

Workforce Training and Development in Selected Public Libraries Throughout the State of Oregon: Patterns and Implications

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to survey the levels of workforce training and development programs in selected public libraries throughout the State of Oregon, and to consider staff training and development efforts as a basis for enhancing library services. The study targeted all public libraries throughout Oregon with service populations ranging from 1,000 to 15,000.

Findings indicated varying levels of workforce training and suggested a need for improvement. The research concluded that library services could likely be enhanced through training and development programs made available to library staff.

The study provided some recommendations for enhancing library services through improvement of staff training and development programs. The recommendations were aimed at library directors and library governing bodies, and included reflecting and accessing the library's mission as related to services, identifying training needs, and developing a plan for library staff development.

Introduction

Background of the Study

Traditionally, the mission of public libraries has been to meet the recreational, educational, and informational needs of their communities. They have addressed their mission by providing resources and a variety of programs and services to their communities. Patrons of all ages and backgrounds have enjoyed access to collections of books, magazines, newspapers, videos, recorded books, music, and interlibrary loan service. Some of the favorite programs have included children's storyhour and literacy classes for adults. Many libraries have continued to provide access to computers, recreational and educational software, and access to the Internet. Over the years, these services have

evolved into essentials that have been required and expected by the public in large and small communities.

Libraries that have provided these services have been held in high esteem by their communities. In a sense, they have been a reflection of community pride and quality of life. Central to those services has been the library staff, a group of professional individuals dedicated to providing library services to their communities. Library staff has continued to strive to maintain high service standards for library patrons. Maintaining high quality service standards, however, has been difficult for some staff, particularly those in libraries with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000.

Budget reductions, emerging technology and increased competition for grants and other external funding sources have continued to challenge resident staff in libraries of all sizes. Libraries have had limited budgets for facilities, equipment, and continuing education programs for staff. Yet, the need for staff training and development has continued to be critical, largely as a result of rapid developments in the field of information technology.

Emerging technology has continued to impact the work of librarians. Library professionals have been required to learn new methods and systems for accessing and delivering services to library patrons. In the area of collection development, for example, librarians have been expected to use new criteria for identifying, evaluating, selecting, and using a wide variety of electronic formats and hardware delivery systems. Patrons have become aware of the changes and have developed expectations from their libraries and librarians. The library professional has accepted the challenge to deliver current technology based services. However, it has continued to be expensive. Some public libraries have not had the budget to access the appropriate technology.

Libraries have had to overcome the realities of budget reductions, shrinking grant-funding sources and increased competition for any and all available funds. Librarians have had a need to increase their knowledge and skills in the areas of fundraising, public relations, and the political process. In the meantime, library patrons have continued to develop their awareness of what local community libraries should provide. All of the above situations have continued to challenge library staff in libraries with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000. Yet, the expectation for service quality has continued (Altman & Herson, 1998).

One of the more readily available and powerful responses for library staff facing the aforementioned realities has continued to be effective workplace literacy. Staff members who have been provided with training and professional development opportunities have succeeded in meeting the public's demands for quality services. Many times, however, these critical training opportunities have been lacking for staff in small and medium size public libraries throughout Oregon.

Statement of the Problem

The need for continued training of library staff in new methods and technologies has continued to exist in some libraries throughout the state of Oregon. Library staff without proper training in emerging technology and current library methods may not have been providing patrons with the appropriate resources, programs, and services they require. The need for quality library services has continued and should be addressed proactively if community libraries are to continue to provide viable, essential and indispensable services to their patrons (Vavrek, 1997).

Staffs in some community libraries have continued to work with smaller collections, limited access to technological resources, and limited budgets. Yet, in spite of these realities, library patrons have continued to expect quality library services. Libraries throughout Oregon that offer appropriate training in emerging technology and current methods to library staff have been more likely to provide enhanced services to their patrons.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess and report on the status of workforce training and development programs available to public library staff in public libraries with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 throughout the state of Oregon. In addition, the purpose was to illustrate the benefits of staff training as a means for enhancing and maintaining quality library services, and to offer some recommendations for enhancing library services through staff training and development. The following questions were addressed:

1. Who participated in the training?
2. What types of training topics were covered?
3. What was the frequency and type of training provided?
4. Were annual training sessions provided to staff?
5. Was there a training budget?
6. Was there a tuition reimbursement program?

Delimitations

The study was limited to public libraries throughout Oregon with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000. The study was conducted during 1998-99 academic year.

Assumptions

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions were believed to be true:

1. The targeted libraries were small and medium size libraries with average incomes ranging from \$11,659 to \$478,000, registered borrowers ranging from 405 to 11,531, and staff sizes ranging from .63 to 10.2 full time equivalent.
2. Many of the targeted libraries provided some form of workforce training and development for their staff.
3. Some of the targeted libraries had access to automation ranging from personal computers for general applications, and online public access catalogs to full access to the Internet.

Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis One: Public libraries throughout Oregon with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 were more likely to improve services and meet community needs to access current resources, services and programs if they initiated, developed and/or expanded their workforce training and development programs, as measured by the percentages of training opportunities provided to staff.

Hypothesis Two: Library administrations in public libraries in Oregon with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 were more likely to meet community needs to access current resources, programs and services through staff training and development, as measured by levels of training budgets and support for continuing education of staff.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study indicated the importance of a well-trained staff in meeting community demands for quality public library services. The study focused on generating concern from library administrators and library staff for the value of enhancing and developing service quality in community libraries with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000. Also, the study identified library management's responsibilities to patrons and staff for delivering quality services. The study recommended considerations and suggestions for achieving success in these areas.

Procedure

For the purpose of this study, the following steps were undertaken:

1. A review of selected literature was obtained through the Heritage College Library, Blue Mountain Community College Library, Oregon Trail Library District Libraries, and the Internet.
2. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from Maureen Mc Elligott, President of the Oregon Trail Library District.
3. Libraries selected for participation in the study were identified from a list of public libraries produced by the Oregon State Library.
4. A *Public Library Workforce Training Survey* was developed with input from library staff of the Oregon Trail Library District and colleagues from other libraries, the Oregon Trail Library District Board and Heritage College faculty.
5. A cover letter to accompany the survey was developed. The letter indicated the purpose of the project as being to assess the levels of workforce training available at small and medium size libraries and that the project was part of the requirements towards the author's masters degree in education.
6. The survey was mailed to library directors and librarians at sixty-six public libraries.
7. Data were subjected to standard statistical techniques and procedures to measure and establish project findings.
8. The study concluded with a summary of the project, conclusions and recommendations.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the term full time equivalency (FTE) was defined. Full time equivalency refers to staffing based on a forty-hour work-week, i.e. a forty-hour position equals 1 FTE, and a twenty-hour position equals .5 FTE.

Review of Selected Literature

A Brief History of Public Libraries in America

The first public library in the United States was founded in Peterborough, NH, in 1833. The library was supported by an 1821 law that permitted a por-

tion of taxes to be used for educational purposes (Thompson, 1991). In 1847, a free public library was founded in Wayland, Massachusetts by Brown University President, Francis Wayland who gave five hundred dollars to promote a town library (Thompson, 1991).

Thompson (1991) reported more financial support for public libraries in the United States emerged in the early 1900s when philanthropist Andrew Carnegie provided more than \$50 million for library buildings in hundreds of communities throughout the United States.

Churchwell (1975) stated that the American Library Association (ALA) recognized the need for training librarians. In 1909 he created the Committee on Library Training and authorized it “... to investigate from time to time the whole subject of library schools and courses of study, and report the results of its investigations, with recommendations.” Since that time, public libraries have continued to develop their position of providing quality services to all members of the library community. By 1998, the American Library Association had developed a membership of 57,000 (Barber & Hodges, 1998). Their mission was “... to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.” By the 1990s, public libraries were addressing and promoting a variety of issues including diversity, education and continuous learning, equity of access, intellectual freedom, and 21st Century literacy (Barber & Hodges, 1998). Throughout the 20th Century, the public was responding to rapidly changing societal values and information needs largely influenced by the impact of emerging technology. A framework for new standards, concepts, and rules for cultural literacy was initiated and introduced to the public.

Cultural Literacy

Public libraries have continued to assume a significant role in the development of American society. They have established themselves as primary providers of access to information designed to meet the recreational and educational needs of their communities. The information has been made available to patrons in a variety of formats including print, non-print, photographic, and electronic media. Information has been provided on a wide variety of topics including health, business, recreation, and education. To supplement local resources, many public libraries have provided interlibrary loan services and free access to computers and the Internet.

Public libraries have taken the responsibility for providing access to information to people of all ages and backgrounds. Libraries have championed equal access to information based on intellectual freedom as supported by the Library Bill of Rights (ALA Action, 1999). The American Library Association

has continued to support the view that “the free expression of ideas as embodied in the First Amendment is a basic human right. As American citizens, we have the right to read what we want to read, hear what we want to hear, watch what we want to watch and think what we want to think” (American Library Association, 1999). The efforts by public libraries to respond to the changing character of America’s cultural literacy has continued to bolster intellectual freedom.

Emerging technology has had an effect on the ability for public libraries to keep up with a changing cultural literacy. Rapidly changing developments in computer software and equipment have continued to place budget constraints on public libraries. The high cost of technology and limited funding for many libraries has made it difficult for these libraries to comply with new requirements and expectations of library users. Academic libraries have faced similar demands.

According to Stoffle (1998), “Success in the next century—personal, professional, civic, and economic—will depend on the ability to participate intellectually in the emerging knowledge-based society.” One of the more important means for achieving success with meeting the service demands of library users has been information-technology and education for library staffs (Stoffle, 1998). Low (1991) stated, “It is essential for librarians to keep abreast of all the technological changes in society. They must have a basic knowledge of current technologies so that they can apply and implement these technologies in their libraries.” One example of a university’s response to the need for training was found at the University of Wisconsin. A pilot project was designed that identified patrons’ technological literacy needs and also focused on training staffs to adequately meet the identified requirements (Konrad, 1998).

Public libraries reported similar requirements and responsibilities particularly in the area of adult literacy. Ellingson (1998) indicated that libraries have always been dedicated to literacy and life-long learning. However, existing literacy programs may not be enough to “...meet the increasing need for a literate population.” Literacy is no longer just having basic skills. Literacy is a term that describes all the skills people need to do their jobs and to function in society (Ellingson, 1998). Other reported elements of literacy and life-long learning were family-centered literacy programs. Talan (1998) stated that adult learners who participated in family-centered literacy programs have four basic purposes for improving their literacy skills: “to have access, to have voice, to take action, and to provide a bridge to the future.”

Literacy programs in public libraries indicated a wide variety of services and resources. One reported example was found at Queens Borough, New York Public Library. According to Strong (1998), the library provided small-group instruction for adult new readers by trained volunteer tutors, conversation

groups for adults learning English as a second language, computer-assisted instruction for students learning English or improving their reading skills, and adult basic education classes. Resources included collections of materials such as books, cassettes, and videotapes for new adult readers and those whose native language is not English, tutor training workshops for adult for literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages conversation volunteers, and professional educators available for assistance and advisement (Strong, 1998).

Cultural literacy was characterized as having many dimensions and responses, particularly in the areas of information delivery infrastructures and technologies. Fleischman (1999) wrote that one response was the creation of distributed learning environments where the interactive capabilities of networking and multimedia were combined with learner-centered instruction creating interactive distance learning environments. People were able to learn at any time, any place and at any pace. There was greater access to instructional materials and information resources. The variety of software, hardware and associated infrastructure to operate them has created a need for public libraries to focus on workforce training and development.

Workforce Training and Development

The need for workforce training and development is illustrated in the existing shortage of children's librarians. Somerville (1998), who received responses from twenty-four public libraries throughout the United States to a survey that questioned directors and children's coordinators on issues of training, recruitment, retention, and importance of children's librarians, found that "most respondents agree that recruitment of children's librarians is still a problem." Early literacy has been known to foster crime prevention, a productive work force and a healthy economy. The shortage was attributed to salary and amenities, proximity of an accredited library school and attractiveness of the surrounding area. Training of children's librarians in the areas of early childhood education and developmental psychology was noted, according to Somerville (1998).

One innovation that addressed services for an increasingly multicultural society was the Transition into Management (TIM) program sponsored by the California State Library. Low (1998) indicated that the weeklong TIM program was designed " ...to increase confidence, develop leadership attitudes and skills, and encourage networking." The program identified promising entry-level librarians from all ethnic backgrounds and encouraged them to move into positions of leadership.

Some workforce training opportunities for library staffs were available via distance education. Chepesiuk (1998) stated that the state of Texas made library history in September 1998 by launching the first cooperative offering of

an ALA-accredited Master in Library Science degree. The program delivered library education to four areas of the state, using interactive television and the Internet. The areas served by the program were Texas A&M in Texarkana, the University of Texas/Pan American in Edinburg, Christian University in Abilene, and Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls.

Library organizations such as the American Library Association developed a variety of continuing professional education programs. One example was the "Live at the Library" program, a national training project that helped librarians develop and support programs that brought cultural events including author readings, book discussions and performances to their libraries (Watkins, 1998).

Workforce training in small public libraries was reported to be lacking, according to a finding by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (Vavrek, 1997). This finding indicated that "...only one in 20 library directors serving communities of less than 2,500 people have an MLS or equivalent; one in five directors serving populations of up to 25,000 is so prepared."

Workforce training in public libraries was reported to be critical yet inaccessible to veteran librarians. Woodward (1997) stated, "Every aspect of a modern library operation has become integrally linked to the computer." A demand has been created that all librarians be computer literate. This has been difficult for some older workers, due to few training opportunities related to diminishing budgets. Older workers could bring a wealth of experience to a library position, given the opportunity to train in the application of current and emerging technologies, according to Woodward.

The literature suggested the importance of workforce training from the standpoint of continuing education. Woodsworth (1998) indicated that it was necessary for information professionals to commit to a lifetime of continuous technological education to stay employable. Library professionals with corporate experience were required to develop competencies as their careers developed. They were expected to acquire training in change management, leadership development, project management, problem solving, decision-making, critical thinking, and time management. Employers were identified as those who were in a position to provide opportunities for required training by providing financial support for staff to pursue appropriate training including advanced certificates in the field.

Public libraries are likely to be staffed by adult employees with varied educational and experience levels. In order to add significance and understanding to the processes and outcomes involved in workforce training in public libraries, it was necessary to explore some characteristics of adult learners.

The Adult Learner

Knowles, Holton & Swanson (1998) provided insight into the adult learner by describing the andragogical learning model. The andragogical model was based on several assumptions that differed from pedagogy, the traditional model used in educating children. In andragogy, adults were required to know why they needed to learn something before undertaking to learn it, had a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions and their own lives, brought their past learning and experiences to the learning process, were ready to learn those things they needed to learn, and were motivated to learning those things that they perceive would help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confronted in their life situations. Adult learner characteristics suggested great potential for success in the labor market.

Hickins (1999) observed that “many organizations are coaxing former employees out of retirement for part-time or temporary contract, or dipping into the pool of older workers to fill unskilled and semi-skilled positions.” For purposes of this study, it suggested the potential for a pool of professional expertise to be found among retired library professionals. Besides the potential pool of older adult learners, the literature indicated an increase in adult learning.

Pegg (1999) found adult learners twenty-five years and older represented approximately forty percent of undergraduate enrollment in U.S. colleges and universities. Pegg referred to andragogy and concluded that “...most adults regard education as an important lifetime activity, and that they learn more effectively in a self-directed and self-planned manner, in contrast to learning in school.” The importance of adult learners was illustrated in the work of the National Adult Education Foundation (NAEF).

According to McKenna (1999), NAEF was established to address the needs of adult learners. NAEF assessed the state of adult education as follows:

The following are some of the critical needs in adult education today:

- to further develop adult education as a field of practice and profession in informal community programs, schools and colleges
- to further develop adult education in traditional and nontraditional settings;
- to further develop continuing education for professionals in research and in the adult education practice;
- to further develop “cutting edge” work on special needs issues and interests in adult education;
- to stimulate further research in adult education;
- to explore new ways of motivating adult to continue their education; and
- to find new methods which create initiative for learning enterprises.

One approach for addressing the requirements of adult learners was found in the use of multiple intelligence concepts in creating a positive and productive learning environment for adults.

Multiple Intelligences

Gardner (1983) found that multiple intelligence theory provided a theoretical framework for teaching children and adults. The intelligences are verbal/linguistic, musical/rhythmic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

Brougher (1997), referring to Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, indicated that ... "by participating in an environment that is nourishing for all the intelligences, adults begin experiencing a richness and enjoyment in learning they thought they had outgrown or in many cases never experienced."

Total Quality Management

The literature search for this study suggested the existence of management philosophies and methodologies that fostered individual and collective success in the workplace. Total Quality Management (TQM) theory was found to be popular and effective in many organizations. Seidler (1996) stated that Total Quality Management "...is a total philosophy for running an organization. It has as its main objective the meeting of both internal and external customer's expectations through continuously improving all processes and products." The success attributed to TQM was found in its empowering of the workforce into teams for the purpose of achieving a quality product. Seidler (1996), although generally supportive of TQM, stressed the importance of assessing outcomes.

Dervitsiotis (1999) supported performance-based process management, a function within the scope of TQM theory. The importance of prioritizing the appropriate processes to be performed was stressed.

ColemanYi and Chollett (1997) recognized the need for accurate and effective measurements of TQM applications in a library setting. They presented the results of a survey designed to measure service quality in five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Survey results indicated a discrepancy in the quality of the services provided by a large university library. ColemanYi and Chollett (1997) indicated that "exceeding what customers expect from the service is the key to delivering high-quality service." The researcher of this study found evidence that staff training and development as provided for in TQM and other quality based management systems was more likely to be effective if pursued within the scope of a learning organization philosophy and process (Montgomery, 1999).

The Learning Organization

In their discussion of human resources development (HRD) in the workplace, Galbraith and McGrath (1997) indicated that "consideration of HRD is no longer limited to traditional assumptions of training...HRD is being transformed from training to learning." Successful organizations were beginning to recognize the critical value of continued improvement of their human resources.

Senge (1999) indicated that improvement of human resources was inhibited by an organization's tendency to control rather than to learn. Senge stated that "human beings are designed for learning ... people are born with intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, dignity, curiosity to learn, (and) joy in learning." The literature suggested that some continuous improvement programs failed because people and companies had been unable to understand that learning preceded improvement (Garvin, 1993). Garvin (1993) discussed that learning organizations were not built overnight, but from " ... carefully cultivated attitudes, commitments, and management processes that accrue slowly and steadily. The first step is to foster an environment conducive to learning." Employees in small and medium size public libraries were more likely to thrive in a working environment that encouraged and supported workplace learning.

Methodology

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study from the Oregon Trail Library District Board of Directors. Maureen Mc Elligott, Board President authorized and evaluated the researcher's study design in the form of a field practicum administered and evaluated by Dr. David Zufelt, Interim Dean, Division of Education and Psychology, Heritage College.

Study participants represented library directors and librarians who work in public libraries throughout Oregon with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000. Participants were asked to respond to a Workforce Development and Public Libraries Survey.

Libraries for the study were identified from a directory entitled Public Libraries in Oregon, produced by the Oregon State Library. Sixty-six public libraries were selected from the directory as meeting the criteria of having service populations ranging from 1,000 to 15,000.

The survey listed 12 questions designed to elicit appropriate quantifiable responses from participants. Each question provided a subset of answers from which participants could select in order to answer each question. The survey design was reworked numerous times in order to enhance the quality and significance of the data collected. The survey design was reviewed by members of the Oregon Trail Library District Board of Directors and by Dr. David Zufelt, the researcher's advisor.

A draft of the proposed survey was shared with several of the researcher's colleagues at library meetings and by phone calls initiated by the researcher. The input provided by library colleagues resulted in some changes to the content of the survey including rephrasing some of the questions.

The survey was mailed June 15, 1999. Participants were asked to respond by July 15th. A self-addressed stamped envelope was included with each survey. Fifteen surveys had been returned by June 30th. The researcher made random calls to participants in order to encourage them to complete and return the surveys. A total of 44 surveys were received. One responding library was disqualified because it exceeded the maximum of 15,000 population service area. The study was based on data from 43 surveys.

Data were grouped and displayed through use of the Microsoft Excel software program. Tables and bar graphs were used to display percentages and to make comparisons of statistics with reference to the purpose this study.

Analysis of the Data

Demographics

The study required participating libraries to have a service population base ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 and be listed in the *Oregon Public Library Directory* (1998) published by the Oregon State Library. Sixty-six libraries were identified.

Forty-four (67 percent) of the surveys mailed were received initially, but one was disqualified because the population service area exceeded the 15,000 required by the study. A total of 43 (65percent) of the 66 surveys mailed were returned and used for the study.

The first element in the survey provided respondents with the option of indicating their library's name. Thirty-two (74 percent) of the 43 respondents indicated the name of their libraries.

This study was conducted in Boardman, Oregon, under the auspices of the Board of Directors of the Oregon Trail Library District. The participants selected for the study represented public libraries with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 throughout the State of Oregon. The libraries were located in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

Thirty-eight (88.4 percent) responding libraries were situated in rural settings. Four (9.3 percent) libraries were from suburban setting and one (2.3 percent) from an urban setting (see Table 1).

Table 1
Geographic Settings of Participating Libraries

Types of settings	Number of respondents	Percent of participants
Urban	1	2.3
Suburban	4	9.3
Rural	38	88.4
Total	43	100

Service population areas were reported in increments of 1,000 ranging from 1,000 to 15,000. Libraries with service population areas of approximately 2,000 represented the highest category of respondents. Libraries with service population areas ranging between 12,000 to 14,000 represented the lowest categories.

The service areas reported indicated that 27 (63 percent) respondents represented libraries with service areas ranging from 1,000 to 5,000.

Sixteen (37 percent) of the respondents represented libraries with service areas ranging from 6,000 to 15,000 (see Table 2).

Table 2
Library Service Areas

Service area	Libraries	Service area	Libraries
15,000	3	5,000	5
14,000	1	4,000	4
12,000	1	3,000	5
10,000	2	2,000	8
9,000	3	1,000	5
8,000	2		
7,000	2		
6,000	2		
Subtotal:	16		27

N=43

Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were tested:

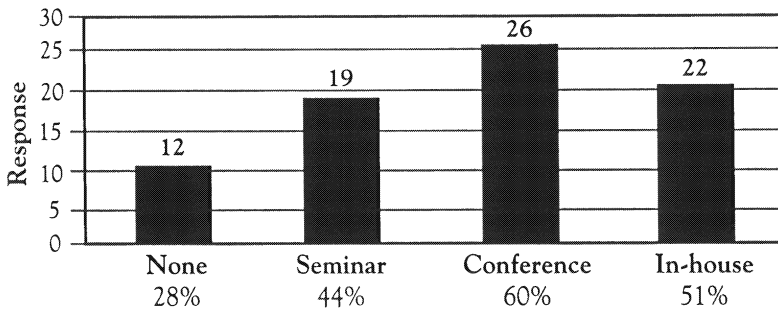
Hypothesis One: Public libraries throughout Oregon with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 were more likely to improve

services and meet community needs to access current resources, services and programs if they initiated, developed and/or expanded their workforce training and development programs as measured by the percentages of training opportunities provided to staff.

Hypothesis One was tested according to types of training offered, categories of staff who participated in the training, and number of training sessions per year. Types of training offered were analyzed according to frequency of training sessions. Types of training were none, seminar, conference, and in-house.

The data showed that 12 (28 percent) responses indicated no training frequency or types of training. The frequency of seminars was reported in 19 (44 percent) responses. Conference frequency was cited in 26 (60 percent) responses. In-house training frequency was reported in 22 (51 percent) responses (see Figure 1).

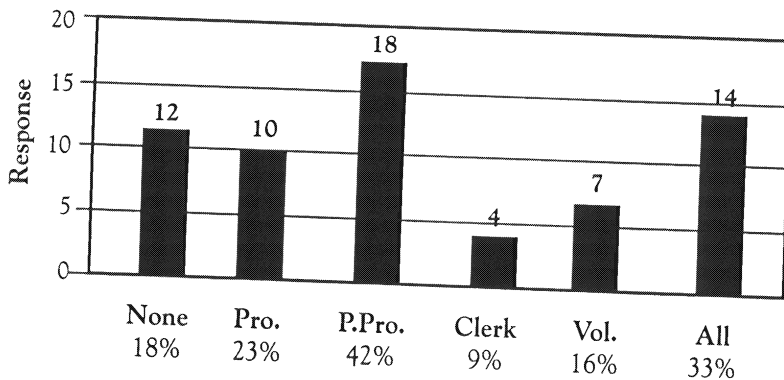
Figure 1
Frequency and type of training



Participation in training was analyzed according to frequency of training sessions within each staff category. Staff categories were none, professional, paraprofessional, clerk, volunteer and all.

The data showed 12 (28 percent) respondents indicated that no staff categories participated in training. Ten (23 percent) respondents said that professional staff participated in training. Eighteen (42 percent) respondents indicated that paraprofessionals participated in training. Four (9 percent) respondents said that clerks participated in training. Seven (16 percent) respondents indicated that volunteers participated in training. Fourteen (33 percent) respondents reported that all staff categories participated in training (see Figure 2).

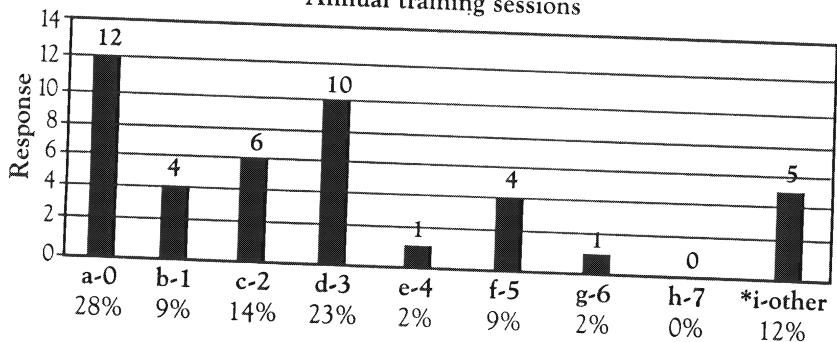
Figure 2
Training Participants



Frequency of training was analyzed according number of training sessions per year. Number of training sessions were none, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and other.

The data showed 12 (28 percent) respondents indicated that no annual training sessions were held. Four (9 percent) respondents selected 1 annual training session. Six (14 percent) respondents had 2 annual sessions. Ten (23 percent) respondents indicated 3 annual training sessions were held. One (2 percent) respondent indicated 4 annual sessions. Four (9 percent) respondents selected 5 annual sessions. Two (5 percent) respondents indicated 6 annual sessions. One (2 percent) respondent held six annual training sessions. None of the respondents had 7 annual training sessions. Five (12 percent) respondents indicated other than annual training sessions were held (see Figure 3).

Figure 3
Annual training sessions



*Other category responses were (a) training provided at monthly staff meetings, (b) as needed, (c) weekly staff briefings, and (d) on going. Therefore,

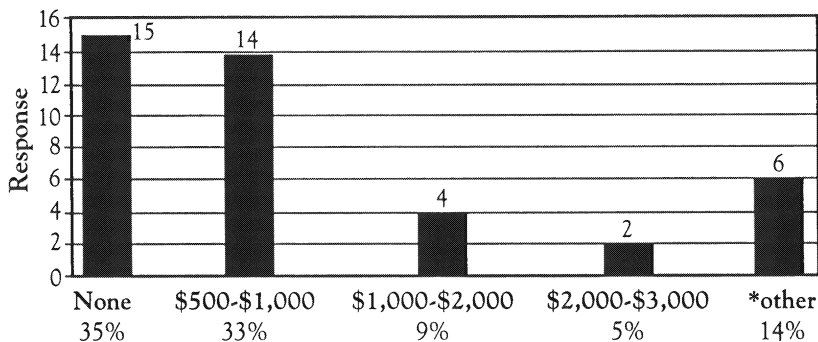
Hypothesis One was accepted based on the measurable levels of workforce training and development programs provided to staff as indicated by the data.

Hypothesis Two: Library administrations in public libraries throughout Oregon with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 were more likely to meet community needs to access current resources, programs and services through staff training and development programs, as measured by levels of training budgets and support for the continuing education of staff.

Hypothesis Two was tested according to training budget levels, types of training topics, and availability of tuition reimbursement programs. Training budget levels were analyzed according to the annual amounts none, \$500-\$1000, \$1000-\$2000, \$2000-\$3000, and other.

The data showed 15 (35 percent) respondents had no annual training budget. Fourteen (33 percent) respondents reported annual amounts from \$500 to \$1,000. Four (9 percent) respondents had annual budgets ranging from \$2,000 to \$3,000. Two (5 percent) respondents reported annual budgets ranging from \$2,000 to \$3,000. Six (14 percent) responses indicated “other” budget levels (see Figure 4).

Figure 4
Training budgets

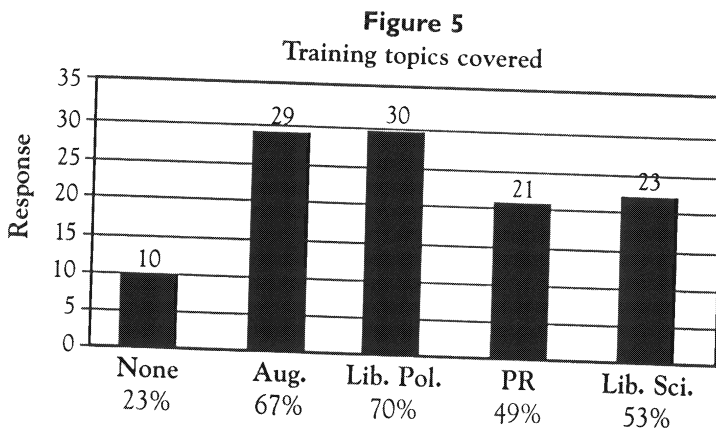


*Other responses were (a) \$3,000-\$5,000 (2 responses), (b) \$200-\$2,000 (1 response), (c) less than \$500 (1 response), (d) \$400 (1 response), and (e) \$350 (1 response).

Types of training offered were analyzed according to topics covered. Training topics were none, automation, library policies, public relations, and library science.

The data showed 10 (23 percent) respondents covered no training topics. Twenty-nine (67 percent) respondents said automation was covered as a train-

ing topic. Thirty (70 percent) respondents cited library policies as a covered topic. Twenty-one (49 percent) respondents indicated that public relations was covered as a training topic. Twenty-three (53 percent) respondents reported library science as a covered topic (see Figure 5).



The availability of tuition reimbursement programs was determined by the number of libraries offering such programs. Data showed three (7 percent) of the libraries had tuition reimbursement programs (see Table 3). Therefore, Hypothesis Two was accepted based on the levels of training budgets and support for the continuing education of staff as indicated by the data.

Table 3
Tuition Reimbursement Programs

Tuition reimbursement	Number of responses	Percent of responses
Yes	3	7
No	40	93
Total	43	100

Findings

Based on the analyzed data, the following findings were listed:

1. Twelve (28 percent) of the responses indicated that no staff categories participated in training.

2. Ten (23 percent) of the responses indicated no training topics were covered.
3. Twelve (28 percent) of the responses indicated no frequency or type of training was available.
4. Twelve (28 percent) of the responses indicated no annual training sessions were held.
5. Fifteen (35 percent) of the responses indicated no training budgets were available.
6. Three (7 percent) of responses indicated the availability of tuition reimbursement programs.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to assess and report on the status of workforce training and development programs available to public library staff in public libraries with population service areas ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 throughout the state of Oregon. In addition, the purpose was to illustrate the benefits of staff training as a means for enhancing and maintaining quality library services, and to offer some recommendations for enhancing library services through staff training and development.

The study presented background information that included a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and hypotheses. A review of selected literature was provided that included a brief history of public libraries, a discussion on the adult learner, and a review of management systems and organizational concepts. The methodology for the study was described, data were analyzed and findings were presented.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from findings 1, 2, 3, and 4:

Findings:

1. Twelve of the responses (28 percent) indicated that no staff categories participated in training.
2. Ten of the responses (23 percent) indicated no training topics were covered.
3. Twelve of the responses (28 percent) indicated no frequency or type of training was available.
4. Twelve of the responses (28 percent) indicated no annual training sessions were held.

Conclusions:

1. Staff categories of professionals, paraprofessionals, clerks and volunteers who received training in emerging technology and current library methods were more likely to provide quality services to patrons.
2. Quality service was more likely to be achieved when staff received training on various topics.
3. Service quality was more likely to be maintained when some form of staff training was available and the frequency was consistent.

The following conclusions were drawn from findings 5 and 6:

Findings:

5. Fifteen of the responses (35 percent) indicated no training budgets were available.
6. Three of the responses (7 percent) indicated that no staff categories participated in training.

Conclusions:

4. Library administrators and governing bodies were more likely to meet community needs for services if they provided adequate budgets for staff training and development.
5. Library administrators and governing bodies were more likely to achieve quality services for their patrons and were more likely to retain quality staff if they offered some form of work-related tuition reimbursement to staff.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from conclusions 1-5:

1. Library governing bodies, directors, and managers should consider providing a variety of appropriate, effective, and consistent training opportunities to library staff. At minimum, key staff should be compensated and encouraged to join and participate in professional library organizations such as Eastern Oregon Library Association, Oregon Library Association, and American Library Association. These organizations develop high quality training programs in all areas of librarianship. Some programs are featured at annual conferences and as workshops throughout the year. Also, a wealth of training resources and training expertise may be found at local community colleges and universities. And, for those who are seeking graduate level training in library science, there are some courses available via the Internet.

2. Library governing bodies, directors, and managers should consider supporting funding for an in-house professional collection of materials on current topics ranging from electronic resource sharing and web publishing to the latest developments in programs for children. Also, every library should have, at minimum, subscriptions to professional journals such as *Library Journal* and *American Libraries*.
3. Library administrators and governing bodies should reflect on the library's mission in terms of resources, services and programs provided to their communities. They may want to focus on enhancing, maintaining, and developing services based on staff training and development. Ideally, training needs would be assessed and appropriate training would be arranged and conducted throughout the year. More realistically, a training plan might be developed based on community needs, available training resources, and budget limitations. The plan should be developed collaboratively between library administrators, governing bodies, staff, and the library community. One of the more direct ways to begin the planning process would be to develop and conduct a community survey on library services. The survey results would help to identify some training priorities.
4. Library governing bodies, directors and managers should consider expanding their funding base through grants to help finance their staff training and development programs. Grant funds are available to libraries from a variety of governmental and corporate sources such as the Library Services and Technology Act and the Ford Foundation. In addition, local organizations such as Chamber of Commerce and Friends of the Library provide some grant funds to libraries. One way to insure consistent funding from grant sources would be to provide grant-writing training opportunities to library staff.
5. Library governing bodies, directors and managers should consider supporting some form of tuition reimbursement program for staff as a means of enhancing and maintaining quality services for their patrons and as an incentive for staff to pursue their personal and professional development.

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Public Library Workforce Training Survey

Instructions: Check appropriate responses and/or fill in the blanks.

1. Reporting Library (optional): _____
2. Geographic Setting: Urban Suburban Rural
3. Approximate Service Population Per Thousand:
 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 5,000 6,000 7,000
 8,000 9,000 10,000 11,000 12,000 13,000 14,000
 15,000
4. What types of staff training opportunities does your library currently provide?
 None Seminars Attendance at Conferences In-house training
5. Who participates in the training?
 None Professional Paraprofessional Clerical Volunteer All
6. What are the training topics/contents?
 Automation
 None Internet Networking Hardware
 Other _____
 Library Policies
 None Circulation Internet Interlibrary loan Reference
 Other _____
 Public Relations
 None Communication Fundraising Friends of the Library
 Other _____
 Library Science
 None Collection development Resource sharing
 Library programming Other _____
7. How many training sessions are provided during a twelve-month period?
 None One Two Three Four Five Six Seven
 Other _____
8. Does your library provide a tuition reimbursement program for staff who wish to pursue graduate studies?
 Yes No
9. If yes to question 8, how much is reimbursed per semester?
 None Half of tuition Less than half All
10. What are the qualifications for participating in the reimbursement program?
 None Length of Employment
 Other _____

11. What conditions must be met prior to receiving reimbursement?
 None Grade point average of _____
 Course Grade of _____
 Other _____
12. What is the approximate annual budget for training?
 None 500-1,000 1,000-2,000 2,000-3,000 Other

Comments:

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