
Library Research and Statistics

Research and Statistics on Libraries and Librarianship in 2008

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This report on library research and statistics will focus again this year on four key topics: library usage, the library work force, digital repositories and their impact on libraries, and general research methods used by the profession.

Library Usage

Serving Non-English-Speakers

About 21 million people in the United States speak little or no English—50 percent more than a decade ago. This principally affects public agencies in health care and education, but affects other public agencies as well. Staff at these agencies are faced daily with someone who needs services and doesn't speak English.

"Serving Non-English Speakers in U.S. Public Libraries: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs,"¹ published in 2008 by the American Library Association (ALA), is the first national study to consider the impact of providing specialized library services to non-English-speakers as reported through anecdotal information by library staff, both in terms of barriers to developing language-based services and regarding the perceived success of these services.

The study identified three principal findings:

- Spanish is far and away the most-supported non-English language in public libraries.
- Smaller communities are serving a larger proportion of non-English speakers.
- Low-level literacy is a barrier both for non-English-speakers using library services and for libraries in providing services and programs.

The study was made possible with the support of the ALA Offices for Literacy and Outreach Services, Public Programs, and Diversity, and by the 2006

World Book/ALA Goal Grant. It was conducted for ALA by Christie M. Koontz and Dean Jue of Florida State University.

A related report, "Immigration and Diversity," in the September 2008 *American School Board Journal*, is important for those interested in the impact of immigration and demographic relocation in the United States and the impact on public education (see <http://www.asbj.com>).

Harris Poll on Public Library Usage

As America deals with a worsening economy, U.S. libraries are experiencing a dramatic increase in library card registration. According to a Harris Poll released in September, 68 percent of Americans had a library card, up 5 percent since 2006.² Survey results indicate that this was the greatest number of Americans with library cards since ALA started to measure library card usage in 1990.

In-person library visits were up 10 percent compared with a 2006 ALA household survey. Seventy-six percent of Americans had visited their local public library in the past year, compared with 65.7 percent two years ago. Online visits to libraries were up even more substantially, with 41 percent of library card holders visiting their library Web sites in the past year, compared with 23.6 percent in 2006. This finding complements ALA's 2008 Public Library Funding and Technology Access study, detailed below, which found that public libraries had significantly increased the Internet services available to their communities, including online homework help, downloadable audio and video, and e-books. Detailed findings, including regional distributions, are available at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/printerfriend/index.asp?PID=949.

Other articles discussing population segmentation and libraries include Marc Futterman's October 15 *Library Journal* article "Finding the Underserved: Close Examination Using Market Segmentation Can Reveal Useful Surprises About the People Your Library Is Leaving Behind" (<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6602835.html>), and the OCLC study "From Awareness to Funding: A Study of Library Support in America" (available at <http://www.oclc.org/reports/funding>). A study using regression analysis of the government studies "Current Population Survey 2002" and the "Public Libraries Survey 2002" is presented in an article by Sei-Ching Joanna Sin and Kyung-Sun Kim (University of Wisconsin-Madison) titled "Use and Non-Use of Public Libraries in the Information Age: A Logistic Regression Analysis of Household Characteristics and Library Services Variables" (*Library and Information Science Research (LISR)* 30(3) (2008): 207-215, DOI 10.1016/j.lisr.2007.11.008).

Funding and Technology Access Study

ALA released "Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study 2007-2008" in September 2008. Among its key findings:

- Funding data indicate libraries are relying more on non-tax funding sources.
- Free wireless access is offered by 66 percent of public libraries, up about 12 percent from the previous year.

- Nearly two-thirds of all public libraries provide 1.5 Mbps or faster Internet access speeds, with a continuing disparity between urban (90 percent) and rural libraries (51.5 percent).
- Staff at 74 percent of libraries help patrons understand and use e-government services, including enrolling in Medicare and applying for unemployment compensation.
- Nearly three-quarters (73.4 percent) of libraries provide technology training to library patrons.
- While the number of Internet computers available to the public climbed for the first time in several years, one in five libraries reports there are consistently fewer computers than patrons who wish to use them throughout the day.

This is the most current national data available on technology access and funding in U.S. public libraries. The study collected data through surveys involving more than 5,400 public libraries, a questionnaire to the chief officers of state library agencies, and focus groups and site visits in New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. To view the final report, visit <http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding>.

Funding Models and Ranking Models

Articles tackling difficult library issues—funding models and public library ranking models—were “An Argument on Why the City Should Contribute to the Library Budget in a Means Similar to Corporate Funding of R&D” by Beatrice Priestly (*Library Administration and Management* 22(3): 125–128 [Summer 2008]) and “The New *LJ* Index” by Keith Curry Lance and Ray Lyons (*Library Journal*, June 15, 2008, pp. 38–41).

Library Work Force

IMLS Study

The long-awaited national work force study funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) was completed in 2008. The study results were released at a meeting of the project advisory committee during the ALA Mid-winter Meeting in Denver. Highlighted were MLS librarian demographics (age, race, ethnicity, and so forth), evidence of career path, and attitudes toward librarianship. In addition to the data analysis, the study provides verbatim responses by librarians about their career experiences.

Among key findings were that remote Internet access has little, if any, effect on in-person visits to public libraries—people visit libraries online regardless of their level, in-person use—and that the demand for librarians is going to be significant over the next ten years. Another interesting finding was the increase in in-person library visits compared with five years ago; even libraries reporting library visits of fewer than 10,000 a year indicated increases of more than 5 percent (about 38 percent of libraries reported increases of 5 percent plus). A higher percentage of libraries (about 53 percent) with 250,000 or more in-person visits

reported increases of more than 5 percent. There is much more of interest in the study. To review specific findings, see <http://libraryworkforce.org/tiki-index.php>.

ALA-APA Salary Study

The ALA Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) coordinates an annual salary study and additional research on library workers (see <http://www.ala-apa.org/salaries/salaries.html>).

According to the 2008 salary survey, the mean salary for librarians rose to \$58,960, an increase of \$1,151 from 2007 (about 2 percent). The modest increase was half that of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the same time period, 4.0 percent (CPI, February 2008). The average salary increase of public librarians was 2.7 percent and academic librarian salaries declined in all but two positions—academic library dean/director and manager/supervisor of support staff. More information about librarian salaries is available from the report summary (<http://www.ala-apa.org/salaries/SalarySummary2008.pdf>) or from the complete study, “ALA-APA Salary Survey: Librarian-Public and Academic (Librarian Salary Survey).”

The study included supplemental questions about employee benefits. Comparison of benefits data reported in 2003 and 2008 are available in “Library Employee Benefits 2003 and 2008: A Report from the 2008 Librarian Salary Survey” by ALA-APA Director Jenifer Grady (<http://www.ala-apa.org/salaries/SalarySummary2008Benefits.pdf>). Findings in the comparison study included these:

- In the insurance group of benefits for part-time library workers, academic libraries offered more options than did public libraries.
- Both academic and public libraries offered fewer financial benefits (retirement savings, professional memberships, pension plans) than in 2003.

Job satisfaction of library information technology (IT) workers based on regression analysis of three hypotheses—background variables, work-related variables, and a combination of both—was explored by Sook Lim in “Job Satisfaction of Information Technology Workers in Academic Libraries” (*LISR* 30 [2008]: 115–121, DOI 10.1016/j.lisr.2007.10.002). Gender and salary affected job satisfaction of academic library IT staff more than any other variables. Women IT workers were more satisfied than men, and those earning more (regardless of gender) were more satisfied than those earning less.

Digital Books and Repositories

Digital books, repositories, and their impact on libraries continued to be a focus of scholarly communication in 2008. The following grouping of EDUCAUSE, Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL), and Association for Research Libraries (ARL) articles provides context and overview of the changing landscape in academic libraries. In addition, the summer 2008 issue of *Library Trends* was devoted to the topic of digital books.

- “Digital Books and the Impact on Libraries” (Peter Brantley, editor), *Library Trends* 57(1), Summer 2008
- “Advancing Scholarship and Intellectual Productivity: An Interview with Clifford A. Lynch by Brian L. Hawkins,” *EDUCAUSE Review*, May/June 2006 (<http://www.educause.edu/er/erm06/erm0622.asp>)
- “Tec(h)tonics: Reimagining Preservation” by Paul Conway, *C&RL News* 69(10), November 2008 (<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/crlnews/2008/nov/techtomics.cfm>)
- “A Steady Vision for Libraries” by James G. Neal, *EDUCAUSE Review* May/June 2008, pp. 12–13, and “Publishing Services: An Emerging Role for Research Libraries” by Karla Hahn, *EDUCAUSE Review*, November/December 2008, pp. 16–17.
- “The Need to Formalize Trust Relationships in Digital Repositories” by Fran Berman, Ardys Kozbial, Robert H. McDonald, and Brian E. C. Schottlaender, *EDUCAUSE Review* May/June 2008, pp. 10–11

The ARL resources on digital repositories, including a SPEC Kit (SPEC Kit 292, ARL, July 2006) are online at <http://www.arl.org/sc/models/repositories/index.shtml>.

General Research Methods

Some interesting general methodology articles and books should be mentioned. The fourth edition of *Designing Qualitative Research* by Catherine Marshall (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and Gretchen B. Rossman (University of Massachusetts–Amherst) (SAGE, 2006) is a useful primer and presents information in sequence from hypothesis/purpose through resource allocation.

Issue 30 of *LISR* provides a number of useful “general research methodology” articles.

An editorial by Peter Hernon and Candy Schwartz (Simmons College), “A Research Study’s Reflective Inquiry” (*LISR* 30 [2008]:163–164), provides brief yet detailed guidance on the parts of a research proposal. For those just learning about research, this editorial offers a useful synopsis.

For a review of the types of research being published, consult Phil Hider and Bob Pymm’s (Charles Sturt University, Australia) article “Empirical Research Methods Reported in High-Profile LIS Journal Literature” (*LISR* 30 [2008]: 108–114). The authors propose that, because LIS is multi-disciplinary, no single research protocol is preferred. Through citation analysis for research published in 1975, 1985, and 2005, the authors discovered that data collection techniques in high-profile journal literature ranged from questionnaires and interviews to secondary use of data previously collected. The majority of analysis techniques were, however, quantitative rather than qualitative, and this held true for librarianship and non-librarianship journals. The reporting of empirical data has increased since 1985. This may be explained by such articles being published elsewhere rather than there being less qualitative research. Data collection technique “facets” recommended by the authors for future analysis vary significantly

from the list they began with. Among the additions were bibliometric analysis and transaction log analysis—perhaps an indicator of the significance of library technology.

For those doing research and using census data, an article by Edward Herman (University of Buffalo), “The American Community Survey: An Introduction to the Basics” (*Government Information Quarterly* 25 [2008]: 504–519), provides helpful information about the integrity of the super-sampling, using multi-year averages, and the purpose of the American Community Survey interim data collection in addition to the comprehensive decennial census.

Awards and Grants That Honor and Support Excellent Research

The professional library associations offer many awards and grants to recognize and encourage research. The 2008 awards and grants here are listed under the name of the sponsoring association, and in the case of ALA by the awarding division, in alphabetical order. More-detailed information about the prizes and prizewinners can be found at the association Web sites.

American Library Association

Jesse H. Shera Award for Excellence in Published Research

Winners: Eric M. Meyers, Karen E. Fisher, and Elizabeth Marcoux, for “Studying the Everyday Information Behavior of Tweens: Notes from the Field,” *LISR* 29, pp. 310–331.

Jesse H. Shera Award for Support of Dissertation Research

Winner: Sharon McQueen, University of Wisconsin–Madison, for “‘The Story of Ferdinand’: The Creation of a Cultural Icon.”

American Society for Information Science and Technology

ASIS&T Best Information Science Book Award

Winner: Christine Borgman for *Scholarship in the Digital Age: Information, Infrastructure, and the Internet* (MIT) (<http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?type=2&tid=11333>).

ProQuest Doctoral Dissertation Award

Winner: Eric Meyer for “Socio-Technical Perspectives on Digital Photography.”

Thomson ISI Citation Analysis Research Grant (formerly the ISI/ASIS&T Citation Analysis Research Grant)

Winners: Isola Ajiferuke and Dietmar Wolfram, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, for “Citer Analysis as a Measure of Research Impact.”

Thomson ISI Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Scholarship (formerly the ASIS&T/ISI Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Scholarship)

Winner: Christina M. Finneran for “Factors That Influence Users to Keep and/or Leave Information Items: A Case Study of College Students’ Personal Information Management Behavior.”

John Wiley Best JASIST Paper Award

Winners: Teresa M. Harrison, Theresa A. Pardo, José Ramón Gil-García, Fiona Thompson, and Dubravka Juraga, for “Geographic Information Technologies, Structuration Theory, and the World Trade Center Crisis” *JASIST* 58(14): 2240–2253.

Association for Library and Information Science Education**ALISE/Eugene Garfield Doctoral Dissertation Award**

Winner: Kara Anne Reuter, University of Maryland, for “Children Selecting Books in a Library: Extending Models of Information Behavior to a Recreational Setting.”

ALISE Research Grant Award

Winners: Joan Cherry, Luanne Freund, and Wendy Duff, University of Toronto, for “Learning From Our Students: Assessing Student Perceptions of Information Studies Programs and the Information Professions.”

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)**Coutts Nijhoff International West European Specialist Study Grant**

Winner: Michelle Emanuel, University of Mississippi, for her proposal to survey major film libraries in the Paris region in order to analyze and evaluate the collections and services provided to visiting scholars, with some focus on the films of Francis Veber.

Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

Winner: Donghua Tao for “Using Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) in Understanding Selection and Use of Information Resources: An Information Resource Selection and Use Model.”

Samuel Lazerow Fellowship for Research in Collections and Technical Services in Academic and Research Libraries

Winners: Ping Situ and Shuyong Jiang for their research project on vendor-provided records and the experience of a research library in outsourcing cataloging service for its Chinese-language materials.

Ilene F. Rockman Instruction Publication of the Year Award (formerly the IS Publication Award)

Winner: Patrick Ragains, University of Nevada–Reno, for his book *Information Literacy Instruction That Works: A Guide to Teaching by Discipline and Student Population* (Neal-Schuman).

Beta Phi Mu**Mary Jo Lynch Distinguished Lecture Award**

Winner: Beta Lambda Chapter (University of North Texas/Texas Woman’s University); the lecturer was Danny P. Wallace, University of Oklahoma at Norman, who presented “Using Technology to Effectively Serve Older Adults and Baby Boomers in Your Local Library.”

Library and Information Technology Association/OCLC**Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology**

Winner: Jane Greenberg, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science (see <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/lita/newandnoteworthy/kilgourwinner08.cfm>).

Medical Library Association**Ida and George Eliot Prize**

Winner: Keith W. Cogdill, National Library of Medicine, for “Progress in Health Sciences Librarianship: 1970–2005.”

Janet Doe Lectureship for 2009

Winner: J. Michael Homan, Mayo Clinic Libraries.

Donald A. B. Lindberg Research Fellowship

Winner: Mark Puterbaugh, Warner Memorial Library, Eastern University.

Notes

1. American Library Association, Office for Research and Statistics. *Serving Non-English Speakers in U.S. Public Libraries: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs* (2008), <http://www.ala.org/nonenglishspeakers>.
2. The Harris Poll is a non-commissioned survey that was conducted online within the United States Aug. 11–17, 2008, among 2,710 adults (ages 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race, education, region, and household income were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to answer online. A full methodology is available at <http://www.harrisinteractive.com>.