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Analysing Digital Information Seeking and Quality Evaluation of Sources about Healthy Lifestyle among Senior Citizens in Iceland

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As a key to senior citizens health and well-being it is important to support their possibilities to be actively involved in health promotional interventions through life-long learning. The study aims at understanding better older people's digital information seeking, their source preferences and how they evaluate the quality of the information. An improved awareness of the issue may help to increase the efficiency of disseminating information to seniors and enhance their abilities to adopting healthier lifestyles. A random sample was used in the study and data collected in 2012. Participants were categorized into two groups, 60 to 67 years and 68 years or older. Data analysis was performed with ANOVA (one-way). The difference across the age groups was in most cases not significant. Both groups rarely sought digital information and considered the quality of it to be low. The results indicate that the older population can be reached with information about healthy living through professional health websites. Libraries and information professionals have the possibility and the means to take a leadership role and work together with health authorities at improving and stimulating senior's use of digital health information.

Keywords: *digital health information; healthy lifestyle; information reliability; information seeking; information usefulness; senior citizens; Iceland*

1. Introduction

The lifestyles that people practice are widely known to have impact on their health. Unhealthy behaviour patterns, for example smoking, unhealthy dietary habits and sedentary lifestyle, are associated with a number of health problems and mortal illnesses (Ford et al. 2012, Mackenbach 2006). Thus, it is of great significance to influence and empower people to change their behaviours into a healthier manner.

Approaches that aim at preventing disease, such as promoting healthy behaviours, have been shown to be successful at improving population health and well-being and to maintain sustainable health of the population (World Health Organization 2014). There is evidence suggesting that information seeking and lifelong learning is an effective way to promote public health. Seeking for health information has for example been related to the feeling of having a power to make positive health behaviour changes (Manafa&Wong 2015), as well as improvements in both health knowledge and healthy behaviour (Shim et al. 2006). Information seeking has, furthermore, been related to perceived better health. Weaver et al. (2010) found that internet users who sought information about health and wellness on the internet were more likely to consider themselves to be healthy and reported fewer health risk factors, than those who sought only for information about illness. Enwald et al. (2017), on the other hand, has reported that with growing age, seniors are more likely to have negative attitude towards information about physical exercise, avoid thinking about it and feel that the information is not motivating.

The paper will present results about Icelandic senior citizens information seeking and preference for information sources on the internet, as well as their evaluation of the quality of the information

found in the sources. Knowledge about this issue is important for libraries and information specialist who can work together with health authorities at improving older peoples possibilities at lifelong learning.

1.1 Literature review

It is a well-known fact that societies all over the world are ageing rapidly. From 2013 to 2050 it is expected that the number of people aged 60 years and older will more than double globally (United Nations 2013). In Western countries, the forecast is a little lower, with the proportion of senior citizens estimated to double, from 11% in 2006 to 22% in 2050 (World Health Organization 2007). This calls for awareness of how older people can be assisted at living independently in their homes. It is equally important to support their prospects to be active participants in society and thereby decrease the possibilities of their social exclusion. Inspiring older people to practice a healthy lifestyle in order to stay healthy for as long as possible is essential, for both the individuals and society, since it is likely to support and enhance their independence and social inclusion.

As a key to seniors' health and well-being, it is important to encourage them and support their possibilities to be actively involved in health promotional interventions through life-long learning. A prerequisite for this is that they must have an access to quality information that satisfy their needs. The need for information that is not demanding to access and which can easily be put to use has been stressed (Eriksson-Backa et al. 2012).

Health related information is increasingly being provided in a digital form, which can open up an opportunity for an easy access to it. It is also well known that older adults have adopted to information technology at a slower rate than those who are younger (Pálsdóttir 2009, Smith 2014). Senior citizens did not grow up with computers or the internet, and not all of them have had an opportunity to grow accustomed to using it while they were still active on the labour market. It has, nevertheless, been suggested that because those who are younger are more accustomed to using the internet in their work or private life, older people will gradually become more used to seeking information digitally and therefore more active users of the internet (Bromley 2004, Loos 2012). Accessing information on the internet is contingent on people having online access. However, other aspects should also be considered and various factors have been identified that can have an impact on senior citizens use of information technology.

Some of the concerns relating to the relatively slow adoption of seniors may include life course effects on the use of digital information. It has for example been noted that weak physical condition and health problems can cause challenges for a certain group of elderly people (Smith 2014). Communication barriers, such as problems with the visual and auditory presentation of information (Enwald et al. 2017), and changes in the motor ability which people can experience as they grow older (Hoogendam et al. 2014), can also affect the ability to use digital devices. By taking the needs of older people into account when information technology is designed, for example with suitable interface design and touch screen solutions (Piper et al. 2010), some of the obstacles that they are faced with might be minimised.

Concerns have also been raised that because of lack of practice at using the internet and negative beliefs related to the quality of the information found there, senior citizens may not benefit as much from it as others (Fischer et al. 2014). Studies have described a negative relationship between age and trust in health information on the internet. In a survey among people aged 50 years or older, those who were 65 years or older were found to be less likely to trust the internet as a source of health information than those who were younger (Zulman et al. 2011). Seniors have been found to regard health information on the internet to be both less reliable (Eriksson-Backa 2012, Pálsdóttir 2011) and less useful (Pálsdóttir 2011) than information from other sources or channels. Furthermore, it has been reported that trust is related to the use of health information on

the internet and that a negative relationship increases with age (Soederberg Miller&Bell 2012). Because information about healthy living are increasingly being delivered digitally, it can be considered a barrier when senior citizens tend to avoid it and prefer rather to use sources in other information channels. In fact, it has been noted that attitudinal issues have a bearing on the use of digital information and that mistrust reduces the use of it (Fischer et al. 2014), while if senior citizens consider the relevance of digital information to be high they are prone to make more effort at seeking it (Loos, 2012, Medlock et al. 2015).

It is of great importance that the needs, abilities and circumstances of older adults are not unseen and unrecognized, so that they can benefit from the development in information technology and the knowledge that can be gained from digital health information sources. As an information channel, the internet offers a wide variety of sources that people can choose between while seeking health information. Yet, studies often refer to the internet as one resource of information (Manafa&Wong 2015, Soederberg Miller&Bell 2012, Zulman et al. 2011), without distinguishing between the various sources that it contains. In addition, senior citizens are a heterogeneous group and by dividing them up in age groups it may be possible to distinguish differences or similarities among them .

1.2 Aim and research questions

The aim of the present study was to understand better older people's digital health and lifestyle information seeking, their source preferences, as well as how they evaluate the quality of the information found on the internet. Specifically the aim was to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. Which internet sources do senior citizens in the age groups 60 to 67 years old and 68 years or older prefer and to what extent do they seek information in the sources?
2. How do they evaluate the quality of the internet sources, with regard to the usefulness and reliability of the information found?

Relatively little is known about how older people prefer to use the internet to gain information and knowledge about healthy behaviour, as well as how they can be supported at it. Shedding more light on this issue might prove useful for libraries and information professionals who can take a leadership role at enhancing older people's possibilities to make use of digital health sources and thereby their opportunities for healthy living. Thus, the study findings may improve the understanding about seniors' preferences for digital health information and help to increase the efficiency of information dissemination for them.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Data collection

Data were gathered in spring 2012 from two samples using an internet and a telephone survey of 600 people each. For the telephone survey, a sample representing the adult population in Iceland was used, consisting of 600 people from the whole country, aged 18 years and older and randomly selected from the National Register of Persons in Iceland. Participants were contacted by telephone and invited to answer the survey directly by telephone or by email. For the internet survey, a random sample of 600 people from the Social Science Research Institute at the University of Iceland net panel was used. The net panel consists of people aged 18 years or older from the whole country. A random sample from the National Register of Persons in Iceland was contacted by telephone and people were asked if they were willing to participate in the net panel. The choice of participants in the net panel follows strict methodological rules to avoid

convenience sampling. The net panel is updated regularly to ensure that it corresponds with the distribution in the population, regarding sex, age and residence.

Respondents consisted of 299 individuals belonging to the simple random sample drawn from the National Register who were reached by telephone and 399 participants in the net panel. Women were overrepresented in the telephone survey, with 57.2% of the respondents being women. However, of those who participated in the net panel survey, 50.9% were women and 49.1% were men. The age distribution of respondents from both samples was also different although not statistically significant. The respondents who answered the telephone survey (or provided their email addresses over the telephone) were slightly younger than the net panel respondents. While 20.4% of those answering the telephone survey were 18 to 29 years of age, the same held for 16.3% of those who belonged to the net panel. It can therefore be said that each data collection method has advantages and disadvantages. The net panel reaches both men and women but those who belong to the youngest age groups (18-29 and 30-39) were reluctant to answer surveys sent out to the net panel. By combining the datasets from these two surveys, the sex and age distribution was closer to the corresponding distribution in the population. Both datasets were therefore merged, allowing answers from all individuals belonging to each set of data. The total response rate was 58.4%.

The current paper focuses only on respondents who have reached the age of 60 years and older. In Western countries it has been traditional to use the retirement age to define “elderly” (Thane 1989), and in Iceland elderly is defined by law as people who have reached the age of 67 (Lög um málefni aldraðra nr. 125/1999), when it is usual for people to retire. This has, however, been criticised for not taking into consideration the heterogeneity of older people (Berger 1994). It has been pointed out that people’s chronological age is less important than determinants, like their physical, cognitive and social capabilities (Ries&Pöthiga 1984). In Iceland it is customary to use the term *senior citizens* for older adults and therefore it is used in this study. In accordance with the viewpoints, that there is no clearly defined age when people become senior citizens, the associations for senior citizens in Iceland admit those who have reached the age of 60 to become members (Landsamband eldri borgara s.a.).

However, classifying all seniors together in one age category may obscure differences among them, while comparing sub-groups can generate differences and similarities between them. In addition, as mentioned above it has been implied that although those who belong to the elderly generation today are reluctant to use digital information this may change with the coming elderly generation. Therefore it was decided that people who have reached the age of 60 should be included in the study, and to compare people at the age 60 to 67 years old, a group who is approaching retirement, with those who are 68 years or older, who have reached the retirement age.

A total of 176 people at the age 60 years and older participated in the study, 86 women and 90 men. Participants aged 60 to 67 years were 87, while 89 participants were 68 years or older (oldest participant was 92 years old).

2.2 Measurements and data analysis

The following measurements were used in the study:

- (1) *Age groups*. Socio-demographic information included traditional background variables, however in the current analysis only the variable age is used. To better assess how the internet adoption may relate to age the participants were divided into two groups, those who are aged 60 to 67 years and those who are 68 years and older.
- (2) *Information seeking*. This was examined by asking the participants’: ‘How often do you seek

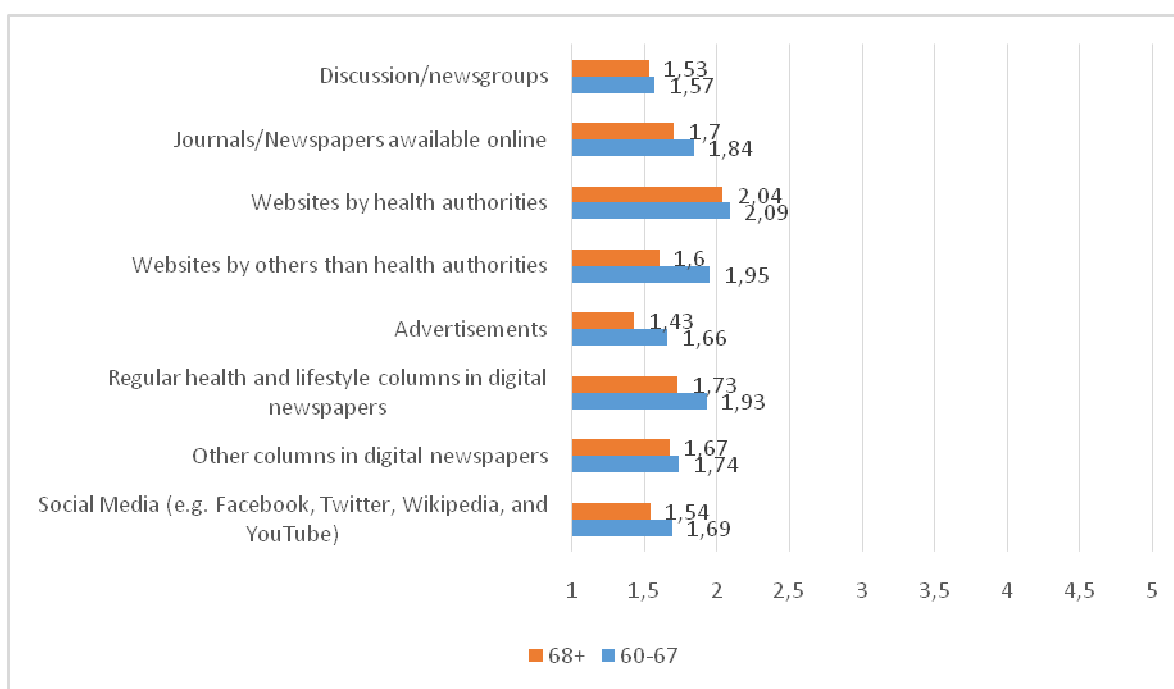
information about health and lifestyle in the following sources'? A list of eight information sources on the internet was presented and people asked to provide answers about every source. The questions had a five-point response scale (5: Very often, 4: Rather often, 3: Rather seldom, 2: Very seldom, 1: Never).

(3) *Quality of information.* This was examined by two questions: 'How useful do you find information about health and lifestyle in the following sources'? And 'How reliable do you find information about health and lifestyle in the following sources'? The same list of information sources was presented as for the question about information seeking. The questions had a five-point response scale (5: Very useful/reliable, 4: Rather useful/reliable, 3: Rather unuseful/unreliable, 2: Very unuseful/unreliable, 1: Don't know).

ANOVA (one-way) was performed to examine difference across the age groups for information seeking activity, as well their evaluation of the information usefulness and reliability .

3. Results

The chapter will start by presenting results about information seeking in source on the internet by the participants in the two age groups. This will be followed by results about the evaluation of the usefulness of the information in the same sources and after that results about the evaluation of the reliability of the information in the sources.

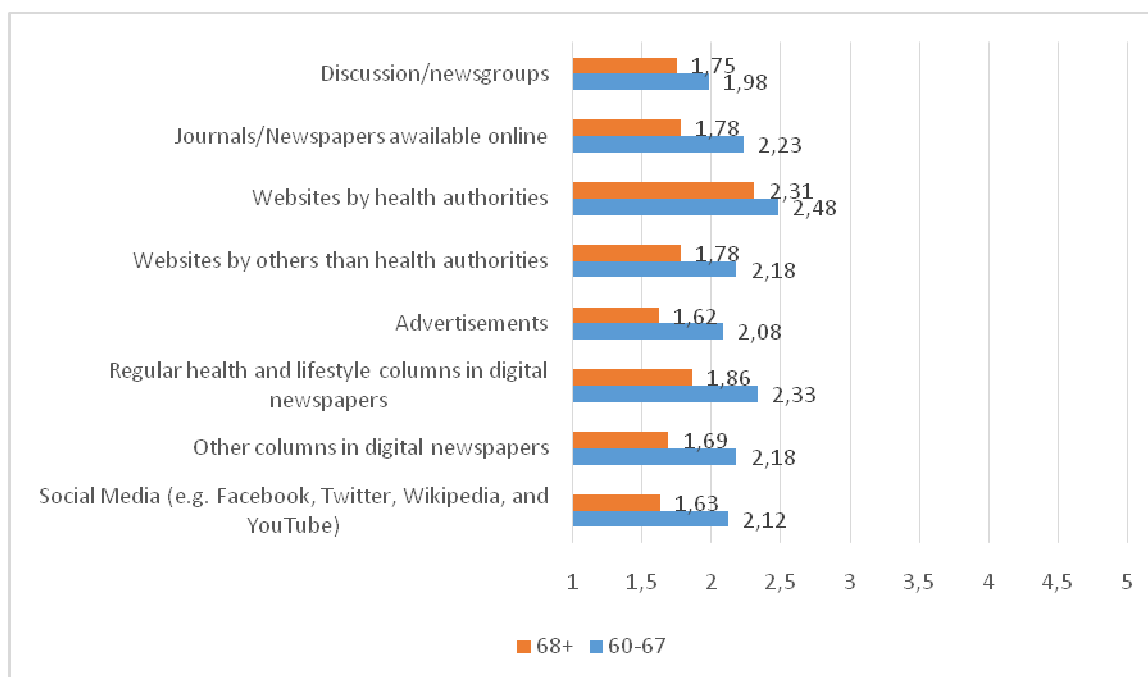


Mean scores, 1=Never, 5=Very often

Figure 1. *Information about health and lifestyle sought in sources on the internet*

As can be seen from Figure 1, both age groups sought information infrequently in sources on the internet. Apart from websites from health authorities, the mean score for all the sources is below 2 (Very seldom). Thus, the participants sought information in the internet sources either never or very seldom. Those who belong to the younger age group did though seek information more often than those who belong to the older group. However, the only significant difference across the age groups was for websites by other than health authorities, which the younger group used more frequently for information seeking than the older group $F(1,179=5,23; p=0,023)$.

The older group sought information about health and lifestyle least frequently in advertisements and after that in discussion/newsgroups and social media. The results about the younger group are similar, with information being least often sought in discussion/newsgroups and after that in advertisements and social media. Both age groups sought information most frequently in websites by health authorities. The age groups, however, differ in their use of websites by other than health authorities. This was the source that came as second for seeking information by the younger group, while the older group used it less frequently (Figure 1).



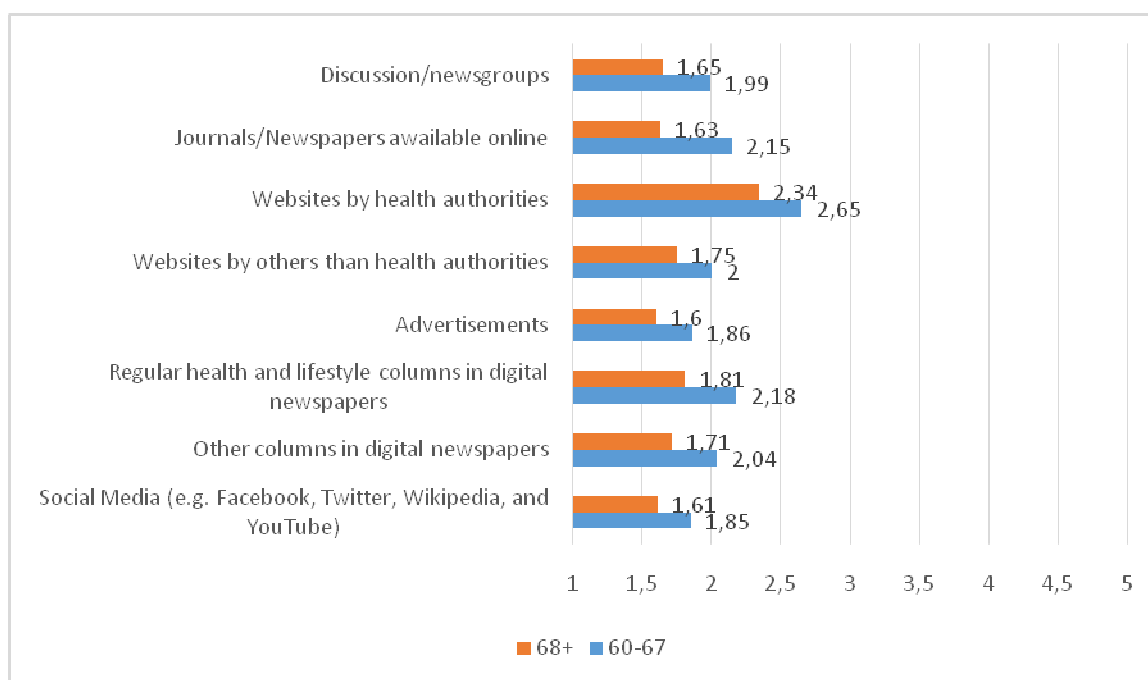
Mean scores, 1=Don't know, 5=Very useful

Figure 2. *Usefulness of information about health and lifestyle in sources on the internet*

Figure 2 shows that those who are at the age 60-67 years found information in all sources to be more useful than those who are 68 years or older.

Information on websites by health authorities were considered most useful. The mean scores for the age groups are similar and they did not differ significantly $F(1,162=0,54; p=0,464)$. Information in regular health and lifestyle columns in digital newspapers were considered to be second most useful. However, those who belong to the younger group rated the information found there significantly higher than the older group, $F(1,155=5,25; p=0,023)$. Likewise, the younger group found information in journals/newspapers available on the internet $F(1,159=5,16; p=0,024)$, websites by others than health authorities $F(1,161=4,24; p=0,041)$, advertisements $F(1,159=6,68; p=0,011)$, other columns in digital newspapers $F(1,160=6,97; p=0,009)$, and social media $F(1,158=6,44; p=0,012)$, to be significantly more useful than those who belong to the older age group. For discussion/newsgroups $F(1,163=1,44; p=0,232)$ significant difference was not found across the age groups (Figure 2).

Figure 3 shows results about how the seniors evaluate the reliability of information in the various sources.



Mean scores, 1=Don't know, 5=Very useful

Figure 3. *Reliability of information about health and lifestyle in sources on the internet*

As can be seen from Figure 3, participants who belong to the younger age group considered information in all the sources to be more reliable than those who are 68 years or older.

Both age groups found websites by health authorities to be most reliable. Although the mean scores show that those who are 60-67 years old considered it to be somewhat more reliable than those who are older, the difference across the age groups was not significant $F(1,158=1,83; p=0,179)$. The younger group found regular health and lifestyle columns in digital newspapers to be the second most reliable source. This was followed very tightly by journals/newspapers available online. For the older age group, there difference in evaluation of sources other than websites by health authorities was relatively small (Figure 3).

Significant difference was only found across the age groups for discussion/newsgroups $F(1,158=4,26; p=0,041)$ and journals/newspapers available online $F(1,154=9,85; p=0,002)$. For websites by others than health authorities $F(1,157=2,06; p=0,153)$, advertisements $F(1,154=3,09; p=0,081)$, regular health and lifestyle columns in digital newspapers $F(1,156=3,82; p=0,053)$, other columns in digital newspapers $F(1,154=3,55; p=0,062)$, and social media $F(1,154=2,17; p=0,142)$, no significant difference was found across the age groups (Figure 3).

4. Discussion

In the past years, the development in information and communication technology has drastically altered the possibilities to disseminate and access information about healthy lifestyle. It has meant that people's information environment is constantly changing, with information sources on the internet continually becoming more important as means for people to practice lifelong learning. This is a progress that can be expected to continue in the coming years.

Elderly people form the fastest growing population group in most parts of the world (United Nations 2013, World Health Organization 2007). It is of great significance for their well-being to

support them at taking an active part in health promotion and practice healthy behaviour. To do that they need to be able to add new understanding and skills to their already existing knowledge. Information about healthy lifestyle is increasingly provided digitally. Ensuring seniors access to quality information on the internet which they feel that they can trust, and to stimulate and enhance their digital health knowledge seeking, is therefore essential. Libraries and information professionals can make a significant contribution to this.

The study examined digital information seeking about healthy living and preferences for information sources on the internet among senior citizens at the age of 60 years and older. In addition, it explored the senior's evaluation of the quality of the sources, regarding the usability and reliability of the information found there. This was done by comparing two age groups of seniors, those who were 60 to 67 years old and those who were 68 years or older.

Online access is a prerequisite for retrieving information on the internet. In Iceland, internet access is widespread, with a total of 95% of Icelandic homes having access to it in 2012. The figures about internet use do, however, show that the frequency of it decreases with higher age. A total of 85.2% of men and 77.1% of women at the age of 55-75 years had connected to the internet daily, compared to 94.2% of men and 94.4% of women in the age group 25-54 years old (Statistics Iceland 2012). The same trend can be seen internationally, findings about internet usage in the U.S. show for example that age is negatively related to online health information seeking (Fox and Duggan, 2013). Nevertheless, the statistics from Iceland indicate that older people's prospects for accessing information on the internet are good.

The results from the present study, however, show that the frequency of using digital health information sources was very low. On a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very often), the mean figures for information seeking ranged from 1.43 to 2.04 for those who were 68 years or older and 1.57 to 2.09 for those who were 60 to 67 years old. The seniors, therefore, either never used the internet sources for seeking information about health and lifestyle, or did so very seldom.

A comparison of the age groups revealed that both groups rarely sought information in sources on the internet. Both groups rarely seek information in sources on the internet. Those who are at the age 60 to 67 years sought information in all of the internet sources more often than those who are 68 years or older. However, apart from websites by other than health authorities, the difference across the age groups was not significant. The study also asked how the seniors evaluated the quality of the information in the internet sources. The results reflect the outcome about information seeking in terms of low rating of all the sources by both age groups. It was though interesting to note that the scores for the quality evaluation were in general somewhat higher than the mean scores for seeking information in the sources, a difference that was more distinct for the younger age group. For the evaluation of the usefulness of the information (1: Don't know - 5: Very useful) the mean scores for the older group ranged from 1.62 to 2.31 and 1.98 to 2.48 for the younger group. The mean figures for evaluation of the reliability of the information ranged from 1.60 to 2.34 for the older group and from 1.85 to 2.65 for the younger group. The younger group rated the usefulness of the information significantly higher than the older group in all sources, except for websites by other than health authorities and discussion/newsgroups. Whereas, results about the reliability of information revealed that, even though the mean figures were higher for the younger group than the older group, the only significant difference across them was for discussion/newsgroups.

The internet source that was preferred most by both age groups was websites by health authorities. Both age groups reported that they sought information most often in it and that they considered the information to be most useful and most reliable. These results are partly in line with other findings. Previous studies have repeatedly reported health professionals to be the most trusted source of health information (Chaudhuri et al. 2013, Medlock et al. 2015, Pálsdóttir 2011). The results from

the present study indicate that this also applies to information provided by health professionals on the internet. Hence, in spite of the low use of internet sources, this finding may indicate that health professionals have an opportunity to reach the older population with information about healthy living through professional health websites.

The study asked about eight information sources on the internet. This is more extensive than what has been common in other studies and should therefore serve to provide a more detailed picture of the digital information behaviour of elderly people. Nevertheless, in light of the rapid changes that take place in information and communication technology, future studies need to develop the list of sources accordingly so that it reflects the digital information environment. It also needs to be kept in mind that the overall study is limited by a rather low response rate of 58.4%. Although, this is considered satisfactory in a survey it nevertheless raises the question, whether or not those who answered the survey are giving a biased picture of those who did not respond. However, the rate of people at the age of 60 years and older in the sample (27%) is higher than in the population (19%), which strengthens the findings. Thus, the study results may provide valuable information about senior citizens information seeking and how they experience trust in online sources about healthy living.

The ability to make effective use of the information environment to enhance knowledge throughout life is has been described as a basic human right of lifelong learning (The Prague declaration 2003). Information technology develops rapidly and it is important to realize that people may not always change their information behaviour in line with it. Particularly the older generation who has formed their habits of information seeking and attitude towards the quality of information sources during a lifetime. In addition, although it can be assumed that the coming generation of senior citizens will be more used to seeking information on the internet, the skills that they possess today may be irrelevant in the future. Thus, a question remains how they will be able to adapt and learn new technology. For that they may need assistance and support, which is a challenge that future studies need to seek answers to.

5. Conclusion

Promoting senior citizens possibilities to take active part in health promotional interventions, through life-long learning, is a crucial issue which may have impact on their wider prospects for sustainable health and wellbeing. As a key to that, it is essential that they have an easy access to information that they feel that they can trust and meets their needs. Information about healthy living is increasingly being provided digitally and it is of concern if older people do not have sufficient possibilities to benefit from it. The study sought to understand better how seniors can be supported with information about healthy lifestyle. This was done by comparing how seniors, in the age groups 60 to 67 years old and 68 years or older, sought information in eight sources on the internet, as well as their evaluation of the usefulness and reliability of the information.

The results of the study revealed the same pattern for information seeking behaviour and quality evaluation of the sources for the age groups. Both groups rarely sought information in the internet sources and considered the quality of it to be low. The scores for those who belong to the age group 60 to 67 were higher than for those who are 68 years or older but, except for the evaluation of the usefulness of the information, the difference was in most cases not significant. In addition, the information source that was most preferred by both age groups was websites by health authorities. It can, therefore, be concluded that these age groups have more in common than what separates them.

Furthermore, the results indicate that the older population can be reached with information about healthy living through professional health websites. An improved awareness of senior's information seeking, opinion and preferences for digital information sources, may help to increase

the efficiency of disseminating information and enhance their abilities to adopting healthier lifestyles. By providing seniors with high quality service libraries make can make a difference in this respect. Libraries and information professionals have the possibility and the means to take a leadership role and work together with health authorities at improving and stimulating seniors use of digital health information.

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The Reference Librarian

Face-to-Face with Reference Management

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This case study focuses on the trends of reference management as part of the reference services at “Dunarea de Jos” University of Galati in the last 20 years. The institution aims to adopt reference managers such as Zotero, Mendeley or EndNote online in the most common research-related scenarios, whether for the accreditation of an university specialization, the development of a research topic or bibliometric research. Publish or Perish is also explored for the cases of managing citations and research impact analysis.

Keywords: *reference librarians; online reference managers; bibliographic research work; academic libraries*

1. Introduction

The reference department has always been the interface between the library and its users. The information overload and emerging technologies have reshaped the work of the reference librarian (RL) and changes had to be made to meet users expectations in a successful manner. This case study reveals some of the solutions identified by the RL in terms of managing references.

The analysis was focused on various scenarios as a result of day-to-day interaction with library users (Zabel et al. 2010). In particular, the following topics will be considered:

- Does the library website host a list of new entries in library collection from a specific subject?
- How can I manage different types of information sources for my paper?
- How can I make a list of my papers indexed in Scopus or Web of Science?
- Is it possible to import my papers in ORCID record?
- How can I compare the bibliometric indicators in Google Scholar, Scopus and Web of Science by using a single tool?
- How can I use a specific citation style for my paper?

One of the main responsibilities of RLs is undoubtedly to be helpful and to save user's time (Igbinovia&Solanke 2015), so they have to face these challenging situations, to improve their competencies and to bring new and relevant services in the library. The trends in the field indicate reference managers as perfect software tools to be explored for the research process. They are the subject of the analysis performed in this article. Although the results of their implementation have been disseminated among undergraduates, doctoral or postdoctoral students and academics within seminars or faculty meetings, most of them still prefer to manage the information in a rudimentary way, by taking notes on pieces of paper or capturing screenshots on PC.

2. Methodology

The paper reflects on a few scenarios and brings practical, inexpensive and innovative approaches in terms of reference management. For many years, “Dunărea de Jos” University Library of Galati (DJULG) had no access to electronic tools and that is why the information was traditionally organized through catalogue cards and library catalogues. In the end of the '90s, we have

witnessed the library automation and the development of the Internet. The integrated library system and library webpage have become valuable tools for librarians. Later, after 2010, ARTHRA institutional repository and reference management tools (Zotero, Mendeley and Endnote online) have completed the library's portfolio.

In recent years, as literature also shows, RLs are asked quite often for their help when users need to organize citations (Ahmat et al. 2016). Besides this, complex questions have come from the academics concerned about how to manage the information for their annual evaluation (h-index, citations number, ISI or BDI indexed journals, scientific profiles etc.). Online reference managers such as EndNote and Mendeley can easily manage the results retrieved from the well-known scientific databases Web of Science and Scopus. Moreover, these results can be automatically added in ORCID record or Publish or Perish software by export-import actions and this way researchers can easily populate their scientific profile or compare metrics.

3. Results

DJULG has provided traditional reference services until 2000. In most cases, they included quick references about the library collections, services or opening hours, support on how to search information using the traditional library catalogues, research consultation (Marcu 2006, pp. 23-24). The reference department has been involved in promoting the latest library acquisitions by editing bibliographic tools: bulletin of titles added in library collections (books or periodicals), list of the books having as authors the university professors, list of foreign books purchased by the library and so on. Until 2000, besides the cataloguer, the RL also had to write catalogue cards for each new title added in library collections which were used after that as reference instruments for the bibliographies or bulletins (edited by using typing machines) (fig. 1, left side).

Scenario no. 1: Does the library website host a list of new entries in library collection from a specific subject?

The automation of the library in 1998 definitely simplified the bibliographic work of the RL. Plans needed to be changed, knowledge to be updated and skills to be improved, in order to face the new technologies and information sources (Wang et al. 2010). The integrated library system reduced the delivery time of bibliographic references (necessary for the accreditation documentation, research topic or bulletins/repositories). The information could be studied in electronic format through e-mail or library webpage (Fig. 1, right side).

2012 has been the reference year for the implementation of information literacy programs at DJULG which transformed the RL into a digital librarian, more confident in online searching, selecting and managing information. One year after the implementation of ARTHRA institutional repository of "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galati, as Bailey (2005) stated, the RL has started to play a significant role in this respect. In return, the institutional repository has been accepted as a tool to submit and promote bibliographies generated for academic purposes (fig. 2).

Besides the library webpage and institutional repository, other attractive tools have been discovered on the "market". They were sources of inspiration for the RL who turned into "technology mediator" according to Howse et al. definition (2006), ready to guide users in online navigation and reference management.

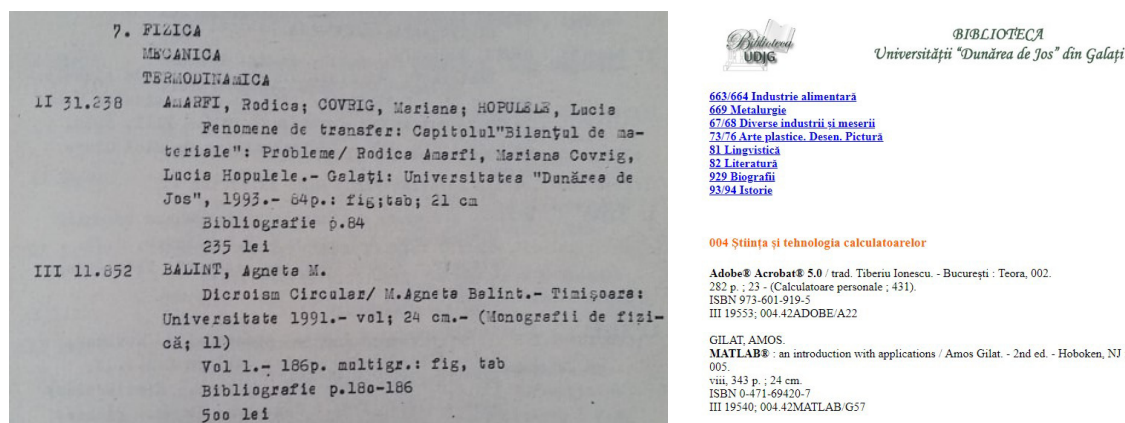


Figure 1. List of new entries in library collection (print and online versions)



Figure 2. Bibliographies available in ARTHRA institutional repository

Scenario no. 2: How can I manage different type of information sources for my paper?

The research conducted after 2012 indicated the use of the following reference management tools for this scenario: Zotero, Mendeley and EndNote online. These tools are certainly efficient in the stage of collecting and organizing information (Fig. 4) when researchers wanted to manage their print or online resources (retrieved from online library catalogue, online database or academic search engines), as well as in the most discussed stage of citing information. For instance, in order to manage references from an online library catalogue (e.g. by using Zotero), the researcher should follow the steps:

1. access the library online catalogue;
2. conduct a research (e.g. „inginerie electronică și telecomunicații” AND cărți AND „TN/2017” - TN/2017 indicates new titles added in library collections during the year 2017)
3. click on Zotero Connector's save button (placed near URL) - it looks like the icon of a folder (indicating a list of results);
4. select the relevant items from the list and then press on OK button (Fig. 3).

Consequently, references will be instantly saved in Zotero library and metadata will be automatically extracted (Fig. 4).

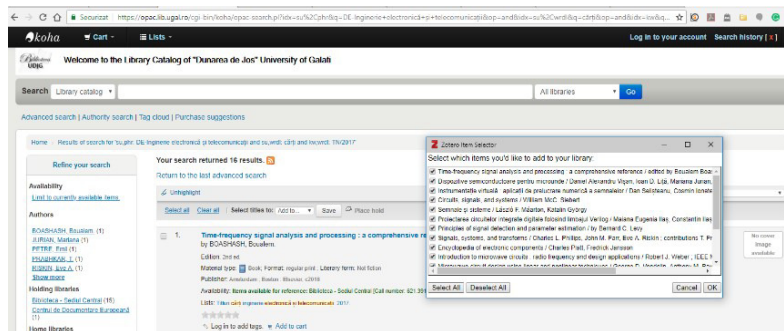


Figure 3. How to save references from Koha library catalogue in Zotero

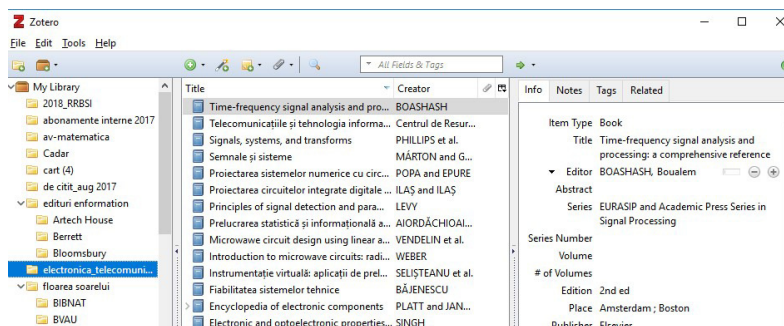


Figure 4. Reference management in Zotero

Scenario no 3: How can I make a list of my papers indexed in Scopus or Web of Science?

Two reference managers are being analyzed for this task, but any of them can be used whether it's for Scopus or Web of Science query. Elsevier has in its portfolio Scopus as abstract and indexing (A&I) database and Mendeley as reference manager while Clarivate Analytics has similar products in Web of Science and EndNote.

Scopus

For this scenario, the researcher should follow the steps:

1. access Scopus database;
2. choose „Documents” as search technique;
3. complete the keywords (e.g. *Ursachi, L*) and choose the criteria from the left side (*Author*);
4. limit the results to affiliation (*Universitatea Dunarea de Jos din Galati*);
5. select relevant references from the list and click on *Save to Mendeley* (Fig. 5) - researcher need to be logged into Mendeley account;
6. view the saved references in the web version of Mendeley Library;
7. synchronize Mendeley Library to get references in the Desktop version (Fig. 6);
8. select the saved references, click right, choose Copy as - Formatted Citation and then apply „Paste” in a blank Word document.

The list of references saved from Scopus should have the format presented below:

1. Ursachi, L., Scutelnicu, E. (2010) ‘Welding research journals included in ISI Web of knowledge database’, *Annals of ‘Dunarea de Jos’ University of Galati, Fascicle XII, Welding Equipment and Technology*, 21.
2. Ursachi, L., Scutelnicu, E. (2013) ‘New concepts and techniques implemented by “dunărea de jos” university library of galati’, *Revista Transilvania*, (2), 59-64.

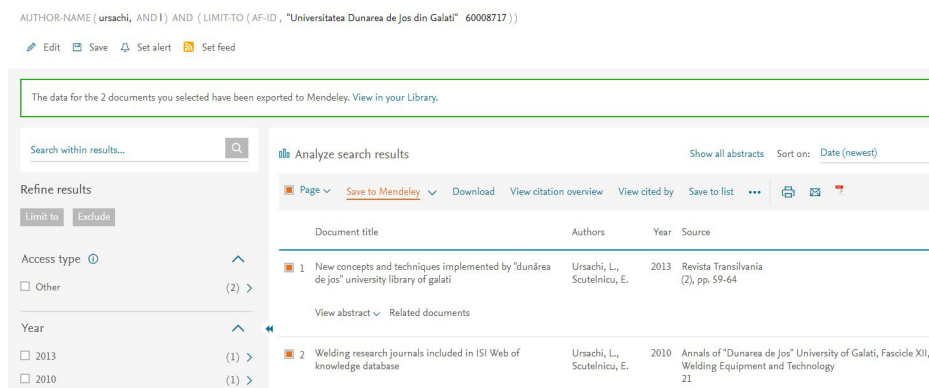


Figure 5. How to save Scopus indexed publications in Mendeley Library

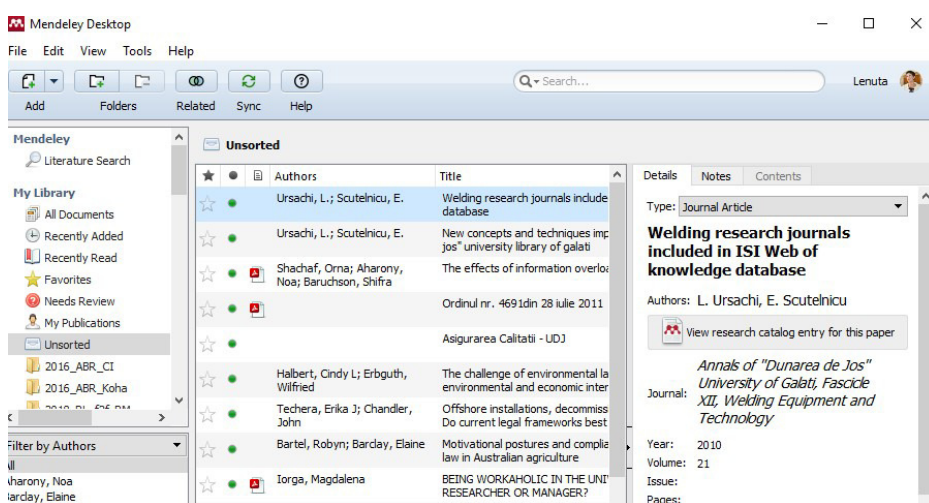


Figure 6. Reference management in Mendeley Desktop

Web of Science

For the case of a query (e.g. Author search) in Web of Science, the researcher should do the following:

1. access Web of Science database;
2. click on *More* and then choose *Author search* option;
3. conduct a search by completing the fields according to the suggested model;
4. choose a research domain and in the end select the affiliation;
5. browse and select the relevant results selection;
6. click on *Save to EndNote online*;
7. connect to EndNote online account and save the selected references;
8. view the saved results in *Unfilled folder* (in the left side of the screen);
9. select the results from this folder and add them in a *New group* or an existing one (Fig. 7).

To create a bibliographic list that should contain these references, the researcher will just click on Format menu, choose Bibliography, select the folder (e.g. Scutelnicu E), select bibliographic style (e.g. ISO 690), select file format (e.g. TXT) and then click on one of the options Save, E-mail or Preview and Print.

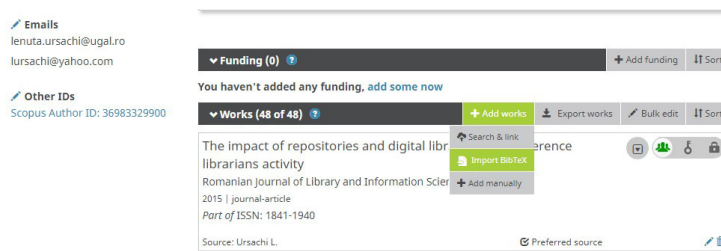


Figure 8. How to import my publications in ORCID record

Google Scholar query in PoP

1. access PoP application installed on the computer;
2. select „Google Scholar” button to initiate the query;
3. conduct a search, by completing the field related to author name (e.g. Vlad Ciprian) and then press on *Look up* button (placed in the right side) and citations will be automatically listed (Fig. 9).

Google Scholar query	
Authors:	Vlad Ciprian
Publication/Journal:	
All of the words:	
Any of the words:	
None of the words:	
The phrase:	
Metrics	Help
Publication years:	2005-2017
Citation years:	13 (2005-2018)
Papers:	37
Citations:	149
Cites/year:	11.46
Cites/paper:	4.03
Cites/author:	48.05
Papers/author:	13.22
Authors/paper:	3.49
h-index:	5
g-index:	11
hI,norm:	5
hI,annual:	0.38
*Count:	0

	Cites	Per year	Rank	Authors	Title	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h	41	5.13	1	C Vlad, I Muntean...	Output power maximization of lo...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h	28	7.00	2	A Idbaih, K Mokht...	Dramatic response of a BRAF V60...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h	14	3.50	3	C Vlad, Al Bratcu, L...	Real-time replication of a stand-a...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h	11	1.83	5	C Vlad, MI Sbarcio...	Indirect control of substrate conc...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h	10	1.67	4	G Casadei, R Teod...	Analysis of dynamic behavior of ...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		5	0.83	12	C Vlad	Conducerea automată a sistemel...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		5	0.00	13	C VLAD	Contribuții privind conducerea a...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		5	0.00	14	C VLAD	Contribuții privind conducerea a...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		4	0.44	19	C Vlad, I Muntean...	Anticipative control of low-powe...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3	0.75	6	D Florica, C Vlad	A new five-level rectifier based o...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3	0.50	7	C Vlad, S Caraman...	Gain scheduling control of dissol...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3	0.38	8	N Badea, C Vlad, ...	Comparative study of energy perf...

Figure 9. How to add Google Scholar citations in PoP

Importing Scopus citations in PoP

1. conduct a search in Scopus (e.g. Author search – Vlad C);
2. export displayed references by selecting *Save to Other File Formats*;
3. select *Method of export* - CSV Excel and for *Information to export* – Citation information
4. save file in computer;
5. access PoP application and click on *Import External Data*;
6. open the file saved in computer and Scopus citations will be automatically imported (Fig. 10).

Importing Web of Science citations

1. conduct a similar search in Web of Science;
2. export references by selecting *Save to Other File Formats*;
3. select *Record Content* – Full record and for *File Format* – Other Reference Software;
4. save file in computer;
5. access PoP application and click on *Import External Data*;
6. open the file saved in computer and Web of Science citations will be automatically imported (Fig. 11).

Imported external data

Display title: scopus.csv [2018-06-21 09:30:47]

Original format: Scopus (CSV)

Imported fields:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volume	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Article link
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Issue no.	<input type="checkbox"/> Citation link
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publication	<input type="checkbox"/> ISSN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start page	<input type="checkbox"/> Citing references link
<input type="checkbox"/> Publisher	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DOI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> End page	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number of citations

Note: Unchecked fields were not available in the imported data.

Metrics [Help](#)

		Cites	Per year	Rank	Authors
Publication years:	2005-2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 30	3.75	19	C. Vlad, I. Muntea...
Citation years:	13 (2005-2018)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 10	2.50	10	C. Vlad, A.J. Bratcu...
Papers:	23	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 8	1.33	13	G. Casadei, R. Teo...
Citations:	70	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 8	1.33	17	C. Vlad, M. Sbarci...
Cites/year:	5.38	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	6	C. Vlad, M. Barbu, ...
Cites/paper:	3.04	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	21	C. Vlad, I. Muntea...
Cites/author:	17.95	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	9	D. Floricau, C. Vlad
Papers/author:	6.15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	16	C. Vlad, S. Carama...
Authors/paper:	4.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	5	C. Vlad, M. Barbu, ...
h-index:	4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	14	C. Vlad, V. Minzu, ...
g-index:	8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	18	N. Badea, C. Vlad, ...
hI,norm:	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	23	G. Guraiatu. T. M...
hI,annual:	0.15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1		
*Count:	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1		

Figure 10. How to import Scopus citations in PoP

Imported external data

Display title: web of science.txt [2018-06-21 10:05:24]

Original format: ISI/WoS (tagged)

Imported fields:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volume	<input type="checkbox"/> Article link
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Issue no.	<input type="checkbox"/> Citation link
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ISSN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start page	<input type="checkbox"/> Citing references link
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publisher	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DOI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> End page	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number of citations

Note: Unchecked fields were not available in the imported data.

Metrics [Help](#)

		Cites	Per year	Rank	Authors
Publication years:	2002-2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 19	2.38	1	C Vlad, I Muntean...
Citation years:	16 (2002-2018)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 8	2.00	2	C Vlad, Al Bratcu, l...
Papers:	20	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h 6	0.38	3	K Hulka, C Vlad, A...
Citations:	46	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	4	C Vlad, M Barbu, ...
Cites/year:	2.88	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	5	C Vlad, M Sbarcio...
Cites/paper:	2.30	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	6	C Vlad, I Muntean...
Cites/author:	12.38	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	7	D Floricau, C Vlad
Papers/author:	5.55	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	8	N Badea, C Vlad, ...
Authors/paper:	3.85	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	9	C Vlad, I Muntean...
h-index:	3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	10	G Gurguiatu, T M...
g-index:	6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	11	S Epure, C Vlad, R ...
hI,norm:	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	12	C Vlad, R Padurar...
hI,annual:	0.13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0		
*Count:	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0		

Figure 11. How to import Web of Science citations in PoP

Scenario no. 6: How can I use a specific citation style for my paper?

If the researcher is looking for a specific citation style (e.g. Materials Today), it is necessary to access the URL <https://csli.mendeley.com/about/>, search for the citation style (by name or example), edit the closest match (if the citation style couldn't be found) and install or save it in the reference manager.

In Mendeley Desktop, the researcher has the option to import the desired citation style by following the path View menu-Citation styles-Get more styles. In the search box will just type the name of the citation style (e.g. Materials Today), press the button „Use this style” (fig. 12) and then „Install”. The installed citation styles will be retrieved in the left side, *Installed*.

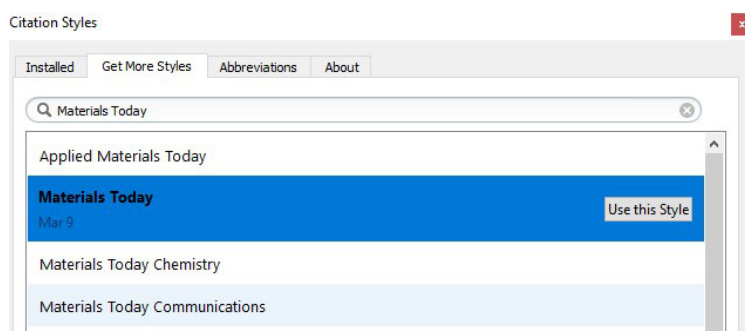


Figure 12. How to import a specific citation style in Mendeley

4. Discussion and conclusions

The reference service has been redesigned as new resources and information technologies emerged. The study revealed significant aspects in the evolution of reference management in the last 20 years at DJULG. The Internet has had a major impact on users' life, who became more comfortable with online navigation. Under these circumstances, RLs needed to re-evaluate their behavior, to go ahead and to implement new services to attract library users and to be closer to them.

Reference management is a hot topic nowadays and issues related to plagiarism are very much discussed in debates related to scientific publishing. The RLs proved to be capable of efficiently solving the aspects of reference management and ethical use of information. Training sessions, drop-in sessions and library guides have been included in their agenda. Dedicated software tools have been promoted in order to strengthen the liaison with the faculties and users, to avoid delays in their research work and to demonstrate the multiple qualities of the RLs as genuine managers of information.

The new approach of reference management is not yet entirely embraced by library users. Some of them started to use reference managers, but most of them are still rigid and manage information in a traditional way. Whether we are talking about students who are faced with the problem of managing different types of information or academics who need to gather references for their research impact analysis, this study comes out with a few solutions designed to invite all users to test reference managers.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mrs. Cristina Alina Huidiu for her support in this case study.

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Contemporary Library and Its Role in the Community

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Contemporary libraries need to redefine, to diversify their activities and services so that they can face the challenges of the new information and communication environment. To reach this goal, libraries need to integrate into the community and play an active role in educational, cultural, and social activities.

This article aims at portraying the contemporary library from the perspective of its role in the community. It aims at synthesising opinions and results of sociological research in North American literature, thus pointing out theories and good practices for the Romanian space. Literature shows that ensuring access to information and documentation is no longer the dominant activity of libraries. Together with this activity, there are also educational and cultural activities and even leisure activities that define the community role of a library.

People come to a library not only for information, research, and reading activities, but also, increasingly, to carry out group community activities, for cultural activities, or even for socialisation activities. Contemporary libraries need to be keepers of a community memory and a reliable partner of authorities and community institutions in their endeavour to carry out projects and activities.

Keywords: *contemporary libraries; community space; library technology; cultural and educational activities*

1. Introduction

The contemporary library seems to be in crisis. The increasingly higher exigencies from the community and the impact of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) force libraries to redefine to meet the new information and documentation exigencies. A few questions have arisen: What is a library to a community? Do communities really need libraries? The answers supplied by literature are encouraging. Libraries are the memory of communities: they have a moulding role supporting non-formal education, they represent a cultural area, they actively support local cultural events, they have an active social role, and they are free-access, non-discriminatory public areas. All these are arguments in favour of contemporary libraries and of their role in the community.

This article aims at portraying contemporary library from the perspective of its role in the community. It is an attempt to synthesise opinions and results of sociological research present in North-American literature, and to point out theories and good practices useful for the Romanian cultural area.

2. Changes, advantages and vulnerabilities of contemporary library

Contemporary libraries differ from the libraries decades and centuries ago. These differences are the result of changes of the social environment in which these structures of information and documentation exist; these differences are obvious in the changes in mission and objectives, in the diversification of the activities and of the services and products offered, in the placing of library

users in the centre of specific activities, and in better integration in the community life.

Changes in our contemporary society dominated by information, communication and technologies have caused significant changes of the paradigms influencing library activity. To note as dominant the influence of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) that have substantially changed the vision of institutions on their own activities, products, and services, and determined changes of specific library activities. Libraries are also compelled to shift from relative passivity to an active state of involvement and collaboration, and to meet users' needs. To also note the shift from the function of conservation of collections to the function of communication or, in other words, the emphasis from document to user and his/her need for information. The quantitative explosion of information, its globalisation and the implosion of the communication time have a special, multiple impacts on the community. There has also been expansion and diversification of the community, as well as a considerable increase of users' exigencies and needs for information.

The changes of contemporary society have brought to light a number of advantages and vulnerabilities of the library, as well as of the professions of information.

The main advantages would be as follows:

- Libraries remain specialised structures in the building-up, processing, use, communication, and conservation of documents and information;
- Libraries develop their own competencies as managers of information and knowledge;
- Libraries are acknowledged as competent in preserving and archiving documentary heritage thus becoming keepers of local, regional, and national cultural memory;
- Libraries are involved in the life of local communities fulfilling their educational, cultural, social, and informational functions;
- Libraries and other information and documentation structures play an active role in society making cooperation, communication, and sharing of information resources and of good practices with similar structures or with any other type of institutions in the social environment extremely conspicuous;
- Information professions internationalise; therefore, all information professions require the same competencies, no matter the country or the community;
- Competencies specific to information professions slide towards professions specific to other fields of activity thus making their interdisciplinarity more obvious.

The vulnerabilities that libraries are forced to face are both external and internal because of the lack of effective adaptation to the changes of the social environment.

For the first time in their history, libraries have lost their position of single owners of information and are compelled to evolve in a competitive environment. The Internet is both a competitor and a partner of libraries. The Internet is the most important competitor because it supplies its users with information products and services in digital format and accessible no matter the distance. Moreover, due to ICTs, there are numerous specific applications making possible all functions and activities allowing the organization, recuperation, and archiving of information resources. The Internet becomes a partner of libraries if the latter manage to use all the advantages supplied by the former to extend the community they serve and to diversify the offer of information and documentation products and services specific to this type of institution.

The most important internal vulnerability is libraries' lack of response to change. Used to be in a state of relative passivity because the users would come to the libraries and because their main function was to inform, libraries need now to meet users' needs and become active, get involved in the communities' activities, and make their presence and usefulness noted because of the changes and challenges in the social environment. The measure in which libraries manage to adapt to changes is the measure of their integration in the communities they serve. If they fail to do that, they are the only ones to be blamed for driving away the community public; they end up by self-isolating and their specific functions are taken over by other institutions or structures that are not

necessarily specialised in information and communication.

Another vulnerability is the fragile status of the library professions. The place and role of library professions in society is a measure of the society's recognition of their importance for the community. The status of specific professions becomes fragile when specific competencies acquired in professional training institutions do not match the real necessities of the professions. Employing in libraries people with no special training has a double negative impact on the social status of library professions. On the one hand, people lacking minimum specific competencies are employed as specialists; on the other hand, the perception is that library professions are simplistic ones that do not ask for specialised training. Negative effects of such approaches are obvious in libraries' activity and in the difficulties they face, difficulties that are increasingly more difficult to overcome. The status of library professions is uneven at European and international levels. In the countries where special training is essential (e.g. France, U.S.A., United Kingdom, etc.), libraries have an established status in society and are actively involved in their communities, while in the countries where library profession are not established, they are less developed: they are not involved in the communities they serve and they have relatively the status of tolerated public institutions.

3. Social role of libraries

The American Library Association (ALA) synthesises the reasons why libraries play an important social role within their communities (American Library Association s.a.). The main reasons would be:

- Libraries support disadvantaged groups, playing an important role in non-formal education (e.g. literacy of children from disadvantaged environments);
- Libraries bring cultural and social added value to inhabited areas: studies carried out in the U.S.A. show that people prefer to live close to libraries because such areas are considered safer and libraries are indicators of a high standard of living;
- Libraries are socialisation environments since they facilitate meetings between people and groups of people;
- Libraries are important for their collections and for the support in information and documentation;
- Libraries are spaces for public meetings, reunions, and debates - true Agoras of the community;
- Libraries support cultural activities and community members that wish to perform (in small communities, libraries are the main exhibition and cultural areas);
- Libraries are working areas for individuals or groups, managing to ensure proper working conditions and relative privacy to their visitors;
- Libraries are true suppliers of technology, of necessary ICTs for different users.

These remarks on the role of libraries in their communities show that access to documents and information no longer ranks first and that libraries on the whole, as institutions gathering community members count most. People see libraries as community spaces, as places where everybody is welcome, free of charge and indiscriminately, a space where everybody can enjoy cultural, educational, and social activities. It is more and more obvious that libraries become suppliers of technology and infrastructure for community activities making them get involved actively in the most diverse community activities.

4. Configuration and reconfiguration of library space

In contemporary libraries, the documentation, reading, and individual work area is no longer dominant. Group activities and modern technologies determine configurations and

reconfigurations of interior architecture and design.

Libraries need to understand that they are parts of their communities; therefore, they need to meet the informational, cultural, educational, and social needs of the community. The diversification of services provided for the community and the increasing exigencies of the users have caused change in library interior architecture and design (University of Southern California 2018). The requirements regarding contemporary library buildings have determined changes in the architectural and building standards of these specialised buildings. There is expansion of working areas, of socialization areas, and of cultural areas in contemporary libraries. Periodical repositories make room for open access to documents and traditional reading areas make room for digital technologies and services. Library technology should not be inferior to that people have access to at home, on the contrary. Last generation technologies, specialised information applications, specialists that can provide assistance and proper instruction can be assets of useful libraries.

Literature claims that modern libraries should design their interior so that it provide four types of areas (Petra 2017):

- A social area for interaction, communication, and exchange of knowledge and information, for group activities, etc., i.e. a true area for human socialization;
- An area for study and contemplation (reading rooms or other silent areas ensuring the quiet and privacy necessary for the users' study and work), i.e. an area for individual activities;
- An area for technologies or for innovation that allows the use of ICTs and the development of competencies in the use of specialised technologies and applications;
- A neutral area for the public (cultural areas, exhibition areas, or areas for social and artistic events).

It is worth noting that access to information and reading in the public area is no longer dominant among library activities. Together with individual needs of the users, other user group, public, and community needs become equally important and, in some contexts, dominant. The community as whole and homogeneous groups of people are, now, specific library users. It is necessary to configure and reconfigure library space to meet the new demands and exigencies of individual and group users.

5. Library and community

Of all library types representing the national library system of a country, public libraries represent community the best.

Public libraries are characterized by serving a very heterogeneous public from the perspective of age, level of professional training, personal and professional pursuits, fields of interest, etc. and, in addition, users of public libraries can also be users of other types of libraries (school libraries, university libraries, scientific libraries, specialised libraries). Public libraries fulfil their mission and social role if they manage to harmonise the needs of all categories of users thus becoming an identity element of the community served.

What would be the specific elements that could become assets of libraries in their relationship with the local administration and the community? The study *Library Services in the Digital Age* (Zickuhr et al. 2013) lists the strengths of contemporary libraries:

- Libraries are community centres that really link the population with community institutions (libraries are partners of schools, of cultural institutions, and of social work, and they are involved actively in supporting their specific activities);
- Libraries provide indiscriminately, free of charge access to information resources in both traditional and digital formats (libraries are supported by their communities through local authorities aiming at mediating in a professional, specialised way access to information for all community members);

- Libraries play an important role in continuous education and a complementary role in education (libraries are involved in non-formal education);
- Libraries are characterised by flexibility, quick assimilation of new technologies, provision of training in their use, and by diversification of activities for the public;
- Libraries are permanently open to innovation and technology, to digital products and services, and to providing distance access;
- Libraries play an active role in user training (individuals or legal persons, individuals or groups of individuals) and are open to cooperation and partnerships with similar institutions and with the most community institutions;
- Libraries are managers of knowledge, i.e. information science theories and techniques are acknowledged as the most performing in organising and finding information.

The above remarks show that contemporary libraries are institutions with a high degree of involvement in community activities, a partner of other community institutions, a support of the most diverse activities, and a central place of the community or the area where every individual or group of individuals can find their places.

Another study identifies 23 reasons why libraries can be considered the most important place on town (Edwards et al. 2013). These reasons are grouped into five categories describing the mission of contemporary libraries.

The basic principle is that libraries are community areas and active parts of the community. Thus:

Libraries are binders of community, i.e. they help to revive disadvantaged areas, and they are partners of community in the most diverse long-term sustainable projects. The development of library collections also reflect the concerns and needs of a community and of each user, and libraries are responsible for the preservation of the cultural heritage of the community, i.e. they are responsible for the preservation of the archives, preservation, and conservation of documents and even of the objects reflecting local history and community, including minority groups. Libraries promote democratic values and are active parts of the local community life; they are socialization areas in which people meet and communicate with other people. Libraries also “speak” through their architecture, culture, and identity of a community. Libraries are, usually, historically or architecturally representative buildings.

Libraries are community centres for different people and populations (they reflect the features of the community), i.e. they support minority communities and immigrants willing to integrate disadvantaged people due to their mission of addressing indiscriminately all social categories and groups and all types of individuals.

Libraries are art centres, i.e. they promote and support local artists, professionals, and amateurs, and ensure access to artistic events for all.

Libraries are closely related to universities, i.e. they are integrated in the academic community, where they provide distance access to documentation and learning resources, they help the members of the academic community develop and manage documentary content for information and learning, and they promote civic discourse.

Libraries are partners of the youth, i.e. they teach youth basic life concepts, they organise tutorials, and learning programmes, summer schools on different topics as acknowledged support for children education.

Acknowledging the role of libraries in the community resides in the measure in which local authorities and community members use competencies and resources provided by this type of public institution. A community eases its own work and solves a lot of problems if it knows how to effectively use its libraries.

Contemporary libraries are not only active parts of a community, but they are increasingly seen as building up communities (Twomey 2017 or 2018). How is that possible? Through the promotion

by libraries of educational and cultural programmes for the local community, by facilitating interactions between people, by involving libraries in the social activities of the community (debates, discussions, different topical campaigns, etc.), by conserving local written heritage (and they should be asked to do so by local authorities). Libraries are and should be in the centre of community and support local culture and other activities of the community (Morris 2011 cited by Twomey 2017 or 2018). Even if an individual does not come to a library for its services, the simple fact that he/she uses the institution is enough to show the importance of libraries in a community. A library space is considered the third space used by people after family space, job space, or school space (Oldenburg 1991 cited by Twomey 2017 or 2018). In addition, it is the space of an institution where one can spend his/her free time free of charge on cultural, educational, and recreational activities, which does not always happen to museums or performance institutions like cinemas, opera houses, or theatres.

6. Supporting contemporary libraries

It is unanimously accepted that contemporary libraries are compelled to face unprecedented challenges. The dynamics of changes in the world of information and documents has forced libraries to adapt continuously to the new realities of the community and social environments. Overcoming difficult situations on their way to accomplishing their social fate, redefining their mission are possible with the support of professional community at national level - through professional associations - and at international level - through specialized, regional or global associations such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions - IFLA) or international organisms such as UNESCO. To support contemporary libraries and the professions of information, these institutional structures have developed and promoted official declarations, resolutions, and directive documents affirming the place, role, and mission of the structures of information and documentation in society and community, the necessity of free access to information for all people, education and culture for all, preservation and promotion of local and national cultural heritage. The *IFLA-UNESCO Manifesto* from 1994 (IFLA&UNESCO 1994), which redefines contemporary public library and its social, community role presents its new mission and objectives. Contemporary public libraries should be an integrated part of a community and should participate actively in educational, cultural, and social projects. Access to information is only one of the activities contemporary libraries should carry out. This official document was followed by the *IFLA-UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto* (IFLA&UNESCO 2006), *IFLA-UNESCO Manifesto for Digital Libraries* (IFLA&UNESCO 2011) and the *IFLA Guide for School Libraries* (IFLA 2015). The translation of these documents in numerous national languages shows the interest of national professional communities in their promotion at national level and in their contemporary mission are continuously changing all over the world; to do so, society on the whole and authorities become aware of this and support libraries.

Other ways of supporting libraries are legislative initiatives making up a clear, coherent legislative framework, local, regional, national, and even international programmes specific to library activities (heritage, cultural, educational), common projects to support local communities. The exchange of good practices and promotion activities could really support these institutions.

Promoting research in the field of Information and Communication Science, specialty, scientific and professional publications are ways of averment in community and society of information professions.

7. Conclusions

Literature concerning contemporary libraries and their role in society allows several conclusions to be drawn.

It is clear that we witness a redefinition of the mission of libraries and of their functions, which draws restructuring, remodelling, and design of library space in accordance with its new attributions and requirements. Contemporary libraries come out of a state of relative passivity and play an increasingly active role in the community sphere. Starting with the 21st century, libraries pay an increasing importance to educational, cultural, and communicational function. Providing *access to information and documents* is still one of their basic activities, but not necessarily their main activity. Are equally important *non-formal education activities* that make libraries partner of schools, *cultural activities* providing citizen the opportunity of expressing their artistic side and also access to diversified culture, and *local heritage conservation and valorisation activities*. From an architectural perspective, contemporary libraries focus on public, cultural, exhibition areas rather than on storage facilities and reading rooms as in the past.

Libraries build up and link communities. Libraries are open institution where free, indiscriminately access to information, technology, training, culture, social and community life are ensured, thus contributing to the development of the community they belong to. Libraries continue to be areas where citizens act like people interested in finding a document or some information, and who need specialised assistance to do so, either as people interested in using a technological infrastructure for public use, or as people interested in using a public space to express themselves artistically and culturally or simply as people in a community area enjoying spending free time in a relaxing, educational manner.

Contemporary libraries are true community areas expressing their communities.

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