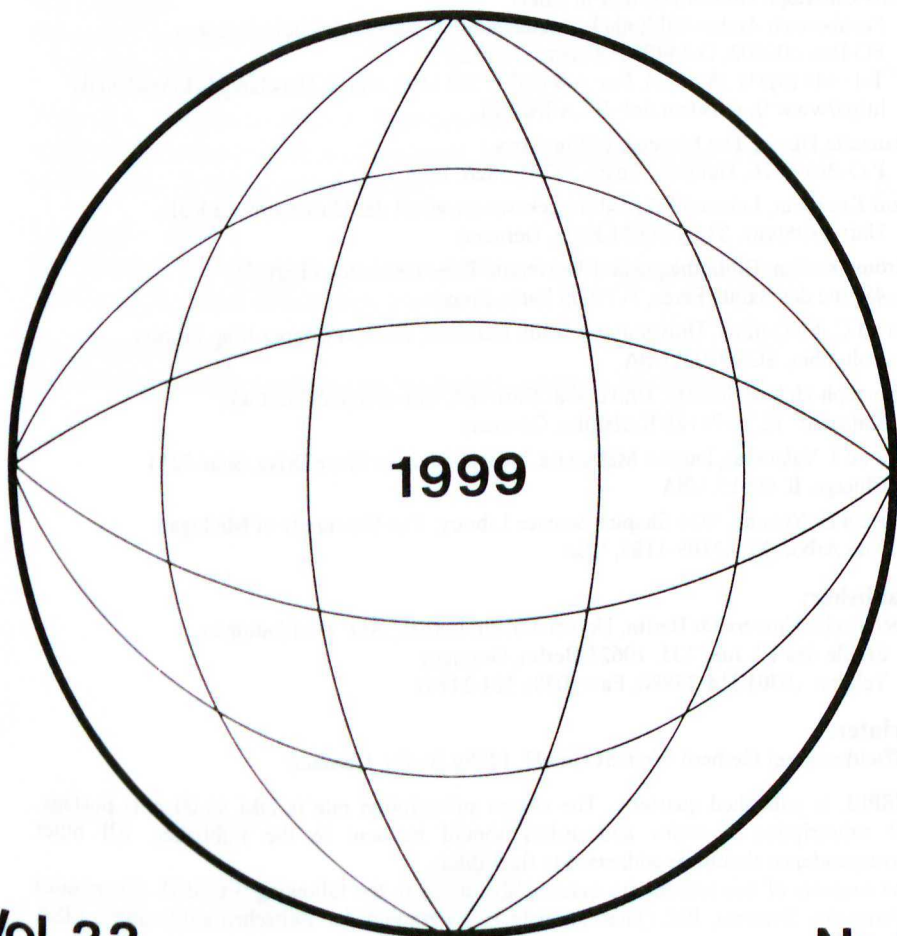


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LIBRARIES IN THE WORKPLACE: THE UK SPECIAL LIBRARY STATISTICS EXPERIENCE*

By David Spiller

Abstract: The paper describes three recent pieces of research into UK workplace libraries. Problems in surveying this sector are described - particularly the difficulties of identifying and defining workplace libraries, and the poor return of questionnaires. The paper discusses the advantages and disadvantages of different methodologies, and ways of presenting the data; also, procedures for grossing up data to achieve all-sector totals, and comparisons between sectors. These points are illustrated with examples. Also briefly mentioned is a telephone survey of the contribution of workplace libraries to employee development.

Introduction

Special libraries in the United Kingdom are - along with school libraries - the section of the library and information world about which least is known. This situation is characteristic of many countries outside the United States. Even the term 'special libraries' - though generally understood - is indistinct, defining what is *not* represented (public, academic or school libraries), rather than what *is*. In the UK, it is gradually being replaced by the expression 'libraries in the workplace', which covers all services in commercial, governmental and quasi-governmental bodies that provide information to advance the goals of their organisations. I use the term 'workplace libraries' below - and also use 'library' as shorthand for 'library/information services'.

The lack of focus in 'workplace' libraries is inherent, because of the wide divergence in their size, subject matter and type, and the natural reluctance of commercial organisations to publicise information about their activities. This is a pity. The economic importance of these institutions, and the central role of information to their work, mean that an overview of workplace libraries is important to any developed country. It is also keenly sought by suppliers of materials and electronic resources, equipment, training and education. And managers of the institutions themselves, together with their library specialists,

* This paper has been presented at the 27. Arbeits- und Fortbildungstagung der ASpB. Dresden 1999 (German proceedings forthcoming: Karlsruhe 1999).

should not opt out of the national and international trends towards benchmarking library performance.

I assume the audience here will be more interested in the methodology of surveying workplace libraries than in the actual details of the UK scene. I have therefore concentrated my talk on the difficulties of surveying the sector, the various approaches taken in the UK, and the methodologies which have proved effective - and have used only occasional examples from the findings.

Recent UK work

Three major surveys of UK workplace libraries have been carried out in the past five years:

1. *UK special library statistics*¹, by Pamela Berridge and John Sumsion, was a survey of the statistics on special libraries that existed at the time of publication (1994), funded by the British Library Research and Innovation Centre. The exercise was important in preparing the way for subsequent surveys. In countries where the subject of special libraries is being addressed for the first time, this form of mapping approach may be the ideal start.
2. *TFPL survey of UK special library statistics*², by Claire Creaser and David Spiller, took advantage of information collected in 1994 and 1996 by the prominent UK information consultants, TFPL.
3. *Libraries in the workplace*³, also funded by the British Library Research and Innovation Centre, was published in August 1998: a random survey of ten special library sectors, which builds upon the findings of the TFPL survey - particularly in the areas of performance and the use of electronic media.

Problems

Definition Surveys of workplace libraries usually encounter serious problems of identification and definition. Which libraries are to be included? How are the different sectors to be defined - so that like services can be compared with like? How should individual libraries be allocated to these sectors?

¹ Berridge, Pamela J & Sumsion, J. *UK special library statistics*, ISBN 0 948848 64 2, Loughborough: LISU, 1994.

² Creaser, Claire & Spiller, D J. *TFPL survey of special library statistics*, ISBN 0 948848 93 6, Loughborough: LISU, 1997.

³ *Libraries in the workplace*. LISU project in progress, publication Summer 1998.

Workplace libraries are rarely as well mapped as their academic and public counterparts, and directories that do exist are rarely comprehensive. Amongst the sources that we have found useful as sampling frames for the projects mentioned above are:

- Published directories of libraries and information services, and/or their parent organisations
- Membership lists of associations of information professionals
- Sectoral groups of librarians, both formal and informal (eg the City Information Group, the Regional Librarians Group of the National Health Service)
- Mailing lists of information consultants and suppliers (often only accessible on payment of a fee).

In relation to the definition of sectors, the classification devised by Pamela Berridge, and used for the first two LISU publications mentioned above, has proved a workable system. The categories are:

Commercial/industrial

Pharmaceutical
 chemical & plastics
 energy
 machinery manufacturers
 miscellaneous manufacturers
 financial
 legal
 information consultants
 media/publishing

Non-commercial

central government
 local government
 health
 museums
 voluntary organisations
 professional associations

In the UK, the Department of Trade and Industry’s ‘Standard Industrial Classification’ is helpful for eliminating much of the potential cross-classification, and for allocating institutions to agreed sectors. Even so, certain institutions obstinately resist easy allocation. The borderline between ‘commercial’ and ‘non-commercial’ becomes increasingly indistinct, as organisations which were 100% government-funded are obliged to diversify their sources of funding. Research libraries are often difficult to classify for this reason.

Returns A recent paper by Eberhard Janke⁴ lamented that it was difficult to achieve returns of more than 35% in surveys of German special libraries. That

⁴ Deutsche Bibliotheksstatistik. Revising the German special library statistics: a quantity to quality initiative, Discussion paper for the European workshop for suppliers and users of library statistics, Luxembourg, 9/10 December 1997. See also: INSPEL 31(1997)4

experience is echoed in UK surveys. One reason for it is the difficulty of getting postal questionnaires to the right department of the organisation. The different terminologies used (library, information unit, resource centre, research, documentation centre) do not help. Telephone chasing of postal questionnaires is essential, and often establishes - if the right person *can* be tracked down - that the original questionnaire never reached its mark. For short questionnaires it may be worth doing the whole survey by telephone.

Of course, a questionnaire about library/information services is unlikely to be completed if the recipient organisation does not *have* a library. This can only be determined - if at all - by telephone chasing. In the *Libraries in the workplace* random survey, 14% of the 897 organisations contacted said they had no library - 17% if we include libraries reported as "too small to be worth surveying". Twenty-seven per cent of voluntary sector organisations contacted had no library, and 60% of food manufacturing organisations - a response which suggested the need for a completely different survey about the nature of information gathering in manufacturing industries. The full picture is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Response rate

Code	Sector	Forms sent out	Forms returned	Response rate	No lib	Response rate
1	Govt Dept	29	17	58.6	0	0
2	Govt Non-Dept	96	44	45.8	2	2.1
3	Voluntary	98	26	26.5	26	26.5
4	Trade Assoc	101	50	49.5	4	4.0
5	Law	90	23	25.6	8	8.9
6	Comm & Fin	99	24	24.2	11	11.1
7	Energy	90	33	36.7	7	7.8
8	Pharma	97	32	33.0	3	3.1
9	Man & Info Cons	100	33	33.0	9	9.0
10	Food Manu	97	3	3.1	58	59.8
Total		897	285	31.8	128	14.2

There are other probable reasons for poor returns:

- Libraries in commercial organisations are understandably reluctant to provide confidential information which might be of use to their competitors. For this reason surveys are best conducted from outside the sector - by organisations with a reputation for not revealing sources.
- There is no tradition of benchmarking amongst workplace libraries - despite its strong presence in their parent companies.
- In many workplace libraries there are only one or two hard-pressed members of staff, for whom the receipt of a questionnaire is not a cause for rejoicing.

- Special librarians may also feel that the added value they give, by packaging or interpreting information for their users, cannot easily be addressed by a questionnaire - and on this point they are probably right.

Methodologies

The different approaches taken in the TFPL survey⁵ and in *Libraries in the workplace*⁶ can be instructive. TFPL had the idea of including a statistics questionnaire along with the professional/biographical questionnaire distributed to all those mailed for their publication *Who's who in the UK information world*⁷. The impressive number of statistical responses received - 1,076 in 1994 and 772 in 1996 - was a function of this approach, and also of an impressively *short* questionnaire - squeezed onto a single page.

The *Libraries in the workplace survey*⁶ is restricted to ten specified sectors. Respondents were selected through a simple random sample, drawn from a different sampling frame for each sector. The questionnaire was longer (four pages), and the initial response much lower: 150 questionnaires, or 15% of the sample - increasing to 28% following telephone chasing.

Despite these differences of approach, the findings were largely comparable. Where there were variations, they were usually explicable. For instance, the self-selection approach of the TFPL survey naturally led to responses being received from organisations where a well developed library was known to exist. The random sample of organisations in *Libraries in the workplace* discovered additional information about organisations where there was no library, or where the library/information facility was very small - and many of the findings showed correspondingly lower averages.

Another difference was the form in which quantitative information (about budgets, stock, acquisitions, etc) was requested. The TFPL survey used a bracket approach, asking respondents to tick one of five or six boxes representing different ranges of figures. This was probably a factor in eliciting a high response - particularly in sensitive areas such as budgets. But in devising the questionnaire, it is easy to guesstimate the prompted ranges unhelpfully, both at lower levels and higher (when a prompted option of '£5,000+' can conceal figures of £5,000 or

⁵ Creaser, Claire & Spiller, D J. *TFPL survey of special library statistics*, ISBN 0 948848 93 6, Loughborough: LISU, 1997.

⁶ *Libraries in the workplace*. LISU project in progress, publication Summer 1998.

⁷ Nordin, Jorund B, ed. *Who's who in the UK information world*, 6th ed. 1997, London: TFPL, 1997.

£50,000). *Libraries in the workplace* requested specific figures - more accurate, if forthcoming.

However it is gathered, the quantitative information needs careful analysis. The variations in responses tend to be much greater than they are in other library/information sectors, and almost every sector was characterised by a small number of very large libraries at the top end of the scale - and a consequent tendency for 'means' to be distorted. For this reason, 'medians' are in most instances a better indicator of the average.

Quantifying user numbers

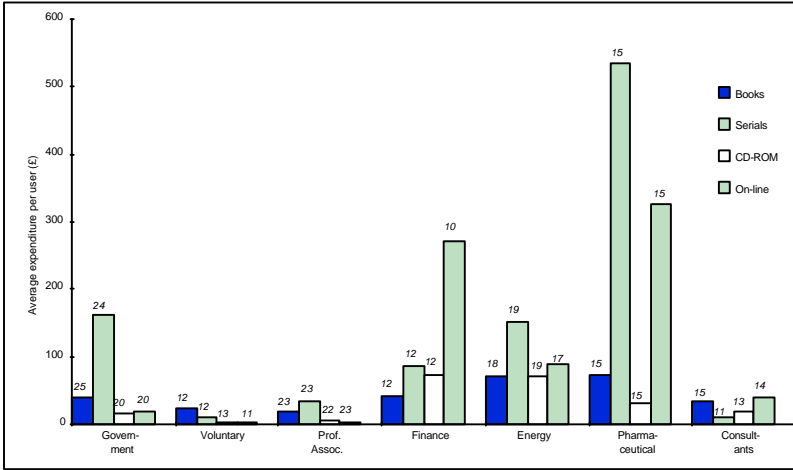
There is a difficulty in quantifying numbers of users in workplace libraries. We want to know about library use by the staff of the organisation (on one or more sites), but also about several varieties of external use:

- by external members (eg in the *Libraries in the workplace* survey, 92% of professional associations served these)
- by external clients (82% of government departments and 75% of financial libraries served these groups)
- and by members of the public (69% of voluntary libraries served these).

Those who fund workplace libraries are also interested in the numbers of 'regular users' of library/information services, in relation to the numbers targeted for use. In fact, 'regular users' is probably the more meaningful figure. In *Libraries in the workplace*, the median numbers of users targeted varied from 13,000 for professional associations to 300 for voluntary organisations. The percentage of regular library users to targeted users varied between 46% in government and 24% in professional associations.

Once established, user data may be constructively linked with other information - for instance, Figure 1 depicts 'average expenditure per regular user' across the sectors. There are clear differences between the sectors, in overall levels of expenditure and in the relative levels on the four expenditure components listed. Pharmaceutical libraries are the most intensive spenders, with serials by far the largest component. Financial libraries are the next highest spenders, though in their case most expenditure goes on on-line sources. The voluntary sector is the only one where the largest expenditure element is books.

Fig 1: Average expenditure per regular user



Whole sector estimates

Whole sector estimates of key data (on staff, stock and services) are of particular interest to suppliers. But moving from the analysed sample data to a whole sector estimate is a step fraught with complications, and the final estimates may be fairly crude. There are two main problems: establishing the number of organisations in a sector (as already mentioned); and knowing whether the sample is representative of the sector as a whole- especially if a large sector is represented by a small sample.

Each sector throws up its own problems, which need to be separately addressed. For instance the UK energy sector is relatively small, but its components are diversifying so rapidly that it is difficult to pin down which institutions/libraries should be included. In the legal sector, there are very large numbers of law firms - all with collections of information materials, but often run on a part-time basis by office managers, rather than treated as 'libraries'. In the voluntary sector, there are even larger numbers of small agencies, many of which do not have a 'library/information centre' as such, although the agencies' work is principally concerned with the transmission of information. Such problems soon lead surveyors of workplace libraries to ask themselves: *What is a library?*

When we reach the 'whole sector estimate' stage, the importance of initially choosing the right sampling frame becomes all too clear. Ideally, we need the fullest possible list of *institutions* in the sector, rather than a list of known

libraries. Lists of the latter from associations of library/information specialists within sectors tend to under-represent those organisations without qualified personnel - though they may have substantial resources. But the temptation to use such lists as sampling frames is strong, because the libraries listed in them are more likely to respond to questionnaires. And as anyone who has surveyed workplace libraries will confirm, one soon becomes desperate to *get a response* - by whatever means.

When sampling frame problems are resolved, the actual grossing up process is relatively straight-forward. The example in Table 2, from the pharmaceutical sector, shows how this was done for the *Libraries in the workplace* survey.

Table 2: Grossing up

Pharmaceutical libraries	
Estimated no. organisations	100
Survey % with no library	7.2%
Estimated no. libraries	93
Survey respondents	32
Grossing up factor	2.9

The estimated numbers of libraries within the nine UK sectors covered by the *Workplace* survey are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Estimated numbers of libraries in sectors

Government departments	60
Government (others)	379
Voluntary agencies	1,390
Professional associations	220
Legal libraries	1,400
Finance	211
Energy	83
Pharmaceutics	93
Management consultants	223

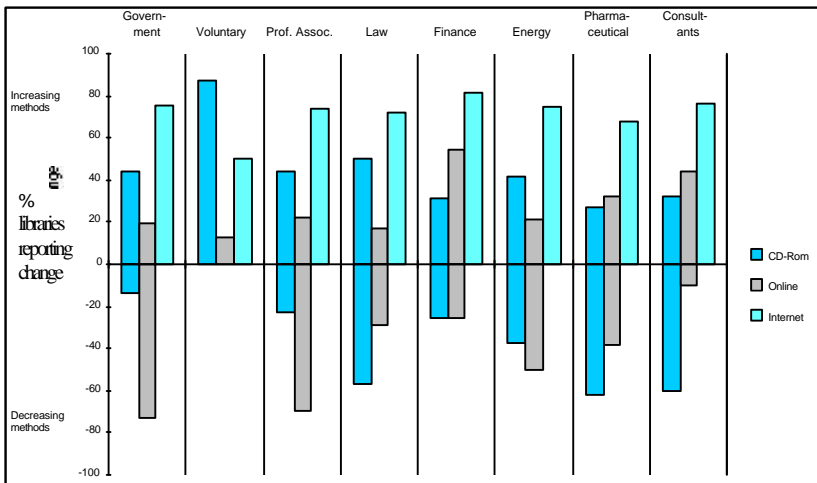
Trends

Because surveys of workplace libraries are rare, the missing factor has been information about trends. The TFPL data, which relate to both 1994 and 1996, provide the start of a time series. In the *Libraries in the workplace* survey, the 285 respondents were asked if they would be willing to complete a more limited questionnaire - covering key data - on an annual basis, and an encouraging number of 135 of them (47%) said that they would. The first of the follow-up

questionnaires were sent out in January 1999. It should now be possible to establish a panel of libraries making annual returns, and to carry out trend analysis over an extended period.

In the meantime, some indication of trends was obtained in the initial survey by questions asking whether budgets, staffing, acquisitions, etc were fluctuating. For instance, Figure 2 depicts, by sector, responses to a question about which of the various electronic methods of access to databases were ‘increasing’ or ‘decreasing’ most rapidly.

Fig 2: Changing methods of database access



There were some interesting features. Internet sources were frequently mentioned as ‘increasing in use’, as might be expected. The use of CD-ROMs was also increasing in many sectors, but in both pharmaceutical and management consultant libraries it was decreasing more than increasing. Perhaps the most revealing feature was on-line services. One might expect them to be the main casualty of increased Internet use, and in some sectors this was the case; but amongst management consultant, financial and voluntary libraries use of on-line services was increasing more than decreasing. The message seems to be that there are no straightforward patterns for the use of information materials, and that each medium finds its own level in specific situations.

Workplace learning in the corporate sector

Finally, a brief mention of a survey carried out for the UK Library Association, on library support for workplace learning in the UK corporate sector. UK commercial enterprises are placing an increasing emphasis upon the personal and professional development of their employees, and recent UK government initiatives may accelerate this process. The Library and Information Statistics Unit surveyed the UK's top 250 companies - the majority of them large manufacturers. A telephone survey proved to be suited to the task, for two reasons: first, it helped to establish which unit handled the learning support functions in the companies (47% of the 250 companies reporting that they had *no* library or information centre); and secondly, a dialogue between interviewer and interviewee was right for the complex subject matter of the questionnaire.

A total of 61 companies provided detailed information, and confirmed that a wide range of employee development schemes was supported by the companies. But the library/information support function for the schemes was complex and somewhat confusing - with 20% of companies having a library which did not support employee development, 15% giving limited support, and 13% full support. Another development was the growth of resource centres (or learning centres) supporting employee development, but managed by personnel officers rather than library/information staff; 21% of the 61 companies reported the existence of both a library and a resource centre - often with confused lines of responsibility and communication between them. The overall picture was one of missed opportunities for library/information services, and under-use of existing information skills by the organisations' managements. There were opportunities for closer liaison by all parties involved - to the potential benefit of their organisations.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS OF CHILE : A HANDS-ON MODERNIZATION EXPERIENCE*

By Marialyse Delano S.

Abstract: The Chilean Library of Congress has recently finished the first stage of a major modernization project, redesigning services and information products, incorporating technologies on a massive scale, upgrading collections, training people, changing the organizational structure, management techniques and physical space. As a result of this major turmoil the Library today is a successful one-stop information shop, but at the same time has to deal with resistance to change. The paper describes the Library's experience, major successes and problems encountered. It will be of particular interest to those institutions rethinking their services and business planning to adapt to changes in technology, management, human resources and user demand, as well as reflecting globalization and information as a strategic resource for development.

Introduction

Latin America has been experiencing major, region wide changes during the last decade: development, drugs, debt, democracy and corruption have been the main issues. Information Technology has dramatically changed both the structure and fabric of knowledge generation and transfer, impacting society's perception of such fundamental issues. Information and communication technologies have made the workplace smaller and more complex, generating tensions in the work environment between pragmatic acceptance of change and traditional work practices.

Economic integration through NAFTA, Mercosur and Apec regional treaties, encompassing the USA, the southern cone of Latin America and the Pacific Rim countries, are redefining the relationships within the region. The library and information environment is facing new challenges, new demands and the appearance of new competitors; countries are striving for the modernization of the State apparatus, repositioning and converting government organizations to meet these challenges.

Parliaments, political activities and representation are in a critical situation. Parliaments are considered expensive, and unable to solve problems with

* Paper presented at the 64th IFLA General Conference August 16 - August 21, 1998, in Amsterdam

legislation. At best, they are seen as slow to react and as neither reflecting the changing times and the present pace of major competitive activities, nor acting on predominant concerns such as environmental issues. Yet parliaments within emerging democracies are recognized as a necessary evil, fundamental for democratic processes, better than a dictatorship, but not intrinsically good. Governments are reacting to this perception. There is a major tendency towards the modernization of parliaments and their information provision services, using technology to monitor constituency concerns, looking for more transparency in political action and promoting a clearer understanding of political issues.

The Chilean Library of Congress has just finished a major modernization project, with World Bank funds, aiming at a profound cultural change in the use of information and knowledge for laws and law-making. The project was multi-layered, including people, organizational structure, information resources, databases, products and services. The Library now offers a wide range of products and services not only within Congress walls but over the Internet, incorporating indexed access to the information offered. It has grasped the opportunities offered by the widespread use of technologies beyond a gradual automation of traditional library processes.

The Bolivian, the Peruvian and the Argentinean Libraries of Parliament are initiating their own modernization projects, ranging from traditional automation of library collections to top of the line technologies. These projects are being initiated in the Parliamentary Libraries because they are recognized as the major information and knowledge providers for Congress, possessing the necessary technical skills, and being apolitical. Democracy in the region is still a fragile infant, and one way to strengthen democratic efforts is by supporting the decision-making capabilities of national or regional parliaments. This has been widely recognized and international funds made available for several modernization projects. However, some countries like Paraguay do not have a workable parliamentary library to support parliamentary decision making.

National and Parliamentary Libraries in Latin America have carved themselves a niche within the cultural environment of their countries. In some cases they have been a leverage for change and growth within their countries, like Venezuela or Chile; in other cases they have maintained services and limited growth during troubled times; in still others libraries are trying hard to achieve a minimum level of quality services and activities. Some countries are in grave danger of losing their own artistic and intellectual production, while others are having to hold on very fast to their achievements.

Six years ago we presented a paper at the Cuba IFLA General Conference, describing our modernization project, with its major components, strengths, weaknesses and expected outcomes. After this period of time, we can describe our experience, the objectives that were met, the objectives that changed during the time of realization of the project, and the aspects we could not modify as rapidly as we wanted to.

Modernization Project: The Concept

The modernization project of the Chilean Library of Congress was conceptualized as a concrete effort to incorporate social intelligence within the Institution. This was considered to be the organized capability to identify and solve internal and external problems in a rapidly changing world by effectively exploiting information resources. The aim was to offer a wide-ranging view of legislative developments, with tailored and ever more profound levels of information, implemented as a one-stop-information-shop.

The World Bank, the main financial source, was interested in contributing to the project, particularly in enhancing decision-making capabilities for a newly revived Congress, after 17 years of the Pinochet regime. The point of departure was to extend technologies and information resources, creating a knowledge-based, multiple source, structured and unstructured, formally and informally networked, information environment. It considered the integration of information technologies with information and knowledge, analytic and management capabilities.

Some of the main objectives of the project were:

- To help the Congress to accomplish its mission by providing information and knowledge needs related to legislative work (legislative, representative and fiscal duties); to inform and contribute to public opinion; to have a modern, effective and efficient management.
- To enhance the institution's public image and presence nationally and internationally;
- To provide flexible access to information considering geographic dispersion and the national and international context in which information is provided and disseminated.

Services and Products

The Chilean Library of Congress today provides services from two major locations: in Santiago where the Congress sat before 1973, (85 employees), and

Valparaíso, the port city where Congress has been located since 1990, (60 employees). The shift in physical location has brought about major changes in services and organizational structure. It has also resulted in increasingly heavy reliance on technologies not only because of major global changes, but because of the distance between the two cities.

The most important change has been the revolution in services provided. Whereas we were a mainly traditional library, waiting for the user to generate demands for services and products, we are now proactively offering our services to parliamentarians and users in general over the Congressional Intranet and over the Internet. The Chilean Library of Congress could be described as the coalescence of several libraries embraced by a single mission and common objectives.

One library is the traditional, upholstered, book and paper based library, with classical services such as reference, loans, bibliographies, searches and other services provided in an electronic, networked environment. Thus, we buy books, catalogue them (Marc, AACR-2) with rigorous authority control, and provide access and lending services. The system includes collection development, (acquisitions) management and multiple transactions, such as loans, reports and statistics. So, a part of the modernization project acknowledges the value of a traditional library and was aimed at providing more and better of the same.

Another, superimposed library is the electronic one, in which we provide electronic access to collections and extensive, full text databases, (our own and external), CD-ROMs, and the Internet, thus providing very rich informational resources. From our point of view, the electronic library is at the service of its users, the country, the region, and even the world, turned outwards through electronic media, such as the WWW, providing remote access to our own or external databases. The main difference is the attitude that permeates our services. They are no longer local, or passive, but pro-active, with an outreach concept; towards the user and not from the user, with rapid turnaround capabilities.

The third library is the virtual one, in which we are striving to enrich, and in some cases substitute, physical access to our building, providing value-added services and products over our Intranet. This third library provides a major change for the user; designing and providing highly specialized services and value-added products specially geared to the legislative process. The virtual library is being built slowly, and aims at providing more and more direct information and knowledge, less referential information; partly substituting the traditional library and building upon it at the same time. The library of the future

is an attitude, a concept based upon the capability of being open to opportunities and turning into an outreaching enterprise.

The Library provides three levels of information services and products:

- The first level responds to inquiries that are answered with little or no previous elaboration, such as factual data, photocopies of an article, lending and quick reference services.
- The second level responds to questions that need further analysis. The user usually receives a dossier of information on a given subject, which integrates data, legislative information, press clippings, serials and book chapter photocopies, simple bibliographies, biographies and other ancillary information. The user receives comprehensive "as-is" information.
- The third level involves in-depth research, providing the user with a paper responding to the inquiry on pre-agreed parameters including subject, breadth and scope.

The main services and products that we offer within an electronic and virtual environment are:

- Access to on-line, full text legislation in force (more than 37,000 laws, resolutions, decrees, etc.), both in original and modified versions. The user can search, down-load, print or reformat for e-mail, or for her or his own office needs.
- Access to a bibliographic database holding more than 80,000 titles, that can be turned into bibliographies, loans, requests over E-mail, down-loaded or printed. It is a traditional (Marc format, AACR-2), integrated system that includes cataloguing, collection development, authority control, loans, etc.
- Access to data bases directly relevant to the legislative process, such as History of the Law, parliamentary records or parliamentary work and Bill tracking.
- Special on-line products for parliament: On-line, full-text dossiers, research studies, names and CVs of parliamentarians, legislative commissions' information, relevant press information as scanned images;
- weekly press bulletin which underlines main issues and news as appearing in newspapers and weekly magazines.

All of these in-house Library-generated databases are updated daily. They require expensive, intellectual, multidisciplinary work, from sections such as our Parliamentary Research Group. We are also striving for a future integration of searches, so every database is using the same controlled vocabulary in the relevant bibliographic areas or fields for efficient retrieval of information.

The Library of Congress also provides services such as press clippings (on-going manual archive since 1948), research and reference on demand by a multidisciplinary team; publications, and others. For example, each month every parliamentarian receives a dossier with his or her own clippings, their activities, views and comments in the printed press.

The Library's Role within the Legislative Process

The reinstallation of Congress, after 17 years of the Junta regime, meant reconsidering the way representatives worked, particularly regarding information, as multiple source, multi-level information consumers, who need value-added products tailored to their individual needs. The parliamentarian does not have time to search or browse through tons of potentially useful information, nor can he or she deal with massive secondary information products: their needs are unique and urgent as the champion of a bill or law.

One of the most difficult endeavors during these years has been to promote recognition of, and demand among parliamentarians, for the sophisticated services and products provided by the Library, which are an asset to them in their roles as representatives and legislators and in their fiscal duties. The process has been slow, involving years of public relations work, lobbying for the library, and striving to improve communications between parliamentarians, their staff and the library.

Technology has been helpful; we have provided unusual services beyond traditional user training, that expand the Library's relevance. We personally teach users how to interrogate our databases from their offices, provide manuals, train secretaries, and trouble-shoot network or computer glitches beyond the call of service. We also offer group training sessions for parliamentarians, their staff, the political committees and legislative commissions.

For the first time, in March 1998, we conducted a well planned public-relations campaign for newly elected Representatives and Senators. The campaign included hand-outs, a video of the Library, user manuals, training offers, and personal contact with each individual office. As the Members have become acquainted with our services, and as younger people are elected to Congress, they have exponentially incremented the demand for services, products, and Intranet searches, and are beginning to more fully exploit the potential of the Library.

As part of the modernization project, we were successful in expanding the area of influence and general recognition of the Library's role within the Legislative process. We have made a significant impact with increased service, product

demand, assistance requirements, and participation in orientation work-shops for new parliamentarians and their staff.

How we got here

The first stage of the modernization project, with World Bank funds, included the following aspects, in which technology was one of the main concerns. Technology as an instrument not only changes the way things are done, providing for more of the same, but also changes outlook, demands, expectations and results.

- Collection upgrading
- Strategic planning, training and consultancy
- Organizational Structure
- New bibliographic system
- New legislative system
- New legislative process system
- Equipping Library Staff, reading areas and reference services with PCs
- Networks and communications
- Consolidation of Valparaíso Library and redesigning Santiago, as a corollary.
- Training staff in computer use, processing, analytical information services and products, management, strategic planning processes, human relations and others.

The projects were executed by public tender for systems, including training activities within the academic environment, looking for turn-key solutions, and outsourcing, thus avoiding impact on operational budgets and keeping down the number of library staff.

During the implementation of the original project, the widespread availability of the Internet and the emerging alternative of Intranet connectivity and access generated an enormous upheaval. Thus, we found ourselves in a very unstable technological environment which offered new and as yet unconsolidated opportunities, and new relationships with parliamentarians based upon technologies and project shifts geared beyond the Library walls. The Library embraced Internet and Intranet facilities to extend information resources, and to become part of the information world in this new marketplace. As to community work, during 1998, as a result of major educational modernization projects, all schools will have a technological platform with which to access the Internet, and will work within a shared and networked environment, with access to Library of Congress products especially designed for outreach purposes.

Caveats

The major difficulties in implementing the project so far, have been people, technological glitches and management issues. A number of library staff have been resistant to change, even though they have been assisted by comprehensive training programs. Maybe the changes were too sweeping, including not only technologies, but organizational structure and relocation to new headquarters in Valparaíso. We initiated the project with a participative outlook, but discussions were endless and we were always encountering problems and coming into cul-de-sacs - not advancing fast enough towards the implementation of the projects. We then chose to close the debate so as to move on, and were criticized for not being participative enough. We had difficulties finding a middle ground, under the pressure of contractual timetables.

While some staff had difficulties with modernization activities and new technologies, others became champions of change. Some staff rejected, quite understandably, the Library Headquarters in Valparaíso: others embraced the opportunity to change cities. The new, functional, organizational structure generated some insecurities, with a degree of reluctance in accepting centralized processing and decentralized services. However, to counteract these disappointments, the users appreciated the benefits of these changes soon enough, having their requirements satisfied from a one-stop-information-shop library.

Technological glitches were also a major problem - not one of the new systems is fully consolidated and reliable. We have worked with major international and renowned hardware, communications, network and software providers, and have the ambivalent feeling that technological change and competitiveness is such that systems are offered in the market when they are still in their infancy and not completely tried and tested. When the core of our business and services relies on technology in a similar way to banks and financial operations, technology should be glitch-free, but we do not have the means to carry out in-house development or testing such as the financial world does. This fragility can be observed library-wide, and is an opinion shared with most colleagues, although not openly or frequently acknowledged. Systems and network administration have become complex operations with too many elements in play, resulting in rising operational costs beyond previous plans and estimates.

Management issues have also been a potential for trouble, as the resources, staff and multiple locations have made the Library into an increasingly complex institution from a management point of view. Most middle managers of the Library, even though receiving expensive and holistic training, have not become proactive, effective, and efficient enough to sustain this prolonged modernization

effort. There is a duality between modernization changes, and fear of them, and it can be extremely difficult to change mind-sets.

The Future

Our plan to modernize the Library had many experimental features, involving a degree of trial and error. We did not have all the answers, or fully structured outlooks, so as to preserve the flexibility to adapt and grow according to the vortex of changes experienced each day. Some products and services will continue, while others will shift as they are superseded by better or differently focused ones. We have realized that the life cycle of some is very short, technologies change more rapidly than we can, the information environment will not become stable in the future, and change is the only permanent aspect we can rely upon.

The Library is continually considering the next steps to develop, monitoring emerging technologies, listening to user demands, and watching where our competitors are going. Some of the clear-cut projects we are initiating are:

- Automated press information system, presently in the feasibility study and pilot project phase.
- Integration of research trans-databases, based upon the concept of integrated information services.
- Niche products such as full sets of specialized information, designed specifically for legislative commissions. For example, the Commission on Environment will have, on-line a unique information package made up of: Legislation on the subject; Press information; Members of commissions; Foreign law; Major of specialists in the world and in Chile; Bibliographies; Periodical articles; Standing on the subject political parties, Political party information.
- Outreach information and services, for which the Library has a unique opportunity, such as civic education to children (Proyecto enlaces).
- Cooperation with other Parliamentary Libraries, database access, exchange programs, training programs.

But, the most important is an attitude to embrace change, and to exploit technological opportunities that could emerge. Other challenges include more work with Congress people to evaluate impact of library services, and more focused products geared to particular needs. We have made the initial effort to catapult the Library into the 21st. Century while at the same time preserving the link with Alexandria and Babylon which is and will always be relevant. In libraries, changes have always been cumulative, complementing previous formats,

services and traditions. The Alexandria library had a list of materials within each repository room, striving to hold all of the world's knowledge in its walls ; Otlet and LaFontaine integrated the list and considered this a major universal scale of organizing knowledge, therefore centralizing control and access. We can now have a universal library with both access and availability, superimposing the world's knowledge, and reinforcing the role of information brokers and organizers in an ever expanding world.

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THE ROLE OF COMMITTEES OF MEMBERS IN PROVISION OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES*

By Katalin Haraszti

Abstract: Almost every type of library, national, university and school, public, private or special has some form of Advisory Board or supervisory committee. This paper follows up interest at recent IFLA meetings in the role of Library Committees in relation to legislative libraries. The results of some survey work on the prevalence of Library Committees are summarised and the subject is then considered in more detail in the context of a case study of the Library Committees of the Hungarian Parliament from 1867 until 1950 and the Advisory Board established in 1996.

Introduction

"The ultimate responsibility for the policy, efficiency and management of a library does not lie with the chief librarian. Whatever the type of library there can hardly be found a case in which the librarian is in complete control. Almost without exception the librarian is the servant of a higher authority; he may be very powerful, with immense freedom to carry out the day to day management of a library, yet he is always acting as a professional executive who exercises his skill and expertise as the employee of his governing body ...

It is the governing body of an institution which has the overall responsibility for its library provision, and this body is always the holder of the purse strings. Whichever body controls the financial resources given to the library has the ultimate authority over it. Therefore although librarians manage or control, they do not govern."¹

At the IFLA Conference held in Copenhagen in 1997 the question of the role of Library Committees - or equivalents - attracted considerable interest. Annalise Quistorff, Head of the Library of the Danish Parliament, distributed a paper² based on a questionnaire which the Library of the Folketing had sent out with the assistance of the ECPRD³ to parliamentary libraries in Central, Eastern, and

* Paper presented at the 64th IFLA General Conference August 16 - August 21, 1998 in Amsterdam

¹ Stockham, K.A. *The Government and Control of Libraries*, 2nd edition 1975, Deutsch, London.

² Quistorff, Annalise. *The role of Members of Parliament in parliamentary library administration*. Paper at IFLA 1997.

³ European Centre for Research and Documentation

Western Europe and in the USA. This questionnaire sought information on the extent to which Members of Parliament (MPs) were involved in the administration of the Library or on other ways in which they followed the work of the Library. Unfortunately the questionnaire did not reach the Hungarian Parliament, where there is both an old tradition of Library Committees and great interest in the subject because of current developments. The author therefore distributed an *ad hoc* questionnaire to those present at the Workshop of the Section on Library and Research Services held in the Folketing. The *ad hoc* survey asked which parliaments had a Library Committee and some questions on the status of the committee (standing, advisory, etc).

1. Library Committees around the World

The data derived from the Quistorff paper and the *ad hoc* survey (supplemented by some information gathered later from certain international assemblies) has been analysed and is presented in the following diagrams. Responses were available from 57 parliamentary assemblies, out of some 170 assemblies with parliamentary libraries. More than half of the responses came from Europe: a different picture might emerge if data was collected without this European bias.

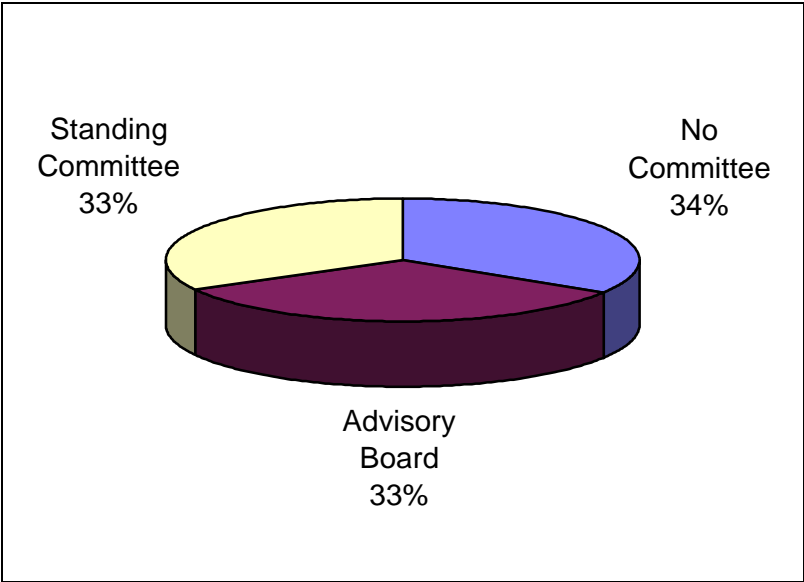


Diagram 1

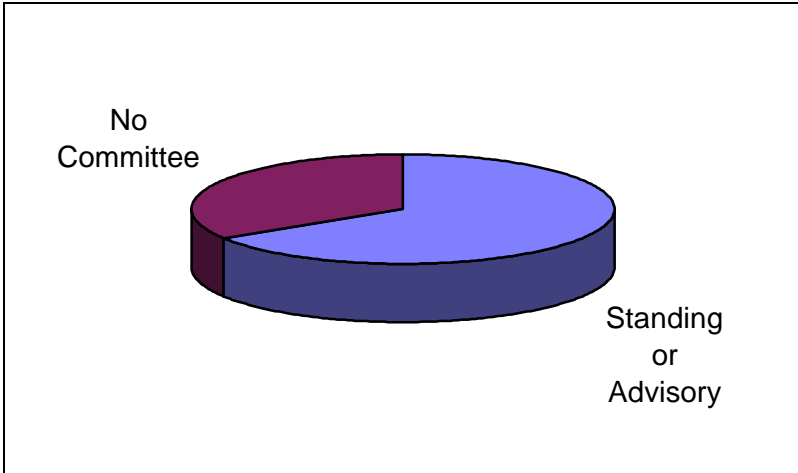


Diagram 2

What do we learn from these figures? The first two diagrams show that the Library Committees are widely used; committees or commissions are dealing with the library from its strategy to its everyday activity in 32 of the 57 responding parliaments. The third diagram, an analysis by continent of parliaments with some kind of Library Committee or consultative board, shows that more than half are European national assemblies.

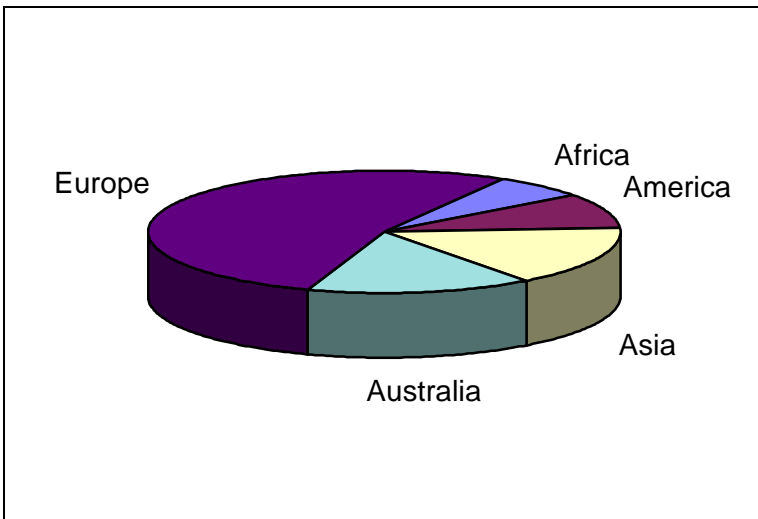


Diagram 3

Do we draw the conclusion that the Library Committee is a European speciality?

No, because the majority of parliaments who answered "yes" (18) to having a standing committee are from Australia, Asia and North America (11). Only seven European parliaments have a "standing Library Committee", and there are fifteen European national assemblies and one European international assembly with no participation by parliamentarians in library administration. In addition, we examine the proportion of the continents where there are no Library Committees or MPs are not involved to the parliamentary library's administration:

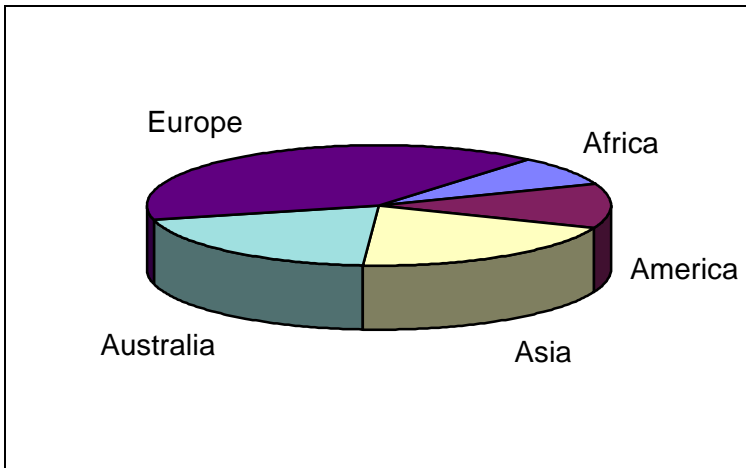


Diagram 4

So perhaps the Library Committee is not an European speciality.

Standing type Library Committees are the most commonly used in the surveyed parliamentary libraries. A "standing" Library Committee means one which generally consists of MPs, but sometimes chief officials from the administrative staff are also elected or delegated. These standing committees have regular obligations and their members may have extra allowances. They may be working in a more immediate framework than an advisory board.

What are the main functions of a Library Committee or why should have it an important role in the life of a parliamentary library? In the cases analysed these committees are:

- Policy making and oversight bodies,
- approving/providing strategic guidance and goals,

- deciding on the acquisition of documents, the lending service and rules of access to the library for public or specialists and working and opening hours.

In cases when the Library Committee is an advisory board (communicative, supervisory, consultative, initiative etc. committees), these committees also include MPs. Comparing with standing type committees the main difference can be found between their competencies. The advisory committees generally have only supervisory competence, for instance reviewing the budget, being consulted on changes in information services, or working as an information channel between the factions (party groups) and the parliamentary administration. Although these committees also have regular obligations like the standing ones, their decisions are not obligatory. The committee members are working as 'volunteers' - generally not supported by any extra allowances. There are a significant number of advisory type committees in the surveyed parliamentary libraries.

A European case might to be cited: the example of Germany where the Bundestag has three committees dealing with library matters (The Commission of the Council of Elders for Internal Affairs, a committee dealing with computerization and one dealing with the move from Bonn to Berlin), while in the Bundesrat MPs are not involved in library administration.

The first two diagrams show that about a third of the 57 responding parliamentary libraries are administered without any formal participation of MPs. Two European examples might be highlighted here because the present position is a changed one: in the Stortinget of Norway MPs have not been involved since 1992 in the library administration because the previous supervisory board was abolished and "the parliamentary librarian [was made] responsible for presenting the library's budget and new appointments. Likewise the Swiss parliament in 1988 replaced the previous supervision by a Committee of Documentation into a Commission of Administration, the task of which is supervising the library budget only"⁴

2. The Story of an Old-fashioned Library Committee or the renaissance of a traditional model

The traditional Hungarian model was based on the following three axioms:

Axiom No.1 The Library Committee supervised directly the Parliamentary Library

⁴ Quistorff loc cit

Axiom No.2 The Library Committee had its own competence

Axiom No.3 The Library Committee held its meetings on regular basis

The first Library Committee was established by the Parliament in 1867 in order to supervise its library. The committee members were originally delegated by the Speaker, but from 1875 they were freely elected when the new parliament set up. The post-1875 Library Committee was established as a standing committee. The number of permanent members varied: it worked optimally with 5-11 MPs, but since the 1930's the participation rate had grown to 33 members. After World War II until abolition in 1950, the Committee had 17 members. The Library Committee had its own president or chairman: at first he was elected from its members, later - probably as a consequence of its growing power and competence - the Speaker officially presided.

The Library Committee had the right to intervene in all matters of importance in the library's activity. This right was based on Rules of Procedure and on other parliamentary documents. The Committee's powers included the establishment of the statutes of the library, which defined the obligations and tasks of the institution, the limits to the actions and competence of the Librarian and the staff, and other regulations such as lending rules. Depending on current duties the Library Committee established subcommittees e.g. on statutes, on acquisition etc. The supervising of the acquisition policy was particularly stressed, for example from 1878 the library began to gather the documents of foreign parliaments on an exchange basis and the parliament legislated for legal deposit of published materials (first in 1922).

Examining Library Committee responsibilities of that time shows some similarity with the present practice of the German Parliament (Bundestag) or the Turkish Parliament (Türkiye Bülük Millet Meclisi) where a Library Committee is responsible for matters of policy concerning the use of the library, catalogue systems, store rooms, book lending etc. The Statutes of the Hungarian Library Committee enacted in 1909 provided that any measures concerning the out-building storage of the holding was subject to the Committee's approval because the speed of service could have been at risk. The Library Committee made cataloguing rules, decided exchange policy and practice, as well as the composition of the staff by qualifications, age etc.

How did the Library Committees work?

The Library Committees were working to a regular schedule: meetings were held monthly, then quarterly, and later once in a year at minimum. The committee controlled the status of the library, the implementation of the planned task and *ad*

hoc duties. It laid down the next year's financial framework and professional obligations on the basis of the figures and information gathered about the previous session(s), knowledge of the essential legislative requirements and the information needs of legislators. At the end of each sessions the Committee had to report to the Parliament on the activity and the main figures (holdings, expenditure, purchases, exchanges, lending, etc.) of the library - at first in each parliamentary session but later annually. These regular reports were very valuable because the committee members changed session by session, a new Speaker/President and members were elected and the staff of the library changed too. For all those involved in committee proceeding the best source for retrospective orientation was the minutes of the Library Committee, which served as the written collective memory.

The Library Committee submitted its reports to the plenary session, where the Parliament debated, passed or modified or voted against them. When the report as proposed was passed and promulgated, it was enacted and its enforcement was obligatory.

From 1920 the preparatory work of the Library Committee meetings was one of the duties of the Librarian (Chief Librarian/Director General). As the secretary of the Committee, he collected the previous reports, the future plan and the problems to be discussed. Then he agreed a date for the meeting with the Speaker, and sent an invitation letter to the committee members.

Typical Agendas

The meetings of the Library Committee had their own agenda prepared by the Librarian and distributed among the members in advance. The standing items of the agenda show the continuity of the auditing and controlling work of the committee and of the different library activities. The standing items were the following:

1. Librarian's report on the activities of the Library during the previous year
2. Librarian's proposal on the next year's budget
3. Librarian's report on the ordering and shipment of next year's periodicals and newspapers
4. Librarian's report on the lending, on the status of claims
5. Librarian's report on the status of the international exchange

Further ordinary agenda items included:

- Report to be submitted to the parliament on the role of the library
- Proposal on the framework of the library budget

- Auditing and supervising the expenditure and income
- Review of the requests of users (MPs noted in a book their demands and the titles of required but missing documents they had needed during the plenary debates)
- Decisions on the titles to be purchased
- Decisions on gifts (if the Library Committee accepted documents as gift, it sent a letter of thanks to the donor and registered the fact for the minutes)
- Decisions on allowances of the staff

Other items discussed were:

- Personal issues (staff or committee related)
- Establishment of a new reading room for outsider researchers
- Inventory control
- Establishment of new cataloguing rules

The Librarian's role was to serve as rapporteur. The proposals and reports submitted on the basis of the agenda were discussed by the committee members who accepted them or in some cases modified or voted against them. Each committee member had the right to propose an initiative. These proposals concerned mainly purchasing or cancelling documents, often linked to the particular information needs of one MP. When the Speaker agreed that the proposal was for the general good the demand was voted. Some proposals submitted by MPs were hopeless projects - all the proposals were commented upon by the Librarian before the decision was taken.

All meetings were minuted and the minutes signed by the president of the Library Committee and the secretary, and confirmed by the committee members elected at the beginning of each meetings. These confirmed committee minutes became very important sources of the library's history.

The composition of the Library Committee

The criteria for nomination as a committee member were not formally defined, nevertheless the MPs came generally from literary or scientific career. Election to the Library Committee brought a cultural recognition for an MP. This changed later, and from the middle of the 1930's partisanship and the party point of view became predominate. The composition of the Committee reflected distinctly the party balance of parliamentary power and cultural or scientific merits became secondary. A few examples of the characteristics of the qualifications or profession of Library Committee members: they included lawyers, philosophers, economists, sociologists, judges, writers, poets, journalists, archaeologists, art and

literary historians, editors, translators, ethnographers, landowners, priests, teachers and professors, geographers, sculptors and painters - with just one common attribute: they were all elected representatives.

What was the level of influence of the Hungarian Library Committees on the parliamentary library?

- a) The senior management of the library was more stable than the membership of the Committee. The length of service of each Librarian was far longer than the period of each parliamentary session: two of them directed the library for 20 years, three of them for one decade. Their knowledge had an important role in the continuous development of the institution. They acted as standing rapporteurs of the Library Committee meetings, providing continuity through their duties. The MPs acknowledged their professional standing.
- b) The standing rules of the meetings of the Library Committees were also important. The rules on frequency of meetings guaranteed regular committee activity, and provided for the annual survey of the implementation of the previous Committee's decisions and how the most important problems were handled.
- c) The change of members happened gradually. At the beginning of a new session only a few new members were elected, the majority remained from the former committee. Usually at least a third the Library Committee members did not change which allowed transmission of experience, and professional and local knowledge, from one Library Committee to the next. The member who recorded the longest service in the acquisition subcommittee was reelected four times.
- d) The relation between the Speaker and the library was continuous and the executive power of the Speaker/President of the Committee ensured that library activity continued between committee meetings.
- e) Recording the actions and decisions of the Library Committee for the minutes, and archiving them was important, as was the annual report of the Committee submitted to the plenary session.

The participation rate of members varied, meetings were characterised by a rate of 50%. On some occasions almost all committee members were present, but sometimes the quorum was threatened (the required quorum was one third of the members).⁵ In all parliamentary sessions there were some committee members

⁵ The Library and Computers Sub-Committee of the House of Lords consists of 11 members and the quorum is only two!

who did not participate at any meeting of the Committee. Perhaps they were not interested, or they could have had other more important duties or they were acquainted with neither the library's nor the Library Committee's activities. On the other hand a number of MPs attended all committee meetings.

The present situation

The Library of the present Hungarian Parliament has a double function: like the Finnish parliamentary library, it is also open to the public and has a specialized holding of the literature published in the legal field and in political science. In 1991 it became again the responsibility of the Parliament and since 1997 its staff are again civil servants. The library reports directly to the Speaker.

In the Autumn of 1996 the Speaker established a Library Advisory Board consisting of MPs delegated from each of the parliamentary party groups. The independent MPs are not involved, their interests are only indirectly represented. The Speaker is the President of the Library Advisory Board and the Librarian is the secretary. The Board consists of 8 members. The professions of the Library Advisory Board are: lawyers (3), historians (2), librarian (1), teachers (2), and engineer (1).⁶ The Secretary General, the financial and the computer system managers, and the library directors participate regularly in the meetings. This board has its tradition in the earlier committees of the Hungarian Parliament. After its renaissance in 1996 it adopted a number of important resolutions. The Board has advisory and initiative competence without a supervising right. It has approved annual plans and reports, increased the acquisition budget, submitted a proposal for legislation on the legal deposit of materials published in the Parliament's jurisdiction, and founded a special library prize.

The Hungarian Parliament ended its sessional activity (1994-1998) in the middle of March 1998 because of the general parliamentary elections to be held in May. It is not yet clear how the Advisory Board will continue to fulfil its role, in principle we can expect the reestablishment of the Library Advisory Board or a new (standing?) Library Committee with a faster legal framework.

⁶ In every parliament ideally economists should also be elected as members and supervisors who take a special interest in the library from each party, from the government party and from the opposite side, would also enhance the Board.

3. Concluding Comments

Why do parliamentary libraries need a Library Committee?

Like a typical nonprofit organisation, parliamentary libraries should have their sponsors. What does 'sponsoring' an institution mean? Sponsoring is one of the most fashionable magic expressions of our globalised and market-oriented world, it means basically to assist or to support somebody for a special purpose. The sponsorship can take various forms and can embrace the activities of a Library Committee. Then both parties, the library and the committee/board have to have their own interest to make the arrangement work. The need for sponsorship could come from other requirements: to establish a new strategy for the library; to launch new initiatives in information services and to get them adopted by the parliament; or, if there is a lack of adequate funding, to deal with the resulting difficulties. Another reason for sponsorship is the need for goodwill or PR activities, and keeping the attention of users regarding library services is also a very important factor.

Everyone will realise that the competence of the Library Committee has a close connection with its composition. On that competence depends the achievement of a consensus between MP's and the parliamentary administration. A Library Committee can be a policymaking and oversight body, it can provide strategic guidance and goals for the library. At the same time it can offer practical assistance in order to ensure timely and correct information services to MP's, for instance in relation to the extension of copying rights and the particular application of copyright in a parliamentary library. The Library Committee can help to ensure the legal deposit of materials published via traditional ways or in electronic form. The Library Committee's activities can be very positive for the library, because the results and benefits will derive from the common experience of the library and of its users.

Questions remain after this analysis and case study: "How do parliamentary libraries which do not have any kind of Library Committee function?"; "To whom does the Librarian in this instance report?"; "What is the experience of parliamentary libraries whose supervisory body has been abolished?". This paper is unlikely to be the last word on legislative library committees.

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BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS AND RESEARCHERS: OECD INFORMATION, A TWO-WAY FLOW*

By Peter Raggett

Abstract: The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) both gathers and disseminates information. The presentation will demonstrate some of the information that the OECD makes available to researchers all over the world, concentrating on material published via the Internet. In addition, there will be a discussion of work that the OECD Central Library is doing to gather information to aid researchers working in the organisation. These include the provision of information files on certain "horizontal projects" which entail the Library providing periodical articles, electronic documents and links to relevant Internet sites. Some of these latter will also be of interest to researchers working on similar topics.

1. Introduction

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) is located in Paris and has 29 member countries. The predecessor to the OECD, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), was founded in 1948 in order to oversee the Marshall Plan of United States aid to Europe after the Second World War. In 1961 the European countries together with the United States and Canada faced a new challenge: to make their rebuilt economies thrive in a world where international interdependence was increasingly becoming the norm. Thus it was that the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation became the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development . In the convention signed in 1961, the OECD is charged with promoting policies to:

- achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus contribute to the development of the world economy;
- contribute to sound economic expansion in Member as well as non-Member countries in the process of economic development; and
- contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations.

* Paper presented at the 64th IFLA General Conference August 16 - August 21, 1998 in Amsterdam

These aims are still valid today and the OECD's mission remains to promote economic growth and development in Member and non-Member countries, and to contribute to an open international trade and investment system. These aims are achieved through co-operative effort on the part of the Member countries. The purpose of this paper is to describe the OECD both as information provider and as information consumer. The organisation provides information to researchers through its archives, statistics and publications. It uses information from many sources including that provided by the Central Library and the Library Intranet pages.

PART A - The OECD as an information provider

A.1. The OECD archives

The OEEC archives of documents from 1948 to 1960 and OECD archives from 1961 onwards are deposited at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, Italy. These documents are declassified and sent to Florence approximately 30 years after their creation and are transferred annually from Paris to Florence. The most significant items are chronological collections of coded documents such as minutes of meetings or working papers. Material is available for consultation by researchers who apply in writing to the EUI. More information on the archives can be found at the OECD Archives Home Page¹ and a search engine for archives held at the EUI is available². A list of OECD bodies and committees is available to aid research.

A.2 Statistics

A.2.1 Free statistics

The OECD has loaded onto the Internet statistics in various domains which are freely available for consulting and downloading. From the lead page³ one has access to the the tables in "OECD in Figures" in either HTML or Portable Document Format (PDF) format. There are some useful tables contained under the rubrique "Frequently requested statistics". To quickly find the GDP of one of the OECD member countries a couple of clicks from "Frequently requested statistics" brings up the relevant table⁴. Similarly, it is possible to compare unemployment rates across 21 of the OECD member countries with the monthly table "Standardised Unemployment Rates"⁵.

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/about/archives.htm>

² <http://wwwarc.iue.it/ehar/toehar.html>

³ <http://www.oecd.org/statlist.htm>

⁴ <http://www.oecd.org/std/qnagdp.htm>

⁵ http://www.oecd.org/news_and_events/new-numbers/sur/surlist.htm

Energy statistics provided by the International Energy Agency are available in graphic form. Of particular interest are the "Energy Indicators" which show figures for energy production, imports, CO2 emissions, electricity consumption and population.⁶

A.2.2 Priced statistical publications

The OECD publishes a range of statistics with the data available either in printed or in electronic format and information about these publications can be found at the OECD Bookshop Web Site⁷. The Quarterly National Accounts and The Main Economic Indicators, for instance, are published in printed format and on diskette or magnetic tape. The OECD Hot File⁸ is a database which is updated weekly and provides the latest official data on industrial production, OECD leading indicators, unemployment, price indices, business surveys, retail sales, foreign trade, balance of payments and financial indicators. It contains tables for OECD Member countries and comparative tables on consumer prices, industrial production and unemployment. The file is available on annual subscription. However, government agencies of OECD member countries can register for free access. One publication for which there is no printed equivalent is the *OECD Statistical Compendium on CD-ROM* which gives a macroeconomic overview of the economies of all OECD member countries with historical data.

A3. OECD Publications

A.3.1 Free Publications

A number of free publications are available for downloading from the OECD Internet site. The lead page Free Online Documents⁹ links to several downloadable publications including The OECD Observer¹⁰. The page¹¹ lists available documents by activity sector and by clicking on one of the subjects e.g. Information & Communications Policy which is listed under Science, Technology, Industry, the searcher is taken down the hierarchy¹² and then to Information Economy¹³ where the documents themselves are listed.

The majority of these documents are working papers and general distribution papers. These latter, as the name implies, are freely available to any researcher

⁶ http://www.iea.org/stats/files/keystats/STATS_97.HTM

⁷ <http://electrade.att.fr/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront/>

⁸ <http://www.oecd.org/std/hot/index.htm>

⁹ <http://www.oecd.org/freedoc.htm>

¹⁰ http://www.oecd.org/publications/observer/index_en.html

¹¹ <http://www.oecd.org/freeactivities.htm>

¹² <http://www.oecd.org/dsti/sti/it/prod/online.htm>

¹³ <http://www.oecd.org/dsti/sti/it/infosoc/prod/online.htm>

who finds them of interest. The general distribution documents have a code e.g. OCDE/GD(97)123 where the figure in brackets identifies the year of publication. These publications are generally available in Portable Document Format (PDF) format.

As well as these publications mentioned above, there are regular updates of information put onto the OECD Internet. The page Financial Market Trends Highlights¹⁴ presents a résumé of recent developments in international and national financial markets. These short articles are supplemented with tables in PDF format.

A.3.2 Priced Publications

The OECD bookshop site¹⁵ offers the opportunity to browse or to search for priced publications. The OECD publishes over 250 monographs and as many periodical titles each year and all in-print titles are in the bookstore database. Currently there are more than 2500 books in print, the majority available in English and French. As well as offering these publications for purchase, the OECD designates a Depository Library in each OECD Member country - usually the National Library - where members of the public can consult the broad range of OECD publications and working papers. All publications are supplied to depository libraries free of charge. These libraries are listed on the bookshop Internet pages¹⁶ under the rubrique "about OECD publications" Some of the publications such as the *OECD Observer* and the yearly economic surveys of member countries can be found in most academic libraries and in public libraries which have a strong social sciences collection.

PART B The OECD as an information consumer

B.1 Gathering the information

The OECD's areas of activities cover a wide range. Although the layman may think that our name implies that we are mainly interested in economic development - and this is certainly a main interest for the Organisation - the areas of interest include macroeconomics, agriculture, development, science technology & industry, energy, environment, education and fiscal affairs. In fact, a glance at the Internet page OECD activities¹⁷ gives some idea of the wide range of the OECD's interests. A lot of the information is provided by member countries'

¹⁴ <http://www.oecd.org/daf/fin/nethigh.htm>

¹⁵ <http://electrade.att.fr/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront/>

¹⁶ <http://electrade.att.fr/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront/>

¹⁷ <http://www.oecd.org/activities.html>

governments directly to the OECD but there is a lot which is gathered by other means, and this is where the Central Library plays a major role.

B2. OECD Central Library

The Library has a physical collection of some 50,000 monographs and to 2,600 periodical subscriptions. A large proportion of these latter circulate around the Organisation. Unfortunately, some of the circulation lists are fairly long, which means that the unfortunates at the end of the list can wait some time before receiving that particular issue of the periodical. To overcome this, we have created profiles in Uncover and use this service and that of the British Library's Inside to quickly obtain copies of articles from periodicals for which we have no subscription or which are circulating around the Organisation when an article is urgently needed.

The Uncover profiles also allow our clients to receive Tables of Contents by e-mail. They then contact the Library if they wish to see the full-text of any of these articles. If we subscribe to the journal and we have a copy available, we will either lend the issue or provide a photocopy. If not, depending on the urgency of the request, we will obtain the article by inter-library-loan or order it from a document delivery service. As is the case with all libraries, we have to balance the speed of the service against cost.

B2.1 Information files and bibliographies

For a year now, the Central library has been gathering information to produce information files and bibliographies on specific subjects including Ageing Populations, Electronic Commerce, Corporate Governance, Trade & Investment Liberalisation and Employment & The OECD Jobs Strategy. These files, which exist in a physical form in our Reading Room and in an electronic form on the OECD Intranet, contain references to, and in some cases the full-text of, periodical articles, a list of relevant monographs held in the Library, latest news stories, a list of WWW sites of important research organisations that specialise in the subject, a list of other useful WWW sites and information on important conferences. Many of the WWW sites are of interest to researchers who are looking for statistics or other information in one of these subjects. One site of interest to demographers that we discovered whilst gathering those concerned with ageing populations is the US Census Bureau's International Data Population Pyramids.¹⁸ When a country is selected, it is possible to see population predictions by age spread and by sex to the year 2050.

¹⁸ <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/iddyr.html>

The full-text of periodical articles is either downloaded from the Internet if it is available in PDF format or a link is established if it is in HTML format. The page of articles on digital money, which is part of the Library's file on electronic commerce, contains the full-text of a working paper from the Bank for International Settlements. The page of article references on government policy contains links to the two papers "Towards a European Framework for Digital Signatures & Encryption" and "A Framework for Global Electronic Commerce" as these two have been loaded onto the Internet in HTML format by the European Commission and the White House respectively. As useful WWW sites are discovered they are added to the files. The WWW links page of the file "Corporate Governance" has as its first entry a link to the leading Internet site on the subject¹⁹. As this subject is fairly hot at the moment, it is not surprising to find a fair number of principal sites dealing with corporate governance including the OECD's own site²⁰.

B2.2 The Central Library's Virtual Reference Desk

There are several libraries, particularly in the US, which have created, or are in the process of creating, a virtual reference site. The OECD Central Library has created a virtual reference desk which has been loaded onto the Intranet. The site contains the information files mentioned above, as well as CD-ROMs on the network and annotated links to hundreds of useful WWW sites. As our clients at the OECD frequently use the Internet to supplement their research, these latter have proved to be popular. I am sure you have all heard the complaint "I would use the Internet more if I could find anything" and it is intended that these links provided by the Central Library will aid our client in going directly to a useful site.

The links to government or country-specific sites are listed alphabetically. One example of a country's or region's web page is the page "Hong Kong World Wide Web Database".²¹ As well as this page created by the Chinese University of Hong Kong, there is an official HK government page produced by the Government Information Centre.²² All these country specific servers generally link to information produced by the country's government, news sources and national academic institutions and research centres.

The page "Useful Pages Arranged by Subject", as its name implies, is a list of about 200 sites under broad subject areas. Click on Environment as an example

¹⁹ <http://www.corpgov.net/>

²⁰ <http://www.oecd.org/daf/fin/netcorp.htm>

²¹ <http://www.cuhk.hk/hkwww.htm>

²² <http://www.info.gov.hk/>

and the first link displayed is Envirolink.²³ This site says that it is "the most comprehensive resource of environmental information available on the Internet". Other pages making up the Library Links list news sites, electronic journals, financial sites and banks' home pages.

The Library Catalogue will be mounted on the Intranet powered by a Z39.50 server. This will allow our clients, not only to search the Library collections, but other Z39.50 compliant library catalogues as well.

C. Conclusions

It is an obvious truism that the better the quality of the input information, the better the quality of the output. The OECD has a justified reputation for the accuracy and quality of its analyses and of its data. To keep to their high standards OECD economists and statisticians must have access to the latest accurate information on a topic or a geographical area. The Central Library is playing a major part in finding and providing quality information and data from both traditional sources and newer ones like the Internet. The economists and statisticians then take this information and provide the data and publications which the OECD makes available for policy makers, researchers and the private sector all over the world.

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²³ <http://www.envirolink.org/>

LIBRARY RESOURCES OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE RUSSIAN NATION: PROBLEMS OF COLLECTION BUILDING AND OF ACCESS*

By Tamara A. Vassilieva and I.Z. Starodubova

Abstract: In Russia's recent period of social transformation the importance of public documents of legal significance has sharply increased. Libraries provide a channel through which such documents can be spread to all the people, and made easier of access. However, there is no Russian library which contains all the official documents needed by users. The solution to this problem lies in setting up a shared library resource of official documents, at three levels: the federal, the regional, and the municipal. The Russian State Library, in its role as a national library for Russia, is at the head of the resource-sharing system for public documents, but territorial sharing of responsibilities for collection building and access throughout the nation's library and information system will allow Russia to achieve full availability of public documents of legal significance to all members of Russian society.

How real are the rights and freedoms of a country's citizens? This is a function of the degree of development of a public legal culture, or rule of law, in society. Citizens' access to official documents is an essential component of this public legal culture.

In 1990, following international recommendations (and especially those of IFLA), Russia adopted this definition of an official publication: *a publication brought out on behalf of governmental bodies or institutions or agencies of the state, and containing materials of a normative or directive nature* (GOST 7.60-90). Official documents in Russia, so defined, are a very heterogeneous collection of materials, whether you think in terms of their varied composition and diverse contents, in terms of the number and variety of organisations putting them out, or in terms of their differences of purpose and of use. Furthermore, the vital underlying role of official documents in civil society has plainly been underestimated in the past by the state. As a result, providing for public examination of official documents, or even provision of information about them, has become a major challenge.

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What the citizens of Russia badly lack is access to the sort of legal information which constitutes a rather substantial portion of the country's official documents. Achieving rapid and complete access to legal information of high quality from official documents poses a grave problem, not only because it is vital for the public interest, but because it is remarkably bulky. At a conference of the executive officers of the legal services of Russia's federal organs of government in December 1995, for example, it was noted that in Russia there are at least one and a half million normative acts or regulations in force at the federal or regional levels!

In recent years, within the governmental sphere, collections of Russian official documents have begun to be developed deliberately and systematically. Thus, clause 11 of the federal law of 1994 *On the legal deposit copy of documents* bestows on the Parliamentary Library of Russia the right to receive two free copies of each official document. Furthermore, governmental systems to provide information on legislation are being created. In parallel with this development, a good many electronic full-text databases of normative documents have come into being as a commercial initiative. However, most of these governmental and commercial resources are difficult for the general public to access. State activities in the sphere of government documents collection are geared to the the provision of service to government agencies, and to acquire information from commercial databases would cost the private citizen a pretty penny.

It is the public importance of official documents which causes Russian libraries to go out and acquire them, by purchase or otherwise. For unlike other state agencies our libraries are social institutions, with a mission of serving the individual needs of every citizen who comes to them, and respecting the priority of each person's human rights.

In this context the building of quality library collections of official documents, open to general use by the public, has become urgent. According to a survey we did in 1997 of the research and information activities of national and regional public research libraries within the Russian Federation, every one of these libraries ranks the placing of official documents at the disposal of its readers among its priority tasks.

To that end reading rooms for official publications are being opened, and most libraries are now collaborating closely and successfully with the local executive and legislative authorities, who are both suppliers of official documents and users of the resources of official publications kept in the library. Furthermore, each of the libraries surveyed has acquired one or another of the full-text Russian legal databases, such as Garant, or Kodeks, or Konsultant Plus.

These efforts by individual libraries are important, but nonetheless fragmentary. Almost every library we surveyed, in answering our questionnaire, mentioned its readers' discontent with the state of its official documents service.

How can we solve this public problem of grave importance? The solution would seem to lie in setting up a library and information network for Russia based upon a shared, nation-wide library collection of official documents. In keeping with existing library structures, this new library and information network for official documents provision could be broken down into three levels: the federal, the regional, the municipal. On each level libraries would be assigned responsibility for maintaining a complete collection of all official documents within their jurisdiction, and for granting public access to those documents.

This of course presupposes a lively co-operation of libraries at all levels with the centres for legal information which by mandate of the Russian government are now developing automated legal information networks at both the federal and regional levels.

Within the resource-sharing system, the accumulated collections of official documents at the country's two national libraries, which both receive legal deposits of documents and acquire foreign official documents, will be essential building blocks. These two institutions, the Russian State Library in Moscow and the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, will collect the most complete sets of Russian and foreign official documents, while regional official documents will be collected by the national libraries of the different constituent republics of the Russian Federation, as well as by regional research libraries.

Of course, a whole range of questions must be resolved before a shared, national library collection of official documents can be set up. Central libraries within different regions must be assigned responsibility for the acquisition, preservation and use of official documents according to certain terms of reference. Full bibliographic control of official documents is needed, and, based upon it, the creation of means of registering the availability of official publications to readers, whether through national or regional union catalogues or through publication of bibliographic notices and abstracts.

The first practical steps in the direction of the new resource-sharing system have been taken by the Russian State Library, which sponsored and arranged a conference on organising the official publications work of libraries in Russia. At this conference representatives of the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law, of the Russian State Duma committee on information policy, of the Parliamentary Library of Russia, of the Library of the Russian Presidential

Administration, and of the research centre for legal information at the Russian Ministry of Justice, all took the floor to speak in favour of the idea of a shared, national library collection of official documents.

Also, this year (1998) the scheme was submitted to the Russian President's Standing Commission on the Systematic Codification of Russian Law, which likewise favoured it.

Now let us take a closer look at the present situation as regards collection building and public access in the field of official documents at the Russian State Library, a leading centre for this work within the Russian library and information system.

The Russian State Library has at its disposal a truly vast collection of official documents; each year it receives another hundred thousand or so of them, both Russian and foreign! The Library acquires official publications from several sources:

- the free legal deposit copy of official publications
- purchase of official literature at auction in the Russian and foreign markets
- subscriptions
- book exchanges
- deposit of materials from the United Nations and its specialised agencies
- copies of missing documents from the Russian Book Chamber or other libraries
- microfilming of publications and their transfer to machine-readable form
- gifts, both from organisations and from private individuals.

The complete and general supply of Russian official documents to the Library through legal deposit provides a favourable basis for the building up of a comprehensive collection of Russian official publications within its walls. Russian official publications are acquired both in the Russian language and in the languages of other peoples within the Federation. The Library also possesses an exhaustive collection of official documents of the republics of the former U.S.S.R. Foreign official documents are acquired more selectively, with national constitutions and the legislation of international organisations being collected most thoroughly. The purchase of official publications is restricted neither as to kind of document nor as to format: monographic publications, periodicals and brief documents in no series are acquired for the collections, in paper formats ranging from book to broadside, in microformat and in electronic media.

It is notorious that there is no uniformity in world library practice as regards the physical organisation of collections of official documents. At the Russian State

Library we have separated out the United Nations documents (which have their own special coding, and occupy about 210,000 shelving units), as well as specialised collections of standards and technical documents; these have their own reading rooms, where readers can obtain a document from the shelves within five to fifteen minutes. Other official publications have been divided among specialised departments of the Library according either to subject content or to format, and are not included in the ambit of the traditional reference tool for users, the library catalogue.

It is the lack of a precise classification scheme for official documents that has led to their being scattered throughout the Library without catalogue access. However, at the same time the heightened public interest in these documents has led to their being given special attention in the central reference collection of the reference and bibliographic department.

There within a few minutes a user of the Library can consult enactments and ordinances of the Russian parliament and government, Russian presidential decrees, documents issued on behalf of the Council of the Federation, collected statutes going back to the Russian Empire, publications of government ministries and agencies, and statistical reference books. Bibliographic specialists aid the readers with advice on the use of official documents and devote a major effort to expounding their contents.

To assist in this work and help users follow the complicated flow of official documents research guidelines and pathfinder leaflets for users of official publications are put out, such as our recent guides to *The State and the law or to the United Nations*, and our new pathfinder *Normative acts of the Russian Federation: bibliographic searching in periodicals and serials*. Also, a *Guide to the official documents holdings of libraries and to holdings of normative legal information* is in press.

Since 1995 the users of the Russian State Library have been able to carry out online searches for legislation and other normative acts in the Garant full-text legal reference database. This documentation comes to Garant directly from 186 agencies of government and administration, including the Presidency, the Government, the Central Bank and the State taxation service. In addition to documents relevant to virtually all branches of federal Russian law and international documents applicable to Russia and to the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Garant database includes normative acts of the Russian regions. It is updated weekly.

Finally, since last year (1997) readers at the Russian State Library have been able to search for and download official documents on the Internet.

Who are these users of our official documents? They cover a very wide spectrum, from students to scholars, from technical specialists to businessmen. But our analysis of the user population tells us that we can serve them most effectively through an open access environment, with a service point where special skills in the handling of official documents are concentrated.

Making official documents available to users only within the general service pattern of the Library has reduced the efficacy of their use. We therefore have concluded that the Russian State Library must set up a specialized department of official documents. A new *Acquisitions policy for official documents at the Russian State Library* has been composed, and we have begun preparations to set up our Hall of Official Publications.

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THE LEOPARD THAT CHANGED IT'S SPOTS: OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS AS A RESEARCH TOOL IN AN EVOLVING INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT*

By Myoung C. Wilson

Abstract: The end of the Cold War and the advance of information and telecommunication technology have brought changes in official publishing and access services. This paper presents a theoretical framework that explores the relationship between the quantity and reliability of official publications and information environments and discusses how the intersection of these two conditions affects the way that scholars access official publications for research purposes.

I. Introduction

Everyone knows that a leopard cannot change its spots. However, the end of the Cold War has brought fundamental changes in the structure of government in many countries, particularly those that were formerly under Communist Party rule. In Eastern Europe the process of political restructuring toward more open government has resulted in privatizing, decentralizing and deregulating activities that are occurring to such an extent that the bibliographic control of official publications might almost be said to be disintegrating.¹ For other countries, while government structures remain the same, the advance of information technology has resulted in fundamental changes in patterns of official publishing, access provisions, and distribution methods. For example, in the United States the Federal Government is introducing a bill to change the traditional "Depository Library Program" into a "Federal Information Access Program." The intent of this bill is to ensure continuing public access to the ever increasing electronic information sources produced by the government². In the United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Stationary Office has been completely privatized; the majority of UK official publications are now printed and distributed by the Stationary Office, a private company.³ In fast growing countries like South Korea, the growth rate of

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¹ Information Sources in Official Publications, edited by Valerie J.Nurcombe, 1997, London: Bowker-Sauer, p.xxv.

² Documents Association of New Jersey Newsletter, 1998, No. 78 (Winter). See also US GPO Administrative Notes-Special issue on proposed changes to Chapters 17 and 19, Title 44 available online at URL: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/aspecial.html/

³ <http://www.the.stationary.office.co.uk>.

official publications far surpasses that of trade publications. Between 1990 and 1993 the number of South Korean government publications increased by 60%, reflecting both an expansion of government functions as well as of public interest in government affairs.⁴

In the case of government publications, therefore, while the leopard has remained essentially the same in its fundamental functions, it has, in many countries, truly changed its spots. As one of the sub-themes of this General Conference suggests, the official publications produced by some countries conform to the metaphor of a narrow footpath while in others there has been an acceleration of change that has resulted in new patterns of publications that reflect new technologies and changing political socio-economic factors. Understanding the implications of these changes will help librarians in their role as information providers.

To date no generally accepted theoretical framework has been developed regarding how official publications are used as research tools in a world that is now interconnected by the advance of telecommunications technology. Yet librarians, as information providers, are concerned, first and foremost, with the acquisition of materials produced by government agencies and with providing adequate access to this body of valuable information. This paper, therefore, explores the different ways that researchers access official publications in today's changing political and information environment. I argue that the availability and reliability of government documents influence the way in which official publications are utilized and thus have implications for the services that librarians provide.

II. The Nature of Government Publications

For the purposes of this paper, official publications are defined as those that are produced at the expense of government agencies (this definition, in the restrictive form presented here, excludes the official publications of Intergovernmental Organizations). It must be recognized, however, that the mere availability of government publications ignores the question of reliability, whether data have been modified to meet particular policy needs or ideological dictates. Many governments expend enormous sums of money to disseminate information about their countries.⁵ Yet this fact, by itself, begs the question of accuracy. This is an

⁴ Choi, Chongtai and Cho, Youngju, 1995, "Chongbu KanHaeng Mul KwanLi Wa YiYong," [Management and Use of Government Publications], Kukhoi Doswo Kwanbo, No. 242, pp.22-36.

⁵ [Wilson] Chung, Myoung Ja, 1980, "Embassy Newsletters As Information Sources Current Affairs," Government Publications Review, Vol.7A, pp.329-332.

important factor that librarians must consider when assessing the appropriate strategies for obtaining and disseminating information.

In order to account for differences in the amount and veracity of official publications produced by various governments I propose the following three steps: (1) establish categories that are appropriate for revealing distinctions in the quantity and quality of government publications; (2) set forth three prevalent modes of inquiry utilized by scholars; and (3) briefly elucidate the reasons why certain modes of inquiry are more appropriate than others depending on the quantity and quality of the information that is available, i.e., this will be done by a discussion of the matrix that is generated by combining points 1 and 2 above, and by analyzing how these relationships predict to the information seeking behavior of researchers.

III. The Quantity and Quality of Government publications

Official government publications are the main source for information regarding economic, legal and political data. Some countries, such as those in North America, assure a wide and systematic distribution of government information to the public. For others, such as New Zealand and many Latin American countries, the concept of "open" government information does not exist. In these countries official government publications are for consumption by government agencies, not by the public⁶ and are generally available only upon request, often for a fee.

In order to enhance awareness of official publications, two comprehensive guides to official publications have been published in recent years. These are Guide to Official Publications in Foreign Countries, edited by Gloria Westfall⁷ and Introduction to Information Sources in Official Publications, edited by Valerie Nurcombe⁸. An examination of these guides suggests that official publications can be divided into three major categories:

A. Countries that publish in "high volume" frequently have a centralized government publishing office that coordinates publications from different agencies and is also responsible for distribution. The Government Printing Office of the United States, the Government Printing Office of Canada and the recently

⁶ Hernon, Peter, 1996, "Government Information Policy in New Zealand; Business Like but Evolving," Government Information Quarterly: An International Journal of Policies, Resources, Services and Practices, Vol.13, No.3, p. 215+.

⁷ Guide to Official Publications of Foreign Countries Edited by Gloria Westfall, 1997. Washington DC and Chicago: CIS and American Library Association.

⁸ Nurcombe, Valerie J. 1997, Information Sources in Official Publications, *op.cit*

privatized Stationary Office of the United Kingdom are examples of countries with "high volume" sources..

B. "Medium volume" countries have a centralized government printing office that is responsible for publishing only certain titles. Individual agencies are responsible for the publication and dissemination of data relevant to their own activities. There is no central government office that handles distribution of official publications; instead, well established private vendors are the main distributors. Many Asian and Latin American countries belong in this category.

C. "Low volume" countries have no centralized government printing office for official publications. Agency publications are minimal. Examples of countries in this category are North Korea and countries at war. As a general rule, overt restrictions by governments on the publication of official information correlate with restrictions on the availability of information in general.

Any comprehensive measurement of the quality of official government publications is beyond the scope of this paper. It can be stated generally , however, that the quality of data from high volume countries tends to be the most reliable. As one noted scholar put it, "...where public life is free and robust and government agencies are routinely scrutinized, their data and analyses can be compared with those collected by independent research institutions."⁹ In contrast, data from low volume countries are generally the least reliable, if only because they are least subject to independent verification. Means of data collection are frequently unknown and there is a greater likelihood that information will be skewed for ideological reasons. The reliability of data from medium volume countries falls variably between these two extremes.

IV. Modes of Research Inquiry

A vast amount of literature exists regarding information seeking behavior. Among earlier studies is one that deals with the behavior of specific groups of scholars.¹⁰ How anthropologists obtain and access information and what humanists do when they conduct research is thus relatively well known. Perhaps the most rigorously examined group is the scientific community. Less understood is how anyone, be it an historian, economist, or engineer does research using

⁹ Professor Jan Kubik of Political Science Department, Rutgers University. E-mail to Myoung C. Wilson, 15 March 1998.

¹⁰ For a comprehensive review of literature on this topic, see Elizabeth T. Hemin's chapter on "Information Needs and Use Studies in the Annual Review of Information Science and Technology, vol. 25, 1990, pp. 145-172. See also William Sugar's chapter on "User Centered Perspective of Information Retrieval research and Analysis Methods" in the Annual Review of Information Science and Technology, vol. 35, 1995. pp.7-107.

official publications. Although some studies have been conducted about the use of government publications, these are generally specific to particular institutions.¹¹

In order to put this paper in proper perspective, therefore, I will describe the two most commonly identified information seeking behaviors of academic researchers -- citation chasing and informal networking (personal contact). I will then add a category of behavior that is rapidly emerging -- electronic browsing. Although not mutually exclusive, the attributes of these three information seeking behaviors can be described analytically as follows:

A. Citation Chasing is a well established pattern of scholarly inquiry that is utilized by many researchers regardless of discipline. In this case when a user has located an appropriate article, book or report, s/he finds related material in the bibliography and footnotes. Citation chasing as a research methodology is critically dependent on the availability of material. Where availability is restricted by a lack of resources or for political reasons, this mode of information seeking is sub-optimal. Governments that prevent free access to official information compromise the effectiveness of this strategy.

B. Informal Networkers, particularly area specialists and those who need research information from a specific country, frequently utilize personal contacts. Others in this category are those with information needs that can most reliably be met by colleagues or informants in the field. Conference attendance is an important vehicle for these researchers as are interviews (structured and unstructured) and personal correspondence. This is clearly the strategy of choice for people who require data from societies where information is distorted for political reasons and/or is limited in amount. In these circumstances restrictions imposed by the information environment can be reliably circumvented only by access to data that are provided through a trusted personal contact.

C. Electronic Browsers frequently surf the Internet in search of online catalogs, subject indexes and abstracts, full text articles, the homepages of government agencies from around the world, etc. These individuals are also sophisticated users of the e-mail system in a manner that not only increases access to global data but also enhances personal contacts. To some extent, the caveats noted above for citation chasing apply here as well. Perhaps more important, however, is the general paucity of personal computers in societies with low levels of economic development. The opportunity for employing this information seeking mode is then restricted to a privileged few.

¹¹ Caswell, Thomas Reed., 1997, "Studies on Government Publications' Use, 1990-1996," Government Information Quarterly, Vol. 14, No.4, pp.363-373.

V. The Impact of Government Publishing Patterns and the Information Environment of Information Seeking Behavior

It is now possible to construct a matrix which relates the availability and reliability of official government publications with appropriate forms of information seeking behavior (keeping in mind the assumption, noted above, that availability is generally associated with reliability). Using this matrix it is then possible to determine the most effective strategies for obtaining government information from various countries. Librarians, especially those who function in open and information-rich societies, are then in a position to structure a research environment that matches the type and quality of data with an appropriate research mode.

Table 1

Expected Types of Information Seeking Behavior Based on the Volume and Reliability of Data and the Receiver's Information Environment

Volume & Reliability	Information Environment		
	Open	Restricted	Repressive
High	Chaser/E.Browser	Chaser/E.Browser	Networker
Medium	Chaser/E.Browser	Chaser	Networker
Low	Networker	Networker	Networker

Table 1 suggests that if the research topic concerns high volume countries (e.g., North American countries) scholarly inquiry will generally employ citation chasing or electronic methodologies whereas when research concerns countries like North Korea, the most reliable information (excluding electronic intelligence data which are not available to the general public) will be derived primarily from personal networks, to the extent that these are available.

A citation chasing strategy implies that researchers have relatively free access to information. An electronic strategy implies both the availability of equipment and, concomitantly, the willingness of governments not to interfere with the free flow of information. An informal networking strategy, however, suggests restrictions on the free flow of information. In these circumstances personal contacts are a critical means of obtaining information about and from a specific country. Different information seeking strategies will be employed by researchers in different information contexts. For example, where access to computers is limited or virtually non-existent for economic reasons, as is the case in some medium and all low volume countries, information disseminated in an electronic

mode from a high volume country will have limited impact. The reverse holds true when this information is targeted electronically at a high volume country.

A limited survey of scholars at my own institution who use official publications is revealing. Scholars who use official publications from countries such as those in Eastern Europe, Russia and Malaysia rely heavily on personal contacts to access official information. Scholars who use US government publications tend to rely on library collections. The same survey also suggests that researchers are well aware of the reliability and/or unreliability of official publications. One scholar commented that in certain countries the level of accuracy even differs from ministry to ministry .

What Table 1 tells us is that information seeking behavior varies markedly depending on both "sending" and "receiving" conditions. Those who target information to potential users must be aware of these limiting conditions. Librarians who are responsible for facilitating the provision of information must also take into account the same factors when designing service programs.

VI. Conclusion

This paper posits that the uneven flow of information from one country to another coupled with differences in the information receiving environment affect researcher's information seeking behavior. I have set forth the relationship between information seeking behavior and the availability/reliability of data in conjunction with the nature of the information environment. Further work is required to test these assumptions against empirical data in order to establish any meaningful trend lines.

Librarians as well as information suppliers such as governments must learn to respond in a timely way to the changing international information market. New technologies and means of access provide librarians with an unprecedented opportunity to develop new types of delivery services and to provide improved access services to official publications. These opportunities, however, must be placed within the context of constraints defined by types of information delivery and modes of information acquisition.

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CONSORTIA LICENSING: IMPLICATIONS FOR DIGITAL COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT*

By Lars Bjoernshauge

Introduction

The developments in scientific publishing and the pricing policies of publishers offer new challenges and opportunities for academic libraries. A proper strategy can take advantage of the new developments and contribute to solve the ongoing serials crisis, if the libraries manage to change themselves.

The current situation

It is a well known fact that the traditional mode of operation of academic libraries is in deep crisis. Several developments have contributed to this crisis. Firstly, the continuous price increase for scientific information combined with the lack of funding for academic libraries has led to massive yearly cancellations of scientific journals.

Secondly, the exponential growth in the production of knowledge has made it more and more impossible for the individual library to purchase all the relevant information. The effect has been that libraries have become more and more dependent on interlending in order to fulfil the requirements of their users. Thirdly, the rapid technological developments have resulted in a constant pressure for new hardware, software and education and training of library staff. And finally, the overwhelming application of new technologies --especially the World Wide Web-- in all media has contributed to rapid escalating user expectations in the sense that the users expect library information to be delivered just as fast as any other information they need in their daily lives. However, precisely the same technological developments seem to include the opportunity to solve the crisis.

Scientific publishing

Commercial publishers and scholarly societies are trying to implement the new technologies in their productions processes and services. During the past few years all the major publishers have produced electronic editions of their scientific

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journals on a large scale. A number of new journals are only available in electronic format.

Publishers, database producers, subscription agents and other intermediaries are already on the market with their own "integrated electronic libraries" - many of these targeted and tailored towards the end user. These products have the potential of bypassing the academic libraries; some of the producers won't even deal with libraries! Some publishers offer discount to customers who go for electronic products only. This pricing strategy aims at eliminating the print edition in order to save costs in the future. What we are witnessing here is a dramatic change in the production processes and services. These changes require investments on a significant scale both from the producers and the customers.

Furthermore at the same time an increased co-operation and competition among publishers, database producers, agents and other intermediaries are taking place. Co-operation in the sense that publishers offer bibliographic data to database producers in order to increase the demand for their electronic full text journals. And competition often leading to mergers or as one can put it: cannibalism where large redundancy operations are taking place.

There is no sign whatsoever that this will not happen to libraries as well! It is to foresee, that if academic libraries want to survive as institutions, they will have to change their production processes and services as well, that the competition - and co-operation - between libraries and indeed co-operation between libraries and publishers, database producers, agents and other intermediaries will be increased.

Consortia purchasing

The technological developments in scientific publishing -- so far primarily in publishing of scholarly journals -- and the pricing models of the publishers display new opportunities for libraries to give their users instant access to information.

A number of publishers offer consortia -- if their purchase power is big enough -- access to the whole range of their journals. That is, every member of the consortium will have electronic access not only to the journals currently subscribed to but all the journals. As we all know libraries currently subscribe only to those journals that they can afford on any specific time of date, and there will be a number of other journals of the specific publisher the library occasionally will have to interlend as well. Such a consortium agreement will give the library, and therefore also the user, extended access --that is better service-- and reduce the costs --that is staff costs and document delivery costs-- in interlending

procedures. In my opinion, the costs for this is usually a modest increase in payments to the publisher.

Consortia purchasing offers for the single library the opportunity to get access to more journals than they currently have subscriptions to, thus eliminating the continuous cancellation operations. For the consortia members -the specific group of libraries- it offers reduced costs in the interinstitutional document delivery processes for those specific journals.

However there are a number of obstacles for the libraries to take advantage of this development. Firstly, there is the ever present funding problem. Entering consortia requires initial investments in licenses and information and communication technology. Here we face the problem, that most libraries at the beginning of the year have allocated nearly 100% of their funds to the day to day operations and services which means that there are little if any space for decisions during the course of the year. In the rapid changing environment of electronic publishing this is a very dangerous thing to do.

Secondly libraries are not prepared to cash in the savings offered by not handling the print edition of the journals. Their work procedures are still centred around the physical document, staff are not trained in handling electronic documents etc. Therefore many libraries are reluctant in entering consortia agreements especially where publishers impose payments for off-consortia delivery of documents, either in electronic or paper format.

Thirdly there will often be investments to be made in local - consortium based - central hardware set up, mounting of data, development of interfaces, administration of access etc. However those problems are precisely to be solved not by the single library but in co-operation between the participating libraries.

A forward oriented strategy for taking advantage of consortia licensing

Given that no additional funding is available, libraries will have to change strategy and implement a number of changes in order to fight the current crisis and at the same time take advantage of the new opportunities offered by scientific publishing and consortia licensing.

It is a common feature these days that national library authorities or university agencies establish programmes such as Electronic Libraries Programme, National Electronic Library programmes etc. Those programmes have often seed money to help libraries enter the new age by subsidising the first generation of consortia licenses or national licenses. It is in my opinion very important to stress that it is nothing but seed money - and that I so far haven't seen any signs that national

agencies or universities have committed themselves to a long term increase in their funding of academic libraries. On the contrary, the seed money is expected to pay off in the sense that it is expected that libraries will be able to provide more, better, faster and cheaper services for less money in the future. What is expected is nothing but that libraries be able to change themselves and reengineer their services and operations in such a way that they meet user expectations better for less money.

The question is: how can this be done?

The answer to this simple question is quite simple too. The library must - in co-operation with other libraries - develop and implement a strategy consisting of a combination of the following features:

Funds have to be made available from the library budget. This can be done the following way: Firstly reduce the library "paper work" - that is whenever there is an electronic edition of a journal, the library will not handle the printed version. This is meant very literally. The printed edition will not be registered, bar coded and made shelf ready: the printed edition will be non-existent in the library. This means that internal work procedures have to change accordingly.

Secondly prepare an adjustment of staff numbers - the reduction of the "paper work" must be followed by reducing the staff involved in those operations. What is suggested here is really, that you up front cash in the cost savings by not providing *both* print and electronic versions of specific journals

Thirdly invest in education and training for the staff to perform new work processes.

The library management must invest significant efforts in building consortia with other libraries in the region, on the national and international level. The available funds from the above manoeuvres can be used for buying access to electronic journals and databases.

Establish co-operation with other libraries in building local hardware set-ups and interfaces that can handle large amounts of databases and electronic journals. Groups of libraries can - if they are determined - establish digital libraries with lots and lots of content available instantly for their users.

New forms of inter-institutional co-operation and division of labour:

The above scenario requires a whole new approach to library co-operation. So far library co-operation has mainly been established in order to handle interlibrary lending and document delivery on the individual document level. The new

opportunities offered by the technological developments requires much more commitment and indeed much more ability from the management to give in on institutional autonomy in the sense that core library operations and services must be driven in co-operation with other libraries or even outsourced to other libraries.

If the libraries really want to fight the current crisis they must interact in new ways. In reality what eventually must happen is that the concept of the single - primarily - self dependent library must fade away and the larger virtual library must be in place. We have for a number of years now talked about the virtual library. Now it must be in place very quickly.

Furthermore, what we will discover is a decreasing specialisation among libraries: the purchase of whole packages of journals has the effect that a given library suddenly will be in the position where it can provide service in other scientific disciplines.

This will eventually lead to an increased competition among libraries: the above development will push the competition between libraries due to the fact that the purchase dealing with publishers can be often made in such a manner that the library can resale documents on a pay per view or pay as you go basis. As a matter of fact libraries can develop into local or regional document delivery centres on a commercial basis.

Academic libraries will not only have to co-operate in whole new ways but will also have to engage with one another in more vendor-customer like relations.

Recommendations and concluding remarks

Do not wait for seed money to facilitate development towards the electronic or hybrid library. We are living in very turbulent times where things change rapidly in our nearest environment. The commercial publishers and intermediaries offer already today their own integrated electronic libraries. If your library does not make significant progress towards making instant access for the users to a significant amount of electronic information resources, you run the risk that your university decision makers and key users will shop elsewhere for satisfaction of their information needs. Therefore it is very important that library managers take the necessary steps in paving the way towards the digital library - and that has to take place very fast.

The most important things here are making funds available for this development by reducing the library "paper work" and adjusting staff numbers involved in those processes.

Universities must change their primary operations drastically in the coming years. Conventional educational strategies are way too expensive to meet the demands for further education and lifelong learning in our societies. I cannot see any signs why libraries can avoid to change their operations drastically as well - if they want to survive.

With the developments in scientific publishing and implementation of new technologies we have a historical and unique opportunity to use technology - not to do old things differently, but for the first time to do different things.

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