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Editorial

First of all, a big 'thank you' to Louise Cooke who has stepped down as Joint Editor of *Library and Information Research* after three years of hard work. Louise was instrumental in moving the journal from a printed to an electronic format, a journey that was both exciting and frustrating as we grappled with the new technology and ways of working. As her co-editor I benefitted hugely from Louise's greater experience and her academic approach to the task, and on many occasions I had reason to be grateful for her advice and wisdom. I wish her well as she concentrates her efforts on her ever more demanding 'day job'.

This issue is particularly close to my heart, focusing as it does on the work of practitioners and students. It features research in school libraries, a university library and a cross-sectoral study.

Two of the papers are from Library and Research Group (LIRG) prize winners. Cristina Sacco Ritchie was a very deserving winner of the 2009 LIRG student prize. Her dissertation examined two aspects of librarianship in Scotland: public and school librarians' salaries and the self perceived status of librarians in schools. Ritchie describes some interesting findings, especially in the area of professional librarianship where she reports a clear link between the holding of a professional qualification and the perception of professional status within the school. Ritchie makes a compelling argument for having a qualified librarian in every school.

Andrew Walsh, winner of the 2009 LIRG research award, used his funding to conduct a study of student attitudes towards the library's use of mobile technologies, in particular text messaging. Walsh found that students were overwhelmingly positive about receiving text message based services as long as these were useful to them (for example overdue item reminders). They were less keen to experiment with 'new' services for which they couldn't see the point (such as QR codes) or to receive podcasts or vodcasts (for fear of incurring high network charges). This work has not only informed practice at the University of Huddersfield but it is also very pertinent to other academic libraries currently considering implementing these services. It is a particularly good example of a small scale but highly useful piece of research undertaken by a practising academic librarian.

Two of the key objectives of *Library and Information Research* are to encourage reporting of research by practitioners and to encourage reflective and evidence based practice (Library and Information Research, 2010). Janet Clapton's article, on the motivations, barriers and supports for LIS practitioners writing for publication, is therefore extremely appropriate for the journal. Clapton herself is a practitioner, familiar with the challenges of fitting her research and writing around her busy working life, so she fully understands the joys and the tensions which arise. Drawing evidence from an examination of practitioner authorship in twelve peer reviewed and professional journals and magazines, an online survey of

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practitioners, and discussions with professional colleagues, Clapton found that the greatest motivators for writing were to share ideas with others and for professional development; the chief barrier was lack of time. There was certainly no lack of interest in the topic, with 100 responses to the survey in the first 36 hours. Clapton concludes with some suggestions for how her findings could be used to promote practitioner writing.

All four book reviews in this issue have been written by practitioners (perhaps motivated by professional development?). Two books cover new technologies in librarianship – Needham *et al.*'s *M-libraries: libraries on the move to provide virtual access* and Engard's *Library mashups*; the others examine literacy information landscapes (Lloyds's *Literacy information landscapes: information literacy in education, workplace and everyday contexts*) and support for research students (Allan's *Supporting Research Students*). It is always interesting to read a professional colleague's view of a current book so I urge you to take a look at these.

If, having read one of the papers in this issue, you feel inspired to undertake your own research project or write up a project that you have already completed then please do consider submitting your work to *Library and Information Research*. We would love to hear from you.

Miggie Pickton

Reference:

Library and Information Research (2010) *Focus and Scope*. URL: http://www.lirg.org.uk/lir/ojs/index.php/lir/about/editorialPolicies#focusAndScope e [accessed 17.05.10].

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A summary of MSc research on school libraries in the UK

Cristina Sacco Ritchie

Abstract

This paper summarises the author's MSc dissertation which was a co-winner of the 2009 LIRG student prize. It comprises two parts. The first part, a survey of school library salaries, was published in the May 2009 issue of Library and Information Update. This survey used Freedom of Information Act requests to obtain the pay grades and salaries of school librarians and public librarians across local authorities in Scotland. The second part of the dissertation discusses the findings of research conducted on the self-perceived status of secondary school librarians in the UK, with a focus on Scotland. This research will be published in a forthcoming issue of the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science.

1 Part one: Librarians' salaries

Two sets of Freedom of Information Act (FOI) Requests were sent to councils across Scotland, one asking for salary information of school librarians, and one asking for salary information of public librarians. Results indicate that there is a very wide variation in the salaries of school librarians from council to council, and most school librarians in Scotland (two-thirds) have their salaries capped at £24,000 per year. In addition, there is also a lack of consistency regarding the relative salary of public librarians and school librarians. In many councils, public librarians have both higher salary minimums and maximums than school librarians, though in some, public librarians only enjoy a higher maximum, and there are many more variations as well. In addition, the results indicate that local authorities in Scotland maintain a policy of hiring librarians rather than library assistants to staff school libraries, with the exception of two responding councils (31 out of 32 councils responded to the school library survey, which was issued separately from the public library salary survey).

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2 Part two: Self perceived status of librarians

The aim of the second part of the research project was to ascertain how school librarians perceive their status within the school by looking at their perceptions of: their relationships with their colleagues and supervisors, their role within the school, job satisfaction, and views on their careers and their training. This research originated from some negative perceptions about school librarianship, observed in a small group of school librarians met by the researcher during a work placement. One goal of the research is to investigate to what degree school librarians across Scotland and indeed, the UK, share these perceptions. The negative perceptions about school librarianship observed include:

- that school librarians hold the lowest status of all types of librarians;

- that school librarianship is a temporary post that one should escape or else risk "getting stuck";

- that school librarians are respected less than other librarians;

- that the success of the library depends entirely on the personality of the librarian; and

- that senior management largely do not understand or value the school library.

Many of these perceptions paint a rather negative picture of school librarianship. These perceptions were held consistently across different sites within the same council, however, little academic research is available on the perceptions of school librarians for comparison. The hypotheses for this project, therefore, are:

- school librarians are dissatisfied with their jobs;

- school librarians feel they are stuck in their positions until retirement;

- if given the chance, most school librarians would choose a different career;

- school librarians do not feel respected by their supervisors;

- school librarians are isolated from their school communities and from the library community as a whole;

The methods used comprised a review of current and historical literature and a UK-wide survey in the form of a questionnaire, which was distributed electronically. The survey questions covered topics including job satisfaction, relationships within the school, training, professional support, and career goals. Recent research into UK school libraries is scant, and therefore a broad range of questions was necessary in order to best identify potential influencers of one's self-perceived status. The survey asked school librarians to compare their own perceived status in the school to job levels including "clerical staff", "teacher" and "head of department", and asked respondents whether they felt that teachers and their supervisors treated them as important and professional members of staff. The survey asked respondents about their training and qualifications, and asked them to comment on their experiences in the role, which generated over 100 thoughtful and, at times lengthy, responses. A very brief summary follows.

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Most respondents reported levels of self-perceived status on par with heads of department, along with many other positive feelings toward their jobs. These respondents fit the following profile: they believe that teachers and their supervisors support the library, they always felt welcome in the staff rooms, they feel regarded as both an important and a professional member of staff, and they are satisfied with their jobs. They also believe that they are respected as much as other types of librarians and feel like members of both the school and the library communities. This is a very positive picture of school librarianship, however there are those whose working lives are not so fulfilled.

Those who identify themselves as having a low status within the school are less likely to offer workshops for teachers, are more likely to report that school librarians as a whole are respected less than other librarians, are less likely to feel supported by management and colleagues, and are less likely to feel regarded as important or professional members of staff. They are also less likely to be satisfied in their jobs. Of the respondents who ranked themselves as having an equal status to clerical staff, only 50% report holding a CILIP-accredited qualification (compared to 78% of all respondents), so half of those who do not feel regarded as a professional member of school staff are not actually professional librarians. Does this mean that having a professional qualification improves one's status within the school? Certainly, at least, the data suggest a link between not having a professional qualification and not feeling as if one is perceived as a professional.

Survey responses indicate that support from management seems to be the element most closely-linked with the self-perceived status of school librarians, and it seems particularly relevant in its absence. Lack of support from management sets an example for teachers to follow, and determines which aspects of the school are to be treated as important. With the current trend of private-sector policies creeping into public-sector bodies, school librarians may find their positions jeopardized if their value is not made known. Is there a way to improve the position of school librarians? In the US, the American Library Association (ALA) has lobbied for years for tougher qualification requirements and for the importance of having a qualified school librarian in every school. It would follow logically, therefore, that CILIP is in the best position to do this for school librarians in the UK. As the national representative professional organization for librarians, on what other shoulders could this responsibility fall?

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A full version of this article will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, to which CILIP members have access via http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/informed/online-databases/pages/sage.aspx

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Library and information science practitioners writing for publication: motivations, barriers and supports

Janet Clapton

Abstract

Few research studies have investigated UK LIS practitioners' motivation for publication, the barriers they perceive and which supports they think would help, and there is a particular lack of research on publication by practitioners who do not work in academic libraries. This investigation drew evidence from two sources: a small scale quantitative survey to assess variation in the extent of practitioner publishing in 12 LIS publications, including peer reviewed journals and practitioner magazines; and an online survey of self-perceived motivations, barriers, and writing support wishes, undertaken by 100 LIS practitioners in September 2009.

Key motivations included sharing ideas, professional development and raising the personal profile. Lack of time was the most reported barrier to participation, while protected time to write, peer encouragement and organisational support via appraisal objectives were most commonly requested supports. The findings will be of interest to those who wish to participate in or promote LIS practitioner publishing and research.

1 Introduction

This introduction describes the context for practitioners' writing and research, including the relationship between writing for publication and practitioner research.

Writing about research is an important part of the research cycle. The nature of this cycle and how practice fits into it has been outlined succinctly by Hall (2009) as:

- Draw on and understand the research context

- Identify a problem or evidence gap

- Make an informed and appropriate choice of research approach

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- Carry out research (collect and analyse data)

- Relate findings to research context (thereby improving the evidence base and raising the standard of practice)

Hall (2009) stated the dual importance of published research as directing future effort and adding to research context. However, she also noted that publication is not the only means of research dissemination, other routes including social media and conference presentation.

Not all writing by practitioners is for research dissemination (in the narrowest sense). Other types of writing include commentary, practice descriptions, news items and opinion pieces. Scholarly journals usually include some peer reviewed content. Some journals are more like professional magazines, reporting on practice issues, and most journals include both peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed content. Even allowing for these distinctions, the issue of the status of practitioner research is related to practitioners' publication outputs.

How large is the UK LIS practitioner group? The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) estimate is 36,000 (CILIP, 2009). LISU, the library and information statistics organisation, publish broadly similar statistics for the 2006-7 combined public and academic library workforce (LISU, 2006/7). In a North American study of 612 participants (Powell, Baker *et al.* 2002) it was estimated that almost 90% regularly read at least one research journal, 50% occasionally applied research findings to practice and 42% occasionally or frequently carried out research. McNicol surveyed 334 UK librarians in different sectors and found that 52% had been involved in research in the previous two years (33% - 67%, depending on sector, with school libraries and academic libraries representing the extremes). Findings from Schlackman's study of 85 academic librarians showed that 82% had researched as part of their work responsibilities, 58% had carried out research outside of work responsibilities and 65% had published (Schlackman, 2009). The majority of this output was internal publication, followed by conference proceedings, case studies and book reviews, followed by research findings, book chapters, blogs and wikis. Schlackman's findings confirmed those of Powell *et al.* that practitioner research is relatively unlikely to be published externally: Powell *et al.* (2002) surveyed 571 US LIS practitioners who had carried out research and found that more than half had not published their findings.

Separation between practitioner writing and academic writing has been found in a number of studies. Hildreth and Aytac (2007) surveyed characteristics of 206 articles from 23 LIS journals published between 2003 and 2005. The results of this North American based study included findings such as separation of academic or practitioner author groups. By far the most common research type used was descriptive (77%) (rather than exploratory, evaluative or explanatory) and descriptive studies were preferred by practitioners compared with academics. Schlogl and Stock (2008) carried out a detailed, multi-method study of the journals which German speaking academics and practitioners chose to read and publish in, the characteristics of these journals and citation analysis of author affiliation in reference lists in published articles. They also concluded that there

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was little cross-over between the two groups. Eve and Schenk, in the Interactions project, described good practice as well as barriers in practitioner / researcher collaboration (Eve and Schenk, 2007). Feather (2009) contrasted practitioner and academic research disciplines within LIS, including their origins in the early to mid 20th century, and reasons for discord between their supporters. However, he maintained belief in the contribution that both could make to develop the LIS field.

The benefits of LIS research in general were identified in the Research Landscape Project as informing practice; planning future developments; raising the profile of the discipline; teaching and course design; raising the profile of services; contributing to knowledge; and individual interest (McNicol and Nankivell, 2002). In 2009, the Southampton Practice Research Initiative Network Group (SPRING) recognized the importance of practice research across practical disciplines with the publication of the Salisbury Statement on Practice Research (SPRING, 2009). Although SPRING has its roots in social work, the statement encompasses the requirement of all practice based professions to increase effectiveness and accountability, be evidence based and carry out good quality research on practice matters. The authors of the statement acknowledge mainstream thinking that research drives practice, but challenge that with explanation of the importance of dialogue between practitioners and researchers with a view to practice questions influencing research (Southampton Practice Research Initiative Network Group, 2009).

Overall, the context is of a large practitioner group, of which a significant proportion carries out research. However, not all of this research is widely disseminated by external publication. Through this study, the aim is to help explain this situation and point to possible solutions by describing LIS practitioners' motivations to publish, perceived barriers and requested supports. Little attention has been paid to this group in previous research on writing for publication.

Assumptions made within the study include the representativeness of the survey respondents. In fact, they were self-selecting members of 6 UK-based LIS jiscmail discussion lists and so were probably particularly interested in writing for publication.

2 Literature review

This is a selective review of previous studies findings on motivations for writing, reported barriers and requested supports among LIS practitioners.

2.1   Motivations for writing

What motivates practitioners to write for publication? Schlackman surveyed 130 UK academic librarians' motivations to research and publish and found that 'to improve practice in the organisation' was the most popular choice (33%) followed by 'personal interest' (Schlackman, 2009). She considered that these findings confirmed other studies such as Powell *et al.*'s work (2002) in that practitioner researchers are strongly self-motivated and interested in evidence-based practice improvement. The next most popular profiles were to 'raise personal profile',

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'career progression' and to 'raise the library's profile'. Professional development is another key reason (Joint, 2006) and leadership development has also been suggested (Kester, 1997). In the US, publication is expected towards gaining permanent contracts in academic libraries (tenure) (Miller and Benefiel, 1998) but support helps motivate those not in tenured positions (Palmer and Matz, 2006).

Edem and Lawal (1999) focused on the influence of job satisfaction on the publication output of 202 LIS professionals in Nigerian University libraries. The relationship appeared to be complex: satisfaction with achievement, responsibility and recognition appeared to improve the quality of output, whereas salary level, university policies and supervision did not influence output. Financial reward is missing from lists of motivations in other studies (Bradley, 2008). In personal discussion, a colleague mentioned that she found a salary bonus for publication an incentive. Another colleague reflected that this effect could be more about recognition than desire for material gain. This was echoed by the request for an annual prize, made by a participant on Fallon's writing support programme for Irish academic librarians (Fallon, 2009).

2.2 Barriers

2.2.1 Time

Lack of time is consistently mentioned in the literature as the most significant barrier to practitioners carrying out research, for example in McNicol's cross sector comparison of practitioner research in libraries (McNicol, 2004). Joint, in his editorial on practitioner – researcher collaboration, discussed the impact of research activity on workload. As a plus, he felt that involvement in service evaluation could be a time-saving activity, but noted the time and effort required to prepare or respond to research proposals (Joint, 2005). Boice (1987) specifically compared the pressures on academic library staff matched with academics with respect to writing for publication. He concluded that both groups seemed to have enough time in their schedules, but that practitioners experienced other barriers such as 'unsupportive work cultures' and 'entrenched working habits' which prevented them making use of short slots of free time. Boice reported (in 1987) that this 'free time' seemed to be filled by reading magazines or newspapers. In 2010 it would be filled by answering emails or online social networking!

The premise that regular short bursts of writing can give greater productivity than long sessions underpins subscription support groups such as The Academic Writing Club (2010). Boice was unusual in going beyond the face value of the 'time' excuse, and Schlackman also asked why time was such a problem. In her survey, 'too large a workload', 'impact on work-life balance' and 'no time to reflect' were combined as a time pressure, the greatest barrier, followed by 'not an organizational priority' as the next most important barrier. This suggests that practitioners need permission to carry out research and writing in a feasible timescale. More senior staff seemed to have a greater publication output, but they identified time pressure as being even more significant than did junior staff (Schlackman, 2009).

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Despite these authors' attention, there is a gap in explanatory research on time pressures on practitioner writing.

2.2.2   Job roles

Seniority does not necessarily mean that practitioners have more time to publish. As mentioned above (Schlackman, 2009), publication tended to be an activity carried out by senior staff, but they perceived even more time pressure than junior staff. Bradley (2008) studied authorship by new LIS professionals presenting at a new professionals conference in Australia. Although her sample size was small (31) the responses showed that only 6% were required to publish for their job and stronger motivators were networking, personal development and interest in the specific topics.

2.2.3   Staff skills, financial resources, relevant topics

Shenton (2008) mentions issues of support and confidence in his guide to surviving this process. He listed potentially negative experiences once writing is underway, including feeling intimidated by the peer review process, rejection of proposed articles by editors, suppression of negative results, or other events (e.g. workplace reorganisation, personal life events), all of which affect capacity to see the publication process through. Staudt *et al.*'s study of social work practitioners' barriers to publication (2003) found that after lack of time (55%) the next most cited barriers were aspects of the review and publication process (26%) and lack of experience / skills (13%). McNicol also cited financial resources, staff skill deficiency and lack of practically focused subjects to research (McNicol 2004).

2.3   Support for writing

This section considers specific initiatives planned for practitioners; situations, either experienced or requested, which aided writing for publication; and resources which were found to be supportive.

A few studies have focused specifically on support programmes for practitioners working in academic libraries. Fallon described a formal series of workshops to help Irish academic librarians (Fallon, 2009). Tysick and Babb gave details of an academic writing group to support librarians applying for permanent academic positions (Tysick and Babb, 2006) and Miller and Benefiel described a similar support group (Miller and Benefiel, 1998).

Guidance to writing for publication is relatively abundant in the literature. Several resources have been written specifically for LIS professionals (Bahr and McLane, 1997; Hernon, 2003; Gordon, 2004; Gordon, 2004; Putnam, 2009). These tend to be US-orientated, reflecting requirements to publish to gain permanent academic librarianship posts.

Some of the supports for writing that were reported or requested mirrored the barriers described above. Powell *et al.* (Powell, Baker *et al.* 2002) reported positive correlation between conducting research and time to do research during work hours, and with receiving internal and / or external support. Swanepoel (2006) proposed an 'involve as many staff as possible' approach for university

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library research practitioners; this could also be a means of overcoming time allocation, organizational culture and permission barriers.

Overall, the literature gives us a picture of quantitative and qualitative differences between LIS practitioners and academics writing for publication. Little attention has been paid in the past to publication by LIS practitioners who do not work in academic libraries, although there is some literature from comparable professions such as social work. Only one study was found which included non-research writing (Schlackman, 2009).

3 Methodology

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used, including unstructured discussion with colleagues and an online survey (question styles included fixed choice responses plus text boxes for alternative options and comments). A similar (but more detailed) approach was used by Schlackman in her unpublished MSc dissertation (2009), accessed after completion of experimental work in the present study.

The extent of practitioner publishing in peer reviewed and professional magazines or journals was explored by analysing author affiliations of articles and reports within 12 purposively selected publications (7 journals and 5 magazines). The publications were chosen as representative of publications which a UK-based practitioner might read. Several studies have used variations of the publication author affiliation approach, e.g. (Schlogl and Stock, 2008). In the current study, an article was categorised as practitioner authored if at least one author was not affiliated to an academic institution. This categorisation is simple to apply but has the limitation of discounting practitioners who work in an academic setting, thereby potentially underestimating practitioner authorship. Articles and reports were defined as discrete headed written accounts, with a named author, but editorial was excluded. Simple statistical analysis was used to describe the percentage of articles written by practitioners who were not affiliated to an academic institution.

While this work was underway, initial informal discussion was carried out with four practitioner peers in the author's workplace, to establish qualitative issues. This explored issues such as time available, motivation, concerns, and potential support. Five workplace colleagues then piloted and fed back comments on the online survey, which had been developed from the author's own ideas and their suggestions. Their anonymous feedback guided clarification of the questions for development of the final version of the survey, which contained 9 questions (see Appendix). The survey was publicised on 6 UK-based LIS jiscmail discussion lists: LIS-LINK, LIS-PROFESSION, LIS-LIRG, LIS-CILIP-REVAL, LIS-RESEARCH-SUPPORT, LIS-UKEIG in September 2009. Survey Monkey www.surveymonkey.com was used to present the survey; the free option was chosen, which closed on 100 replies after 36 hours. The responses were entered manually into Excel™ (Microsoft Corporation, 2007) and simple descriptive statistical analysis carried out on quantifiable responses. Sector based contingency tests and calculation of chi-squared values for significant difference have been used in other studies (Powell, Baker *et al*. 2002; Hildreth and Aytac, 2007), but

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could not be calculated here as the questions offered more than one response. The solution chosen was comparison by order of popularity of response.

Free text comments were coded and analysed in the qualitative data analysis programme QSR N6 ™ (QSR International, 2002).

4 Results

4.1 Extent of practitioner authored articles within publications

Latest issues of the following journals and magazines (as at October 2009) were assessed for author affiliation except where starred, where the most recent issue available in full text was used. The results are shown below:

Publication	Type of publication	Percentage practitioner authored articles
Free Pint	Professional magazine	100
Managing Information	Professional magazine	100
Career Development Group 'Impact'	Professional magazine	100
CILIP 'Update'	Professional magazine	67
Evidence Based Library and Information Practice	Peer Reviewed Journal	62
Health Information Libraries Journal	Peer Reviewed Journal	30
LIBRI International Journal of Libraries and Information Services	Peer Reviewed Journal	17
Library and Information Research	Peer Reviewed Journal	11
Journal of Information Science	Peer Reviewed Journal	0
VINE: The journal of information and knowledge management systems	Peer Reviewed Journal	0
Library and Information Research Electronic Journal*	Peer Reviewed Journal	0

Table 1: Analysis of representative LIS publications for proportion of practitioner authorship.

Although relatively few publications were investigated, they fall into two groups of high practitioner authorship in professional magazines and low practitioner

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authorship in peer reviewed journals. The extremes are represented by the professional magazines FreePint, Managing Information and the Career Development Group's Impact (100% practitioner authorship) and the peer reviewed journals Journal of Information Science, VINE: The journal of information and knowledge management systems, and Library and Information Research Electronic Journal (0% practitioner authorship). The two publications at the interface are CILIP Update, a professional magazine, and Evidence Based Library and Information Practice, a peer reviewed journal, both of which have around two thirds practitioner authorship.

4.2   Results of online survey of LIS practitioners' perceived   motivations, barriers and desired supports for writing for academic or professional publications

100 responses were collected, including the 5 pilot responses. These were included as question modification was relatively minor between the pilot and final versions of the survey.

57% of the respondents worked in an academic library and 43% did not.

Initially, the two groups' responses were analysed separately, although subsequently the results were combined as responses were so similar, varying by -11 to 16 per cent between the groups (mean difference 0%). The only difference in order of response popularity was in the four least popular choices on perceived barriers

Of the combined responses, 76% of respondents had already written for publication. All 100 respondents were either interested in writing (81%) or possibly interested (19%) (although one later ticked lack of interest as a barrier).

Of the 54 who specified which type of writing they were interested in, nearly half were interested in writing for both professional and peer reviewed publications. Preference for writing for peer review only was more common among academic library practitioners than non-academic library practitioners but the number of responses favouring this option was considered too small to draw firm conclusions (9 as opposed to 4).

Responses to motivations, barriers and requested supports are shown in Tables 2-4 and described on the following pages.

Motivation	Percentage of respondents (N=100) choosing this option
To share my ideas with others	84
For professional development	78
To raise my profile	47
To publicise my organisation or sector	47
Approached by an editor	23
Other	17
Financial reward	11

Table 2: Practitioners' stated motivations for writing for publication, in decreasing order of preference.

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When the 'other' comments (n=19) were analysed and grouped, these included:

- to add to the body of knowledge

- to improve career prospects or as an obligation of a job

- personal development

- social responsibility

- subject enjoyment

Barrier	Percentage of respondents (N=100) choosing this option
Lack of time	80
More skill needed	30
Lack of confidence	28
Fear of rejection by editors	24
Lack of support or example from peers	19
Other	16
Employer / manager is not supportive	11
Not interested	1

Table 3: Practitioners' stated barriers to writing for publication, in decreasing order of preference.

When the 'other' comments (n=20) were analysed and grouped, these included:

- expectation, within self or manager / organisation, that academics publish while practitioners should get on with their work.

- related to this, having to rely on own resources due to resistance of employer

- lack of suitable subjects or opinions

- procedural uncertainty

- lack of acceptance within the profession of open access collaboration

Support	Relative preference among 99 respondents, in order of perceived helpfulness (1=very helpful, 2=moderately helpful, 3=unhelpful)
Protected time to write	1.28
Peer encouragement	1.42
Written into appraisal	1.68
Online support group	1.94
Tailored course	1.97
List of resources	1.98
Financial reward	2.09
Websites listing your goals publicly	2.47

Table 4: Practitioners' requested supports, in decreasing order of preference.

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When the 'other' comments (n=21) were analysed and grouped, these included:

- reiterating the time requirement

- online peer support

- guidance and support from editors

- guidance on which publications to target

- a topic or article call

- integration of research ethos into work practice

- having a mentor

Lack of an appraisal plan was noted by one respondent.

5 Limitations

This is a relatively small scale piece of work. Given the wish to compare responses from different sectors within the sample, a larger sample size was needed so the decision to use the free version of Survey Monkey (which limited responses to 100) should be reviewed.

Ethical aspects should have been included in the methodology. An explicit statement seeking consent could have enabled direct quotation of respondents' comments, many of which were succinct, insightful and even impassioned. Lack of literature on practitioners writing for publication prompted me to draw on research on the overlapping activity of practitioner research. However, this activity, although related, is not identical to writing for publication.

6 Discussion

The 100 participants in the online survey were LIS practitioners. I aimed to focus on those who carry out a practical job within a profession, rather those who are employed as teachers and researchers by academic or research institutions. My initial plan was to differentiate between the views of professionals who work in academic libraries (who may receive support for publication activity) and those who work in other settings. In practice, negligible difference was found between the views of practitioners working within (57/100) or outside academic libraries (43/100) so all 100 responses were aggregated.

The findings largely confirm previous studies' conclusions for motivations, barriers and support for writing by academic library practitioners. The key motivations of sharing results, professional development and publicity for self and organisation broadly repeated other studies' findings, as did relative lack of interest in financial incentives. Time is consistently reported as the greatest barrier, followed by lack of confidence in skills and processes, and this was confirmed in the present study. Time for writing and peer encouragement were the most requested supports.

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7 Conclusion

This study shows that the stated motivations, perceived barriers and requested supports were broadly similar for those working in and outside academic libraries. Previous UK research on writing for publication has concentrated on those working in academic libraries.

The findings could be used to promote practitioner writing

- by improving self-awareness and preparing practitioners to face challenges in writing for publication

- by validating and benchmarking practitioners own feelings about their motivations, perceived barriers and requested supports

- as evidence to help negotiate supports within organisations

- for wider advocacy of practitioner writing.

There may be scope to build on intrinsic motivations such as desire for professional recognition, and formal 'permission' from the organisation culture via appraisal objectives. The barriers of lack of time, lack of confidence in skills, and need for peer support could be addressed by formal programmes which involve a significant proportion of the workforce.

The topic is interesting and warrants further research, especially to investigate further the reasons behind perceived time pressure at work.

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Open access and copyright

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Appendix 1

Below is a transcript of the survey posted online at
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=budG_2bTzSM3ayB8XwIf07BA_3d_
3d

Writing for publication: exploring motivations, barriers and support for LIS practitioners

Research by Library and Information Science practitioners is important because it builds an evidence base for decisions we take during our work. However, few of us carry out research and get it published.

Your help will be much appreciated to examine what motives and barriers exist, and consider what kind of support is needed to encourage professional and academic publishing by LIS practitioners.

Thank you for participating in this short questionnaire.

1. Do you work for a higher education institution?

     Yes   No

2. Have you ever written for publication, either in professional magazines or peer reviewed journals?

     Yes   No

3. Would you be interested in writing for these kinds of publication in the future?

     Yes   No   Maybe

4. Please explain below if you prefer writing for one publication type to another, e.g. would write for professional press (e.g. CILIP Update) but not peer reviewed journal.

5. If you are interested in writing for publication, what motivates you? (click as many as apply)

To share my ideas with others
To raise my profile
To publicise my organisation or sector
For professional development
Because an editor approached me to write
For financial reward
Other (please enter details in text box below)

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6. If other, please enter details:
7. Tick any of the following that hold you back from writing
(click as many as apply)

Not interested
Lack of time
Employer / manager is not supportive
I don't feel confident to write
More skill would be needed, e.g. in data analysis
Lack of support or example from peers
Fear of rejection by editors
Other (please enter details in text box below)

8. If other, please enter details:

9. How helpful would you find the following types of support?

	Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Not helpful
Peer encouragement at work			
Protected work time to write			
Having it written into your appraisal plan			
A tailored course			
Websites for listing your own goals publicly			
An online support group			
List of resources			
Financial reward			

Any other support suggestions?

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Mobile phone services and UK Higher Education students, what do they want from the library?

Andrew Walsh

Abstract

Student attitudes towards the libraries use of mobile technologies in general, and SMS (text messaging) in particular were investigated using a series of focus groups during Autumn 2009 at the University of Huddersfield. The results suggest that students do not feel that text messaging services would be intrusive or unwelcome and they felt overwhelmingly positive towards services such as overdue reminders direct to their phones. The results also suggest that libraries should concentrate on introducing text messaging based systems initially, with other services likely to be well received only if students can see an obvious and immediate benefit to using them. The research was carried out thanks to the Library and Information Research Group (LIRG) research award, 2009.

1 Introduction

This paper is based on research carried out at the University of Huddersfield, thanks to the Library and Information Research Group (LIRG) Award 2009. Using a series of focus groups at this typical, mid-sized, Post-1992 Higher Education institution with the UK, the research aimed to discover student attitudes towards the potential use of mobile technologies by their University's Library service, particularly, but not exclusively, the use of SMS (text messaging) to deliver services to students. The research was carried out over a short period of time in the Autumn term of the 2009-2010 academic year.

This study primarily used focus groups to examine how readily students would accept mobile friendly services from their library, what services they'd like to see delivered to them via their mobile phones, and whether they would accept contact via SMS as a "default" option, or if they would instead prefer "opt-in" services. Additional supporting information also came from an exit survey of library users.

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Andrew Walsh

Andrew Walsh is a librarian (liaising with Law and Accountancy) at the University of Huddersfield and is interested in mobile learning; web 2.0; and information literacy.

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The institution where the study was carried out had been investigating and piloting some limited mobile friendly services to students over the academic year prior to the study, some of which were used as examples to inform the discussion within focus groups. The intention, however, was not to look at or assess any particular existing services, but to qualitatively examine the attitudes of students at the institution towards potential mobile friendly services.

Although this uses an individual institution as a case study, the conclusions pull together the *attitudes* of the students, rather than particular preferences for individual services. These attitudes are primarily an artefact of the general culture of mobile phone use with the students' wider environment, not their institution. As such the general conclusions are most likely to be applicable across other UK institutions, together with those in other European countries, in Australasia and in North America where mobile usage is directly comparable to the UK.

2 Literature Review

There is increasing interest in the use of mobile learning technologies, including mobile phones, with a mixture of ideas for quite basic phone usage including contacting the library via SMS ("text a librarian"), for example Herman (2007); quizzes via SMS (packages now available commercially, for instance http://www.m-learning.org/products/m-learning-products.htm); podcasting (Berk *et al*., 2007; Ronchetti and Stevovic, 2008); and group discussion via SMS to either web 2.0 services such as Jaiku (http://www.jaiku.com/), moblog (http://moblog.net/home/), or Twitter (http://twitter.com/), or custom web sites such as reported by Sillence and Baber (2004). A range of mobile phone services being developed by libraries are reviewed by Buczynski (2008), showing the increasing interest in taking advantage of mobiles in the library context and many potential usages of text messaging services are outlined by Walsh (2009). Much current research, however, focuses on high end devices that are capable of viewing video, or running small programs to deliver interactive content (especially the Apple i-phone and increasingly the open source Android platform from Google). The literature reviews by Hahn (2008) and Kim *et al.* (2006) make the emphasis on high end devices clear.

Although there are many case studies published in the literature, most focus on the implementation of a technology or service. Many projects have supplied mobile phones or PDAs (personal digital assistants) to trial participants, for instance the ALPS (Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings) project which issued 900 high end mobiles / PDAs to study participants (http://www.hud.ac.uk/hhs/alps/tools.htm). There has therefore been limited study as to the acceptance of students using their own mobile devices in the context of delivery of library services, in particular whether students would see contact initiated from the library via their own mobiles as being intrusive, as opposed to services such as "text a librarian" where the students themselves choose to initiate contact, though Uday Bhaksar and Govindarajulu (2008) report some brief examples of student feedback on using SMS services and Pasanen (2002) describes an early adoption of such services at Helsinki University of Technology.

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There has, however, been research in the commercial sector into contact by companies, particularly promotional contact, with their customers. Some of this can be directly translated into potential uses for our libraries. A recent Finnish study led by Merisavo (2008), found that mobile advertising which recipients perceived to be both useful in regard to context and content was generally well received. Merisavo also looked at issues of control and trust, in other words, do mobile owners feel some sense of intrusion and perhaps powerlessness on account of receiving advertisements from perhaps dubious senders? The study found that as long as messages were perceived as useful, both in relation to information and situation/timing, neither control nor trust were significant factors.

A further, rather more complex study led by Karjaluoto (2008) broadly concurs with some Merisavo's findings, but also brings in "perceived social utility" as an additional driver, or as an extension of the message's usefulness. Another slight difference is that consumer trust, which Merisavo considered relatively unimportant is believed to gradually develop as organisation/consumer interactions increase, and so can "solidify the relationship" thus fostering "mutually beneficial exchange". Also Karjaluoto, drawing upon his earlier 2006 study on demographics (see above), looks at intention in relation to gender, age, education, income, and even household size, and again cites relative youth as increasing the likelihood of a positive predisposition towards mobile marketing. The results from these studies suggest that in libraries, which are normally perceived as a neutral, trustworthy space, are naturally more likely to have text messages seen as acceptable, reinforced in academic libraries, as their key demographics matches those which Karjaluoto found as particularly comfortable with mobile contact in a previous study (Karjaluoto, 2006), that is 16-20 and 21-25 in Karjaluoto's study. The element of "usefulness" is one which we will return to later.

The use of SMS "reminders" is also creeping into education in general, with schools, colleges, and universities experimenting with text messages to remind students about deadlines and more. A study by Jones *et al.* (2008) showed widespread acceptance of text message reminders amongst their students, directly relevant to one possible way libraries may choose to use mobile technologies.

In terms of the potential for libraries to send out messages longer than simple reminders or reservation shelf notices, a cautionary piece of largely French based research has been conducted recently which investigated if and when a saturation point develops beyond which mobile advertising is at best non-efficient or possibly even a source of irritation to recipients (Gauzente *et al.*, 2008). The study found that a complex relationship exists between demographics, how often and for how long people used their mobiles, and the frequency and text length of sent messages, all of which have a bearing as to when this saturation point may be reached. Again though, concurring with the above studies of Karjaluoto and Merisavo, usefulness is the most important factor for SMS adoption.

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3 Methodology

The key questions this study addresses are to do with student attitudes and willingness for the library to intrude upon something that may be seen as a very personal tool, that is, their mobile phone. As such it is preferable to take a qualitative approach to gathering much of the data and give the students a chance to discuss and present their feelings on this topic in their own words.

For the study the researcher primarily used focus groups. These are a good way of exploring feelings and expectations with the population studied, with members able to interact with each other and develop ideas that may not be expressed individually. The limitations include the risk of one or two members dominating a group, or people being reluctant to express opinions contradictory to those already given (so a "group-think mentality can arise). The Library, however, uses focus groups regularly and has a long track record of gathering information to improve its services using such groups, along with corresponding experience of moderating these groups to try and reduce some of the key limitations.

Students were recruited across a range of courses based full or part-time at the main university campus, both undergraduate and taught postgraduate. They were invited to small focus groups, with a prize draw for an iPod Nano acting as a small incentive to encourage attendance, in addition to refreshments during each meeting. Recruitment was through advertising the focus groups and associated prize draw via the Library Twitter account; subject team blogs; plasma screens within the library; and student library inductions across all subject areas. Recruiting students was problematic, as was turning an expressed willingness to attend a focus group into actual attendance. Eighteen students in total attended the focus groups.

Five focus groups were held in the Autumn term of the 2009-2010 academic year. The groups were asked to discuss the idea of library contact via SMS to their own mobiles and to think about the issues that arise with this sort of contact. They were then presented with some possible services along with brief explanations and examples were possible. They were asked to discuss whether they felt each service is interesting and useful to them and their peers. Finally in these focus groups they were asked to rank a list of ten potential mobile friendly services in order of priority for development, with the service they felt as a group to be most useful at number one, and the service they see of least utility at number ten. They were also invited at this stage to suggest other potential developments.

The comments and concerns expressed in the focus group were be grouped and analysed to bring out the key concerns and attitudes to library contact via text message (SMS).

One additional piece of data gathering was carried out, a one day exit survey of the Library. This addressed directly the question. "Would students accept contact via SMS as a "default" option, or would they prefer "opt-in" services?", as it was felt initially that this question lends itself to a quantitative approach where we can easily gather large amounts of data to a simple "either / or" question. The researcher stood in the area immediately past the Library exit and exiting users were asked if they'd be happy the library contacting them by text message using

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the details on their student account, or would they prefer to have the choice to "opt-in" to such a service.

4   Attitudes towards text messaging

Attitudes towards text messaging from the Library are overwhelmingly positive. There were some concerns with the Library using text messaging services, but these were based around whether the messages would be "useful" or promotional. Only one group brought up the issue of the text messages being potentially intrusive with comments such as *"I prefer, I mean, text messages for me are quite personal, they are from friends not institutions…"* and *"I get annoyed if I get a text message from my network, do you know what I mean? I pull out my phone, see what it is and think, was it really necessary for O2 to send this right now".*

Even the group that raised concerns about the potential intrusiveness of text messaging stated that they'd be happy receiving text messages by default as long as the messages were useful, and ranked text messaging services at third and fourth in desirability, out of ten suggested mobile services. This concept of "usefulness" cropped up again and again in the focus groups, with all groups considering it okay to for their university to introduce text message based services for all students (so offering only an opt-out option, not waiting for users to opt-in), as long as the service was perceived as being "useful". Perceptions of "usefulness" varied slightly between the groups, with some concrete examples below:

"Reminders and things like that would be quite useful."

"I personally wouldn't mind receiving notifications and things, because I'd find it useful."

"I received a message from the university reminding me I was working tomorrow and I found that really useful." (from a student employed on a part-time basis by the university)

"If you booked a room and where being told it was free, that would be okay, But if you were texted by IT to say something's down and that happened frequently then you'd get a bit annoyed".

"If you requested a book and it's come in, it saves you from having to, if you don't have access on your phone, it saves you having to find a computer to find out if your book's come in. If you get a text, you'll know you've got it and if you're out and about you can just pop into the library and pick that book up".

"That's stuff you're actively interacting with the library with, so you've requested a book or booked a room rather than the library cold calling you on your time."

All of the groups agreed that the services where they had already chosen to interact with the Library were where they'd most like to see text message contact. These services included loans (e.g. notices about books being due back, or overdue); their requested items becoming available (so they knew to come into the library and pick them up); and room bookings (to remind them their booking was about to start). In general, these are services currently dealt with by email reminders and it may be that common email reminders could be duplicated by text

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message fairly readily by libraries, which could be fairly confident that if the email notices are perceived as useful, then the text messages are likely to be well received.

At the researcher's request, the issue of whether to target all students, or only those who chose to opt-in, was discussed at length. More concerns were expressed about students potentially missing out than concerns over use of mobile numbers by the university. As long as the service was perceived as useful, all the groups strongly felt that it should be introduced for all students by default. There were concerns repeatedly raised over students missing out if they had to choose themselves whether to subscribe to a text messaging service.

"I can see the people that are more likely to forget their library books are those that are also most likely not to opt-in."

"Think that if you do it, it has to be driven by the library itself. If you offer the option to students, then 9 times out of 10 they won't either through forgetting or just not wanting to do it."

"Think it's important that you guys drive it."

Besides the issue of "usefulness", the only other reservation expressed over all students automatically receiving text messages using the numbers harvested from their student records, is that it should be easy to opt-out if required. The opt-out should also be clear and easy to do, with it being made clear to all students that they would receive text messages and why, with instructions on how to stop them.

"...if you could just be like other services and you could text back "stop", then that would be okay."

The exit survey, at first glance, somewhat contradicted the focus groups, with only 46% (n=150) stating they'd be happy the library using existing records to automatically contact all students and 52% saying they'd prefer to have to choose themselves to "opt-in". This reflected the comments made in the focus groups about any contact having to be seen as useful to library users, so it is believed it was too simplistic to ask a simply yes / no question in the exit survey, with the response being tied tightly to whether they could immediately see text messages being of utility to them, without being given the chance to consider examples.

5 General feelings about mobile services and the Library

Some general feelings about using the Library and mobile phones came out of the focus group discussions that were perhaps a little unexpected. They were not initiated by the researcher, but emerged from the general discussions.

- **A perception that you only interact with the library in the library.** Mobile services are often introduced to help busy students who are thought of as being constantly on the move and needing opportunities to interact with services wherever they are, in whatever small amounts of time they have available. We expect that they may want to use mobile library services on public transport on their way to lectures, or in snatched moments between lectures, or while waiting to be served in a supermarket queue. In this research, however, the comments from the participants frequently implied

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they thought the only place that people would be interested in interacting with the library, was from within the library. For "text a librarian" services comments were made by several participants similar to *"…didn't see the point. Obviously there are librarians knocking about all over the place"* and *"if I go to the library and need to ask someone something…"*. These ideas cropped up while discussing several potential services, with a potential text message tips service commented on by on participant *"…personally I'd prefer like an FAQ thing on a piece of paper…"* and another *"…if you had it in leaflet form, in an obvious place, like in the middle of the room…"*. This perception seemed to persist across all the groups to some extent, with a rather unexpected attitude that although we were discussing mobile services, that users would primarily use them only when they choose to come into the library. This may mean that we should be cautious extrapolating some of the results of this research to part-time, distance learning, or collaborative provision students that rarely visit the campus.

- **A reluctance to use the mobile web.** More than half (55%) of focus group participants had accessed email or the general mobile web on their phones, but seemed reluctant to use mobile internet access unless they had a concrete reason for doing so. It was seen as difficult and potentially costly by several participants with comments such as *"depends who's paying for it"* and *"if it's through your phone it can cost a fortune"*. It may be that even as mobile internet access becomes easier and more widespread and costs come down (charges are already normally capped at a fairly low cost per day, even on pay as you go plans), the perception of mobile internet access as costly and difficult may persist for a time.

- **When a potential service manages to meet a perceived need, they are enthusiastic about using it**, immediately contradicting points 1 and 2 above. One particular potential service was mobile search of Library services, with a mobile version of Summon (the search tool for electronic resources) shown. Many of the participants were quite enthusiastic about this potential service, suggesting uses for it outside the library through their own mobile phones, despite previously expressing reluctance towards accessing the mobile web, or for accessing mobile friendly library services in general outside the library building.

- **There was little sense of the desire to explore or experiment with new services.** Some potential services, such as QR codes were described as potentially being useful, even "futuristic", but there was no element within the groups of the desire to experiment or explore these services unless they were already convinced of the services usefulness to them. This is likely to provide a significant barrier to any new service, as we cannot rely on our users to try new services without first persuading them they will find it useful. The very nature of new services, however, means it is hard to do this, we really want them to find out for themselves, allowing us to then fine-tune services and persuade others based on current users.

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6 Potential services

A range of potential mobile phone services, pre-prepared by the researcher, was discussed and demonstrated (where possible) and each focus group discussed their feelings about these potential services, as well as being asked about any other potential services they'd like to see developed. They were also asked, as groups, to rank these potential services in order of priority for development with number one as most desirable. The ranking for each focus groups was combined by simply using the rank for each group as a score and adding them together, the potential service with the lowest score was then ranked first. The overall, combined ranking for the potential services was:

1. Reminders by text (for example for overdue items).

2. Search from a mobile device (to easily search the catalogue or electronic resources)

3. Renewals by text (text a central number to automatically renew all items borrowed)

4. More mobile friendly web pages (to be more accessible from mobile devices)

5. Help by text message (a "text a librarian" service)

6. Tips by text message (a series of text messages to support inductions or information skills)

7. Vodcasts (video materials, but in mobile friendly formats)

8. Podcasts (audio materials easily downloadable to mobile devices)

9. QR codes (codes that can be read using freely available applications on mobile phones and used to link to further information, web resources and contact details, amongst other things.)

10. Bluetooth (to automatically recognise users as they walk through the library and deliver appropriate materials or alerts to their mobile phone)

11. There was one additional suggestion from one group, being able to search one shelf at a time from a mobile device within the library, which they ranked 2nd choice.

The rankings were broken down as shown in Table 1 below:

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	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Overall Ranking
Reminders by text	1	4	1	3	1	1
Search from a mobile device	3	3	6	2	2	2
Renewals by text	2	7	2	4	3	3
More mobile friendly web pages	8	1	5	1	4	4
Help by text message	7	5	3	7	5	5
Tips by text message	6	6	4	8	7	6
Vodcasts	4	10	7	5	6	7
Podcasts	5	9	8	7	8	8
QR codes	9	5	10	6	10	9
Bluetooth	10	11	9	10	9	10
Searching by shelf	x	2	x	x	x	

Table 1: Preference for potential mobile phone services expressed by focus groups (1 = most wanted)

6.1 Reminders by text

This service was by far the most popular, with three out of five of the groups putting it as their first choice. This was the service that was seen to have concrete benefits in all the group discussions and one that most closely matched the sort of service they'd like every student to automatically receive unless they decided to opt-out, with all groups seeing this as being convenient and valuable to all students who use the library. Suggested uses for reminders included when borrowed items were due back, when a requested item was available to be collected, and when a group room the user had booked became available.

6.2 Search from a mobile device

This potential service caused some excitement in the groups, with some unexpected suggestions on how they thought it would be of use. Although the general feeling in the groups was that they were reluctant to connect to the internet via mobile phones, there was an immediate feeling in most groups that they would make an exception for this. The researcher expected that this sort of mobile search may be used when library users were travelling or otherwise have small amounts of time to spare. Some participants reinforced this expectation:

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"I commute a lot and print off a lot of journal articles to read on the train. If I could read them on my phone, that would be really useful – I wouldn't have to print it off and pay for it, as well as it being more accessible."

"you wouldn't have to come all the way here just to see if there was a book in."

However, an unexpected suggestion that came independently from two groups was the use in lectures to look up references immediately when mentioned by the lecturer:

"I'd probably use that quite often in lectures. When a lecturer recommended a book I'd pull out my phone and maybe add it to a list or something to use it later on."

"If you're sitting in a lecture and wanted to see what journals were available later, then it would be useful."

Another, somewhat unexpected suggestion, was its use within the library to save walking the short distances to fixed library catalogues, with several groups stating it would be really convenient to have while browsing the shelves or studying within the library:

"Sometimes, when I'm in the library, if I'm sitting down in the music section, then the library catalogue computers are near, like, the stairs, so to check if there's a book in, like, I'd have to go all the way there, but if I could access it where I am then that would make things a lot easier."

6.3 Renewals by text

This was seen as valuable by all groups and often linked together with "reminders by text" during their discussions. It was narrowly beaten in the group rankings by "search from a mobile device" as there was some suggestions within the groups that it is so easy to renew books already (the university library allows renewals via the catalogue, by phone (voice), using self-service machines, or in person), that it didn't give as much benefit to the user as mobile search would.

6.4 More mobile friendly web pages

Quite realistically, this was discussed at length in various groups as being a necessary precursor to other mobile friendly services. If the Library web pages aren't mobile friendly, then it was seen as pointless to produce other mobile friendly resources as it would be too hard to navigate to them.

"They have to be more mobile friendly before you can do the others."

This seemed to be the key reason for placing this service so highly, not because there was any desire to view the normal Library web pages in mobile friendly formats, but because it was a necessary step for users to be able to find and access some of the other services.

6.5 Help by text message

While the other potential services above were generally seen as positive and often discussed enthusiastically, this service (fifth in the ranking) and below were often

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seen as lacking relevance to library users. While it was generally seen as a good, convenient service, many participants couldn't see why it would be useful. Some illustrative comments were listed above, showing that many students thought of themselves as only wanting to ask questions about the library, or accessing information, whilst in the library. Other comments included:

"If I go into the library and need to ask someone something it's usually more complex than can be answered in a simple text."

There was also a feeling that speed was of the essence when answering text questions, with suggestions of anything up to half a day being acceptable time scales:

"...that's crucial, isn't it? I think 2 hours is unacceptable, more like 5 minutes..."

"...if you texted in the morning and had a reply by midday or whatever, then that would be fast enough to be useful."

All the students in the focus groups come onto the campus regularly, so the lukewarm response to text a librarian type services may be a reflection that they are more likely to ask for help face to face than use other enquiry methods.

6.6 Tips by text message

This "drip feeding" of information by text was generally seen as a service that could be useful.

"That's definitely going to work because a little bit of information over a long period is far more likely to sink in."

"There are some people on my course that have hardly been in the library, if you do make them realise how useful it can be pretty early on, then you're going to put them in a better position, because right at the beginning is when they are likely to try new things, when they've just arrived."

"...for first years, a really good idea."

This was tempered by several people in the groups thinking about only wanting information on the library, while in the library. Hence comments such as the one below, essentially asking for a service we already offer, with short library handbooks displayed across the library:

"If you had it in leaflet form, in an obvious place, like in the middle of the room, you could have sections saying what to do..."

"I'd prefer, like, an FAQ thing on a piece of paper"

These mixed views meant some groups struggled to come to a consensus as to the relevance or priority of this service, with it tending to hover around the middle of the list of priorities.

6.7 Vodcasts and Podcasts

There were some mixed views on these possible services, including some limited concerns over connection charges, *"...coming through a wireless hotspot it's fine, but if it's through your phone it can cost a fortune"*.

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None of the groups could see why they would want to view video or listen to audio from the library, though there was a slight preference towards video, particularly for showing more complex or confusing areas such as research techniques and search skills, potentially as a replacement for library information skills sessions. There was a definite preference to live streaming of content over downloading material across all groups, with comments including:

"I don't know if a lot of people would go through the process of downloading it, they'd want a quick live thing and having to be transferred onto an iPod or whatever, would end up being more hassle than it's actually worth. I think YouTube live streaming is probably a better way of transfer."

"I've streamed a couple of the videos on my laptop, everyone's used to going on YouTube and everything and videos playing, but I probably wouldn't download one."

The issue of only being interested in interacting with the library in the library, was also raised again, with one group concluding that there was no point in watching such materials on their mobile devices as there were "plenty of computers in the library" and they would prefer to watch them on the larger computer screens.

On a positive note, one student said "*if it worked and helped me, I'd use it and show it to all my friends*", bringing us back again to the importance of perceived usefulness for all these services. It seems that is we can persuade students that any of these services would be of concrete use to them, then they will be happy using them.

6.8 QR Codes

All the groups felt that these were too complicated and had too high barriers to use for them to be of widespread use, even though the only barrier is to install a free application onto almost any camera phone. It seems that unless they are convinced in advance of QR codes utility, then they will not install an application to try them.

Some illustrative comments included:

"Why bother?"

"I don't really think enough people can use them ... it's not really going to happen"

"Personally I saw it and didn't know what to do with it".

The only positive comments about QR codes were summed up by one short quote by a student, *"They have potential, but..."*, with no groups feeling they were an accessible and useful enough service to be worth the Library spending time on.

6.9 Bluetooth

Comments about using Bluetooth in any way were overwhelmingly negative, with no students in any group thinking it was an appropriate medium to interact with the library, mainly due to only ever turning Bluetooth on when they want to carry

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out a specific task, such as exchanging information with friends or between devices.

"Most of the people I know never have Bluetooth turned on."

"I only turn it one if I want to exchange information..."

The most succinct comment summing up the feeling about Bluetooth, agreed by all members of a focus group was *"Oh, no, that is horrible"*, suggesting that whatever services were offered using Bluetooth, they were unlikely to have a significant uptake.

7   Conclusion and implications for practice

There are always dangers in generalising results from one small study at an individual institution. However, the conclusions and implications for practice below are drawn from the qualitative data that should be readily transferable to other academic institutions where the context of mobile phone use is similar. This includes institutions across the UK, Europe, North America and Australasia. It is unlikely that the conclusions will be as relevant in areas where current mobile phone availability and use follows significantly different patterns, such as in most developing countries and in certain highly developed countries in Asia (such as Japan). The ordering of preference of individual services may well vary from institution to institution, but the general attitudes towards text messages and mobile web friendly services are likely to remain relatively constant with the general cultural environment of mass mobile phone use.

The students who participated in the focus groups confirmed some of the commercial research into the acceptance of text messaging contact. They were overwhelmingly positive about receiving text message based services from the Library, with the key caveat that they must believe that they are *useful* to them. This was confirmed in discussions about all the possible services, with perceived and obvious utility being the most important factor when deciding if they were interested in a service being developed. There was no sense of being willing to experiment and explore new services so they could discover for themselves which services would be useful.

They were also reluctant to use the mobile web, even when able to do so, though this may change in the near future as accessing the web via mobile phones becomes increasingly mainstream.

The results suggest that libraries considering increasing their services aimed at mobile users should:

a) Initially introduce services that use text messaging, not the mobile web.

b) Concentrate on services that potential users can immediately see benefits for, such as "reminders" of overdue books, rather than services with less obvious, or less mainstream benefits.

c) Make sure that any mobile friendly services are marketed carefully, selecting the groups most likely to benefit from them and directly stressing those benefits to the potential users in any promotional activities.

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This study qualitatively studied student attitudes to mobile friendly library services in general, rather than focussing on individual services being piloted or introduced by a library. This is unusual in the published literature and there is potential for more studies in this area, investigating what students would like developed, rather than whether new or existing services are working. It would also be beneficial to investigate if the current wariness of the mobile web by participants in this study is significantly reducing as smartphones increase their market penetration. Any such studies would help build a consensus towards the sort of mobile services we should be developing based on the attitudes and desires of our users, rather than the preferences of institutions and our funders.

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The Occasion

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LLOYD, Annemaree. *Literacy information landscapes: information literacy in education, workplace and everyday contexts.* **Oxford: Chandos Publishing. 2010.**

200 pages. ISBN 978-1-84334-507-7. £45.00.

As practitioners in information literacy, it is all too easy to become ensconced in our own everyday practice and not think about the broader issues of exactly what it is and its place outside of formal learning. We talk a lot about the Holy Grail of embedding these skills into everyday life but never reach a full and informed consensus across the board. We quibble about definitions on information literacy and worry about where the future of librarianship lies but, Lloyd argues, if we 'continue to impose a library-centric view on the information literacy skills debate, we will find that we continue to lack relevance to the world outside of librarianship'.

This book (a follow on from doctoral research), is aimed at 'information literacy researchers, librarians and educators who are interested in the ways people experience an information environment', Lloyd (Senior Lecturer in the School of Information Studies, Charles Stuart University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia), seeks to expand our thinking and place information literacy, as a catalyst for learning, in the context of a socio-cultural 'meta-practice'; something that is embedded in every part of our lives and is context dependent by the 'landscape' we find ourselves in at the time of need. The landscape may be related to our working lives, education or a particular circumstance such as a health issue, but all have a foundation based on human interaction and have evolved over time to include 'social, historical, political and economic layers'.

Lloyd gives an example from a study of fire fighters (Lloyd-Zantiotis 2004) to highlight this theory: a novice fire fighter will begin by acting out the role as a fire fighter but then goes through the process of being guided by experts, who will coach them and scaffold their development. Coupled with reflection on their experience, this enables the novice to transfer from 'institutionally sanctioned' information towards a 'development of collective competencies' and the ability to 'speak a fire'.

The first part of the book deals with the conceptual orientation the reader will need in order to understand how Lloyd has arrived at her theory of information literacy as meta-practice. It brings together a range of ideas and theories, from the definition of information literacy to discourse on the nature of practice theory and situated learning in context. This chapter draws on academic sources and develops a coherent argument for the broader view of information literacy acting as a catalyst for formal and informal learning but being more than the sum of its parts.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 separate into reviews of the literature and practice taking place in the fields of higher education, the workplace and public libraries respectively (with a small proportion on health literacy), in terms of information literacy. It transpires that HE has had the most activity in research in this area but that the emphasis is on function and individual achievement. Few studies have been carried out on the workplace because of a general lack of knowledge of what information literacy is, exacerbated by the complication that information is not

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only 'explicit and rule bound' but 'tacit and nuanced'. Public libraries have done very little research on the subject as there appears to be a lack of agreed standards or framework to work to and there is some ambiguity on the role of librarians as to their part in the process.

Lloyd ends with a chapter on the potential of an overarching 'conceptual architecture' within society, for information literacy practice, which takes into account broader features such as: context, discourse, 'information modality' and opportunities which the landscape provides, to invite collaboration. One of the advantages to this concept is the added emphasis on knowing both how and why information is constructed as well as how to locate it. Something librarians, come back to time and time again.

The book draws on empirical research in various sectors to create an approach towards information literacy as a holistic practice based around constructivism and the novice in a dynamic environment, leading to the creation of lifelong learners. It requires the reader to fully engage with the wider themes of educational and social theory, which can be challenging when there are few examples to link it to actual physical practice. The review of the literature attempts to cover research on a global level but there is no mention of the work on non-linear information seeking behaviour by Foster (Foster 2004), although his model, encompasses some of the qualities that Lloyd is a proponent of. The author succeeds in her aim of creating a well-structured and coherent case, for a change in the thinking and pedagogy of information literacy as a social construction in a range of landscapes.

'Information literacy landscapes' is a book well worth reading if you wish to lift your head above the minutiae of daily practice and question the notion of what information literacy means in the very 'complex and messy' world of everyday life. It should be used as a tool to remind ourselves, as practitioners, of the bigger picture of the needs of our users.

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NEEDHAM, Gill, ALLY, Mohamed (eds.) *M-libraries: libraries on the move to provide virtual access.* **London: Facet Publishing. 2008.**

280 pages. ISBN – 978 1 85604 648 0. £44.95.

This book comprises a collection of articles based on the 2007 First International M-Libraries Conference. The scope is truly international and reflects the interests of the delegates from 26 countries. The main themes of the book are:

The ubiquity of mobile devices: mobile phone ownership in particular is within reach of most individuals in both urban and remote areas. Typically Net Gens (those born between 1982 and 1991) swap easily between multiple electronic devices, such as mobile phones, MP3 players, digital cameras and laptops.

- Technological advances: larger storage and processing capability on mobile devices makes them more viable while location aware services (GPS) are becoming increasingly available.

- Cloud computing: we are moving from a PC centred, to a network centred computing environment. Many electronic services such as e-mail, messaging, document creation, multimedia storage, presentations and calendar services will be delivered through the cloud.

- User expectations: demands for anywhere anytime access to information is increasing. People on the move are looking for answers to questions rather than looking for specific items such as books or journals.

- Content: changing attention patterns affect mobile usage, services including m-library services have to atomise content into snippets, thumbnails, abstracts or tags. This chunked content can be more easily delivered to mobile devices. Sharing social objects such as photos, movies and music that are available for download, adaptation and mixing with other materials is becoming the norm, thereby personalising the data. User's online behaviour is being analysed and used to rank and recommend material based on shared interests.

The articles are grouped into four parts which address these themes from a variety of perspectives: the changing landscapes in terms of mobile technology and information; mobile technology for development; current initiatives, innovations and challenges of the use of mobile technology in libraries; and current practice, case studies and projects.

It is evident from the book that mobile services that are already being offered include mobile catalogues, library information, reference services and campus directories. A number of libraries are using text messages for renewals and reservations. Libraries are also making and hosting content intended for mobile devices such as podcasts and videos.

A variety of research projects are described in the book, some are advanced although many are only in the early stages of development. Projects to support distance education through m-learning; exploring the potential of delivering information literacy materials; the use of mobile phones to provide administration

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and academic support to teachers; services to support community-based health workers in developing countries; learning English as a second language.

Libraries are investigating the needs of various different users - students, public library users, students working in the field, students on placement. Mobile technology is not just for the young - NetGens and subsequent generations are growing up, and consequently, a highly IT-literate user community is evolving that will expect a library to provide a wide range of services using mobile technologies. Lifelong learning needs to be considered.

The book is fully indexed, and clearly laid out with underlined section headings, which make it easy to home in on particular topics. The references and/or lists of urls at the end of each chapter also provide useful points of departure, while the short biographical summaries of the contributors emphasise the extent of the expertise on offer here.

One of the key messages in this book is that Information Professionals need to manage and create new types of content, tools, services and environments for today's mobile users. Strategic planning must therefore include anywhere anytime access to this content.

Support needs to be provided both in terms of accessing the resources and in using the devices and Information Professionals need training in order to help users utilise using mobile devices.

The overlapping themes and the nature of a collected volume inevitably means that there is some repetition of content. Overall though this book provides a wide ranging and thought provoking survey of contemporary theory and practice in the burgeoning world of m-libraries.

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ALLAN, Barbara. *Supporting Research Students*. **London: Facet Publishing. 2010.**
192 pages. ISBN 978-1-85604-685-5. £44.95

With the increasing profile of the research training agenda, many academic libraries have taken the opportunity to revisit their practices in supporting researchers. Some libraries have a dedicated research support role vested in a single person or small team; others have incorporated research support within liaison librarian portfolios. This book will interest both groups, and especially those who are new to supporting research students.

The book has nine chapters. The first five chapters address the nature of research and research processes, the research student's experience and research skills training; chapters 6 and 7 describe academic libraries' approaches to supporting research students, both face to face and online; and the remaining two chapters discuss research communities and professional development for library and information staff respectively. The author states that individual chapters may be read and used in any order.

The book is well signposted. With a clear description of the book's structure in chapter one, an introduction to each chapter as it starts, and a summary of each chapter at its end, one knows exactly what is there. Chapters are divided into sections of moderate length, each dealing with a different aspect of the topic. Good use is made of bullet pointed lists. Several case studies are used to good effect. These include a study of the types of information source used by students; an example session plan for teaching referencing; a six week training course provided for research students by library staff; and a description of the development of a Virtual Graduate School.

The earlier chapters are informed by the author's recent experience as a research student completing a professional doctorate, and by her discussions with members of both the research community and the library and information professions. This has obviously given her a good understanding of some of the basic issues in research student life. There is recognition of the variety and complexity of the research student experience, although many examples come from the social sciences. These chapters offer a valuable insight into the context of research student support, but the reader is mostly left to make their own connections between the issues discussed and their impact (in practical terms) on the provision of research support services.

Chapters six and seven are the heart of the book. They are stuffed full of useful examples of how research students are being supported in academic libraries. There are lists showing types of support; induction activities; one to one services; online services and targeted support. A self-assessment checklist at the end of chapter six allows the reader to evaluate their own provision and reflect on areas for development. Chapter seven, focused mainly on the University of Hull's virtual graduate school and research environment, takes online provision of research support services to the next level. Incorporating the latest in web 2.0 technology, the virtual graduate school described here enables research students to interact with a range of resources, including blogs, wikis, podcasts and videos,

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and to communicate with their supervisors and each other. Like the earlier chapters, this chapter presents the information and allows the reader to reflect for themselves how this might be applied in their own institution.

Chapter eight cleverly mops up a number of other topics of relevance to supporting research students. Under the umbrella of 'research communities' the author discusses communities of practice and interest; information sharing in academic communities; professional associations; academic conferences and online networking. It is unfortunate that the 'implications for library and information workers' are sidelined to less than one page at the end of the chapter.

The final chapter addresses for professional development for those responsible for research student support. A distinction is drawn between academic research and the investigative workplace project. A list of professional organisations and networks is given. Although CILIP's 'specialist groups' are mentioned, it would have been good to see specific reference to the University, College and Research Group (UC&R) and the Library and Information Research Group (LIRG), both of these groups are active in undertaking or supporting research. The JISCmail LIS-RESEARCHSUPPORT mailing list is another omission.

Overall this book is a good starting point for somebody newly tasked with supporting research students and it has sufficient detail to have some interest to a more experienced librarian. As a practical guide, chapter 6 ticks all the boxes. There are more trivial typographic errors than one normally expects from Facet Publishing (e.g. pages 58, 61, 83, 103, 146, 149 and 174) but these shouldn't detract from the value of the book which fills a useful gap in the literature. I shall be encouraging my colleagues in both the library and our Graduate School to take a look.

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ENGARD, Nicole C. (ed.) *Library mashups.* **London: Facet Publishing, 2009. 334 pages. ISBN 978-1-85604-703-6. £29.95.**

What is a 'Mashup?' Simply put, as the word suggests, you take two (or more) things, and mash them together to make a shiny new thing. In web 2.0 terminology, 'a mashup is a web application that uses content from more than one source to create a single new service displayed in a single graphical interface' (p.3). Web services we use every day may have been enhanced using mashed up technology that we don't notice: the blog that has feeds from other sites you use, say, Twitter and Tumblr; plus bookmarks from your Delicious account, and a slideshow of photographs from Flickr.

The introduction states that the goal of this guide is to outline the basics of what mashups are, and how they have been used in libraries worldwide (though a large proportion of the examples are US based, I guess the UK needs to get mashing!) and in this the book is mostly successful: Having read it I now feel that I know what a mashup is, and how they could be used in a library context to enhance the web services we provide, but whether I'd immediately volunteer to try and build one, I'm not sure, perhaps I'll go and have a play with Yahoo! Pipes, which is a mashing up tool described by Engard in chapter 7, which she promises will 'get us hooked'.

The first section of the book, by necessity, has a lot of terminology to get used to, and there are acronyms galore all the way through (nobody wants to keep writing, or reading, Application Programming Interface when API will do). The tone and language of the book, whilst friendly, assumes that you are familiar with web terminology and if you have a low tolerance for jargon and acronyms, you might feel a little discouraged. Don't give up; there is a lot of creative stuff to discover as you read on. Indeed, as the editor says, don't worry too much about having to remember all the terms: there is a handy glossary which is not only at the back of the book, but can also be found on the companion website: www.mashups.web2learning.net, which is being kept up-to-date with all the links to blog posts, resources and sites that are mentioned in the book, listed alphabetically for each chapter. So should web addresses in the book change or disappear entirely, you can check on the website for the updated version.

Library Mashups is divided into sections: What are mashups? Mashing up library websites; Mashing up catalog data; Maps, pictures and videos… Oh my! and Adding value to your services. The examples, some of which are very detailed, are appropriate to these headings. If you only want to know about adding a video mashup to your site, you could maybe just skip to that section, though I'm not sure this book is the one to go to for a simple 'how to' guide. It is not just a matter of 'here's how to do this cool thing' but: 'this is why we need to do it' and I think the book is all the better for that. There is a need for creating new ways of accessing and sharing our data, moving it into the open and doing things with it, and moving away from the old-fashioned perception of electronic resources that are complicated to access, boring to look at and protected with a multitude of passwords.

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Thomas Brevik of the Royal Norwegian Naval Academy says in chapter 4 Mashing Up With Librarian Knowledge that 'The opportunity to externalize our professional knowledge also provides the chance to be relevant to new generations of information seekers' (p.51), which is one of the key points I take from this book. In other words, what is the point of being a librarian with access to fantastic resources, ready and willing to help, if someone seeking knowledge starts and ends their search at Google because they can't see how to get to anything more?

This book is about how libraries, repositories and similar institutions are responding to the need for new tools to help users access and use their resources. The attitude is that if such tools do not yet exist, then we should build our own – handy in a time when budgets are being cut. 'Dream big, and set your content free', says Jenny Levine, who blogs as the Shifted Librarian, in her foreword (p.xiv). Perhaps we should all just have a go and see what we can create.

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