

Library Self-surveys

図書館の自己調査

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要 旨

図書館の目的は、その図書館の利用者の要求を満たすためにサービスを行なうことであり、そのためには、利用者の要求を子細に知っている必要がある。

図書館調査の主要な目的は、その図書館が設立の目的をいかによく具現しているかを見出すことと、無駄を省いて効果的に業務を行なっているかどうかを見るためである。

図書館の自己調査は、その館員によって行なわれる調査で、かなり長期間にわたる場合と比較的短期間に完了する場合がある。

図書館調査報告は3つの主要な部分から成り立っている：1) その図書館の目的、機能、方針、人事組織、業務規定、蔵書、施設設備、およびサービスについての基本的な現状調査、2) その図書館の潜在利用者をもふくめた利用者のコミュニティ、実際の利用者とその利用状況に関する徹底的な調査、3) は1)と2)の調査によって集められたデータの客観的な分析、および必要に応じ図書館の方針、業務規定、蔵書、施設設備、サービス、人事などについて改善策の策定。

本文では図書館調査実施上のチェックリストを用意して、各項目ごとに必要に応じて解説を加えているが、基本調査と利用者の要求調査によって得られたデータごとに分析検討するほか、図書館の蔵書とその利用状況との関係、利用者の関心・要求と図書館資料の利用状況との関係、図書館資料と利用者の関心・要求との関係を比較検討し、蔵書および利用者とその利用に関しての主要カテゴリーの決定に関して吟味しなければならないとし、さらに調査結果が望んでいたようなものであったかどうかを考察し、改善方策検討の必要を論じている。

このような総合的な図書館調査は、軽々に行なわれるべきものではなく、またそう何度も行なわれるものではない。しかし、一旦調査が行なわれれば、その図書館の発展計画実施上の基礎として役立つであろう。部分的な調査なら、ある期間をおいて実施することにより、その図書館が利用者の要求にできる限り効果的に応えているかどうかを確認することができる。(Y. A.)

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I. Introduction

The sole purpose of any library is to serve the needs of its authorized users, often called the library's community. In order to do this effectively it is necessary to know in some detail what these needs are. These needs, of course, are themselves dependent on the purpose and needs of the parent organization to which the library belongs, so it follows that any library, to be effectively useful, must gear its resources, its services, its facilities, and its staff to the purpose of its parent organization whether this be a school, a university, an industry, a city, or a government agency.

One of the primary objectives of a library survey is to find out how well the particular library is serving the purpose for which it was established. (Another objective would be to find operations or services that could be stream-lined, tightened up, or even eliminated.)

A library survey, therefore, must begin with a clear statement and understanding of the purpose of the library as determined by the purpose of the parent organization. A survey must include a comprehensive study of the library's community, their interests and their needs, and of the actual use they make of the library. It must also include a comprehensive study of the library's resources, services, facilities, and staff.

A self-survey is one which is made by the library's own staff and may be made over an extended period of time, one part following another, or it may be made in a relatively short "crash program" provided that long-term records and adequate personnel are both readily available.

There are three major parts of a library

survey. One is the basic study of the library's purpose, function, policy, personnel organization, procedures, resources, facilities, and service, the total inventory so to speak, of what actually exists to serve the library's community. Another part is a thorough study of the library's community and of the use the users actually make of the library. The third part, then, is an objective analysis of the data and a list of relevant recommendations to improve (if necessary) and to up-date (if required) the library's policy, procedures, resources, facilities, and staff in accordance with its intended purpose.

II. Checklist: Existing conditions in the library

- A. Administrative matters: should be covered in a library manual, preferably loose-leaf for ease in keeping up to date
 1. Directive from the parent organization on the intended purpose of the library, based on the objectives of the parent organization itself
 2. Statement on the functions of the library to fulfill its purpose
 3. Policy: determined by the chief librarian in accordance with the policy of the parent organization and in consultation, perhaps, with an advisory library committee
 - a. On authorized users: all those eligible to use the library including those who are not members of the parent organization
 - b. On selection of materials to be acquired: (1) criteria for selection including level, kinds, languages, forms, etc.; (2) authorization for recommen-

- dations and for acquisition
- c. On services to be offered: standard, specialized, ad hoc (may or may not be spelled out at this point; see "D" below)
 - d. On access to the resources and services: working hours, open shelves, assistance and training in use of the library, etc.
 - e. On use of the resources and services: in the library, on loan outside the library (regular, overnight, interlibrary)
 - f. On other matters: role of the chief librarian, role of the advisory committee, records to be maintained, weeding of the collection, accountability, status of the professional library staff, budget, planning, etc.
4. Personnel: staff organization, staff development program, staff benefits, schedules, leave, salary plan, promotions, duties, job descriptions, performance standards, evaluation, recruitment, selection (qualifications desired), etc.
 5. Procedures to run the library
 - a. Operational routines: selection, acquisition, processing, loan, services, maintenance, etc.
 - (1) Purpose and inter-relationship of each one
 - (2) Step-by-step description of each one
 - (3) Flow chart of all operations
 - b. Special projects: operations to be spelled out as in "a"
 - c. Administrative routines: staff meetings, staff selection, communication (with staff, with parent administration, with users, with suppliers, with community, with other libraries), correspondence, telephone, office matters, etc.
- B. Library resources actually available**
1. Material: books, journals, pamphlets, theses, microforms, etc.
 - a. Books: by subject (class), language, and date; in numbers and in percents of total book holdings, by individual titles and by duplicate copies
 - b. Journals: by subject, country, and holding; current and back files, in numbers and in percents of total journal acquisitions
 - c. Other material: by subject, form, and date
 2. Library staff: number, qualifications, experience, etc.
 3. Equipment: kind, make, date; for public use and for staff use
 4. Other resources
- C. Library facilities to use the resources: should be spotted on a library floor plan for ease in locating**
1. For access to the resources: card catalogs (author, subject, title, classified—for books, journals, other material), open stacks (if closed, method of access to the material), current periodicals area, bibliographical tools area, location of major subject materials, etc.
 2. For reading and study: tables (single and multiple-seat), carrels (study cubicles), special shelving arrangements (for textbooks, reserve collection, reference books, bound journals), public areas, staff area, etc.
 3. For reference and research: alcoves, shelf-top tables, interlibrary loan, seminar rooms, research carrels, special collections (maps, theses, government publications, rare books)
 4. For browsing and recreational reading: newspaper racks, lounge-chair areas, smoking area (if any), etc.
 5. Microform readers and printers
 6. Photocopy: procedures, fees
 7. Work space and facilities for library staff use
 8. Water, light, ventilation, wash rooms, lifts, telephones, Telex, parking (car, bicycle), canteen (if any), etc.
- D. Library services to help users: should be well publicized**

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1. Standard: loan, reference, referral, inter-library loan, user handbook, location guides, assistance in using library or resources (individually or in groups), regulations (may be separate or part of user handbook), etc.
2. Special: announcement publications (accession list, weekly journal-arrival list), book or journal circulation to members of the parent organization, textbook bank, seminar (departmental) collections, documentation services including selective dissemination of information, etc. NB: Most of these have come to be considered "standard" in many libraries.
3. Ad hoc: literature search, bibliography compilation, book purchase for individuals, etc. NB: Also may be "standard."

III. Checklist: Community, users, and use (from records, personal interviews, and individual information profile sheets)

- A. Community (potential users): all those eligible to use the library
 1. Categories: numbers, percents, location, etc.
 2. Interests (by groups): professional, geographical, hobby, recreational, etc.
 3. Information needs (by groups): kinds, levels, languages, urgency, etc.
 4. Expectations (by groups): regular and special library resources and services
 5. Capabilities (individual): special subject competence, area or language knowledge, do own literature searches, willing to advise on library matters, etc.
- B. Users
 1. Library members (registered borrowers): by category, number, percent
 2. Actual users: by category, number, percent, frequency, specific use
- C. Use: during a specific period (calendar year, quarter, month, academic session, etc.)
 1. Categories (books, journals, other ma-

terial): by subject class, journal title and date, language (if desired), numbers, percents, users (by kind, frequency, individual amount)

2. Seasonal, daily, hourly (if desired): numbers of persons
3. In library, on loan (regular, special), etc.
4. Services, facilities (by individuals, groups)

IV. Analysis, discussion, and recommendations

A point-by-point analysis and discussion should be made (if they seem to be called for) of every check-listed item in the inventory and user parts of the survey (see II. and III. above). The following comparisons and analyses should be covered somewhere in this same section of the survey report.

- A. Comparison of [actual use (III. C.) with resources (II. B. 1.)

Since the proportions of the total book holdings and of the total book use have been determined for specific subject classes, it is possible to determine "use factors" for as many subjects as desired. This use factor is the ratio of the actual use of books in a particular subject class to the holdings of books available for use in that subject class, both expressed as percentages of the respective totals (i.e., total book use during the survey period and total book holdings available during this period).

A use factor of 1.0 indicates that the use and the holdings are proportional, more or less what might be expected or hoped for. A use factor of less than 1.0 indicates that the use was less intensive than the collection was prepared to support, and a use factor of more than 1.0 indicates more intensive use than might have been expected or planned for.

For example, suppose that a library has 10,000 volumes of books in its general collection all spread evenly over the D.C. subject classes (to make the calculation simple) with 1,000 volumes in each of the ten classes. In this library each major class accounts for 10 percent

of the total book holdings.

During the survey period suppose that the total circulation of books came to 1,000 spread rather unevenly over the D. C. classes—300 (30 percent) in literature (800's), 200 (20 percent) in social sciences (300's), 100 (10 percent) in applied sciences (600's), 75 (7.5 percent) in pure sciences (500's), 50 (5 percent) in arts (700's), 25 (2.5 percent) in philosophy (100's), and the rest (250) scattered in the other subject fields.

The use factors for these broad subject classes during that survey period may easily be calculated: literature—30 (percent used) divided by 10 (percent available for use), or 3.0; social sciences—20 divided by 10, or 2.0; applied sciences—10 divided by 10, or 1.0; pure sciences—7.5 divided by 10, or 0.75; arts—5 divided by 10, or 0.5; and philosophy—2.5 divided by 10, or 0.25.

It is quite evident in this hypothetical case that the intensity of use of the books in literature was rather high while the intensity of use of the books in philosophy was rather low. There may, of course, be very good reasons for these results, but on the face of it it looks as if the collection is not well balanced, perhaps because it had been built up over some years without enough regard for the interests and needs of the users.

Use factors may be determined for as specific a subject class as desired, but remember that the breakdowns made of the compiled data on the holdings and on the use must be equally as specific in the very beginning on the study.

In an academic library it is likely that there will be many duplicate copies of the important titles in certain subjects depending on the teaching and research program of the institution. All copies, of course, would be available for use, so the number of books (rather than the number of titles) is the figure to be used in determining the use factors of subjects in such a general collection.

Similarly, a library's reference collection is likely to have a number of multiple-volume sets all volumes of which, again, would be available for use, so the number of books (volumes available would again be the proper figure to

use in determining use factors in such a collection. In either case, depending on the time and the personnel available to collect the needed data, it would be possible to determine the use of specific titles and hence use factors of the subject by titles as well as by volumes of books.

In the same way use factors may be determined for other special collections in the library, such as textbook bank, reserve books, or pamphlets, and for various kinds of use, such as in-library, overnight, or interlibrary, of the general collection or of the special collections.

The smaller the library's collection the more important it is that the collection be up to date, and in a technical library it becomes very essential that the collection be quite timely. A breakdown of the library's subject holdings by date (say in 5-year periods) will be useful to show which subjects need weeding and/or up-dating and may, in fact, furnish clues as to why certain subjects were used less intensively than might have been expected or planned for; that is, their use factors were found to be considerably less than 1.0. To be sure, older books, per se, are not necessarily out-dated but their existence in the library should be known and, indeed, justified.

B. Comparison of actual use (III. B/C) with reported interests and needs (III. A. 2/3)

Assuming that the library is able to compile information profiles on its users and to index them by subject, it is possible to compare the reported interests with actual use by individual library users. Any great discrepancy between the two should be investigated, accounted for if possible, and remedied.

C. Comparison of reported interests and needs (III. A. 2/3) with resources (II. B. 1)

As in B (above) any great discrepancy between the two should be investigated and remedied. Obviously, the librarian over the years had been building up the collection in response to the needs and interests of his community and had been keeping alert to changes in these needs and interests as time went on, there should be no unaccounted for big difference between the

interests and needs and either the resources or the actual use.

D. Determination of major categories (by subject and type) of resources (II. B. 1), use (III. C), and users (III. B)

1. *Journals*. Not only the book collection but also the journal collection should be thoroughly examined.

For example, a chart may be prepared showing the subject areas covered by journals being currently received from various countries of the world. Such a chart will show which subjects are adequately covered and which are not, and which countries have been furnishing journals in which subjects. It should also then give rise to a number of questions, such as the following ones:

- a. Are *all* these subjects of importance to the users of this library? are they all adequately covered?
- b. Are *other* subjects also important?
- c. Are *all* these countries doing work that is of interest to the users of this library? are they all adequately represented?
- d. Are *other* countries doing work that is of interest?
- e. Are these the *best*—or the *only*—journals in these fields?
- f. Should all of them be bound and retained in the library?
- g. Should complete back files be kept (or acquired) of any of them? if not complete, how far back should the files go?

Total journal use in the library (current issues, back files) as well as on loan (if permitted) should be analyzed, to determine, among other facts:

- a. Those titles that are used (consulted, borrowed) the most,
- b. Those titles that are used the least,
- c. How indexing and abstracting journals are used,

and then questions such as the following should be asked:

- a. Of those used the most: are extra copies needed? are more complete back files needed? do they reflect the major interests (teaching, research, literary, recrea-

tional) of the library's users? who, and which group, makes most use of them? why are certain periodicals (general or popular, for example) used so much? (The answer to this last question may be that certain areas in the book collection are weak and need to be strengthened.) etc.

- b. Of those used the least: are these, then, really needed? are they properly publicized? who selected them in the first place and are these persons using them? if not, why not? should present holdings of these titles be kept or be discarded (sold? exchanged? sent elsewhere?)? does language of publication affect use? etc.
- c. Of the indexing and abstracting journals: (in addition to the questions asked in "a" and "b" above) are other journals (both primary and secondary) needed? does use justify cost? is translation service becoming necessary? is photocopy service likely to become necessary? etc.

In a similar way, other types of resources should be examined.

2. *Use/users*. Major categories of use probably will vary according to the proportions of various elements in the user community. So the relationship between the library's community and the library's use should be looked at rather carefully to determine if all community groups are being given service commensurate with their interests and their needs, *not*, as so often happens, commensurately only with their importance and status.

A technical library's community, for instance, is often assumed to be made up entirely of technically trained and technically motivated library users, whereas in actual fact it probably also includes a sizeable proportion of administrative staff, of editorial staff, and even of families of all the groups. These, too, should be accommodated in the library. The library's policy will have to take them into account partly because of their numbers and their significance in the overall purpose of the community and partly because of the possible relative isolation of the community with res-

pect to other types of libraries and library services.

Other relationships between use and users should also be studied and more questions should be asked. For example :

- a. Why are some groups using the library so little? is the collection weak—or out of date—in the areas of their interests and needs? do they know what the library has in their areas of interests? do they have access to other resources—their own, or pooled collections, or more conveniently located collections? does the library adequately publicize itself and its services? is the library at fault or deficient in other ways? how can the library attract and encourage greater use, assuming it is felt that it should? do these “little users” really need a library in the first place?
- b. Are the major users getting the service they need or would like? does the library need more resources in the areas of their interests or more staff to give more specialized service? do these users appreciate the service they are getting and do they express their appreciation to the library staff and to the appropriate officers of the parent organization? etc.

- E. Are the results of the survey the ones that were hoped for? are they desirable? were they intended?

Answers to these questions depend not only on the stated purpose of the library but also on how seriously both the parent administration and the library staff are concerned about the matter. And this latter factor may be the most crucial one of all.

- F. Recommendations: What, if anything, needs to be done to improve the library in any way to make it more effective in serving the purpose for which it was intended. These may come in the report wherever they seem appropriate.

V. L'envoi

Obviously such a comprehensive survey must not be taken lightly and can not be undertaken often. But once done, it will serve as a solid base on which the development of the library can be planned and carried out. Partial surveys may be made at intervals of, say, 5 years, or as often as any seem required to ensure that the library and the library staff are continuing to serve the needs of its users as effectively and as efficiently as they possibly can.