



SLLA Newsletter

Volume 37

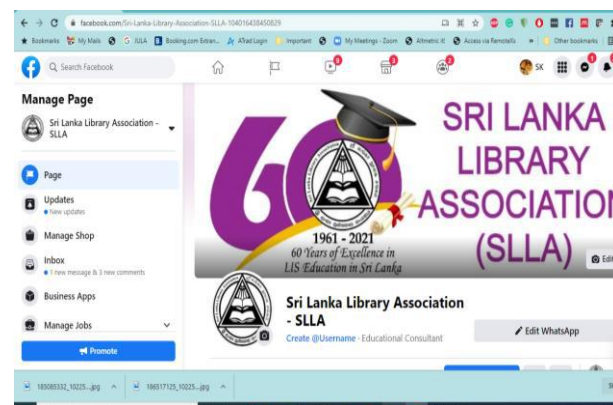
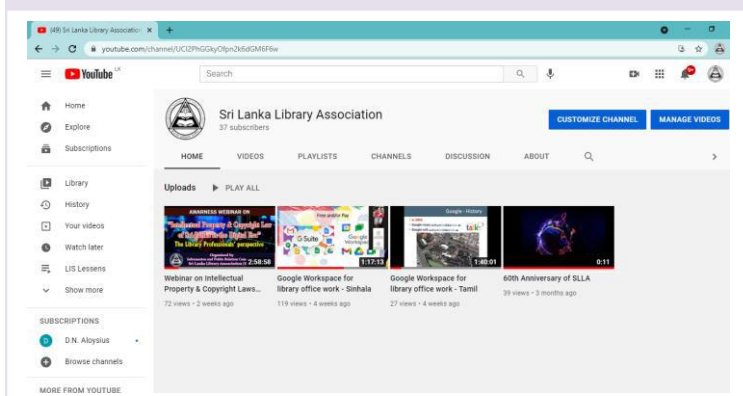
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Official YouTube channel and Facebook page of SLLA

Information and Public Relation (IPR) committee created and launched an official YouTube channel and a Facebook page for SLLA on 5th, March 2021. SLLA You Tube channel and Facebook page addresses are <https://www.youtube.com/sllalk> and <https://www.facebook.com/slla.lk> respectively. All members of SLLA are invited to join with these social media



SLLR is now live on SLJOL

The SLLA is proud to announce that the scholarly journal of the association; Sri Lanka Library Review (SLLR) is now available on Sri Lankan Journals online (SLJOL) platform. Access it from 2020 onwards at <https://sllr.sljol.info/>. The previous issues can still be accessed from slla.lk

Examinations of SLLA - 2020/2021

At the 04th Council meeting (2020/2021) of the Sri Lanka Library Association, it was decided to conduct examinations of the Diploma and Higher Diploma courses in Library and Information Science (DLIS and HDIPLIS) and the Course on Library Automation (COLA) in online mode for the year of 2020 due to the present pandemic situation in the country. This was the first time in its history that the SLLA had its examinations online.

The education team of the SLLA has provided immense support to conduct this examination in a successful manner. The SLLA office was made the focal administration point. Altogether approximately 700 students took the examinations from their homes

Name of the Examination	Completion dates
HDIPLIS Part I	6 th 7 th and 13 th of February, 2021
HDIPLIS Part I1	6 th and 7 th March, 2021
DLIS	20 th and 21 st March, 2021
COLA	29 th December, 2020

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Role of public libraries in promoting information literacy in Sri Lankan context

The ever-growing technological development leads to the proliferation of information exponentially and thus make information overload. Along with the information overload skepticism on validity, the information's reliability and authenticity have also been growing. Thus, there is a need for society to develop a strategy to combat these challenges. The strategy that the intellectual has already created is "Information Literacy" (IL). The term information literacy was first used by Paul Zurkowski in 1974, who stated the need for people to become "*information literate*" if they could survive and compete in an emerging Information Society. In 1989, the American Library Association defined information literacy as the "ability to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate and effectively use and communicate information in its various formats". The IL is now considered as one of the fundamental humans right in the digital world and core skill for lifelong learning. The American Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standard indicate following six competencies that an information literate person should be developed.

1. Determine the extent of information needed
2. Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
3. Evaluate the information and its sources critically
4. Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
5. Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
6. Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

The concept of IL came to light in Sri Lankan comparatively recently. IL training has been introduced in some universities as a module which is taught mainly through university librarians. Although extensive training programmes had been conducted for teacher librarians and school library staff, its implementation in secondary schools is still questionable as it is not mandated in the school system. Therefore, the next major stakeholder to introduce the IL to the society is the public libraries, as the public libraries are considered the knowledge hub of society. Public libraries and serve the citizens irrespective of the caste, religion, age, gender, language and education.

The first question regarding IL's introduction in the public library is 'Can the public library contribute to IL training?' The answer is yes. The UNESCO Public Library declaration defines the functions of the public libraries in relation to Information literacy as follows:

1. Supporting both individual and self-conducted education as well as formal education at all levels;
2. Providing opportunities for personal creative development;
3. Ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;
4. Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills;
5. Supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary

This indicates that the public library should incorporate IL training into its functions. Information literacy is a set of lifelong learning skills, and public libraries are lifelong learning centers of society. When these two systems are fused, they form the information society by increasing the competency among people. Moreover, the public library has strength over other libraries in promoting information literacy among society. One of the strengths is that the public library is traditionally recognized as a learning center, so the users trust it. If the public library is successful in IL training, it can train all types of users, unlike the university library and the school library. Another strength is that the public library can have lifelong contact with users and this gives long standing relationship between librarian and users.

The second question is, how can the public library contribute to IL? There are a wide range of IL programmes worldwide in public libraries. However, all of them are not applicable in Sri Lankan context. Hence, information literacy programme which suit Sri Lankan public library system should be developed. Since the public library has an image of a traditional information center, it is challenging to project a new image suddenly as a community training center. This transformation has to come gradually. This transformation's best starting point is to provide the community with enough ICT infrastructures within the library with internet access. The library will be used as an internet access place, and this attracts users. With this initiation, the library can start training programmes on ICT for various users like children, school students, retired people, and older peoples. The library can use social media to connect with people, advertise their training programme, and issue printed notices to the library's area. The library can also start training on the internet searching, use of the application in smartphones; introduce the e-books and e-newspapers portals and conduct sessions on the safe use of social media etc.

The public library can initiate a partnership programme with schools to develop IL competencies among school students. The library can invite nearby schools to use their ICT facilities at least once a month. Even though ICT is a subject in school curricula, many schools do not even have a single computer. The ICT facilities of the library will help these types of schools. During the students' visit, the library can organize a short IL training programme for students. Another opportunity for the public library is the reading month celebration.

..... **Continued in page 3**

The information literacy programmes can also be incorporated in the reading month celebration, targeting the schools' students and general users. It is obvious that the public library cannot train the users in all the spectrum of information literacy. Nevertheless, the idea presented here can give the users fundamental information skills of IL.

The third question is: What are the limits or barriers of the public library to implement IL programmes? It is necessary to discuss about the limitations, so that the actions can be taken to rectify the barriers. The leading two barriers are the lack of ICT facilities for many public libraries and lack of IL training/skills for librarians. Apart from this, the reluctance of librarians to change from the traditional role, poor public perceptions about public library's function, and lack of positive attitude also contribute to barriers in implementing IL programmes in the public library.

The local government bodies that constitute the public library have a significant role in facilitating and motivating the libraries to engage in these kinds of programmes. The librarians also need to develop their skills on par with the current trend, and plan and implement innovative service programmes in public libraries.

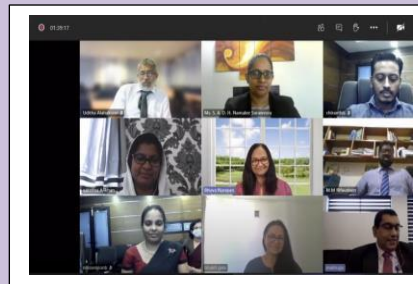


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ANNUAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM OF NILIS -2021



The annual research symposium of the National Institute of Library and Information Sciences, University of Colombo was virtually held on 23rd January 2021. South Asia Chapter of the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) partnered in organizing this event. Dr. Ruwan Gamage, Acting Director – NILIS and Dr. Bahkti Gala, Chair of the South Asia Chapter of ASIS&T co-chaired the symposium. The main theme of the symposium is “Challenges and Opportunities for Libraries in the New Normal”. The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Bhuva Narayan of the School of Communication, University of Technology Sydney, Australia.



The best presentation award was presented to Mr. M. Jeyakanthan, Library, Eastern University of Sri Lanka for “Integrated library systems - discovery interface (ILS -DI): a standard framework for real time connectivity with information discovery applications”.

Fifty-four (54) abstracts were presented in six (06) sessions, namely; Librarianship, information literacy, information sources and services, IT applications and new trends, Covid-19 and learning, and how Covid-19 affected libraries. Presenters were from Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The NILIS Research Symposium was open and free for participants and presenters. Participants were mainly from Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The Best Presentation and Best Student Presentation awards were selected based on the average ratings of Session Chairs.



The best student presentation award was presented to Mrs. J. Lavanya, Library, Eastern University of Sri Lanka for “Present status of human resource capacity of public libraries in Batticaloa district”. Mrs. Lavanya Co-authored the paper with Dr. G. D.M.N Samaradiwahara, Library, Sri Jayawardenapura University.

Annual School Library workshop



The workshop on school library and learning resource center guidelines was conducted by the School Library Committee of SLLA on 29th March 2021 at the Colombo Public Library auditorium.

This workshop was attended by Librarians and Teacher Librarians of National and provincial school libraries. Ms. R.C. Kusumanchali, Convenor, School Libraries welcomed the audience. Dr. Ruwan Gamage, President, SLLA briefed the role of the association in supporting the school librarian profession. The Keynote address was delivered by Dr. K.R.N. Harshani, General Secretary, SLLA. The main speech was delivered by Mr. P.Thenabadu, Director, School Library Development Unit, WHO detailed about the contents of the School Library and Learning Resource center Guidelines. Around 100 participants attended for this this workshop.



Dr. Pradeepa Wijetunge, Past President of SLLA and the Librarian, University of Colombo Wins the Dr. H. Anil Kumar Memorial Emerald South Asia LIS Research Award 2020



The winner of the above award for the year 2020 is Dr. Pradeepa Wijetunge, Librarian, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka and the project submitted by her is "Positioning the library services in post COVID-19 online learning in the Sri Lankan state Universities: Opportunities and challenges encountered by the University Libraries.

Emerald, a renowned publisher dedicated this LIS Research Fund Award in memory and Honour of Dr. H. Anil Kumar for his unwavering dedication and contributions to the field of Library Science. He has left behind a rich legacy that will be remembered by many generations to come.

Emerald offers of £2,000 for the winning research project, to fund or part – fund the project.

Workshop on Library Management for Public librarians

National Library and Documentation services board organized a workshop on Library management for public librarians of Batticaloa district on 24th - 25th February at the National Institute of Education, Colombo. More than 30 Public librarians from Batticaloa district participated at this workshop.



Chunnakam Public Library

Officials of National Library and Documentation services Board visited to Chunnakam Public library in January 2021



Chunnakam Public Library organized a seminar on Healthy Women and Ayurvedic Medicine on 5th March 2021. Dr. J. Rathnalagi participated as a resource person at this seminar. More than 50 participants including women library readers, general officers and officers from Pradeshya sabha attended at this event following the health measures.

News Items for the next Newsletter (April. – June. 2021)

Share your experiences, best practices and activities held in your libraries to be published in the forthcoming SLLA Newsletter. Its main aim is to exchange and disseminate news and views among membership. Send your news items in MS WORD format to publication officer via email sritharan@lib.cmb.ac.lk or sllapublicationofficer@gmail.com

If undelivered please return to:

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To:

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