

Preserving Heritage and Promoting Academic Progress: The Role of the Library, University of Jaffna.

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Abstract

Libraries typically act as guardians of cultural heritage as well as modern academic development enablers. This study evaluates how the University of Jaffna library helps to preserving indigenous knowledge, historical records, and cultural resources whereas also helping to research, innovation, and modern academic development for the future advancement. By preserving of rare manuscripts, archival collections, indigenous knowledge, historical documents, and non-book collections related to heritage, University of Jaffna library contributes to heritage preservation whereas encouraging innovation, research support services, and academic growth for future advancements. This study examines the library's attempts to preserve heritage and enable the future developments through the document analysis. The findings show the library's remarkable initiatives to preserve heritage knowledge through varies activities such as Digitization project, Tamilology Library Project, Preservation of Indigenes knowledge, project of Capturing unit for historical records and Preserving of Non-book collections project related to Musicology, in the same time, for the academic progress, library initiates research support services, international knowledge networks, outreach programs, library symposium and collaboration works, which are ensuring that knowledge sharing and innovation within academic communities. When library implements these kind of dual activities, face challenges include shortage of staff, inadequate funding, and limited infrastructure facilities for digitization. This study presents that the University of Jaffna library not only preserve the intellectual heritage of the region but also serves as a dynamic platform for future academic development, it connects tradition and modernity. Finally, this study concludes with suggestions for enhancing dual functions of library in heritage preservation and academic advancement that is establishing the library as a strengthen focal point for cultural continuity as well as academic progress. For this study, primary and secondary data are used.

Keywords: Academic Progress, Archival Collections, Heritage Preservation, Indigenous Knowledge, Library University of Jaffna, Outreach Activities, Rare Manuscripts

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Introduction

Globally, University libraries perform a transformative role by functioning as custodian of cultural heritage while simultaneously serving as centers for an academic and social development. They ensure continuity of cultural identity, safeguard intellectual memory and preserve historical resources. In the meantime, they promote research productivity, making novel information to more accessible, and promote innovation in higher education. (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016).

Within this dual context, the University of Jaffna library known as the *Vithiananthan Library*, it represents an excellent instance, how a University library can actively engage contemporary academic requirements with maintaining of cultural traditions. Library University of Jaffna was established in October 1974, simultaneous with opening of the Jaffna Campus of the University of Jaffna. Since then, the library has been developing into an important academic institution and providing service to wide range of stakeholders. Now, the main library of University of Jaffna at *Thirunelvely* has eight branch libraries systematically positioned across the University's faculties. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.589).

As of December 2024, nearly 13,500 registered users were used the University of Jaffna library. It reflects an important of academic and intellectual life of the institution. Library holdings are over 275,000 books, almost 2,000 scholarly journals and magazines, 70 newspaper titles, more than 14,000 pamphlets, and an increasing collection of digital materials, including CDs, DVDs, e-books, and e-journals. It makes up outstanding collection. In addition to these resources, the library has a large number of heritage materials such as 284 bundles of palm-leaf collections, and specialized audio and visual Musicological collections. It ensures that the library maintains priceless cultural heritage collections and simultaneously serves to the immediate needs of academic research. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, pp.588-590).

Furthermore, the contribution of the University of Jaffna library goes over traditional collection management. It actively contributes to growth of university community's intellectual capacities. Through Information literacy programs, undergraduate students learn how to effectively acquire, evaluate, and use of information in a world dominated by digital complexity. (Library Committee, 2021). The library also assists university community to increase the visibility by developing institutional repositories, preserving faculty research outputs, and fostering open access to scholarly publications. In this manner, library preserves

local academic contributions as well as incorporate it into international knowledge networks. Additionally, by engaging the outreach activities, the library strengthens its role with local communities over the university boundaries, it is seen library as a knowledge center for marginalized society. (Annual Report, 2024).

University of Jaffna library's commitment to preservation of cultural heritage is one of its distinctive features. The collection of palm-leaf manuscripts represents decades of indigenous knowledge tradition, religious beliefs, and literary heritage. In addition to archival materials and historical collections were preserved by digitization project and capturing unit, these collections provided invaluable original data for scholars in variety of disciplines. By preserving these kind of collections, the library protects cultural heritage, however, today, many historical sources of knowledge are under threat due to digitization gaps, globalization, and generational changes. Non-book materials of library such as musicological materials, also contribute to a deeper knowledge of invisible cultural heritage.

Meanwhile, the library strategically promote the academic development including expanding e-resources, digital repositories, research support services, research symposium and national and international collaborations which give students and faculty members access to worldwide research environments. Further, research support services including reference service, citation management, plagiarism and AI deduction facilities, and academic publishing guidance, these initiative increase academic output of University of Jaffna. (Annual Report, 2024). The University of Jaffna library actuality acts as a bridge between the past and the future, striking a balance cultural preservation and contemporary technology.

University of Jaffna library's these kind of dual functions are extremely significant in Northern Sri Lanka, due to region has experienced more than two decades of conflict, limited resources, and difficulties to cultural survival. In this situation, the library's mission preserving cultural heritage and connecting the academic community to international development has taken more important. University of Jaffna library's these kind of dual activities are equally significant one another. While cultural heritage serves as foundation for identity, access to modern knowledge provides development.

Finally, this study provides important insights into how University of Jaffna library can balance its dual functions such as heritage preservation and modern academic development through the various activities, despite limited resources after a long period of civil conflict. Furthermore,

this study highlights the *library's* dual functions as a custodian of the past and a dynamic facilitator for future development, it is reflecting as a key center for continuity of culture, research support, and academic development.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are,

1. To examine the activities done by the University of Jaffna library to preserve cultural heritage resources.
2. To investigate how library can contribute to modern academic development by providing research support services, online resources, and information accessibility.
3. To evaluate library's ability to maintain a balance between heritage preservation and modern academic advancements.
4. To identify the challenges faced by the University of Jaffna library in fulfilling its dual functions.
5. To provide the possible recommendations for improving the library's ability to support both heritage preservation and academic development.

Methodology

A qualitative research method is used to examine the dual functions of the University of Jaffna library for safeguarding heritage and promoting academic development. The document analysis method is used as primary methodology of this study that includes a systematic analysis of primary and secondary data related to this study such as library and university reports, archival collections, rare manuscripts, indigenous knowledge repositories, historical records, and book materials. The methodology of this study is including following steps:

Data Collection

- Evaluate the library's archival documents, catalogues, and special collections.
- Review of library and university's reports, policy documents, and strategic plan documents related to digitization, research support, and outreach programs.

- Analysis of e-resources, digital repositories, and library collaboration records.

Data Analysis

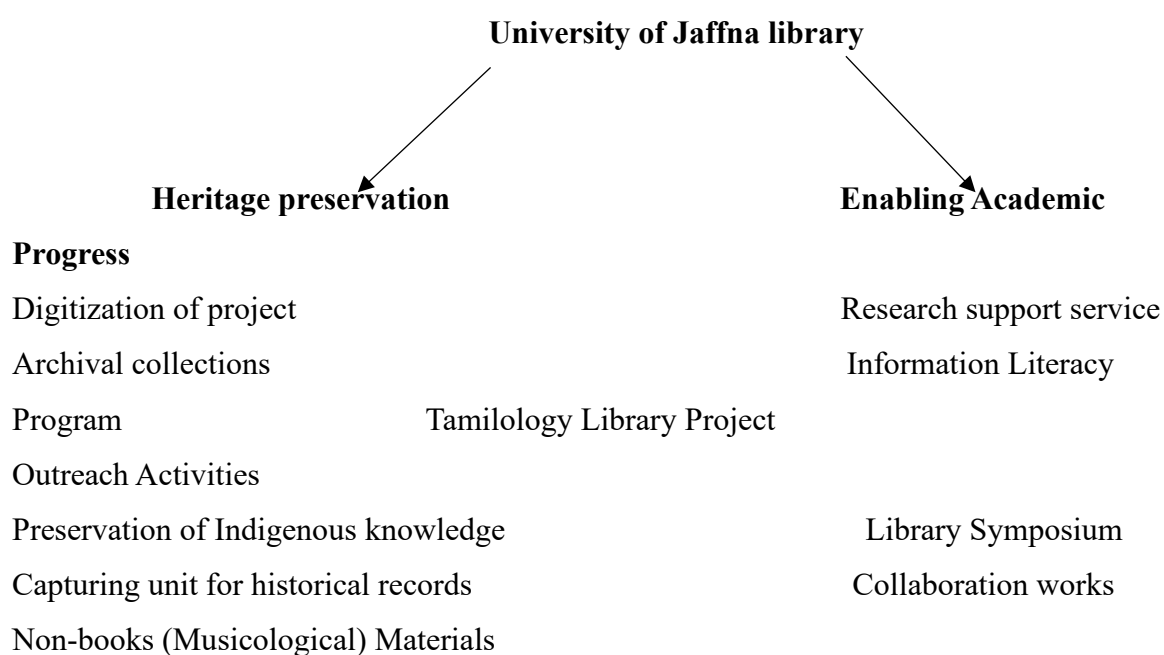
- Identification of programs aimed at heritage preservation, digitization, and resource accessibility.
- Analysis the library services for research supporting, global knowledge networks, and outreach activities.
- Assessment of collaboration initiatives with other organizations

Synthesis

- Findings are compiled to emphasize the library's role to preserving cultural heritage and facilitating current academic progress.
- Observations are used to propose recommendations for reinforcing digital archives, expanding collaborative networks, and enhancing the library's role as a central hub for cultural and academic development.

Above mentioned methodology allows for an in-depth understanding of the University of Jaffna library's initiatives, difficulties, and effect on preservation of heritage as well as academic development.

Conceptual frame work for dual functions of the University of Jaffna library



Review of Literature

University Libraries as organizations for Cultural heritage

University libraries are becoming as cultural heritage organizations, with maintaining the historical, indigenous, intellectual, and cultural heritage of communities while enhancing modern knowledge creation. According to Assmann (2011), he claimed that cultural heritage institutions serve as guardians of collective identity by preserving documentary heritage that represents a society's historical events. Libraries play an essential role to maintaining continuity between previous knowledge systems and contemporary academic practices like archives and museums.

According to UNESCO (2019), libraries are essential for the preservation of documentary heritage, especially in preserving indigenous knowledge, rare manuscripts, and vulnerable archival collections. University libraries in particular have a special place, because they integrate research, teaching, and innovation functions with preservation rules. Literature demonstrates that when heritage documents are integrated within academic settings, they are not just preserved but actively reconstructed and renewed through academic usage (IFLA, 2020).

Heritage Preservation in Academic Libraries

Primary responsibility of academic libraries are preservation and conservation of historical collections, especially in regions strong in manuscript traditions. A Study was done by Harvey (2014), who highlighted that preservation include preventive conservation like environmental management as well as appropriated storage like reconditioning, restoration, and digitization.

In South Asian region, palm-leaf manuscripts, Ola leaf records, and hand- written materials are especially vulnerable due to climate, insect infestation, and material vulnerability. Sri Jayewardenepura university library was conducted a study, which highlighted that systematic preservation techniques are necessary to extant the lifelong of these collections. (Nishanthi & Wijayasundara, 2022). Further, this research emphasized that libraries should incorporate traditional conservation practices and modern scientific methodologies to effectively handle preservation challenges.

Additionally, preservation of heritage in academic libraries expands beyond physical defense. Scholars argue that contextual documentation, metadata creation, and scholarly interpretation are crucial. It ensures that preserved collections remain relevant and useful for future research (Smith, 2016).

Indigenous Knowledge and the Role of Libraries

Indigenous knowledge accumulated from regional environments, local cultures, and historical experiences. According to UNESCO (2019), heritage knowledge as dynamic, consistently growing knowledge system passed down through generations' oral as well as written traditions. Generally, libraries are recognized as essential facilitators for organizing, preserving, and legitimizing indigenous knowledge within formal knowledge systems.

Number of studies mention that when indigenous knowledge is included into academic library documents, which receives scholarly recognition, visibility, and protection from marginalization (Battiste, 2013). Indigenous medical systems in Sri Lanka, including Ayurveda, Siddha, Yunani and Deshiya Chikitsa mostly depend on manuscript-based knowledge. Generally, academic libraries connected with faculties play a crucial role in preserving these collections and integrating them into academic programs and research. (WHO, 2013).

Crucially, literature emphasize that on interpreting indigenous knowledge just as archival artifacts. Rather, libraries are urged to embrace ethical and participation methods, this method protects cultural sensitivity, community ownership, and intellectual property rights (UNESCO, 2015). This view point closely linked with the University of Jaffna library's role in preserving regional and heritage knowledge while enabling responsible accessibility.

Digitization as a Bridge between Preservation and Progress

Digitization is one of the most cutting-edge developments in academic libraries, which helps institutions maintain a balance between heritage preservation and modern academic needs. Digital preservation initiatives enable libraries to preserve originality while expanding access to rare and specialized collections. (Conway, 2010).

Studies indicate that digitized traditional collections greatly enhance research productivity by allowing remote access, multidisciplinary use, and international scholarly engagement (IFLA,

2020). In developing post-war regions, digitization activities act as a resilience mechanism, preserving cultural memory against physical damage, loss, and unrest political conditions (UNESCO, 2015).

However, scholars advise that digitization activities should not be seen as a substitute for physical preservation. Rather, it should be seen as a complementary approach to increase accessibility while minimizing handling of originals. (Harvey, 2014). Strong metadata standards, long-term preservation planning, and durable digital infrastructure facilities are necessary for Effective digitization; in this university libraries have an essential strategic.

Libraries as Enablers of Academic and Research Development

In addition to preservation, university libraries are deeply recognized as facilitators of academic progress and research excellence. According to Corral, mentioned a strong collaborations between research productivity and library services, learning outcomes of students, and institutional visibility. (Corral, 2014).

Main contributions of academic libraries for future progress, which include,

- Access to electronic resources and databases
- Research support services (reference management, citation management and publishing guidance)
- Information literacy and academic research training
- Institutional repositories and open-access projects

These services mentioned that libraries as active partners in the research process rather than passive storage facilities. Additionally, the Study mention that importance of libraries in promoting open science, measurement of research impact, and international knowledge exchange (IFLA, 2020).

Role of Libraries in Post-Conflict Contexts and challenges

The function of libraries in post-war societies has received increasing Scholarly interest. According to research, libraries in these environment support to social integration, academic

rehabilitation, cultural healing, and identity reconstruction. (Johnson, 2018). Safeguarding of heritage collections becomes crucial in regions where cultural survival has been threatened by war.

Northern Sri Lanka is a special in post-conflict scenario, where libraries have to work with limited recourse to meet greater demands for access and preservation. According to UNESCO's suggestions, libraries in this situation take hybrid roles including serving as heritage custodians, as well as academic facilitators, and community information centers (UNESCO, 2015).

Although libraries have ability to function as custodian of heritage as well as enabling innovation, there are several challenges in that direction. They include limited funding, shortage of trained staff in dual functions, difficulties in building collaborations with stakeholders and insufficient infrastructure facilities for digitization activities (Wilson et al., 2023; Senaratne & Perera, 2018). However, there are number of opportunities such as increasing digitization projects, improving collaborations with communities, and in the overtime, library employees get the specialized training skills (Smith & Kennedy, 2020).

Despite current literature expendably studies on heritage preservation, indigenous knowledge management, digitization, and academic library services, very few studies use comprehensive analytical structure on how university libraries preserve cultural heritage as well as enable academic advancement. This study fulfills this gap by offering a comprehensive analysis of the University of Jaffna library as a dual-function organization such as a custodian of cultural heritage as well as a facilitator for academic and research development. This study provides a deeper LIS discussion on balancing tradition and innovation within historical and post war context.

Discussions

a. Initiatives Undertaken by the University of Jaffna library for Heritage Preservation.

Digitization and Preservation Project for the Sri Lankan Tamilology Collections

A major digitization and preservation project, funded by the *Kandiah Karthigaesan Trust Fund* at a cost of LKR 92,813,563.30, has been launched in 2021 to safeguard and enhance access to Sri Lankan traditional Tamilology resources. The project focuses on preserving rare materials, documenting Tamil lifestyles and traditions, and providing digital access through a dedicated

repository containing rare works with detailed metadata. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.612).

Part of this Digitization and Preservation project, a Conservation Laboratory is established at the university library, equipped to treat deteriorating materials and digitize the Tamilology collection. Established Capturing Unit will record Tamil cultural practices in compliance with legal standards. The project also includes forming local and international partnerships through MoU was signed with *Roja Mudiah Libray*, Chennai for resource sharing, capacity building, and collaborative research. Conservation of Ola-leaf manuscripts is ongoing, with plans to publish and reproduce selected rare materials based on user demand (Annual report, 2024).

Establishment of the Library of Tamilology projects

The Library of Tamilology (தமிழியல் நூலகம்) was established with funding from the *Kandiah Karthigaesan Trust Fund*, which contributed LKR 111,561,454.69 for its development. It is a specialized library dedicated to collecting, preserving, and providing access to knowledge on Tamilology, with a strong focus on Sri Lankan Tamil heritage. The library houses a rich collection of published and unpublished materials in multiple languages and formats, covering literature, culture, linguistics, science, indigenous medicine, folklore, law, and traditional practices of the Tamil people. A noteworthy aspect is the “*YālpāṇaKaruvoolum*”, a special section that preserve rare collections and unique works pertaining to Sri Lankan Tamil culture and history. The Trust is providing fully funding for library’s collection expansion, it supports study and the preservation of Tamil heritage. This provides the services to not only University community but also outside society. (Annual report, 2024).

Preservation of indigenous knowledge

The Siddha Medicine Library of University of Jaffna holds a distinctive rare collection related to indigenous medical texts in Tamil, particularly related to Siddha medicine. Since its inception, the library has supported the needs of students, faculty, and research scholars affiliated with the then Department of Siddha Medicine. With a collection of over 5,000 books and subscriptions to 10 periodical titles, the library offers essential resources for the study and research of Siddha medicine. Its specialized materials make it an invaluable asset for both academic and research purposes in the field of traditional medicine. Now, University of Jaffna library is providing digitization works with collaborated with faculty of Siddha medicine to

preserving traditions Ola leaves manuscripts. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, pp.597-598).

Traditional Ola leaf Collections of Library

In 1979, the University Library enriched its collection by acquiring a significant number of Ola-leaf manuscripts, covering a range of subjects including Literature, Astrology, Folklore, History, Veterinary Medicine, and Siddha Medicine. The goal was to build a comprehensive and invaluable collection of these traditional manuscripts. Today, the Preservation and Conservation section of the university library preserves 207 bundles of Ola leaves, totaling 25,607 individual leaves that have all been carefully catalogued. These manuscripts are a testament to the university library's commitment to preserving ancient knowledge and cultural heritage. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.588).

Establishing the Musicology Corner project

A project costing LKR 16.53 Million was implemented a *Musicology Corner* to safeguarding the non-book materials related to traditional Music at the *SPRFPVA Branch Library of University of Jaffna*. As part of this effort, the collection was significantly strengthened with the organization of 1,500 non-book materials (CDs, DVDs, Video castes, and Audio Castes) providing a richer and more comprehensive resource base for students, researchers, and performers. (Annual Report, 2024).

Preservation and Conservation Units in University Libraries - UGC (2012-2013)

The University Grants Commission, through the *Information Technology of the Knowledge Enhancement & Institutional Development vote*, provided financial support for the establishment of Preservation and Conservation Units in university libraries in 2012. With this grant of LKR 1,000,000.00, the Library of the University of Jaffna procured a digital camera and accessories valued at LKR 815,305.00 to support its preservation and digitization efforts. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.610).

b. Academic Development Initiatives of the University of Jaffna library.

Institutional Repository (IR) at the University of Jaffna

The University of Jaffna established its Research Repository (RR) in 2009 and upgraded it in 2013. An RR policy was developed in 2015 and approved by the University Council in 2021. The repository (<http://repo.lib.jfn.ac.lk/ujrr>) archives and provides access to scholarly output produced by academics, researchers, postgraduate students, and visiting scholars. It enhances global visibility and contributes to the University's webometrics ranking. The RR currently holds nearly 9,000 documents and is maintained by the university library. The Faculty of Medicine launched its own Institutional Repository (IR) in 2012 (<http://repo.jfn.ac.lk/med/>), featuring theses, research articles, presentations, teaching materials, and multimedia resources related to medical sciences (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.607).

Information Literacy Programme

The Library of the University of Jaffna proposed an *Information Literacy (IL) programme for all Undergraduates* (First year to fourth year) to promote independent learning alongside classroom-based lectures. The curriculum for the IL Programme for the undergraduates of University of Jaffan, developed by the Library and submitted for Senate approval, was officially approved by the University Senate in 2021. The programme aims to enhance information handling skills and improve the overall competency in information literacy among undergraduates. The IL programme was introduced as an optional course module for undergraduates in the same year, which was offered by the University Library. The IL programme is offered as a certificate course with a total duration of 60 hours for all undergraduates. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.608).

Outreach Activities and Community Engagement

After the civil conflict of Sri Lanka, since 2009, the university library has undertaken several outreach initiatives aimed at promoting reading and expanding access to information within the region, including educational institutions and libraries in remote areas. Recognizing its responsibility to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in society, these initiatives leverage the library's expertise and human resources. The activities include providing consultancy for organizing school and public libraries, fostering library awareness among school students, organizing information literacy programs to enhance students' information-

handling skills, conducting training programs for library personnel in public and school libraries, and addressing important community issues by providing relevant information. The outreach activities of library collaborated with outside communities to enhance the social development beyond the university boundary collaborated with public librarians in the Northern Province, Department of Local Government, Northern Province, *The Provincial Department of Education, Northern Province, The Medical Officer of Health (MOH) Office, Nallur*. Key outreach activities included the capacity-building workshops for teacher-librarians, establishment of a prison library, Organization of library resources in rural schools, information literacy programs for school communities, and health information sessions for pregnant women focusing on accessing reliable pregnancy-related information. (Library Newsletter, 2019, 2020 & 2023).

Library Symposium

The library symposium “*ETAKAM*” organized by the University of Jaffna library serves as an important academic and professional platform for knowledge exchange, scholarly communication, and capacity building among librarians, academics, researchers, and information professionals in national and international level. Through these symposium, the library facilitates critical dialogue on emerging trends in library and information science, heritage preservation, digital transformation, and research support services. This conference offers changes for participants to present their research findings, exchange best practices, and discuss issues related to conservation, digitization, indigenous knowledge management, and the use of digital technologies in libraries. Further, *ETAKAM* symposium promotes collaborative activities by bringing together experts from various research organizations, and libraries. Overall, the library symposium provides a strategic academic forum that strengthens library’s role as a dynamic knowledge center. (Annual Report, 2024).

Contribution of E-Resource Services to Academic Development

The electronic resource services of University of Jaffna library is one of the contributions of modern academic development. The Subscription of library databases is the backbone of the University of Jaffna library’s e-resource services. By providing access to digital scholarly content, the library supports teaching, learning, research, and knowledge dissemination beyond the university boundaries. Currently library was subscribed 58 databases including Taylor and Francis, Oxford and Emerald. By accessing of interdisciplinary academic databases, the library,

University of Jaffna provides students, academics, and researchers to peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports, books, conference proceedings, and reference materials. These databases support curriculum development, evidence-based research, and postgraduate studies across faculties. The online databases greatly improve research efficiency by providing rapid access to modern international literature. Further, Remote access facilities extend the benefits to out of faculty users, including researchers, alumni, and external scholars, through this remote access facilities library's social reach expanding. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, pp.596-598).

Plagiarism and AI Detection Tools

The library offers plagiarism and artificial intelligence (AI) detection technologies to enhance ethical research practices, which help students and researchers in maintaining academic integrity. This services encourage the appropriate research practice within the University community and help to improve the standard of academic writing. The e-resource services of Library also contributes to academic development by enabling access to academic knowledge for students, academic, and researchers in the University. Through the integration of library databases, plagiarism and AI detection tools, institutional repositories, and remote access facilities, the University of Jaffna library serves as a comprehensive digital knowledge gateway. By extending the library's role from a university-based service to a socially responsive knowledge hub, these e-resource services strengthen academic excellence and promote research visibility. (Srisatkunarajah & Paul Rohan, 2025, p.605).

c. Library's ability to maintain a balance between heritage preservation and modern academic Progress.

The University of Jaffna Library sustains its dual role of heritage preservation and modern academic development through the following integrated activities.

Heritage preservation Activities

Digitization and Preservation Project for the Sri Lankan Tamilology Collections: Through this project, library safes rare and historical collections, where valuable manuscripts, rare books, and archival documents are converted into digital formats to ensure long-term preservation.

Establishment of the Library of Tamilology projects: It dedicated to collecting, preserving, and providing access to knowledge on Tamilology.

Preservation of indigenous knowledge: The Siddha Medicine Library of University of Jaffna holds a distinctive rare collection related to indigenous medical texts in Tamil, particularly related to Siddha medicine.

Traditional Ola leaf Collections of Library: The Preservation and Conservation Division of the University Library safeguards 207 bundles of Ola leaves, comprising 25,607 individual leaves, all meticulously catalogued.

Establishing the Musicology Corner project: Through this project safeguarding the non-book materials related to traditional Music at the *Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan Faculty of Performing and Visual Arts (SPRFPVA)* Branch Library of University of Jaffna. These kind of activities ensure that cultural heritage is safeguarded while also making it accessible to contemporary users.

Modern academic development Activities

Institutional Repository (IR): Currently more than 9,000 documents are maintained by the university library, it enhances global visibility and contributes to the university's webometrics ranking. Information Literacy Programme: Information Literacy (IL) programme for all undergraduates to promote independent learning alongside classroom-based lectures. Library Symposium: Library serves as an important academic and professional platform for knowledge exchange, scholarly communication, and capacity building among librarians, academics, researchers, and information professionals through these symposium. Research support services: Library provides the research support services by the E-Resource Services, Plagiarism and AI Detection Tools. Through these combined efforts, libraries successfully preserve cultural heritage while simultaneously supporting the evolving needs of modern education and research.

d. Challenges are faced by the University of Jaffna library in fulfilling its dual Mission

The University of Jaffna library has a number of challenges in fulfilling its dual mission, despite the fact that it plays a crucial role in balance the heritage preservation and academic development.

Generally, one of the main challenges is **insufficient financial resources**. Despite a larger digitization and preservation projects have been funded by trust funds and national and international grants, consistent funding is needed for digital preservation, long-term conservation, system improvements, and maintaining of specialized facilities. Relying on project-based funding gives difficulties on consistency and flexibility.

Limitation of Human resource is another major challenge. Shortage of staff, especially in fields requires specific skills include digitization methods, manuscript conservation, metadata generation, and digital archiving, impact on the effectiveness and progress of preservation activities. Furthermore, continues career development possibilities for library employees are limited, it is restricting for modern preservation technologies and international best practices.

Furthermore, the library faces another challenge is **Modern technological and infrastructure facilities**. An infrastructure facilities for digitalization, storage facility, and long-term digital preservation mechanism restrict to large digitization activities in all heritage collections. Software sustainability, system interoperability, and cyber security, which are further difficulties for digital preservation initiatives.

Open access to some digital resources such as research publications, theses, and rare manuscripts is challenging due to **Copyright laws and access limitations**. Finding a balance between the need for wider accessibility and intellectual property rights is still a major challenge. Finally, if University of Jaffna library is serving in a **post-war and rehabilitation area**, library must address significant socio-economic issues, including limited internet facilities among communities, differences in digital literacy, limited funding facilities and the need for more awareness on heritage collections beyond the University boundary.

e. Recommendations for enhancing the library's capacity in heritage preservation and academic development.

Sustainable financial mechanisms should be created through long-term institutional budgeting, collaborations, and endowment models, it ensure for continuation of preservation and digitization activities.

The library should enhance **capacity building programs for professional development**, it is including training in metadata production, digital preservation, conservation technology, and

contemporary library technologies. Further, collaboration activity with national and international organizations help the exchange of knowledge and development of skills.

Digital infrastructure facilities such as extending digitization facilities, establishing digital preservation methods, enhancing storage techniques, and implementing international metadata standards.

Collaborations networks with other institutions, and stakeholders. These collaborations with universities, research institutions, and stakeholders can enhance research collaborations, resources sharing, and outreach activities of library.

Library must focus on community engagement activities, it improves the use of historical collections and digital resources among public libraries, schools, and marginalized societies.

Additionally, this study recommends that **establishment of ethical guidance on access, copyright, and ethical use of heritage sources,** it will be balance between preservation, accessibility, and intellectual property issues.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examined the dual functions of the University of Jaffna library in preserving heritage and enabling academic progress in future. The findings highlight that the library of University of Jaffna plays an important role as a custodian of cultural heritage by preservation of archival collections, indigenous knowledge, rare manuscripts, and non-book materials. Meanwhile, it functions as a facilitator of future academic development by providing research, digital access, information literacy, and global scholarly engagement. Although facing difficulties pertaining to funding, staffing, infrastructure, and access constraints, University of Jaffna library has proven resilience and innovation in balancing tradition and modernity. Its activities highlight the evolving role of University libraries as dynamic knowledge centers that integrate physical heritage preservation, and digital transformation. Finally, this research concludes that digital capacity, strengthening institutional support, and collaborative networks will further enhance the library's ability to sustain cultural continuity while contributing meaningfully to academic excellence and development. In this sense, the University of Jaffna library serves as a model for university libraries functioning in culturally rich yet resource-constrained contexts.

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