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***Readiness for digital reference service (DRS) in university libraries.* Unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of the Punjab, Lahore, 2011. [Abstract]**

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Large scale computerization and related technologies have modernized all library functions, especially converted traditional reference service (RS) into digital reference service (DRS) through synchronous and asynchronous systems. DRS is necessary in all types of libraries due to bulk of literature, diversity of users, competitive urgency and various formats of information. Main objective of the study was to find out the current status of technologies and practices related to DRS and readiness level of university libraries in terms of their awareness, motivation level and strength of sources. Recommendations and suggestions have been made for developing better DRS programs.

Survey method was used to achieve the objectives of this study. A review of related literature both national and international was made to understand theoretical aspects of the study. With the help of reviewed literature, research instrument (questionnaire) was developed for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed to HEC recognized university libraries in the province of Punjab. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis using SPSS.

Findings of the study reveal that a large majority of the university libraries are at the low level of overall DRS readiness and thus adopting this system at a very slow pace. They are still stuck with traditional reference service (RS) model. Financial resources, inadequate staff skills, lack of digital collection and training can be considered as the main reasons for tardiness.

The study imparts guidelines which hopefully help reference librarians to consider the critical issues of DRS.