DOCUMENT RESUME

ABSTRACT
            To increase a deep continuous stream of library
research, the following steps are recommended: (1) expand present
research activities in library schools, libraries, and professional
associations; (2) add evaluative measures to library "demonstrations"
set up as a part of state plans for library development; (3) sponsor
experimental programs of library service on a state-wide or
multi-state basis with evaluative techniques built in and (4)
organize a large-scale program of research aimed at evaluation of
library services. It is also recommended that a Federal Institute of
Library and Information Science be established within the Office of
the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. The proposed
institute would have several responsibilities: (1) conduct research
into the changing needs of information users and the effectiveness of
libraries and information systems meeting these needs, (2) undertake
research, development, and prototype application of all types of new
technology as they relate to library and information science
activities and (3) assume the system engineering and technical
direction responsibilities for the design and implementation of an
integrated national library information system. (MF)

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/USA/

RESEARCH IN LIBRARIANSHIP IN THE U.S.A.

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RESEARCH IN LIBRARIANSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES

It is difficult to describe the status of library research in the United

States in any comprehensive way. No central office attempts to maintain a

complete, up-to-date record of research activity. The latest summary by

the Library Services Branch of the U. S. Office of Education covers the five-

year period 1959-1964. During this period 902 projects were listed in the

publication Library Research in Progress.[1] These include studies reported

by individual researchers, library schools, professional associations and

foundations. Although the editors aimed at comprehensive coverage, they

undoubtedly missed many studies through failure of the researchers to report.

Analyzing these 902 projects the editors found that they fell into

eight subject categories as follows:

Category	Percent of all Studies
Background	25%
Organization and administration	21
Technical processes	20
Resources	12
Personnel and training	8
Readers Services	7
International, comparative and foreign librarianship	6
Methods of research	1
	100%

The category "Background" includes such varied subjects as library philosophy

and goals; the history of libraries, books and publishing; and the library as a

social institution. The number of studies listed under "Organization and

Administration" reflects the current concern with the processes of planning

and evaluation at local, state, regional and national levels. The concentration

of studies in the area of "Technical Processes" is due largely to the widespread

interest in the application of automation to library problems.

Two-thirds of the 902 research projects were found to be conducted by people in academic institutions. These included degree candidates (42%), library school faculty members (10%), other faculty members (8%), and college and university librarians (7%). The remainder of the projects were carried out by people in a variety of other agencies--federal and state government departments, public libraries, research organizations and library associations.

A total of $8,730,036 was invested in these 902 research projects, and more than half of this money came from the federal government. The amounts coming from various sources were as follows:

Source	Amount Spent
Federal Government	$ 4,451,810
Council on Library Resources	2,941,872
Other private foundations	973,810
Professional associations	108,475
State library agencies	75,189
Institutions of higher education	40,400
Miscellaneous	128,480

The federal government total is made up of contributions from several agencies:

National Science Foundation	$ 2,051,958
U.S. Office of Education	1,312,508
National Institutes of Health	536,668
Department of Defense	352,000
Other federal government agencies	208,676

What changes took place in this pattern between 1965 and 1970 can only be surmised in the absence of any similar analysis by the Office of Education. Since the amount of federal money available for library research

increased, presumably more research projects were undertaken. Interest

in library automation and interlibrary cooperation increased, leading

undoubtedly to the popularity of research projects in these areas. Library

school enrollments rose, and more students were trained in research

techniques, particularly in those schools offering the doctorate. At the same

time commercial research organizations such as the Nelson Associates in

New York and the System Development Corporation in California entered the

library research field and obtained major research contracts.

Reflecting the growing interest in library research during the past

15 years and contributing to the progress made during this period were a

number of developments which deserve mention: 1) the establishment of

the Council on Library Resources, 2) the availability of federal funds for

library and information science research, 3) the creation of library research

institutes by a number of universities, 4) the establishment of an Office of

Research and Development by the American Library Association, and 5) the

activity of the federal government in disseminating information about research

activities.

The Council on Library Resources was established in 1956 by the

Ford Foundation "to aid in the solution of library problems." Starting out

with a grant of $5 million the Council received another $8 million from the

foundation in 1960 and an additional $5 million in 1968. In its first ten years

of operation the Council awarded 346 grants totaling approximately $8.5 million.

Projects financed by the Council have covered a wide range of problems

including paper deterioration; library automation; testing and standardization

of supplies, equipment and systems; interlibrary cooperation; cataloging;

and university library management. International library relations has been

a special interest of the Council, and a former IFLA President (Sir Frank

Francis) now serves as the Council's Consultant on Foreign Library Development

Through the support of the Council on Library Resources library research in

the United States has been encouraged, problems in need of study have been

identified, and partial or complete solutions have been found for some of them. 2

Recognition by the federal government of the importance of library

research was one of the most significant development in the field in the 1960's.

Various federal agencies funded research programs, e.g., the Air Force

Office of Scientific Research, the National Science Foundation, the National

Library of Medicine, and the U. S. Army Engineers. The program of

broadest interest is that set up under Title II B of the Higher Education Act

of 1965. This title authorized the U. S. Office of Education to establish a

Library and Information Science Research Program. Applications for grants

under this Program could be submitted by school districts, colleges, universities,

state governments, and other public or private non-profit agencies. Two types

of projects could be supported: small projects under $10,000 and larger projects

in excess of $10,000. Small project support was designed to facilitate

exploratory research, hypothesis generation and theory building, analysis of

existing data or pilot studies which may serve as the first stage of a larger

research or demonstration activity. Applications for small project support

are administered through the Office of Education regional offices and can be

funded with minimum delay. Projects in excess of $10,000 must be approved

by the Office of Education staff in Washington. Applications for research

under this program are accepted for problems in a number of areas:

1. Education: the techniques, philosophy and scope of training
   and education for librarianship.

2. Use and users: information and reader services, goals for
   different kinds of users, variations in user patterns.

3. Organization of library and information services: administration,
   personnel, finance, and governmental relations.

4. Role of libraries and information centers in society.

5. Integration of library services in school and academic
   instructional programs.

6. Control of resources, through such means as indexing,
   classification, or abstracting; network and system planning.

7. Library technology, including physical access, reprography,
   and automation.

During the three-year period 1967-1969 Congress appropriated

$10,100,000 for this Program. Ninety-eight projects were funded at a total

cost of $8,396,258. Among projects supported were the development of an

information storage and retrieval system for biological and geological data,

the bibliographic automation of large library operations using a time-sharing

system, the identification of manpower requirements in the library and

information professions, and the construction of a decision-making model for

library network implementation in the State of Washington. Of the 98 grants

57 were made to university and college agencies (including libraries, library

schools and library research institutes), 25 to non-profit organizations and

9 to commercial research firms. The remainder went to a variety of

institutions including a public library, a city school district, a government

agency. It is anticipated that $2.2 million will be available for grants under this. Program in both 1970 and 1971.[4]

Another significant development of the 1960's was the establishment of library research centers at a number of universities, e.g., Illinois (1961), Western Reserve (1955), California (1963), Pittsburgh (1962). These centers were created as adjuncts to graduate library schools with the aim of focusing attention on applied research, recruiting staff with research capabilities, providing an atmosphere in which the conduct of research is the primary objective, and attracting funds from various granting agencies. To take one example, the Library Research Center at The Graduate School of Library Science, University of Illinois was started with an initial grant from the Illinois State Library out of its Library Services Act (federal) funds. Its original purpose was to carry out research studies on public library development problems in rural areas. Subsequently it has engaged in applied research on many kinds of library problems for a variety of sponsors. Along with its contribution to the solution of professional problems the Center has provided research experience to students in the Library School.[5]

The interest of the American Library Association in research has been expressed through the establishment of a Committee on Research, an Office of Research and Development, and a Library Research Round Table. The Committee on Research is charged with responsibility for identifying research needs, for coordinating research activities of the Association, and for recommending general program, policy and priority on matters pertaining to

research. It is expected to recommend procedures within the American
Library Association to govern the expeditious consideration of all research
projects for presentation to the Executive Board; to advise the Executive
Board on library research and development; to encourage and stimulate studies
pertinent to the different types of libraries and in the several fields of library
service; to encourage the establishment of divisional committees for the
purpose of stimulating research; to maintain liaison with all units of the
Association to insure a two-way flow of information and communication on
research. In addition to this main committee, most divisions of the
Association have created their own research committees.

The Office of Research and Development was established at the ALA
Headquarters in 1965. Its objectives were: (1) the advancement of the
theory, methods, and principles of library and information science,
                          of,
(2) the development/ as opposed to research on, library and information
resources and services, and (3) the improvement of library education,
manpower, recruitment and utilization. Its role in research was understood
to be instigative and catalytic rather than operational in the sense of conducting
research projects. The primary function of the Office of Research and
Development has been in evaluating research proposals coming from ALA
divisions and committees, securing funds to undertake projects, and locating
the proper agency to perform the actual research. The Office has been
handicapped by shortage of staff to monitor the research projects which have
been undertaken or to carry out the other objectives for which it was created.

The Library Research Round Table was established in 1968 "to contribut
toward the extension and improvement of library research; to provide public
program opportunities for describing and criticizing library research projects

and for disseminating their findings; to orient and educate ALA members concerning research techniques and their usefulness in obtaining information with which to reach administrative decisions and solve problems." The chief activity of the Round Table is sponsoring meetings at conferences of the American Library Association.[6]

A final development worth noting is the creation by the federal government of a system for disseminating information about library research. The first step in this direction was the publication by the Library Services Branch of the U.S. Office of Education of Library Research in Progress. This monthly listing of research projects was issued from 1959 through 1964. In 1966 the Office of Education inaugurated the Educational Resources Informatic Center (ERIC) to make the results of educational research available on an up-to-date basis at nominal cost. In addition to a central office in Washington, D. C., there is a network of 21 clearinghouses throughout the country. The ERIC Clearinghouse for Library and Information Sciences located at the American Society for Information Science in Washington, D. C. collects and abstracts reports of studies in the field on a comprehensive basis. Documents acquired by this and the other 20 clearinghouses in the ERIC system are abstracted in Research in Education which is published monthly by the Government Printing Office. Copies of most of the documents listed may be obtained from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service in either microfiche or hard copy.

In spite of the progress made since 1955 many librarians feel that library research in the United States exhibits serious shortcomings. These

alleged shortcomings involve the amount of research done, the quality of the

work, the lack of attention to certain major problems, and the absence of

planning and coordination.

It is apparent that the total amount of research carried on is inadequate

to the needs of the profession. Libraries of all kinds are faced with the

urgent need to adapt their services to rapidly changing conditions in American

society. Yet they lack the data to make intelligent decisions about alternative

courses of action. Research could remedy this situation, but too little of it

is done. Why? Various reasons have been mentioned. Busy librarians lack

time for research. Many of them are not sensitive to research needs and

possibilities. Library schools have not trained their students in research

techniques or encouraged them to cultivate a critical attitude toward their

work. Library administrators discourage staff members from raising

questions about accepted practices. Funds for support of research are

insufficient. All these factors undoubtedly contribute to the problem.

Writing in 1967 a library school faculty member (Professor Philip

Ennis of the University of Chicago Graduate Library School) characterized

library research in the United States as "noncumulative, fragmentary,

generally weak and relentlessly oriented to immediate practice."[7] In

amplification of his criticism he pointed out that good research studies are

often ignored rather than being used as a basis for further research; in the

absence of continuing work on major problems it is impossible to build up a

body of generalized knowledge in any area. The fragmentary nature of current

research is illustrated, in his opinion, by reference to the library survey.

Many surveys are conducted to assess strengths and weaknesses of library

programs, but each survey is carried out in isolation. Since surveys differ

in content and method, there can be no comparisons among libraries and no

general understanding of how and why libraries vary in their resources and

services.

The same critic feels that many studies are too poorly done to yield

useful results. Common defects are unsatisfactory sampling techniques,

under-conceptualized study designs, primitive measuring instruments, and

studies conducted on too small a scale to permit generalization. These

criticisms reflect inadequacies in the training and competence of those

undertaking research in the field. The criticism that research is too much

oriented to immediate, practical needs is one on which not all librarians agree.

Some feel that applied research is exactly what is needed, and that unless

studies focus on specific problem situations they are of limited value. Others

believe that basic research is what the profession needs most, and that

preoccupation with immediate concerns will not yield solutions to long-range

problems. The answer is, presumably that both kinds of research are needed

and should be encouraged.

Some advocates of basic research believe that the profession of

librarianship simply does not have at the present time sufficient research

capacity to permit rapid expansion of research activities and, will therefore,

have to rely upon the social sciences for experienced personnel. This presents

difficulties because the social scientists are preoccupied with other research

concerns and because they are normally not interested in the kind of studies

of operations and analyses of particular institutions that many librarians think

should be done.

Some critics of the present status of library research believe that

library schools are not contributing to the field as they should. Many of

the schools apparently attach little importance to research; only a handful

of the accredited schools offer the doctorate. A large proportion of the studies

undertaken by library school students, moreover, are historical or

bibliographical and alledgedly contribute little to an understanding of current

problems. Many library educators believe, however, that the schools should

not be expected to carry the burden of doing research for the profession. The

most to be expected of them is stimulation and training of students. Dissertations,

they feel, should be regarded not so much as contributions to knowledge as

instruments for training in research methods.

Proposals for improving the status of library research have come

from several sources--the American Library Association, library schools,

social scientists and the National Advisory Commission on Libraries. At the

insistence of large numbers of its members the American Library Association

is re-examining its entire structure and program with the assistance of a high-

level group called the "Activities Committee on New Directions for ALA."

This Committee has recognized the importance of library research and has

recommended that the American Library Association assume a more active role

in this area.[8]   To quote from the Committee's __Final Report:__

> "Much research on the problems of effective library service
> must be conducted during the next two decades. The ALA must
> assume a role of positive leadership in this area. In particular,
> ALA should assume the functions of (a) establishing priorities
> for research, (b) soliciting funds for conducting significant
> research proposals, (c) evaluating prospective agencies and
> individuals to carry out these proposals, (d) monitoring the
> studies while in process; and (e) evaluating and distributing the
> results.
>
> The Committee recommends that the essential role of planning
> and research in the Association's responsibilities be recognized
> by the following:
>
> 1) The Office of Research and Development should be expanded
> with additional staff having special competence in the area of
> research. This would enable ALA to take an active role of
> leadership in the development of research in Library Science.
>
> 2) The present Library Research Round Table should be expanded
> to become a Round Table on Planning and Research in order to
> give libraries concerned with both of these activities an opportunity
> for interaction.
>
> 3) Long-range studies should be made of the feasibility of
> further expanding the Office of Research and Development to
> include staff to actually perform some research at ALA
> headquarters.

In a similar vein the Council of the American Library Association at

its meeting in Detroit in June, 1970 adopted a statement of policy on Library

Education and Manpower which included the following admonition to library

schools: "Research has an important role to play in the educational process

as a source of new knowledge both for the field of librarianship in general

and for library education in particular. In its planning, budgeting, and

organizational design, the library school should recognize research, both

theoretical and applied, as an imperative responsibility."

As long ago as 1948 Bernard Berelson, then Dean of the Chicago

Graduate Library School, made several important suggestions for improving

the state of library research. He advocated more planning of research

programs as a corrective for the excessively fragmentary nature of research

activity; this could be achieved, he felt, by having library school faculties

prepare general statements of long-range research programs within which

framework students and faculty could work on specific interrelated research

projects. He also urged the appointment of full-time research associates

in library schools and the establishment of a "research service bureau" at

the American Library Association headquarters.

More recently Professor Philip Ennis, the critic of library research

quoted above, has made a number of suggestions for improvement: (1) library

educators and administrators must develop a greater commitment to research.

This means presumably that they must devote more time and money to the

encouragement of research in their own institutions; (2) library schools must

recruit researchers and build research programs. In selecting faculty members

they must appoint not only librarians interested in research but also non-library

specialists who are willing to share academic chairs in their own fields of

psychology, linguistics, economics, sociology, and information science with

a library commitment; (3) library schools must concentrate on basic research

and resist pressures to service the profession by devising solutions to

immediate problems; (4) provide personnel in school and public libraries

and in large library systems who are trained and committed to research at the operational level; (5) organize seminars of a month's duration or longer bringing together senior library administrators and researchers to discuss specific topics (the INTREX conference sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is a good example); (6) concentrate on a program of basic research devoted to problems in three general areas: (a) measurement of library performances, (b) the users of print, and (c) the organization of knowledge.

A third group of proposals came out of a seminar held at Rutgers University in 1964-65 in which practicing librarians, social scientists and library school faculty members met to discuss research on library service in metropolitan areas.[9] The group recognized that "there is no deep, continuous stream of scholarship in this profession." To increase research activity the following steps were suggested: (1) Set as a major goal the expansion of present research activity in library schools, libraries and professional associations, (2) add evaluative measures to library "demonstrations" set up as a part of state plans for library development, (3) sponsor experimental programs of library service on a state-wide or multi-state basis with evaluative techniques built in, (4) organize a large-scale program of research aimed at evaluation of library service; under the direction of a social scientist experienced in research, with an advisory group of researchers from such disciplines as education, planning, sociology, political science, history and economics, this program should extend over a five year period and result in six or eight publications; liaison with the library profession should be maintained by means of seminars of 25 librarians from various segments of the profession meeting with the social scientists every two or three months.

The National Advisory Commission on Libraries was established by the President in 1965 to study the role of libraries in American society and to recommend ways of improving library service. In its report, presented in 1968, the Commission recognized research as one of the principal ways in which the level of library service can be raised. One of its five recommendations is the "establishment of a Federal Institute of Library and Information Science as a principal center for basic and applied research in all relevant areas."[10]

The proposed Institute would have several reponsibilities: (1) conduct research into the changing needs of information users and the effectiveness of libraries and information systems in meeting these needs, (2) undertake research, development, and prototype application of all types of new technology as they relate to library and information science activities, and (3) assume the system engineering and technical direction responsibilities for the design and implementation of an integrated national library and information system. Its program, according to the Commission, should be built on a foundation of basic research efforts directed toward better tools for the analysis of library and information requirements, quantitative measures for judging the value of existing systems and services, and an understanding of the relative value of various information transfer media and of the role of interactive systems.

Supported by such basic investigations, the major research and development activities of the program should aim to improve library work through: (1) applications of new technology for purposes of saving labor, improving speed and accuracy, maximizing convenience and dependability,

reducing costs, and performing tasks previously impossible, (2) more effective
devices for organizing, storing, transmitting, displaying, and copying
information; (3) more effective organization of manpower and service units;
(4) better understanding of the theoretical foundations of library work and
of the storage, organization, and communication of knowledge, (5) understanding,
based on comprehensive studies of both users and non-users of libraries, of
their library requirements and also of the reasons for non-use; and (6) the
resolution of legal problems, such as those relating to the photocopying of
copyrighted material.

  It is recommended that the new Institute be established within the
Office of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

FOOTNOTES

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