EVENTOS

LOS RETOS DE LA CALIDAD:
Primeras Jornadas Universitarias de calidad y bibliotecas

Assessing the value of academics libraries
Assessing the value of academic libraries

Dr. Roswitha Poll
Münster
Mission of academic libraries

The library orients its range of services consequently according to ...

- the needs of its clientele and
- the strategic goals of the institution,
- and actively promotes its services.

- Information supply
  collection building, lending, document delivery
- Information production
  metadata, publishing, archiving
- Support for teaching and learning
  library as place, information literacy training
- Effective management
  staff development, adequate management methods, cooperation
Goals of universities

- recruitment and retention of students
- effective teaching
- effective research
Performance indicators for these goals

recruitment and retention of students
- number of students, of these foreign
- high retention rates

effective teaching
- high graduation rates
- high grades in examinations
- high employment rates of graduates
Performance indicators for these goals

**effective research**
- frequent use of research publications
- high renown of researchers
- high amount of special grants
- awards, honours

Does the library support these goals?
Quality in libraries

Services are
- user-oriented
- reliable
- quick
- accessible
- easy to use

Staff is
- competent
- helpful

Processes are
- streamlined
- cost-effective
Quality assessment in libraries

Performance indicators
measure the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of library services: quantitative, objective

User satisfaction surveys
measure the perceived quality, the users’ impression of library services: qualitative, subjective

Outcome assessment
tries to show benefits, value for individual users and society
ISO 11620: Library performance indicators
Structure: Balanced Scorecard

- Resources, access, infrastructure
- Use
- Efficiency
- Potentials and development
ISO 11620

Indicators for traditional services

resources, access, infrastructure

- shelving accuracy
- median time of document delivery from closed stacks

use

- collection turnover
- loans per capita
- in-library use per capita

efficiency

- cost per loan

potentials, development
Indicators for "hybrid" services

ISO 11620

resources, access, infrastructure
• percentage of required titles in the collection
• speed of interlibrary lending

use
• library visits per capita (including virtual visits)
• user attendances at training lessons per capita
• percentage of population reached
• user satisfaction

efficiency
• cost per library visit
• cost per user
• median time of document acquisition
• median time of document processing
• correct answer fill rate

potentials, development
• attendances at training lessons per staff member
Indicators for electronic services

ISO 11620

- percentage of rejected sessions
- public access workstations per capita

- number of content units downloaded per capita
- percentage of information requests submitted electronically
- workstation use rate

- cost per database session
- cost per content unit downloaded

- percentage of expenditure on information provision spent on the electronic collection
- percentage of library staff providing and developing electronic services

resources, access, infrastructure

use

efficiency

potentials, development
ISO TR 28118 Performance indicators for National Libraries

Additional indicators for

- collecting the national documentary heritage
- creating the national bibliography
- preservation
- digitization
- international cooperation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print questionnaire in the library</td>
<td>High recall</td>
<td>Only active users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire by mail to a sample of potential users</td>
<td>Non-users are included</td>
<td>Less recall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone survey</td>
<td>High recall by direct contact</td>
<td>Time-consuming; may be influenced by the interviewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online survey (e.g. in connection with OPAC use)</td>
<td>No distribution needed</td>
<td>Bias on users who frequently use E-services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
User satisfaction surveys

SERVQUAL model
Adapted to libraries by ARL (Association of Research Libraries) as LibQual

Gaps model
Asking for:
- minimum expectation
- perceived levels
- desired levels

http://www.libqual.org
Input – Processes – Output – Impact/Outcome

**Input**
- funding
- staff
- collections
- space
- equipment

**Processes**
- Preparing products and services

**Output**
- loans
- visits
- downloads
- reference transactions

**Impact/Outcome**
"Outcomes are the results of library use as affecting the individual user."

Don Revill

"Outcomes are the ways in which library users are changed as a result of their contact with the library's resources and programs."

ACRL
Impact/outcome of libraries

- knowledge
- information
- academic
- social inclusion
- life-long learning
- individual well-being

changes in skills, competences, attitudes, behaviour
The pyramid of outcomes

**Change in behaviour**

**Change in attitudes, opinions**

**Cognitive Impacts (knowledge acquisition)**

**Short-term effects**
- problems solved
- information gained
- time saved

**Long-term effects**
- improved information literacy
- better academic / professional success
Problems of assessing outcome

- Data may not be available because of data protection rules
- Results of projects are not comparable because of different data collection methods
- Long-term effects cannot be assessed as persons are no longer available
- Influences on individuals are manifold
- All tested methods are time-consuming
Methods for assessing impact/outcome of libraries

- **Statistics of usage**
  - changes in user groups, in the use of specified services

- **Sociological methods**
  - Surveys
  - Interviews
  - Focus groups, discussion groups
  - Self-assessment

The "anecdotal evidence" supports data
Methods for assessing impact/outcome of libraries

- **Quantitative methods**
  - tests assessing user skills before and after training on a service
  - observation
  - data mining
  - correlation between library use and success

**Problem:**
Library influences are difficult to distinguish from others
User satisfaction as outcome measure?

"Satisfaction on the part of a user is an outcome. So is dissatisfaction."

A change of behaviour? Rather a basis for such change

ACRL

Jennifer Cram
Correlation of library use and academic success

Library use, expressed by
- Frequency (loans, visits)
- Range of services used (reference service, user training, ILL)
- Range of collections used (undergraduate collection, E-journals, special material)

Success, expressed by
- Quick examination
- Grades in exams
- Student retention
- Employment rate after exam
- Quality of publications (impact factor, peer-review journals)
The library's impact on information literacy

Outcome of a specific training or series of trainings

- surveys after instruction
- pretest / posttest
- self-assessment of users
- behavioural observation
- assessing changes in students' bibliographies
Example of "mini-quiz"

**Tests**

**Students …**

- are aware of options to get material not available locally
  - Results: 90 %

- can recognise a Web address, a book citation, a serial citation, and a call number
  - Results: 90 %

- know how to use the operators AND and OR
  - Results: 50 %

- know the difference between primary and secondary sources
  - Results: 57 – 90 %

- know the difference between popular and scholarly journals
  - Results: 90 %

- think library skills will be useful in their chosen profession
  - Results: 77 %
Examples of questions

Please rate your confidence as follows (1=very confident  5=not confident)

1. Using an online catalogue to look up books
   1  2  3  4  5

2. Finding books on the shelf using call numbers
   1  2  3  4  5

3. Using a database to find periodical articles
   1  2  3  4  5

4. Writing a correct citation in a bibliography
   1  2  3  4  5

5. Finding sources on a specific topic on the Internet
   1  2  3  4  5

6. Evaluating an Internet source (authority, bias)
   1  2  3  4  5

Problem:
Self-assessment may be too optimistic
Importance of the local library for research

1. **Percentage of material cited** in academic publications that was (could have been) retrieved via the local library.
   - Citations in:
     - dissertations
     - student papers
     - publications of a faculty

2. **Estimated percentage of the information needed** for a publication / paper / report found via the local library
   - questionnaire/interview after publication
Citations in 20 dissertations are analyzed as to availability in the local library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citations</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>% available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monographs</td>
<td>3111</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal articles</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where did you get the literature?</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch libraries</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessing impact

The financial value of libraries

Assessing time costs (replacement value of a client's time)

Users invest time and effort in order to use library services. The value that they or their institution place on that use must be at least as high as their "sacrifice" of time. (Costs are calculated by time and average salary)

Using the contingent valuation method

Willingness-to-pay

What would users pay for the maintenance of a service?

Willingness-to-accept

Which sum would users accept as equivalent for the deletion of a service?

For every £1 of public funding the British Library receives each year, £4.4 is generated for the economy.
## Possible indicators for impact

### Information literacy
- **Higher skills/competences after training**
  - Surveys
  - Tests

### Importance of the local library for research
- **Estimation of the importance**
  - Survey
- **Percentage of citations in publications in the local library collection**
  - Manual counts
  - Survey

### Academic or professional success
- **Correlation of library services use to success**
  - Use data / success data
- **Correlation of library services use to number/citation of publications**
  - Use data / Citation index
### Possible indicators for impact

#### Social inclusion
- **Estimation of the social importance of libraries**
- **Percentage of potential users in a group using the library after certain promotion activities**
  (Groups e.g. defined by age, gender, ethnic origin, education)

#### Financial value of library services
- **Estimation of time saved**
- **Willingness-to-pay**
Impact/outcome projects

**eVALUEd:** in "evidence base", University of Central England:
Toolkit for evaluating electronic information services
http://www.evalued.bcu.ac.uk/about.htm

**IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services):**
outcome-based evaluation of projects
http://www.imls.gov/index.shtm

**ARL New Measures Initiative: several projects**
- Learning outcomes
- Higher education outcomes research review
- MINES (Measuring the impact of networked electronic services)
http://www.arl.org/stats/newmeas/index.html

**SCONUL and LIRG (Library and Information Research Group):**
Impact initiative 2003 - 2005
http://vamp.diglib.shrivenham.cranfield.ac.uk/impact
Life is full of surprises