

Varying Levels of Support Given to Government Documents Departments in Academic Libraries

Documents departments in eighty-eight academic libraries belonging to the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) were surveyed. Data collected on departmental staffing and budget were compared to ARL data for the entire library. Other data collected concerned equipment and the types of publications housed in the department. Bivariate correlation analysis showed no significant correlation between the resources available to the documents department and those of the library as a whole. Suggestions for increasing the visibility of the department are given.

INTRODUCTION

In these times of retrenchment, libraries must find methods to utilize available resources more effectively. For almost 700 academic libraries, one method is to participate in the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) depository system. The congressionally designated libraries in the GPO system can elect to receive any of more than 5,300 categories of publications free of charge. This system, created by Congress in 1895,¹ allows a library to receive as many as 40,000 publications each year from all departments and branches of the U.S. government. These publications cover such diverse topics as gardening information from the Department of Agriculture, technical reports from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and results of investigations into current problems written for congressional committees. Most publications found in an academic library's government publications collection are received

through the GPO system. However, other nations, many intergovernmental organizations, and several state governments have similar depository systems to distribute publications that they produce.

In return for receiving these publications, depository libraries are required to provide resources, such as staff and space, needed to make the information accessible. However, not all libraries provide resources at an adequate level. An advisory committee to the U.S. Congress Joint Committee on Printing, which oversees the GPO depository program, mentions this variation in support.

For example, the Detroit Public Library expends \$325,000 annually to maintain its depository collection. This disparity in financial support for the depository program has created variations in the quantity and quality of service available to citizens because the quality of service is dependent upon local funding levels.²

This article examines varying levels of support given to government publications departments in major academic libraries. The survey attempts (1) to determine which resources are allocated to documents departments, (2) to compare the relationships among available resources, and (3) to compare resources allocated to the documents department in relation to those allocated to the entire library.

Kevin L. Cook is documents librarian at the Dean B. Ellis Library, Arkansas State University, State University, Arkansas. Research was funded by a grant from the University Research Council-Norman Campus, in connection with thesis work at the University of Oklahoma, and the author acknowledges the comments made by thesis committee member Dr. Charles R. McClure and others.

The hypothesis is that there is no significant relationship between the resources available to a library and the resources available to that library's government publications department.

Librarianship has produced relatively little quantitative research, but there has been so little research in documents librarianship that the lack of it was recognized as a serious problem in a National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) report. Moreover, much of the research that has been done has addressed specific procedural issues, rather than policy issues of concern to all libraries.³

Even a basic issue, such as whether to physically integrate or separate government collections from the remainder of the library collection, has been discussed for many years without substantial investigation. Waldo concludes that the "functional problem is the lack of scientific evidence to substantiate the claims of the various approaches" to organizing documents. The debate over organization has been based upon opinion, not upon interpretation of scientific evidence.⁴

DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Academic GPO depository libraries belonging to the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) are examined in this study because many leading academic libraries belong to ARL, and because these major libraries have important collections of government publications. The study defines the *government documents collection* or *documents department* as that system in the library that makes government documents accessible to the public. In some institutions, this could include parts of the acquisitions, cataloging, and serials units—which sometimes process documents—as well as the unit that uses government publications in reference work. *Government publications*, *government documents*, or more simply, *documents*, are defined as those materials integrated into the government publications collection of the library. This broad definition helps allow for varying practices among documents departments.

The study assumes that support for a department can be measured in terms of indicators, such as materials budget or number of librarians working in the department. For

example, a patron using a documents department employing three librarians, one of whom specializes in international documents, may have a different chance of finding a given European Communities publication than would a patron in a department where one librarian is responsible for all government publications.

A second assumption is that documents are worthy of receiving resources from the library. Fry refers to government publications as a "major source of information in practically every field of endeavor."⁵ Government publications are inexpensive to obtain with depository status and are frequently accessible through indexes, thus reducing some cataloging expenses. Government publications are often more current than any other information available and are frequently the only sources for obtaining some types of information. In congressional hearings, for example, one may examine testimony of expert witnesses that could be found in no other sources. Government-sponsored research reports, at the forefront of research in many fields, are often available only in government publications.

Also, this article assumes a documents department in which at least some government publications are housed in, and serviced from, a separate documents collection. Although some libraries have physically integrated documents collections—in which documents are cataloged, classified, and shelved with other library materials—the separate collection is more common and is often recognized as a superior arrangement.⁶

LITERATURE REVIEW

A substantial amount of literature exists that details budgetary problems of libraries. However, little of it discusses the effective utilization of free depository distribution systems as a means of supplementing low materials budgets. Because so few accurate, relevant comments on documents are in the mainstream of general library literature, the problem of ignorance of documents generates more ignorance of documents.

General literature concerning government documents indicates that documents are "discriminated against" and little used.^{7,8} This claim is largely unsubstantiated but is widely accepted. One possible cause of this

could be Nakata's needed "image changes," to reflect documents as sources of current information, rather than being archival in nature.⁹

A survey was used in this study because survey research can give a general profile of a large number of libraries. Surveys use quantitative techniques, thus enabling readers to compare their individual circumstances more concretely, as well as constructing a firmer foundation for subsequent research. Many previous surveys, unlike this survey, have not attempted to test hypotheses, or to validate conclusions by testing statistical significance.

Two surveys related to the problem questioned here are those of Julien and Shearer. Shearer sampled two academic GPO depositories in each state, neither of which were regional depositories nor law or medical libraries. His purpose was to "identify the real state of the art of federal depository collection administration."¹⁰ Shearer's questionnaire, sent to documents departments, consisted of fourteen questions. Of these, eight were yes or no questions, and six were multiple-choice questions. Shearer examined staffing, processing of documents, and departmental relations with the director of the library.

Julien's purpose was "to study existing methods of organizing and administering depository collections."¹¹ She selected thirty-five academic depositories on the basis of size, location, and the length of time the library had been used as a depository. Two open-ended questions were asked, and the remaining thirty-eight were chiefly multiple choice. Staffing, equipment, and procedures were emphasized.

METHODOLOGY

This study differs from the previous two in that it utilized the data gathered to test a hypothesis. Because the population of this study—ARL member academic libraries—is relatively small, the entire population can be examined, eliminating problems of inference and estimates from a sample to a population.

This study also differs from previous studies in that interval data, rather than nominal data, are used. More powerful statistical procedures can be used with data at this level of measurement than with nominal-level data.

The data gathered by the survey questionnaire provided information from documents departments; figures from *ARL Statistics*¹² provided comparable data for the library as a whole.

Data were analyzed using three procedures in the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)*.¹³ The Frequencies procedure was used to obtain a frequency distribution and statistics for twenty-four of the thirty-one variables. The remaining seven variables were measured by data taken from *ARL Statistics*.

To obtain Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for two-variable combinations of the thirty interval-level variables, the Pearson Corr procedure was used. The Crosstabs procedure analyzed the single nominal-level variable, GPO depository status, and paired it with the other variables.

The questionnaire was divided into sections labeled *Resources*, *Equipment*, and *Physical Allocation of Materials* (see appendix 1). These sections were sent to the documents librarians at the ARL libraries included in the study. A pretest sent to four libraries revealed no major weaknesses in the questionnaire. Minor changes were made and the first mailing to the eighty-four remaining libraries followed in early May 1980. Three weeks were allowed for responses; then a follow-up request, containing another copy of the questionnaire, was sent to those persons who had not responded to the first mailing.

A higher response rate would have been desirable, but some libraries may have lacked ready access to some of the necessary information, such as the percentage of documents housed in the documents department, and so declined to respond. Also, several incomplete questionnaires were returned, yet they provided some usable data. These were included in the analysis to obtain maximum benefit from the data, and they account for the varying numbers of responses in the tables.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF DATA

While the questionnaire response rate was lower than expected, an acceptable degree of reliability and validity is likely. Most of the questions in the study were objective and

concrete (such as the number of student hours assigned to the documents department or the number of volumes in the library). Similar questions, such as asking the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) professional, nonprofessional, and student staff, were used to obtain multiple measures of some variables. While there are doubtless other measures of resources that were not used in this study, several measures were taken. The nature of the questions made the responses easy to code, and this coding was checked at various points before the data were analyzed.

Validity of the data is based largely on face validity. Questions were direct and the responses were objective. Knowledgeable people examined the questionnaire and found the questions reasonable.

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS

Questions concerning staffing show the number of student hours assigned weekly to documents departments varied from 0 at one library to 300 in another, as shown in table 1. All responding libraries had at least one FTE nonprofessional staff member working in the documents department. The maximum value reported was ten nonprofessionals at one library. These data are presented in table 2. However, there were fewer professional librarians than nonprofessional staff found in documents departments. Two respondents had no professional staff, and two other departments had less than one FTE. At the other end of the range, two libraries reported

TABLE 1
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR
WEEKLY STUDENT HOURS ASSIGNED
TO THE DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

Hours	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (%)
0-19	10	14.9
20-49	22	32.8
50-79	17	25.4
80-99	8	11.9
100-300	10	14.9
N	67	99.9
Missing	21	23.9

\bar{X} = 60.19
 M_e = 49.80
 M_o = 40.00
 60.00
 s = 50.00
 range = 300.00

that they had seven professional staff. Table 3 presents the frequency distribution for responses to this question.

These frequency distributions indicate that there are large variations in the resources allocated to documents departments. Table 4 illustrates the materials budget allo-

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION
FOR FTE NONPROFESSIONAL
STAFF IN DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

Staff	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (%)
0-2.00	34	50.7
3-5.99	28	41.8
6-10.00	5	7.5
N	67	100.0
Missing	21	23.9

\bar{X} = 2.96
 M_e = 2.55
 M_o = 2.00
 s = 1.86
 range = 9.00

TABLE 3
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION
FOR FTE PROFESSIONAL
STAFF IN DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

Staff	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (%)
0-1.99	29	43.3
2-3.99	29	43.3
4-7.00	9	13.4
N	67	100.0
Missing	21	23.9

\bar{X} = 2.15
 M_e = 1.99
 M_o = 1.00
 s = 1.46
 range = 7.00

TABLE 4
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR DOCUMENTS
DEPARTMENT MATERIALS BUDGET

Budget (\$)	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (%)
0-4,999	13	27.1
5,000-19,999	16	33.3
20,000-178,536	19	39.6
N	48	100.0
Missing	40	45.5

\bar{X} = 25,851.06
 M_e = 12,050.00
 M_o = 5,000.00
 s = 4,895.61
 range = 178,536.00

cated to documents collections. Three libraries had no funds specifically marked for documents collections, while another library had over \$175,000 allocated to its documents department. Next highest were three departments having budgets of \$85,000. There was also wide variation in the amount of space occupied by documents departments. The maximum was 23,000 square feet. These data are summarized in table 5. Table 6 shows data for six different types of microforms equipment located in the documents department. Other equipment in the department is reported in the frequency distribution labeled table 7.

TABLE 5
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR SQUARE
FEET IN DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

Square Feet	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (%)
0-6,999	18	38.3
7,000-13,999	18	38.3
14,000-23,000	11	23.4
N	47	100.0
Missing	41	46.6

\bar{x}	= 9,482.06
M_e	= 9,992.75
M_o	= 5,600.00
	10,000.00
	13,000.00
	15,000.00
s	= 5,787.24
range	= 22,630.00

Data related to the proportion of publications housed in the documents department are presented in table 8. One department reported housing no U.S. GPO depository publications, while eleven had 100 percent of the library's depository publications. Seven departments had none of the library's non-GPO depository publications, while twelve reported holding 100 percent.

The data are quite different for publications from governmental units smaller than states, such as county or local publications. Forty libraries had none of these substate publications in their documents departments, and only one library reported having all substate publications housed in the documents collection. Similarly, twenty-one departments housed no state publications, while one held all of the library's state documents. Foreign national publications were not housed in thirty-five of the departments

that responded, but two departments housed 100 percent of the library's publications falling into this category. Fourteen documents departments contained no publications of international intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), such as the United Nations, but six departments held all of their library's IGO publications.

These frequency distributions demonstrate again the many different ways in which government publications are handled by libraries. In general, U.S. federal publications are housed in documents departments more often than other types of publications.

The year in which the survey libraries were designated GPO depositories is shown in table 9. Dates ranged from 1859 to 1969. In fact, eleven of the ARL libraries did not become GPO depositories until 1960 or later. Sixteen of the libraries are regional GPO depositories (18.2 percent) while the remaining seventy-two (81.8 percent) had selective status.

BIVARIATE CORRELATION ANALYSIS *Regional and Selective Status*

Neither departmental resources, library resources, nor the types of publications received were correlated with the depository status of the library. In other words, a regional GPO depository, with responsibilities beyond those of a selective depository, apparently had no effect on the resources of the library as a whole (including staffing), on the distribution of publications in the library, or on indicators of the resources available to the documents department. Perhaps patterns of handling federal publications were well established by 1962, when the depository law was changed to allow the establishment of regional depositories. Another explanation could be that ARL libraries select a high percentage of documents, making them comparable to regionals in some respects. Nevertheless, regionals have responsibilities, including permanent retention of all publications distributed through the system, interlibrary loan service, and advising other depositories in the area, which place different demands upon those libraries serving as regional depositories. It seems unlikely that regionals could meet these demands if they were supported at the same levels as selective depositories.

TABLE 6
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR MICROFORMS EQUIPMENT IN DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

No. of Units	Microfiche Readers		Microfilm Readers		Microopaque Readers		Microfiche Reader-Printers		Microfilm Reader-Printers		Microopaque Reader-Printers	
	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)
0	7	13.0	28	53.8	27	51.9	44	84.6	47	90.4	47	90.4
1	18	33.3	15	28.8	16	30.8	7	13.5	5	9.6	5	9.6
2	12	22.2	7	13.5	6	11.5	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	6	11.1	2	3.8	2	3.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	2	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5	3	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	5	9.3	0	0.0	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
7	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	54	100.1	52	99.9	52	99.9	52	100.0	52	100.0	52	100.0
Missing	34	38.6	36	40.9	36	40.9	36	40.9	36	40.9	36	40.9
	$\bar{X} = 2.22$		$\bar{X} = 0.67$		$\bar{X} = 0.77$		$\bar{X} = 0.17$		$\bar{X} = 0.10$		$\bar{X} = 0.10$	
	$M_e = 1.67$		$M_e = 0.43$		$M_e = 0.46$		$M_e = 0.09$		$M_e = 0.05$		$M_e = 0.05$	
	$M_o = 1.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$	
	$s = 1.89$		$s = 0.86$		$s = 1.11$		$s = 0.43$		$s = 0.30$		$s = 0.30$	
	range = 7.00		range = 3.00		range = 6.00		range = 2.00		range = 1.00		range = 1.00	

TABLE 7
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR EQUIPMENT IN DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

No. of Units	Photocopier		Cathode Ray Computer Terminal		Printing Computer Terminal		Bibliographic Network Terminal	
	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)
0	45	88.2	47	88.7	48	92.3	46	88.5
1	5	9.8	4	7.5	3	5.8	5	9.6
2	1	2.0	1	1.9	1	1.9	1	1.9
3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	0	0.0	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	51	100.0	53	100.0	52	100.0	52	100.0
Missing	37	42.0	35	39.8	36	40.9	36	40.9
	$\bar{X} = 0.14$		$\bar{X} = 0.23$		$\bar{X} = 0.10$		$\bar{X} = 0.14$	
	$M_e = 0.07$		$M_e = 0.06$		$M_e = 0.04$		$M_e = 0.06$	
	$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$	
	$s = 0.40$		$s = 0.89$		$s = 0.36$		$s = 0.40$	
	range = 2.00		range = 6.00		range = 2.00		range = 2.00	

TABLE 8
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR PROPORTION OF DOCUMENTS IN LIBRARY HOUSED IN THE DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

Documents Housed (%)	U.S. GPO Depository		Other U.S.		Substrate and Local		State		Foreign National		International governmental Organization	
	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)	Absol. Freq.	Adjst. Freq. (%)
0-24	5	7.7	14	22.2	43	69.4	33	54.1	46	73.0	18	30.5
25-49	4	6.2	2	3.2	3	4.8	8	13.1	5	7.9	14	23.7
50-74	5	7.7	2	3.2	1	1.6	1	1.6	2	3.2	1	1.7
75-89	20	30.8	10	15.9	3	4.8	7	11.5	4	6.3	11	18.6
90-100	31	47.7	35	55.6	12	19.4	12	19.7	6	9.5	15	25.4
N	65	100.1	63	100.0	62	100.0	61	100.0	63	99.9	59	99.9
Missing	23	26.1	25	28.4	26	29.5	27	30.7	25	28.4	29	33.0
		$\bar{X} = 79.12$		$\bar{X} = 70.56$		$\bar{X} = 25.84$		$\bar{X} = 34.13$		$\bar{X} = 20.78$		$\bar{X} = 49.24$
		$M_e = 85.00$		$M_e = 89.82$		$M_e = 0.28$		$M_e = 9.67$		$M_e = 0.40$		$M_e = 49.67$
		$M_o = 100.00$		$M_o = 100.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$		$M_o = 0.00$
		$s = 25.12$		$s = 36.73$		$s = 39.36$		$s = 39.50$		$s = 33.72$		$s = 38.53$
		range = 100.00		range = 100.00		range = 100.00		range = 100.00		range = 100.00		range = 100.00

TABLE 9
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR YEAR LIBRARY WAS DESIGNATED A GPO DEPOSITORY

Year	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (%)
Before 1900	30	34.5
1900-1929	34	39.1
1930-Present	23	26.4
N	87	100.0
Missing	1	1.1

$\bar{X} = 1911.10$
 $M_e = 1907.00$
 $M_o = 1907.00$
 $s = 29.25$
 range = 110.00

Documents Department Resources

When comparing the fifteen indicators of documents department resources with each other, sixteen pairs yielded a Pearson's r^2 value greater than .20. Eight of those sixteen with a coefficient of .30 or greater are reported in table 10, which summarizes correlations between the various indicators of resources in documents departments. The number of student hours was moderately correlated to nonprofessional staff and professional staff in the department, and to the number of cathode-ray terminals in the department. Professional staff was correlated with student hours and with nonprofessional staff. Correlations between various kinds of equipment were low, and the practices in different libraries were varied enough to prevent drawing conclusions based on availability of equipment.

Library Resources

It would be reasonable to expect that the more resources a library has, the more resources the library's documents department would have. Table 11, however, shows that this is not true.

Only twelve comparisons of resources yielded r^2 values greater than .20. Of these, five were moderate r^2 values greater than .30. The strongest correlation was between library-materials budgets and the number of professional documents staff. Professional documents staff was also weakly correlated to current serials expenditures. There were two comparisons in which a given resource in the documents department was correlated with that same resource in the library. The

TABLE 11
CORRELATION BETWEEN DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT AND LIBRARY RESOURCES USING r^2

Indicators	Volumes in Library	Current Serials (Number)	Library Materials Budget	Library Indicators Current Serials (Expend.)	Library Prof. Staff	Library Non-Prof. Staff	Library Student Hours
Documents Student Hours							.32 $p < .001$ $N = 67$
Documents Prof. Staff			.40 $p < .001$ $N = 66$.31 $p < .001$ $N = 66$			
Documents Non-Prof. Staff			.33 $p < .001$ $N = 66$				
Documents Materials Budget			.31 $p < .001$ $N = 47$				
Documents Dept. Space Photocopiers Cathode-Ray Terminals							

documents materials budget was correlated to the library-materials budget ($r^2 = .32, p < .001$), and the number of student hours assigned to the department was correlated to the student hours in the library ($r^2 = .32, p < .001$). The number of professionals and nonprofessionals working in the library has no apparent correlation to the number of staff in the documents department.

From this, one could conclude that the staffing in the documents department is quite independent of staffing in other areas of the library, and that factors outside the scope of this study have greater influence on staffing. For example, this study was not able to take into account various means used by individual libraries to process and service documents. Some libraries may use methods less demanding of staff time. Another variable not measured in this study is the staffing of other library departments. Some departments may employ staff members at the expense of other library departments. Implicit in this statement is the concept that some departments may possess greater power than other departments. This possibility was not addressed in this study.

A higher correlation exists between staffing in other parts of the library and the materials budgets. There were r^2 values from .24 to .40 between the number of the three types of documents department staff and the library materials budget. While it appears that there is some relationship between materials budgets and library staffing outside the documents department, there are factors other than the resources available to the library as a whole that determine what resources are available in the documents collection. Materials budgets allocated to other departments may have an effect on the budget of the documents department. Distribution of power in the library could affect resource allocation.

Library staffing, with the exception of student hours, was not related to staffing in the documents department. Similarly, the materials budget allocated to the department was not related to the materials budget of the library. However, the library's materials budget was related to staffing in the documents department. Possibly the materials budget of the library is a better indicator of the library's support than the number of staff. The library's materials budget is sub-

ject to greater variations over time than is the number of staff. During a financially lean year, a library might cut its materials budget as an alternative to dismissing staff members. This may make the library's materials budget a better predictor of the fiscal health of the library, rather than the level at which the library is staffed. It seems unlikely that the lack of relationship between library staffing and documents department staffing is because documents departments are so well staffed. An understaffed documents department cannot function properly. It is possible that such a cycle exists in some documents departments. Patrons may not get satisfactory service because the staff is too busy processing incoming materials; or there may be stacks of unprocessed material because the staff is too busy helping patrons.

Documents departments may contain material from different sources requiring different types of processing, such as state publications and GPO publications. If there are not enough staff members to assign an area of responsibility to each person, or if a few staff members must spread their duties over a large area, there may be no one with expertise in any of the areas. The staff would not have time to obtain in-depth knowledge about any single variety of their publications. While general knowledge is desirable, some degree of specific knowledge about certain materials is often required of the staff.

Types of Publications Housed

The percentage of the library's documents that were housed in the documents department was not correlated to staffing. This would seem to indicate that either servicing a large collection is less demanding than servicing a smaller collection, or that some documents departments operate more efficiently with fewer staff. Individual library practices could account for some of this discrepancy. For example, documents staff may process and catalog documents that are housed elsewhere in the library. Conversely, the library's acquisitions and cataloging departments may process publications that are housed in, and serviced from, the documents department. Decentralization of libraries and the existence of branch libraries or of departmental libraries could possibly affect the proportion of publications which are housed in the documents department. While it

would seem that the size of a collection would be related to its staff, this was not shown to be the case. More needs to be known about processing procedures in such situations.

There was a lack of correlation between publications in the department and the entire library's statistics. This corroborates the earlier finding that the percentage of documents housed in the department is not related to resources, such as staffing, of either the department or the library.

There were, however, some correlations indicating that certain types of publications were more likely to be found together in the documents department. The strongest of these correlations ($r^2 = .71$) was between state, substate, and local documents. A moderate correlation ($r^2 = .46$) was found between U.S. depository and nondepository publications. It appears, then, that state and substate publications tend to be found in the same locations.

Types of publications do not appear to be related to other resources of the collection. Similarly, Richardson et al. found little relationship between staffing of a documents department and the level of bibliographic control of U.S. publications in depository libraries as a whole. Richardson found that "increasing professional staff did not increase the total number or the likelihood of specific access points, except for series access."¹⁴ Richardson concluded that the total number of descriptive access points provided for federal publications in all depository libraries was unrelated to staff size. This suggests that staffing is related to neither publications housed in the department, nor to the bibliographic organization of the publications. Richardson did not examine the amount of use a department receives. This could be an important factor because high use might increase the visibility of the department, which in turn could affect the resources made available to the department.

Thus it appears that the hypothesis, that there is not a significant relationship between the resources available to a library and the resources available to that library's government publications department, must be rejected.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Major decisions made years ago by incum-

bents with certain attitudes may develop into organizational habits not easily changed. One method of overcoming these habits and obtaining additional visibility and improving relations with many librarians would be to participate in a staff exchange program with other departments in the library. Many libraries already require various library personnel to work a few hours per week at a general reference desk or similar service point. Perhaps librarians outside of the documents department would be interested in exchanging some duties with the documents staff. This type of training would offer two major advantages to the documents department.

First, other librarians would become more familiar with the department, its operations, and its needs (the department would be building support in other areas of the library). Second, the documents staff would become more aware of patron needs, and may gain useful information about which types of publications to select. Unless the documents staff member were working at a general public-service point alone, other general reference staff could be learning about documents without coming near the collection.

General reference staff could observe the circumstances under which a patron might be referred to the documents department, and thus become more aware of the information contained in government publications. This type of program could help reduce the fear of government publications, which librarians often have. While public-service exchanges are discussed here, if a similar arrangement exists with the technical services areas, the documents department should be included in those also. For many libraries this would not involve creating a new program, but merely taking advantage of an existing one in order to improve service to patrons and increase awareness of the documents department.

Similarly, a documents librarian could improve contact with other librarians by spending an hour or so each week informally instructing nondocuments librarians in some aspect of government publications. For example, this could be a detailed program or a simple discussion concerning census statistics. At one library, two documents staff members prepared a shelf of materials for general reference librarians to examine in

such a session. The librarians became so interested that the sessions became regularly scheduled. This led to an exchange program as discussed above. Some librarians are insecure about their knowledge of government publications, but are willing to learn about them.

Some depositories need to inform their director about the activities of the documents department. One ARL library director declined to respond to a questionnaire, saying that his library was not a GPO depository.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Since no definitive conclusion can be drawn as to what factors determine the level of resource support a documents department receives, this is an important area for further research. This study has suggested that major factors are not the availability of resources in the library as a whole, or the manner in which documents were housed in the library. Thence the question: What factors contribute toward resource support of the documents department? Research on the budgeting process or on the distribution of power within the library would be relevant to this question.

A related question concerns the effects of staff exchange programs within libraries on support for documents departments. Other means of increasing awareness of the documents departments within libraries should also be investigated and evaluated.

Longitudinal studies might be able to relate changes in levels of support to changes in the environment of the documents collection. Staff changes, additions to facilities, as well as the indicators used in this study should be examined. It would also be possible to compare the support of a documents department at the beginning and at the end of directors' tenures.

Further research should be done to elaborate upon the conclusions of the study, in relation to the level of support given to GPO regional depositories, as opposed to selective

depositories. If there actually is little additional support given to a regional library, does this have an effect on the service the public can obtain from that depository?

More needs to be known about the process of resource allocation to documents departments in academic libraries. This information might also be generalized to other library departments, further increasing its usefulness. This study raises questions about the level of support given to GPO regional depositories. It appears that in ARL libraries, regional depositories are not supported differently from selective depositories. Perhaps most importantly, the output of the documents department and its services to patrons need to be examined. This could result in greater access to government information and more effective operation of government publications departments.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESULTS

Frequency distributions show that among ARL libraries, a relatively homogenous population, there is a vast disparity in the amount of resources allocated to documents departments. Perhaps by establishing this fact, this study may help justify the receipt of greater resource support. The resources given to the documents department did not appear to be correlated to the resources that were available to the entire library. While the library-materials budget was correlated to documents staff, there was only a moderate correlation between the library-materials budget and the budget in the documents department. Another finding was that regional GPO depositories in academic libraries seem to be supported at the same level as selective GPO depositories.

This study may have raised more questions than it answered, yet it serves as a starting point for future research related to resources allocation and the development of a conceptual framework to examine factors that affect resource allocation for government documents departments.

REFERENCES

1. U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on Printing, *Government Depository Libraries* (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Print. Off., 1979), p.5.
2. U.S. Congress, Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Revision of Title 44, *Federal Government*

Printing and Publishing: Policy Issues, Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Revision of Title 44 to the Joint Committee on Printing (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Print. Off., 1979), p.45.

3. U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, *Government Publications: Their Role in the National Program for Library and Information Services* (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Print. Off., 1978), p.vii.
4. Michael Waldo, "An Historical Look at the Debate Over How to Organize Federal Government Documents in Depository Libraries," *Government Publications Review* 4:328 (1977).
5. NCLIS, *Government Publications*, p.1.
6. John E. Pemberton, "Guest Editorial: Bibliographic Control of Official Publications," *Government Publications Review* 4:209-14 (1977).
7. Kathy Schneider, "Document Discrimination," *Wisconsin Library Bulletin* 73:189 (July-Aug. 1977).
8. Christine Britten, "What Do You Do with Them? Put Your Documents Where the Service Is," *Wisconsin Library Bulletin* 73:32-33 (Jan.-Feb. 1977).
9. Yuri Nakata, "Toward a New Image: A Look at Federal Depository Libraries," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 48:568-71 (March 1974).
10. Benjamin Shearer, "Federal Depository Libraries on the Campus: Practices and Prospects," *Government Publications Review* 4:209 (1977).
11. Jane A. Julien, "The Organization and Administration of U.S. Government Publications in Selected University Depository Libraries: A Survey" (Educational specialist research paper, Northern Arizona Univ., 1974), p.4.
12. Carol A. Mandel and Mary P. Johnson, comps., *ARL Statistics 1978-79*, (Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, 1979).
13. Norman H. Nie, *SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (2d ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).
14. John V. Richardson and others, "Bibliographic Organization of U.S. Federal Depository Collections," *Government Publications Review* 7A:475 (1980).

APPENDIX I: LIBRARY RESOURCES QUESTIONNAIRE

Please include any clarification or comments on the reverse side of the questionnaire.

I. RESOURCES

Please complete items 1 through 5 using the same definitions of terms you would use in completing an Association of Research Libraries statistical report.

1. How many student hours per week were allocated to the documents department in 1978-79? _____ Average Student Hours Per Week.
2. How many non-student, non-professional staff were working predominantly in the documents department in 1978-79? _____ Full-Time Equivalent Non-Professional Staff.
3. How many professional librarians worked predominantly with documents in 1978-79? _____ Full-Time Equivalent Professional Librarians.
4. What was the total materials budget available to the documents department for purchase of documents and related materials excluding equipment and supplies in 1978-79? _____ Materials Budget in Dollars.
5. How many square feet are dedicated to storage, reference, and work areas for government documents? _____ Estimated Total Square Feet.

II. EQUIPMENT

How many pieces of the following types of equipment have been purchased at the request of the documents department for its use?

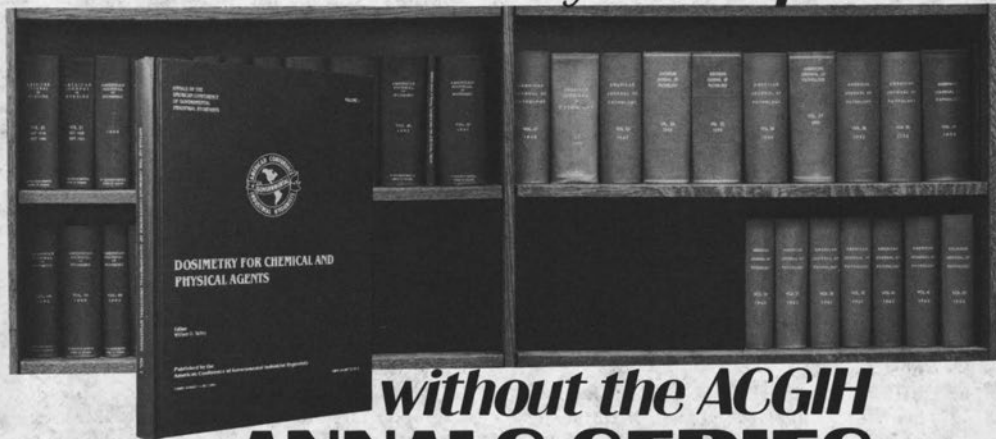
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| ___ Microfiche Reader(s) | ___ Microfiche Reader-Printer(s) |
| ___ Microfilm Reader(s) | ___ Microfilm Reader-Printer(s) |
| ___ Micro-opaque Reader(s) | ___ Micro-opaque Reader-Printer(s) |
| ___ Photocopier(s) | ___ OCLC (or similar bibliographic network) |
| ___ Cathode-Ray Computer Terminal(s) | ___ Terminal(s) |
| | ___ Printing Computer Terminal(s) |

III. PHYSICAL ALLOCATION OF MATERIALS

What percent of each of the following types of documents collected by your library are housed in the documents department? (EXAMPLE: If *all* your library's government documents from *all* of the following categories are in the documents department, each category would have the answer 100 percent.)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ___ U.S. GPO Depository Documents | ___ Documents from States |
| ___ Other U.S. Documents | ___ Foreign National Documents |
| ___ Sub-State and Local Documents | ___ International Intergovernmental Organization Documents |

No reference library is complete...



without the ACGIH
ANNALS SERIES

ACGIH's ANNALS SERIES, hard-bound library quality books, present the latest state-of-the-art information available on subjects of current importance to occupational safety and health professionals.

Volume 2: Agricultural Respiratory Hazards

details agents and metabolites that affect man, the workplace and agricultural environment; infectious and immunologic agents from livestock and farm structures; dusts and allergic response; respiratory response and control of grain dusts. 220 pages. Price: \$60.00.

Also Available

Volume 1: Dosimetry for Chemical and Physical Agents—includes an overview of chemical and physical aspects; monitoring and reporting to meet regulatory requirements; passive monitors; physical agents; and, instrumentation. 351 pages. Price \$90.00.

Volume 3: Protection of the Sensitive Worker—This volume is an in-depth toxicological review. **Protection of the Sensitive Worker** defines and recognizes the sensitive individual; occupational exposure limits; employer-employee relations; legal and ethical issues. Approx. 260 pages. Price \$75.00.

Available Soon

Volume 4: Transactions of 1982 Meeting

Volume 5: A Look at the Field of Industrial Hygiene—Past, Present, Future



The Source for technical reference literature

American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists
Dept. K, 6500 Glenway Ave., Bldg. D-5, Cincinnati, OH 45211 (513) 661-7881
library discounts offered • subscription agency inquiries invited