

**INFORMATION SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH THE OPAC: WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES OF SRI LANKA.**

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Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs) are one of the main interfaces that link the library with its users. It opens a more intimate gateway for online users. There is a variability of OPAC services due to the software platforms that provide OPACs and activation of built-in service plugins available with the software. Therefore, this study aims at identifying variations in OPAC services among the 15 state universities of Sri Lanka. In this study, the available types of OPAC software (whether free or fee), built-in services provided by those software platforms, and how far each university library adopted those services through the OPAC were investigated. This cross-sectional research conducted as an online survey and took place in a computer lab facility at the University of Ruhuna, with same environmental, and connectivity situations. All the 15 university OPACs were loaded and evaluated simultaneously by 15 dedicated evaluators in dedicated computers. The evaluation conducted under four main characteristics that were visible in OPACs in general, namely the accessibility, interface, promotion of reading, and service diversity. All 15 universities have adopted OPACs and 93% of them are using KOHA (Free) platform while 7% is still using the fee-based platform. Most of the library services are provided through the OPACs of many libraries. However, laptop lending service, article index service, plagiarism check and newspaper articles are specific services offered by some universities. It can be concluded that there is a variability among OPAC services provided by the universities and filling the gaps in services will ensure a better service experience and passive marketing of services to the OPAC users of the library.

Keywords: *OPAC services; Academic libraries; Library services enhancement.*

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