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User satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library: a case study

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USER SATISFACTION WITH THE INTERLIBRARY LOAN SYSTEM

AT CAMDEN COUNTY LIBRARY:

A CASE STUDY

by
Jennifer L. Pierce

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
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Approved by _____
                                             Assistant Professor

Date Approved *August 10, 2001*

ABSTRACT

Jennifer L. Pierce. User Satisfaction with the Interlibrary Loan System at Camden County Library: A Case Study. 2001. (Under the direction of Dr. Holly G. Willett, Program in School and Public Librarianship.)

The purpose of the study was to determine patron satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library in New Jersey. The researcher experienced the interlibrary loan process first-hand at the main library in Voorhees. Protecting patron confidentiality and anonymity, a four-page questionnaire survey was included with 150 interlibrary loan items that were picked up by patrons between March 9, 2000 and June 6, 2000. Of the 79 surveys returned, 76 were usable for this study. The overall conclusion is that respondents were satisfied: 96.05% were satisfied with staff helpfulness, 82.89% were satisfied with the time it took to get the item, and 90.79% were satisfied with the ease of the ILL process. Respondents gave lower satisfaction ratings for past ILL requests: 84.62% for staff helpfulness and 78.85% for time to get the item. Only 7 people (9.21% of the total respondents) indicated any dissatisfaction.

MINI-ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to determine patron satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library in New Jersey. The overall conclusion is that respondents were satisfied, with only 7 people (9.21% of the total respondents) expressing any type of dissatisfaction.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank the staff of Camden County Library, without whose cooperation this thesis could not have been accomplished. I would also like to thank my family and friends who kept me sane during this project, and Dr. Holly Willett, for her patience and guidance.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction and Background

Interlibrary loan (ILL) is a service that libraries provide for their patrons to obtain materials that patrons want which the library does not currently own. The borrowing library will ask another library to lend those materials; in turn, items are lent to the patron. However, a copy of an article may be sent or faxed instead of lending the particular periodical in which it appears. It is not possible, regarding space and funds, to buy every book, videotape or audio tape, or to subscribe to every periodical. Most written materials eventually go out of print, after which they cannot be purchased. Therefore, interlibrary loan is a system of resource sharing through which each library can benefit from borrowing and loaning materials.

Interlibrary loan can allow patrons to get information they need or want, regardless of where it is located. Not all materials can be obtained, however. For example, few libraries will lend audio-visual materials, and no library will lend a new book This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

So what can be borrowed through interlibrary loan? Is purchasing the requested item a reasonable alternative? If there are restrictions, is the service really filling the needs of the patrons? These are just some of the questions that were considered.

Statement of the Problem

The topic of this study was user satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library. Looking at how satisfied patrons are with any library service is important to that library and possibly others as well. Essex and Magal (1998) state that user satisfaction has been the predominant means of evaluating the success of any information center. By looking at the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library in particular, the researcher was able to discuss information which could be used to either confirm that patrons are satisfied with the current system or show that it needs improvement. If improvement was needed, the library staff could consider ways of making interlibrary loans more satisfactory or alternatives which may have been more appropriate. Such alternatives might include buying the requested materials for the library or allowing more liberal borrowing privileges, for example, instituting a system which would allow patrons to check out books at other libraries.

As a former employee and continuing patron of Camden County Library, the researcher already knew some aspects of how the system works. There are only two employees in the interlibrary loan department, one full-time and one part-time. The sheer volume of interlibrary loan requests is sometimes more than they can handle during peak borrowing times. Also, past patron comments have given the impression that some requests take so long to fill that patrons can no longer use the item when it finally arrives.

Hand-carry interlibrary loan can be seen as both an aspect of, and an alternative to, traditional interlibrary loan. Essentially, patrons do the legwork for a hand-carry ILL, but they do get their items much quicker. In many cases this method allows a patron to get an item on the same day from the lending library.

It should be noted that during the course of this study, a new state-wide process of interlibrary loan was in the early stages of implementation. When the new system is fully operational, a new study that compares the results of this study would be informative. Though this was a limited study, the methods and results can be used to design a more thorough study should one be desired in the future.

Also, the implementation of EBSCOhost, an index database of periodical articles, many of which are available in full text, has greatly reduced the usage of interlibrary loan for obtaining articles. Patrons can now print out copies of the articles either from a library terminal or online from home if they have a valid Camden County Library card.

Purpose

To better serve the library patrons was the main purpose of undertaking this study. By examining patron satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system currently in use, the researcher believed it was possible to determine if it is an effective tool for providing the materials which are not currently owned that the patron wants or needs in a timely manner. If it were shown that the interlibrary loan system is satisfactory, then the patrons are being served. If the system was shown not to be satisfactory, then ways to better serve the patrons must be considered, or the system itself must be improved.

Methodology

The objectives were accomplished by doing a literature review, conducting a patron satisfaction survey, and observing first hand the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library. The observation and survey distribution took place at the main

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branch of Camden County Library in Voorhees during the Spring of the year 2000. The literature review will be mentioned briefly later in this chapter and in more detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis. The literature review provided historical background and a basis of comparison. It was hoped that the current literature would also support the findings of the case study.

The research for the case study was actually accomplished in two parts: a patron survey and first hand observation. The patron survey was anonymous and confidential. The plan was to include an approved and pre-tested survey with interlibrary loan materials as they went out until all surveys were distributed. Postage paid return envelopes were provided so the patron only had to fill out the survey and drop it in a mailbox. Babbie (1998) states that at least 100 surveys should be sent, so it was believed that the number of surveys actually sent out (150) would provide a random sampling of interlibrary loan patrons. Satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system cannot be assessed by surveying non-users of the system. Therefore, it was reasonable to survey only known users in this manner.

There were several variables considered. One was the type of material: books, videotapes, audio tapes, or articles. Articles are handled by the reference desk and/or periodicals department in cooperation with the interlibrary loan department. Audio-visual interlibrary loans are less frequent but do occur. At Camden County Library, such requests are not encouraged as the success rate is lower and the restrictions higher. Another variable was the number of requests made during a specific time period. It is likely that if there are more requests one month than the next month, the number filled may decline (though not necessarily the percentage). A third variable was the time to fill

a request. A related variable was the mode of delivery for the request. That is, how it arrived: regular mail, airmail, fax, e-mail, local delivery, or another delivery service such as UPS.

Statistics were examined for the two-year period of January 1, 1998 to December 31, 1999 for comparison to the first hand observation of the interlibrary loan department at Camden County Library. During the observation, the entire process of interlibrary loan was examined from the initial request to fulfillment. It is important to see and experience how something is done to truly understand how much work goes into filling a single request and how far the staff will go to locate a desired item. The concepts discussed in the literature were made clearer through direct observation.

As a part of the interlibrary loan process, it was necessary to briefly review the South Jersey Regional Cooperative and its role in the interlibrary loan system. Visit their website at http://www.sjrlc.org/ for detailed information.

Questions to Be Answered

In determining if the interlibrary loan system is satisfactory, several questions were asked. Are library patrons getting the materials they request through interlibrary loan? Are the materials being obtained in a timely manner? These and other questions were answered both by the library statistics, and the answers given on the survey. If they are not getting the materials, it is reasonable to question why. Was the item too new? Was the library not able to locate it? Was it an item that other libraries will not lend? Did the patron give a too soon needed by date? (If patrons specify a date that an item is

needed by, library staff will stop looking if it is not located or filled by that date.) Failure to obtain an item may not be the fault of the Camden County Library system.

It was hoped that by including questions regarding past requests, patrons would comment on why an item was not received if their request was not filled. Unfortunately, a limit of this study was the inability to survey patrons who specifically did not receive a requested item. To do so would have compromised confidentiality and the patron's right to privacy, as the only possible method would be to access unfilled requests and contact the patron listed.

Interlibrary loan policy of the Camden County Library was examined, as it could affect the ability to obtain desired materials. For instance, regulations as to where the items are requested from might affect the success of a request. How many libraries will be asked in trying to locate one that will agree to lend the item? Are only certain libraries asked? Are the rules different for different materials? All these issues could affect the ultimate answer, so each needed to be examined.

To assess the satisfaction with the interlibrary loan system, all these questions had to be answered. The variables needed to be examined and compared. Once the research was complete and comparisons were made, the following question could be answered: Are Camden County Library patrons satisfied with the current interlibrary loan system? If the answer was yes, it would confirm that Camden County Library has a good interlibrary loan system for serving the patrons. A no answer, however, would open the need for further research and the need to answer additional questions: 1) What could be done to improve the system? 2) What alternatives could be made available?

Definition of Terms

Branch Library. Library in addition to the main library in Voorhees that is considered part of the Camden County Library and whose collection catalog is part of the public catalog patrons can access from any of the locations. Library patrons can use the same library card at the main library and all of the branches. Branch libraries are run as part of, and collection development is done in conjunction with, the main library. Funds for running the branch libraries come from the main library budget. Branch Managers report to the Library Director of the main library. These libraries are the Winslow Township Branch (now renamed South County Regional Branch), the Bellmawr Branch, the Haddon Township Library (William G. Rohrer Memorial Library), the Gloucester Township Branch, and the Merchantville Reading Room. Although Camden County College is not a branch library; its catalog holdings are part of Camden County Library's computer catalog, and patrons have reciprocal borrowing privileges.

Hand Carry ILL. When the patron does the legwork in obtaining an interlibrary loan request. If an item is located at a nearby library that is not part of the Camden County System, the patron may opt to use the Hand Carry ILL form. This allows the patron to go pick up the desired item from the lending library. The patron must then return to the Camden County Library so the item can be processed by the ILL Department, before the item may be checked out.

Interlibrary Loan. When one library borrows an item from another library for a patron.

Interlibrary Loan Request. When a patron requests an eligible item that is not available at any of the libraries within the Camden County Library system (see Lack of Ownership).

Interlibrary Loan System. The whole process of taking the request, to filling (or not filling) the request. This includes searching for libraries that own the item, asking libraries to loan the item, processing it for loan through the library when it arrives, loaning the item to the patron, and returning it to the lending library. Any of the steps may take time, or may not be possible, resulting in the request not being filled.

Lack of Ownership. Not having a copy of the requested item anywhere in the Camden County Library system. An item owned by any of the libraries that list materials in the public catalog is not eligible for an interlibrary loan request (see Branch Libraries). There is a separate process, not part of this study, for borrowing materials that belong to any of those libraries.

LibraryLink. A program that allows libraries to view the Camden County Library catalog from remote locations via telnet. Member libraries can also send ILL requests to the main library in Voorhees.

Materials Requested. Any and all materials requested through interlibrary loan during the time period studied. These include, but are not limited to, books, video recordings, audio tapes, and periodical articles.

Member Library. Libraries in towns that pay the county library tax but are not part of the Camden County Library system. Residents of those towns are eligible for a free membership at Camden County Library. Member libraries are run by the town in which they are located, independent of Camden County Library, and their catalogs are

not part of the Camden County Library catalog system. These libraries are Audubon Park, Barrington, Berlin, Berlin Township, Brooklawn, Chesilhurst, Clementon, Gibbsboro, Hi Nella, Laurel Springs, Lawnside, Lindenwold, Magnolia, Mt. Ephraim, Oaklyn, Pine Valley, Pine Hill, Somerdale, Tavistock, and Woodlyne. Although Cherry Hill is not a member library, patrons have reciprocal borrowing privileges.

Net Borrower. A library that borrows more materials than it lends.

Net Lender. A library that lends more materials than it borrows.

Patron. Any individual who is a member of the Camden County Library.

Request Filled. The requested item on the interlibrary loan form arrives for the patron. It does not matter if the patron fails to pick up the item and it has to be sent back, as long as it arrives for the patron (who is notified to that effect).

Request Unfilled. The library is unable to borrow the item within the time specified by the patron, or no library asked will lend the item.

Respondent. Any patron who answered the patron survey used for this study.

Satisfaction. The respondent indicates that a request was filled in a timely matter and that he or she is happy with the interlibrary loan system.

Timely Manner. Getting the requested item to the patron when it is needed. Consideration should be given, though, if a patron gives an unreasonable date needed by. The library says to allow three to six weeks, but most requests come sooner. Patrons expecting materials within a couple days are not allowing a reasonable amount of time to procure the item. A reasonable length of time would be three to four weeks, the time a book is allowed to circulate plus time for it to be sent from the lending library.

Literature Review

Literature reviewed for Chapter 2 of this thesis included books as well as articles. Older literature was consulted for a historical perspective. Case studies of ILL and user satisfaction were reviewed for comparison with this study. Also, literature on general library service and interlibrary loan issues were consulted. Modes for document delivery, including UnCover, were reviewed and discussed.

Limitations

Given more time and resources for this project, a more efficient process might have been used. For instance, distributing the survey in every tenth book over a longer period of time, or sending out more surveys (Babbie, 1998). It was quickly discovered that the sampling method chosen resulted in some patrons getting multiple surveys (as indicated by three patrons). It is desirable that each survey be received by a different patron.

Due to the confidentiality and anonymity guaranteed to patrons, it was not possible to survey those who received unfilled notices or to follow up non-respondents. A more in-depth study in the future should consider these issues. For the purposes of this study, the researcher was limited in the time available for the research. It was hoped that the survey questions about past interlibrary loans would gather information about patrons' experiences with unfilled interlibrary loan requests.

Organization of Remainder of Study

The full impact of the study will be revealed in the remaining chapters. In Chapter 2, the literature reviewed during this study will be discussed in depth. In Chapter 3, the methodology will be fully explained. The data collected will be presented and analyzed in Chapter 4. The last chapter will comprise the summary, conclusions, and resulting recommendations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Examining existing literature on any research topic is important. Older literature provided background history and important related studies. Recent literature more accurately reflected the contemporary interlibrary loan system with the advantages of changing technology. Examples of enhancements to interlibrary loan were also demonstrated by current literature.

Interlibrary loan was used to request materials for this literature review. The first packet of articles arrived, but they were for another patron and could not be used for this study. This early experience demonstrates why interlibrary loan needs to be studied. Michael Carpenter (1991) describes his own experiences with interlibrary loan requests. His article brings forth a new perspective: the effectiveness of the system of the lending library might be the cause of possible problems.

Some articles that discuss how an interlibrary loan system may be improved by allowing patrons to make their own requests include "FirstSearch Patrons Can Place Their Own ILL Requests" (1993) and one by David Belanger (1990). These articles describe the process and show how it is quicker because library staff do not have to spend as much time, or in some cases any time, on an interlibrary loan request. Preece and Kilpatrick (1998) also discuss patrons making their own requests. They describe the

system in use at Southern Illinois University. Their study also provided some information used to devise the patron survey for this study.

A few articles discussed commercial document suppliers. In one article, Pedersen and Gregory (1994) did a study comparing six such suppliers. They discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each, and compare them to traditional interlibrary loans. Interestingly, they do not suggest suppliers as a replacement, only as a possible enhancement to the library's service.

Some articles discussed a whole new system. One very short article ("NJ Implements," 1999) offers little more than a prospect, but the promise of improved service is worth mentioning. Similarly, another very short article ("British Document," 1999) promises speedy delivery of documents. The possibility of having a request filled within three hours is very enticing. There are many developing systems.

Sharing resources is important for libraries so they can all better serve the patrons. Doug Johnson (1999) discusses this in his article "A Stone-Soup Mentality". He presents both sides of the argument, concluding that sharing versus hoarding benefits everyone. Dougherty and Williams (1999) discuss various aspects of resource sharing. One point seems to occur in much of the literature: it should enhance library collections, not replace the purchase of materials.

ILL History in the United States

In order for interlibrary loan to take place, there must be a reciprocal agreement. The necessary elements are a patron who needs materials, the borrowing library that does not have the materials, a means to identify where the desired materials might be located,

and an owning library that does have the materials. The owning library must also be willing to lend the desired materials.

Samuel S. Green is considered by many to be the forefather of interlibrary loan, as he mentions in a 1876 letter the practice in Europe of getting books from other libraries (Young, 1928). But Evans, Amodeo, and Carter (1992) claim that cooperative lending dates back to medieval times in Western European monasteries, which loaned books to each other for copying. They state that ILL is an issue of equal access, and the ideal would be to meet the patrons' needs regardless of their location or status. "Interlibrary loan removes the limitations of patron location and is inherently democratic" (Gilmer, 1994, p. 165). M. O. Young (1928) stated that ILLs are evidence of cooperation, and photostats might help ease the burden of lending periodicals. He also mentioned that the borrowing library should be trusted to judge that a request is not frivolous.

Lois C. Gilmer (1994) outlined important dates in American interlibrary loan history. Libraries had to come first, and the first public library was established from provisions in the will of Captain Robert Keayne in Boston in 1655 or 1656. In 1762 and 1765 there were failed attempts at establishing circulating libraries in the colonies, but they became more successful after the Revolution. Circulating libraries were the first step in lending desired materials to anyone who wished to borrow them.

In 1800 the Library of Congress (LC) was established by the U.S. Congress. Governor DeWitt Clinton of New York recommended in 1827 that school district libraries be formed. The first reports of loans to people outside the library district were in 1849. In 1847 the first index of periodicals was published: *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature* (originally called *An Alphabetical Index to Subjects Treated in the Reviews*

and Other Periodicals). This index made it easier for library staff to see who had which

periodicals so that time looking for desired materials was decreased. Charles C. Jewett

formed a plan in 1850 for a universal library, but his idea was not well received. By 1876

every state and territory had a governmental library, and Samuel S. Green suggested

lending books between libraries. Also in 1876, the American Library Association (ALA)

was established, and Melvil Dewey's classification scheme was put into use (Gilmer,

1994). In 1878 Dewey spoke of ILL being an almost daily occurrence, and in 1887 he

became head of the first library school in the United States (Young, 1928; Gilmer, 1994).

Library schools taught people who wished to be librarians, which meant librarians would

be professionals and better trained to help fulfill the needs of patrons. In 1891 Green

became president of ALA and in his speech mentioned libraries that had adopted his idea.

Lois C. Gilmer (1994) noted that Bunford Samuel suggested in 1892 that libraries have

loan agreements. Also in 1892, the earliest resource list describing library collections

and catalogs was published: William C. Lane and Charles K. Bolton's *Notes on Special*

Collections in American Libraries. More directories followed their example (Gilmer,

1994). Not only periodicals, but also books and other materials were made more

accessible simply by revealing which libraries had what materials.

Samuel S. Green wrote in 1898 of his 20 years experience with ILL, and his

library never lost or injured a book and never had a returned book arrive injured. His

opinion was that the system should be extended, and small libraries should become

lenders as well as borrowers. He also stated that rules should be devised and enforced.

Rounding off the 19th century, Ernest C. Richardson reported in 1899 that he supported

practical cooperation (Young, 1928). As evidence he claimed there were three barriers to

research: works not available in North American libraries, difficulty in locating titles held, and the expense of traveling to libraries. He also suggested a national lending library be established (Gilmer, 1994). All these events were the initial steps necessary to create libraries in which people could borrow materials, set up agreements for libraries to borrow from each other, and make the lending and borrowing process easier and beneficial to all those involved.

In 1901 the Library of Congress (LC) began printing library catalog cards (Gilmer, 1994). In 1905 Richardson became president of ALA and again urged cooperation among libraries (Young, 1928; Gilmer, 1994). The LC cooperated with lending to foreign libraries starting in 1906. In 1908 Charles H. Gould proposed regional libraries, and W. C. Lane suggested producing union lists and creating a lending bureau. A regional library would give patrons more access to materials by pooling resources. Also, distant libraries would be more likely to enter interlibrary loan agreements with regional libraries, as the potential for having desired materials would be greater. Gould became ALA president in 1909 and emphasized cooperation in his speech. The 50th anniversary conference of ALA was in 1926, and many topics focused on interlibrary loan. Standardized cataloging and easier bibliographic verification came about with the publication in 1942 of *A Catalog of Books Represented by LC Printed Cards Issued to July 31, 1942* and its later supplements (Gilmer, 1994). Again, these were all steps to make the interlibrary loan process easier for all those involved. Searching which libraries had the desired materials was made quicker and easier, thereby lessening time spent on each request.

Technology really came into use for ILL requests during the 1960s. Requests could be sent over telephone lines using teletype machines (Fong, 1996a). Henriette Avram and others created the Machine-Readable Cataloging [MARC] record, a standardized format for transmitting bibliographic data (L. H. Rogers, 1995). Automated catalogs and library-to-library terminal connections came about in the 1970s (Gilmer, 1994; Fong, 1996a). OCLC first went online in 1971 (L. H. Rogers, 1995). In 1979 the Online Computer Library Center [OCLC] activated its first ILL system. It included a messaging system and allowed for the location and verification of an item (Fong, 1996a). Linda H. Rogers (1995) claims that in the 1980s microcomputers led to the integrated online systems. Yem S. Fong (1996a) claims that in the 1980s messaging software utilized a variety of telecommunication channels, and computer usage prompted the establishment of ILL standards. By the 1990s, many libraries had catalogs on CD-ROM (Gilmer, 1994). Message formats varied among libraries, and some libraries considered electronic delivery of documents directly to the patrons (Fong, 1996a). The Internet also came into wide usage in the 1990s, allowing worldwide access to various libraries (L. H. Rogers, 1995). The advent of utilizing technology to aid in interlibrary loan requests not only made the process easier, but also more efficient, more accurate, and less time consuming.

Lois C. Gilmer (1994) listed 14 people whom she considered most important to ILL history, some of whom have already been mentioned. In addition to publishing the first index of periodicals, William F. Poole worked for the ILL cause at the first ALA conference. Although his ideas were not well received at the time, C. C. Jewett proposed a union catalog, cooperative cataloging, and building the Smithsonian Institution Library.

In 1876 Richard Roger Bowker helped found *Library Journal* and arranged the meeting

at which ALA was organized. He was also the owner and editor of *Publisher's Weekly*.

Aside from developing his well-known classification system, Melvil Dewey was the first

editor of *Library Journal*. Among his many accomplishments, Justin Winsor was an

ALA president and one of the founders of *Library Journal*. Considered most responsible

for ILL development, Samuel S. Green was one of the ALA founders, and was ALA

president in 1891. William C. Lane suggested union lists and creating a lending bureau.

In 1892 he penned *Notes on Special Collections in American Libraries*. In 1892 Bunford

Samuel proposed that libraries have ILL agreements. Ernest Cushing Richardson was

president of ALA and the American Library Institute. He was also an honorary

bibliographic consultant at the Library of Congress. Charles H. Gould proposed regional

libraries, and he was ALA president in 1909. As Librarian of Congress, Herbert Putnam

did many things, including helping other libraries print catalog cards, publishing

classification schedules, and developing the *National Union Catalog*. William Warner

Bishop was sent in 1924 to invite European libraries to the 50th anniversary meeting of

ALA. Charles C. Williamson was instrumental in securing a Rockefeller Foundation

grant for funding the publication of the catalog of the Bibliotheque Nationale. H. M.

Lydenberg published various union lists and assisted in completing Sabin's *Dictionary of*

Books Relating to America (Gilmer, 1994). These men, and countless unnamed others,

laid the groundwork for what developed into the modern day interlibrary loan process,

and for various library tools such as standard bibliographic records, union lists, and

library related literature for librarians.

Several professional organizations were listed by Lois C. Gilmer (1994) as important to the development of ILL. The American Library Association was founded in 1876 with the goals of making libraries accessible to everyone, establishing professional standards, and publishing materials to aid ALA goals. Founded in 1932, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) was formed to strengthen member libraries and serve the research needs of students, faculty, and the research community. ARL member libraries provided the bulk of ILLs in the early stages of the ILL movement. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) was organized in 1927 to promote worldwide library cooperation. IFLA studies the problems of international relations, and in 1954 created an agreement on international ILL. The Special Libraries Association (SLA) concentrates on the loans of specialized materials, and publishes the journal *Special Libraries*, as well as various bibliographies, sourcebooks, and directories. Founded in 1909 with just 26 members, SLA now consists of more than 12,000 international groups of professionals (Gilmer, 1994). Professional organizations help develop standards to make the interlibrary loan process easy for everyone involved. Library literature helps keep librarians informed of what other librarians are doing and any new developments in the library field.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the first official ILL code was the *ALA Interlibrary Loan Code of 1917*. The code established guidelines for ILL transactions, stressing the need to serve scholars, that borrowing was a privilege, and lending was not an obligation. Some larger lending libraries also created their own codes. Over the years, the code was revised several times. The code of 1940 was targeted for college, university, and research libraries. The code of 1952 liberalized the ILL rules and allowed

undergraduates the use of interlibrary loan to borrow books for the first time. This code also had provisions for photocopied material and for transportation costs. The *National Interlibrary Loan Code of 1968* replaced the 1956 revision. There were changes in the forms to accommodate typewritten entries and carbonless copies. A model code was added that could be used by regional, state, local, or other special groups or libraries. The code was again revised in 1980. As with the others, it contained general guidelines for borrowing and lending of materials. In addition to placing the burden of responsibility on the borrowing library, this version of the code takes into account technological developments (Gilmer, 1994). More recently, the code was revised in 1994 and retitled *National Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States* (Reference and Adult Services Division [RASD] Management and Operation of Public Services Section [MOPSS] Interlibrary Loan Committee, 1994). See the ALA website at http://www.ala.org/rusa/stnd_Inc.html for the complete updated code.

Case Studies

Specific institutions were the topic of some of the reviewed literature. Anna H. Perrault and Marjo Arseneau conducted a user satisfaction study at Louisiana State University (LSU) in 1992. Surveys were sent to a 20% sample of ILL users to determine user satisfaction and create a basis for future assessments. The primary finding was that there was a high level of satisfaction with the ILL service. Although no names were asked on the survey itself to protect anonymity, the names of those in the sample were held so follow-up letters could be sent at a later date. The actual survey questions were included in the Appendix of the article. Faculty users had an additional question not on

the survey sent to student users. Survey questions focused mainly on time issues such as when they needed the item by and how long it took to get the item. Overall, the authors found a 93.26% approval rate among the respondents (Perrault and Arseneau, 1995). This study was conducted well and provides a good baseline comparison for future studies at the same institution.

David Belanger (1990) examined the Delaware County Library System in Pennsylvania in his article, "Bulletin Board and Interlibrary Loan EL-Mail: The Electronic Library Mail Network." The "Chairman" program has been in use since November 1987. It is a microcomputer-based bulletin board for electronic mail. Its capacity to support six simultaneous callers helps increase the speed and effectiveness of the ILL system. With this program, requests from users go directly to the mailbox of the first potential lender. If the item cannot be lent, the request is automatically forwarded to the next potential lender. In the first two years over 60,000 messages were sent, representing approximately 15,000 ILL requests. A survey conducted in 1989 revealed that the average fill time for the new system was 3.2 days, in contrast to 7.1 days for the old paper system. It also showed that 51% of the requests were filled in 2 days or fewer, and 4% arrived the same day the request was made (Belanger, 1990).

David H. Fuller (1998) looked at the effectiveness of ILL agreements at the University of Florida Smathers Libraries. The Smathers Libraries participate in two reciprocal/consortium partnerships, one with the Florida Library Information Network (FLIN), a statewide cooperative network and one with the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries. Fuller explains that a reciprocal agreement is for free borrowing of items, not photocopies, and consortium agreements include other practices besides free

ILL, such as on-site borrowing, joint collection development, and other types of resource sharing. For the study, OCLC statistics for requests filled over the 5-year period 1993 to 1997 were examined. The end results found were that 64.2% of requests filled were from libraries with agreements, while non-agreement libraries that charge fees filled only 35.8% of the requests. The author concluded that reciprocal agreements are very important as they provide greater access to materials, minimize the cost of service to users, and foster ongoing resource sharing (Fuller, 1998).

Part of a larger report, Yem S. Fong's article, "Specifications for an Electronic Interlibrary Loan (ILL) System: The Colorado Model" (1997), discusses a project initiated in 1996 by the Colorado Library Resource Sharing and Information Access Board (CLRSIAB). The project was developed to explore patron-initiated interlibrary loans using Access Colorado Library Information Network (ACLIN), a statewide initiative to provide links between all Colorado library systems for catalog access and document delivery. See their website at http://www.aclin.org for more detailed information. CLRSIAB wanted a system that would interface with local catalogs, remote databases, and bibliographic utilities to form an electronically available statewide ILL network. The system needed to be more efficient than paper forms, allow patron initiation, hold patron records, be affordable, work with OCLC, implement current standards, and allow local customization. Before creating ACLIN, CLRSIAB had looked at models in other states and decided that, though the necessary technology and standards existed, the current products had limitations and the cost of developing an ideal model would be significant (Fong, 1997).

Barbara G. Preece and Thomas L. Kilpatrick (1998) discussed a study at the Morris Library at Southern Illinois University (SIU), which involved redesigning the ILL process to give patrons more choice and responsibility. Staff at Morris Library decided a redesign was necessary due to increased patron demand for resources, the revised mission statement that emphasized patron services, a reallocation of funds to support photocopy and borrowing fees, and a commitment to using technology to optimize access to resources. In short, the staff wanted to respond to the increased demand for access, provide service in a timely and cost effective manner, and empower patrons. There are 49 libraries that constitute the Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization (ILCSO). The common circulation system is part of ILLINET Online (IO), a statewide catalog for over 800 Illinois libraries that subscribes to OCLC's cataloging service. IO also serves as the ILL system for ILCSO and IO members, and allows patrons unmediated borrowing at ILCSO libraries. IO does not generate notifications, so staff at SIU developed a program to send notices and create book bands, as well as track all request activity. Although borrowed items and ILL requests have increased, less professional time is needed for requests, so the service is actually better. A study examining the time from initiation of request to fulfillment indicated that patron-initiated requests were filled more quickly than other ILL items: 8.4 days on average versus approximately 3 weeks for requests originating from the Web, ILL paper cards, or FirstSearch. A patron satisfaction questionnaire survey was distributed to 200 patrons picking up ILL items during a 3 week period. Although only 40 (20% of the sample) surveys were returned, respondents indicated high satisfaction rates: 75% received their item in a timely matter, 95% were notified promptly, 98% received the correct item, and 100% said the system was

user-friendly. The authors concluded that the patrons were satisfied, staff could now devote their time to other matters, and by strengthening alliances and redesigning ILL, the library could provide patrons with better access to resources (Preece and Kilpatrick, 1998). Although this study appears significant, the quality of the survey questions cannot be determined as they were not included as part of the published article. Also, the low survey return rate casts doubt that the results can be generalized to other ILL users; even other users at Southern Illinois University.

Clifford A. Lynch (1995) discussed the background and issues of developing the North American Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery (NAILDD) initiative. NAILDD was undertaken by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of ILL and document delivery (DD), and to control costs and improve service. Technological advances mean that Internet connections can facilitate resource sharing and document delivery, electronic databases can be integrated for increased accessibility, patrons can identify needed items easier, and libraries can communicate faster and easier across networks. NAILDD supplies print articles more efficiently than traditional ILL. It requires the cooperation and compromise of all participants. Lynch claims one extreme is a centralized system such as OCLC, where there is a central union database and requests are ranked in priority according to criteria set by the borrowing library. The other extreme is when a computer probes catalogs for potential lenders using the Z39.50 retrieval protocol. "The Z39.50 protocol allows programs at one site to conduct searches of remote catalogs in support of interlibrary loan processes and to retrieve search results that are in a form suitable for subsequent post processing by these same programs." (Lynch, 1995, p. 146).

Hybrid solutions include searching regional union catalogs first, then OCLC or outside libraries. Lynch mentions and supports the auction marketplace model, where libraries would make offers and bid for filling ILL requests, often claiming it is the best solution, but describes it as too complex and volatile, an unworkable solution at this time. He recommends in the meantime using a central routing system. In fact, a NAILDD objective is that requests be routed automatically from a library's local system to the central ILL management system. He discussed several problems with the system, such as the inefficiency of payments and whether the DD should go to the patron directly or to the library first. He concludes by stating that local systems need substantial developing, collecting and reporting data is important for effective implementation of NAILDD, and, at least in the near-term, it is practical to progress from within centralized frameworks (Lynch, 1995).

The use of the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries (CARL) UnCover service at Colorado State University (CSU) is discussed by Joan Beam in "Document Delivery via UnCover: Analysis of a Subsidized Service" (1997). The project was to determine the effectiveness of using UnCover, which delivers documents via fax, to fill patron requests for articles not held by the library. Rising journal prices and increased demand for new titles created a need for alternative methods of document delivery. Substituting remote access for ownership, the goal was to make it unmediated so patrons could place and receive requests independent of staff involvement. Before choosing CARL UnCover, pilot projects of other ARL libraries and other document suppliers were reviewed. In February 1994, CSU became the first ARL library to use UnCover for all its patrons. UnCover could link to CSU patron files for account authorization. Orders

were blocked for titles held by CSU and articles costing more than $25. Originally, the system was set up so access was limited to requests made from library terminals only. The problem of limited access to fax machines was alleviated by the main library commercial copy center, but a $2 per article fee payable by the requester was imposed. After 4 months, transaction logs were analyzed, and users were surveyed. There were a few problems, but 48% of the users surveyed were completely satisfied. A library task force met with UnCover personnel to customize the interface to the project needs. The resulting product was called Subsidized UnMediated Ordering (SUMO), a customized interface that allows patrons to create and edit profiles, mark articles, and complete the order. The project ended in Spring 1994, but UnCover had become so popular and heavily used that CSU continued the service. Later improvements allowed telnet access for faculty, simplified interface and expanded coverage to include libraries worldwide (Beam, 1997).

A follow-up study 3 years later showed even more improvements. Telnet capabilities were expanded for patron use with campus accounts, and the database had increased coverage in the areas of science, medicine, and technology. Use of UnCover was found to be more economical than the cost of subscriptions to all requested titles. Users could now perform searches and place orders in the same session with little or no staff assistance. UnCover was used in addition to ILL, not as a replacement, and by March 1996 had an 87% overall fill rate. Turn-around time was improved to one day for many requests; due mainly to UnCover Express, 81.5% were filled in 2 days or sooner. Beam concludes by stating that the plan is to continue the UnCover service, but there are a few hoped-for improvements that staff at CSU would still like to see. These include

e-mail delivery of articles, full text online delivery, expanded indexing beyond titles including subjects and abstracts, and removal of journal titles from the keyword index (Beam, 1997). This study was very thorough and included more detailed information on CARL Uncover, which is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Overall, the studies reviewed yielded positive results. Users are generally satisfied with the current service. However, suggestions and ideas for improvement came from patron comments and observing the system at work.

Document Delivery

Some of the literature reviewed dealt specifically with document delivery, which refers only to copies of articles. These could come directly from the lending library, or via a commercial supplier, and could arrive electronically or by mail or some other method of delivery. Marilyn Roche conducted a study published in 1993 of ARL libraries that looked at ILL costs in 1991. It was found that the highest cost of ILL transactions was staff time. She also found that the number of ILL transactions had increased steadily due to more accessible bibliographic tools, more items being published, and reduced buying power of libraries. Most significant, Roche discovered that on average, 49% of ARL borrowing and 64% of lending was fulfilled by photocopies (Roche, 1993).

Debra Kachel (1993) discussed document delivery in school libraries. She outlined factors that have led to an increase in article requests, problems associated with getting the articles, and possible solutions. She states that students were requesting more articles because they need recent information, they have more access to bibliographies

through online databases and CD-ROM indexes, they prefer more and shorter sources, they have increased expectations, and there is an educational trend away from text-book-driven curriculum. Obstacles to obtaining the requested material include out-of-date union lists, learning the policies of lending libraries, net lenders reluctant to fill requests, budget not allowing for ILL fees, and copyright guidelines that must be followed (Kachel. 1993).

The author made several suggestions for making the ILL process easier. Those included creating an electronic regional or state union listing tool, building protocols into the system, attempting equitable sharing, making document delivery fees part of the budget, and using computers to keep records so copyright guidelines are followed. In conclusion, Kachel listed some additional observations: sometimes staff time spent looking for free copies costs more than paying for the article through a service; computerized systems can track requests and make the process more cost-efficient by decreasing time spent; state agencies should help school libraries provide a more equitable service; the collection and abstract indexing should reflect the curriculum; and a commercial vendor should be contracted for seldom-used titles not held regionally (Kachel, 1993).

Wayne Pedersen and David Gregory (1994) conducted a study in which they examined six commercial document suppliers, and compared them to traditional ILL. They state that more libraries are opting to buy photocopies from commercial document delivery companies due to increased ILL activity. The published article, "Interlibrary Loan and Commercial Document Supply: Finding the Right Fit," is actually only part of the study conducted by the Iowa State University (ISU) Library in July and August 1993

for dealing with the increased ILL. It was decided to study the quality and costs of six suppliers accessible through the OCLC/ILL system, two in each of three categories. The general subject collection-based suppliers were UMI's Article Clearinghouse and ISI's The Genuine Article. The specialized subject collection-based suppliers were Chemical Abstracts Document Delivery Service and Engineering Information's Article Express. The general subject non-collection based suppliers were The Information Store and Information on Demand. ISU wanted to remain an intermediary between the suppliers and patrons, so direct delivery services such as CARL UnCover and Faxon EXPRESS were not included in the study. The authors report that for collection-based suppliers the average fill rate was 74%, average time to get item was 11 days, and the average cost was $14. For non-collection-based suppliers the average fill rate was 51%, average time to get the item was 30 days, and the average cost was $28. Although the abstract states that comparisons were made to traditional ILL, the authors state that the comparisons cannot be made accurately. After the data collection of the study, Engineering Information's Article Express and The Information Store stopped accepting OCLC requests. Also, Chemical Abstracts Document Delivery Service changed their OCLC status from "document supplier" to "conventional lending library". As a result, ISU developed their order of preference as follows: Iowa libraries, out-of-state libraries with reciprocal agreements, UMI's Article Clearinghouse (utilized OCLC most efficiently of the six studied), out-of-state libraries with no agreements or other U.S. collection-based commercial suppliers, Information on Demand, then foreign libraries as a last resort. The authors recommended establishing suppliers that link directly to the patron, which will reduce overall ILL costs. But they also mention it is really a cost shift

because then there is a cost to maintaining an automated system (Pedersen and Gregory, 1994).

"Key Elements in an Advanced Document Delivery & ILL System" (1994) focuses on the move toward patron-initiated ILL requests. Trends affecting traditional ILL and Document Delivery (DD) are increasing subscription costs of serials, an increase in immediate table-of-contents indexing, reasonably-priced DD services, fax technology, the Internet, ILL subsystems on online databases like OCLC, vendors offing scanned articles on CD-ROM for library use, and integrated library systems which allow patron-initiated requests. With an automated system, the patron request would be automatically routed to the most cost-effective alternative. The article states that resource sharing is a central service, like reference, and the cost should be absorbed by the library, not the patron. Two models are discussed in support of patron-initiated request: The Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries and the North American Interlibrary Loan / Document Delivery Project (NAILDD). In conclusion, it is stated that empowering the patron is the key, and systems must be built to standards for compatibility ("Key Elements," 1994).

As mentioned earlier, CARL UnCover is a commercial document supplier. Its article database combines the holdings of large research libraries and is retrospective to 1988. UnCover works directly with copyright holders and publishers, so it combines royalties with the overhead charge. Alliance libraries submit journals to the UnCover headquarters in Denver. Records are created which correspond to the table of contents, then the journal is forwarded to the subscribing library. So by the time the library gets the journal, online indexing is already available. When a request is made, staff at the owning library pulls the issue and scans the pages to Denver. The digitized article is then

faxed to the requesting library within 24-48 hours. Once scanned, the next request for the

same article can be filled within one hour by fax via the subdivision UnCover Express.

In the 1990's UnCover expanded to include non-alliance members worldwide. The

subdivision UnCover Complete allows orders on backfiles that are not indexed in the

database. And UnCover Reveal is a monthly table of contents personal e-mail delivery

service (Beam, 1997).

"ARL Adopts Position on Future Directions of Library Access & Delivery"

(1994) is simply a description of the statement in response to the NAILDD project, which

envisions a networked environment in which information is available at desktop

workstations. The statement was released July 19, 1994 and titled, "Information Access

and Delivery Services: A Strategic Direction for Research Libraries." In summary, it

stated that users can initiate a request electronically and receive nonreturnables directly at

workstations, that complete access requires the participation of all North American

libraries and colleagues world-wide, that evolution is shaped by local library missions

and resources, that copyright and fair use must be adhered to, that library collections must

include all formats, that all users must have access, and active collaboration between

libraries and other information sources is required ("ARL Adopts," 1994).

In 1999 OCLC announced an integration of the British Library Document Supply

Centre Urgent Action Service. It was stated that documents will be processed within

3 hours, and that materials are sent by fax, Ariel, courier, or first-class mail ("British

Document," 1999). See their website at http://www.bl.uk/services/bsds/dsc/urgent.html

for more information and pricing.

The Library Corporation (TLC) and Pigasus Software, Inc. formed an alliance to create a new ILL/DD system. The result was a web-based, International Standard Organization (ISO)-standard package that facilitates the communication of document delivery, interlibrary loan, and related messages ("ILL/Document," 1999). This shows that the move is still on to improve service and provide easier means of delivering materials electronically.

Interlibrary Loan and Current Trends

Much of the literature deals with interlibrary loan in general, or library service in general. "FirstSearch Patrons Can Place Their Own ILL Requests" (1993) describes how patrons can place their own ILL requests for articles if the library has the FirstSearch catalog. Requests are processed through WorldCat or OCLC's ArticleFirst serials database and filled by OCLC member libraries. The advantages are that the citation is accurate and pre-verified, and saves time because the bibliography is automatically transmitted. The FirstSearch link is optional and must be activated by a system administrator. The link can also be restricted so only authorized people can use it ("FirstSearch," 1993).

Michael Carpenter (1991) states that expensive library materials are causing libraries to turn to resource sharing as a substitute for ownership. He claims that timely, efficient, and reliable delivery is needed for resource sharing to work. As an example of why the current ILL systems need to be studied, he describes two unsatisfactory ILLs. One time, two books that were supposed to be shipped never were, and when he finally got the request it was only one of the volumes. The second title was not actually in the

lending library's collection even though OCLC and RLIN records indicated otherwise. In his second example he tried for 2 years to obtain a specific book but was always denied. He summarizes by stating that making resource-sharing work is important (Carpenter, 1991).

Doug Johnson (1999) suggests adopting a "stone-soup" approach to collection development and ILL. Like the folk tale, he claims that when everyone participates, everyone will benefit. Digitalization of catalogs makes remote access possible and inevitable. Using resource pages and other examples, Johnson claims that the Internet has helped develop the stone-soup mentality for other resources. He states that a collaborative approach will provide access to a greater range of materials, schools can target purchases for the curricula, being loaners and borrowers helps develop regional collection planning, and students will learn that it might be necessary to go to different places for information. He concludes with, "We need to participate in joint collection development, in efforts to make our catalogs and collections publicly accessible, and to be full members of interlibrary loan practices," and "Let's learn to share – we'll all be the richer for it" (Johnson, 1999).

David Rogers (1997) discussed how a storm temporarily shut down both the Library of Congress (LC) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM). He goes on to describe the difference between centralized and decentralized models. The centralized model is one big library. The decentralized model is a multitype library system linked by communication, where the most popular resources are duplicated and the other resources are shared. He states that the backbone of a large library is needed for both models, that both systems can be effective for rapid access, and that access is possible for both, but the

decentralized model allows for document delivery (D. Rogers 1997). Although the article claims to compare the two models, David Rogers rarely mentions the centralized model specifically.

Dougherty and Williams (1999) state that libraries cannot purchase everything, so ILL fills the gaps. Bibliographic databases make articles easier to search but not always easier to retrieve. Electronically-based procedures speed up the ILL process, but also cause subsequent increase in volume. The authors claim that electronic record keeping should replace paper trails to reduce workloads, and they recommend examining the system to make it more efficient. Users should be able to search the local catalog and remote databases and have more control to initiate their own ILL requests. The authors mention that the use of the fax and the Internet has increased rapidly, and some libraries allow e-mail requests which allow direct and fast communication between the user and staff. They claim that to manage system growth, libraries should assess user fees to control frivolous requests, but the fees should not be restrictively high to discourage usage. Also, they suggest imposing a limit on the number of requests allowed per person over a specific period of time. They conclude with, "Ultimately, the best combination interlibrary-circulation system is the one that tries to meet the needs of each user in the most efficient manner possible." (Dougherty and Williams, 1999, p. 111).

Michael Gorman (1998) transformed Ranganathan's five laws into his own versions. One, libraries serve humanity. This means libraries are about service and benefits that society can expect must be identified. Two, respect all forms by which knowledge is communicated. That means libraries should support all formats of media. Three, use technology intelligently to enhance service. Technology exists to support the

library mission and assist in ready and free access to information. Four, protect free access to knowledge. Simply put, avoid censorship. And five, honor the past and create the future. Libraries should balance the old and the new to serve all users (Gorman, 1998).

An interesting concept was discussed by Ken Winter in, "MyLibrary Can Help Your Library" (1999). He describes the idea of personalizing library pages, much like My Yahoo! on the Internet. First-time users would log in and answer a brief survey, then choose options from a menu. After that, each visit would present targeted information. For libraries, the information would include book subjects and library programs and services. Users would select what they want to see and can be notified when new information is available. The personalized page can be matched against the user's record so he can place holds, receive notifications, check loans, and save past searches. The program is not difficult to set up; it works using a programming language and basic server hardware. This concept of personalized library pages has the potential to improve library service. Such pages already exist at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Cornell University, The University of Washington, and California Polytechnic State University. On the VCU web site at http://www.library.vcu.edu/mylibrary/ visitors can create their own personalized library web pages (Winter, 1999).

New Jersey Statewide ILL System

During the course of this study, Camden County Library was in the early stages of switching over to the statewide interlibrary loan system. At that time, few articles were found to detail the system. Planning began in April 1999, with the hope of having 180 of

the 312 public libraries online by the end of the year, and having the entire system

operational by the end of 2001 ("NJ Implements," 1999). Library patrons would have

quick access to book collections of all participating libraries, as well as the circulation

status of all items ("New Jersey State," 1999; "NJ Implements"). The new accessibility

of New Jersey's vast resources was made apparent in a quote by former state librarian

Jack Livingston: "For the first time, all of New Jersey's public, academic, and school

libraries will be able to present a virtual statewide database of library resources for the

use of their patrons." ("New Jersey State," 1999; "New Jersey to Create," 1999). Lana

Porter stated that librarians from the state library worked closely with Ameritech Library

Services to develop the new system ("New Jersey to Create," 1999). Late 1999 it was

announced that the first 17 libraries were live with the new system and actively

borrowing and lending ("First-Ever," 1999). See the New Jersey State Library's website

at http://www2.njstatelib.org/njlib/illpage.htm for current information on the statewide

ILL system and participating libraries.

The section "ILL History in the United States" discussed literature of a historical

viewpoint. Events, dates, and people important to the development of interlibrary loan

were mentioned. Studies of specific interlibrary loan systems were discussed in the

section titled "Case Studies." "Document Delivery" consisted of a summary of literature

that described document delivery of articles to fulfill ILL requests. This includes general

methods as well as specific document suppliers. The last section of this chapter,

"Interlibrary Loan and Current Trends," discussed literature about modern ILL systems.

All the studies, histories, and current articles lead to one concept: interlibrary loan is a

service that is continually changing and undergoing improvement, but, in order to

improve that service, the current systems must be studied.

The next chapter of this thesis will discuss the methodology used for this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Review of Purpose of Study

To better serve the library patron who uses interlibrary loan was the main purpose of this study. The results would either confirm that the Camden County Library interlibrary loan system satisfies its users or show that it needs improvement. It was hoped that if improvement were needed, the data would identify areas to be addressed.

Description of Methodology Selected

Two methods were used to complete this case study. The current interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library was examined first hand. In addition, a survey was distributed to Camden County Library patrons who used the interlibrary loan system. The analysis of the survey data helped determine if the current system was a satisfactory tool for providing materials which are not currently owned that the patron wants or needs, in a timely manner.

The first-hand observation was necessarily brief due to the time restrictions of this project. It served mainly to provide the researcher with an understanding of how the system works. The researcher learned the detailed step-by-step procedure of processing an interlibrary loan request, from its start with the patron to fulfillment or non-fulfillment as the case may be. This was accomplished by talking to the interlibrary loan staff about what they do, watching them actually perform the duties necessary to fulfilling an

interlibrary loan request, and helping them complete some of those duties. Actually seeing the system in action provided information on various parts that would not be apparent in an interview setting. Some actions are so routine that the person describing them might miss or skip a step unknowingly. The observation allowed the researcher to observe those actions that might not otherwise be apparent.

The patron survey provided the bulk of the data for this study. The survey was in the form of a self-administered questionnaire, which was placed in interlibrary loan materials being picked up by patrons during a specific period of time.

Design of the Study

The survey questions were designed to determine the patrons' satisfaction with various aspects of the interlibrary loan process. Topics and variables covered by the survey were the type of material requested, why the item was requested, time allowed for request to be filled, how long it took to get the item to the patron, if the patron had requested past interlibrary loans (including how many and what type), how satisfied patrons were with the interlibrary loan process and staff helpfulness, how quickly patrons expected requests to be filled, how they would prefer to request an interlibrary loan, gender, and age.

Patrons have no control or knowledge of the remaining variables, which include where the item came from and how the item got to Camden County Library. Method of delivery will be discussed in the next chapter. Where a specific item came from cannot be determined without compromising the confidentiality and anonymity of this study, but a brief discussion of where items are requested from will also appear in the next chapter.

One type of item may be requested from everywhere within the United States, whereas other types might be requested from within the state of New Jersey only. During the observation, the researcher saw these processes in action. However, due to the confidentiality and anonymity of this study, it was impossible to determine exactly which variables applied to a specific request. One variable completely out of the control of the researcher, this study, and the Camden County Library is the quality of the interlibrary loan system of the library from which an item is borrowed.

Sample and Population

The interlibrary loan service is available to all individuals who have a valid library card with Camden County Library. Anyone who wishes to may sign up for a card. A person who does not reside in a participating community of Camden County does not qualify for a free card but can obtain a membership by paying a yearly fee.

The population under study was all patrons of the Camden County Library who use the interlibrary loan service. The sampling frame was those members of the population that had interlibrary loan requests filled after the survey was approved. One hundred fifty (150) surveys were created for distribution in interlibrary loan items waiting to be picked up by the patron. The surveys were simply placed by interlibrary loan staff in every outgoing item until all the surveys were distributed. The starting date for the distribution of the surveys was March 9, 2000. The last survey was distributed June 6, 2000. To allow the patron time to pick up the item, complete and mail the survey, the cutoff time for surveys to be included in this study was set for June 27, 2000, 3 weeks

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from when the last survey was distributed. The last survey received that was used in this study arrived on June 16, 2000, and no surveys arrived after the cutoff date.

Because it was not possible to select to whom the surveys were given, it is not possible to determine if the respondents comprised a representative sample of the population under study. However, the survey asked for age and gender in order to determine some of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Those demographics will be compared to the general Camden County population in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Design of Observation

The first-hand observation occurred over a six-week period during the start of the survey distribution. The researcher spent approximately one day each week (five days total) observing and helping the staff of the Interlibrary Loan Department. The first session lasted a full day to get an understanding of a typical day. The remaining sessions were split – one afternoon, and three mornings, when most of the work is accomplished.

Survey Instrumentation

The patron survey provided the bulk of data for this study. The survey was anonymous and confidential. A pre-tested survey approved by the Director of the Camden County Library and the thesis advisor was sent out with interlibrary loan items ready to be picked up by Camden County Library patrons. A letter of introduction (see Appendix) was included to introduce the researcher, describe the study, and provide instructions for the return of the survey. A bookplate was included with every letter as an

incentive to complete the survey. Postage-paid return envelopes were also included, so the patron had only to fill out the survey and drop it in a mailbox.

The survey itself (see Appendix) was four pages of questions related to that specific interlibrary loan item, as well as any past requests the patron may have made at Camden County Library. Topics included the type of item requested, why the item was requested, how long it took to get the item, how many past requests were made, what types of materials were requested in the past, how satisfied they were with the interlibrary loan system and staff helpfulness, how quickly they expect an item to arrive, and what method they would prefer to make a request if given a choice. A combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions were asked. Simple demographics of age and gender were included to see if answers varied according to those variables. Space was given for the patron to note any comments or suggestions not covered elsewhere in the survey. It was hoped that information about patron satisfaction would be made clearer with those comments. Question 17 asked respondents about their opinion of online interlibrary loan forms, an option not currently available at Camden County Library at the time of this study.

Data coding sheets (see Appendix) were used to transfer the answers of each survey onto one sheet per respondent. A spreadsheet (see Appendix) was devised to compare the answers on all the surveys to particular questions. See the section titled Data Analysis Plan for more details.

Data Collection and Other Procedures

Instructions were given in the letter to patrons on returning the survey. Participating patrons needed only to fill out the survey, place it in the included envelope, which was pre-addressed and postage-paid, then drop it in a mail box. The researcher used a branch library address to ensure personal security.

Except Sundays, the researcher checked in at the branch library daily to pick up any surveys that came in the mail that day. Surveys were marked with the date of arrival and given a number based on the order they arrived. The number served only to provide a means for keeping each survey separate and made it easier to re-check data during the analysis stage.

Data Analysis Plan

As the surveys were returned, a progressive chart was kept to note how many were received each day. This enabled the researcher to notice whether or not a pattern existed. There did not appear to be a set pattern of survey returns. Upon arrival, each survey was coded so the answers appeared on a single page. Data was also entered into a spreadsheet so answers to a single question could be compared, as well as overall patterns that might be noticed between questions. Three weeks after the last survey was included with an interlibrary loan item (to allow sufficient time for the item to be picked up, the survey filled out, and the mailed envelope to arrive at the branch library), the researcher began to analyze the data. Closed-ended questions were analyzed based on percentages for each choice. Open-ended questions were analyzed based on their content. Finally, if

any dissatisfaction was noted, the researcher looked at the reasons given (if any) and compared them.

The next chapter of this thesis presents the data found from the surveys, as well as information obtained during the first-hand observation.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction

This chapter will present the data found during the observation and discovered through responses from the patron survey. First, the summary of the observation will be detailed. That will be followed by a question-by-question presentation of the answers given on the patron surveys. Of the 150 surveys sent out, 79 were returned. However, only 76 were usable. Three surveys were invalid because the respondents noted having already filled out a survey. Thus, the return rate was 76 out of 147 (or 51.35%). Babbie (1998) states that he believes a return rate of 50% is adequate for data analysis. Unless otherwise noted, all percentages in this chapter are based on the 76 responses out of the total number of surveys used for collecting data.

The Observation

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the researcher spent five days over a 6 week period during the start of the survey distribution observing the staff of the Interlibrary Loan Department, as well as helping the staff, to get a feel for the work they do. One session lasted a full day to get an understanding of a typical day. One session was in the afternoon, and the remaining three sessions were in the morning, when most of the work is accomplished.

The complete interlibrary loan process began when a library patron looked for a item that he/she could not find in the library catalog. That patron then made a request for the item, either over the telephone (request form filled out by a staff member) or in person at the Information Desk (patron filled out the request form). Once the library staff member verified that the requested item was not owned by the library, the existence of the item was verified through various sources, such as *Books in Print*, *Books out of Print*, and Amazon.com. If an item was identified through one of the sources, then the information on the request form was checked for accuracy. Then that form was sent to the interlibrary loan (ILL) department. If no matching records were found, the form was still sent to the ILL department with as much information as the patron was able to provide. The ILL staff then searched for a library on the OCLC database that owned the item and requested to borrow it. Once located and requested, time was allowed for the item to be delivered. Once it arrived and was processed, the item was put on hold for the patron to pick up. To process an item, library staff entered a temporary record into the computer catalog which identified that item. This allowed the item to be checked out and kept track of like any other item in the collection. ILL staff placed the surveys for this study with the items on hold between March 9, 2000 and June 6, 2000.

Normally, the person in charge of collection development will have looked at the ILL requests before the forms were sent up to the ILL department. Titles were noted and considered for future additions to the library collection.

The Interlibrary Loan department consisted of two staff members -- one full-time and one part-time -- and the supervisor. The full-time staff member worked 35 hours a

week, while the part-time staff member worked 25 hours per week. The supervisor was full-time and worked in other areas of the reference department as well as Interlibrary Loan.

Each day, the same procedures were followed. The ILL staff checks their voicemail, e-mail, and the library's electronic bulletin board for messages. A list of items requested from the Camden County Library via LibraryLink (member libraries), SOJOURN, and OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) was printed, the catalog was checked for availability, and any available items were pulled from the shelf to be sent to the borrowing library. See the websites at http://www.sjrlc.org/ for more details on the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative and http://www.oclc.org/home/ for more details on OCLC. Paper forms of ILL requests from Camden County Library were verified if necessary, then library staff searched for a library that would lend the item. Staff would keep trying to get the request filled until the date arrived that a patron specified they needed the item by or until they did not believe they would be able to obtain the item. Any returned books were marked returned, withdrawn from the system, and returned to the lending library. A log was kept to keep track of the status of all items borrowed and loaned. Interlibrary loan staff at Camden County Library (CCL) Voorhees performed all the interlibrary loan requests for the branch and member libraries (see Chapter 1 Definitions, or Camden County Library's website at http://www.camden.lib.nj.us/about/members.htm for a list of these libraries). All requests for photocopies/articles were sent to the reference department and filled by the periodicals department. Due to the time constraints of this study, the researcher did not observe the filling of photocopy requests.

Camden County Library will lend most materials if currently available. Magazines, reference materials, and new books are never loaned out. New books are those less than one year old, though nonfiction and books without a waiting list are sometimes considered for loan. Articles and pages of reference materials are photocopied. Camden County Library will send out photocopies only if the asking library is in the state of New Jersey.

If a patron requests an item, the library staff will do their best to locate a library that will lend the item, but there are a few limits to where they ask and whom they ask first. New books are the only item Camden County Library will not try to borrow, as no library will lend them. Books will be requested only from libraries within the United States. Videos will be requested only from libraries that will lend them for free. For the most part, only New Jersey libraries are asked to lend audio-visual materials because most libraries will only lend to others within their own state. For all materials, libraries within the state are checked first. If no library has it or agrees to lend the item, then the requests are extended to all libraries on OCLC. If all the libraries that own the requested item say no, then the request is held a short time, and staff will try again. Since no reasons can be given as to why the answer was no (a technological drawback of the current computerized ILL system), it is possible the item was simply checked out at the time of the request. It should be noted that the new statewide system that will replace the current system has that capacity; so, staff members will know why a request was refused and will know whether to try again later. All items within New Jersey are sent and arrive by a delivery service called Comet. Out-of-state transactions use the United States Postal Service.

When an item is sent out to a borrowing library, it is marked checked out in DRA (the online catalog used by the library), written in the log, then sent to the borrowing library. When an item arrives for a patron, it is marked received in OCLC and in the log book. A pink band with a barcode is wrapped around the item, and the item is temporarily listed in DRA so that it can be checked out by the patron. Once processed, a card is sent to the patron that the item is available to be picked up. It is held for one week. If not picked up, or when it is returned, the item is removed from the system and sent back to the lending library.

To get an idea of the number of interlibrary loans that Camden County Library handles, the researcher checked the Interlibrary Loan Activity Reports for the years 1998 and 1999. The researcher did not have access to statistics for unfilled requests. The borrowing results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Total Requests Filled for Camden County Library Patrons

Month	1998	1999
January	157	85
February	111	90
March	103	161
April	119	133
May	87	110
June	124	143
July	181	98
August	165	133
September	119	83
October	167	100
November	124	98
December	95	101
Total	1552	1335

The first-hand observation demonstrated how an interlibrary loan request is handled. The library staff works hard, and much effort is put into trying to fill every request made by the patrons. The next section presents the responses to the patron survey, which indicates the patrons' views of the interlibrary loan process.

Response Per Question

The first question asked if the item received was the item requested. Every respondent ($\underline{n}$=76) answered yes. However, one patron marked the "no" option as well as the "yes" option, indicating that the book was the one she requested but upon examination, it did not contain the information she wanted. Another remarked that she had given the wrong title but did not indicate whether she meant she received the title she wanted or the title she gave.

Question 2 asked what type of item had been requested. The results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Items in Which the Survey Was Distributed

Item Type	# of Responses	% of Responses
Book	66	86.84
Article	6	7.89
Video cassette	2	2.63
Audio tape	1	1.32
CD (compact disc)	0	0.00
Microfilm	0	0.00
Other	1	1.32
Total	76	100.00

Note. The patron who chose the option "other" indicated that it was a musical score.

The next question asked for the reason the item was requested. Thirty-three (43.42%) answered pleasure, 29 (38.16%) answered personal research, 12 (15.79%) answered school or homework, and 2 (2.63%) answered other. One person who answered "other" wrote in "dissertation proposal". That answer was included in the school or homework tally. One person answered both pleasure and personal research. That answer was included in the pleasure tally.

Question 4 asked for the general genre of the item. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

<u>Genre of Items in Which the Survey Was Distributed</u>

Genre Type	# of Responses	% of Responses
Fiction	18	23.68
Nonfiction	45*	59.21
Reference	8	10.52
Other	1	1.32
Left blank	1	1.32
Both nonfiction & reference	3	3.95
Total	76	100.00

* Includes nine respondents who did not check the nonfiction option but who filled in a subject classified as nonfiction (history, nutrition, family history, self-help, photographs, biography, opera, scholarships, and a musical score).

<u>Note.</u> the patron who chose "other" indicated that the item contained both fiction and nonfiction parts on the topic, which was not specified.

Question 5 asked if a date needed by was specified, and if the item arrived by that date. This question appeared to be the most confusing for respondents, as many answered only part of the question and/or answered parts which did not pertain to them.

For example, if the respondent did not fill in a specific date or amount of time in the first part, he would have no reason to answer the second part, yet several people did. The results are summarized in Tables 4 and 5. It is interesting to note that the Head of Reference commented that most people write ASAP, and the researcher's personal experience supports that statement, but only 11 (14.47%) respondents claimed to have written ASAP on the ILL form.

Table 4

Date Specified by Respondent That Item Was Needed By

Date	n	%
ASAP	11	14.47
Specific date or time given	14	18.42
No specific date given	46	60.53
Left blank	5	6.58
Total	76	100.00

Note. A specific date would be May 21st, 6/15, etc., while a specific time would be one week, two weeks, etc. No specific date includes all answers such as "no time specified", "didn't matter", "NA", etc., but not "ASAP" which is listed separately.

Table 5

Respondent Replies to Whether or Not Item Arrived in Time

Respondent Answer	n	%
Yes	35	46.05
No	4	5.27
Left blank	37	48.68
Total	76	100.00

In theory, only the 14 people who gave a specific date or time should have answered whether or not it arrived on time, but nine who said ASAP, and 14 who did not specify a date answered along with 12 of those who did specify a date. Of the four who stated the item did not arrive on time, three had given a specific date and one had said ASAP. Of those, two said they were notified before the specified date that they would not receive the item on time. The two who marked that they were not notified were not happy with the time it took to get the item.

The next question asked how long it took to receive the requested item. Forty-one (53.95%) said less than two weeks, 21 (27.63%) said 2-3 weeks, 4 (5.26%) said 3-4 weeks, 4 (5.26%) said more than four weeks, 5 (6.58%) said not sure, and 1 (1.32%) left the question blank. One of the "not sure" tallies includes a respondent who did not select one of the choices, but wrote in "don't remember".

The seventh question asked if the patron had requested interlibrary loan items from Camden County Library in the past, and if so, what types of items. Fifty-two (68.42%) answered yes they had and 24 (31.58%) answered no they had not. More than one answer was allowed for the second part of the question, which asked what types of items had been requested in the past, so the number of responses do not reflect the number and percentages of respondents who answered. One marked "Other" and wrote in "journal". As this could mean the whole journal and not an article from the journal, it was not included in the article tally. Table 6 summarizes the full results.

Table 6

Types of Items That Have Been Requested by Respondents in the Past

Item Type	# of Responses n=76	% of Responses	% Based on Who Said Yes to Question 7 n=52
Book	51	67.11	98.08
Article	14	18.42	26.92
Video cassette	6	7.89	11.54
Audio tape	4	5.26	7.69
CD (compact disc)	1	1.32	1.92
Microfilm	3	3.95	5.77
Other	1	1.32	1.92

Note. Those who said yes to Question 7 are those who had made previous ILL requests.

In Question 8 the respondents were asked to approximate how many interlibrary loan requests they had made at Camden County Library in the past. Twenty-four (31.58%) had not made an ILL request in the past, 4 (5.26%) checked "1", 21 (27.63%) checked "2-5", 7 (9.21%) checked "6-10", and 20 (26.32%) checked "more than 10". Two of the "0" tallies include two patrons who checked "1", but who answered "no" to Question 7. If a respondent answered "no" to Question 7, it meant he had not requested any interlibrary loan items in the past. Therefore, any answer other than "0" was interpreted as a mistake, and the correct option selected. The zero tallies also include 17 who left the question blank. However, all 17 had answered "no" to Question 7, so Question 8 did not apply to them. Those answers were changed simply to reflect what the respondents would have answered had they not skipped the question as directed on the survey.

Questions 9 through 13 presented a rating grid of staff helpfulness and time it took to get the item on past and present interlibrary loans, as well as overall ease

of the interlibrary loan process. On the scale, "5" is very satisfied (VS), "4" is satisfied

(S), "3" is neutral (N), "2" is dissatisfied (D), "1" is very dissatisfied (VD), and a "0"

means the question item does not apply (NA). One patron remarked that she marked "0"

for Questions 12 and 13 because she could not remember due to the length of time since

the past request. The results are summarized in Tables 7-9.

Table 7

Number of Responses to Satisfaction Questions

Question	VS & S (5 & 4 on scale)	D & VD (2 & 1 on scale)	N (3 on scale) NA (0 on scale) or blank
Staff help	73	0	3
Time to get item	63	6	7
Ease of process	69	1	6
Past staff help	44	0	32
Past time to get item	41	3	32

Note. For the last two, 24 of those left blank are because the patron did not have past ILL requests to answer the question.

Table 8

Number of Responses to Satisfaction Questions Based on Gender

Question	VS & S (5 & 4 on scale)			D & VD (2 & 1 on scale)			N (3), NA (0), or Blank		
	Male	Female	Blank	Male	Female	Blank	Male	Female	Blank
Staff help	29	41	3	0	0	0	0	3	0
Time	23	37	3	1	5	0	0	3	0
Process	25	41	0	0	1	0	4	2	0
Past staff	21	23	0	0	0	0	8	21	3
Past Time	19	22	0	0	3	0	10	19	3

Note. VS is very satisfied, S is satisfied, D is dissatisfied, VD is very dissatisfied, N is neutral, and NA is not applicable.

Table 9

Number of Responses to Satisfaction Question Based on Age

Question	Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60+	Blank
Staff helpfulness							
VS & S	1	2	7	16	18	26	3
D & VD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N, NA, or blank	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Time to get item							
VS & S	1	2	6	15	15	21	3
D & VD	0	0	0	1	2	3	0
N, NA, or blank	0	0	1	1	2	3	0
Ease of ILL process							
VS & S	1	2	6	16	17	24	3
D & VD	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
N, NA, or blank	0	0	1	1	1	3	0
Past staff helpfulness							
VS & S	0	1	4	10	10	19	0
D & VD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N, NA, or blank	1	1	3	7	9	8	3
Past time to get items							
VS & S	0	1	3	8	10	19	0
D & VD	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
N, NA, or blank	1	1	4	8	8	7	3

Note. VS is very satisfied (5 on the scale), S is satisfied (4 on the scale), D is dissatisfied (2 on the scale), VD is very dissatisfied (1 on the scale), N is neutral (3 on the scale), and NA is not applicable (0 on the scale). There are many more NAs for the last two because those questions do not pertain to patrons who have not requested ILLs in the past.

Question 14 asked how long the patron expected it to take for an interlibrary loan request to be filled. Eight (10.53%) replied less than one week, 46 (60.53%) replied 1-2 weeks, 14 (18.42%) replied 3-4 weeks, 2 (2.63%) replied more than 4 weeks, and 1 (1.32%) left it blank. Three (3.95%) patrons did not mark an answer, but indicated a different reply – both indicated that they did not have an expectation. Two patrons

(2.63%) marked two different replies. One marked less than 1 week and 1-2 weeks, while the other marked 1-2 weeks and 3-4 weeks.

The next question asked patrons if they preferred to make an interlibrary loan request by filling out a paper form, using a library computer terminal, or do it online from home. Thirty-seven (48.68%) marked paper, 11 (14.47%) marked library terminal, 20 (26.32%) marked online from home, and 1 (1.32%) left the question completely blank. Four respondents (5.26%) marked more than one choice, and one of those marked all three choices. Three patrons (3.95%) marked nothing but added a comment. Sixty-seven respondents (88.16%) (including the three just mentioned) made some kind of remark in the comments area of this question. Many of the respondents that chose paper also mentioned computers as an obstacle; they either didn't have one or were not comfortable using one. Just as many mentioned that an online option would be convenient, and one replied it could be done at any time. One patron pointed out that she would prefer to have a choice of methods. The subject of fee collection was brought up by another respondent. See the Appendix for full list of comments to this question. Tables 10 and 11 summarize patron preferences according to gender and age.

Table 10

ILL Request Form Preference Based on Gender

Gender	Paper	Library Terminal	Online	2 or 3 Selected	Blank	Total
Female	14	8	17	2	3	44
Male	21	2	3	2	1	29
Blank	2	1	0	0	0	3

Table11

Age	Paper	Library Terminal	Online	2 or 3 Selected	Blank	Total
Under 18	1	0	0	0	0	1
18-24	1	0	0	0	1	2
25-34	2	0	3	1	1	7
35-44	3	2	12	0	0	17
45-59	9	2	5	1	2	19
60 and older	19	6	0	2	0	27
Blank	2	1	0	0	0	3
Total	37	11	20	4	4	76

Question 16 was open-ended for patrons to make any additional comments or suggestions that they wished to express. Thirty-two patrons (42.11%), not counting the respondent who simply wrote "none", took the opportunity to make some kind of remark. Eighteen comments (56.25%) were positive and reflected satisfaction with ILL service. For instance, one patron noted, "ILL is a fine service – it is necessary to be part of academic world excellence." One respondent complained that the books could not be renewed, and another suggested a four-week borrowing period (instead of the current two weeks). Another person specifically mentioned Oaklyn library, which is not a branch of Camden County Library. This was a result of CCL doing ILL requests for member libraries and will be discussed further in Chapter 5. Several patrons wished the researcher good luck with this thesis. A complete list of comments to this question is in the Appendix.

The last two questions were simple demographic questions to determine if there might be any pattern among answers based on gender or age. Forty-four females (57.89%) and 29 males (38.16%) responded. Three respondents (3.95%) did not

answer. Of the ages, 1 (1.32%) marked under 18, 2 (2.63%) marked 18-24, 7 (9.21%) marked 25-34, 17 (22.37%) marked 35-44, 19 (25%) marked 45-59, 27 (35.53%) marked 60 or over, and 3 (3.95%) left it blank. One respondent did not mark an answer but instead wrote in a clue, leaving the researcher to check the patron's age. The clue was, "4 years older than Israel". Israel was founded in 1948; therefore, a tally was placed in the 45-59 bracket.

Unfortunately, the above demographics can only be broadly compared to Camden County demographics. The statistics available in the *New Jersey Municipal Data Book* are not broken out into the same categories used for this study. In the data book, there were 39,653 children under the age of 5, 93,414 children aged 5-17, 308,566 adults aged 18-64, and 61,191 adults 65 and older in Camden County. The gender statistics make no distinction between adults and children; there were 241,824 males and 261,000 females in Camden County (Horner, 2000). Camden county general population was 48.09% male and 51.91% female, whereas the survey respondent population was 38.16% male and 57.89% female. Subtracting the two groups of children in the age categories it can be determined that there were approximately 369,757 adults in Camden County, or 73.54% of the general population, whereas 98.68% of the survey respondents were adults.

The last chapter of this thesis will comment on the data found and the interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library and make recommendations.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

This case study consisted of a first-hand observation and a patron survey that was distributed with interlibrary loan materials during the spring of the year 2000. Of the 150 surveys distributed, 79 were returned, and 76 were usable for this thesis.

The purpose of the study was to better serve the interlibrary loan users at Camden County Library by examining patron satisfaction with the current ILL system. Questions were asked, such as are library patrons getting the materials they need and want, and are they getting the items in a timely manner. The questions as to whether patrons received the item requested and if in a timely manner were answered by the patrons themselves on the survey. Overwhelmingly, the answers were positive. See Chapter 4 for the detailed data presentation and the Appendix for a summary of data in the form of a completed survey.

Literature, both published and unpublished, was summarized in Chapter 2. Works were divided according to topics: ILL history in the United States, case studies, document delivery, interlibrary loan and current trends, and finally the New Jersey Statewide ILL System was described. As the system is more widely implemented, more literature will be available, and the effects of the change will become apparent. As more resources become accessible, usage may increase, but the researcher believes the system will become more efficient, decreasing actual workload.

The study methodology was discussed. Detailed information was provided on the study parameters, sample used, methods of observation, the survey instrument, and how the data was collected and analyzed. See the Appendix for the actual letter and survey that patrons received.

Information found during the observation was presented, as well as the data from the patron surveys. ILL procedure was discussed in the observation section. The survey data was presented in detail in a question-by-question format. See the Appendix for a summary of data in the form of a completed survey.

This last chapter will answer the initial question and make recommendations. Miscellaneous information, such as the survey and letter that patrons received, the data coding sheet used, and lists of all comments made by patrons on the survey can be found in the Appendix.

Conclusions

Of all the respondents, only 7 (9.21%) mentioned not being satisfied. It is important to look at the reasons for dissatisfaction. For six of those seven, the time it took to get the item was greater than was expected; four stated that it took more than 4 weeks to receive the item, and two of those said it took a year. For all of them, the comments should be considered. One respondent was researching scholarships, and the information found was outdated. Another complained that it took two weeks instead of one, and he was not notified of the delay. Realistically, two weeks is a good turnaround time for a book request, especially when notices are sent through the mail and the patron must then come in to get the item. A third respondent was satisfied with the time it took

to get the current item, but unhappy with how long a past item took. The fourth respondent was unhappy that it took more than 4 weeks to get the item. The fifth respondent complained about the 3-4 week wait when he or she expected the item in 1-2 weeks. The last two respondents had to wait a year to get the requested items, and they had to make a second request. Time to get the item was clearly the major cause of dissatisfaction.

Even with these few complaints, it is clear to see that the majority of patrons, 90.79% (69 of 76 respondents) received what they wanted when they wanted it, and are satisfied with the Camden County Library Interlibrary Loan System. This compares to the 1995 study by Perrault and Arseneau, which showed a patron satisfaction rate of 93.26%. The Appendix lists all comments made by respondents, most of them positive. Therefore, it is the researcher's opinion that the answer to the ultimate question is yes: Yes, the patrons of Camden County Library are being well served by the current ILL system.

Recommendations

The researcher's opinion is that the Camden County Library is doing an excellent job with the current interlibrary loan system. The researcher has only two recommendations for improvement. The option of making an ILL request online from home should be added. The patrons indicated they would like that option. Since patrons can already renew books online, and wish-list books (request that the library buys a specific title) online, it is reasonable to add the ILL option. Literature discussed in Chapter 2 show how some library systems have already taken that step.

The other suggestion is to implement a longer loan period, or allow one renewal of interlibrary loan materials. It is understood that the lending library would have to agree, but it is worth considering. Several patrons mentioned this aspect as a desired feature of interlibrary loan.

It would be interesting to redo this survey when the new state-wide system for interlibrary loans is fully implemented. However, there were a few problems with the current survey that need to be addressed. Several patrons commented that they had received more than one survey. Ideally, only one survey should reach each patron. So either a different sampling method or tracking method should be used. It is possible that the survey return rate may have been higher if many of those not returning the surveys did not reply because they already had.

Four of the questions need retooling if the survey were to be used for another study. Question 5 seemed to be the most confusing for patrons. Ideally, a time track could be used by checking the original request card when the item arrives for the date requested. Unfortunately, that method, and tracking who gets the surveys, both risk compromising confidentiality. Perrault and Arseneau's question, "How quickly did you need the material?" (1995, p. 99) might have been a less confusing choice. Some people selected more than one option for Question 15. A better method might be to have the patrons number the choices in order of preference. The last problem with the questions is that the time choices for Questions 6 and 14 did not match, making it impossible to compare the answers. As that comparison is an important factor in checking a reason for dissatisfaction, they need to match.

Final Words

Dougherty and Williams (1999) suggest user fees and limiting requests as a means of managing increased ILL activity. It is interesting to note that Camden County Library practices both suggestions. At the time of this study, there was a nominal fee of 50 cents per request, and patrons are responsible for additional article fees if the lending library charges for the copies. Also, requests were limited to five per person per day.

Having the surveys delivered to a neutral location (in this case a branch library) was a very good choice. One patron made inappropriate remarks, requested a photograph, and sent back a survey of his own with personal questions. A neutral delivery location is a must for personal safety.

The respondents themselves made several important points which reflect the needs and desires of interlibrary loan users (see the Appendix). Users' opinions should always be considered when implementing, evaluating, or improving a library service. Several mentioned that they either did not own a computer or were not experienced with it. The researcher is pleased to note that Camden County Library has free classes to help people of all ages become more computer-oriented. Those who did want computer access mentioned the convenience and anytime access. Most of all, patrons expressed the desire of choice: they would like to be able to choose the method of ILL each time.

The researcher can only guess as to why using library terminals for ILL requests was not preferred, when online access from home was preferred. It does not appear to be related to discomfort in using a computer. Possibly patrons decided if they were already at the library they might as well use the paper form, which is what is sent to the ILL department.

The new state-wide system in New Jersey comprises only ILL borrowing and lending. It is the researcher's opinion that the system should be expanded to include universal borrowing. That is, patrons could walk into any participating New Jersey library and check out items. This would not only reduce the workload of ILL staff, but give patrons immediate access to desired materials.

During the course of the literature review, few studies on user satisfaction with ILL systems in public libraries were found. It is possible that academic libraries are studied more often because research costs money, and those libraries might be more likely than public libraries to obtain or have the funds for such studies. This study helps fill the gap for much needed research on user satisfaction with ILL systems in public libraries.

In closing, the researcher would like to reiterate that the level of patron satisfaction is very high with the current interlibrary loan system at Camden County Library. Rather than improvement, it appears that all the system needs are additional choices, such as patrons being able to initiate their own requests online, and increased borrowing time. Though the latter is unlikely, the former is not only possible, but has been implemented successfully in other libraries. Examples of systems with Patron-initiated requests include Morris Library in Illinois (Preece and Kilpatrick, 1998), the Delaware County Library System in Pennsylvania (Belanger, 1990), and libraries throughout Colorado (Fong, 1997). As noted by Michael Carpenter (1991), it is possible that the lending library might be the cause of any ILL problems. Therefore, the little dissatisfaction shown by respondents may have been a result of inefficiency of the lending library, and not problems with the system at Camden County Library.

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Appendix

ROWAN UNIVERSITY

Secondary Education / Foundations of Education

Jennifer L. Pierce

c/o William G. Rohrer Memorial
Library
15 MacArthur Blvd.
Westmont, NJ 08108
jenniferlpierce@gateway.net

Dear Library User,

My name is Jennifer L. Pierce and I am working on my graduate thesis at Rowan University. My topic is "User Satisfaction of the Inter-Library Loan System at Camden County Library: A Case Study". To determine if library users are getting the items they request through inter-library loan, I need to ask them directly.

I would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to fill out the enclosed survey and mail it back to me in the enclosed self- addressed stamped envelope. Filling out this survey is completely voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. I am not asking for your name, and I have no way of finding out who you are. Library staff placed these surveys randomly in inter-library loan items waiting to be picked up.

You do not have to answer all the questions, and all the information you provide will help me in my research.

If you have any questions, you may e-mail me at the above address. You may also contact my professor, Dr. Holly Willett, at 856-256-4759 or "willett@rowan.edu".

If you would like to see the results of this survey, a copy of my completed thesis will be available at the reference desk of the main library in Voorhees in late June or early July.

I have enclosed a bookplate as a thank-you gift for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Pierce

Inter-Library Loan Survey

Please answer the following questions about this inter-library loan item by making a **check mark** in the appropriate space and/or filling in the blank.

1. Was this the item you requested?
   [ ] yes   [ ] no

   If not, please explain._____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. This item was a(n):
   [ ] book
   [ ] article
   [ ] movie or videotape
   [ ] audio tape
   [ ] compact disc
   [ ] microfilm
   [ ] other (please specify) _____

3. This item was for:
   [ ] pleasure
   [ ] personal research
   [ ] school / homework
   [ ] other (please explain) _____

4. What type of material was this item:
   [ ] fiction
   [ ] non-fiction
   [ ] reference (marked "R" or "Ref" for reference)
   [ ] other (please specify) _____

5. What date did you specify you needed this item by on the inter-library loan form?

   _____

   5a. Did the item arrive by the date specified?
      [ ] yes   [ ] no

      If not, were you notified by the time specified that the item was unavailable?
         [ ] yes   [ ] no

6. How long did it take from when you requested this item to when you received this item?

       [ ] less than 2 weeks
       [ ] 2 – 3 weeks
       [ ] 3 – 4 weeks
       [ ] more than 4 weeks
       [ ] not sure how long it took

Please answer the following questions about past inter-library loans by making a **check mark** in the appropriate space and/or filling in the blank.

7. Have you requested inter-library loan items from Camden County Library in the past?

       [ ] yes   [ ] no

If no, please skip ahead to the next page (page 3, item 9).

If yes, what items? (check all that apply)
       [ ] books
       [ ] articles
       [ ] movies or videotapes
       [ ] audio tapes
       [ ] compact discs
       [ ] microfilm
       [ ] other (please specify) _____

8. Approximately how many inter-library loans have you requested from the Camden County Library in the past?

       [ ] 0
       [ ] 1
       [ ] 2 – 5
       [ ] 6 – 10
       [ ] more than 10

Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the following by **circling** the appropriate number of the scale. ILL stands for inter-library loan.

	very satisfied	satisfied	neutral	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	does not apply
9. Staff helpfulness with this ILL	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Time it took to get this item	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Overall ease of the ILL process	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Staff helpfulness with past ILLs	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Time it took to get past ILLs	5	4	3	2	1	0

14. How quickly do you expect an inter-library loan request to be filled?
[ ] less than 1 week
[ ] 1 – 2 weeks
[ ] 3 – 4 weeks
[ ] more than 4 weeks

15. If you had a choice between filling out the request form on paper or on a computer, would you prefer:
[ ] paper
[ ] computer terminal at the library
[ ] online from home computer

Why? (please explain briefly) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. If you have any additional comments or suggestions, please include them here.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
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_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

17. Are you:
         [ ] female   [ ] male

18. How old are you?
         [ ] under 18
         [ ] 18 - 24
         [ ] 25 - 34
         [ ] 35 - 44
         [ ] 45 – 59
         [ ] 60 or over

Inter-Library Loan Survey

The following survey is filled in to reflect the summary of data presented in this thesis.
See Chapter 4 for explanations of changed tallies and other detailed information.
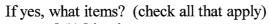
1. Was this the item you requested?
   [76] yes   [1] no

   If not, please explain "It was on the subject but matter but not very helpful." [This respondent also checked "yes".]

2. This item was a(n):
   [66] book
   [6] article
   [2] movie or videotape
   [1] audio tape
   [0] compact disc
   [0] microfilm
   [1] other (please specify) "musical score"
   one respondent left blank

3. This item was for:
   [33] pleasure
   [29] personal research
   [13] school / homework
   [1] other (please explain) "I am a teacher – it was for one of my students"

4. What type of material was this item:
   [18] fiction
   [45] non-fiction
   [11] reference (marked "R" or "Ref" for reference)
   [1] other (please specify) "contains both fiction & NF"
   one respondent left blank

5. What date did you specify you needed this item by on the inter-library loan form?
   11 wrote ASAP, 14 gave a specific date or time, 46 gave no specific date or time
   5 respondents left blank

   5a. Did the item arrive by the date specified?
       [35] yes   [4] no   *37 respondents left blank*

                      If not, were you notified by the time specified that the item was unavailable?
                      [2] yes   [2] no

6. How long did it take from when you requested this item to when you received this item?

    [41] less than 2 weeks
    [21] 2 – 3 weeks
    [4] 3 – 4 weeks
    [4] more than 4 weeks
    [5] not sure how long it took
    one respondent left blank

7. Have you requested inter-library loan items from Camden County Library in the past?

    [52] yes   [24] no

> If yes, what items? (check all that apply)
>   [51] books
>   [14] articles
>   [6] movies or videotapes
>   [4] audio tapes
>   [1] compact discs
>   [3] microfilm
>   [1] other (please specify) "journals"

8. Approximately how many inter-library loans have you requested from the Camden County Library in the past?

    [24] 0
    [4] 1
    [21] 2 – 5
    [7] 6 – 10
    [20] more than 10

	VS	S	N	D	VD	N/A	Left Blank
9. Staff helpfulness this ILL	62	11	1	0	0	2	0
10. Time to get this item	40	23	5	3	3	1	1
11. Overall ease of ILL process	49	20	4	0	1	0	2
12. Staff helpfulness past ILLs	35	9	2	0	0	28	2
13. Time to get past ILLs	26	15	3	3	0	26	3

14. How quickly do you expect an inter-library loan request to be filled?

    [8] less than 1 week
    [46] 1 – 2 weeks
    [14] 3 – 4 weeks
    [2] more than 4 weeks

2 respondents marked more than one choice, 3 respondents wrote something to the side but did not mark a choice, and 1 respondent left it blank

15. If you had a choice between filling out the request form on paper or on a computer, would you prefer:

[37] paper
[11] computer terminal at the library
[20] online from home computer
4 respondents marked more than one choice and 4 respondents left blank

Why? (please explain briefly) [67 respondents made some kind of comment.]

16. If you have any additional comments or suggestions, please include them here.
[Not counting the one who simply wrote "none", 32 respondents made some kind of comment.]

17. Are you:
[44] female   [29] male
3 respondents left blank

18. How old are you?
[1] under 18
[2] 18 - 24
[7] 25 - 34
[17] 35 - 44
[19] 45 – 59
[27] 60 or over
3 respondents left blank

Data Coding Sheet

Survey #
Date received:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

5a)

6)

7)

8)

9)

10)

11)

12)

13)

14)

15)

16)

17)

18)

	survey #	#	#	#	#	#	#
1 - yes							
1 - no							
1 - blank							
2 - book							
2 -- article							
2 - video							
2 - audio							
2 - CD							
2 - m/film							
2 - other							
2 - blank							
3 - pleas.							
3 - per. res.							
3 - sch/HW							
3 - other							
3 - blank							
4 - fiction							
4 - nonfic.							
4 - ref.							
4 - other							
4 - blank							
5 - date							
5a - yes							
5a - no							
5a - blank							
5b - yes							
5b - no							
5b - blank							
6 - <2 wks.							
6 - 2-3 wks							
6 - 3-4 wks							
6 - 4+ wks							
6 - not sure							
6 - blank							
7 - yes							
7 - no							
7 - blank							
7a - book							
7a - article							
7a - video							
7a - audio							
7a - CD							
7a - m/film							
7a - other							
7a - N/A							
7a - blank							
8 - 0							
8 - 1							
8 - 2-5							
8 - 6-10							
8 - 10+							
8 - N/A							
8 - blank							
9 - 5(VS)							
9 - 4(S)							
9 - 3(N)							
9 - 2(D)							
9 - 1(VD)							
9 - 0(n/a)							
9 - blank							

10 - 5(VS)						
10 - 4(S)						
10 - 3(N)						
10 - 2(D)						
10 - 1(VD)						
10 - 0(n/a)						
10 - blank						
11 - 5(VS)						
11 - 4(S)						
11 - 3(N)						
11 - 2(D)						
11 - 1(VD)						
11 - 0(n/a)						
11 - blank						
12 - 5(VS)						
12 - 4(S)						
12 - 3(N)						
12 - 2(D)						
12 - 1(VD)						
12 - 0(n/a)						
12 - blank						
13 - 5(VS)						
13 - 4(S)						
13 - 3(N)						
13 - 2(D)						
13 - 1(VD)						
13 - 0(n/a)						
13 - blank						
14 - <1 wk						
14 - 1-2 wk						
14 - 3-4 wk						
14 - 4+ wk						
14 - blank						
15 - paper						
15 - lib. ter.						
15 - home						
15 - blank						
15a - reply						
15a - blank						
16 - reply						
16 - blank						
17 - female						
17 - male						
17 - blank						
18 - <18						
18 - 18-24						
18 - 25-34						
18 - 35-44						
18 - 45-59						
18 - 60+						
18 - blank						

Question 15 open comments

The following comments are presented as the patron wrote them on the survey for Question 15. Their request form choice is indicated in brackets before the comment.

[chose paper] individual contact with a human being allows proper reference interview – as necessary

[chose library terminal] Because I would check the library first to see what was available and if I needed something I could do it right there. My second choice would be online.

[chose library terminal & online] Online is great IF you know exactly what is available – the term. In the library is second choice

[chose paper] simpler for me

[chose paper] I'm computer illiterate

[chose paper] I hate computers with a passion. They make people lazy and should only be used when absolutely necessary.

[chose paper] I don't have a computer and even if I did I am sure it would be faster to fill out the simple form provided by the library. In addition, how would I pay the charge which undoubtedly would involve more complexity if the procedure was shifted to computers.

[chose library terminal] faster than paper. I have no home computer!

[chose online] convenience

[chose paper] I feel more at home with paper than with a computer. I never learned to type and I find it difficult to use a computer keyboard, but I can write quite easily.

[chose paper] no reason

[chose paper] like to fill them out myself

[chose library terminal] no home computer. Paper is slower

[chose paper] I really enjoy going to the library. I do have a computer but am still not comfortable with it. I do go online sometimes to check out whether the library has a certain book.

[chose paper] It is easier to convey in words that are written.

[chose library terminal] easier

[chose online] It is inconvenient for me to go from where I live to the Camden County Library in Voorhees. It would be much more convenient if I could request articles/books online & then just make 1 trip to the library to p/u items requested.

[chose online] convenience, not having to travel to library since your [sic] not picking up the item.

[chose online] It would be easier for me and quicker.

[chose paper & library terminal] first – we're not online. Second – if there is a waiting list, I can find out where I am on this list.

[chose paper] cannot use computer

[chose online] convenience

[chose paper] I prefer to let the librarian do it

[chose paper] takes less time

[chose online] easier

[chose online] I wouldn't have to come into the library until it was time to pick up the book.

[chose paper] Have never operated a computer

[chose paper & online] I want to choose how I use my time to request info. from library.

[chose none of the options] does not apply to me as librarian filled out request form.

[chose online] convenience

[chose paper] Do not have a computer and it would probably take just as long.

[chose none of the options] all three

[chose none of the options] no preference

[chose library terminal] I feel comfortable with computers, but having to use the terminal at the library is helpful in case I need assistance from one of the librarians.

[chose online] ease of use. You don't have to gussie up to speak with a librarian who might have another agenda or wait for a patron to get off.

[chose paper] don't have a computer

[chose library terminal] It would allow others to have more time for others

[chose paper] I didn't use any of these methods. I called the library on the phone from home & they took my request.

[chose online] I am in the library only once a week and don't always recall those books that I had thought of to look for during the week. Online is much more convenient as I am on the internet nearly every day.

[chose paper] easier

[chose online] More convenient – I can do it anytime.

[chose paper] do not own a computer

[chose online] saves time

[chose paper] to much trouble to start the computer

[chose paper & library terminal] The method doesn't matter, as long as I can continue to provide basic information about the book I want – just author & title and not have to worry about the edition or the ISBN number. Vagueness is good. I do hate, though, having to write my name on all those cards.

[chose paper] don't use computers

[chose library terminal] It really doesn't matter. It's not that difficult to do. As a matter of fact, a library person wrote it out the last time.

[chose library terminal] can be done immediately and you know if it is available

[chose online] convenience

[chose paper] Not very computer literate!

[chose paper] I am a letter writer. I write letters to 3 people weekly.

[chose paper] I am a follower of Ned Ludd.

[chose all three options] To be sure I get the <u>Right</u> information

[chose paper] availability at the library

[chose library terminal] I think? That's how the person at the library did it and it was very easy.

[chose online] hard to get to the library

[chose library terminal] It is easier – it does not require a librarian's assistance.

[chose paper] Paper seems easier.

[chose online] Anytime access

[chose paper] I'm illiterate

[chose paper] no computer savvy

[chose paper] don't know how to use computer.

[chose online] convenience

[chose paper] less work / less time

[chose paper] paper is easier & more readily available.

[chose online] Very time saving if this was available – the fee could be collected when the book came in. However how would they collect if it was unavailable (I just had 2 requests they could not fill!)

[chose online] More easily available

Question 16 open comments

The following comments are presented as the patron wrote them on the survey for Question 16.

I was truly delighted that something was found but a little disappointed that they were not as helpful as I would have liked. Frankly, I was so surprised that there is such a plethora of materials in the area in which I was interested.

It would have been nice to have more of a selection on the subject matter – I'm very surprised at how little was available. Still ... something is always better than nothing.

I have ordered hundreds of items over the past 10 years, more than 90% have been located for me. I am very pleased with the performance of the system.

ILL is a fine service – it is necessary to be part of academic world excellence.

I have my M.A. in nutritional sciences and I consider that degree to be more than adequate to fulfill your dreams. Good luck! I am pleased to help you.

Very pleased thus far – I'm going to request a real old family history book and am looking forward to see how they manage to research and handle my request.

Have one central location, fully staff for ILL, and completely web base for a quick turnaround. Have two deposits for books in each county for rerouting back to the central location.

I am very happy with the inter library loan system. The books I had requested always arrived within 2 or 3 days and I was notified by phone of each books arrival. The audience you should target is interlibrary loan users who are attending college and need books, articles, etc. immediately to complete a term paper or project. The other thing to check is how well the system works when there are several requests for the same item. (This could easily happen when students are gathering information for a term paper or project.)

Most of the time results are fine. Other time results take too long!

This probably doesn't pertain to your study but the book I picked up today I tried to get on Thursday. The girl at the front desk said the book had been sent back. Today I received a call and was told she had made a mistake and that the book was there to be picked up. This was the first time I've had a problem. I graduated from Glassboro in 1974. I started college after my three sons were in school. Hope you receive all of your surveys back! Thanks for the bookplate.

I would Love [love was circled] to have the option of renewing ILL for another week or two. The two week time frame does not work real well since you can't always be sure of arrival (receipt) of the ILL. I would love [love was circled] to request online then just have the fee added like a fine is to my card. I would pay it at my next library visit. Are there ever credits (refunds) for the fee for books that can't be ILL?

Staff at the Winslow branch library are very helpful and polite – they really go out of their way to help us.

I enjoy this process and feel it benefits the populace.

I am reading Pulitzer Prize novels starting with the first novel to receive the award in 1918 & came via ILL from the University of Maryland. I am currently reading the 1944 winner.

Very pleased with service and effort by library staff.

On form for ILL book – only bottom section is marked for "Library Use Only", but isn't middle section for "library use only" too? Branch pickup maybe should be in top section.

Good luck with your research!

Nice system!

The books I got could not be renewed. I think they should be able to be renewed. I requested 2 books on the same subject at the same time, from the same person. On one request they listed my name as Paula (correct). On the other they listed my name (in more than one spot) as Paul. How could anyone do this?

I adore this service – I can get almost anything I want this way – only a few times have they been unable to fill my request. The librarians are so helpful! I love Camden County Library! Additional note end of survey – Hi, I'm a grad student at Rowan, too – though I may not ever finish up. Good luck on the thesis!

I'm delighted to know that they'd search all over for a book I really want to get. One came all the way from Oregon! I was astounded! I do wish I could have kept the last one longer. They would not let me renew after 2 weeks.

At one time I was told; "No more than 10 ILLs at once". That is ridiculous! I pay for them!?! It was just a rule that should not exist. Also – in other states – they will "plead" to get you a book – if library is "reluctant" to lend. C.C. N.J. will not. Additional note at end of survey – P.S. Good luck on your thesis! Love Rowan!

The entire ILL system is extremely helpful. The one and only difficulty with the system is with the user, i.e. with me (in my case). Either I have ill-apportioned my time, or my wits are so slow, that the due date for a book arrives before I have finished it.

Thanks for the ILL system. I wish it came earlier!

I was more than satisfied. I didn't know they had such a system. I now know I can get almost anything in print.

It would be nice if a longer borrowing period were an option, say four weeks.

The county library never notifies me if an item is unavailable or will take a long time to receive.

Keep up the good work!

Very happy with all service at Oaklyn library.

The scholarship foundation book for Aeronautical College was absolutely useless!! Every one of the foundations were either non-existent or outdated. For example: The American Airlines Scholarship was discontinued years ago & they notified the publishers to remove their name from the book but it still appeared. This was a total waste of time & am very disappointed.

I found ILL helpful as a cost-saver. I am working on a PhD so it's nice to borrow books that I don't want to buy.

Excellent service.

Additional Comments

The following comments are presented as the patron wrote them on the survey. The bracketed words indicate where on the survey the comments were added.

[Question 1] It was on the subject matter but not very helpful.

[Questions 12 & 13] I can't remember it's a long time ago

[Question 5] N/A but I originally ordered 5/99, sent 2nd request 1/18/2000!

[Question 5] The item arrived within two or three days and I was perfectly satisfied.

[Question 5] 1st ordered 3/8/99 – Reordered 1/18/00 Received 3/22/00

[Question 14] I really don't expect the book in any time frame.

[Question 18] 4 years older than Israel. A little test for the college student.

[end of survey] Good luck on your thesis.

[Question 7] Marlton

[Question 3] To use in walkman – while walking to lose weight & hear while walking great incentive to get me to walk.

[on letter] Good Luck!

[Question 5] did not specify a date but received book in one week

[Question 5] I was told it would take two weeks.

[Question 1] Even though I had the title wrong

[top of survey] This survey covers the loan of 2 books. I requested them at the same time. One was an interlibrary loan, the other came from OCLC. I was notified of their arrival 1 day apart & picked them up together.

[Question 15] I didn't use any of these methods. I called the library on the phone from home & they took my request.

[on letter] Thanks for your concerns!

[Question 5] very promptly

[Question 14] My only expectation is: "Sometime – I hope."

[Question 3] History of German cities

[Question 3] I am a teacher – it was for one of my students.

[Question 3] Professional Enrichment

[Question 14] I have no expectation date.

[Question 5] It took a while longer than 1 wk probably 2 wks

[Question 9] my library staff

[Question 12] my staff

[Question 14] ideal [marked next to less than 1 week]

[Question 5a] no date specified delivered quickly I was impressed

[end of survey] Keep up the good work! Thanks for the sticker

[Question 5] didn't use form – just asked librarian

[Questions 3 & 4] Scholarships for aeronautical colleges.