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A STUDY OF THE CONTINUING LIBRARY EDUCATION PATTERNS OF PUBLIC
LIBRARIANS IN NEW JERSEY

By
Mathew J. Freund

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
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at
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Approved by

Assistant Professor

Date Approved

August 20, 2002

ABSTRACT

Matthew J. Freund

A STUDY OF THE CONTINUING LIBRARY EDUCATION PATTERNS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIANS IN NEW JERSEY

2001/02

Dr. Holly G. Willett

Masters of Arts in School and Public Librarianship

The purposes of this study were to (a) ascertain the strengths and weakness of the continuing library education practices of New Jersey public librarians; (b) determine the frequency of continuing library education of New Jersey public librarians; (c) determine if certain types of librarians participate in continuing library education at higher frequencies; (d) determine which continuing library education topics are participated in most frequently and which continuing library education topics need to be addressed; and (e) ascertain which agencies are offering these continuing library education experiences for New Jersey public librarians.

The population of the study consisted of all public libraries in New Jersey with at least four professional librarians ($n=102$). Forty-five libraries were randomly chosen from this population, and a total of 180 questionnaires were mailed out across the state. Ninety-seven surveys were returned and 95 were usable for a return rate of 54%. The conclusion drawn by the researcher is the needs of New Jersey public librarians are being met adequately. The majority of the library professionals surveyed are participating in an

adequate number of CLE hours to renew their skills and keep abreast of new topics in information science.

MINI-ABSTRACT

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I would like to thank my family for the support and patience they have shown me over the last few years. I am certain without their help I would not have been able to attain this degree. I would also like to thank the program's faculty for their patience and guidance and a wonderful and rewarding learning experience.

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Chapter 1

The Problem

Introduction

The labor-intensive nature of library organizations requires library directors to allocate a substantial part of their financial resources to staff salaries and benefits. This alone suggests that the effective development of the library's human resources should be a high priority. In addition, the dramatically changing library environment suggests that administrators must recognize the importance of providing the library staff with training and development activities that will enable librarians to master required skills and techniques throughout their employment (Creth, 1981).

As technology and management theories continue to evolve, continuing library education (CLE) continues to be one of the most important needs in libraries. From the smallest to the largest libraries, training and developing librarians has become critical to libraries' mission (Avery, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

At the World Conference on Continuing Education for Library and Information Professionals in August 1985, continuing library education was stated to be an essential part of a librarian's lifetime education (Stone, 1986). Weingand, a long-time professor at the University of Wisconsin School of Library and Information Science and editor of

“Continuing Education” in the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* states, “ the shelf-life of any degree is three to five years”. She believes that an MLS is an entry degree and that continuing education is needed to realize the degree’s full potential (Weingand, 1999).

The literature overwhelmingly supports the necessity of continuing education in librarianship. However, little data exists on the actual continuing library education practices of librarians, and no data were found for New Jersey librarians. Therefore this study was created to describe and evaluate the CLE patterns of public librarians in the state of New Jersey.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to gather and analyze data about the continuing library education practices of public librarians in the state of New Jersey. The data were collected by drawing a random sample of librarians from all over New Jersey, and mailing a questionnaire that examined their continuing library education practices. The objective for gathering this data was to form a conclusion about the continuing library education (CLE) strengths and weaknesses of librarians in New Jersey, librarians’ preferences and frequencies in their CLE activities, and future and current needs of New Jersey librarians in their pursuit of CLE.

Conceptual Framework

CLE has been discussed for over a century. In 1898 at the American Library Association (ALA) annual meeting, Melvil Dewey spoke of the advantages of competent

leaders speaking at the regional level to practitioners (Dewey, 1898). He believed this would cut down on traveling time and many more practitioners would take part. Unfortunately, the ALA governing body did not follow up on Dewey's ideas (Stone, 1986).

Charles C. Williamson reiterated many of Dewey's earlier recommendations in his Carnegie Foundation survey of 1923 of library education. Williamson stated that there were no standards of library practice and that a national system of certification should be administered. He also wrote a chapter on library continuing education (Williamson, 1923). However, little attention was given by educators to Williamson's recommendations till the mid 1960's and beyond (Stone, 1986, p. 491).

The profession's responsibility for continuing education was brought once again to the forefront by Rothstein in his *Library Journal* article "Nobody's Baby: A Brief Sermon on Continuing Professional Education." Rothstein compares continuing education to a parentless baby. He nominates the American Library Association (ALA) to adopt the parentless baby. In Rothstein's view, the ALA should model itself after other professional organizations. He urged the ALA to establish offices for continuing education. Rothstein envisioned the ALA serving as a coordinating agent and resource and development center (1965). Unfortunately, the ALA did not accept Rothstein's invitation to adopt his baby at that time (Stone, 1986).

In 1967, the American Library Association realizing that a library degree, an annual trip to the association's meeting, and an occasional browsing of journals were not enough to sustain practitioners' skills, invited Cyril Houle of the University of Chicago to speak at its midwinter convention (Houle, 1964). Houle emphasized that the role of a

professional association is to assume responsibility for continuing education. He stated four areas where practitioners need the professional association's support:

- 1) to keep up with new knowledge related to the profession
- 2) to establish mastery of the new conception of their profession
- 3) to continue study of the basic disciplines which support the profession
- 4) to grow as a person as well as a professional (Houle, 1967, p. 266)

Throughout the 1970's, many statements released by the American Library Association emphasized the importance of continuing library education. The National Commission on Library and Information Science (NCLIS) survey conducted by the Catholic University of America found a severe lack of continuing education opportunities needed to deliver quality library services. A new organization, Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange (CLENE), was the recommendation of the NCLIS study. CLENE was officially founded during ALA's 1975 annual meeting (Stone, 1986). The basic missions of CLENE were based on the philosophy of lifelong learning and self-directed learning (Stone, 1974).

After nine years as an independent national organization, the ALA Council at its 1984 Midwinter meeting changed CLENE on a petition vote. The body was retitled Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange Round Table (CLENERT). It was hoped that the services provided by the ALA would increase membership. The objectives and purposes of CLENERT, as stated in the ALA Handbook of Organization 1985/1986 were:

- 1) To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns among library and information personnel responsible for continuing library education, training, and staff development.
- 2) To provide learning activities and material to maintain the competencies of those who provide continuing education.

- 3) To provide a force for initiating, and supporting programs to increase the availability of quality continuing library education.
- 4) To create an awareness of, and sense of need for, continuing library education on the part of employees and employers (ALA, 1984, p.152).

These remain the purposes and objectives of CLENERT today (ALA, 1998).

With the support of the profession's association, the realization of the necessity of CLE has continued to grow. Many other organizations have taken a proactive role in the continuing education of library professionals. The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) has supported CLE through its library schools, and state and regional library agencies' roles in continuing education have increasingly grown.

Questions to Be Answered

The data accumulated during the research was expected to show the frequency of New Jersey librarians' participation in continuing library education. Are certain types of librarians participating more often than other types? Which CLE topics are participated in most frequently? In which CLE topics would librarians like to participate in the future? Finally, which agencies are offering CLE activities for New Jersey librarians?

Definitions of Terms

The researcher is aware that the term "continuing library education" can have many meanings for many different library professionals. However, for the sake of this study it is defined in a limited manner. Continuing library education consists of learning activities that are used to upgrade knowledge, attitudes, competencies, and understandings in the

library field to (1) deliver quality performance in their work setting and to (2) enrich librarians' careers (Stone, 1986). The researcher specifically asked the survey participants to concentrate on the continuing library education activities at college campuses, workshops, seminars, discussion groups, and conferences. Participants were asked to exclude their professional readings from the survey. For the purpose of this study, a librarian is considered a professional who has received a master's in library science or an equivalent degree.

Assumptions and Limitations

The researcher assumed that the majority of participating librarians believe in the American Library Association Code of Ethics, which states in Article VIII that librarians strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skills. This is the reason for high frequency participation in CLE. This study was based on the participation of New Jersey public librarians, and accuracy of the data was based upon truthful responses to the survey. These conditions may imply limited generalization of the study results.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter Two discusses the literature appropriate to the problem just described. Chapter Three discusses and describes the methodology selected to study the problem. Chapter Four presents and analyzes the data collected through the methodology described

in Chapter Three. Chapter Five is the summary of the data in Chapter Four and presents recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The researcher discovered a great deal of literature about the value of continuing library education. However, there were few studies that actually provided statistics on participation of public librarians in CLE activities.

The Literature Review that follows will discuss the importance of continuing library education, put CLE in its historical context, discuss who is providing CLE, and assess a study of professional development and continuing education of librarians conducted by Kenney and McMillan.

Historical Context

As discussed previously, continuing library education has been a topic of librarians and library science educators for over a century. The need for trained experts speaking to library practitioners was seen as early as the late 1800s. Throughout the 20th century the debate continued for some type of formalized CLE plan. In 1960 Samuel Rothstein nominated the American Library Association to be the coordinating agency and the developmental center for the library profession. Unfortunately, at this time the ALA did not accept Rothstein's invitation. In 1967, Cyril Houle at the ALA midwinter convention emphasized the continuing education role of the professional association.

Finally, in 1975 at the recommendation of NCLIS, the ALA formed CLENE. CLENE was to be the organization of the ALA to oversee the CLE opportunities for library professionals. After acting independently for nine years, the Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange (CLENE) changed to the Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange Round Table (CLENERT). It was hoped with the backing of the ALA, there would be an increase in membership and support for CLE activities. With support from the ALA, the realization of the necessity of continuing library education has continued to grow. Many organizations have taken a proactive role in CLE. At this time, library professionals receive CLE support from the ALISE and state and regional agencies. Since the founding of CLENE, attention paid to continuing library education in library literature has continued to grow (Horrocks, 1987).

Why Continuing Library Education?

As defined in Chapter 1, a librarian is a professional with a master's in library science and/or equivalent degree. Hence, when discussing the necessity of continuing education for librarians, it is appropriate to look at professionals as a whole. Everett C. Hughes, formerly of the University of Chicago, wrote in 1958:

The professions are entered by long training, ordinarily in a manner prescribed by the profession itself and sanctioned by the state. The training is assumed to be necessary to learning the science and technique essential to practice of the function of the profession. The training, however, carries with it as a by-product assimilation of the candidate to a set of professional attitudes and controls, a professional conscience and solidarity. The profession claims and aims to become a moral unit (Hughes, 1958, as cited in McGlothlin, 1972, p. 4).

Hughes's description of a professional has two distinguishing characteristics. The first is the special competence acquired through long training. The second is its ethical or moral

component, which determines the way in which the competency is to be used. This combination of knowledge directed by moral values for a positive contribution to society gives a profession its status and rewards. If this contribution to society is diminished, the profession's status is also diminished. Hence, professionals must continue to sharpen and renew their competencies. A profession's ethical stance is also strengthened by continuing revisions in its competencies as new situations and requirements arise. Neither competence nor ethical principle can stand still (McGlothlin, 1972).

This broad view of the professions can clearly be applied to librarianship. One example is the rapidly changing information world; it is a necessity for librarians to keep up with the new and changing means of access to information. Librarians who do not keep up with these competencies are shortchanging their patrons and doing a disservice to the profession. The need for continuing library education is supported by the ALA and Elizabeth Stone in *The ALA Yearbook of Library and Information Services*:

Increasing awareness of the rapid and profound changes in technology, industry and society that are altering the direction and scope of the library/information profession led to initiatives in the realm of continuing professional education in 1984. The changes reflected the recognition of the need for new skills, methods and approaches, new understanding of the environment in which professionals and end-users operate, and the need for new patterns of collaboration with other groups both inside and outside the library/information science profession. The radical and continuing changes are forcing the development of new patterns and structures toward improving the system of continuing education... It is now universally recognized that no members of the profession can hope to continue working with the same knowledge and understanding they had started their professional careers (Stone, 1984, p. 106).

Now that it is established that continuing library education is essential for library professionals and their clienteles, we can look at areas where the practicing library

professional needs to undertake continuing education. Cyril Houle at the midwinter ALA meeting stated, "The practicing professional needs:

- 1) to keep up with new knowledge ...
- 2) to establish his mastery of the new conceptions of his own profession...
- 3) to continue study of the basic disciplines which support his profession...
- 4) to grow as a person as well as professional..." (Houle, 1967, p. 266)

Let us now look at who is providing continuing education for library professionals.

Providers of Continuing Library Education

The first state library associations were developed between 1889 and 1890, when librarians in five states formed organizations. New Hampshire was the first in 1889, followed by Iowa, New York, Massachusetts, and New Jersey in 1890. In 1891 Connecticut, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan formed associations, and by 1905 twenty-eight states had a library association. For many librarians, state associations provide professional contacts that might not otherwise exist (Kenney & McMillan, 1992).

The American Library Association was formed in 1876 and is now the largest professional librarian organization in the country. Its annual conference draws thousands of librarians from throughout the United States and Canada as well as countries all over the world. These conventions offer ways for librarians to renew themselves professionally and learn new ways of approaching traditional services. Librarians also have the opportunity to view and try hundreds of products and thousands of books and materials that are on display by publishers and vendors. This dual function that takes place at the ALA conventions is a form of CLE (Kenney & McMillan, 1992). Similarly,

many of the functions and activities performed at the ALA conventions are also done at state library association conventions.

If one looks at Houle's four categories of CLE needs for practicing library professionals, it becomes apparent why a librarian would turn to various levels of the professional association, be it national, regional, or state, for continuing library education.

Assessing a Study of State Library Associations

In 1991, Kenney & McMillan, librarians at the Virginia Tech University, conducted a survey of state library associations to gather information about the professional development and continuing education of their members (Kenney & McMillan, 1992). The survey was mailed to the presidents of the 50 state library organizations as well as the presidents of the District of Columbia and the Puerto Rico library associations. The survey attempted to find out how state library associations perceived their missions to members in their areas of professional development and continuing education. The survey was made up of mostly multiple-choice questions, and included three open-ended questions. Frequency was analyzed for the United States as a whole and as regions (West, Midwest, Southeast, and Mid-Atlantic/North). Forty-one of the fifty-two surveys were returned for a 78.8% response rate.

Survey questions one through three solicited information regarding the goals of the state library association. Ninety-five percent of the respondents (30 of 41) said their association had continuing education and professional development goals. About half of the associations had some type of written guidelines or policy statements covering continuing education (21 of 41). While 10% (4 of 40) of the respondents indicated plans

were underway to develop such guidelines, 37.5% (15 of 40) responded they did not have any such written guidelines or policies. When continuing education and professional development were not part of the association goals, the survey asked how these issues would be addressed. Some responded they relied on the state library and state department of education for continuing education opportunities. Other associations commented that they relied on close ties with academic institutions to assist in continuing education.

Most associations budgeted support for continuing education and professional development. More than three-fourths (33 of 39) of the respondents indicated that their associations have budgets that support continuing education/professional development. Only 12.8% (5 of 39) indicated that their associations lacked a supporting budget. The survey also asked about budgets for grants, scholarships and other rewards for continuing education and professional development. Slightly more than half the respondents (53.7%, 22 of 41) indicated that no type of grant or scholarship was available to pursue education or professional development opportunities. Forty-four percent (18 of 41) indicated that they offered grants. Similarly, a little more than half of the associations responding (56.1%, 23 of 41) indicated that they offered scholarships that support education and professional development. In almost every instance if the association offered grants they did not offer scholarships, and vice versa.

State associations use a variety of methods to present continuing education. Ninety-five percent (38 of 40) indicated that their associations conduct workshops to enhance library skills, and one association had them in the planning stage. Thirty-eight of the forty respondents (95%) indicated their associations provide continuing education opportunities, but only 7 of 38 (18.4%) reported that their work earns college credits.

When asked if opportunities for professional development within the association were available, 92.3% (36 of 39) responded positively. When asked to comment on the means of providing professional development within the association, the respondents most often mentioned committee work (n=27), sections and roundtables (n=8), workshops (n=7), elected positions (n=4), and attendance at annual meetings (n=3). There was no mention of internships or professional publications as professional development activities within an association.

Only 1 of the 40 responding state associations did not sponsor continuing education and professional development programs and or workshops, and that one had it in the planning stages. These programs were held throughout the state and were in conjunction with annual conferences or meetings. Fifty-five percent (22 of 40) had professional development committees. The remaining 45% (18 of 40) did not have such committees, but 16.7% (3 of the 18) had continuing education committees or education committees.

The survey also attempted to find out whom the associations looked to for continuing education and professional development. All but one of the associations indicated that they most relied on the association's membership. State library staff was the second most often mentioned source (78%, 32 of 41) followed by consultants within the library profession (63.4%, 26 of 41). According to the responses, 43.9 % (18 of 41) of the state library associations turned to library school faculty, and 48.8% (20 of 41) of the associations turned to consultants outside the library profession. The American Library Association was listed by just over one-fourth (11 of 41) of the respondents.

The publication of a journal and/or newsletter is a typical way many associations keep their members informed. Over half the associations (21 of 40) published a journal.

These associations relied heavily on their membership for articles (73.3%, 22 of 30) although 69.2 % (18 of 26) accepted articles from non-members. Only 6 associations out of 25 respondents (24%) had refereed journals. The vast majority of journals published (21 of 22) three to six issues a year. Only one was published every month.

Other ways mentioned by state associations to promote continuing education and professional development were establishing a clearinghouse for continuing education programs, sending press releases to other library newsletters, making available interest free loans or outright scholarships, providing a student loan fund, and promoting events such as regional and national conferences.

Kenney & McMillan concluded that the survey results reported in their article suggest that state library associations are meeting the needs of practicing professionals as outlined by Houle in 1967. The fact that 40 out of 41 library associations provide some form of continuing education or professional development program and 84.6% (30 of 39) state associations budget for these activities is a clear indication that continuing education is an important aspect of their mission for their members.

Kenney & McMillan's data clearly support the state library associations as CLE providers. However, the study had several faults, the major flaw being that the study indicates that associations are providing opportunities for continuing education, but there are no data about participation. It is highly unlikely that state associations would continue to perform this service if librarians did not participate. However, one cannot assume librarians are taking part just because there are programs. The study also points out that continuing education programs exist at the state level, but it cannot be assumed that they are meeting practitioners' needs. For example, state library associations may be offering

continuing education in technology, but are they offering CLE in the areas of library marketing and supervisor-employee relations, where there might be a need? Finally, Kenney & McMillan failed to define continuing education and professional development.

Conclusion

The Kenney & McMillan study clearly shows that the opportunities exist for continuing library education. However, one cannot assume because the programs exist, practitioners' needs are being met. No impact studies were found indicating the number of continuing education programs librarians are taking part in, if librarians believe that their needs are being met, what kind of continuing library education librarians are participating in, and what type of librarian is participating and how often. This study was intended to answer all of these questions as they pertain to New Jersey librarians.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

As technology and management theories evolve, continuing library education (CLE) is still and for the foreseeable future one of the most important needs in libraries. Unfortunately, there is little data about what public libraries and librarians do for CLE. The purpose of my study was to gather and analyze data about continuing library education practices of public librarians in the state of New Jersey. The principle objective for gathering this data was to form a conclusion about practicing librarians' strengths and weakness in their continuing library education (CLE) activities. Additionally, the data collected offered information about librarians' preferences for how they participate in their CLE activities, future and current CLE needs, and the frequency of CLE participation. Information was collected from librarians in four types of positions: library directors, reference librarians, youth services librarians, and technical services librarians. The objective was to collect data from librarians practicing in different capacities of library work.

Description of Methodology

Since so little data exists on CLE among public librarians and none on New Jersey public librarians, the data had to be collected for the study. After contemplation, a

descriptive survey was determined to be the best method to gather data on continuing library education activities of librarians in New Jersey. Since it was unrealistic to survey all New Jersey public librarians, a sample was selected. A descriptive survey allowed the researcher to collect a reliable body of data to analyze and to draw conclusions about the continuing library education practices of New Jersey librarians.

Design of the Study

The population of my study consisted of all libraries in the state of New Jersey with at least four professionals. A sample of libraries was selected from the municipal and county public libraries throughout the state. Each of these libraries had to have at least four professional certified librarians. The criterion was four professionals because the researcher wanted to include librarians in various functions. A survey was sent to the director, youth service librarian, the reference librarian, and the technical service librarian of each selected library in order to survey librarians who perform in various job titles. This allowed the researcher to examine the CLE practices of different job titles in public librarianship. One hundred and two municipal public libraries and county public library systems met this criterion, as reported in the *New Jersey Public Library Statistics 2000* published by the New Jersey State Library. From the population of 102, a sample of 45 libraries was randomly selected. Each of these libraries was mailed four surveys, one each to the director, youth service, reference, and technical service librarian. Addresses and names were retrieved from the *Official Directory of New Jersey Libraries and Media Centers*. If names were not given in the *Directory*, the surveys were addressed by the type of librarian and sent to the library. Included with the mailed questionnaire were a

self-addressed return envelope and a cover letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire (see Appendix). Before the questionnaire was mailed, it was numbered to allow the researcher to identify returned surveys. This allowed for a follow up post card to remind those who had not returned their surveys to fill out the survey if at all possible.

A questionnaire was chosen as the method of collecting data for several reasons. Because the sample was spread throughout the state, a questionnaire was the most cost effective and efficient way to collect the data. The survey offered the participants adequate time to respond, within limits, and it offered participants anonymity (Powell, 1997).

Instrumentation

After determining the studies objectives, the researcher concluded a mail questionnaire would be the most logical instrument to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of eighteen open- and closed-ended questions and was approximately three pages (see Appendix). The survey was pre-tested by the thesis advisor and by three volunteer librarians before it was mailed out to the selected sample.

Data Collection and Other Procedures

Those willing to take part in the study returned the survey to the Atlantic City Free Public Library. The Atlantic City Library was chosen in hopes of increasing participation in the study by showing the study had the support of a major New Jersey public library. The director of the Atlantic City Free Public Library gave permission in advance.

Data from each survey returned were entered on to a coding sheet. When all returned surveys were coded, the results were then tallied on a tally sheet. The data were then input into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This statistical software created tables and graphs from the collected data.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to interpret the aggregated data. Some functions that were performed were frequency distributions, means, medians, modes, and variability of the data. The findings are presented in Chapter 4 and summarized in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Introduction

A questionnaire consisting of eighteen open- and closed-ended questions was mailed to 180 public librarians throughout New Jersey on March 1, 2002. A sample of 45 municipal and county libraries was randomly chosen from 102 libraries in the state that employed at least four professional librarians. Each of these libraries was sent a survey for the library director, youth services librarian, technical services librarian, and reference librarian. A total of 97 surveys were returned, and 95 of them were usable for a response rate of 54%.

Demographics of Respondents

Eighty-five of the respondents included their gender. Seventy-two of the respondents were female (84.7%) and thirteen were male (15.3%). Ninety-nine percent of the respondents held a master's in library science. The respondents had a mean of 24 years involvement in library work and 22 years as professional librarians. Technical service librarians had the highest mean as library professionals at 25.6 years. Library administrators were a close second at a mean of 25.5 years. Table 1 shows the mean years as library professionals by job title. South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative members had the highest mean at 25.1 years as library professionals. Central Jersey Regional

Library Cooperative members were second with a mean of 22.7 years. Table 2 shows mean years as library professionals by regional cooperative.

Table 1

Mean Years as Library Professionals Cross Tabulated by Job Title

Job Title	Mean	<i>n</i>	Std. Deviation
Technical Services	25.6	11	6.4
Administration	25.5	22	7.5
Principal	21.5	6	11.6
Supervising	21.1	8	9.1
Youth Services	19.1	18	9.5
Reference	17.2	17	8.8
Other	18.5	6	8.3
Total	21.5	88	9.0

Table 2

Mean Years as Library Professionals Cross Tabulated by Regional Cooperative

Regional Cooperative	Mean	<i>n</i>	Std. Deviation
SJRLC	25.1	17	8.5
CJRLC	22.7	11	8.0
INFOLINK	21.5	22	10.0
HRLC	19.9	39	8.8
Total	21.6	89	9.0

Table 3 shows that 24.2% of the respondents were administrators, 18.9% reference librarians, 18.9% youth services librarians, 11.6% technical services librarians, 7.4% supervising librarians 6.3% principal librarians, and 6.3% indicated other titles.

Table 3
Frequency of Responses by Job Title

Job Title	<i>n</i>	%	Cumulative %
Administration	23	24.2	24.2
Reference Librarian	18	18.9	43.1
Youth Services Librarian	18	18.9	62.0
Technical Services Librarian	11	11.6	73.6
Supervising Librarian	7	7.4	81.0
Principal Librarian	6	6.3	87.3
Other	6	6.3	93.6
No Response	6	6.3	100
Total	95	100	

Librarians from every regional library cooperative in the state responded to the survey. Thirty-nine of the 56 surveys mailed to Highlands Regional Library Cooperative region (libraries in Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren counties) were returned. This was a rate of return of 70%, making up 41% of the total returned surveys. INFOLINK Regional Library Cooperative (libraries from Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union counties) had the second highest rate of return at 37%; 22 of the 60 surveys were returned from these counties. These surveys made up 23% of the returned surveys. South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative (libraries from Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties) returned 17 of the 44 surveys mailed to these counties, for a return rate of 39%. This made up 18% of the total returned surveys. Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative (libraries from Ocean, Mercer, and Monmouth counties) returned 11 of the 16 surveys mailed to these

counties for a rate of return of 69%. This made up 12% of the total returned counties. Six of the respondents chose not to indicate their county.

The population included libraries from every county in New Jersey except Salem County, which has no libraries with four professionals. As stated previously, the criterion for inclusion in the study was at least four professional certified librarians. The greater number of libraries that met this criterion the more likely a library from that county would be selected. This explains the absence of libraries from Gloucester, Hunterdon, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties, because few libraries in these counties met the criterion, none were selected in the sample. Figure 1 indicates survey participants by county of employment.

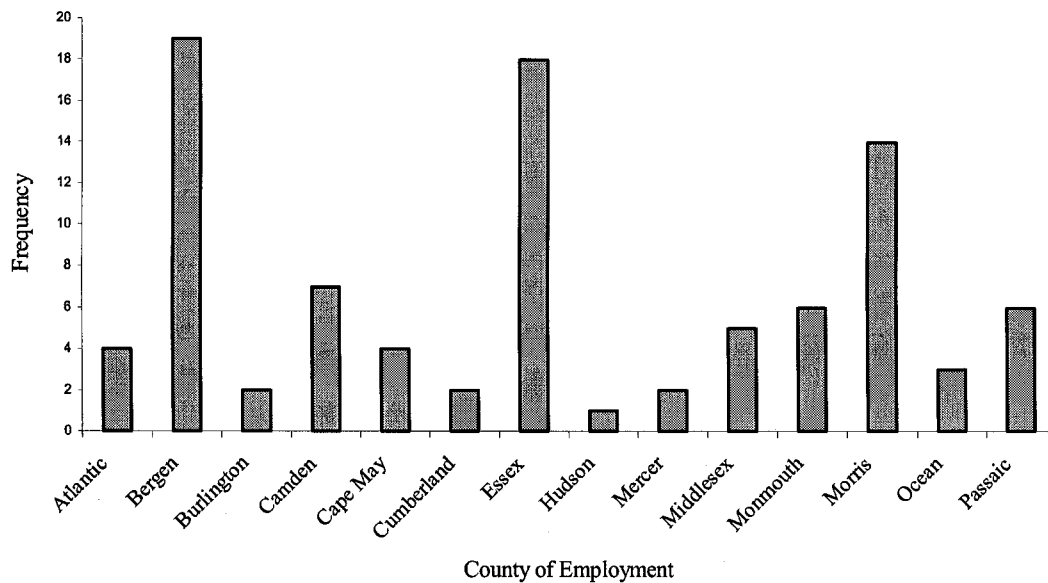


Figure 1. Frequency of returned surveys by county

Librarians' Continuing Education

Participants were asked to indicate how many hours they had devoted to continuing library education in the last twelve months. Thirty-three of the 95 usable surveys returned (35%) indicated that the respondents participated in over 20 hours of continuing library education in the last twelve months. The average hours of continuing library education for these respondents was 37. Fifteen spent 15-19 hours in CLE in the last 12 months (16%). Sixteen librarians responded that they spent 10-14 hours in continuing library education in the previous twelve months (17%). Fourteen librarians responded that they participated in 5-9 hours in CLE (15%). Eight surveys were returned indicating that they participated in 1-4 hours of CLE in the last twelve months (8%). Finally, nine librarians responded they didn't participate in any CLE (10%). The number one reason respondents gave for attending zero continuing education hours was no time, followed by no financial support. Table 4 indicates respondents' hours of continuing library education by regional library cooperative.

Table 4
Respondents' Hours of Continuing Education Cross Tabulated by Regional Cooperative

Regional Cooperative	Hours of Continuing Education						Total
	None	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+	
SJRLC	4	1	5	3	4	4	21
CJRLC	0	2	0	2	0	7	11
INFOLINK	2	2	2	5	6	6	23
HRLC	3	3	7	6	5	16	40
Total	9	8	14	16	15	33	95

Eighty-two percent (18 of 22) of the library administrators who responded had participated in at least 15 hours of continuing library education in the previous 12 months. Fifty-five percent (10 of 18) of the youth services librarians participated in at least 15 hours of CLE. Thirty-eight percent (3 of 8) of the supervising librarians, followed by principal librarians at 33% (2 of 6), and technical services librarians at 27% (3 of 11). Three of the remaining six librarians had at least 15 hours of CLE in the last 12 months. Seven respondents did not indicate their job title. Table 5 indicates hours of continuing education by job title.

Table 5
Respondents' Hours of Continuing Education Cross Tabulated by Job Title

Job Title	Hours of Continuing Education						Total
	None	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+	
Administration	0	1	0	3	5	13	22
Reference	0	2	5	2	6	2	17
Youth Services	1	2	0	5	3	7	18
Technical Services	1	1	4	2	0	3	11
Principal	1	0	2	1	0	2	6
Supervising	0	0	2	2	0	3	8
Other	1	1	1	0	0	3	6
Title not given	5	0	1	1	0	0	7
Total	9	7	15	16	15	33	95

Forty-nine respondents indicated they believe continuing education is very important (52%). Twenty-eight respondents indicated continuing education is important (29%). Twelve respondents indicated CLE is somewhat important (13%). Two responded CLE is unimportant (2%).

Twenty-three respondents believe their continuing library education needs are being met very well (24%). Fifty-six librarians responded that their continuing library education needs are being met adequately (59%). Eleven responded the CLE needs are being met less than adequately (12%).

Forty respondents offered information why they are not satisfied with their continuing library education opportunities. Thirteen responded that the subjects they are interested are not offered. Thirteen librarians believe the times are not convenient. Twenty-four responded that CLE opportunities are offered at too great a distance. Fifteen respondents replied the opportunities are too expensive.

Support for Continuing Library Education

Thirty-four (36%) respondents indicated that their library administration places high priority on CLE. Thirty-three (35%) perceive that library administration places medium to high priority on continuing library education. Twelve (13%) responded that their library administration places medium priority on continuing library education. Five (5%) responded that administration priority towards continuing library education is low to medium. Seven (7%) believe their administration puts a low priority on CLE.

Seventy-four of the respondents (78%) receive travel costs from their employer when participating in continuing library education. Seventy-seven of the respondents (81%) have their expenses covered by their employer when taking part in a CLE activity. Seventy-five librarians (79%) responded they receive time off with pay when participating in CLE. Four receive time off without pay from their employer. Three are

offered promotion as support for taking part in continuing library education. Three receive no support at all from their employer.

Continuing Library Education Activities

Librarians were asked to indicate which providers offered their continuing library education experience they participated in the last 12 months. Seventy-eight librarians responded that they attended continuing library education activities provided by their regional library cooperative. Forty-six respondents indicated they participated in CLE offered by the state library. Twenty-seven librarians responded they participated in CLE within their own libraries. Fifteen took part in a CLE activity sponsored by a library vendor. Fourteen indicated they participated with a higher education institution. Ten responded they were involved in a CLE activity with another public agency and nine with a private consultant. One respondent indicated he/she participated in a CLE activity with the federal government. Twenty-two responded they participated in continuing library education with other institutions. The most frequently mentioned were the New Jersey Library Association ($n=16$) and the American Library Association ($n=11$). Table 6 indicates the total number of continuing library education activities participated in by all respondents.

Participants were asked to rank how they prefer to take their continuing library education activities. Sixty-five respondents indicated workshops as their number one choice. Seventeen respondents indicated live lecture demonstrations as their most preferred choice. Sixteen responded conferences as their most preferred method of

Table 6

Providers Offering Continuing Library Education Experiences

<u>CLE Providers</u>	<u># of Mentions</u>	<u># of Experiences</u>
Library Vendors	15	15
Higher Education	14	23
Own Library	27	47
Federal Government	1	1
State Library	46	58
Regional Library Cooperative	78	130
Other Public Agencies	10	13
Private Consultants	9	9
Other	22	42
Totals	222	338

continuing library education. The number one preference of six of the respondents was on-campus courses. Three preferred web-based workshops as their number one choice. Only one preferred web-based college courses as their number one CLE choice.

The most frequent continuing education topic participated in the past twelve months was computer software (36). Thirty-five people participated in a continuing education activity dealing with reference services. The least attended was rare books and preservation. Table 7 gives a complete listing of the frequency of continuing library education topics.

The most requested continuing library education topic to be covered in the next twelve months was management/supervision (38). The second most requested was computer software (37), followed by book selection and collection development (35). The least requested were interlibrary loan (10) and rare books and preservation (7). Table 8 lists the frequency of requested continuing library education topics for the next twelve months.

Table 7

Frequency of Continuing Library Education Topics

Topics	Frequency
Computer software	36
Reference services	35
Management/supervision	29
Book selection and collection development	26
Programming	26
Public relations/marketing	22
Adult services	20
Youth Services	20
Interlibrary loan	17
Computer hardware	16
Other	14
Cataloging	12
Grant Development	12
Web page design	10
Budgeting	5
Rare books and preservation	1

Respondents were asked to identify the strategies used to reinforce their continuing library education activities. Forty-three librarians responded that they write or present an oral report to other staff members. Thirty-seven indicated that they brief other staff. Thirteen present a workshop for other library staff based on the continuing library education activity. Twelve do not use any strategy to reinforce the CLE activity. Thirteen use other mean for reinforcement.

Table 8
Frequency of Continuing Library Education Topics Requested

Topics	Frequency
Management/supervision	38
Computer software	37
Book selection and collection development	36
Web page design	31
Reference services	30
Grant Development	28
Public relations/marketing	24
Programming	23
Computer hardware	22
Youth Services	20
Budgeting	18
Adult services	17
Cataloging	16
Interlibrary loan	10
Other	9
Rare books and preservation	7

Summary

Although results of this study cannot be generalized to the state of continuing library education of public librarians in New Jersey, the data clearly showed that the respondents of this study have made a commitment to continuing library education.

Chapter 5 summarizes the collected data and makes recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

There is a direct correlation between a profession's status and its contribution to society. If its contribution diminishes then its status diminishes. Hence, a profession must continue to sharpen and renew its competencies. With this in mind, it is easy to see the necessity for continuing education in librarianship.

The Kenney & McMillan study clearly showed that opportunities exist for continuing library education. However, one cannot make the assumption that because opportunities exist, needs are being met. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the continuing library education opportunities for librarians in New Jersey. Of particular interest to the researcher were the topics of CLE experiences librarians participate in, how often librarians are participating, who offered their experiences, librarians' satisfaction with their CLE opportunities, what support librarians receive from their administrators, and what topics of CLE they would like to participate in in the future.

Conclusions

Ninety-seven out of 180 surveys were returned and 95 were usable for a return rate of 54%. The researcher would have liked a higher rate of return, but the return rate is strong enough to merit confidence in the findings. Ten percent of the respondents indicated they did not participate in any continuing library education in the previous 12

months. The number one reason librarians gave for attending zero hours of continuing library education was lack of time. The researcher speculates that the 46% who did not return the surveys might also have had little time to participate in any CLE, and, since they did not participate in any CLE, they did not return the survey. Some also may have intended to complete the survey and never got around to it.

Over 50% of the respondents took more than 15 hours of continuing library education. If broken down into four-hour workshops (half day), this is four continuing library education experiences per year. If one compares this to New Jersey teachers, who must participate in an average of 20 hours of professional development per year over a five-year period to remain licensed and have summers off to participate in these activities, it is very comparable. Thirty-five percent attended 20 or more hours of CLE. The average hours of CLE of these respondents were 37, and this far out number the 20 continuing education hours required by the state of New Jersey for teachers. Sixty-three percent of the respondents from Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative spent 15 hours or more of CLE, followed by Highlands Regional Library Cooperative at 53%, INFOLINK Regional Library Cooperative at 52%, and South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative at 38%. The researcher speculates that SJRLC may have the lowest participation in CLE because of the distance needed to travel for their CLE activities. Eighty-two percent of the library administrators participated in 15 or more CLE hours in the past twelve months. Youth services librarians are a far second at 55%. One factor that may contribute to such a disparity between administrators and other librarians' CLE hours is administrators may be in a better position to leave the library to pursue CLE activities, due to the fact that they may not spend as much time covering public services

desks as reference and other librarians. This also may explain why administrators had the highest response rate by job title (see Table 3).

Eighty-six percent of the respondents indicated that their CLE needs are being met adequately to very well. Twenty-four percent believe their needs are being met well. Fourteen percent believe their needs are being met less than adequately. Twenty-four percent of the respondents who are not satisfied with the CLE available believe that opportunities are offered at too great a distance. Thirteen percent believe times are inconvenient and subjects they are interested in are unavailable.

Sixty-nine percent of the librarians that responded believe that their administration puts at least a medium to high priority on CLE. Participants supported this response when indicating that 78% of the libraries provide travel cost, 82% pay expenses, and 80% give staff time off with pay.

Kenney & McMillan's conclusion that state library associations are meeting librarian's CLE needs was supported by the study's findings. Seventy-eight respondents participated in a CLE topic provided by their regional library cooperative, and 46 attended a CLE topic offered by the New Jersey State Library. These figures clearly indicate that the New Jersey public librarian relies heavily on the state and regional cooperatives for CLE. Librarians responded that workshops are the most preferred method to receive continuing library education. This also happens to be the method most often used by the state library and regional library cooperatives.

The two most frequent CLE topics were computer software and reference services. The researcher believes that these two topics are most frequent because of the rapid changes in technology and its effects on information access. The third most

attended topic was management/supervision. This also makes sense considering the respondents' demographics. The mean years as a librarian of those who responded was 22. After 22 years as a practicing librarian, many of the respondents are working in management and supervisory positions. Thirty-six out of the 95 respondents (38%) indicated administrator, principal, or supervisor as a job title, and others may have supervision duties.

The mean number of years as a library professional by regional cooperative and job title did not deviate much from the total mean of 22 years from all respondents. If the data is a complete picture of the state of New Jersey this clearly indicates that a large turnover of jobs may take place in the next ten years in all regions and job titles. However, New Jersey librarians have responded in the last year with a recruitment drive for new librarians.

Computer software and management and supervision were the two most requested topics for CLE in the next twelve months. The researcher believes that with the rapidly changing information field, many librarians expect to need continuing training and retraining in technology. Finally, as the library field changes and evolves, librarians are going to require leaders that have the skills to establish vision and goals, communicate these goals, and guide others to accomplish these tasks. Naturally, many librarians are going to need training in management and supervision skills to lead libraries in the future.

The conclusion drawn by the researcher is the needs of New Jersey public librarians are being met adequately. The majority of the library professionals surveyed are participating in an adequate number of CLE hours to renew their skills and keep

Recommendations for Higher CLE Participation

The number one reason for not participating in CLE was lack of time. This could be changed by mandating CLE hours to keep professional certification. The researcher does not recommend this change; however, service to the public suffers if librarians do not adequately keep up with changes in the field. The number one reason respondents were not satisfied with the CLE available was the distance needed to travel for the activities. The researcher can sympathize and strongly recommends more opportunities in the southern part of the state (Atlantic and Cape May counties). Another solution might be to promote more asynchronous CLE activities via the World Wide Web. This would allow librarians to participate in CLE when it is most convenient and without traveling.

Recommendations for Future Study

Although the data obtained from this study was useful in determining the state of CLE for New Jersey librarians, the researcher believes too many librarians were excluded. In the future, the researcher would like to enlarge the sample by including libraries that have fewer than four professionals and use a stratified sample to include more New Jersey counties. The researcher believes this would give a more complete picture of CLE in New Jersey.

Limitations in the Study

Unfortunately, there are many libraries in New Jersey that do not receive adequate funding to hire professional librarians. Not only do these libraries have no professional, in many cases they have only one employee. It is unrealistic to expect that the lone staff

member at a one-person library can get away often to pursue CLE. Therefore these libraries were excluded from this study. The researcher decided only to include medium to large libraries with at least four professionals. Unfortunately, this limited the population of the study. A future study of this population or a comparison of CLE participation of small public libraries vs. medium and large public libraries would rectify this situation. This study was also limited to library professionals. As stated previously, there are libraries in New Jersey with no professional or one professional and the majority of the staff non-professionals. As a result, many non-professionals are working in the capacity of professionals. Hence, continuing library education is also important to these individuals. The researcher believes it is a necessity for supervisors and administrators to actively promote CLE activities for all staff members, the end result being improved function of libraries and greater patron service. A study of smaller libraries would provide data on the CLE activities of these individuals.

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Appendix

Department of Secondary Education Foundations of Education
Program in School and Public Librarianship

March 1, 2002

Dear Librarian,

My name is Matthew Freund, and I am a master's degree student at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey.

For my master's thesis, I am conducting a survey of librarians in New Jersey. I am interested in examining the continuing library education patterns of librarians who work in the state.

I would very much appreciate your help in completing the enclosed survey and returning it to me. I have enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope to make the task of returning the survey easier. Please return the survey to me by March 15, 2002.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact me at the Atlantic City Free Public Library (609) 345-2269 or at my email address mj629@msn.com. In addition you may contact my program advisor, Dr. Holly G. Willett at (856) 256-4759.

All responses will remain confidential and care will be taken in the final paper that the libraries and librarians who participate will not be identified. The survey is completely voluntary. All questions answered will be extremely useful, however you do not have to answer all the questions.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Matthew Freund

Continuing Library Education Survey

For the purpose of this survey continuing library education consists of workshops, seminars, discussion groups, conferences, and college courses. I am aware that professional reading is an active part of most librarians' continuing library education, but please exclude your professional reading from this survey.

CLE Assessment

1. How many hours have you devoted to continuing library education in the last 12 months? (Check one):

☐ none (why not:)

☐ 1 to 4 hours

☐ 5 to 9 hours

☐ 10 to 14 hours

☐ 15 to 19 hours

☐ 20 or more hours:

approximate # of hours _____

Why not:

☐ no time

☐ no financial support

☐ I'm retiring soon

☐ other _____

Please stop here. Thank You!

2. How important is continuing library education to you? (Check one):

☐ very important

☐ important

☐ somewhat important

☐ not very important

☐ unimportant

3. How well are your continuing library education needs being met? (Check one):

☐ very well

☐ adequately

☐ less than adequately

4. If you are not satisfied with the currently available continuing library education opportunities available to you, why not? (Check as many as apply):

☐ subjects I am interested in are not offered

☐ times offered are not convenient

☐ offered at too great a distance

☐ too expensive

☐ other (please describe): _____

5. What priority does your library administration assign to continuing library education? (Check one):

- ☐ high
- ☐ medium to high
- ☐ medium
- ☐ low to medium
- ☐ low

6. What kind of support does your employer provide for continuing library education participation ? (Check as many as apply):

- ☐ travel costs
- ☐ expenses, such as registration fees
- ☐ time off with pay
- ☐ other (please describe): _____
- ☐ time off without pay
- ☐ promotion
- ☐ none

7. What groups or institutions offered the continuing library education experiences you have had the last 12 months? (Please indicate how many times you attended each type)

- ☐ library materials and supplies vendors
- ☐ higher education
- ☐ your library
- ☐ other public agencies (such as county and social welfare agencies)
- ☐ federal
- ☐ other (please describe): _____
- ☐ state library
- ☐ regional library cooperative
- ☐ private consultants

8. How do you prefer your continuing library education activities? (Please rank your top 3 choices)

- ☐ workshops, seminars and discussion groups (separately held)
- ☐ conference sessions
- ☐ on-campus college courses
- ☐ web-based college courses
- ☐ web-based workshops
- ☐ live lecture demonstrations
- ☐ other (please describe): _____

9. In the last 12 months, what were the topics of your continuing library education activities? (Check as many as apply)

- ☐ book selection and collection development
- ☐ reference services
- ☐ adult services
- ☐ interlibrary loan
- ☐ cataloging
- ☐ preservation
- ☐ other (describe): _____
- ☐ programming
- ☐ grant development
- ☐ youth services
- ☐ management/supervision
- ☐ public relations/marketing
- ☐ web page design
- ☐ computer software
- ☐ computer hardware
- ☐ budgeting
- ☐ rare books and

10. Which topics of continuing library education would you like to have available to you in the next 12 months? (Check as many as apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> book selection and collection development	<input type="checkbox"/> programming	<input type="checkbox"/> web page design
<input type="checkbox"/> reference services	<input type="checkbox"/> grant development	<input type="checkbox"/> computer software
<input type="checkbox"/> adult services	<input type="checkbox"/> youth services	<input type="checkbox"/> computer hardware
<input type="checkbox"/> interlibrary loan	<input type="checkbox"/> management /supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> cataloging	<input type="checkbox"/> public relations/marketing	
<input type="checkbox"/> rare books and preservation		
<input type="checkbox"/> other		

(describe) _____

11. What strategies do you use to reinforce the learning that takes place in a continuing library education activity? (Please check all that apply.) Do you:

☐ provide a briefing in a staff meeting

☐ provide written or oral report for supervisor or fellow staffers

☐ present workshop for other library staff based on CLE activity

☐ other (describe) _____

☐ none

Demographics

12. What is your job title? _____
13. Do you have a graduate degree in library and/or information science?
- ☐ yes
- ☐ no
14. If no please specify degree if applicable. _____
15. How long have you been involved with library work?
- ☐ years
16. How long have you been a professional librarian?
- ☐ years

17. Which county do you work in?

☐ Atlantic
☐ Bergen
☐ Burlington
☐ Camden
☐ Cape May
☐ Cumberland

☐ Essex
☐ Gloucester
☐ Hudson
☐ Hunterdon
☐ Mercer

☐ Middlesex
☐ Monmouth
☐ Morris
☐ Ocean
☐ Passaic

☐ Salem
☐ Somerset
☐ Sussex
☐ Union
☐ Warren

18. Please indicate your gender.

☐ female
☐ male

Thank you for your support and participation!

Please add any comments:
