Liaison between Librarians and Lecturers Regarding Information Literacy: A Case Study of Some Academic Libraries

This research looked at the liaison between the library information professionals and academic staff of academic institutions stressing the aspect of information literacy. The general aims of this research were to emphasize the importance of training in information literacy in higher education, for students, academic staff and library staff and to stress that essential collaboration between librarians and faculty staff is basic for successful results. The research method used to collect data was the interview. Interviews were conducted with both librarians and lecturers at Thames Valley University and at some colleges of the University of London.

Keywords: information literacy, academics, library information professionals, liaison.

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Vinculación entre bibliotecarios y profesores universitarios en cuanto a competencias en información: estudio de algunas bibliotecas universitarias

Este estudio se centra en la relación entre bibliotecarios y profesores universitarios de algunas instituciones académicas concentrándose en el aspecto de las competencias en información. Los puntos principales de este estudio han sido enfatizar la importancia de la enseñanza y práctica de la búsqueda bibliográfica para estudiantes, profesores y bibliotecarios en el ambiente académico, y subrayar la necesidad de una colaboración estrecha entre bibliotecarios y profesores para un funcionamiento con éxito de las instituciones. El método de investigación utilizado para la recogida de datos ha

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sido la entrevista, dirigida a profesores y bibliotecarios de Thames Valley University y algunos "colleges" de la Universidad de Londres.

Palabras clave: Competencias en información, profesores universitarios, bibliotecarios, relación interprofesional.

1. Introducción. Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to stress out the importance of a liaison between library information professionals and academics for a good running of the academic institutions; this was done by looking at the working relationship between faculty and librarians concerning information literacy in some different British universities, their use of the library services, and therefore its impact on the delivery of the lectures and on the students.

The academic institutions of this research were selected and used as case studies because of their differences in background, academic status, courses offered, scope of their library services, resources, and their target groups in terms of the people they provide services for: whilst Thames Valley University helps people who may not have a traditional University entrance requirements and orientates them towards a suitable higher education course, some of the Colleges at University of London are very selective with their student intake.

Some librarians at Senate House were also interviewed to provide with a more globalised vision due to the fact that it deals with the whole set of Colleges belonging to the University of London and it is also a National Library, so its scope and therefore its awareness of the matter is broader.

Table 1.
Library facts and figures of the chosen institutions

	Thames Valley University	King's College	Birkbeck College	University College London	London School of Economics	Senate House
Year of the University foundation	1992	1829	1823	1826	1895	1838 actively developed from 1870
Number of sites	6	5	1	19	1	1
Number of students per year	Around 50,000	Around 19,500	Around 19,000	Around 19,000	Around 10,000	Over 32,000 registered users
Number of external users	––	Around 1,000	––	Around 4,000	Around 12,000	––

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Table 1. (continuación)
Library facts and figures of the chosen institutions

	Thames Valley University	King's College	Birkbeck College	University College London	London School of Economics	Senate House
PCs equipment	Over 500	1,500	––	Over 250	450 and 200 laptop drop-in points	50 and some laptop points
Collections	Over 270,000	Over 1.000,000 (15,000 added each year)	Over 360,000	Over 2.000,000	Over 4.000,000	Over 2.000,00
Number of electronic journals	Around 100	Around 3,500	Over 20,000	Approx. 10,500	Around 20,000	––

2. In Lformation Literacy in the Society and in the Academic World

According to the American Library Association (2000), information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information".

The library used to be always the heart of the university. Since the internet revolution it has become somewhat neglected and relegated to a lower position not only by students but by lecturers and researchers. Research skills, essential in an academic world are being abandoned.

Information literacy provides students with all the necessary skills to help them to carry out their assignments, projects, research and thesis-writing in a competent and successful way.

But many students do not even know how to use or access these resources, and what is even more worrying is that quite a lot of students finish their degree without having used them at all.

Even with academics it is found that when they have an information need and do not have the necessary skills to solve it, they turn to the use of the free search engines such as Google or websites such as Wikipedia among others, because it is easier and quicker, instead

of referring to the library information professionals to ask for help or training.

These sources of information are not reliable, their authenticity and accuracy is not assured due to the fact that there is no filter, and everything comes up, academic and non-academic articles that have not been revised by competent academic authorities. People do not have the patience, and sometimes enough knowledge, to sort out the relevant from the non relevant information and they just use the first set of items.

The Pennsylvania Library Association held a debate on the relationship between libraries and Google at its annual conference on 2004, some of the interviewees said:

"Academic librarians must help our students understand that taking the results of a poorly thought-out, simplistic search that yields far too much irrelevant and questionable content and then wrapping it in a professional-looking clear plastic binder is no way to access the path that will lead to lifelong learning and success […]. Setting high standards, assessing the learning methods we use to achieve them, and evaluating the effectiveness of our efforts is hard work" (Kenney, 2004, p. 46).

"Googlizers will tell you that our students will do just fine with results that are good enough. At my institute we aspire to lofty learning outcomes for our students. Our faculty members haven't lowered their standards. As academic librarians, we shouldn't lower ours. We should maintain that just good enough isn't acceptable" (Kenney, 2004, p. 45).

Bawden and Brophy (2005), in their study *Is Google enough? Comparison of an internet search engine with academic library resources* came to the following conclusions: "The library databases are superior for quality of results [….], improving the skills of the searcher is likely to give better results from the library systems, but not from Google" (p. 510).

The role of library information professionals has considerably changed during the last two decades especially due to the introduction of the new technologies and the way information is acquired, handled, organised and delivered. Their role is coming closer to the area of teaching. They have to help academics, researchers and students to formulate research strategies, to identify the information sources and different methods of accessing these resources. Many library information professionals now have a degree in another speciality which is very helpful when assigning posts for subject or specialised librarians so that they can have a background in the area they are working with and it is easier to make a connection with the public they are addressing.

One of the main jobs of the library information professionals is to find the best method to integrate the teaching of traditional print material with newer electronic resources and to run information literacy programmes to support and help academics, researchers and students to make the most of their research, courses and of their time at University in relation to academic purposes.

In most institutions at the beginning of the academic year, apart from the introductory sessions for new students, some information literacy sessions take place in the library about the best use of the resources available for the specific module. This is a great opportunity for library information professionals not only to establish contact, and the beginning of a working relationship, with lecturers as well as students but to make them both realise how valuable library information professionals can be.

As Winner (1998) remarks:

"There is still no widespread acceptance of the librarian's role in curriculum planning and course-integrated instruction.
Teaching faculties are appreciative of the support given by librarians; however, librarians are not universally recognized as playing an integral role in course planning and teaching" (p. 25).

According to her, success will come when the collaboration between librarians and faculty involves the incorporation of the library into all elements of curricula planning.

Information literacy should be taught, not just as an introductory session for newly arrived undergraduates, but as part of the curriculum for every course, so students could be able to develop research and critical skills, which apart from saving a lot of time will result in satisfactory academic performance but it will also have repercussions on the development of their future professional as well as personal career.

As Grafstein (2002) states:

The teaching of information literacy "involves equipping them with both knowledge about the subject-specific content and research practices of particular disciplines, as well as the broader, process based principles of research and information retrieval that apply generally across disciplines" (p. 197). For her, information literacy leads to an independent way of thinking and reasoning about disciplines.

It is for this reason that sessions on information literacy are very important. The first thing is to make academics aware of this, because they are the ones who are going to have an influence on the students; they are the ones students listen to, rather than librarians. If lecturers get to know about the importance of this matter and take it seriously, students will be enabled to improve the quality of their work, and the academics themselves will produce better and more efficient research.

The ideal would be for academic staff to incorporate information literacy into their teaching so that students are able to find, evaluate, deal with and make use of information from a range of sources according to their information needs, at all levels of education.

As a way of approaching this goal many Universities have incorporated an Academic Faculty or Library Liaison programme to offer a link between the library and the academic community and to give a boost to the image of the library. As Ryans, Suresh and Zhang (1995) mention in their article: "Assigning librarians to work with specific departments in a systematic and structured way creates a channel of communication that allows the faculty's

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needs to be understood by the library and the library to be interpreted to the faculty" (p. 14).

Library information professionals' are expected to carry out the entire job regarding information literacy as part of their duties, including, when it has been established, the teaching of information literacy skills. But apart from that their skills in learning and teaching are much more limited compared to that of academic staff, another difficulty to face is that a simple lecture of information literacy is not enough to develop the necessary skills among students, these skills need to be supported and built up by the lecturer during the length of each specific module in the academic year. This will be ideal, because the influence and relation of library information professionals with students is not going to be the same as that of the lecturers with the students; but the problem comes when academics do not have enough information literacy skills themselves, so they are unable to teach them. Often academics are not aware of the importance, or need, of having information literacy skills themselves.

According to Johnston and Webber (2003):

"In a conference discussion about who should be teaching information literacy, speakers questioned whether many academics actually were that good at (or interested in) teaching, and commented that academics "often do not have any information skills themselves and have little idea how to teach them" (Powis, 2000, p. 79)" (p. 343).

Many lecturers nowadays think that they have the enough information literacy skills to cover their information needs and are not interested in updating or extending those skills, even though when they admit that looking for information is a daily activity. This is sometimes due to lack of time, others because they do not want to show their lack of competence. The worst is when they do not see information literacy as an ordinary part of preparation for students when they have to write dissertations or theses. There is a need to make lecturers aware of the consequences and magnitude of being Information Literate and of seeing information seeking as part of the learning process not only for themselves and their own benefit but so they could transmit this awareness to their students. In order to do all this, it is fundamental that collaboration between library information professionals and academics will be built, so academics have a knowledge of the library services which is not limited to lending books and journals. library information professionals have the great challenge of making "friends" with academics, with spontaneous and informal meetings, so they can make academics realise that they are not alone or the only ones in the task of producing and spreading knowledge, but they can rely on the support of library information professionals.

The ACRL (American Library Association) (2000; 2001) offers a set of best practice characteristics which underline the importance of integrating instruction on information literacy all through the entire academic career at the same time as it suggests methods for the evaluation of information literacy programmes.

3. Liaison between Library Information Professionals –Subject Librarians– and Academic Staff

It is important to realize that this is not a matter in which all the responsibility should fall only on the librarians, it concerns and has an effect on all disciplines. As Grafstein (2002), Reference Librarian and Circulation Coordination at College of Staten Island in New York, mentions in her article, information literacy should not be limited to the library, but be taught and shared throughout the academic institution. Librarians and lecturers have a complementary role and responsibility in teaching information literacy. Collaboration is essential to make sure that information literacy skills are set in the university curriculum at every level, but first among the academic staff, and in every academic course. What is clear is that if the teachers use the library, it will have an impact on more students using it (p. 202).

Liaison between library information professionals and academic staff is essential for the good running of the higher education institution and the successful work and learning of students with productive assessments. The key part of the liaison concerns library information professionals, and more specifically what are called subject librarians. They are the ones who have to make a greater effort and the ones who have a major interest in making the collection, products, resources and the image of the library known, especially of what is related to its subject area. One of the most important and basic things within an academic liaison programme is communication between the two parts, subject librarians and academics, so they can help and understand each other, making working together easier. Formal and informal situations of communication, exchange of information where subject librarians keep up contact with different departments are essential and cooperation between them leads to a successful running of the library and in consequence to properly information literate lecturers, researchers and students.

Some suggestions to improve closer professional relationship between the library and the different departments of the university are recommended by Cunningham and Lanning (2002) in their paper *New frontier trail guides: faculty-librarian collaboration on information literacy:* improving and broadening the relation with academics, attending to department meetings, offering workshops in which subject librarians introduce the products, database update and search tools of the library and teach academics how to integrate information literacy into coursework. It is very interesting to mention one successful story that they met when introducing these techniques at Southern Utah University, USA: The collection specialist for art met with the art faculty to discuss their collection needs and he had also taken some art classes. Hence, he had established a positive relationship with the art department, and when he invited the art department for an update on library databases and other resources, the chair decided to dedicate an entire department meeting to the topic, and to hold the meeting in the library. After the training session, the librarian took the art faculty on a tour of the library. A ceramics professor was amazed to learn of the library's collection of native American pottery

that is not on public display. The result of the meeting was an increase in the awareness of art faculty about the wide variety of art resources available on the campus (cf. Cunningham and Lanning, 2002, p. 346).

As can be seen it is crucially important that subject librarians have some subject knowledge of the area they are in charge, as well as an up-to-date and in-depth knowledge of the specific subject related resources available to facilitate relations with academic staff.

4. Research Study –Research Methods and Population Sample

Data was collected from library information professionals and lecturers working at both academic institutions using Interviews research methods to identify and assess their professional relationships regarding information literacy. Interviews were held at Thames Valley University and different colleges of the University of London in the months of July, August and September 2007. The interviews were carried out in a structured format and the questions were made so as to encourage informal discussion and a climax of relaxation in the two targeted groups on the part of both the interviewer and interviewee.

The population sample that this study aims to research was, on one hand, eighteen library information professionals distributed between the two academic institutions, nine at Thames Valley University and nine distributed along the different colleges chosen at the University of London and its main library site, Senate House; on the other hand, eighteen lecturers distributed in the same way, nine at Thames Valley University and nine among the different colleges chosen at the University of London. The library information professionals were all subject librarians who together with the lecturers were chosen to cover a wide range of specialities, from Sciences to Humanities as well as from a varied and different mixed age group. Eighteen subject librarians and eighteen lecturers equally distributed along the chosen institutions were thought to be a selective and fair number to cover a range of different responses. Most of the candidates chosen responded positively when asked to give an interview; although it is fair to say that few lecturers showed a little bit of reluctance to be interviewed because of their lack of time. When that was the case, another candidate was chosen as a replacement.

5. Analysis and Findings from the Interviews

All the tape recordings and notes taken were examined and analysed. Qualitative data from the questions of the interviews, together with quantitative data from the answers were codified and compared according to the way professional relationships and liaison between library information professionals and academic staff was carried put at both institutions.

Some of the most relevant answers are exposed below:

5.1. Regarding communication and liaison

Five subject librarians at University of London agreed in that lecturers were in general accessible to talk to but not always easily available. One of them complained that they do

not respond sometimes to emails or do not reply to surveys, whereas another one affirmed that they always replied quite quickly to emails, but it did not work out in the same way with the telephone or face to face.

Two subject librarians said that on the whole, lecturers were both easily available and accessible to talk to and responded well. All the subject librarians at Thames Valley University argued that academics were not either available or accessible due to the time factor (time constraints), assuming that they were very busy, which made it difficult for them to establish communication and keep up contacts. Of the subject librarians at University of London only four of them mentioned time as an obstacle.

All the subject librarians agreed that liaison depends on the lecturers: with some of them it works very well and they respond very positively, but with other the liaison does not work very well, –subject librarians have to put a great effort trying to trace them and they ignored them. Quoting a very graphic sentence from one of the subject librarians at Senate House: "You can take the horses to water but you cannot make them drink".

Five subject librarians commented on the fact that one of the things that give library information professionals, and more specifically, subject librarians, great satisfaction is when students knock at their doors and ask for help because some professors told them that the librarian in this place is very friendly and he/she can help you.

One subject librarian mentioned as well that some lecturers encourage librarians to go into their lessons and talk about specific learning resources, as a practical element of the course. Librarians appreciate that there are too many students at the University and they do not have time to do that with all of them as part of the induction tour, and other lecturers are not keen on giving their lecture time for that purpose. Two subject librarians also commented on how reassuring it is when lecturers are aware of the not always very positive effect of Google and tried to get students to realise this, in the sense that they should look at it with a different point of view. Then they promote the library resources being a big support for the library and the library information professionals. The subject librarians also suggested that it is important to start liaison with lecturers with whom the library information professionals get on well in the department, so it would have a good impact on their students and the other lecturers of the department, and liaison could be established with them afterwards as a result.

Five subject librarians said that lecturers did not go to the library but encouraged students to go; one said that some lecturers appreciate the job of the librarians and involve them with students more than others.

Two of them said that lecturers were very busy but if the subject librarian contacts them they respond. One subject librarian complained about some lecturers using Google rather than the library, saying that these lecturers do not even know what is in the library, so therefore their students do the same. Two other subject librarians talked again about the problem of lecturers not updating module study guides or lists. One subject librarian

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pointed out as well that lecturers only contact librarians when they have problems or they cannot find something but not for any other reason.

In general, library information professionals from the University of London found lecturers responding better to the liaison with subject librarians than those at Thames Valley University. Only two of the lectures interviewed knew something about academic liaison programme, one of them claimed to have some awareness but not much.

Seven of the lectures supposed it was something to do with subject librarians and academics. Nine lecturers admitted having no idea of what liaison programme meant. Just two of the lecturers interviewed talked about responsibilities with the library, but merely said that they needed to update and revise module study guides and return them to the library at the end of each academic year, and to make arrangements about the journal subscriptions.

It was very interesting to note the comment of one lecturer who stated that librarians know the difficulties students have better than the lecturers. For her, cooperation between librarians and lecturers has a very good impact on students because they will be well directed, with good bibliographical advice; if they follow the references of the librarian, they will end up with very good results in their assignments.

Two lecturers commented that sometimes students complained they cannot find books or material for their assignments and essays, so cooperation between librarians and lecturers will be good, although for academics it is more difficult to manage their time. They could see a lot of difference in the results of the essays and assignments of students, who have looked at many resources and found out useful information, and those who did not do anything, and they admitted that sometimes it could happen because of lack of information. Some students do not know where to look and how to find the information they need, so they get poor results.

Six lecturers complained about students using Wikipedia and other URLs that were not academic sources, from which the quality of the literature reviews suffers. When students use good academic source materials it is noticeable that the quality of the work increases. They thought that liaison between academics and the library could be better, but they also admitted that it is very difficult for academics to have time for everything, and they prefer the librarian to contact them.

One lecturer saw the liaison between lecturers and academics as being definitely for the benefit of the students, but he specified that it was difficult to know what "good use" of the library really is.

One lecturer commented that liaison had an impact on students, and she went on to say that she depends on her subject librarian for her students doing their projects, and because her subject librarian has been there for a long time it is easier and library can also prepare it in advance with more time and experience. She also mentioned that some students were

very lazy, but one could notice the students who have done their own research.

Another lecturer complained also about the time factor when talking about liaison and said that it was a matter of priorities, although she also commented that she notices a difference in the students' assignments, from the ones that have been lazy or have copied everything from some web pages to the ones who have taken the trouble to consult different sources and books.

Two lecturers showed an interest in the liaison between librarians and lecturers admitting that there needs to be more contact, and one of them even suggested having a weekend course together, the lecturers of the department and librarians of their subject areas. They also said that they see a lot of differences in the students' assignments because of the references they used.

Four lecturers mentioned that it is important for lecturers to liaise with the library and for students to engage with the library because they have to study a lot, lecturers provide the tools but after that students need to prove their capacity, they have to know what they do not know and they need to look for more information and work out where to find it. Students have to become professionals of their own.

5.2. Regarding lecturers engaging students in information literacy

One of the lecturers said he knew there are training sessions run by IT Services and subject librarian linked to assigned tasks from an early stage in the undergraduate curriculum. Five lecturers said that when students had to do projects and research, the first thing that they have to do is a literature research, get passwords for the library and some literary searches of the core publications in the subject area. One lecturer commented that having to look up information encourages students to retrieve information and discover relevant academic sources. Three lecturers admitted clearly that they do nothing regarding information literacy because their subjects were more practical, these were lecturers of Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science and Physics. Two other lecturers said that they expected students to know how to use online research already, because they taught at postgraduate level. One lecturer said that through the assignments that she asks students to do, or other projects objectives, she refers students to the library or to online databases. Another subject librarian of the business area remarked that she asks students to extract information from some market reports, but it is very difficult for students to know where the information comes from, sometimes they know only the information relevant for the assignment, but they still need to look for that information to do the assignment. Three lecturers said that at the beginning of the academic year, they have an induction session from the learning resources unit on how to access the resources they need for the subject. One lecturer said they have an optional module on how to retrieve information, indexing, etc. which is a framework to give students the opportunity to construct information searches.

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5.3. Regarding dedicating some of the lecture time for information literacy skills sessions

Five lecturers said that they already do it. Especially at the beginning of the academic year, they have some induction sessions when subject librarians go into their lectures and show and teach students how to access electronic sources of the library for the specific modules. One lecturer suggested she would prefer one to one sessions more than in the lecture time, so questions could be asked and responded to in more detail and according to the different cases.

One lecturer who taught in Computer Science commented that there is software on the computer, so they do not need to use the library for anything, they do not use anything that is not on Internet. Two lecturers remarked that they would like to have more support for the students on how to write reports, essays, assignments, etc. and they saw the importance and need of information literacy.

Another lecturer said that she would not like to have information literacy sessions during her lessons, although she thought it could be interesting to have them in the degree course and that it would be a matter to discuss with the tutor responsible. Two lecturers commented that they would not see the importance of it for their subjects, and do not think it was necessary.

Six lecturers admitted that it was an interesting and good idea and they could think about it and discuss it with the library staff, and they were very keen on giving some time of their lectures, especially when students are given the assignments.

Only two of the lecturers interviewed would not mind teaching some information literacy sessions themselves during their lectures. One lecturer said that she would like to do it, but first she would like to see the expert doing it or to have some training from the experts. Four lecturers admitted that they would prefer the librarian to do it, but they would be present.

Eight lecturers thought that information literacy sessions were important, interesting and useful but they do not have time for those things, they had a lot of material to cover and very interestingly they admitted that they were not skilled enough to do it themselves. One lecturer said that he already does it at the beginning of the course.

Two lecturers said they do not think it was very important for their courses. One lecturer said that he has done it in the past, but now had far too many things to do, so he prefers others to do it when possible. Generally, for the past several years in his department they have been able to enlist the IT services and/or the library to run sessions, etc.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Although many improvements have been made regarding liaison with academics, there is still a lot to be done for the impact of an efficient and well-run library to be felt in the whole University. It is very important for library information professionals not only to engage with academics, but also to work closely with them. Even more than the students, academics are the first ones to know about the benefits of being information literate.

Judging by the results of the interviews this is still not the case. They show that, as usual, there are some academic staff members who are not aware of the library facilities they can use or how to access them, and there is more and more reliance on computer facilities, such as free search engines; this has bad implications and repercussions on their teaching job and on their students' learning leading to poor quality results in the students' assignments.

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But academic staff have underlined that student work is of better quality when they use the library resources and do their own guided research. In order to increase the use of university libraries, which is in some cases on the decrease because of changed fashions, library information professionals indeed have the heavy responsibility of moving out towards staff and students. In other words, library information professionals need to sell their goods to attract users.

Something particularly striking was the fact that three of the lecturers were kind and eager to hold the interview but admitted plainly that they have no contact and knew nothing about the library or library staff, although they used the electronic resources available at the University. In the same line another difficulty that library information professionals have to tackle is that academics tend to be self-sufficient; most of them think they already know everything they need and it is not easy to change this mentality, but library information professionals have to make a greater effort in making academics realise that they have something to offer to them that is helpful and useful for them and their lectures.

It is very interesting to note as well what one subject librarian commented on: the fact that it is often very difficult to measure the impact of information literacy, since it is hard to tell whether, if less enquiries are coming to the help desk, it is because lectures as well as students are more self-sufficient and they can do it themselves; and if more enquiries are coming it is because lecturers and students are aware and they know that there is a wide range of resources that they did not know about and they want more access to information.

Another thing that is quite worrying is to realise that not only students but lecturers, even professors, affirmed plainly that they use free search engines, such as Google, to solve their information needs. It is very interesting what Tara Brabazon (2007), professor of media at Brighton University, says about the "digi-swingers" as she calls them:

> "Simply because more people are involved in the construction of a set of facts or a document –the premise of Wikipedia– does not make it true. The reason scholarly articles are trusted is because they have been refereed and checked by experts. But Google has flattened expertise, creating confusion between finding information and possessing the literacy to evaluate and judge information" (p. 14).

The interviews revealed that there are many different views of the use or non-use of the library and in age which is becoming increasingly more computerised there could arise the question of the role of the library information professionals. Tara Brabazon (2007) also commented on this:

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"There has never been a more opportune moment to value the expertise of librarians. The e-library –if and when it does appear– will not be created by dumping books, sacking librarians and plugging in rows of keyboards. The electronic library will be built through information literacy classes and courses, considered document delivery on stable platforms, effective and accessible databases and a thoughtful transition between the analogue and digital collections" (p. 14).

A very interesting point will be to mention that in order to be a good librarian, social networking skills are very important, especially in the field of subject librarians. The library has always been a social place, the meeting point of the university, gathering in the whole of the academic society within the university. In librarianship training, as well as while librarians are practising their profession, it would be interesting to include, apart from the technical skills, some social skills courses on how to deal with people, how to sell "your product", as well as some techniques on talking in public, knowing how to address the different people who work or study at the university, from students, postgraduates, researchers, to lecturers and professors. It is very important for library information professionals to get rid of that image of a person who walks around the library with a long face and looks at people making them feel small when they ask questions.

It is also recommendable that subject librarians, apart from having a representative in the department they work for with whom they have contact and main liaison, should be in contact with all the lecturers of the department, getting to know them and trying to build a friendly professional relationship in which they can offer their services and the library services. One way could be having a monthly coffee with all the lecturers of the department in which the subject librarian explains the new resources, and online products of their subject areas and even different ways of accessing the resources, so lecturers could start building an interest, which they will pass onto students. This way, there will be a mutual advantage; the library will benefit by making itself known not only to lecturers but also to students. Lecturers and teachers will benefit much more from the resources and services of the library, they could start asking the librarian to give some information literacy sessions in their lectures or, still better, giving them themselves. This is even more important given the fact that a number of university libraries are being revamped because of the increase in electronic facilities, e.g. use of space –saving electronic shelving stacks to meet new demands for student study, e.g. group working facilities. As Jane Core Stothart (2007), director of library and learning services at Northumbria University said: "Libraries are still hugely important to students, but they are not the same places as ten years ago. There is a lot more group work happening there. I think there does need to be more investment in reconfiguring the spaces" (p. 9).

So, it is very necessary for library information professionals as well as for academics to be aware of changes, it would have a positive impact on the whole University, which will be reflected in the prestige of the institution.■

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ESTUDIOS

LIAISON BETWEEN
LIBRARIANS AND
LECTURERS REGARDING
INFORMATION LITERACY: A
CASE STUDY OF SOME
ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Appendix A.
Librarians' interviews

1. Are you a subject librarian?
        – Yes
        – No
If so, what are your roles as a subject librarian?

2. Do you know all the lecturers that work in the department of your subject?
        – Yes
        – No
With how many have you established contact?
How do you communicate mainly?
        – By e-mail
        – Face to face
        – By phone

3. How often do you talk to the head of department of your subject?
        – Once a week
        – Once a month
        – Once a year
        – Others

4. Do you know in which areas research is being done, so you can give information about all the relevant material available in the library, which can be useful for lecturers and researchers?
        – Yes
        – No
If yes, do the departments inform you or do you have to find out yourself?

5. Do you find lecturers easily available and accessible to talk to?

6. Have you got in your library an academic liaison programme?
If so, do you think you are meeting the objectives of the library in within that programme?

7. How are the lecturers responding to it?

8. Does library staff ever see the results of the working together and coordination between librarians and lecturers?
Has it got an impact on students, making more frequent and better use of the library?

9. Which subject in your college do you think implements this liaison between librarians and lecturers most effectively?

10. How do you engage academic staff in information literacy?

11. Do you think that there is a tendency on lecturers to look down on Librarians instead of seeing them as colleagues?

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Appendix B.
Lecturers' interviews

1. What is your idea of a librarian?
2. Do you know if there is a subject librarian assigned to work with your department?
   – Yes
   – No
   How often do you communicate with him/her?
   – Once a week
   – Once a month
   – Others
   Do you find librarians easily available and accessible to talk?
   – Yes
   – No
3. Have you heard about an Academic/Library liaison programme at your University?
   – Yes
   – No
   If yes, do you know what your responsibilities are within the programme?
4. Do you tell a member of the library staff, or your subject librarian about research lines that are being done in your department?
5. Do you regularly try to inform the Librarian about the recent publications that are coming out in your area?
6. When you have information need, do you tend to use "Google" and try to resolve it by yourself or do you try to contact your subject librarian to resolve it or both?
7. What is your definition of information literacy?
8. How do you engage your students in information literacy?
9. Do you think that the working together, the coordination between librarians and lecturers has an impact on students?
   – Yes
   – No
   Do you think that with it, they could make more frequent and better use of the resources available?
   – Yes
   – No
   Could you see any difference reflected in the results of the assessments or assignments of students that have made a good use of the library?
   – Yes
   – No
10. Would you be keen on dedicate some of your lecture time so that librarians could carry out some information literacy skills sessions with your students?
11. Would you like to do it yourself?