money to be allocated to libraries? In order to ensure proper use of the funds, money could be allocated through a system of bids, which can be evaluated by an independent body. Subsequently there should be a monitoring and evaluation mechanism as well.

Today one of the priority areas is YOUTH. The role of special libraries in upliftment of youth in providing ideas for self-employment projects needs to be stressed.

There should be a powerful lobby to convince politicians, decision makers that information can have a direct impact on the development of the country. Information should be automatically included in all priority projects, as a component, to enable provision of local and / or foreign funding. Aggressive use of the media for promotion of information services; the organisation of an annual Information Day, with the focus on information available from libraries; a weekly information column in the press, where answers are provided for questions using literature in special libraries, are some ways of promoting information and making the public information conscious - then the public will clamour for greater funding for libraries.

In recent years, some libraries have begun charging for services. Such charges should preferably cover staff time and material costs only, government or project funds being used for capital expenditure.

COMPUTER - BASED SERVICES:

In 1980, there was an ambitious project to create an International data bank for non-aligned countries on a co-operative basis. This project was discussed at several meetings by a committee comprising staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Scientists & Information technology personnel. UN funds were sought for the project. The project however did not materialise. The first computerised library catalogue was created on a minicomputer at the Sri Lanka Scientific & Technical Information Centre (SLSTIC.) In 1990, both CISIR library and Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI) Library created databases on minicomputers, which could be searched by scientists having personal computers or terminals connected to the minicomputer. At CISIR, the databases were accessible at 16 locations within CISIR. With the introduction of CDS / ISIS software, many special librarians received training, but the pace of computerisation has been slow. Although a common bibliographic format was worked out in 1988,⁴ the format has subsequently been modified or changed. A revised common format with mandatory and optional fields is an urgent need. For many small special libraries, a simple one screen data entry worksheet would suffice. At the Institute of Policy Studies Library, using a simple format, it was possible

to create a database with 1800 records in 9 months.

Databases have also been created by scientists. Prof V Kumar⁵ (Chemistry Dept., University of Peradeniya) has supervised a database on medicinal plants, where scientific and local names of plants, uses, activity, and active components can be searched. Although this may not be in the accepted bibliographic format, it enables identification of relevant references. Dr. Lakshmi Arambewela (CISIR) has supervised creation of a database on Ayurvedic medicine, where retrieval of information under the names of the plant, name of drug and disease is possible. Dbase has been used for these databases.

Other bibliographic databases maintained by specialists not by librarians are: Local References on Forest species (Forestry Information Service) and References to local agricultural statistics (Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research & Training Institute). Special Libraries should be aware of these databases and use them in their information services.

There is an urgent need to introduce the concept of total quality management⁶ at least by Network Centres where databases are created from information supplied by member libraries, in order to avoid errors, which often arise by mis-reading entries sent in hand written forms, by some libraries. A team leader could be identified to check the path by which the information is received, co-ordinate logistics and serve as implementer and evaluator to ensure that the databases are of a certain standard acceptable to end users.

Information technology personnel have responded to the need for upto date directory type information, by creating databases on scientists, scientific institutions, on-going research projects (National Resources, Energy & Science Authority (NARESA), scientists and their specializations (Media Resource Service, Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS). Commercial services which provide information over the telephone on a 24-hour basis are INFOMART 100,000 records on products & services available in Sri Lanka, INFOLINK which also provides cellular telephone number, and the most recent FASTFINDER - an electronic directory. In these services, payments are made by firms for inclusion of their names and services in the database.

Many of these databases have been created to

meet identified needs which are not met by Special Libraries. With the increasing emphasis on value-added information, Factual databases have been introduced, containing information in a concise structured format. An example is the factual database maintained at CISIR, which is the national node of the Asia Pacific Information Network on Medicinal & Aromatic Plants (APINMAP).

A few centres have acquired databases on CD-ROM (Compact Disk Read Only Memory). An inventory of such databases, with their location, access costs is required, in order to prevent duplication within the country.

Lanka Internet⁷ was launched in April 1995, enabling 2 options full access or E-mail connectivity only. It has been described as Sri Lanka's path to the information superhighway. Through Internet, over 5,000 Newsgroups (Usenet) can be accessed as well as databases. On-line access to foreign databases was first available through the Sri Lanka Business Development Centre (SLBDC). Export Development Board (EDB) has made available on-line access on a cost sharing basis, where the subscription to databases is met by EDB. Trade information (export and import statistics, prices of commodities, company profiles) and bibliographic references are available. AgEnt operates a commercial information service, using on-line access, with emphasis on agricultural information. Information Science personnel are involved in only some of these services.

By the end of this year, NARESA is expected to set up a network (with funding from Sweden) linking the major academic and research institutes and the National Library. It is interesting to note that the Industrial Technological and Marketing Information Network (ITMIN) which is being set up with UNIDO funds as a commercial network, also has as one of its objectives 'to set up the backbone for a national information infrastructure.'⁸ With the setting up of this network, several questions will arise - Will the library budgets be increased to meet the additional costs? Who will meet the search costs, the user or the library? Will there be two access costs, one for the NARESA network and a substantially higher cost for ITMIN (which will operate as a commercial venture)? The new services will change the role of the librarian - who will now be called upon to assist users to formulate search strategies, help in identification of

databases to be searched, filter the retrieved references omitting irrelevant references in order to save the users time. Non - availability of essential journals in the country will be a serious drawback in the network.

When the Sri Lankan network is operational, participating libraries could start with a home page, which will have information on names of staff members, subject coverage of library, current periodical holdings, conditions for use of collection. This will enable an inter library loan service using E - mail to commence immediately.

Other computer - based services include: Selective Dissemination of Information, (SDI) where profiles of research staff are matched with records added to the databases and notifications of matched records sent by E - mail; Computerisation of loan records, using the accession number to link the loan record to the full record in the database. These were implemented at the CISIR Library by Dilmani Warnasuriya.*

PUBLICATIONS:

Several special libraries circulate a bulletin containing photocopies of contents pages of current periodicals, both in - house and to network libraries according to their interests. A useful co - operative current awareness service was initiated by TECHNINET⁹ but this network is now not functioning, although the present emphasis is on technology information. Some current awareness services were suspended, because of queries on cost, value and effectiveness. New publications with selections with selective coverage, containing abstracts, have emerged. These include: Food Digest, S & T Information, (CISIR Library), Documentation bulletins containing references from other libraries as well (Industrial Development Board). The information analysis agro - product series was initiated by EDB in 1995, publications on Cashew, Banana, Foliage plants were released. An example of a publication compiled through co - operative efforts was the Bibliography of pineapple, where participating libraries of the Agriculture Information Network sent references from their indexes, databases (including CD - ROM databases) and references were also identified by scanning the abstracting services.

GREY LITERATURE:¹⁰

The importance of grey literature in information services and the difficulties experienced in locating policy documents, special reports, proceedings of seminars, conference papers, etc. has often been highlighted. Some officials hoard report literature, with the realisation that Information means power. Special librarians often have to take the role of a detective in the acquisition of relevant documents since direct requests would either receive a negative response or no response, and the statement that only limited numbers were reproduced.

INTERACTION WITH USERS:

Although user seminars have been held by networks, in general user interaction with special librarians has been unsatisfactory. To advance the profession, it is necessary for special librarians to work with professionals, outside their official work. IDB includes information for industry, as a topic in all their seminars held in various parts of the country and IDB information staff also visit small industrialists to ascertain their information needs. Information scientists participated in the following seminars during the period: Information needs of scientists (SLAAS, 1982); Chemical information (Institute of Chemistry, 1988). The APINMAP Database was demonstrated at a SLAAS Seminar on Medicinal & Aromatic Plants in 1990. Users should be included when network activities are being planned to ensure that the programmes are those that users require.

FUTURE:

The formulation of a national information policy, after studying other policies such as Science, Agriculture and Health policies is an urgent need. A national coordinating body should be identified for monitoring and evaluating existing and future services. Submission of annual statistics to the national centre, by all libraries should be made mandatory, as without statistics, planning is not possible. Information Scientists should play a more pro - active role with decision makers, automatically providing the information on the basis of which decisions can be made. The National Library could work closely with NARESA to enable Sri Lanka to leapfrog to newly industrialized country (NIC) status in the 21st century

and to enter cyberspace on the Information superhighway.

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Collection Development in University Libraries

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ABSTRACT

The financial crisis faced by the libraries and the proliferation of research communication and the publishing / storage mediums of these information have made collection development a challenging task for the modern day librarian. The impact of these developments in fulfilling the objectives of the university library vis a vis supporting of undergraduate study, teaching and research are discussed. The problem of supplying multiple copies of undergraduate texts and high cost of journal subscriptions are discussed. It concludes by outlining ways such as resource sharing and cooperative storage by which these problems can be minimised to a certain extent, while maintaining a balance between the needs of the user community; the staff and the students.

Budgetary constraints which almost all libraries are enduring and the impact of electronic technology on academic research has become the most important issue an academic librarian is faced with today. The research communications produced by the academics are proliferating and the mediums through which the research can be communicated are increasing.

Therefore, the collection development librarian faces challenges posed by the dwindling resources and the ever expanding ways of allocating these resources. They are responsible for finding ways to provide both access and appropriate ownership.

The primary objective of the academic library is to support undergraduate study, teaching programmes and research. The university library plays a dual role where the library provides teaching and learning materials for undergraduates, and research materials for the rest of the community. It is therefore, imperative for the academic librarians to monitor constantly the courses of study and changes in the curriculum. They can find out what courses are offered in each of the faculties, whether they are meant for undergraduate, masters or doctoral levels,

the number of students who enrol in a particular programme, and the extension programmes offered by the faculty.

The collection development activities in academic libraries are greatly influenced by the university's curriculum across the faculties. The provision of the materials for undergraduate study is easy, because what is required ascertainable and, assuming that there are adequate financial resources equally readily obtainable. Extra curricular interests of the students have also to be taken into consideration. Their interests surpass the formal courses taught in the classroom.

The research interests of the faculty is as important but more problematical, because there are precisely no upper limits to such provision. The research workers need a library with basic general reference works, specialized works in their respective fields including periodicals, hence the libraries are not able to draw exact boundaries.

In addition to these two major functions the university libraries are also expected to provide books for a variety of reference needs. Bibliographic tools,

national and subject bibliographies, catalogues of major libraries, union lists of periodicals, standard reference works such as encyclopedias, atlases, language dictionaries yearbooks etc., relevant educational guides such as university calendar, directories of research organizations etc., are some of them.

Academic Library is an integral part of its parent organization. Hence every decision made whether financial, academic or administrative has a potential impact on the library. When the university decides to commence a new degree programme or to expand an already existing programme, or to admit more students in a given year; the library has to respond to all these in a very positive manner.

In most countries the universities are state funded and during the 1960's the governments accorded high priority to higher education which received adequate support by the state. With the expansion of the universities to cater to the ever increasing number of students seeking admission, the libraries received sufficient funds to acquire materials, equipment and other resources.

The beginning of 1980 saw change in the environment. The increased student enrolment, increase in the number of courses offered by the universities, continuing rise of inflation during the 1980s not keeping with the increase in material budgets severely handicapped the development of academic libraries.

The academic libraries developed their library collection on two tenets; that the collection should reflect the needs of the users and that the collection should be a balanced one representing the mission or the objective of the institution. As the universities emphasize both teaching and research the university libraries must try to supply materials needed for courses currently being taught and current faculty research, while at the same time building a collection that may be of use to the researchers in the future. Very often conflict among the priorities arose in times of severely limited budgets.

Multiple copies of text books will be needed to meet the demands of the undergraduate students and it is hard to justify expensive purchases of scholarly works where the demand will be less. It is also a fact that there are a large number of researchers who are pressurised by their institutions to publish for their

promotions. The library, therefore, is bound to provide needed information for their research. Balancing research needs against teaching and study is recurrent and unsolved problem in the university libraries.

Serial publications, which are increasing in volume and cost pose another major problem. In most scientific disciplines serials are the most important source of information. It is considered as a fundamental means of exchanging ideas within a scientific community, a way of learning about work in progress, a means of validating and assessing an individual's work. This consideration has been used by the librarians over the years to justify maintaining large collections of scientific journals in spite of the high prices and high inflation rate.

There is no doubt that most periodicals are important for research and teaching, and the libraries must either acquire or provide access to them if they wish to support research activities in the universities. The exorbitant prices of serials have made the selection or cancellation of subscriptions a major exercise where collaborative and consultative effort between the teaching and the library staff is required.

Charles Hamaker who conducted a study as to why journal prices have escalated above any traditional measure found that there has been an explosive growth in article production. The basic laws of demand and supply does not apply to production of journals. When the demand for journals is on the increase the price should come down as a result. This has not happened in the world book trade. He found that between 1982 and 1992 the number of books published increased by 44% and the prices increased by about 65%. The volume of the increase of articles published during this period was less than 10% but the price increase was 32%

With the continuous increase in journal subscription prices, most academic libraries tend to spend a major portion of their allocation on journal subscription. Overemphasis on journal subscriptions may hamper the development of undergraduate collections. If this trend continues, the problem of librarians will not be solved by increased funding. The librarians must now think and decide how much information they should own and how much they will borrow through inter lending or acquire through document delivery services.

The librarians must give consideration to two factors when deciding on retention or cancellation of journal subscriptions. The most important factor is the cost. The cost of ownership vs. cost of borrowing and purchasing from document delivery services. Access through electronic media is a very attractive proposition to the users but may be a drain on the resources of the library.

The other factor is the speed of access of information. A user will want the information at the time of his need, and if his needs are not satisfied the system will fail. The traditional Inter Library Loan (ILL) system will require around two weeks to borrow a book and the users may want information quickly. Although University librarians are giving much attention to the collection development problem posed by serials, a totally satisfactory solution has not yet been found. One popular approach seems to be to provide access via cooperative projects, to handle little used periodicals.

All these changes have put an end to the era where libraries tried to reach self-sufficiency, and has given recognition to the importance of more systematic and formal approach towards collection development. No library can today buy all materials needed by their clientele. When developing collections the librarians must give due recognition to the goals and objectives of the institution and the information needs of the user community. Their needs must be identified, analyzed and translated into a planned programme of collection development. The concept of sharing resources among libraries has gained importance during the past decades.

The resource sharing aims to improve bibliographic access and physical access. Bibliographic access provides the information needed to identify publications, verifying their existence, location etc. and physical access provides means of obtaining a copy of a needed publication.

Basically resource sharing resulted in the reduction of expensive duplicate purchasing and also ensured that all materials of research value in designated fields were acquired by at least one member institution or through an outside institution such as the British Library, Library of Congress or the Center for Research Libraries.

Periodicals because they are expensive to acquire and bulky to store are often the focus of

cooperative schemes. Unlike the individual monographs they are relatively easy to keep under bibliographic control. No library can purchase or maintain subscriptions of all periodicals needed by their users, so sharing of periodicals appeals to all types and sizes of libraries.

A survey carried out in 1991 in 76 Canadian and US libraries measured costs directly involved in ILL operations, staff costs, networking charges, photocopying fees, delivery charges to decide the basis on which retention or cancellation decisions should be made. The study found that maintenance of low use titles is much more expensive than borrowing the same through ILL or document delivery services. The cost of retention included ordering, receiving, accounting, processing, binding, storage costs in addition to subscription costs.

Cooperative storage libraries is another way of providing a central collection of materials upon which all members could draw materials which they cannot afford to buy for their own collection. Center for Research Libraries which was founded in 1949 places more emphasis on cooperative storage as a way of sharing infrequently used research materials. This serves as a central storage and lending agency.

Resource sharing itself is not a new idea. Establishment of union catalogues and development of cooperative acquisition schemes were in operation since the World War 1. For example the Research Libraries Group (RLG) founded in 1974 by the New York Public Library and the libraries of Columbia, Harvard and Yale universities focus on the development of shared computer based bibliographic processing and access system. In Britain, the National Central Library was reorganized in 1931 to facilitate inter library lending. The establishment of the British Library Document Supply Centre depicts the culmination of this process. It now provides a national as well as an international inter lending service.

In an era where librarians are facing severe budgetary constraints on one hand and the ever increasing needs of the academic community on the other, they have to search for means of access to a large spectrum of resources to cater to their needs. As a result the librarians have now been drawn into mechanised resource sharing programmes to alleviate their problems. Automated bibliographic services like BLCMP, SWALCAP and OCLC are very active

in this field. Costs and benefits are shared and the pooling of resources make systems possible which would be out of the question for individual libraries, if they were operating independently.

Electronic enquiry networks are another development, which enables a number of libraries in the network to search library databases available in the network. Joint Academic Network (JANET) established in 1984 is a good example of such networks. Though resource sharing has never been considered a solution to all collection development problems, it is now being considered a part of the library organization. The librarians will now have to spend money not only for books and periodicals but also for computer systems, telecommunication links, network participation and other connected fields to provide access to information.

However, the resource sharing systems should not be used to such an extent as to diminish the library's collection development goals. Browsing is a very important activity of satisfying needs of users. Various studies have shown that users select the books primarily by browsing and what they will select is what is available. In a faculty the members will feel that they need to browse through latest issues of periodicals to remain current in their respective subject disciplines. If a librarian restricts what is available in a library it will not be a service but a disservice to their user. It restricts the free circulation of ideas, information and materials.

The library therefore must use the resource sharing programmes to supplement the resources held by a library. The librarian however should not overlook the needs of the library's primary clientele.

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Dearth of Information in Medical School Libraries

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the dearth of educational materials in Sri Lankan medical school libraries due to financial constraints. This is mainly due to poverty and inflation in the third world countries and the price escalation of books and periodicals. As most western publishers of periodicals have different price structures, it was found that academic libraries in the Asian region (in general) have to pay a higher price for their educational materials. Inflation rates were examined by way of calculating the dollar and sterling pound against the Sri Lankan rupee during the past five years. Escalation of prices of 10 randomly selected medical journals were also examined during the past five years. It was revealed that the prices of these journals in Sri Lankan rupees increased at an average rate of 11 to 38 percent per year.

As a model, a number of journals subscribed together with the purchasing capacity of one medical school library were analyzed during the period under review.

Some remedial measures to overcome these problems are discussed. It was found that unless appropriate remedial measures are implemented the academic libraries of the third world including Sri Lanka may not be able to serve their clientele's information needs successfully.

INTRODUCTION:

Sri Lanka has six medical schools which follow a system of teaching based on the western medical curriculum. Of these, four medical schools have libraries which possess reasonable resources. These are the medical libraries of the Universities of Colombo, Peradeniya, Jaffna and Ruhuna. The medical libraries in the faculties of medicine of the University of Kelaniya and University of Sri Jayawardenepura are in an early stage of development. Recent developments in medical care and medical education have had a major impact on the mission of health science libraries. In the unending struggle to keep pace with new technologies and services, libraries have had to respond to increasing demands while receiving a decreasing share of the financial supply from their hosting institutions.

The dearth of primary and secondary sources of information in the Sri Lankan medical school

libraries adversely affect the quality of education in these educational institutions. The main reason for this scarcity of resources lie in the fact that these medical libraries are heavily dependent on information generated in the western countries. The reason for this is the relative fewness of literature produced in the field of western medical practice by Sri Lanka and other Asian countries while the industrialized countries are showing remarkable growth in generating medical information. Furthermore, there are also some other key factors which accelerate the scarcity of much needed educational materials in the medical school libraries of Sri Lanka.

(a) Poverty and Inflation in the country:

Developed countries like USA, UK, Japan and so forth are economically well ahead of the developing country like Sri Lanka. Therefore the developed countries could absorb the impact of escalating prices of books and periodicals easier than us.

Fluctuations of American Dollar & Sterling Pound against the Sri Lankan Rupee

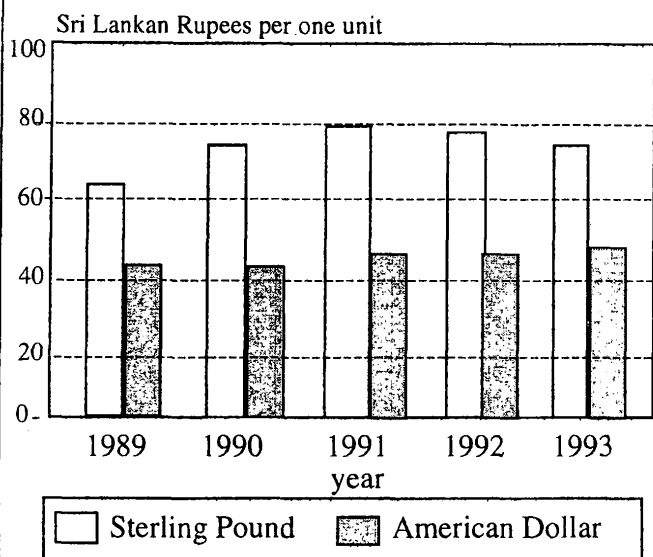


Figure 1 shows the fluctuations of the American dollar and the Sterling pound against the Sri Lankan rupee over the last five years. The American dollar shows a steady increase over the last five years. Due to the falling of Sterling pound since 1991 in the international market there is a slight decrease over the rupee after 1991. However, on average the Sterling pound has increased its value against the Sri Lankan rupee by 7.5% per year while the American dollar shows an increase of 4.09% per year.

(b) High prices for educational materials acquired by academic libraries in the Asia region

Price structures of books and periodicals given by western publishers depend on two basic divisions. One is for persons / institutions and the other is for geographical location of the purchasing country. Among the rates for persons / institutions, the lowest is usually for students and residents. The higher prices are for the libraries and institutions. Due to geographical distance between the Asian countries and the literature producing western countries, Asian libraries have to pay more for postage and handling of books and periodicals which they purchase. Thus the Asian libraries have to pay higher prices for their books and periodicals purchased from western countries than American and European libraries.

(c) Escalation of prices of books and periodicals

The prices of books and periodicals published by western countries are increased year by year. In particular, the prices of materials in the medical field are increased at a higher rate than of those in other disciplines.¹

Table I shows the price increase of some randomly selected 10 medical journals, 5 published in USA and the rest published in Britain over a five year period starting from 1989. These prices were provided by the publishers of the journals mentioned.

Price increase of some randomly selected medical journals

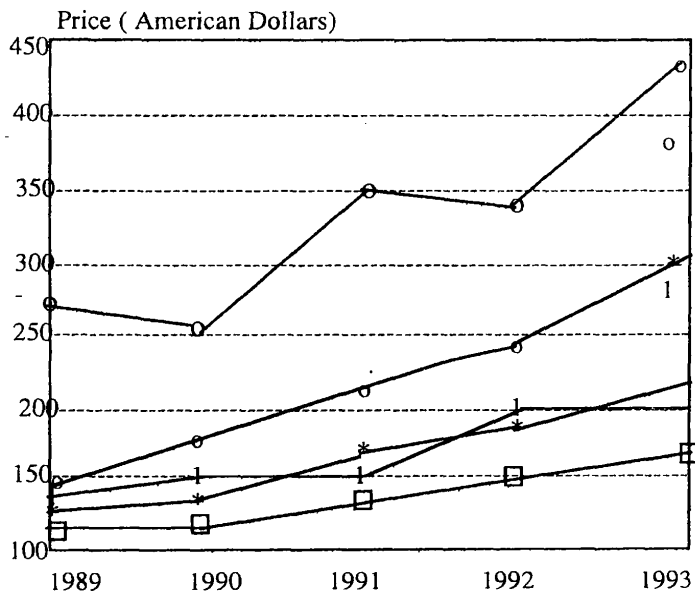
Table I

Journal Name	Price					Average % of price increase
	(1989)	(1990)	(1991)	(1992)	(1993)	
1. Acta Psy scan	\$ 259.50	\$248	\$341.09	\$ 327	\$428.57	19%
	Rs.10380	Rs9979.54	Rs14523.61	Rs.13995.60	Rs. 1994.93	
2. Am J Obs & Gyn	\$ 135.50	\$154.50	\$156	\$201	\$218	15%
	Rs5420	Rs6217.08	Rs6642.48	Rs8602.80	Rs10147.90	
3. J of pediac	\$126	\$143.50	\$166	\$187	\$205	16%
	Rs5040	Rs5774.44	Rs7068.28	Rs8003.60	Rs9542.75	
4. Obs & Gyn	\$115	\$120	\$140	\$150	\$165	11%
	Rs4600	Rs4828.80	Rs5961.20	Rs6420	Rs7680.75	

5. Acta pae scan	\$140	\$171	\$203	\$235	\$294	28%
	Rs5600	Rs6881.04	Rs8643.74	Rs100058	Rs13685.70	36%
6. Br J Hos Med	f70	f75	f95	f160	f160	32%
	Rs4552.80	Rs5669.25	Rs7560.10	Rs12499.20	Rs11465.60	38%
7. Br J Uro	f69	f85	f92	f100	f113	11%
	Rs5138.16	Rs6425.15	Rs7321.36	Rs7812	Rs8097.58	14%
8. Br Heart J	f99	f124	f136	f164	f164	16%
	Rs6438.96	Rs9373.16	Rs10822.88	Rs12811.68	Rs11752.24	12%
9. J Med Micro	f140	f160	f173	f209	f253	20%
	Rs 9105.60	Rs12094	Rs13767.34	Rs16327	Rs18129.98	25%
10. Psy Med	f106	f114	f124	f129	f137	7%
	Rs6894.24	Rs8617.26	Rs9867.92	Rs10077.48	Rs9817.42	11%

Increases of prices of last five journals in Sterling Pounds

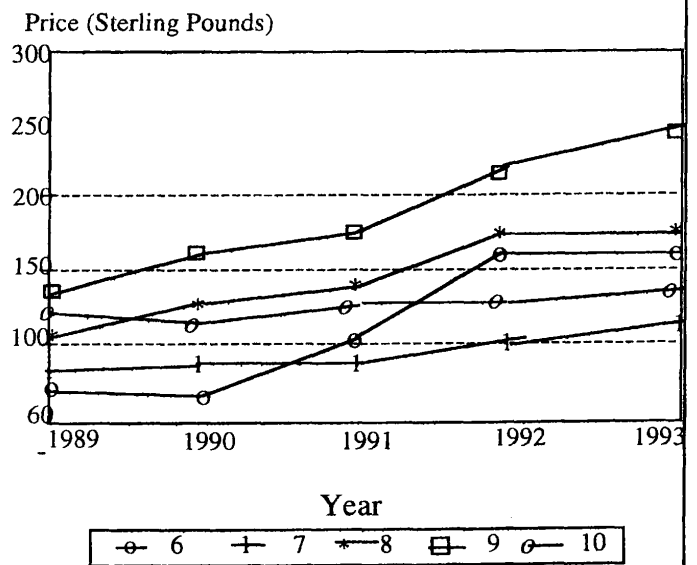
Increases of prices of first five Journals in American Dollars



○ 1 + 2 * 3 □ 4 ○ 5

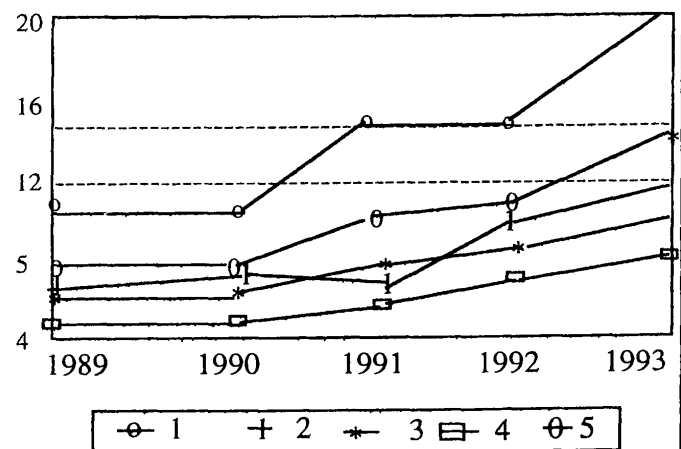
Figure 2

Figure 3 shows the price increase in sterling pounds over the years from 1989 to 1993 for journals numbered from (6) to (10)



○ 6 + 7 * 8 □ 9 ○ 10

Figure 3



○ 1 + 2 * 3 □ 4 ○ 5

Figure 3

Increases of prices of last five journals in Sri Lankan Rupees

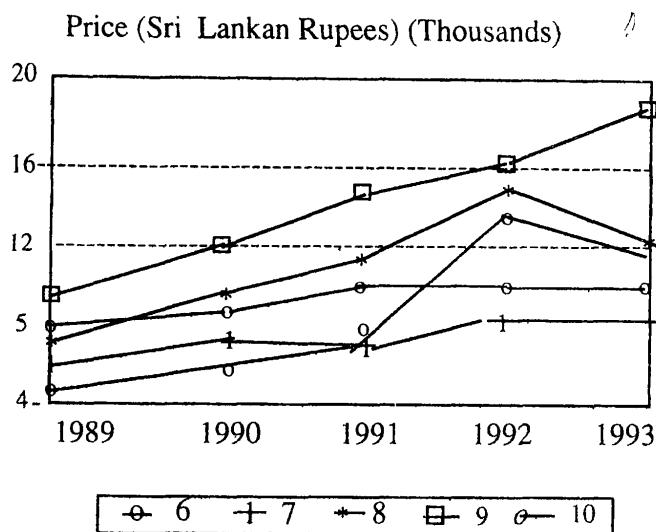


Figure 5

Figure 4 shows the price increase in Sri Lankan Rupees over the years from 1989 to 1993 or the Journals numbered from (1) to (5).

Graphs in Figures 2, 4 and those in Figures 3, 5 are similar. However graphs 4 & 5 have shown more increase in rates than graphs 2 & 3. This means that the prices of journals are increasing in rupees at a higher rate than in American dollars & sterling pounds. This was due to inflation and devaluation of the rupee over the years under review. It is also interesting to note the change of the graph patterns in graph 3 & 5 which represent journals numbered (6), (8). This was due to falling of the sterling pound in the international market since 1991. By contrast, the average percentage of the annual price increase of the journals mentioned in Sri Lankan rupees ranged from 11% to 38%.

PURCHASING CAPACITY OF THE LIBRARY, FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF RUHUNA

The library system of the University of Ruhuna consists of three libraries at three different locations:

- (1) The main library which serves for the faculties of Science, Humanities and Social Sciences in Wellamadama, Matara.
- (2) The Medical library in Karapitiya, Galle.

- (3) The Agriculture library in Mapalana, Kamburupitiya.

The library system is allocated funds for the purchasing of books and periodicals at the beginning of each year by the University authorities. Based on the student ratio which the libraries serve, the main allocation is divided among the three libraries.

Following is a review of the allocation received by the library system and the medical library over the years from 1989 to 1993.

Table II

Year	Total allocation for purchasing books/periodicals	Allocation for the Medical library	Percentage from the Total
1989	Rs. 2,000,000	Rs. 500,000	25%
1990	Rs. 3,000,000	Rs. 800,000	26.6%
1991	Rs. 3,700,000	Rs. 700,000	19%
1992	Rs. 2,200,000	Rs. 550,000	25%
1993	Rs. 5,200,000	Rs. 1,300,000	25%

Medical Library's actual expenditure on books/periodicals for the five years from 1989 to 1993

Table III

Year	Funds utilized for books	Percentage for books	Funds utilized for Periodicals	Percentage for Periodicals	Number of titles
1989	Rs. 160,000	26.66%	Rs. 440,000	73.34%	88
1990	Rs. 350,000	36.85%	Rs. 600,000	63.15%	68
1991	Rs. 85,000	11.73%	Rs. 640,000	88.27%	67
1992	None		Rs. 725,000	100%	64
1993	Rs. 500,000	38.4%	Rs. 800,000	61.6%	64

Comparing Table II and Table III it is clearly visible that the actual expenditure of the Medical Library for books and periodicals far exceeds the allocation during the years from 1989 to 1992. This was due to the fact that in those years the Faculty of Medicine has allocated some extra funds from the Faculty funds to the Library realizing that otherwise the Library has to prune some of the titles of Periodicals

subscribed.

Further Table II shows that on an average the medical library receives 24% of the total allocation for the whole library system.

The data in Table III reveals that on an average the Medical library spent 77% of its allocation for purchasing of periodicals. They further show that, while the money spent on periodicals has increased from Rs. 440,000 to Rs. 800,000 the number of titles subscribed during the same period have come down from 88 to 64. Similarly all other bio - medical libraries in Sri Lanka face the same difficulties in the collection development process due to financial constraints.

S.R. Korale² reported that all the participating libraries of the HELLIS (Health Literature Library and Information Services) network subscribed to purchase a total number of 742 periodicals for the year 1990. She further shows that the number of periodicals subscribed by HELLIS participating libraries declined sharply from 824 in 1970 to 742 in 1990 even though the number of bio - medical libraries increased during these years.

Several libraries of the HELLIS network introduced MEDLINE on CD-ROM as a service to their clientele during the last couple of years. This has decreased the success rate of making searches for articles in Sri Lanka. However at present more and more searches are being conducted under the new service. It is estimated that the Index Medicus or Medline on CDS databases now contain reference to articles from more than 3200 periodicals covering the fields of medical and bio - medical sciences.³

From the above study it was revealed that all Sri Lankan medical or bio - medical libraries subscribe only to a total of 700 - 800 periodicals whereas the average medical libraries in the developing countries subscribe to more than 2000 periodicals.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The above findings clearly show the dearth of medical information resources of the country. However by implementing some remedial measures the ill - effect of this scarcity of medical resources could be overcome to some extent.

Remedial measures to overcome the paucity of library resources in Sri Lanka

(1) Sharing the library resources by co - operative activities on a subject specialization basis.

In the field of medicine, such co - operative activities exist due to the presence of HELLIS (Health Literature Library and Information Services) Network in the South East Asia Region. The HELLIS was conceptualized at the 31st Session of the WHO, SEARO held at Ulan Bator in 1978.

In pursuance of this decision the regional network of HELLIS was established at a consultative meeting held in New Delhi in August 1979 and the meeting recommended a plan of action which was to be implemented by the participating countries. In Sri Lanka the creation of a national network of health science libraries followed with the organization of a meeting of heads and librarians of the health - related institutions convened under the auspices of the Ministry of Health in December 1979⁴. During the past 15 years HELLIS (Sri Lanka) has been able to take meaningful steps in a number of areas to improve and strengthen health - science information provision to users. Since its inception in 1979 the Network has grown from 12 to 20 members. Therefore the on going activities of HELLIS are admirable in this context.

(2) Use of modern library technology, at least up to the levels financially viable

Today databases on CD - ROM (Compact Disks - Read Only Memory) are being widely used in the areas of secondary and primary sources of information. Silver Platter Medline on CDs are one prime example (Secondary). At present two medical school libraries are equipped with Medline on CDS. The Extra - MED CDs are the other feasible solution to overcome the paucity of bio - medical journals in the country (primary).

Extra - MED is a system of delivering electronic documents that covers journals from developing countries that are not usually listed in Medline. This new Extra - MED CDs contain full text of over 200 journals in the bio - medical sciences. All that is needed to run Extra - MED is a personal computer with eight megabytes of RAM, ten megabytes of

hard disk space, Windows 3.1 and a CD - ROM player. Extra - MED costs f 2000 (Rs. 140,000) at present and subscribers receive a monthly disk and a newsletter⁵.

To use this kind of databases on CDs does not involve any extra cost for telecommunication etc. Therefore CDs would be a very practicable solution to ease the ill-effect of scarcity of medical information in the country.

Further, the microcomputers are becoming cheaper day by day. It seems that the academic libraries of third world countries are capable of acquiring these equipment easily. Further, to use these microcomputers to run CD - ROM players, it is possible to create bibliographic databases of the library's collection. As exchanges of these databases are possible, it would be much beneficial if these databases are exchanged among the academic libraries catering to the scientists and practitioners in the same subject area.

Similarly it is possible to create various kinds of Directories, Indexes, Bibliographies, etc., using these microcomputers. Databases, Directories, Indexes, etc., so created, would be very beneficial in the context of maximizing the utilization of available resources.

(3) Have a clear or direct educational policy (in any specialized discipline)

Meeting on WHO/SEARO Regional Consultation on Targeting for Reorientation of Medical Education held in Nov. 1987 has identified the following in this connection as:

" The goal for reorientation of medical education in the South - East Asia region is that, by the year 2000, all medical schools in the region will be producing, according to the needs and resources of the country, graduate or specialist doctors who are responsive to the social and societal needs and who possess the appropriate ethical, social, technical, scientific and management abilities so as to enable them to work effectively in the comprehensive health systems based on primary health care which are being developed in the countries of the region."⁶

If the countries of South - East Asian region follow this direction it would need narrowing down

specific areas of specialization and research resulting in the saving of research efforts and the provision of specialized educational materials.

(4) Identifying the specific information needs of medical information users

By way of surveys and research it is necessary to identify the user needs of information in any subject discipline according to the user categories. In this way it would be possible for the administrators of these libraries to collect information according to the needs of its users and this would in turn maximize the utilization of the available information resources.

(5) User education

Seeking and gathering of information is an intellectual process. Therefore information seekers need to have certain skills to find relevant information. Thus it is necessary and essential to educate the information seekers in using these information resources effectively.

So far suggested are some of the possibilities for making the maximum use of available resources which may suit our country. Unless we implement these remedial measures the academic libraries of the third world, including Sri Lanka, may not be able to serve effectively the needs of the present day information seekers.

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The Health Information Network: The Sri Lankan Experience and the Future

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ABSTRACT

The concept of networking, its potential in providing for the smooth and timely flow of information and its impact on the Sri Lanka Health Literature Library and Information Services (HELLIS). Network in the context of the literature resource situation and use of technologies in libraries of the country, and the on - line data that could be tapped are discussed. In conclusion the paper examines how HELLIS could keep pace with the fast developing information technologies in spite of her still being in a nascent stage of networking.

INTRODUCTION

The history of libraries in Sri Lanka dates back to the 2nd Century B.,C., but what forms of co - operation existed among these mainly monastic libraries and what access users were provided with is unknown. That there was interaction amongst scholars within and outside the country is evident from history, but the role of libraries in this exchange is still unresearched. Evidence on library co - operation is thus restricted to the modern period of library development, and networking even as an impetus can be traced only as far back as the late 1970s.

NETWORKING FOR RESOURCE SHARING

The status quo of many libraries in Sri Lanka had changed by the 1980s from being considered as stockrooms, a place for storage and retrieval of documents, to being sources of access to information - information which may not be held in the particular library, as the library may in fact only contain corestock. By the 1980s had been realised that co - operation alone is ineffective and insufficient and that the commitment and organizational infrastructure has to go beyond that of the informal co - operation that existed. The desire was to change from library co - operation to networking which was a response to an

acknowledgement of the impact of technology on society in Sri Lanka, the faster pace of life and the greater inter - dependence between field of knowledge, the development of a fast growing modern economy and the changing role and functions of the library, which required and encouraged interaction between libraries and people. Thus the sharing of resources that comes into effect in this modern situation envisages the willingness of the individual library to co - operate with, and the right to expect and receive the same co - operation from the others in a network. At the same time it implies the adoption of standards by member libraries, where procedures would have to be standardized to allow or ease in sharing of resources, development of techniques and secondary sources of co - operation. Thus the commitment of each library to organizational structures and procedures was essential for networking, to go beyond mere sharing of resources to the undertaking of joint activities, interchange of skills, and shared responsibilities. However, it was the chance to obtain a far wider service that was recognized as being the most exciting outcome of responding to the possibilities of networking. To assess " the 100% library" or virtual library" where it is possible for any library anywhere to obtain the information it requires

when it is wanted enabling a user to access any library of choice, through computer linkage interrogating any library in the system.⁶ In the decade of the 1980s was Sri Lanka on the verge of entering this wide and expanding area of co-operation reaching beyond the traditional bounds to services she would be little able to procure on her own and in respect of medical information - was HELLIS the answer?

HEALTH LITERATURE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (HELLIS): AN INTRODUCTION

Health library co-operation in South East Asia as a networking concept began in 1978, an outcome of the World Health Organization (WHO) South East Asia Regional Committee initiative taken at Ulan Bator in 1978. The Committee had recommended the development of a network of libraries and information centres for the region, to strengthen libraries in member states, and to later link them with one another through the WHO Regional Office to libraries in other regions.

To further this decision a Consultative Meeting was held by WHO in August 1979 in New Delhi to consider the establishment of a Regional Network of Health Literature Libraries and Information Services (HELLIS). The meeting recommended a plan of action to achieve a practical and workable health library network, which each country would implement according to their current stage of development.¹

HELLIS (SRI LANKA)

Taking the clue from the plan of action formulated by the Consultative Meeting to convene national meetings of bio-medical librarians, administrators and users to share resources and improve access a meeting was convened by the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka in December 1979 of Heads of Health Related Institutions, and Librarians of these institutions to discuss networking possibilities among health science libraries nationally. The meeting had agreed that through networking available library resources could be exploited to the fullest for the maximum benefit of the user community.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Once the health librarians and administrators

had pledged themselves to the concept of networking, preliminary steps were taken for better utilisation of scarce biomedical resources and to develop and organise HELLIS (Sri Lanka). To meet the needs of the future it was necessary to capitalize on the support and commitment of members to the principles and responsibilities connected with the running of the network, and guidelines were provided indicating the principles, the basic inputs of stock, services, manpower, and obligations of members to HELLIS by way of reciprocity of services, participation in joint activities and the strengthening of their own capabilities. A bibliographic resource centre or focal point with co-ordination responsibility for information activities was identified with the concurrence of the Ministry of Health, as the Medical Faculty Library, University of Colombo. The networking model to be in operation was that identified as the star network, where the focal point is principally concerned with providing services to the other libraries, with no authority over them, but having a high degree of ascendancy over them. With the designation of the Medical Faculty Library as the focal point, systematic organising and co-ordinating activities were begun.

Based on the identification of resources (a survey was undertaken in 1980) strengths and commitments, HELLIS (Sri Lanka) went on to develop capabilities of member libraries in identified areas. A first priority was to upgrade manpower resources, and HELLIS librarians were exposed to the health library system in operation in more developed countries in the region. In addition yearly further education training courses and workshops utilising both national and international expertise were held since 1982 where different aspects of professional training were imparted to middle level librarians. The membership were exposed to automation through workshops on the CDS/ISIS package provided by UNESCO. Resource capabilities were strengthened through the provision of basic library equipment to the libraries, to better organise their stock and also initiate participation in network activities as partners. The membership was also to compile basic tools of library co-operation - Union List of periodicals; a Directory of On-Going Research; A Bibliography of Medicine (Sri Lanka) to provide current and retrospective information on

medical literature available in the country. All these activities were supported by WHO.

HELLIS had also recognized the necessity to go beyond the local network to introduce and establish HELLIS as a working system in the WHO South East Asian Region, and had attempted to tap all regional resources with a health science database, and encouraged national focal points to reach out to information bases beyond the health network, to enter into interprofessional relationships both national and international, and exploit them to their fullest for the 100% library concept to gain credence in the region.

The cementing of the informal links that existed between related "networks" within Sri Lanka to maximise on resources went a step forward in 1987 when the National Meeting of HELLIS Focal Point/ Participating Libraries and Country Focal Points of Health Science Research, Primary Health care and Population Information Networks held in Colombo discussed and made recommendations on the strengthening of links for the better utilising of available resources on health information, making use of other networks within the country. It must be borne in mind that these are not computerised networks, but libraries that have a common interest in working towards a better sharing of resources.

In Sri Lanka HELLIS reaches beyond the boundaries of its limited resource base and touches on the fringe of the 100% library concept through the WHO supported International Document Delivery Service and Medlars Service it provides to members. The services provided by the focal point for the period 1984 - 1989 point to the increasing demand made on the focal point to procure foreign journal articles not available in the country through this service. Unfortunately the service was manually operated, Regional Union Lists were searched for identification of items not available locally, and then requests were despatched by post to HELLIS Regional Co-ordinating Centres in New Delhi or Bangkok, or to WHO, Geneva or the National Medical Library, USA (NML) as the case may be, who would then service the requests. This was a fairly long drawn out procedure taking about 3 months, a long waiting time for the researcher. This was in addition to the disadvantage of the service not being on-line which prevented dialogue between user and source, and

recasting of search terms, etc.²

A decade since the coming into being of HELLIS, the position is still not very different. Today too, the same tedious procedures have to be gone through to access MEDLARS through HELLIS Sri Lanka. It is timely for the HELLIS Librarians to show their commitment to the realities of networking by making use of the skills development opportunities and experience they received during the past decade in automation. A basic tool of networking, a Union List of Periodicals is already in place (1990) and its only computerising the information that needs to be completed. In respect of the databases a plan to computerise the stock of each library and to link them with each other through a Local Area Network (LAN) is a project that should be worked out by the membership. With careful planning the membership could successfully computerise their own databases and provide on-line open access to the members, and also obtain direct access to international data bases - perhaps looking to foreign aid in this respect, in the first instance. A committed belief in the benefits of networking are essential for HELLIS to move away from being a group of libraries co-operating to strengthen informal ties to share resources, to a network of libraries using modern information technologies to fulfil its obligations to the research community of Sri Lanka. The *sine quo non* of the goal of each member should be to build its own automated database to provide the necessary inputs to create an efficient local network before the end of the decade of the 90s, so that by Year 2000 OPAC will be a reality. Further, much more marketing of services and networking advantages needs to be done by HELLIS members to bring the current services into the focus and attention of researchers so that medical scientists in Sri Lanka would be made aware that through networking they are able to latch on to a resource base far beyond Sri Lanka's library capability.

In spite of the limitation faced by the present network the dream of the health researcher of Sri Lanka of accessing the virtual library has been partially fulfilled through the use of C, D, ROM technology. The University of Colombo Medical Faculty with technical assistance from IDRC, Canada has access to the MEDLINE Compact Disc Read Only Memory (CD ROM) facility which provides the HELLIS

Focal Point with access to worldwide biomedical literature including research, clinical practice, administration, policy issues, and health care services. The CD ROM gives immediate access to pertinent medical data through search and retrieval software.

Thus the health library network in Sri Lanka is not one which links physically separate computerised databases with telecommunication links allowing for the sharing of resources of each library. They are a group of libraries with special subject interests who have a commitment to sharing resources. The last 15 years have seen the strengthening of these links, and the establishment of good formalized co-operation, further education and skills development of personnel.

THE FUTURE

HELLIS needs now to look more to the other types of information that are necessary and sought by the biomedical information user, such as that provided by professionals like the medical statisticians. HELLIS should be ready to relate to the challenge of this situation. As the membership does not have the skills required to compile, interpret and evaluate such data, it should realise that to provide a comprehensive service co-operation of other professionals is needed. Networking is the answer in such a situation, as services can be pooled to provide a maximum service sharing skills to do so.⁶

HELLIS network of the future should also provide an opportunity for the evolution of clinical librarians as in England, USA and Bangladesh where librarians work with the clinical team making use of the information network on their behalf, providing information to the diagnostic staff and to patients and relatives. This is a furtherance of the development of a relationship between the librarians and those needing information and the available resource base. An awareness of the needs of users allows the librarian to develop skills to act as an information consultant.

The development of HELLIS to this level of outreach would require significant improvements in network co-ordination and management capability. Networking is more than the administration of any individual library, it is managerial in its nature - the management of interactions between libraries within the network, between them and other institutions and other professionals, and between networks. Thus

the development of HELLIS (Sri Lanka) would open up new horizons for the librarians and new roles bringing the librarians out of the traditional library.

HELLIS of the future should help to clarify the position of the medical librarian with information users not limiting the understanding to narrow and traditional patterns, but broadening into the role of the clinical librarian. HELLIS of the future must direct its attention to research, to investigating users of the service, discovering their needs and exploring the best means of meeting their needs and evaluating the results of their efforts to act as co-ordinators, developing relationships with other libraries, and networks and with other information producers to develop a 100% service for the HELLIS network users. It should help to create a "New core to the professional role of the librarian to forge a new professional identity". It may then be possible for HELLIS (Sri Lanka) to "escape from the tyranny of size as an assessment of prestige and status and value". The central place in our professional concern in the future must be occupied by the question of what kinds of relationships we are able to develop among ourselves, with other professions in the information business and with other users.⁶

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Towards a National Women's Information Bank in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

This paper posits a case for the establishment of a National Women's Information Bank to consolidate, manage and disseminate the considerable information resource output on women's issues, a relatively recent growth sector, in order to optimize its use for policy making and planning, programme implementation, impact assessment, research and advocacy. An outline of the existing information resource base and the various groups which form its information clientele is presented and the conclusion offers an operational framework for an Information Bank which would consolidate and organise the information base to service its multi - constituency by developing a varied range of custom design products.

INTRODUCTION

A considerable quantum of data and information has been generated within the last two decades in this country on gender and development issues and this base continues to be steadily augmented. This paper posits, in broad terms, a case for the setting up of a Women's Information Bank to consolidate, manage and disseminate this output in order to optimize its use by the various groups working in this field in Sri Lanka vis - a vis policy making, planning, programme implementation, research and advocacy.

This paper is organised as follows: the **context** international trends in the area of women's concerns and national responses at government and non - government levels are briefly presented in section 1. The **existing information resource base** in terms of sectors and producers and the **broad user groups** within the gender and development constituency are outlined in sections 2 and 3 respectively. The concluding section 4 offers an **operational framework for an Information Bank** which would consolidate and organise the information base to service its information clientele with a varied range of custom designed products.

1. THE CONTEXT: INTERNATIONAL TRENDS AND NATIONAL RESPONSES

The interest in women's issues focused on the need to redress gender imbalances and inequities in the socio - economic system surfaced relatively recently in the seventies. A meld of catalytic factors accounts for the escalation of interest within the past two decades. Chiefly, the vigour and rigour of the world wide movement for women's emancipation and the several UN initiatives' four global conferences at five yearly intervals and the declaration of the Decade for Women [1976 - 1985], among others which exerted pressure on member governments to take relevant action. Another strong contributory factor as the funding support made available by multilateral and bilateral development assistance agencies which accelerated both government and non - government activity in this area of concern.

In Sri Lanka, international trends towards establishing national focal mechanisms to spearhead efforts to enhance women's position, reinforced with lobbying by local women's groups influenced the government to set up a national focal point for women in development activity and the Women's

Bureau was established in 1978.² Sri Lanka ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1981. Within the course of the decade, a new ministerial portfolio of Women's Affairs was created in 1983. Linked initially at cabinet level to Teaching Hospitals, then to Health in 1989, the portfolio is currently assigned to the Ministry of Transport, Environment and Women's Affairs. Since 1988, independent interventions vis - a vis women's affairs are also reported as being made by provincial ministerial structures.³ More recently, the Women's Charter (Sri Lanka) was approved in 1993 and the National Committee on Women was established in the same year to monitor and implement the charter provisions.⁴

Trends at the non - governmental level include the formation of several new women's organisations with a wide activity spectrum, shifts of emphasis to include women's programmes in others and enhanced efforts to organise women professionally. In research and academia, developments include the recognition of women's studies at course level at universities and the setting up of independent research centres with a primary focus on women's concerns - chief among them from both institutional size and output viewpoints being the Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR) established in 1984. The latter's activities extend beyond research *per se* to a lead role in NGO lobbying, gender training and sensitisation programmes. However, the lack of a formal umbrella organisation for NGOs retards networking and lobbying activities though the recent initiative of an NGO forum prior to the Fourth World Conference, 1965 may be a precursor to its formation.

While many of the components of the basic institutional infrastructure both the national machinery and women's organisations needed to promote women's concerns have been created in the country. there are some notable constraints and lacunae.

In the government sector, constraints in the main stem from the placing of responsibility for certain intersectoral concerns, one of which is women's affairs, under sectoral ministries which "prevent such concerns from receiving due attention throughout the executive system of government."⁵ Insofar as the portfolio is treated as a sectoral subject and assigned

as one of three to a cabinet Ministry, it lacks the leverage necessary to pursue multi - sectoral linkages. A further factor is the fragmentation of focal point functions among a multiplicity of institutions - the Women's Affairs Division in the Ministry, the Bureau and the National Committee - which dissipates and diminishes the weightage that a focal mechanism should carry.

Furthermore, Sri Lanka has yet to formulate a coherent and clear strategic plan for women's advancement which fuse the interests of special interest groups and of sectoral and provincial ministries, aim at a given frame and highlight and direct action to identified priority areas.

THE NEED FOR A FOCAL POINT FOR INFORMATION ON WOMEN

A major lacuna is that Sri Lanka has yet to establish a focal point for information on women: a centre that could organise and disseminate the data and information spawned by the wide spectrum of activities - a productive asset in itself with a potential as yet untapped fully. As data and information represent an important means of discerning patterns of discrimination, the base would provide the information under pinnings for future action as required by the now clearly identifiable constituency.

It is envisaged that the setting up of an Information Bank would give the necessary impetus to the formulation of a coherent framework for action that could weld dispersed activities. This is on the basis that the stock taking and consolidation function that the Bank will undertake as a priority (see section 4) will map the current activity areas, pinpoint problems in specific sectors and identify where empirical investigation is required in a systematic manner thus providing the underpinnings required for a broad based policy - planning framework.

Recent writings have underscored the need for changing prevailing gender role assumptions if policy and planning perspectives relating to women are to be improved and effective interventions formulated and implemented.⁶ Another critical need is for raising legal awareness on constitutional rights and remedies. Devising sensitising programmes for these purposes require effective but diverse information packaging and dissemination. Rapid access to relevant

information is also needed for monitoring advances in women's status in terms of international standards such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Furthermore, a national information focal point is a requisite for forging links with regional and global information networks operating for example under SAARC or UN auspices.

These critical needs may be met by establishing a Women's Information Bank which could, most appropriately function under ministerial purview attached to the office of the National Committee on Women or the Women's Affairs Division of the Ministry itself.

2. THE RESOURCE BASE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES : AN OVERVIEW

The information resource base generated within the past two decades on women's issues, represents a new phenomenon in the national information cycle. Its dual components, bibliographic information and data, are outlined in the section that follows.

(A) THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION COMPONENT: WOMEN'S STUDIES

Women's studies constitute the chief bibliographic information component. The generation of studies on different aspects of women and on women from different strata of society, stemming from the growing social science enterprise in this field, was fueled and to a degree influenced by funding agencies. They constitute a critical instrument for problem identification and progress monitoring in the context of Sri Lankan socio-economic reality.

The aspects covered are generally governed by considerations of relevance to the national context and the bulk of research has been carried out by indigenous scholar, mostly women. Within the group, there is now a recognisable, though small, cohort of women researchers (numbering some 20) consistently working in this field, with an extensive list of research reports and papers to their credit. Early work on women's status, on roles and situational analysis is now getting concretised and research is increasingly becoming problem-specific and action-relevant.

SECTOR - WISE COVERAGE

A scan of items listed in the bibliographies available on women in Sri Lanka,⁷ which cover materials issued up to 1989, reveals the extent and nature of the bibliographic base. Considerable variations of sources and formats are apparent. Sources are widely dispersed and institutional links are strong. Data and information are being generated within the country by various government departments, research and academic institutions, NGOs, local officers of both multilateral and bilateral aid agencies; there are two reports commissioned by UN and other inter-national agencies published abroad. Within the germane time frame of 1970 - 89 some 1180 items were generated in contrast to the 170 listed as pre seventies.

The material within the existing base falls into broad sector groups⁸ and the percentage wise distribution is a broad indicator of where the current emphasis lies and where additional work is needed; see Table.1

Focus-wise it appears that work on policy and planning issues *per se* is sparse; also sparse is the coverage of theoretical and methodological issues, and of politics and decision making. The bulk of the studies is on economic participation, population, women in the rural sector, and health and social welfare delivery. In sum, while in certain areas data and information are particularly sparse or lacking, in others there is an information overload of variable quality with few guides to the selection of materials which meets certain quality standards.

A further characteristic is that considerable proportion of items has an institutional connection - as corporate author's sponsor or publisher. This is evident in the predominance of conference documentation and short monographs. A fair proportion is associated with a seminar or workshop most often supported by foreign development assistance agencies' predominant among the organising institutions within the last decade is the Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR). Professional groups such as the Sri Lanka Federation of University Women and independent development research centres such as the MARGA Institute and the Institute of Policy Studies have also been active in research with a bearing on women's issues while the SLAAS session provides a vehicle

for research presentation and at University level a number of theses have focused women's issues.

TABLE 1
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, 1970 -89
BY BROAD SECTORS

SECTOR & COVERAGE	ITEM No.	ITEMS AS % OF TOTAL
1. GENERAL Situational analyses with a multi - faceted comparative focus, studies on status, roles, and gender issues	101	8.6
1.1 POLICY, PLANNING, PROGRAMMES, RESEARCH Issues pertaining to women's concerns	17	1.4
1.2 THEORY & METHODOLOGY Includes Feminism, Marxist, Feminism	23	1.9
1.3 DATA Methodology & evaluation	7	0.6
2. RURAL WOMEN Women in agriculture, food, forestry, fishing, rural settlements, women & land tenure	130	11.0
3. EFFECTS OF MODERNISATION Technology, migration & mass media	63	5.3
4. EDUCATION & TRAINING Formal & non - formal education and training	88	7.5
5. ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION Female labour force participation women in specific labour sectors & occupations	209	17.7
6. POPULATION Issues affecting women including family planning, and fertility factors	126	10.7
7. LEGISLATION Laws and legal issues affecting women's situation	78	6.6
8. HEALTH & SOCIAL WELFARE DELIVERY Includes health services, nutrition child care, housing	149	12.6
9. NATIONAL MACHINERY & WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS Activities of government entities & non - government organisations	70	5.9
10. CULTURE & SOCIETY Positions and perceptions of women	98	8.3

in different ethnic groups & strata, impact of religion, social problems, family patterns

11. POLITICS & DECISION MAKING Women in politics & in decision making positions	17	1.4
12. BIBLIOGRAPHIES & SOURCE BOOKS	4	0.4
	1180	100

RESEARCH UTILIZABILITY & PROBLEMS

Problems began to surface in the mid - nineties with waning funding support as donor fatigue sets in, with the relatively small number of researchers involved, with a certain degree of overlap and repetitious work, and most significantly, the realisation that research still faces a crisis of recognition with the limited use of its findings for policy purposes. In general terms, the degree of research use is conditioned by its relevance, whether data and information are readily available on a specific issue of immediate concern to the administration, whether the material is timely, whether the material is available in an intelligible language and utilizable format.

Again, in general terms, policy making at the higher level tends to get highly personalised with political overtones and may be limited to a small category of decision makers; yet the process also involves a large number of people in different status positions in the different line ministries. Efforts are needed to orientate the policy planning community as a whole to the perspectives offered by research.

B. THE STATISTICAL INFORMATION COMPONENT

Statistical information is vital to identify and highlight differentials in the socio - economic status of men and women and their relative access to opportunities and resources.

Primary Sources: The main sources of primary socio - economic data are the Department of Census and Statistics and Central Bank. Three main types of data series are identifiable: [1] demographic data [2] socio - economic surveys and censuses, and [3] economic transactions and national accounts; the former two constitute the most relevant data sources for women's issues. The Department of Census and Statistics conducts the decennial census and also a

regular range of socio - economic surveys. The Central Bank puts out an annual review of the economy and also undertakes sample surveys and analysis of socio - economic trends.

Other government departments also conduct surveys and issue statistical compilations in their fields of concern, for example the Department of Labour employment surveys and compilation of labour statistics or the Ministry of Education school census.

Supplementary Sources: In the main constitute [1] Sample surveys and micro studies conducted by research institutions, universities, private sector groups, government corporations, and [2] routine government administrative records and registers covering a multiplicity of sectors - a very dispersed source with an uneven coverage.

DATA USE & PROBLEMS

The use and problems of census data are well known at the current time. It is now a commonplace that data collection efforts frequently reinforce cultural stereotypes. UN input in this area is particularly strong with its agencies working towards incremental changes in practices over the long term to correct gender bias in statistical information as well as measures to make effective use of existing data bases.⁹

With the growing sensitivity to gender, data sources are improving in Sri Lanka. A case in point is the disaggregated and consolidated data package covering identified critical sectors which has been published recently (August 1995) by the Department of Census and Statistics supported by ESCAP and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). This practical measure is part of an ongoing programme on improving gender statistics.¹⁰

3. THE USER CONSTITUENCY

Of the several user groups that are identifiable, some may be assigned a priority ranking vis - a vis their contribution or potential to contribute to meeting goals to incorporate women's concerns in mainstream development. Government entities, non government organisations and the research and academic community constitute key members of the constituency.

3.1 Government - the policy making and planning community:

In this group, the possible prime users comprise the national machinery for women's affairs, viz, the ministry unit responsible for women's affairs and the National Committee on Women. Another key segment would be the national machinery for national planning *per se*; other possible user groups comprise the policy planning groups in the various line ministries responsible for sectoral programmes as well as the various women's units in provincial ministries. These entities may interact with each other as well as with the National Planning Department vis - a vis women's interests if a device such as an interministerial meeting of representatives is set up by the main focal point.

Needs at these levels encompass timely, factual analysis of the implications of various alternate policies. Accuracy, timeliness, clarity and brevity in presentation are the hallmarks of information products that could best service this group.

3.2 Government - Programme Implementators & Administrators:

The prime user group would include the Women's Bureau which is now primarily concerned with the implementation of district - based programmes to be re - routed through the divisional secretariats, as well as line and provincial ministry administrative personnel on sectoral projects closely related to women such as health, family planning, rural development.

Needs at this level generally encompass information regarding local circumstances that would facilitate interactions with local communities, programme/project monitoring and evaluation techniques, training materials and audio visual aids.

3.3 Non - governmental organisations at local and national levels

The importance of these organisations lies in that they may work directly with disadvantaged groups such as unorganised and self employed women, play and active leadership role at local level, cooperate with government programmes and / or complement government activities with their own independent activities. A total of 96 organisations oriented towards women's activities were listed in available sources.

Three major groups are identifiable; firstly, NGOs with a specific focus on women; secondly, NGOs with women's sections or women's activities and thirdly, those involved in research and academic activities.

A majority of these NGOs are located in Colombo, a majority claim an all island coverage and membership generally falls within the 100 - 300 range.

3.3. [a] NGOs with a specific focus on women:

Of the 96 organisations found listed, 51 are women-specific NGOs. The traditional NGO orientation has been towards welfare activities. During the UN Decade for Women, a shift in emphasis as well as an increase in the scope of activities took place such that many now include development related activities in their programmes. A majority of women specific NGOs were the products of action within the decade and have a major role in focusing on women's issues.

Considerable variations in foci are apparent: among others - awareness raising, training employment opportunities, development and welfare, rehabilitation, legal aid; there are religious and ethnic groups, activist groups focusing on issues such as human rights and peace, workers groups, and professional and business groups.

3.3 [b] NGOs with women's sections/ women's activities: Some have specific sections, many undertake action oriented programmes and projects with women as targets in varying locations.

Meeting the information needs of both these groups requires a package of differentiated products.

3.4 Research & Academic Community: The research and academic community, both users and sources of information, have needs which are fairly specific and consistent. A small but organised community, it is conversant with information gathering techniques and has the capacity to trace sources with greater efficiency. Currently, a sharing of resources on an informal, ad hoc basis is apparent; for instance CENWOR provides open access to accredited researchers to its library; information exchanges also occur through meetings, conferences and participation in social science indexing systems - all part of peer group relationships.

However, a very basic tool is lacking - a computerised data base listing all the current holdings on [a] Sri Lankan women's studies and [b] UN & foreign items available in the various institutional libraries, with a provision for print out facilities which will enable researchers to both readily locate items and acquire personal lists on specific topics.

3.5 Other information constituents include workers in mass media

who require audio - visual materials, calendars of events, and briefs regarding conferences, etc. also **Information specialists & information agencies - Libraries and documentation centres; and Regional & International Counterparts** which include inter governmental organisations and NGOs, UN organisations; as well as **women per se**, and the public at large.

4. ORGANISING & MANAGING THE BANK - AN OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

This concluding section delineates the framework for a Women's Information Bank which would operate on a modest scale with activities phased such that while initially servicing the parent body it could also lay the groundwork for the incremental development of a full fledged women's information centre.

RATIONALE & PERCEPTION OF ROLE

The burgeoning resource base points to the need for an exercise in stocktaking, for an audit of what has been achieved so far and most importantly, for the integration and synthesis of the various micro - studies to develop profiles at the macro - level to help policy formulation and planning exercises that would also serve to identify gaps in research. There is need too for wider dissemination of the new perspectives that have evolved within the country. This is the basic premise on which the case for an Information Bank rests.

The role of the Bank is perceived on quite different lines to that of the traditional documentation centre, repository or referral centre as the functions defined for it differ from the usual gamut of acquisition, processing and dissemination activities. It is envisaged that the Bank will concentrate on available and relevant information which can be used for policy

formulation, programme planning, research, advocacy, mobilizing and conscientizing of any group interested and involved in women's development. The bank will develop a database which would:

- [a] reflect the reality of the situation of women,
- [b] be adequate to meet the planning, implementation and impact assessment needs of government and other entities,
- [c] be suited to monitoring women's status in terms of international standards,
- [d] pin - point areas for empirical investigation.

To function adequately it will need the promise of continuity, a significant level of organisational commitment, specialised staff skills to search, collect, analyse and synthesise information, financial support to meet the initial and maintenance cost of the facility - the software and the hardware, and funds to package information into forms suitable for different levels of education and receptivity, including audio -visual and other types of mass media.

ACTION IN THE SHORT TERM:

As the initial emphasis is on the evaluation and / or interpretation of data and information directed at the policy and planning levels with a special focus on material relating to disadvantaged groups, in the first phase of its activities, the Bank will need to:

* Identify data and information resources and input items into a computerised database classifying the input into appropriate sectors, subsectors and issue groups with notes on specific location, and use of appropriate broad indexing terms from a standard thesaurus.¹²

* Identify the specific needs of policy and planning groups.

* Select material which is policy relevant for intergration and synthesis. The selection of topics rests with the parent organisation. Priority areas identified will generally relate to special categories of women or topics identified as critical. The ultimate criterion of choice should be that the information and analysis is likely to have an impact on those who can intervene in the system, whether they be the women themselves or the national planners.

* Assess available data on the minimum list of indicators and compile a data source book, which could serve as a benchmark list, with provision for

regular updating.¹³

*Prepare consolidated information packages - assigned to specialist bank staff or consultants on contract. The information packages can form the basis for products and services indicated in the section that follows.

Policy Information Products: The possible range includes

Products which condense an abstract information on current issues concerning women's concerns and present findings and recommendations clearly and briefly, for example - Executive summaries, Fact sheets, Position papers, Analysis of programme and project data.

Collections that compile or summarise bills, resolutions, legislation and administrative regulations of the government concerning women.

Guidebooks for national planners that provide socio - cultural perspectives on women , data and information schedules including demographic data, data on resource allocations for women's concerns, health data, information about women's economic roles; political participation; education, the law.

Public Information Products : may include

Information repackaged in simplified formats to meet the needs of particular groups in the form of brochures and pamphlets; press releases, information bulletins, etc.

Directories of women's organisations; of women experts; of personnel and organisations concerned with women's issues.

Reports on special national and local events concerning women.

Action in the mid and longer terms could encompass the identification of the specific needs of various groups - not only the policy maker and researcher but others such as field workers and women activists, and dissemination of products designed to meet these needs; the consideration of alternate communication media - radio, TV, mass media, as a means of diversifying dissemination forms to reach the multiple user groups and women at all levels; mootng the establishment of a repository collection on women's studies at the National Library of Sri Lanka and the forging of links regionally and

globally.¹⁴

Overall, in the longer term, the Bank would strive to improve the availability, accessibility and dissemination of information on women and for women and over time, the database should represent the major, most up to date source for information on women in the country with links beyond the national level as well, to channel and receive information.

NOTES & REFERENCES

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14. For a list of UN bodies and agencies concerning women see Annex 2 of the ESCAP Manual, 1988 ; for a list of information services and networks outside the UN concerning women see Annex 3.

Citation analysis and user studies: its importance in library management

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ABSTRACT

Giving references by way of footnotes or citations facilitate the establishment of the genealogy of the thought content and be regarded as a part of intellectual communication. This can be used as a means of exploring user behaviour and requirements and therefore citation studies provide a unique indirect method of user study. This article discusses the origin of citation practice, various aspects of citation analysis techniques, its advantages and limitations. It concludes that citation analysis techniques are of extreme importance to librarians in identifying user needs and planning and organizing library services to meet such needs.

1. ORIGIN OF CITATION PRACTICE

The origin of giving references by way of footnotes, or citation practice can be traced to the beginning of scientific writing, when the early periodicals started about three centuries ago. Derek de Solla Price has found that the earliest name of the footnote was scholia which means relating to scholarship, thus indicating that the practice of footnoting was considered to be a scholarly practice.¹

Linda C. Smith, in her overview of citation analysis for the bibliometrics issue of Library Trends explained the two kinds of citation

as "A reference is the acknowledgement that one document gives to another and a citation is the acknowledgement that one document receives from another"². It is a relationship implied between the cited document and the citing document, all or in part, and Smith further explained the technique of citation analysis as "that area of bibliometrics which deals with the study of their relationships."

Bibliographic citation has been defined as "A sequence of items of information needed for enabling a reader to identify the document referred to. It may also include when required, the character, scope, publisher, place of publication, price etc., of the

document."³

A bibliographic citation is made up of various bits of information about the publication cited, to facilitate a reader getting it for use. It may include the author, title of the document, name of periodical, year of publication, volume, pages etc. The details required are determined by the nature of document referred to, such as a book, part of a book, an article in a periodical, etc., and the nature of information to be conveyed for purposes of location, identification, evaluation, bibliographic description, etc. Generally, it may occur as a footnote or at the end of the text or its chapter or any section or in the body of the text.

2. REASONS FOR GIVING CITATIONS

Citation represents a relationship between the cited and citing documents, and yet it is somewhat difficult to characterize this relationship. Weinstock has stated fifteen characteristics governing this relationship in the following manner:

- (I) Paying homage to pioneers.
- (II) Giving credit to related work.
- (III) Identifying methodology, equipment, etc.

- (IV) Providing background reading
- (V) Correcting one's own work
- (VI) Correcting the work of others
- (VII) Criticizing previous work
- (VIII) Substantiating claims
- (IX) Alerting researchers to forthcoming work
- (X) Providing leads to poorly disseminated, poorly indexed or uncited work
- (XI) Authenticating data, and classes of fact, physical constants, etc.
- (XII) Identifying original publications in which an idea or concept was discussed
- (XIII) Identifying original publication describing an eponymic concept or term as, e.g., Hodgkin's disease, Pareto's Law, Friedel - Crafts Reaction.
- (XIV) Discussing work or ideas of others
- (XV) Disputing priority claims of others⁴

Although there are many reasons for citation behaviour as elaborated above, these may lie between two extreme scenarios. At one end, a citation can be placed due to the significant use of cited author's theory, paradigm or method and its true scholarly impact, and in the other, for less noble purposes such as citing a journal editor's work or making reference to a friend's publication.⁵

3. CITATION ANALYSIS DEFINED

Citation counting techniques are used in the evaluation of scientific activities. The main objectives of the citation analysis are to evaluate and to interpret citations received by articles, authors, institutions and other aggregates of scientific activities. It is also used as a tool for measuring communication links in the sociology of science. Osinga defined citation analysis as "A method based on the principle article citing the same reference also have much in common."⁶

The supposition that articles and their references are related has led to many studies including citation counts, impact factor studies, bibliographic coupling, co - citation and citation indexes.

4. BASIC CONCEPTS OF CITATION ANALYSIS

Gupta has elaborated three basic concepts or

techniques which have been frequently used in citation analysis for variety of studies, namely:⁷

- (I) Direct citation
- (II) Bibliographic coupling
- (III) Co - citation

4.1 DIRECT CITATION

The concept of direct citation deals with the citations given in a scientific paper. In this context, it is assumed that there is a subject relationship between the scientific paper itself (citing paper) and the citations to the other documents (cited documents) mentioned therein.⁸ This is the fundamental principle on which the concept of citation indexing is derived.

4.2 BIBLIOGRAPHIC COUPLING

It is postulated that any two scientific papers bear a meaningful relationship to each other (they are coupled) either by virtue of the third one, i. e

two papers are said to be coupled if they both cite the same reference (or a test paper), or a group of papers may be forwarded when each paper in the group has at least one reference in common to every

4.3 CO - CITATION

Co -citation is based on the philosophy that if two citations are cited together in the latter literature, they have a relationship among them.¹⁰

The more the frequency of occurrence together, the stronger is the relationship between the two. Co -citation patterns may fluctuate as the interest and intellectual patterns of the fields may change with time.

5. PRIMARY USE OF CITATIONS

The primary purpose of citation is to enable a reader to go to the referred-to document for more information on a point or check the authenticity of a particular view, finding or method. In other words the citing author is establishing the genealogy of the thought content he has used in consolidating his point of view. This practice of scholastic authorship in communication with the readers can be regarded as the intended primary use of citations.

6. SECONDARY USES OF CITATIONS

Apart from the primary use mentioned above,

citations can be used for a number of other practical applications. It is interesting to note here that many of these applications are of recent origin and do not have a long history, like the practice of citations.

6.1 Use as a Bibliography

A list of citations is a carefully analyzed and properly prepared list of bibliographic references having strong subject relationships to a scholarly piece of work. Therefore, it serves as a bibliography on the subject of the citing document as well as its peripheral subjects. This characteristic of citations is used by Physics Abstracts which publishes a separate semi-annual bibliographic index of articles which have significant lists of references.

Citations provide a good information source in pinpointing suitable literature to users and library personnel. A user can start from the citations given in a relevant recently published document and find out the bibliographic details on relevant items from each successive generation of citations. This technique provides a sound alternative to bibliographies, especially in cases where such bibliographies on specialized topics are not available to the user.

6.2 Preparation of Ranked List of Periodicals

If we assume that there is a definite reflection of what the authors read and use in their writings through citations, then the pattern of such citations would reveal a general picture as to the reading pattern of a user community or a part of it. This condition is particularly true for the use of periodicals, because of the continuous nature of publishing them. This line of reasoning provides a good technique in preparing the lists of most frequently cited periodicals in different subjects.

One of the earliest of such an attempt was published in 'Science' in 1927 by Gross.¹¹ This study presented a ranked list of periodicals in chemistry as cited in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*. This provided inspiration to the subsequent generations of librarians, documentalists and information scientists and now it is increasingly used in wider contexts in preparing not only ranked lists of periodicals, but also discovering most cited authors, research topics, most active research laboratories, etc. In periodicals management, ranked lists provide a sound criteria in evolving a suitable

policy in several important areas such as:

Selection and retention of periodicals for subscription: Periodicals are regarded as the major source of primary literature in science and technology, and hence are of immense value to any academic or research library dealing with science and / or technology. However, in situations where subscription lists have to be trimmed, selection of titles for deletion become a very difficult task for librarians and ranked lists provide a scientific criteria to assess real user needs.

Formation of binding policy: As in the case of retaining periodical subscriptions, periodical titles can be selected for binding by employing the same technique. This is important due to limitations of budgetary allocations and shelving space. In view of this situation, a ranked list provides a suitable criteria to ascertain the suitability of periodicals for binding.

Other areas of importance: Ranked lists are useful in deciding periodicals suitable for coverage by current awareness services and locating the periodicals in libraries. For example the British Library Document Supply Centre has kept highly sought - out periodicals in a separate collection on the basis of their usage.¹²

The question as to what type of documents are most used by the scientists is often asked in allocating materials vote between books and periodicals. Besides, this information will be of much assistance to the acquisitions librarian in formulating a long time acquisitions policy with the aim of developing a balanced collection. In this instance too, one clear and easy method of discovering the relative usage levels of different types of publications is the citation study.

6.3 Finding out useful life of documents

Except for a relatively small percentage of library holdings, all other publications held in a library may not be used constantly over a long period of time. Besides, the formulation of a clear retention policy to help weed out little used material becomes an essential element in effective library management. This has become necessary in many instances where the library space is limited and also the overhead cost of maintaining collections is too high.

Analysis of citations by the age of document can indicate the useful life of documents, especially

the earlier volumes of periodicals. Depending on the situation, librarians can use yardsticks, such as the half - life of periodicals in a given subject, derived from a citation study and based on it the optimum number of years any given periodical has to be held can be decided.

6.4 Finding out relatedness and dependence of subjects

One of the recent trends in research is that it is increasingly becoming interdisciplinary in character. Therefore, it is impossible to clearly demarcate a particular subject field as being suitable for researchers in the field. In this context, it would be useful to identify the importance and dependence of subjects and citation studies can provide as important clue in this respect.

7. ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING VALIDITY OF CITATION ANALYSIS

The validity of citation analysis technique is largely dependent upon the authors' behaviour in selecting, using and citing previous works of other authors. Smith has elaborated a list of five basic assumptions on which the success of the conclusions of citation student relies, in the following manner.¹³

- (I) Citation of a document implies the use of that document by the citing author. This means that the author refers to all or at least to the most important documents used in the preparation of his work, and that all documents cited are indeed used by him.
- (II) Citation of a document (author, journal, etc.) reflects the merit (quality, significance, impact) of that document. It is assumed that there is a high correlation between the number of citations which a particular document receives and the quality of that document.
- (III) Citations are made to the best possible works. This statement has to be viewed against the concept of the accessibility of documents. It is agreed that accessibility to documents is as important as quality. Accessibility to a document may be a function of its form place

of origin, age and language.

- (IV) A cited document is related in context to the citing document. If two documents are bibliographically coupled or co -cited then they are related in content.
- (V) All citations are equal. This implies that all citations are equally weighted in their treatment by the authors.

8. ADVANTAGES OF CITATION ANALYSIS

Citation analysis provides an indirect measurement technique of the literature use patterns by the users according to its form, age, subject, etc. This provides a sound alternative to direct the user studies such as questionnaires and interviewing or augment findings from such studies. Some of the most noteworthy advantages of citation analysis are:

- (I) The most cited items are those most likely to be wanted and the acquisition policies can be moulded in parallel to such findings.
- (II) By employing citation techniques, literature use patterns in respect of form, age, subject, geographic origin, language etc. of documents can be established.
- (III) Productivity of individual authors or institutions can be established with the help of citation analysis techniques.
- (IV) It provides a unique technique in exploring the current trends in research and most significant research areas.

9. LIMITATIONS OF CITATION ANALYSIS

As in any other analytical method, citation analysis too has several drawbacks or limitations. Most noteworthy ones are as follows:

- (1) Citation analysis does not include the informal documents and communications which are normally made use of in the process of research activity.
- (II) The possibility of not citing pertinent papers or citing papers for dishonest purposes may affect the validity of findings.
- (III) Citation studies are concerned only on the first named authors causing neglect of other

co - authors.

- (IV) In case of single authored documents the problem of citing one's own publications or self citations can be rectified. However, multi - authored documents or references from any member (s) of a research group to any other member (s) of the same group are the occurrences where the rectification become difficult.

10. IMPORTANCE OF CITATION ANALYSIS IN LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

It is generally known that research and development work in developing countries are still not regarded as a vital element in the social development process. This situation is also true in library development and management. However, the developments in publishing industry and user needs against a backdrop of limited library budgets coupled with depreciating value of money has made it necessary for the present day librarians to be more innovative and systematic in organizing and offering library services. In order to make library services an essential ingredient in educational and development activities, identification of user needs and providing an optimum service to the user community is of paramount importance. In this sphere, citation analysis techniques provides a scientific tool in assessing user needs and behaviour.

As discussed earlier, citation studies can be made to ascertain the use of different bibliographic forms by the library users. For example, Jayatissa has established that the chemical scientists carrying out research at doctoral degree level are making extensive use of periodical literature (percentage of citations to periodical publications and books to be 86.67% and 10.50% respectively).¹⁴

Citation studies provide a quick method in evaluating the use of publications by library users. A study conducted by Thomas at the California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) vividly illustrates the potential of citation analysis techniques in finding solutions to library management problems associated with the continuation of periodicals subscriptions.¹⁵

When the CSULB had to undergo a 17% reduction in their library materials budget the library authorities had to decide as to what periodicals are to be deleted from the subscriptions list within a very

short period of time. This time limitation did not warrant an extensive direct user study and hence a citation study was made. After analysing a total of 7,797 citations to 1,050 periodicals cited in 342 psychology theses written from 1981 through 1992, it was found that 159 periodicals (14.2%) were cited 10 or more times claiming 38% of the total citations while another 25% of the periodicals receiving no citations, thereby becoming nominees for subscription cancellation. This helped the library management in selecting periodicals to be deleted from the subscriptions list without running into difficulties with the faculty members in identifying little used periodicals.

CONCLUSION

Survival of libraries as an efficient instrument in storing and disseminating information depends largely on the ability of librarians in identifying user needs and organizing library services to meet them. This situation has arisen mainly due to the exponential growth in publishing industry and the resultant necessity for more monetary reserves for purchasing library materials. However only solution to meet the challenge of satisfying user need is to correctly identify and predict their requirements.

Citation analysis techniques provide librarians with a scientific method of investigating user needs and hence are of extreme significance to them in organizing an effective library service. member of the group.⁹ The strength of the coupling is determined by the number of citations they have in common.

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Managing records: some problems in public sector institutions in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to identify the prevailing practices in managing records in Public Institutions in Sri Lanka and to understand the contribution they would make to the efficiency of the administration.

Since independence the growth of public institutions had been rapid. Many activities devolved from the Colonial Secretariat to ministries. Under each ministry, departments and other statutory bodies began to expand along with the expansion of activities. The now familiar practice of splitting and reforming ministries became prevalent. Along with such expansion, although the growth in records creation too increased, their controlling mechanisms declined. As colonial practices were ill - suited to the new situation the expected quality and standard of maintaining files became poorer. A file continued for years, and ephemeral and policy papers came to be mixed together. In some instances files were lost, and replaced by new files. After some time the lost files were found, and then, there were several files on the same subject. Assigning of titles and indexing of files declined in quality. There was no adequate training for the staff who handled correspondence and files. This situation has further deteriorated with the introduction of photocopying machines, fax machines and word processors.

After four and a half decades since independence, the above mentioned features have become common to most public institutions in Sri Lanka. But, it is still not too late to develop controlling mechanisms through properly designed records management systems.

OVERVIEW:

The important and pivotal role, records management plays in the public administration has been thus stated by Waegemann:

"The Record System is the memory of an organisation, an essential element in any organisation functioning. The key to a smooth running organisation is its filing system and the key to planning a smooth running filing system is an evaluation of space and activity." (23p. 18)

This paper had an overview of the problems seen in public institutions in managing their records. For a proper study of records - systems or correspondence and filing systems, an examination of the administrative structure and the functions of the institution are essential. It would be the systematic way to identify records series" created in various

divisions, branches and units in an institution. According to Kesner, "Along with the analysis of the large bureaucratic structure, the information manager must categorise the types of records managed, both in terms of their office of origin and in terms of their physical and intellectual composition.... Archivists and Records Managers must study those procedures, systems and operation guidelines that direct staff activities. (13)

Herein, the early involvement of the archivists in the records management processes would facilitate the administrator as well as the archivists in performing their professional responsibilities efficiently. While evaluating its significance from the archivist's point of view, Duchenin stated that,

"to appreciate a document, it is essential to know exactly where it was created, in the framework of what process to what end, for whom..... and how it

come to our hands. (10)

Taking the theoretical points stated above into consideration, this paper examines the records management systems in some selected public institutions in Sri Lanka, focussing attention on two major areas, namely, correspondence and file management.

CORRESPONDENCE MANAGEMENT:

Correspondence management begins with the receipt of mail in the General Office. The official letters addressed to the head of the institution or deputies or assistants are opened in the General Office before a responsible officer, namely, an administrative officer or the chief clerk. The mail will comprise of letters from the public, other ministries, departments, and statutory bodies. Initially, the letters of routine nature will be sorted. Important letters received by hand and by registered mail are recorded in a register and forwarded to the head of the institution or to authorised person/s for information and instructions. Thereafter, they are sent to the relevant subject clerks for filing, if files exist for the subjects of those letters or otherwise, new files will be opened for them. In most instances the responsibility of the subject clerks is confined to the filing of letters in the respective files and to forwarding them to the relevant staff officers for instructions.

Apart from the letters, the circulars received from the Treasury, Ministry of Public Administration and other departments are filed separately. Unlike circulars issued by the Treasury and by the Ministry of Public Administration, other departmental circulars are not regularly received by all public institutions.

The internal interaction of the divisions in an institution normally takes place by the medium of 'Minutes' in minute papers or through a circulation register. The outward letters to be sent by hand, as well as registered letters are sent to the General Officer or (Central) Administration Branch for despatch. Important and urgent letters are normally sent direct to the relevant institution or party. In the latter instances, the [Central] Administration Branch or the General Office is not always informed, and sometimes such situations can create problems in tracking correspondence.

FILE MANAGEMENT:

(a) Procedure relating to opening of files

Each subject clerk is given a duty list and a case register or a file list. In most instances the instructions for the opening of new subject files are given by the staff officer who is responsible for the subject. In some places subject clerks are entrusted with the opening of files for new subjects. Accordingly, by making a new entry in the case register, the subject clerk opens a file.

The other common feature is this area in that the subject clerks of each institution have assigned numbers or letters to identify their subject areas. For example, the mail clerk gets the letter code, 'TP' [tappal] and the clerk handling establishment matters gets 'ESA' [establishment and administration] and he handles files pertaining to appointments, transfers, retirements and pensions of the staff grade officers.

(b) File numbering system

In most public institutions an alpha - numeric system has been used for file numbering. For instance, the file coding system starts with the prefix, 'AE' to identify the Administration and Establishment Branch. It follows with two sets of digits for the subject clerk's number and for the subject. The allocation of subjects to subject clerks and identification of those subjects under respective subject clerks is not an accepted procedure in modern records management systems. It is so, because, it leads to complications. An examination done, of the list of files of subject clerks revealed that the subjects which fall into different series and sub-series were listed under a particular subject clerk. Such an arrangement would not allow the understanding of the mutual relationship of subjects within a particular series. Moreover, it was also observed that from time to time these subjects had been interchanged among the subject clerks without paying attention to their relationship.

Such allocation could be considered as individual arrangements rather than systems. The danger of such arrangements is that they would only be meaningful to the persons who designed them. Even their immediate successors may not be able to understand them. Therefore, the officers may have to depend on subject clerks for the proper filing requirements of the institution. The other drawback

is that such 'systems' may change from time to time or from administrator to administrator, confusing the management of files.

Moreover, the example shown testifies to a fact that the file numbering system had not been designed with the proper identification of the subjects. Generally such 'systems' would not help to retrieve information fast for the administrative requirements of the institution. Here, it needs to be emphasised that in public institutions, whether they are small or large, there should be simple and workable systems which could be clearly understood by the users, and they should also be able to indicate, the provenance for future requirements.

Allocation of a series under 'miscellaneous' is another drawback which is common to most public institutions. For instance, the Department of Pensions use; (PD/AdI/Mis)² for the subject ' Disposal of Records', here the file number does not give any indication of the subject, and from the number it would not be possible to identify the subject matters of the correspondence, Examination of ' miscellaneous category.' records in various public institutions has revealed that important subjects, like, procedures relating to drafting of legislation, foreign investment projects, work in relation to consultative committees, ministerial orders etc. were among them. It is needless to say that these areas should be separated under respective subject areas. At times, instead of identifying respective subject areas of the institution, the name of the institution has been indicated as the title of the subject file and various subjects relating to that institution have been filed in such files. For example, a file maintained at the Economic Affairs Division of the Treasury pertaining to the Central Bank may contain correspondence on various subject areas. Here while some of them would have only an ephemeral value, the rest in the same file may contain valuable correspondence which would be needed for the administration as well as for future requirements. Such situations would create problems in appraisal due to the fact that, "weeding" is not accepted as a logical exercise in appraisal.

The Block Numbering System is also being used in some institutions. Under this system, the subjects are divided into code numbers. For instance, the subject numbering of a particular series would start from 1001 and would go up to 1099. The second

series would start from 1100. The limitation of this system is, if the subjects go beyond the allocated number, in this example 1099, the next set of files in the series will get the next available block at the end of the numbering system. Once again, such numbering will confuse current users as well as future users and custodians. The second element in this block numbering system is assigned to the department to which the subject matter relates. The final element has been allocated for the case register number³. This system is still in use at the Finance Division of the General Treasury, and could be cited as an example of the ' Central Registry System' which would have been operated in the past. Although the registry practice has since been terminated, the old block numbering system is being followed. This cumbersome and rigid system needs revision.

In some institutions the file numbering system is designed according to the major areas of work in the division. For example the Budget Division of the General Treasury has allocated 965 to 'Estimates.' 355 to ' Cadre' and 356 for the ' Other charges.' This follows the number given to the institution and the last digits are those allocated to the file number. The letters within brackets are the code letters of the subject clerk.⁴

The files with such numbers have been divided into three categories, namely, action cases, pending cases and closed cases. The action cases are always in the filing trays of the subject clerks and the pending cases remain with the staff officers. The closed cases are noted in call up diaries and kept in the filing cabinets. According to the staff officers and the clerical officers of the division, the specific nature of the subjects warrants a clear cut system of this nature.

(c) Work distribution among the subject clerks

In some offices, one subject clerk deals with the subjects pertaining to one or two staff officers. The staff officers' justification for this arrangement is that it would minimise the misplacing of records. As stated above, in such instances the distribution of work is not logical, since the assigning of subjects has not been carried out with the proper identification of their series. Accordingly the arrangement would not be compatible with the functional areas of the institution which gave birth to the 'record series. But, the administrators were of the view that the

arrangement would minimise the confusion and the tendency of misplacing files, because their movement would be restricted to a few officers.

(d) Drafting of letters

The clerical officers do the drafting of letters in Sinhala on the instructions of the staff officers. The action officers or staff officers give necessary instructions to the subject clerks for the preparation of draft replies. Letter writing in English is carried out by the staff officers themselves.

(e) Custody of current files

The custody of files remains as the responsibility of the respective subject clerks. Important and confidential files are kept with staff officers who are responsible for the subject. The monitoring of files is not possible due to the absence of a movement card system. The files which go to action officers or staff officers are not always channelled through the chief clerk or the administrative officer. In most cases the subject clerks handle their subjects direct with the respective staff officers.

According to the interviews conducted for this paper, it was observed that this practice had created a major difficulty to the administrative officer as the head of the Administration Branch and the immediate supervisory officer of the clerical officers, who is answerable to the superiors for matters pertaining to the tracing of letters, files and for providing necessary information contained therein. Moreover, in the absence of the subject clerks, the administrative officer has to attend to their work when the information is required by the superiors. In such circumstances, the administrative officer faces difficulties due to his unawareness of the movement of files.

Absence of a proper monitoring procedure creates problems when a file travels from one staff officer to the other in a large and busy ministry, department, statutory body, provincial or local government institution. According to the findings of this survey, the administrative officers have no system to check the movement of a file without the assistance of the subject clerks who would only know by experience the possible destinations of files. Therefore, such procedures cannot be explained as a system but only a practice which basically depends

on the memory and the experience of the subject clerk.

(f) Closure of files

A Standard procedure has not been developed for the closure of files in most government institutions. The procedure varies from subject to subject. For instance, personal files are not closed until the officers go on retirement. Files on buildings and vehicle maintenance, are closed only when they become bulky. Policy files are closed after the specific job is over. Therefore, such files would normally run for three to four years. There is no specific period for their closure.

When a file is closed in a continuing subject a new volume has to be opened under the same file reference. The files pertaining to the specific subjects, such as 'General Elections' have to be closed after the completion of the specific activity and should be removed from the office area by transferring them to the Record Room. But existing procedure in most public institutions is that files are being kept in the office not only until they complete all administrative requirements, but even thereafter. Therefore, there exists no distinction between the current and semicurrent phases. These two phases pass through the hands of the administrator. Thereafter, the files are transferred to the record room, and are kept there until they are finally disposed of, either by destruction or transferring to the National Archives. This procedure does not allow the record room to play an active role in the administration of the institution by providing necessary information for its day to day administrative requirements.

Interviews conducted for this paper revealed that some officers are of the view that some of their files cannot be closed due to the fact that they contain either standing orders or references for future work. Such explanation cannot be considered as valid for keeping files open for indefinite periods. The closure of a file within an agreed time frame will not cause any obstruction to its future use. It will speed up retrieval processes if it has been properly arranged and kept in an orderly manner for future use.

(g) Appraisal

Methodical systems have not been adopted for the appraisal of records in most government

institutions. Although house - keeping records have been disposed from time to time, it is not a regular and methodical exercise. Our survey has revealed that in certain instances, files have been in operation during the last fifteen to twenty years and they are still functioning as current files. This shows that substantial amounts of papers which could have been removed from the current administration and from the expensive office areas are being accumulated therein. To control this situation, attention needs to be given to the phases of the life cycle of records. Retention of unwanted records in expensive office areas would cause unnecessary expenditure on storage and maintenance costs to the administrative budget of the institution.

(h) Disposal of non - current records

In some institutions the transferring of important noncurrent files to the Record Room is decided by the Director. In some places committees have been appointed for the selection of records which are to be transferred to the record room. But these systems too have not been followed consistently. House - keeping files are destroyed periodically under the provisions of the Treasury Circular No.261. Most public officers are not aware of the schedules on house - keeping records of public institutions, published in Government Gazette No. 313 of 31.8. 1984. The decision for the destruction of records is taken by the staff officer of the relevant branch, but provisions made under Chapter XXVIII, Section 9 of the Establishment Code does not seem to have been always followed. However, in some places a list of destroyed files has been maintained.

CONCLUSION:

Records are created or received in public institutions in the course of performing their assigned functions. Surveys and interviews carried out for this paper revealed the existence of various systems in managing these records, namely the correspondence and files. Since these records contain recorded memory of an institution's activities, they need to be retrieved for multifarious purposes. It needs to be emphasised that the retrieval or use of information is not only for the creators but is also for various future users of such records. Therefore, logical systems for the management of correspondence and files

identifying record series in institutions, should be an integral part of the administrative machinery. Herein, standard forms of agreeable file coding systems, by identifying major functional areas of an institution should be the norm and not individual systems. Such a subject oriented approach would satisfy the requirements of the current administration as well as future needs.

The lack of method in maintaining minutes in files is another common drawback in managing files. Some public institutions do not maintain minute sheets in the files. But in some, clerks are empowered to write minutes by making their comments in brief on the subject, drawing the attention of staff officers to connected papers and to regulations. Such minuting would facilitate the administrator to arrive at a decision, instead of wasting his valuable time tracing and perusing relevant papers and regulations. However, the examination of minute papers in recent files, has revealed that they would not have made positive contributions to the administration of the institution. In contrast, the writing of minutes in the past was done in a methodical way by providing background information on the subject, with a view to facilitate the administrator to arrive at a decision.

The diverse nature of records in various public institutions is another problem which has a bearing on clerical officers' functions in the area of managing records. For example, records which have been and are being created in scientific and technological institutions might differ from other public records, not only in their content but also in format. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the respective areas of activities in each institution and the clerical officers have to be trained accordingly.

Before concluding this paper it would be appropriate to cite a quotation from Thurston which summarises the roots and causes of records management problems prevailing in the developing countries, "..... there was no records management programme whereby they [files] could be moved on through an orderly process towards preservation or destruction. They began to pile up on top of filing cabinets, on the floor in the corridors, in store rooms, in basements, go - downs. When space was needed urgently, they were dumped in the National Archives if there was room and if the ministry was aware of the Archives' existence - otherwise the records were

destroyed. (22)

Today, in most developing countries, archivists, records managers and teachers in records management and archive studies, are working hard with a view to finding remedial measures to bring order into records management in public institutions. In Sri Lanka, our universities still do not offer courses in Records Management; perhaps it is now the appropriate time to commence courses either at the Universities, the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration or at other academic and training institutions, to train public officers at various levels in the management of public records. Such training would help not only to resolve present problems in managing records but also to educate creators and users on their role and responsibility in an ever - growing information conscious society.

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Micrographics and electronic imaging

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ABSTRACT

The continuing growth of the number of documents that are filed and the varying needs that these documents are put to, has led to the rapid development in storage and retrieval systems. Today, a decision maker is faced with a choice of storage and retrieval systems. It is therefore essential to have an understanding of the different systems and its advantages and disadvantages.

Even microfilm which for long has been the media for storage mainly due to its archival quality and low cost now offers a range of systems such as Computer Output Microfilm (COM) and Computer Aided Retrieval (CAR) each of which handles different applications.

Optical based systems have important advantages over microfilm such as offering greater storage capacity, as much as 2 gigabytes of information per 12 inch optical disc and complete on - line access to all images on file and instant recover, as well as greater security since no processing is necessary.

However, the most distinguishing feature between traditional and electronic systems is the mobility of images, where a traditional system necessitate image viewing and printing at a dedicated terminal, electronic systems facilitates transmission of images across user networks.

The need for storage and retrieval of information has existed from the early ages. In the beginning, storage and retrieval was simply through the process of storage in the human memory, passing onto another generation through word of mouth and storage in memory. However with the advance of technology the written word came into being and this, beginning with the stone slab, to paper became the medium of early storage.

The need to store increasingly large volumes of data and the need to preserve it led to the search for better media of storage and retrieval. This search led to the development of microfilm. The volume of information requiring to be stored and the different uses of this information, have led to the development of systems alternative to and complementary to microfilm. i. e. digital media.

Every year there is cumulative growth of 5-8 % of the number of documents that are filed, about

2% of these documents are filed in a digital way while about 3% are kept on microfilm. Which means that 95% are still kept in the traditional way i.e. paper, which is an expensive method.

This would mean that the necessity for storage and retrieval is greater today than even before. Also the need to understand the differences and benefits of each system is necessary so as to be able to take informed decisions on storage and retrieval. The following sections will begin by briefly explaining the systems and technologies now available and then go on to give the benefits of each system and also explain the criteria that would decide selection of a system to be used.

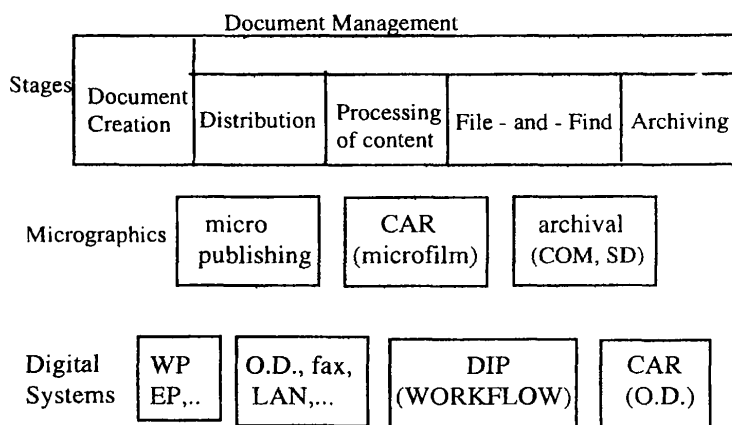
SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Although microfilm commenced as a fairly primitive system, there are today a range of microfilm based systems which can handle different

applications. These systems would be the Computer Output Microfilm (COM) and Computer Aided Retrieval (CAR). For an overview of document systems see figure.1

Digitising of microfilm and its ability to transmit images has remained largely unnoticed. Currently conventional micrographic systems use mainly electronic imaging technology, both to record images of paper documents on microfilm and later to retrieve these documents from the optical disks. Optical disk based systems offer several important advantages over microfilm in certain applications. In an optical system, a laser beam records electronic images on a specially treated metallic disk. The bits of information stored on the disk can be read by another laser and converted back into electronic impulses, which can be interpreted by a computer. This type of system is known as a "Write Once Read Many" (WORM) optical system.

Figure 1: Document Systems



CAR: computer assisted retrieval

COM : computer output on microfilm

SD: source document

WP: word processing

EP: electronic publishing

O.D.: optical disk

DIP: digital image processing

One 12 inch optical disk for example, can hold 2 gigabytes (Two million bytes) of information. Among the advantages of this type of system are complete on line access to all images on file and instant image recovery.

These advantages have made digitised systems to have a major impact in active document applications (unlike inactive or partly active document and storage retrieval, where microfilm has a greater advantage) particularly at the document processing stage e.g. processing of personal files on health claims, since users can have the unique benefit of random access to records.

Optical disk systems also offer reduced storage space requirements and provide greater document security than microfilm since no film has to be sent for processing. " Write Once" optical technology combines some of the most important features of both floppy and hard disks. They also offer high capacities previously available only to hard disk users. Similar to floppies, optic disks are removable, so they can be easily locked away in high security environments. Data handling is becoming widely computerised and handling documents in digital form is gaining momentum. In addition optical storage technology is getting off the ground.

The most distinguishing feature between traditional and electronic systems, is the mobility of images. In traditional systems, images must be viewed at a dedicated terminal and printed for distribution. In electronic systems, images can appear on a computer screen and be transmitted across user networks or faxed off site to remote terminals.

STORAGE MEDIA COMPARISON

Microfilm - Microfilm has for decades been the media for storage, mainly due to its truly archival quality which exceeds a century.

The benefits would be:

- Low media cost
- Fast data capture
- Low duplication cost
- Truly archival
- Legally accepted (In developed countries; in Sri Lanka however, is only accepted as secondary evidence)
- formal standards
- Low initial investment
- Low conversion cost
- Simple document management

- Fully compatible media equipment amongst all vendors.
- Known and proven vendors.
-

Digital systems - The benefits of digital systems are:

- Direct read after write
- Add - on possibility
- Short access time
- Easy automated access
- Higher storage density for ASCII information
- Full text retrieval
- Simultaneous multi - user access
- Easy integration with electronic document creation and processing

Figure 2: Optical vs. Electronic Imaging

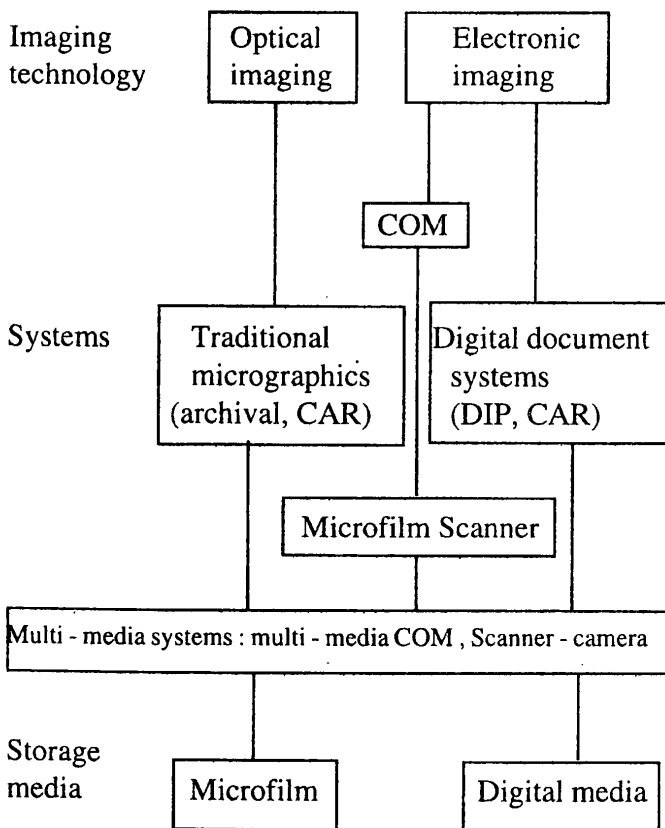
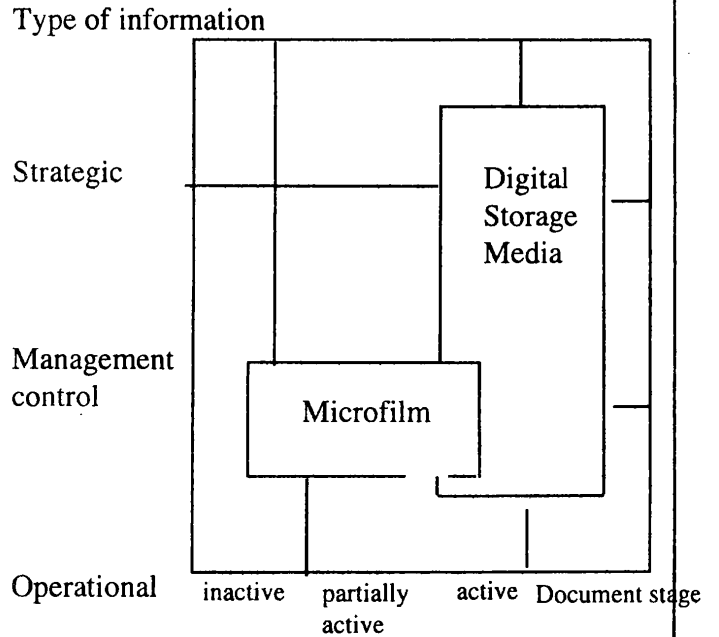


Figure 3 : MEDIA SELECTION



IMAGING SYSTEMS

Having looked at storage it would be necessary to have an understanding of document imaging systems. An overview would be as depicted in figure 2.

ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS

One of the most significant benefits of electronic imaging would be that of integration. i.e. electronic imaging combines well with both digital media and microfilm. Other benefits would be:

- Effective communication
- Instant on - request availability of information
- Greater flexibility in representation of information
- Easy integration in Company - wide information system.

MEDIA SELECTION

Media choices will have to be made for particular applications. This can be done by evaluating document usage against the properties of each medium. Microfilm will exhibit strengths where inactive records (therefore long retention periods) are concerned and also where the records are used for operational purposes (low retrieval applications). However, where it concerns partially active

documents and the need of information is for management control, digital media may be more useful (see figure 3) at the other end of the scale, when it concerns active documents and / or information for the purpose of strategic decision making, digital media is definitely advantageous.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Storage and retrieval systems have progressed from the simple microfilm, to a variety of systems such as CAR and COM as well as digital systems that cater to a variety of needs.

These systems are rarely competitive but offer different advantages depending on the requirements of the user. It is therefore essential to have a clear understanding of the workings and benefits of each system to enable correct decisions to be taken on the system that would best suit a particular organisation.

Although technology in this area has seen rapid progress, the immediate future should see further developments in the form of perfecting and use of combination scanner cameras. These scanner cameras will capture documents both on microfilm and the digital medium in one pass. Further, continued technological improvements in the future could give us the benefit of better, faster and cheaper systems.

The National Library of India: its glorious past and its bright future

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ABSTRACT

The history of the National Library from Calcutta Public Library to the Imperial Library has been narrated. The contributions of the pioneers are acknowledged. The opening of the National Library at Belvedere is mentioned. The Asutosh Collection and other gift collections are described in detail. Other facilities like lending and children's library section are discussed. To meet the rising demand - new expansion plan conceived - a new building is under construction - the detailed design of the building - its unique features have been enumerated. A future plan for the readers' services with modern facilities to make it one of the most modern National Libraries of the world has been enumerated.

India's National Library has its beginning in the nucleus - the CALCUTTA PUBLIC LIBRARY, which was declared open to the public on March 21, 1836. This achievement was possible due to the combined efforts of the prominent citizens of Calcutta, both British and Indian. The idea of a public library visualised by J. H. Stocqueler, editor of the ENGLISHMAN (now the STATESMAN) received enthusiastic response from the upper classes, and subscriptions and books poured in. Dr. F. P. Strong, Civil Surgeon, made available the ground floor of his residence at 13, Esplanade Row, and the Calcutta Public Library came into being. In its long, eventful and chequered history the Calcutta Public Library acquired a good collection of books and periodicals. But for the efforts of this library, the National Library today would not have in its collection many of the valuable rare books and journals, which are now used by scholars from all over the country as well as from abroad. This library moved temporarily to Fort William in July 1841 and finally to Metcalfe Hall in June, 1844. Among others, the library was headed by luminaries like Peary Chand Mitra, father of Bengli

novels, from 1848 to 1866, and by Bipin Chandra Pal, freedom fighter.

THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY:

In the last quarter of the 19th century, the Calcutta Public Library fell into bad days and neglect. Visiting the place in 1899, Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor - General of India, saw the valuable collection in shambles and amalgamated this rich collection with those of the then Imperial Library. The Imperial Library (Indentures Validation) Act (1 of 1902) was passed in 1902 and the IMPERIAL LIBRARY was opened to the public on January 30, 1903 at Metcalfe Hall. In his inaugural address on this occasion, Lord Curzon observed " It is intended that it should be a library of reference, a working place for students and a repository of material for the future historians of India, in which as far as possible, every written work about India at any time can be seen and read. " He was delighted to declare that he "found Calcutta without a library worthy of the name and left it with a first class and well organised institution." Though the control of this institution

was with the Government of India, yet its internal management was delegated to a Council, with the Librarian as its ex - officio Secretary.

The opening of the Imperial Library (the maintenance cost of which being entirely the responsibility of the Government) created a landmark in the history of the Indian Library Movement. Since then, slowly but steadily the Government, both Central and States, continued to extend facilities for use of libraries at the Government cost.

John Macfarlane, the first librarian of the Imperial Library was an Assistant Librarian of the British Museum and this explains the influence of British Museum methods on the cataloguing, classification and organisation of the Imperial Library. His premature death in 1906 was a great loss to the library. He was succeeded in 1907 by the famous scholar and linguist, Harinath De, whose untimely death in 1911 deprived the library of his valuable services. John Alexander Chapman was the librarian from 1911 to 1930, who gave a thrust to the preservation of books in tropical climate. Khan Bahadur K. M. Asadullah succeeded him and headed the Library till July 1947. During his tenure several new measures were introduced, which also included a regular full - time Diploma Course in Librarianship from 1835. Credit goes to him to be the founder Secretary of the Indian Library Association (1933) that functioned from the Imperial Library.

The Imperial Library was shifted from Metcalfe Hall, to a portion of the Foreign and Military Secretariat Building at 5, Esplanade East in 1923, where even now the National Library has a Newspaper Reading Room and Stack. The Second World War made it necessary to shift the Library to Jabakusum House, a private building, from February 1942 to 1947. The Imperial Library returned to its former abode at 5 Esplanade East early in 1948.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

The efforts of Stocqueler and Curzon and a host of good librarians had already given India an institution which could be a National Library when it became an independent country. The Imperial Library (Change of name) Act (LI of 1948) was passed in 1948 and the National Library came into existence on 8.9 1948.

BELVEDERE

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, had foresight and imagination to respond to the initiative of C. Rajagopalachari, the then Governor - General, who suggested that the erstwhile residence of Lieutenant - Governors and Viceroy at BELVEDERE, in its gracious setting of lawn and shade, should be the future home of the National Library. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, with his positive scholarly instinct, lent his great moral support and active encouragement as, Minister of Education to the execution of various schemes.

The National Library shifted from Esplanade East to Belvedere in 1948, described by a famous British librarian as perhaps the most beautiful campus for a library anywhere in the world. It took four years to remodel this old and beautiful mansion into a functional modern library without disturbing its imposing Gothic structure, in any way. It was remarkable that even during the process of shifting, readers' services of the library were continued on a regular basis. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Minister of Education, Government of India, formally opened the National Library at Belvedere, to the public on February 1, 1953.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Acquisition of reading material is through the Delivery of Books Act, purchase, gift & exchange. Collection of Indian reading material - books, periodicals, newspapers and maps is through legal deposit: Delivery of Books (Public Libraries) Act, 1954 as amended in 1956. The Library is also the depository of publications of the United Nations and its agencies. It also receives government and official documents from the United States, Canada, European Economic Community, Asian Development Bank and other such agencies. The library being the implementing agency for exchanges of reading materials under the Cultural Exchange Programmes of the Government of India, receives documents on India and other valuable research material in many foreign languages from 205 institutions in 81 countries. The Library's collection has been greatly enriched by gifts of rare and valuable documents donated, time to time by heirs of important scholars and statesmen.

Governments of the various countries of the world have been presenting important publications of their countries which have enriched the library's collection.

The Library has printed maps, atlases and manuscript maps. The collection ranges from the 16th century onwards.

GIFT COLLECTIONS

Marvellous gift collections like the invaluable, multidisciplinary Asutosh Collection (a singleman's 84,000 unit collection) the rich Ramdas Sen Collection, the unique Buhar Collection of Arabic & Persian manuscripts and printed books of importance, the historical collections of India's great historian, Sri Jadunath Sarkar and that of his contemporary Dr. Surendra Nath Sen, and the Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai Collection of Dravidian manuscripts are the prized possessions of the National Library. The Hidayat Hussain Collection, the Boarid Baran Mukherjee Collection, the Zekariya Collection and the Imambara collection are also noteworthy.

Researchers and scholars are greatly dependent on Tej Bahadur Sapru's correspondence as well as on the manuscripts and personal correspondence of important personalities and litterateurs of repute.

RARE BOOKS

A very good collection of rare books and manuscripts are being preserved for posterity in the Rare Books Division, in a specially air conditioned and humidity controlled chamber. The Library's recent acquisitions of manuscripts and personal correspondence of well known litterateurs and statesmen of India are also being preserved. Microforms are also preserved in this division and are made available for consultation.

CONSERVATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Conservation of library material is as important as collection building and modernisation of library services. This need was felt by John Chapman early in the first quarter of this century and later Khan Bahaur Asadullah upheld the book conservation in a practical way and incorporated 'Book Binding & Repairing' as an integral part of the curriculum in librarianship training classes.

Conservation activities are looked after by (a) Preservation Division, (b) Laboratory Division and (c) Reprography Division.

The reconditioning of books, serial publications, manuscripts and maps, deacidification of brittle documents, preservation of original format through scientific methods and application of micrography for preservation of rare and valuable materials are the major functions of these divisions.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICES

The Library compiles bibliographies/ select reading lists of material on various subjects on specific requests from individuals and institutions, both from India and abroad. List of translations and list of bibliographies published in India are compiled and sent to Unesco for inclusion in the Index Translationum and Bibliography, Documentation Terminology respectively. The Library also compiles and publishes special bibliographies on different subjects as per its action plan.

Indexing of learned journals has also been taken up as a part of this service.

The Library also extends reprographic services as per international regulations to scholars and institutions.

Specialised Readers' Services are rendered in the Children's Library, Science, Technology, Reading Room, Rare Books, Asutosh Collection Divisions and in the Language Divisions.

PUBLICATIONS

Apart from catalogues of the Library's holdings and various bibliographies compiled by the Library from time to time as planned, it also publishes other publications such as monographs and Proceedings of Seminars and Conferences organised by the Library. These are available for sale.

BUILDINGS

1) The National Library has started construction of its Second Annexe Building to house a collection of 5 million books besides technical facilities, reader - services with adequate modern systems for retrieval and storage. The application of computer will be the pivot for the library operations. This provision for 5 million books will assure the Library enough space for its requirements in the next 40 years.

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