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Changes

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The *Romanian Journal of Library and Information Science* is moving from the four issues per year to a more sustainable two issues per year periodicity. We have been thinking about this change for some time now, and finally decided to make the move starting with 2020. This does not necessarily mean that we will be publishing less articles but it will allow us greater maneuvering space in order to both select only the best articles for publishing and keep our publishing schedule. We also wish to announce the departure of our long-time editor, Robert Coravu. His more than 15 years at the journal has changed it for the better and helped it become what it is today. During this period, the *Romanian Journal of Library of Information Science* has gone through a series of changes (English as secondary and then only publishing language, print to electronic only, paid (print) to Open Access, inclusion in several databases etc.) that modernized it and increased the overall quality. We welcome our new colleague, Mihaela Mihăilă, from the Polytechnic University of Timișoara, and wish her a long and fruitful spell at the journal.

The first issue of this new format of the journal comes in a time of crisis and opportunity for libraries. The pandemic has challenged our field and this special issue of the Romanian Journal of Library and Information Science seeks to show the difficulties faced by libraries and how they managed to adapt and overcome the situation.

Libraries are an important part of the communities: they offer access to information, leisure and educational activities; they act as social hubs and bring valuable resources to disadvantaged communities. Most of the benefits they offer are based on activities that imply closeness and physical presence: from the lending of books to the wide variety of courses, libraries have offered both a space and materials to those in need. The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally challenged the usual status quo: libraries have been closed and most of their services halted. However, the pandemic has also offered a stage upon which the libraries can showcase their creativity and importance in the community. Libraries moved their courses on online platforms, diversified their electronic services and even helped the medical system by 3D printing personal protective equipment for health care workers.

Topics discussed in this special issue include an investigation into the ways in which an academic library from Norway adapted to the COVID-19 crisis (*How an academic library worked during the Covid-19 pandemic* by Ane Landøy and Trude Færevaaag) and an „analysis of the online presence of Romanian libraries” (*LIBRARIES IN THE CONTEXT OF A PANDEMIC: CRISIS AND OPORTUNITY* by Elena Tîrziman). The reader will also find an article regarding RDA (Resource Description and Access) and its functionalities (*RDA – THE LONG WAY TO A CHANGE OF VISION* by Victoria Frâncu).

In the end, we wish to cordially invite all those interested to participate in our journal's life, either by submitting an article or by becoming a reviewer for the journal. All information required for this is available on our website (www.rrbsi.ro).

How an academic library worked during the COVID-19 pandemic

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In this paper, we will investigate how an academic library, the University of Bergen Library in Norway, handled the challenges following the Covid-19 pandemic when the University of Bergen closed the campus on short notice and the Library immediately had to go fully digital in all its services to academics and students. The academics and students were helped by more and automated access to electronic books and services, and we show the numbers of usage. The e-mail and chat-functions were expanded, with librarians working from home. As for the Library staff, having to start working from home offices with less than ideal infrastructure, the main issues were missing their colleagues. How did the Library return to (almost) normal services?

Keywords: *Academic library, Norway, Covid-19, Digital Library*

1. The National Library of Romania and its environment: competitors and users: an introduction

A few words as a background about the University of Bergen and its library: University of Bergen is located in Bergen, Norway's second largest city, located on the West Coast of Norway. The University of Bergen (UiB) is an internationally recognised research university. Academic diversity and high quality are fundamental, and UiB is the most cited university in Norway.

There are seven faculties at UiB and there are close to 18 500 students at the university. Around 2 000 of these are international students. More than 4 000 faculty and staff are employed by the UiB. The library presents itself: "The University Library is a public research library at the University of Bergen (...) The main task of the library is to provide information and documentation services for research, teaching and dissemination at the University of Bergen. It also serves other institutions and users, including collaboration with local, national, and international partners. The library is open to the general public" (UB 2020).

Also: "The holdings of the University Library have been developed to serve research and teaching at the university. The library houses special collections such as photos, manuscripts, newspapers and maps. (...) A variety of databases and digital journals, to which the library subscribes, are also searchable online via the university network. (UB 2020)"

1.2 On COVID-19

Coronavirus refers to a family of viruses. COVID-19 – or Coronavirus Disease – is the infectious disease caused by a newly discovered type of coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems are more likely to develop serious illness. (IFLA 2020)

According to WHO, the COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes (IFLA 2020).

1.3 On COVID-19 and libraries

IFLA, the International Federation of Library Association, the global organisation for libraries, collects and publishes information and advice on how libraries can cope with the corona situation, and how to continue working when libraries are closed down, as they have been in many countries. A key question has been around the risk of infection through contact with materials carrying coronavirus, or from computer equipment. In many situations, access to computers is seen as essential, and exceptions have been made to library closures in order to allow this, while implementing tough rules designed to limit the risk.

Given that close physical contact appears to be the primary means of catching the virus, a core response has been ‘social distancing’ – keeping a safe distance between individuals in order to reduce the risks of the virus passing from one person to another. Coughing, sneezing, and even talking tends to mean that potentially contagious droplets are emitted into the air. Libraries of all sorts from around the world have been working hard to provide access to collections and services remotely, often investing time and effort in updating websites and computer systems in order to deal with demand. While many libraries already had a strong digital presence, many others have now moved to create one in order to continue serving members (IFLA, 2020).

Many libraries are seeing a major increase in interest in digital resources and have promoted their digital services, and there have also been major efforts to boost access to eBooks. In addition, a lot of publishers and vendors have taken helpful initiatives, by providing open access, especially to materials related to COVID-19. Others have facilitated access by making it easier to log-in and access materials from outside of official networks (IFLA 2020).

Moves towards the reopening of libraries were increasingly on the agenda as countries look to lift broader restrictions. One step being taken to reduce risks is to limit the number of people in the library at any one time. This makes it easier to maintain social distance. Some efforts globally include giving users specific times when they can come to the library to collect books, limiting concentration of users, f. ex. by keeping a number of areas (children’s reading areas, meeting rooms, self-study areas) inaccessible. Measures also include removing some furniture including access to computer and limiting the time spent in the library. In some countries, services are provided outside the buildings and opening time is limited to particular groups (IFLA 2020).

The libraries have also worked hard to promote hygienic measures. Underlying is the need to keep staff, but also patrons, safe.

This has also been the concern of the Norwegian Library Association, who put together a set of guidelines for libraries, focusing on three main points (NBF 2020):

- A) Sick persons should not be present.
- B) Good hygiene and cleaning
- C) Reduced contact between persons

The guidelines cover issues such as “regulations for staff”, “opening hours”, “staffing”, “services for and contact with users”, “numbers of visitors”, “regulations for users”, “limited use of the library” and “use of equipment in the library room”. These guidelines were developed as a result of insecurity, especially among leaders of the public libraries (of which there are many small libraries with only one – two staff in Norway), and the lack of adequate help from the National Library of Norway, who mainly said:

“Decisions related to health issues in connection with local library operations must be made in each municipality in consultation with health authorities. These decisions must be based on guidelines provided by the Institute of Public Health and information from the government. This includes questions about contact with the public and about infection”. (NB 2020)

1.4 On Norwegian students and academics under COVID-19

The physical closure of Norwegian universities from March 12 had immediate and direct consequences for nearly 280,000 students and more than 38,000 employees. However, the authorities and the sector itself have agreed that the activities should be maintained to the greatest possible extent, even if the physical presence is excluded or severely limited. This has created an urgent and massive need for alternative solutions, both for teaching, guidance, research, dissemination and administration. The main question is how well the sector has handled this major change.

Almost two months after the institutions were closed, there is evidence of adaptability. We do not need to go further back than to August 2018, where both Universities Norway and several university rectors acknowledged that the higher education sector is a "super-thankship" that is stuck in old forms of learning. A survey from 2018 (Støren and Nesje, 2018) showed that traditional lectures were still the most widely used teaching form at Norwegian educational institutions, and that little has happened since the early 2000s. The contrast is high with the research and higher education minister's message to the sector on March 19, 2020, where he says he is "insanely impressed with everything you (the UoH sector) are doing in the face of the crisis the country is in". The digital teaching tool Zoom has been taken in large-scale use, a number of doctoral dissertations have been presented digitally and researchers are communicating with Norwegian and foreign colleagues digitally.

For an academic library, students and academics are the main user groups, and several surveys have been done on how scholars and students are experiencing the situation with closed campus, as was the situation in Norway from 12. March 2020, and digital teaching.

One of the subjects with a large number of students, who is also a Centre of Excellence in teaching is BioCEED. They performed a survey and found indications that the transition to only digital teaching in some way has gone quite well – for quite a lot of students, teachers and courses. However, there are also considerable challenges with the current situation. Many students receive less organized teaching both in terms of quantity and quality. Communication is essential to ease worry and to maintain progression and motivation. Organized teaching is important to ensure a structure and encourage contact. However, the students indicate that they want digital teaching to continue after opening of campus – as a supplement to campus teaching. (BioCeed 2020)

The same results were found in a survey done by the Centre of Excellence in Law, CELL, at the University of Oslo, and a survey done at the Faculty of humanities (Department of History): for example 78 per cent of the Bergen history students responded that they think the study situation has deteriorated after the shutdown. 70 % of students responded that their efforts have been poorer, and 32 percent say that the shutdown has led to far worse study effort (CELL 2020; UiB 2020).

An interesting feature of the students' responses is that the library and lack of library facilities are not mentioned at all, and there are no library relevant questions in the surveys.

1.5 Research questions and methodological issues

We will investigate how the University of Bergen Library in Norway, handled the challenges following the Covid-19 pandemic when the university closed the campus on short notice and the Library immediately had to go fully digital in all its services. What were the consequences for services to academics and students? What were the consequences for the Library staff? What existing systems and structures were used, and what new ones were implemented? And how did the Library return to (almost) normal services? These are the questions we will look closer at.

The main data will come from experiences during the pandemic, and from newspapers and websites, both before and after March 13th. We will also refer to findings from surveys done, in order to investigate how a large number of staff and students respond to questions about their well-being. We expect this mixed methods approach to yield a richer and more diverse picture of this extreme situation.

2. What existed already in digital format?

Returning to the University of Bergen Library, when COVID-19 closed the libraries and all buildings on campus, what was already in place in the digital library?

Like all Norwegian academic libraries, University of Bergen Library has for many years invested heavily in electronic books and journals, and has in 2019: 465.000 electronic books (1 million printed), and 31.000 unique titles of electronic journals (800 printed). The number of electronic books and journals is growing, following a decision by the Board of the University in the 1990s. In our experience, the acceptance of journals in electronic format has been almost universal, especially among the academic staff.

The university has also supported the development and implementation of “Litteraturkiosken”, an electronic system for accessing book chapters and journal articles from paper format for required reading literature, and this is also well accepted and used by the students. The Litteraturkiosken is connected to the digital reading list system, making it easy for students to move from the reading list to the literature in digital format.

When it comes to electronic books, however, the acceptance and usage is lower, especially among students, in line with findings from multi-national surveys. (Gastinger, Landøy, Repanovici, 2015; Landøy, Færevaa, 2019; Mizrachi et al, 2018)

The Library had already implemented user oriented web pages, containing different kinds of instructions in written and video format. The web-pages were both general and subject specific, and covered situations from “how to use the library catalogue” to “how to write your PhD”.

A chat-function, implemented from 2012 was under evaluation in the fall term in 2019, and a decision was made to test out using a newly opened help function for the entire university instead of continuing with the library chat. When COVID-19 struck, the library chat was immediately reopened, and opening hours were extended. The chat uses the software Zopim / Zendesk chat (<https://www.zopim.com/>).

The software is easy to use for any library staff. There is a rota of librarians responding to inquiries, and the first in the morning also checks if there is anything in the history (i.e. questions that came in when the chat is not manned). The service is normally manned Monday to Friday 10 am to 15 (3 pm) and patrons can also leave messages after scheduled hours.

The University of Bergen Library is organisationally and geographically divided in six libraries and a department of special collections. All the units have their own dedicated e-mail address, and there was already a system in place for replying to the e-mails. There is also a dedicated joint e-mail address for reporting problems connected to the library catalogue and off-campus access to electronic literature. Due to the geographically spread libraries the library had already slowly started a transition toward more digital meetings.

A popular service for PhDs and researchers is called “Shut up and write!” The concept entails researchers bringing their laptops to a meeting room in the library building at a set time. After an introductory round around the table, where people explain what they are doing that day, they write (or read, or revise) in quiet for 45 minutes. There is a 15 minute break where talking and discussion is allowed, before another 45 minutes period. This may go on for one more round. There are academic librarians present to facilitate, and to respond to questions during the breaks.

The Library has also started experimenting with digital teaching and library trainings, but this will not be discussed in this paper, as the library training sessions are not scheduled for the period between late March and Mid-June (the late part of the spring term).

3. What happened?

3.1 The first full closure, March 12th – April 20th: The library buildings were also closed for library staff (working from home offices).

Books and journals:

The Library was already almost fully digital regarding journals, and started subscribing to a “get-it-now”-service for journal articles that needed interlibrary loan services. The articles were delivered in pdf to the patrons’ e-mails within a couple of hours after a request through normal channels (library system or library e-mail). This service was not marketed particularly, and in the first ten weeks 86 articles were acquired through this service.

When the library buildings closed and the printed books became unavailable for the patrons, the Library offered access to more electronic books. Some of the books that the Library had already purchased or subscribed to were opened for more concurrent users. This was an initiative from the publishers or vendors. Also, the Library set up an online user-initiated book purchasing service where users could choose among an additional 450.000 electronic books. This service was marketed through the Library social media, and the books were searchable through the library catalogue. The service was set up with IP-identification, and the Library already had VPN and proxy server, so it was quite easily available for academics and students from their home offices and remote study work places.

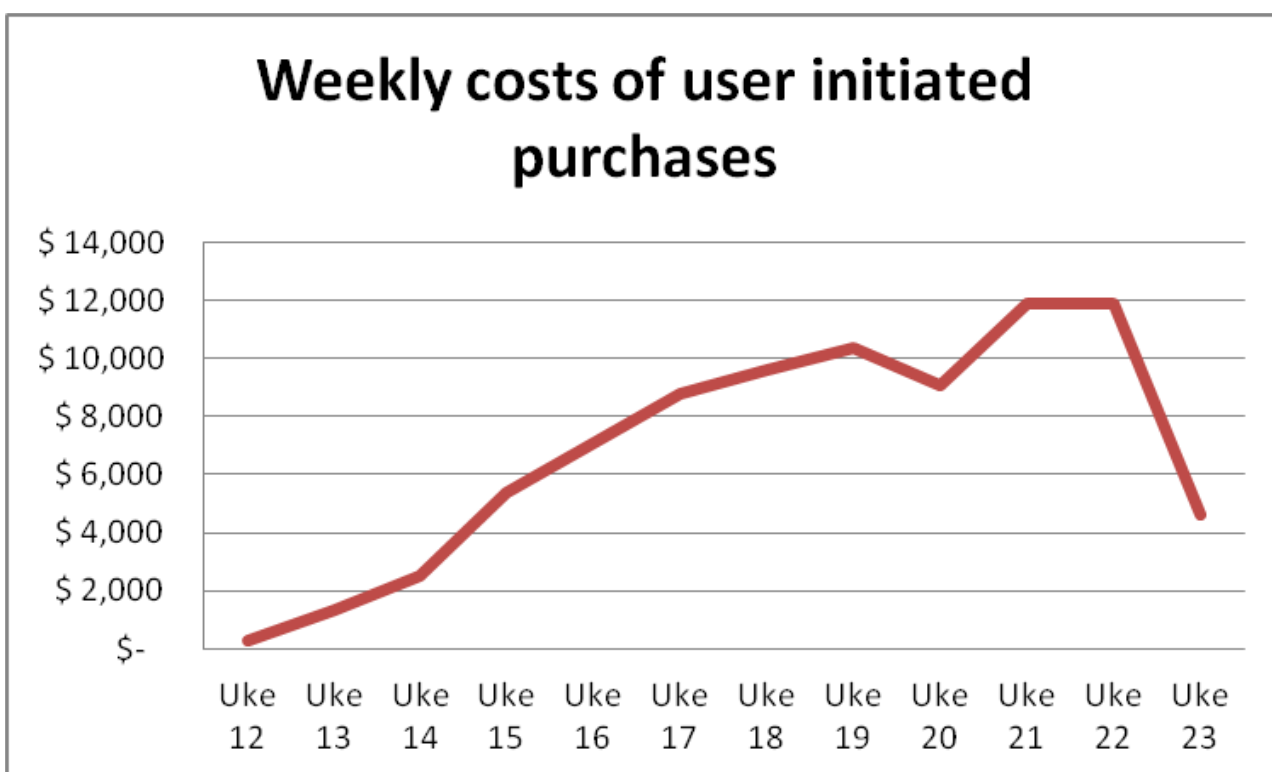
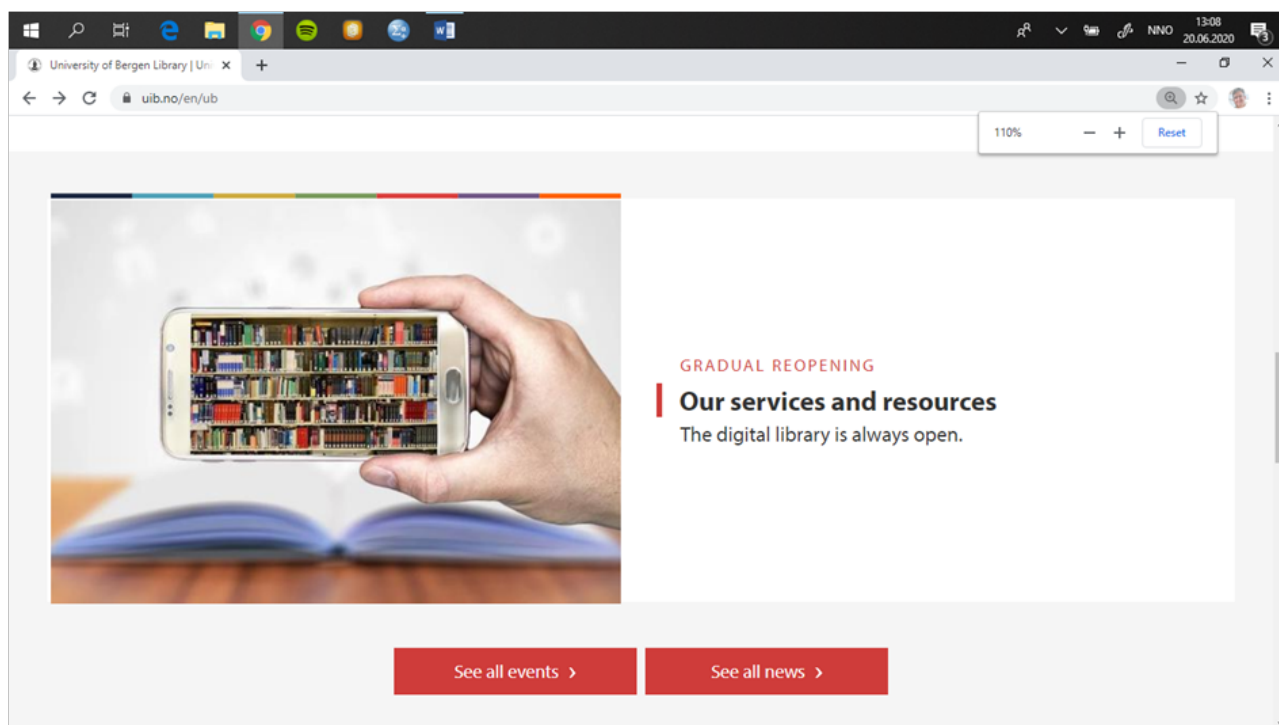


Figure 1: Weekly cost of user initiated purchases in US\$ from March 16 to June 1st 2020. (Svanberg – personal communication)

Web pages:

Both the University and the Library set up special web pages for COVID-19 related information. The Library focused on what services would be available during the time when the library buildings were closed, and how to get access to literature and information.



From March 12th to June 5th, 2020 there was a 137 % increase in usage compared to the same period in 2019: from 60.590 page views in 2019 to 143.409 in 2020.

Chat:

As mentioned earlier, the Library chat services were under evaluation and had been temporarily suspended while one was testing out the new “UiB-help”-services. However, the software and the trained staff were still in place, and an initiative came from the library staff to re-open the chat and market the services more widely than before. There were 625 chat requests between March 12th and June 5th, as compared to 247 in the same period in 2019, an increase of 153%. An overview of the type of questions shows that most questions were concerning loans, returns, reservations and help in accessing journal articles. Also the open repository and other issues regarding open publishing, and support for using EndNote and other referencing tools/referencing question. The main user group, according to the type of questions, seem to be students.

UiB help is a relatively new service that aims to be a one-stop-shop for all kinds of questions, and the Library has responsibility for certain areas. There were approximately 50 requests through this service, mainly from university staff, and most of them concerning the digital study literature system Leganto which had deadline for information about courses in fall term 2020 from academic staff around May 1st this year.

Feedback

E-mails to the libraries increased, and this was also due to the fact that the Library websites were amended, the phone numbers were removed and the e-mail addresses were put more prominently in place. One of special the email-addresses is accessed directly from the user interface of the library catalogue. This address saw an increase in issues between March 12th and June 5th of 85%, compared to the same period in 2019, from 333 to 615. The main kind of questions were problems with access to electronic resources from outside campus.

Shut up and write

The “Shut up and write!” sessions went digital to Zoom immediately after the library buildings closed, and was expanded to two sessions per week, one for PhDs and postdocs, and one also for staff and students. In addition, the academic librarian in charge opened for digital check in/supervision every morning. According to feedback from the PhDs, this service was beneficial to maintaining progression and a feeling of unity.

Also, referencing sessions with students were done digitally (over Zoom) and also by phone, which would “normally” happen face to face.

Staff issues:

The University was clear from the first days of closure that no-one was going to lose their job or be suspended, including here students working as library assistants, and project workers in the Special collections who normally tidy and move books and journals from stacks to stacks. As for many other workplaces the norm after March 12th was office from home, with the Library buildings being physically closed to all, patrons and staff equally. This had its own set of challenges, with change of routines (especially for the approximately 50% of the library staff who normally work in the collections/with the books). Digital meetings and even conferences were set up and conducted over previously unknown and untested software.

After the first days of confusion and slight chaos had settled, employees were able to establish good routines that made it easier for the individual to solve the tasks from home. They were, for example, getting to know and mastering digital tools, establishing digital meeting points for professional meetings and exercising social community.

In the beginning, the home office was not optimal for different reasons. One challenge was to create a workplace with PC and monitor, extra display, ergonomically adapted tables, chair, mouse, webcam, headset, correct cables. Also, other problematic issues in the home office situation, including family (schools and kindergartens were also closed) infrastructure (furniture, computers and network/broadband) and tasks (not all employees had been doing tasks that could easily be transferred to a home office situation). This is equal to the situation in many other workplaces, both inside and outside the University.

After the employees brought home more adapted ICT and ergonomic equipment, the situation improved considerably, but still some worked under poor conditions with noise from the surroundings in the local area which made it difficult to work concentrated, others had poor broadband conditions.

The Library safety representatives (an elected office among the staff), sent out a working environment survey between 24 and 27 March, after approximately 10 days library closure. Most of the staff (70 %) responded. 64 % said they were fine or good; 31 % said they were ok, and 5 % found the situation challenging and frustrating.

In response to the open question: “How are you now?” the majority said, “fine”, “good” or “ok”, but most did also add words like “special”, “surrealistic”, “strange”, “unreal”, “scary”, “sad”, “boring”, “empty”, “challenging”, or “chaotic”. Among the positive comments are found “this is educational”, “we learn new software and systems”, “I have enough to do”, “I have enough time”, “I can handle the digital contact”. The negative comments focus on “missing the contact with colleagues and students”, “worry, isolation and sadness”, “not enough tasks, not broadband, computers or other equipment”, “difficult/challenging with children; home schooling and home kindergarten”. This is in line with comments from other sectors as well. There is no proper research done on this in a Norwegian context yet, but it is widely reported in the media. (See f.ex Larsen 2020)

Positive comments came also from the Library Director, who had an information post on the intranet every day, as the University leadership tried to cope with all challenges. On the other hand, among the responses to several open questions, 32 mentioned “missing colleagues”. When asked about the level of follow-up from leaders, 67 % (50 respondents) agree to “high level of follow-up” and 16 % to some degree. 4 % says “low degree”, and 8 % don’t know.

This survey was followed by another, mapping the needs for computer equipment (laptops, screens, keyboards) and ergonomic equipment (chairs and other office equipment). Some of this were picked up from the library buildings, while others were new purchases, paid for by the Library. A few enterprising librarians also used the possibility to get into the buildings to take home all the books in the workflow, needing classification and cataloguing.

3.2 Gradually reopening of the Library (April 20th to June 22nd)

The Library started offering a «take-away»-service from April 20th, where patrons could request a book (or several) to be picked by library staff from the shelves, and prepared for pick-up at set times outside the library building. This continued until June 19th. The service was open only to patrons from UiB, and only for books from own collections. Between April 20th and June 19th there were 4446 requests for loans, and 4140 went through. (between March 12th and April 19th there were no loans). In a normal year one would expect around 22.500 loans in the same period, so there were approximately 25 % loans. This must be considered the absolutely most necessary for students and academics.

The service was launched on via UiB's corona website, student pages (My UiB), the Library's own website and social media such as Facebook and Instagram. A special infection control routine was created for handling the collections. This was at an early stage of the corona crisis, and there was great uncertainty about whether books were infected or not. In order to protect both employees and users against possible infection, it was important that as few persons as possible had physical contact with the book collections, and that the handover to the users took place as contactless as possible. Employees who had to return to campus and the libraries to perform the service had to be formally approved through a simple application with the HR director, in case of the necessity of infection detection.

The challenge for the Library was that the service was based on volunteers among the staff. There were many considerations: not being in one of the groups with higher risk; preferably not using public transport to get to work, knowledge of how to handle orders in ALMA (the library catalogue system), etc. Finally, there were about 25 employees who were in the scheme distributed across the 6 libraries.

Users could order available material from the Library's own collections via the web-catalogue, and Library staff prepared the orders by picking up from the collections, lending, and putting in a bag ready for collection. The users were notified by e-mail when and where material could be retrieved within a specified deadline 12 – 14 Monday, Wednesday and Friday). Upon arrival at the library's main entrance, the user rang the library's desk phone, and the library employee came out and set the bag outside the main door. The user then retrieved the bag.

The reason for very limited opening hours for retrieval of ordered material was to have as little traffic to the campus as possible, and to avoid the rush hour traffic and public transport.

The service quickly became popular - hundreds of orders were already received in the first few days, especially book-heavy subjects at the Faculty of Social Sciences. The humanities and Law Library also experienced great demand for book material. It was a busy time for the few library staff at work. An estimated 75 % of the ordered material was collected within the deadline. The scheme worked until 19th June.

During this period, it was not possible to return books due to infection control, but if the students (especially the ones that left the city) needed to return books they were allowed. From May 18th the possibility to return books was reopened with some restrictions.

Also from May 18th the students were allowed access to specially prepared working places in the library building, with strict enforcement of the infection control rules. This entails more cleaning, more space around each seat, and librarians and security staff to supervise. In order to use the spaces the students had to apply, and to pass an infection control course in cough- and hand hygiene. Patrons could still not find books in the stacks themselves, but had to order and pick up by the door, also the students that were allowed to read in the library buildings.

From June 22nd the library buildings are reopening with normal services for academics and UiB-students, and with shorter opening hours.

Staff issues after gradually reopening

When the government announced that from June 15th, staff and students could return to an open campus, the joy of staff and students looking forward to this was due to the physical, mental and social consequences they felt the home office brought. But many also did not think that the intention for employees to return to their offices before the summer to prepare for the fall semester was a particularly good idea. Alongside the concern about whether it was justifiable in terms of infection protection and unnecessary strain and use of public transport, it was also emphasized that home office is perceived as a more efficient way of working and which could also provide a health benefit. Employees felt that it was unnecessary to return to campus before the holidays because they were so well established at home with good routines for good job performance, and had the benefits of being able to work flexibly.

The University has always had a great deal of trust in its staff, and emphasizes the value of all the good work done from home offices in the state of emergency that is the COVID-19 crisis. For the employer, the challenge is that home office has not previously been the rule, but the exception. There are a number of laws and regulations drawn up by the Labour Inspectorate which applies when using a home office and which are enshrined in the Work Environment Act. For example, in addition to written agreements between the employee and the employer, it must take into account the working environment and facilities such as tables, chairs, computer mouse / keyboards, indoor climate, and not least safety when using equipment at home. Home office offers many opportunities, but also carries a risk, and among other things may pose a major security challenge for the Library and University.

Further use of home office for administrative and technical staff at UiB can be agreed with the nearest manager. In addition, UiB will start, together with the labour unions, investigating a future model for the use of home offices during parts of working hours for this group of employees.

4. Conclusions

The University of Bergen, like most other institutions of Higher Education in Norway, was not prepared for a pandemic. The Library had an updated risk-analysis and was well under way with intern control and contingency plans. They would eventually include pandemics. However, the Library and staff responded rapidly and decisively to this new and unforeseen situation. We expect that the Library will learn from the closed campus and that the leaders will be aware of the need for social interaction and combatting screen fatigue that may occur if staff is not encouraged to take breaks and go outside.

Another of the changes that are predicted for library staff, as for the rest of the university and the public sector, will be less travel, including less public transport, more digital meetings, and also digital conferences. There will probably be more use of home office for those who can do their work from home, but this may lead to challenges, and also needs to take laws and regulations for worker welfare into account.

Also, there are positive experiences to students, academics and library staff: Mastering new digital tools and feeling more comfortable when working with them, both for meetings, supervisions and trainings.

We also imagine that COVID-19 will contribute to a more speedy shift in usage from printed to electronic books, especially among students. We believe that when the students are forced to use electronic books they will adapt. This is what has happened with electronic journals. Earlier, we have found indications that part of the preference for paper comes from the familiarity with the tools that can be used on paper (writing notes, underlining, and marking the text) (Gastinger, Landøy, Repanovici, 2015; Landøy, Færevaa, 2019)

On the other hand, a survey conducted in June 2020 shows that 30 % of 1700 students state that they have learnt best by reading both printed and electronic materials, while 45 % said they would like 75 % of the reading material in paper format. This is astonishingly similar to the numbers from three years ago, even though the amount of digital books have multiplied during the last years (Svendsen 2020).

The students were asked how they were coping, and said they did not learn as much when they were only reading literature on a screen. In an open field in the survey, they said they missed libraries and other social meeting places (Svendsen 2020).

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Libraries in the context of the pandemic: Crisis and Opportunity

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Any crisis situation is a challenge for libraries. The pandemic caused by COVID - 19 cannot be compared with other crisis situations encountered by libraries. This crisis has profoundly affected the activities of libraries, their presence in the community, their relations with users, and even their mission and vision of institutional development policies and strategies. Forced to carry out most of their activities online, libraries have reorganized and resized their activities and have looked for new ways to best adapt to the digital environment. At the same time, the crisis situation is also an opportunity to analyse the risks and vulnerabilities that they are obliged to face and to develop institutional development strategies that protect and benefit libraries in a competitive environment such as the digital environment. Thus, libraries become concerned with strengthening their online presence, making and publishing their own digital content from their own collections, producing value-added products and services, reaffirming the heritage function by which they constitute and promote the cultural, social, and scientific memory of the community they serve, and partnering with similar institutions in order to ensure mutual support and resource sharing. This study presents a brief analysis of the online presence of Romanian libraries. The contemporary library thus institutionally redefines itself, in terms of its mission, specific activities, products and services, of its presence in the digital competitive environment so that it can effectively fulfil its role at the level of the community it serves and of society as a whole.

Keywords: *library, pandemic, digital environment, crisis and opportunity, development*

1. Introduction

The year 2020 has put libraries in the face of unprecedented challenges through the consequences for the institution's activities and, in particular, for institutional development, for the mission and vision of the institution in a changing society and where situations may arise in which social networking is being redefined. The global health crisis, restrictions on the movement of persons and on ways of social and individual relationship also have a significant impact on libraries. In this particular context, libraries are put, firstly, in the face of crisis management and, secondly, where they need to properly and objectively analyse their position and role in society and, consequently, develop sustainable, flexible development strategies that take into account crisis situations, the information and education mission of libraries, the use and exploitation of library collections in both traditional and digital form through the development of products and services accessed over the Internet.

2. Managing COVID - 19: Crisis Management

The pandemic is a real test for libraries, revealing how they can respond to a health crisis situation. The pandemic status was established quite quickly globally and allowed libraries to react quickly to the situation created, often without the possibility of exploiting situations of good practice from similar institutions. Libraries adapted on the go to the situation created and tried to respond as appropriately as possible to the requests. The main objective was to ensure the safety of

the institution's own staff and users – from compliance with sanitary and hygiene rules to the restriction or redefinition of activities.

IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) monitored the pandemic situation at library level based on reports of libraries and library associations in various countries. A first observation is that the management approaches to the crisis situation are different from country to country and, in some cases, even from library to library in the same country ranging from the total closure of institutions to the adoption of restrictions or limitation of activities according to decisions taken at the level of local or national authorities. According to the IFLA website, the most common situation was *the closure of libraries for a limited time* (the maximum level of pandemic manifestation). Closing the library did not necessarily mean stopping all tasks. From the reports to the IFLA, it has been noted that work from home was organised, staff were redeployed to digitisation and online publication of information resources and was even personally seconded to the local authorities to assist social and community assistance services. Another situation was *to provide minimal services* (i.e. libraries were not totally closed to the public but offered home publishing loan services, online references limiting as much as possible interaction with library staff as well as users with each other). In this situation, cultural, social and educational activities and events in libraries were prohibited. There are also reports of libraries remaining open but a number of *restrictions and obligations* have been implemented for staff and the user audience as well as special rules for groups of users considered at risk, additional hygiene and disinfection measures, specially defined circuits within the library, closure of public spaces, etc. (IFLA 2020) Regardless of the specific situation in which libraries have operated during the pandemic, crisis management has focused on implementing health and hygiene measures to ensure the health and safety of staff and the public. The biblio-economic aspects were limited to providing minimum services at the institution's premises and remotely via the Internet (Parksville 2020).

Preparing libraries to reopen and ensuring their full capacity is a shift from crisis management to current operating management. The premise from which it starts is that the next period cannot be the same as the period before the outbreak of the pandemic. Moreover, the experience gained by libraries during this period will need to be harnessed for possible crisis situations in the future. Libraries have developed rules, procedures, regulations, and guides for staff and users appropriate to the health crisis caused by COVID - 19. (ALA 2020, University of Arkansas 2020). The new rules are aimed at ensuring the health security of all persons entering, working or using library products and services and relate to personal sanitation and premises and surfaces, ensuring appropriate circuits for staff and users, limiting contact times between librarians and users, imposing and observing physical distance, identifying persons at potential risk of infection or removing infection, etc.

3. Library Activities, Products and Services in the Particular Context of the Pandemic

The pandemic period was a veritable test for the online presence of libraries. Three key reasons can be identified that cause libraries to be present in the digital space. Firstly, they want to expand the community they serve and provide remotely accessible digital products and services. Secondly, they use IT infrastructure as ways of interaction and communication. Thirdly, through digital technologies, libraries are institutionally promoting themselves and promoting their products and services.

The offer of digital products and services offered by libraries includes documents from their own collections and services developed internally as well as databases and other types of resources developed by third parties and acquired by libraries and for which libraries have only an intermediary function. The offer of digital documents from their collections differentiates libraries from the perspective of their online presence in this crisis situation when it was almost impossible to attend libraries. (Daily News Sri Lanka 2020, Redwood City 2020). The most popular online product offered by libraries is *the electronic catalogue*. Being, however, essentially a bibliographical database, it does not provide access to information but merely locates documents containing the necessary information.

In the context of the pandemic, and beyond, the library catalogue allows the creation of bibliographic information and bibliographic lists with a view to further access of documents. *The digital documents* provided by the library can be full text databases bought by the library (especially in the case of university libraries), e-books or articles of digital publications that can be borrowed if the book is not in open access or digitized documents from the libraries' own collections.

A service suitable for remote access provided by libraries is *the reference service*. References by phone, email or through specific applications are an effective way to promote library usefulness in the community and to keep library users in touch with the institution. By providing expert assistance in retrieving information (from their own collections, from the collections of other libraries or from the digital environment on the websites of other institutions providing information resources such as publishers, universities, media trusts, etc.), libraries affirm their recognized competences in retrieving, evaluating, and selecting information.

Digitization on demand can be another service provided by libraries during this period. Useful documents from library collections identified in the digital catalogue or by the reference service can be requested by users and the library staff will handle their digitization and transmission through the IT infrastructure (by email or by publishing them in a specific database on the site of the institution through free or controlled access).

Online tutors seeking to train people in retrieving information and documents in catalogues and databases or tutorials on training in the acquisition of intellectual work methods and techniques (information literature) can also enrich the provision of library products and services.

In the category of cultural offer provided by libraries during this period, the most common and accessible products are *virtual exhibitions* or the presentation of a document of cultural or scientific heritage value.

Such products are intended to promote the library and its heritage but also to keep an eye on the institution and its role in society.

4. Risks and Vulnerabilities of Libraries in the Particular Context of the Pandemic

The risks and vulnerabilities to which libraries are exposed in this particular context are no more than usual – they are only much more pronounced and obvious. The risks are the result of external causes to the library and relate to the environment and context in which the establishment operates, while vulnerabilities are due to internal causes of the library and, at least in theory, are easier to control.

The greatest risk remains the competitive environment. Libraries, from their beginnings until several decades ago, had a monopoly on information being the only institutions recognized at the level of the society as having powers and competences in organizing, retrieving, communicating, and preserving documents and information. The emergence of the Internet obliges libraries to evolve in a competitive environment and to clearly delineate their specific competences and, thus, reaffirm their place and role in society. The pandemic further highlighted the risk to libraries. If they remain merely an intermediary of documents and information created by third parties (publishing houses, universities, media), third parties may wish to promote their own products or other intermediaries will appear in the information resource market. For example, many universities buy databases and/or create institutional deposits without necessarily using libraries. Libraries must digitally promote their own collections and develop products and services that highlight their specific competences in the organisation, retrieval, and evaluation and communication of information.

Legislative inaccuracies and, sometimes, arbitrary decisions of the authorities constitute risks because they can leave libraries with low defence capacity in crisis or force majeure situations.

5. Libraries in Romania: Online Presence

The Catalogue of Information and Documentation Systems in Romania – CAIDSRO, based on its own data provided by libraries, includes 3642 registered libraries. All of these libraries are part of the National Library System and are grouped into categories by library type. Thus, there are the following types of libraries: the National Library of Romania, the Library of the Romanian Academy, 41 county libraries (including the Bucharest Metropolitan Library), 60 municipal libraries, 206 city libraries, 2569 communal libraries, 58 university libraries, 47 specialized libraries, 618 school libraries and CID (Documentation and Information Centre), 41 libraries of the Houses of Teaching Staff. School libraries and CIDs, communal libraries, libraries of the Houses of the Teaching Staff and many special or specialized libraries have no legal personality and are dependent, in many aspects, on the decisions of the guardianship institutions and this aspect is strongly reflected in their work (CASIDRO 2020).

A recent doctoral research, carried out at the Bucharest University by Luminita Gruia and publicly supported in November 2019, analyses the online presence of Romanian libraries. The data presented in this doctoral thesis helps assessing the extent to which libraries in Romania can cope with a crisis situation in which they are obliged to provide services only in a digital context (Gruia 2020).

The online presence of libraries envisages a broad and comprehensive presence of both the institutional presence (simple web page, website, blog or web page included on the website of the institution or guardianship authority) and the services and products offered by them. According to the research mentioned, of the total of 3,642 libraries, only 255 libraries have a *url* (a web address) where the library can be found on the Internet, either through its own website (72 libraries), or through a blog (66 libraries), or a page on the website of the guardianship institution (117 libraries), which means that only 7% of libraries are institutionally present online. If online presence is taken into account according to the type of library, the best represented are the county libraries (100%), followed by university libraries (87.93%) and municipal libraries (63.33%). Less than half of specialized libraries (48.94%), libraries of the Houses of the Teaching Staff (46.34%) and city libraries (22.82%) are active online. The least represented are school libraries (0.49%) and communal libraries (1.20%). The National Library, the Library of the Romanian Academy, the 41 county libraries, 61.67% of municipal libraries, 32.7% of university libraries, 30.58% of the city libraries are active on *Facebook* as the main social network. Communal and school libraries have the lowest attendance – 0.78% and 0.65%, respectively, and specialized libraries (1.67%) and those of the Houses of the Teaching Staff (3.33%) represent about 1 to 3%.(Gruia 2020). It can easily be seen that libraries without legal personality and, therefore, with limited decision-making power, are the least represented in the online environment.

In a situation where only 7% of libraries in the National Library System are found, in one form or another, online, we consider that we cannot speak of a real presence of these institutions, with their specific information, documentation in the digital environment as an alternative to traditional specific activities. Large and medium-sized libraries with legal personality are those that can be analysed in terms of their online presence and, moreover, those that also use the Internet as a medium for promotion and communication as well as an infrastructure to expand the supply of specific products and services. Through web infrastructures, Romanian libraries can provide access to the following types of products and services: institutional online catalogues, collective online catalogues, digital collections and libraries, and other types of electronic resources from their collections, databases obtained through purchase, access to integrated resources (internal and external resources of different types) through discovery-type services. Unfortunately, relative to the total number of libraries in the National Library System or only to the 255 Romanian libraries present online, the offer of digital content is very small. Of the 255 libraries that are present online, only 99 have *online catalogues*. This represents 2.7% of the total number of libraries in Romania and 38.8% of libraries with online institutional representation (95.1% of county libraries, 70.7% of

and 38.8% of libraries with online institutional representation (95.1% of county libraries, 70.7% of university libraries, 14.9% of specialized libraries, 8.3% of municipal libraries). Only one school library, one library of a House of Teaching Staff and 3 city libraries have online catalogues. No community library offers this service (Gruia 2020).

Romanian collective catalogues are also not very well represented online. *ROLINEST* is a collective catalogue involving 15 libraries using the same integrated library system, ALEPH (ExLibris). These are the following libraries: the Library of the Romanian Academy Bucharest, the Library of the Romanian Academy Iași, the Carol I Central University Library Bucharest, the Eugen Todoran Central University Library Timișoara, the Lucian Blaga Central University Library Cluj-Napoca, the Mihai Eminescu Central University Library Iași, the Library of the Horia Hulubei National Institute of Nuclear Physics, the Metropolitan Library Bucharest, the National Library of Romania, the Library of the Polytechnic University Bucharest, the Library of the Polytechnic University Timișoara, the Library of the Gheorghe Asachi Technical University Iași, the Library of the Technical University Cluj-Napoca, the Digital Library of Bucharest, the National Digital Library (ROLINEST 2020). *BIBLIO.RO* – The Collective Catalogue of Public Libraries in Romania is the second Romanian collective catalogue in which 27 libraries of different types and sizes participate: 16 county libraries (Arad, Argeș, Bacău, Bistrița-Năsăud, Brăila, Dolj, Hunedoara, Ialomița, Mehedinți, Satu-Mare, Sălaj, Timiș, Tulcea, Vaslui, Vrancea, Vâlcea), 4 municipal libraries (Adjud, Câmpina, Câmpulung, Tecuci) and 7 university libraries (ASE, the University of Architecture, the Danubius University, UNATC, UTCB, the University of Craiova, the University of Pitești) (**BIBLIO 2020**).

The *digital library* is essentially a full text database managed by an app and accessible online. Based on this definition, in Romania, the following libraries have developed the digital library service: the National Library of Romania (National Digital Library – www.digitool.bibnat.ro – about 9,000 digital items) and the Bucharest Metropolitan Library (the Digital Library of Bucharest – www.digibuc.ro – 60,000 digital items and over 10,000,000 scanned pages) have created digital libraries using the *Digitool* app (ExLibris). The Cluj University Central Library, the Bucharest University Central Library, the Lucian Blaga Sibiu University Library and the Sibiu County Library use the *open source* D-Space application for the digital library. Several county libraries (BJ Cluj, BJ Neamț, BJ Arad, BJ Craiova, BJ Sibiu, BJ Dolj, BJ Sălaj, BJ Vâlcea, BJ Prahova, BJ Iași, BJ Timiș) have cooperatively created a digital library using the Greenstone *open source* application, within the framework of the European Local and LoCloud projects.

Without digital library applications, Romanian libraries are concerned with *digitizing documents from their collections and publishing them on institutional websites*, on dedicated pages, most often in *pdf* format. We find thematic collections on the websites of the following libraries: the Academy Library, the Timișoara University Central Library, the Architecture and Urbanism University Library, the Carol Davila UMF Library Bucharest, and the Stavropoleos Monastery Library. County libraries also have initiatives in the field of digitization, mainly collecting documents of local interest.

In Romania, examples of good practices regarding *digital institutional repositories* are three university libraries: the Library of the Dunărea de Jos University Galați which offers free access to the results of research within the university through the institutional digital deposit AR-THRA; the Library of the Transilvania University Brasov which made the digital deposit AS-PECKT, which includes electronic resources developed within the university (PhD theses, bachelor's and master's dissertations) and the Central University Library Cluj-Napoca which organized a digital deposit within the digital library that can only be accessed from within the library.

A service offered by Romanian libraries, mainly found in academia and research is *access to the scientific resources available in databases purchased for a fee* by libraries and offered free of charge, in free or controlled access, to users. In Romania, access to subscribed databases is through the ANELIS consortium which has 102 members (58 Universities, 39 Research-Development Institutes, 4 Central University Libraries, and the Library of the Romanian Academy Bucharest) (ANELIS 2020).

Three libraries in Romania provide a *discovery*-type service in all types of library resources, both internal and external, both printed and electronic; the Cluj-Napoca Central University Library uses the EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS) simultaneous search and retrieval interface; the Library of the Polytechnic University of Timișoara opted for PRIMO (ExLibris); the Galati University Library has created a unique search portal based on Google Search Engine, integrated into the home page of the library's website.

The assessments presented are quantitative. Issues such as site updating, quality of descriptions in catalogues, ease of access, compatibility between technologies and systems, etc. were not taken into account. During the pandemic, such a small presence of Romanian libraries online (7%) and a rather small and rather non-homogeneous volume of digital content showed some vulnerability in the performance of their basic function: access to documentary resources and information.

6. Libraries in the Post-Pandemic Stage: Development Opportunities

The pandemic period was and still is a period of real crisis for libraries around the world. It is a period which, first of all, cannot be compared to any other period of crisis experienced by libraries. After the initial shock and the day-to-day management of the created situation, corresponding to a crisis situation, the libraries as well as the entire library community are concerned with the life and work of libraries after this difficult and unprecedented period. It can be an opportunity for libraries to reaffirm their mission, their place, and their role in society. The starting point would be a lucid and objective analysis of the impact of the pandemic on the library as an institution, on its activities, products and services. Identifying the risks and vulnerabilities manifested during this period would allow them to be mitigated or even eliminated in the future.

Development strategies at institutional level or at the level of national library systems should take into account all the risks and vulnerabilities, advantages and disadvantages manifested during the pandemic period and be centred on the updated mission of the contemporary library (i.e. considering the evolution of the institution in a competitive environment; increasing demands from the community served, reaffirming the heritage function (constituting and harnessing the memory of the community, digitally harnessing their own collections), reaffirming the educational function (information training and tutorials, intellectual work methods, training users in the use of databases and other information resources).

Obligated to evolve in a competitive environment, libraries should make their specialisation known, differentiate themselves from other structures that provide information and documentation resources. The difference is given by products of added value provided by libraries, by specialized assistance in the retrieval, evaluation and use of information.

Also, as an opportunity for the pandemic period, it is possible to appreciate the concern of libraries to support each other, to carry out shared and cooperative activities, as well as to establish partnerships with museums, archives and other institutions in order to share good experiences and to ask for the public support of institutions (Institute of Museum & Library Services 2020). Also, the experience of the pandemic period in the American space shows our concern for the realization of the archive of the crisis period ("COVID memory") thus reaffirming the role of the library in the establishment and recovery of local heritage.

Such a documentary fund includes documents of all kinds (manuscripts, prints, photographs, local press, video recordings, etc.) from private individuals, public and private institutions, authorities that are a testimony over time to the real situation that the community has gone through (California State University 2020, Jacksonville State University 2020).

7. Conclusions

Can there be a library only in the digital space? Will libraries face similar future crises? These are the questions that remain in the wake of the pandemic situation. Forced to move their activities online, libraries have faced situations ranging from the redefinition or decrease of online activities, from difficulties in communicating with users, from the sometimes insufficient and inadequate digital offering to the limits of information systems, or to the fierce competition from other institutions providing digital documentation and information resources.

The main conclusion would be the need to strengthen the online presence of libraries through digital content appropriate to the needs of users, by providing expert assistance in the retrieval, evaluation and use of information activities, through educational and formative tutorials specific to library activities. The definition and redefinition of institutional development strategies should focus on strengthening the online presence of libraries.

The heritage function remains specific to libraries and allows them to constitute and capitalize on the cultural and scientific heritage of the local community and can be effectively achieved if the library makes its presence in the community served through partnerships with other institutions and local authorities.

Looking at the National Library System as a whole, it can be seen that, in Romania, there is a big difference between large libraries and small libraries, there is not enough political and administrative support for libraries and, consequently, the services offered by them to the community they serve are, in some cases, deficient. However, representative examples and best practices can be drawn which can be generalised. A lucid and objective analysis of the products and services offered by Romanian libraries during the pandemic period could contribute significantly to the elimination or reduction of institutional vulnerabilities, to the elaboration of institutional, regional or national strategies to support and develop the online presence of Romanian libraries.

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RDA — a change of vision

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This paper takes a look at the evolution of the cataloging rules, and aims at highlighting what is preserved and what is changed in the way progress was made. It points out the need of innovative rules and features for the bibliographic description and access, so that they agree with the requirements of the new information resources, the new library user profile and information needs. Bibliographic control is also considered and more so, the characteristics of library science education are looked at, particularly in the manner they come to an agreement with the new RDA rules, or change of vision.

Keywords: library catalogues, cataloging rules, cataloging principles, bibliographic control, RDA rules, library science education

1. Introduction

Resource Description and Access (RDA) is a set of descriptive cataloging rules meant to replace the well-known Anglo-American Cataloging Rules-2 (AACR2), used for a very long time by many libraries in the United States and in libraries throughout the world just as well. According to Shawne Miksa (2009), the distance in time between AACR2, first released in 1978, and this new set of cataloging rules has necessarily to go through an appropriate understanding of other significant concepts found in Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records – FRBR (1998) and Functional Requirements for Authority Data – FRAD (2009). The conceptual models described and analyzed in these two documents developed by special interest groups within the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) are of utmost importance for a good knowledge of RDA.

However, a close look at how the first cataloging rules were formulated more than a century ago by the famous Charles A. Cutter (1904), will demonstrate the legitimacy of his thinking. The objectives of a library catalogue according to Cutter and the principles of cataloging established by the works of Panizzi and Lubetzky are found at the basis of the two conceptual models mentioned above. To those who know, let alone to those who apply them, FRBR and FRAD form, as Miksa calls it, “the backbone of RDA”.

All these being said, we shall see in the ongoing how the RDA rules have emerged, having as sources the thinking of prominent forerunners, with some amendments in order to fit the needs of the current information seeker.

2. From Charles A. Cutter, onwards

In order to show the importance of rules in designing a library catalogue, Cutter (1904) highlights the rationale of the twofold interest of the cataloger: the convenience of the library user, so that he can easily find what he is searching for, but also the respect of rules resulting from “experience and good judgment”. Cutter says: “The convenience of the public is always to be set before the ease of the cataloger. [...] Cataloging is an art, not a science. . No rules can take the place of experience and good judgment, but some of the results of experience may be best indicated by rules” (Cutter 1904).

Mention should be made on the fact that Cutter’s Rules emerged from a list he made of the users’ inquiries regarding, among other things: the kind of binding, book publisher, suitability for different age groups, particular forms of literature and even color and size (Miksa 1974).

The objectives of a library catalogue formulated by Cutter at the end of the 19th century, as most of the members of the cataloging community may know, comprise three categories of basic principles which have generally been followed by library catalogue designers ever since.

1. To enable a person to find a book of which either
 - (A) the author
 - (B) the title is known
 - (C) the subject
2. To show what the library has
 - (D) by a given author
 - (E) on a given subject
 - (F) in a given kind of literature
3. To assist in the choice of a book
 - (G) as to its edition (bibliographically)
 - (H) as to its character (literary or topical)

Cutter’s objectives correspond to three basic principles: a) the *finding* principle, enabling the user to identify individual books so they can be located effectively as unique items, b) the *gathering* principle, i.e. classifying or grouping the uniquely identified books into categories required by users and c) the *evaluating* principle, supplying bibliographic information that would enable users to choose a book starting from the catalogue entry itself (Miksa 1974). We shall go back to these principles later in this paper.

The ideal catalogue, according to Cutter’s Rules, should give under each subject its complete bibliography, not only mention every monograph on that particular subject, but also all the works that deal with that subject, including fragments from books, articles from magazines and the best encyclopedias that deal with that.

3. The landmarks set by Panizzi, Cutter and Lubetzky to FRBR

In order to demonstrate both the demands of the contemporary library user and the requirements of the library catalogs today, William Denton (2007) describes an experiment. He tells the story of Brigid, who has seen the movie “The Big Sleep” and wanted to borrow from the library the book on which this is based. She found the book at her library, but it was lent out. Then she made another search and found it in more libraries, of which one had three copies. She ordered one of those. She wanted any edition of “The Big Sleep”, written in English and not in large print, neither did she want an audio book, just a regular one. But the system of that library asked her to get connected with a certain copy of the book, hard cover, dated 1973 and held by their branch in Alexandria Street. She ordered it and received it in a couple of days.

If that library had a FRBR-based catalogue, it would have been more helpful to her. She would have found the *work*, then the *expressions*, the *manifestations*, enabling her to choose what she wanted, and then the *items* held. Furthermore, if that library had a web-based FRBR catalog, as Denton argues, Brigid would search for a work: *The Big Sleep* and get a list containing the 1939 book and the film adaptations from 1946 and 1978. The author, Raymond Chandler is a person, so Brigid could choose his name as a hyperlink, and get a list of works created by him. Chandler is also a subject, so she could get several biographies about him and he would be included in any American (place) book on fiction (concept), or mystery (concept), in a work (concept) from the 20th century (event). All entities – works, expressions, subjects, places, concepts – would be intertwined in a complicated network of connections.

In the mentioned study about FRBR and the history of cataloging, William Denton observes the similarities between the fundamental cataloging principles formulated by Cutter, Panizzi and Lubetzky and this conceptual model.

The IFLA's Final Report on FRBR (1998) mentions four generic tasks for the library user, which obviously correspond significantly to Panizzi, Cutter and Lubetzky's principles and rules. Here they are:

- to find* materials that correspond to the user's stated search criteria (e.g., in the context of a search for all documents on a given subject, or a search for a recording issued under a particular title);
- to identify* an entity (e.g., to confirm that the document described in a record corresponds to the document sought by the user, or to distinguish between two texts or recordings that have the same title);
- to select* an entity that is appropriate to the user's needs (e.g., to select a text in a language the user understands, or to choose a version of a computer program that is compatible with the hardware and operating system available to the user);
- to obtain* access to the entity described (e.g., to place a purchase order for a publication, to submit a request for the loan of a copy of a book in a library's collection, or to access online an electronic document stored on a remote computer).

Going back to Denton's demonstration, we see that Brigid's search for the book on which the film she saw was based fits perfectly into these requirements. She was looking for a book of which she knew the title, she wanted it to be written in English, but preferably not in large print, she didn't want an audio book; then she placed a request for an interlibrary loan resulting from these selection criteria and borrowed a copy of that book.

It is easy to notice, as Denton did, the correspondence between the FRBR user's tasks and the fundamental cataloging rules, despite the great difference in time when their creators lived. There have been successive sets of rules meant to establish order in the bibliographic elements represented in a catalogue beginning as early as the middle of the 19th century. Denton mentions the merits of Antony Panizy while he pays high respect to the complexity, "broad knowledge, keen thinking, and fruitful imagination which the founders of the rules have brought to the profession of cataloging" (Denton 2007). Many subsequent avatars of the main cataloging rules followed and gained in intricacy but also in usefulness, their content being permanently adapted to new requirements as to the current users' demands and the innovative technology's high standards. The list below is given by Denton to show the association he made between the functions, objectives and principles of cataloging as established by the historical personalities of the field and the FRBR conceptual structure.

- the relationship work-author groups all the works of an author – found in Lubetzky;
- all the editions, translations, adaptations, of a work are clearly separated (as expressions and manifestations) – found in Lubetzky;
- all the expressions and manifestations of a work are collocated with their related works in bibliographic families;
- any document (manifestation or item) can be found if the author, title or subject of that document is known – found in Cutter;
- the author is authorized by the authority control;
- the title is an intrinsic part of the work + authority control entity.

Denton defines Lubetzky's principles to be inspiring for the FRBR model. In so doing, he highlights the *authority control* function of the catalogue which is essential for finding a work by the author-title search key. Through the *collocating function*, rather than the *finding function*, with the addition of all kinds of relationships the model has a provision for, entities are clustered according to their common elements in bibliographic families (Le Boeuf 2001, Tillett 2002, Francu 2004).

The main condition for this to happen is a good search facility of the library system. An important objective of the conceptual model was to integrate heterogeneous resources in the online library catalogues, as it resulted from the ELAG (European Library Automation Group is Europe's premier conference on the application of information technology in libraries and documentation centers) conference on practical experimentation of FRBR.

4. FRAD (Functional Requirements for Authority Data) as an extension of FRBR

The multiple and complicated network of relationships among the bibliographic entities in the FRBR conceptual model required a set of guidelines for the management of authority data. A new conceptual model was created for this purpose, Functional Requirements for Authority Data (FRAD, 2009). This was drafted by IFLA's Working Group on Functional Requirements and Numbering of Authority Records (FRANAR), established in 1999.

The FRAD model contains an analysis of attributes belonging to entities of major interest for authority data (persons, families, corporate bodies, works, expressions, manifestations, items, concepts, objects, events and places), the name by which these entities are known and the controlled access points created for them. The conceptual model describes not only the attributes of these entities but also the relationships between them.

The purpose of FRAD conceptual model is “to provide a framework for the analysis of functional requirements for the kind of authority data that is required to support authority control and for the international sharing of authority data” (FRAD, 2009). In other words, FRAD's objectives are to create a model for the description of authority data and to relate this model with the needs of the library users aiming at the international exchange of authority data.

5. Cataloging as a communication process

An important statement was made by Shawne Miksa at the American Library Association Annual Conference: Heads of Cataloging Interest Group in 2010. She said that both the bibliographic control and the role of a cataloger have to be reconsidered. The cataloger, according to her statement, “is not just a transcriber, but an information translator” (Miksa, 2010). Additionally, she said that “cataloging is a communication process”.

In order that a communication process take place, at least three factors are necessary: a sender, a message being sent and a receiver (Bühler, 1990). Roman Jakobson (1960) was inspired by Bühler's Sprachtheorie in formulating his theory of verbal communication, in which there are six factors involved: (1) a context (the other verbal signs in the same message, and the world in which the message takes place), (2) an *addresser* (a sender), (3) an *addressee* (a receiver), (4) a contact between an addresser and addressee, (5) a common code and (6) a *message*.

The indexing languages, like the natural languages, play the same role in information transfer as the latter do in verbal communication. They work as a *code* in which the message is expressed in order to reach from the *sender* (the indexer) to the *receiver* (the user), once the *contact* between the two has been established. The meaning of a descriptor or another indexing language element is dictated by the *context*, with a role in the semantic disambiguation of the indexing language terms. The semantic relations, also, either hierarchical or associative have much to say about the meaning of an indexing term (Frâncu 2003).

The communication process which takes place during cataloging involves four factors, too, according to Miksa. In the diagram she draws, the *cataloger* takes the central position, a place where three circles meet: the *users*, the *information resources* and the *library systems*. This process takes in, apart from the mentioned factors, the complex entity-relation (E-R) models of FRBR, in which the information resources considered are Works, Manifestations, Expressions and Items (WEMI). The meanings, functions and attributes of these entities have to be thoroughly known and therefore worked with in a regular manner. The library catalogue will aggregate bibliographic records based on the E-R conceptual model of FRBR (WEMI, relations and user tasks) and FRAD (the same entities within the authority control frame). Given these

circumstances, the catalogue becomes a *relational database* in which *representations of information resources* are dealt with. The cataloger's task is the *creation and representation of the information resources*, continuously governing these representations.

5. RDA (Resource Description and Access) and its functionalities

From the point of view of the present-day information searcher, the functionalities of the library catalogue are somehow outdated and minimized, the priority being granted to the search engines in the internet. However, it has been proved more often than not, that the search results are not restricted to bibliographic information, they are far from being structured and are rather redundant (Miksa, 2009, Francu, 2017). Even in Google searches, but then with library search tools, like the UDC, the results are better than those using free text Google search.

e.g. Google search performed with UDC notation *58(084.4) – Atlas of botany*, as query, gives 75 results, mostly from library catalogues

Google search performed with free text "*atlas of botany*" as query, gives far more results, but many of them irrelevant (including literature lists, decoration of restaurants, guidelines for home-schooling etc.)

Like all new cataloging rules formerly introduced in libraries, RDA generates some enthusiasm, but also not so convenient feelings. Never-the-less, their advantages are obvious under the current circumstances of a tremendous number of diversified information resources and the persistent need to structure and link them for a better and more accurate usage.

RDA was launched in 2010 as a database product which incorporates specific characteristics and functionalities aiming to attend the online access. RDA is basically incorporating the two conceptual models FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records) and FRAD (Functional Requirements for Authority Data) in a single standard.

Riva & Oliver (2012) explain and demonstrate the alignment between FRBR, FRAD and RDA regarding their *entities, attributes, relations and user functions*. RDA is a *descriptive cataloging standard* and *successor of the AACR2 cataloging rules*. It operates with *authorized access points* and no longer with main headings and auxiliary headings. In so doing it is motivated by several factors such as:

- the changes in technology strongly impacting the descriptive and access data (book catalogues, card catalogues, OPAC's);
- the transition from the individual isolated libraries to incorporated large libraries with international audience;
- the transition from classes of library materials to elements and values (controlled vocabularies).

Created according to the IFLA Statement of International Cataloguing Principles, RDA observes the Principles of Paris and is based on the great cataloging traditions of the world plus FRBR and FRAD. At the same time RDA permits a more granular approach to the information resources represented in the catalogue. Intended to describe all types of resources (not only books), RDA allows the representation of bibliographic relations and mediates the access to bibliographic and authority records (not only the selection and the form of the entries).

Looking at the time when the discussions about the new cataloging rules have started, it is easy to notice how big the demand of those rules was. For longer than ten years, the number of other types of resources, such as digital objects, websites, events and a lot more grow over the printed matter in the total amount of library material, the RDA set of rules are just the right response to their appropriate management. Their attributes and the relationships between them, such as entities and their titles, authors – personal or corporate bodies – plus the access points to each of those need a thoroughly different approach from what was known from the printed environment times. Miksa (2009) makes a useful analysis of the RDA rules and recommends a list of literature for their comprehensive study and implementation issues. Additionally, for a better understanding of the differences between the two sets of rules, she includes a comparison between AACR2 and RDA.

6. Objectives for library system suppliers, authority control and library education

Given the new cataloging standard it goes without saying that the library system providers have also to take into account the reconfiguration of their systems, in order to incorporate the new functionalities required by the accurate representation of bibliographic and authority data. Responsiveness to the user needs, along with the catalogers' demands, is an utmost important vector to be taken into consideration for the reconfiguration of library systems. That is why authority control has to be improved, expanded and differentiated according to the new requirements enacted by the RDA set of cataloging rules.

The profile of library education has to be changed according to the innovative RDA rules, based of the FRBR and FRAD conceptual models. The endless study of the main and auxiliary headings has to be stopped and just reminded of as historical stage in the cataloging techniques.

Library education, as much as the continuous education for library professionals are both major objectives and high priorities. Having a hectic time with data management, today's librarian is becoming a data scientist and/or a library and information worker who has to learn, among other things, programming.

Note

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