

**A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE PIETERMARITZBURG
CLUSTER OF THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIES (PCTL) IN
ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT MEETS
THE DEMANDS OF ITS USERS**

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own original work, unless it is specified to the contrary in the text.

This thesis has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries, a network of theological libraries in an around Pietermaritzburg. The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is an association of the libraries of the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa, St. Joseph's Theological Institute, the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, the Evangelical House of Studies, Anglican House of Studies and the Las Casa Dominican Community. The library network is a component of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI).

An analysis of literature related to resource sharing between libraries and the evaluation of information services was conducted. The performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries was evaluated primarily from the viewpoint of the users of the network. The research problem addressed in the study was:

"Does the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries meet its objectives and satisfies the needs of its users?".

The research problem was broken down into three subproblems, namely:

1. Awareness of the target population of the existence of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries
2. How much use is made of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?

3. Overall performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in meeting objectives

Site visits, document review, transaction records, questionnaire survey and interviews were used for data collection. A questionnaire, accompanied by a cover letter, was the main tool used in data collection. The questionnaire was administered to the primary targets, the theological students from the various institutions, to obtain data related to their awareness and understanding of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries (PCTL), whether they use the facility and the reasons for use of non-use, as well as the overall perception of and attitude towards the service by the users. Interviews were conducted with staff members from the various institutions to determine their usage of the library network.

Major findings of the questionnaire survey were: a high awareness of the PCTL among the respondents, the majority of the lending were by the users from the University of Natal; the main reason for non-use of the network was that the home library is sufficient; majority of the respondents were satisfied with the regularity of the service, found the lending policies satisfactory or good and requested material usually or most often available; the service was generally seen as an advantage by the respondents because they have access to more materials; the long waiting period and the process of acquiring material were identified as problems; and a user education programme, interavailability of borrower cards and streamlining the process were suggested by the respondents. The transaction records reflected that the users of the University of Natal use the service most heavily. Of the requests submitted by the University of Natal, 40,32% was for national interlending via SABINET. The delivery rate of the network is 86,58 %.

It was determined that the users, although they have complaints about the network, are satisfied with the network and view it as an asset. The study proposed a combined user education on the activities of the library network, the inter-

availability of tickets and/or a more regular service and improved access to the on-line union catalogue at St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PCTI:	Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions.
PCTL:	Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries.
ELC:	Evangelical Lutheran Centre; or Luthos Library.
DOM:	Dominican Library.
EB:	Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSemSA).
EBS:	Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSemSA).
SJ:	St. Joseph's Theological Institute.
UNP:	University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
SOT:	School of Theology.
ISBN:	International Standard Book Number
LAN:	Local area network
CATNIP:	Cataloguing network in Pietermaritzburg

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Libraries are facing increasing difficulties in serving the needs of their patrons. Various factors are contributing to this situation. The contributing factors include depleting funds, static or shrinking budgets, the rising costs of publications and the annual increase in the number of publications, new subjects that continue to emerge and the interdisciplinary nature of existing subjects. (Fletcher 1991:162) Resource sharing is embraced as a strategy to alleviate these problems and to remain relevant in this rapidly changing environment. Resource sharing enables libraries to satisfy a greater number of user requests and maximise the resource base. The ultimate aim of resource sharing is to broaden and deepen the total resource base at minimum cost.

Resource sharing and library cooperation or library networking refers to the establishing of inter-institutional relationships that would benefit the users by sharing the resources. Libraries can share resources at different levels. The most common form of resource sharing is what is identified by MacDougall as "exchange" (MacDougall 1991:11) The exchange can take the form of inter-library lending of materials, users, bibliographic information and staff, the inter-availability of borrower cards and the answering of reference queries for staff and users. Another level of resource sharing is that of "coalition" between different libraries. Coalition refers to the working together of institutions towards the development of service tools, the development of resources, research, training and publishing. Networking enables institutions to build up their collections collectively. Collective collection building opens up the possibility of rationalising resources by coordinating acquisition policies in the following ways: (1) the rationalisation of coverage; (2) joint ownership through contribution to a pool stock

or joint ownership of material paid for by a central fund. In a networking arrangement readers are referred to collections at other institutions in the case of non-loanable resources. The referral of readers is most successful when assisted by the compilation of directories of resources. Networking arrangements make coordination of processes such as indexing and abstracting possible.

The success of a network is subject to various factors. Firstly, the conditions have to favour networking. The wish to network with other libraries implies the existence of resources to share. For a library to be an effective partner in a network it must own resources that are sought after by the users of the other institution and vice versa. Every partner of the network must benefit from the network for it to be a useful exercise. The success of networking is increased if up-to-date access to bibliographic information in the form of a joint catalogue or database is available. The possibilities due to technological advances are great. A structure coordinating the movement of resources between the institutions needs to be efficient and as regular as possible. The geographic locations and the distances between the institutions becomes very important when considering the cost of and the time involved in moving resources from one institution to another as well as when accessing bibliographic information in the form of an on-line joint database, also referred to as a union catalogue. The existence of good telecommunication links between institutions also influences the success of a network. Members of a network need to find a balance between institutional priorities and the responsibilities to the network. Tension between the self-interest of the institution and the common good of the network should be weighed carefully. The most important part of networking is that all participating libraries should be able to identify the benefits for their institution. Where there is no or little improvement in the provision of material there should at least be a saving of funds which can be used to improve or maintain existing basic services. (Sewell 1981)

When cooperative solutions to common problems are sought a programme with clear goals and objectives must be adopted. Since the goal of networking is to meet needs as economically and efficiently as possible the point of origin of network planning should be consideration of user needs. Consultation with the users to determine their needs is seldom executed and networks are most often imposed on the users by library administrators. Jennifer Cram speaks of the observation gap between what the users want and what library administrators think the users want. The reality gap, on the other hand, is the gap between what users expect the service to be and what they perceive it to be. (Cram 1995)

The evaluation of library services is a very broad topic and is dealt with extensively in the literature. Despite this, the element of measuring the performance of library services is often neglected. Evaluation is the process of identifying and collecting data about specific services or activities and determining both the quality of the service or activity and the degree to which the service or activity accomplishes stated goals and objectives. Evaluation consists of judgments based on the aggregation of data grounded in three perspectives on the library, namely the social mechanism, scientific process and an economic political system. The perspective on the library as a social mechanism focuses on how users behave, interact with and benefit from the system; the perspective on the library as a scientific process is concerned with how well the processes function; and the library as an economic political system, determines the accountability in allocating finite resources to meet infinite needs. (Cram 1995) In this particular study the focus is on the network as a social mechanism and a scientific process. The study is concerned with the behaviour and interaction of users with the system, the benefits of the system to the user, the satisfaction of user needs and the realization of goals and objectives. The study does not address the cost effectiveness of the network.

The development of resource sharing networks have not kept up with continuous evaluation. Measurement of resource sharing networks is necessary in order to determine the worth of the service to the users and whether it achieves its

objectives. Measurement is also useful for library administrators in that it provides them with an idea of the performance of the network and how it could be improved.

Evaluation is invaluable for the provision of better services and products, and justification for existing services and an improved understanding of systems. An information service should be evaluated in its totality in order to get a feel for the overall performance of the information service as well as an idea of how the various parts of the information service interact. (Bawden 1990:50)

Although all networks work generally towards the sharing of resources to satisfy user needs, each resource sharing activity is unique and is characterized by a specific background with its own unique difficulties to overcome. The resource sharing activity under investigation, the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries, is no different. The wealth of theological material in the Pietermaritzburg region makes the decision of a resource sharing network a logical one, but the distance between the institutions involved in the network and the question of bibliographic access pose very serious challenges.

The aim of this study was to provide a balanced, holistic evaluation of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries which considers the performance of the network in terms of meeting its objectives and user demands. The network was evaluated from the viewpoint of the users in order to determine whether the network satisfies their needs.

User-oriented evaluation is a general style of evaluation rather than a prescriptive methodology. User-oriented evaluation is a holistic, flexible, and an adaptive approach. The system is evaluated in its operational context. The practical value of the system in its everyday context is being questioned. The focus is on qualitative evaluation techniques which aim to measure the worth of the information service. User-oriented evaluation is usually performed on a small scale

and the service is tested in as many ways as feasible. Most evaluations of this type are carried out in a definite location with a particular user group, and by evaluators familiar with the situation (Bawden 1990:97)

A survey was conducted among the primary target population of the network. The survey was in the form of a questionnaire distributed to the student populations at the School of Theology at the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg), St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa. The questionnaire focuses on the worth of the network to the users and the use or non-use of the network by the users as well as possible reasons for use or non-use.

A user-centred evaluation of the document delivery aspect of a network should consider the proportion of requests satisfied, the fill rate, and the response time. The overall consideration is whether the user gets the requested information in time for it to be useful. Factors such as the accessibility of material and bibliographic information, the availability of requested material and the amount of effort and skill required by the user need to be considered when performing a document delivery study.

The interlibrary loan transactions between the above-mentioned institutions for the period 1 June 1995 to 31 May 1996 were analysed in order to determine the extent of the lending between the institutions and to detect user patterns and any possible reasons for it. Staff members of the various cluster institutions were questioned about the extent of their borrowing from cluster libraries.

The overall performance was measured against the goals and objectives of the network (as stated in the literature regarding the network) in order to determine to what extent these goals and objectives were realized.

The study is set in a complex, yet important, field as it impacts on the nature and functions of traditional libraries. Resource sharing affects the processes of traditional librarianship as it represents a paradigm shift from a holdings to an access strategy.

1.2 Structure of the Study

Chapter 1 - Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to set out the background to the research, the objectives and definitions of terms used.

Chapter 2 - The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries (PCTI): an overview

The historical overview of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is set out in this chapter.

Chapter 3 - Review of the literature: Resource sharing and the evaluation of library services

This chapter explains what resource sharing encompasses, different ways in which libraries can cooperate and what constitutes resources that can be shared as well as the methodology of performance evaluation of library services, with special reference to the evaluation of the networking environment.

Chapter 4 - Research methods and methodology

The aim of this chapter is to record the methodology in collecting and analysing the data for this study.

Chapter 5 - Findings and interpretation

This chapter presents the findings of the study and attempts to interpret the findings.

Chapter 6 - Recommendations and conclusion

The last chapter reflects on the study as a whole, presents a conclusion and offers some recommendations.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Does the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries meet its objectives and satisfies the needs of its users?

1.4 Subproblems

1. Awareness of the target population of the existence of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries
2. How much use is made of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?
3. Overall performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in meeting its objectives

1.5 Definitions of Terms

Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI): An association of The School of Theology of the University of Natal, Saint Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa.

Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries: A group of six libraries with collections of theological and religious studies and related material. The current members of the cluster are the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg; LUTHOS Library, Lutheran House of Studies; Denis E. Hurley Library, St. Joseph's Theological Institute; Dominican Library, Las Casa Dominican Community; Stuart Lear Library, Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa; and Anglican House of Studies Library. The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is a subdivision of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI).

Resource sharing/library cooperation: The interchangeable phrases "resource sharing" and "library cooperation" refer to the establishing of inter-institutional relationships for the benefit of users. (Lancaster and King 1981:9) It can be defined as the reciprocally beneficial sharing of resources with the aim of maximising the resource base (MacDougall 1991:9) which increases the number of requests that can be satisfied. Prytherch defines library resource sharing as "collaborative arrangements made between libraries to fulfil a number of functions, such as interlibrary lending, coordinated collection management, shared storage, co-operative cataloguing, automation facilities, network access, user access, and staff training." (Prytherch 1995:167)

Network: A network is a distribution system composed of interlinked, spatially dispersed channels, subsystems and/or elements.(Shaughnessy 1994:71) "A network is a system of physically separate computers with telecommunication links, allowing resources to be shared by either commercial or informal arrangement." (Prytherch 1995:446) In library network refers to the collaboration of separate libraries, linked in some, to share the resources of the libraries for the benefit of the users.

User satisfaction: A measure of performance based on the user's perception of the adequate delivery of a service, or of a required item of piece of information in an acceptable period of time. (Prytherch 1995:666)

User studies: "Research projects, surveys or questionnaires carried out to determine what users want from a service, how they seek information, whether existing services provide adequate responses, and how improvement or new services could be best targeted." (Prytherch 1995:666)

User education (also termed library instruction or library orientation): "A programme of information provided by libraries to users , to enable them to make more efficient independent use of the library's stock and services. A programme of user education might include tours, lectures, exercises and the provision of support materials." (Prytherch 1995:665)

Use: Taking advantage of the services offered by the network.

Users: Those who actually make use of products and services; as well as potential users the products and services are intended to serve.

Awareness: To know about or be conscious of something. Awareness does not necessarily imply actual use of exact information.

Data: are the individual facts and figures which may be processed into information or knowledge.

Access: a device or method whereby information may be found; or the approach to any means of storing information, for example an index, a bibliography, catalogue or computer terminal.

1.6 Summary

The aim of this chapter was to set out the background to the research, the objectives and definitions of terms used and to present the research problem and structure of the study.

CHAPTER 2

PIETERMARITZBURG CLUSTER OF THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIES

2.1 What is the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI)?

As early as 1986 good relations existed between the staff members associated with the various institutions that were to form the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI). Professor Gunther Wittenberg from the then Department of Theology at the University of Natal envisaged some sort of a relationship with the Federal Seminary of Southern Africa, but was unsure of the form it should take. The idea of a cluster system originated in 1987 when Dr. James Cochrane joined the Department of Theology. Dr. Cochrane shared his experience of a cluster system as encountered in Chicago, USA. Funding was obtained for Professor Wittenberg to visit Chicago in 1988 with the view of adapting ideas relevant to the Pietermaritzburg situation. (Denis 1996) Professor Wittenberg's visit was followed by a more formal study by Dr. Cochrane of various theological clusters, which included visits to Chicago, San Francisco, Boston and New York. (Cochrane 1996a)

The consortiums studied in the United States of America included the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS), Boston Library Consortium and Union Theological Seminary. ACTS is an association of theological seminaries committed to utilising resources to the maximum. The Boston Library Consortium is an association of Boston libraries which promotes growth of the library resources and services of its members through cooperation. Members have instituted a reciprocal borrowing programme and a delivery service for exchanged materials, produced a computer-based union list of serials, made joint acquisitions and sponsored workshops and meetings. A newsletter, user's guide and a handbook is published annually. The services of the consortium are available to member libraries and their patrons. (Lucas and Novallo 1988:113)

The models studied in the United States were adapted to the Pietermaritzburg situation. The structure of the Pietermaritzburg network was set-up during 1989, with the official inauguration of the PCTI in March 1990. The vision statement, called "Declaration of Intention" was signed by local Bishops and the heads of the respective institutions. It is in essence an agreement among the theological institutions in the area to form a consortium of theological educational institutions to work together towards the provision of a contextual theological education. Contextual theology education is a focused theology that aims to study various subjects of relevance to a particular context and in this case, South Africa.

The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI) is the only one of its kind in South Africa. (School of Theology: catalogue for prospective students 1997) At the time of the start of the venture South Africa was still under state of emergency, and the aim of the project was to establish a common theological body to respond to the situation by providing a contextual South African theological education. The PCTI drew together staff and students of the Department of Theological Studies at the University of Natal, the Federal Seminary in Imbali, and St. Joseph's Institute at Cedara. (New books for Africa 1991) Federal Seminary in Imbali closed down at the end of 1992, and Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa joined the cluster at roughly the same time. At present the PCTI is an association of The School of Theology of the University of Natal, Saint Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa.

Each institution is autonomous with its own credo, ethos, style and denominational and ecumenical links. The common ground shared between the institutions is a deep commitment to providing a contextual theological education in a changing South Africa, and together they seek to enhance the richness and diversity contributed by the individual institutions. Cooperation and collaboration in many ways is encouraged. (School of Theology: catalogue for prospective students 1997) The cluster facility provides the students at the various institutions with the

opportunity to obtain credits for courses offered by another institution. Students register at one institution and are allowed cross-registration at the other member institutions free of charge. The cluster arrangement exposes the students to more lecturers who are experts in their fields and lecturers are provided with the opportunity to concentrate on their fields of expertise. No courses are duplicated at the institutions, which makes a greater variety of courses possible. Students can choose from any of the courses offered at the cluster institutions. The students also have the opportunity of interaction with other student bodies.

The cluster arrangement allows for the coordination of activities like teaching, joint events such as the cluster staff workshop, cluster open day, a sports day, a cluster debate and cluster worship services as well as a publishing venture and library activities. (Denis 1996) The teaching activities are coordinated in a variety of ways. The joint events are hosted with the aim of promoting the cluster and to provide the students with the opportunity to interact with each other and build relationships.

Cluster Publications, the publishing arm of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI), is an ecumenical venture reflecting the teaching needs of the cluster. (New books for Africa 1991) Cluster Publications is a non-profit publishing enterprise which aims at producing sound and inexpensive works of contemporary theology with particular focus on indigenous material or contributions from elsewhere which have strong regional significance. (Cluster Publications Catalogue 1996) Cluster Publications was established in response to a problem of non-existence of a publishing house in the country producing inexpensive contextual theological books. Cluster Publications is the only specialist publisher of theological literature in English in South Africa and has made its mark as a publisher of high quality local theological material. (School of Theology: catalogue for prospective students 1996) Cluster Publications publishes three categories of works: a monograph series, a study series and general series. David Philip Publishers are the Southern African distributors, and a new arrangement means that co-publication with Orbis books will now take place. Cluster

Publications employs one person and produces more than the University of Natal Press. Some funding for the enterprise comes from the foreign institutions that finance the PCTI. Occasionally the University provides financial assistance and sometimes the author finds alternative financial support. (Denis 1996) For the purpose of this project the emphasis will be placed on the library activities of the of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries (PCTL).

2.2 What is Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?

The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is a subdivision of the PCTI. The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is a group of six Pietermaritzburg libraries with collections of theological and religious studies and related material. A wealth of theological material is concentrated in and around Pietermaritzburg due to the existence of various theological institutions in the area. The theological institutions represent a variety of denominations which means that the collections vary in their focuses.

The library contract of the Theological Cluster Project was signed on 9 June 1993 by St. Joseph's Scholasticate, Las Casas Dominican community, the Evangelical Lutheran Centre, Federal Seminary, and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of South Africa (Library Bulletin 1993), with the Chancellor of the University of Natal Bishop Denis Hurley as a witness. (Library Bulletin 1993) Since then, Federal Seminary closed down and Anglican House of Studies joined the project.

The objectives of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries are to broaden the resource base of all members by sharing resources among members locally and nationally by providing access to SABINET, the national interlending scheme. The cluster is a partnership of libraries with theological or related material where such resources are mutually accessible. In order to achieve these objectives a centralised computer catalogue of the local bibliographic resources was necessary. The catalogue could also act as a conduit to SABINET. The smaller members of

the network who previously had no access to SABINET due to high membership fees could now access all the resources available on SABINET. In turn the smaller libraries would have their materials available to the wider south african community.

The current member libraries of the cluster are:

1. University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg
2. LUTHOS Library, Lutheran House of Studies
3. Denis E. Hurley Library, St. Joseph's Theological Institute
4. Dominican Library, Las Casa Dominican Community
5. Stuart Lear Library, Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa.
6. Anglican House of Studies

The various libraries of the member institutions have different areas of specialization, often directly related to the nature of the organization, as well as their own special collections.

The University of Natal Library was founded in 1910 and contains approximately 210000 books and 2500 current periodical titles covering all disciplines, of which about 11500 books and 160 periodical titles are in the fields of theological and religious studies. The strong areas in the theological and religious studies collection of the University of Natal include feminist theology, liberation theology, Bible commentaries, Hinduism and Islam. The University of Natal owns the St Laurence Collection of Early Theological Classics (17th-19th centuries). (Cluster guide 1996)

The Lutheran House of Studies Library (LUTHOS library) was founded in 1973. It contains approximately 12000 books and 20 periodical titles. The LUTHOS Library contains mostly German material focused on Lutheran theology, biblical theology, liturgy, catechetical/ homiletical works, pastoral care and Christian art. Special collections of LUTHOS Library are the Hermannsburger Missions blatt, Berliner Missions blatt and Dieter Lauenstein theological and philosophical collection. (Cluster guide 1996)

The Denis E. Hurley Library at St. Joseph's Theological Institute, Cedara was founded in 1943 and moved into new premises in 1994. The library contains approximately 25000 books and 120 periodical titles. The library specializes in Catholic history, patristics and spirituality and holds special collections including Missions, Bibliografia Misionaria, OMI archives and old biblical commentaries. (Cluster guide 1996)

The Dominican Library at the Las Casas Dominican Community was founded in 1987 and contains approximately 8000 books and 70 periodical titles. The library concentrates on Dominican history, patristics and philosophy. (Cluster guide 1996)

The Stuart Lear Library at the Evangelical Bible Seminary was founded in 1980. It contains nearly 12000 books and 120 periodical titles. The focus of collection is in the fields of missiology, intercultural studies, Christian education and evangelical theology. (Cluster guide 1996)

Anhouse Library recently joined the Cluster. It belongs to the Anglican House of Studies attached to the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg and is a new library which brings together various Anglican collections (including remnants of the Fedsem Library and the Modderpoort seminary). (Cluster guide 1996). Anhouse Library was founded in 1995 and is still in the process of installation and not yet open for use. It contains about 7000 volumes and 2 current journal titles, as well as numerous discontinued journal titles. The special collections incorporates the libraries of St. Peter's Seminary and the Modderpoort Priory of the Society of the Sacred Mission. Access to the library premises is limited to staff and students from the Anglican House of Studies. (Cluster guide 1996)

As a unit, the resources are increasingly being seen as a primary source of theological literature for the African continent. The collective resources of the six member libraries form a well-rounded, complete and balanced collection. Libraries form an important chain in the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions.

Libraries support the collaborative teaching between the institutions, facilitates the sharing and rationalization of resources, and attempts to satisfy the information needs of the students and staff of the member institutions.

2.3 Administration of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions

2.3.1 Decision making

The Cluster Council is the main decision making body (Langeveldt 1996) of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions and is constituted by fifteen people, three representatives from each institution. The Cluster executive consists of 5 people. The cluster chairperson, the cluster coordinator, and an assistant coordinator provide the backbone for the administration of the cluster.

Five subject committees, a student committee and a worship committee have been set up. (Langeveldt 1996) The subject committees are in the fields of Missiology, Church history, Biblical studies, Practical theology, and Systematic theology. The different subject committees have the responsibility of preparing the teaching programmes and is a way for specialists in a particular field to share their interests as well as discuss papers and books written. (Denis 1996) Altogether the cluster brings together about 40 teaching staff and approximately 320 students, many of them from other parts of Africa. The cluster offers the students a larger variety of courses and a richer theological education than is possible from within one institution. (School of Theology: catalogue for prospective students 1997)

The library structure is autonomous from, for example, the teaching program and the publishing venture but all support the aims of the others. The aim of all the different ventures is to support the ultimate aim of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions which is a commitment to provide a contextual theological education in a changing South Africa. All the ventures fall under the

Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions and are accountable to the Cluster Executive at biannual meetings. (Langeveldt 1996)

The Library Network is run by a Cluster Library Committee which meets three times per annum. The Cluster employs a part-time qualified librarian who has (among other things) the task to prepare retrospective cataloguing.

Cluster Publications Council directs the activities of the enterprise. The Cluster Publications Council is made up of three representatives from each of the members of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI). Bill Houston from the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSemSA) is the current chairperson. (Denis 1996)

2.3.2 Funding

Fundraising for the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries started in 1989. The funding was received in 1992 through the World Council of Churches. The funding agencies are SPCK (Roman Catholic) ; Missio and EMW (German) and ACHEN. (Scriba, G. 1996) The original funding was largely used to upgrade the university computers in order to accommodate the cluster database and to buy computers and modems and to employ a part-time librarian to do the retrospective cataloguing. (Langeveldt 1996)

No additional staff were employed by any of the Cluster libraries to deal with the extra burden brought about by the library cluster but makes use of existing staff. The library cluster demands more staff time, particularly at the University Library.

A R70 000 request for funding was submitted early in 1996. The funding will be utilised for the salary of the part-time librarian, a computer for Anhouse library and for the completion of the cataloguing. The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions runs on a budget of approximately R20 000 a year.(Langeveldt 1996)

The transport costs involved amounts to a little over R1000-00 per annum. (Merrett 1996) The transport costs are paid for by the Cluster.

2.4 Objectives and Advantages of the Cluster of Theological Libraries

2.4.1 Objectives of the Cluster of Theological Libraries

The objectives of the theological cluster of libraries are to create a centralised computer catalogue of local bibliographic resources which will enable bibliographic information to be accessed locally on-line. This catalogue will act as a conduit to SABINET, a national database. Smaller member libraries who previously did not have access due to financial reasons were allowed access to SABINET. Another very important objective is the opening up of the resources to all the members of the cluster via an interlending scheme.

2.4.2 Advantages of the Cluster of Theological Libraries

In summary, the all-round benefits of the project are rationalization, resource sharing, economy and the engendering of shared purpose between the theological libraries of Pietermaritzburg. (Library bulletin 1993)

The inherent advantages of the arrangement include the following:

- (1) a growing awareness of locally available bibliographic resources and a heightened understanding of the concept of a shared resource;
- (2) increased sharing of the resources through an interlending network;
- (3) integration of the smaller collections into the national interlending structure via SABINET
- (4) creating potential for more rational acquisitions policies.
- (5) creating potential for more rational use of computer and human resources, and

- (6) stimulation of potential donor interest in the light of local rationalisation and resource sharing (Cluster guide 1996)

2.5 Operation of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries

The library network is committed to the growth of library resources in the Pietermaritzburg area and the increased cooperation between the member libraries. A combined cluster catalogue is being constituted to enable maximum use of the available resources. A structure has been set up for the transport of documents between the libraries on a weekly basis. The cluster catalogue is available to the wider South African community on the national database, SABINET.

2.5.1 Communication links

A central database is in the process of being constituted. The central facility for the centralised catalogue is provided by the University of Natal library's human and hardware resources. The combined holdings of the cluster libraries are connected through the University of Natal Library's database and they represent one of the largest collections of theological and religious books and journals in southern Africa. The University Library houses and maintains the whole Cluster database (as part of the CATNIP database) All libraries are, or will soon be, linked by computer, thus maximising the resources available for teaching and research. (School of Theology: catalogue for prospective students 1996)

The on-line catalogue allows access by author (personal and corporate), title, series title, subject, classification, publisher and ISBN. Hardcopy catalogues are printed for author, title and subject. (Cluster guide 1996) The entire catalogue is in machine readable form but annual printed finding lists are also available. (CATNIP annual report 1995) Access to the catalogue of the University of Natal, Durban and

to SABINET is also possible through the central Pietermaritzburg database. (Cluster Library guide 1996)

The Lutheran Studies Library (LUTHOS) is connected to the University of Natal computer via the local area network (LAN) for information retrieval purposes, and there is a hard copy (author-title) finding list. There is no communication at present between the University of Natal computer and Las Casas but a link is being planned.

St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSemSA) can access the UNP computer via a dial-up modem. EBSemSA has an Internet connection. Printed finding lists are available at both institutions. Like St. Joseph's EBSemSA is also experiencing problems accessing the database and also often has to phone up the university to inquire. Mrs. Annette le Roux, the librarian at EBSemSA, suggests that it might help if the modem at the university is reset regularly or a modem that resets automatically is acquired. (Le Roux 1996; Russell 1996)

2.5.2 Loan Arrangements

All staff members and students have access to the libraries of the other institutions. Accredited staff members and students may borrow four books for a renewable two-week period. Staff members have honorary membership (999 books for 14 days) and may borrow books directly from the participating libraries. Books are not issued directly to students, but to the library representative from the borrowing institution. (Merrett 1996) Loans are on a library-to-library basis, with the lending library accepting responsibility for the item once in their possession. The Cluster funds the transport of items of the inter-lending network. In the past the cluster travel arrangements has involved a staff member from the University Library and one from St. Joseph's. The service operates on a weekly basis with a Thursday turn around.

The University also handles incoming requests for the national interlibrary loan of material from the other libraries. Lending between seminaries has yet to develop.

At present LUTHOS Library does not lend to or borrow from any library other than the university library. Any person can become a member of the LUTHOS Library, by paying the required subscription fee. Students registered at the Lutheran House of Studies have LUTHOS membership as well as University Library membership. Some from the other member institutions of the cluster subscribe to LUTHOS. The above mentioned categories of persons can borrow directly from LUTHOS Library and do not have to make use of the interlibrary lending facility provided by the cluster arrangement. (Scriba, I. 1996)

In the past, some interlending took place between St. Joseph's and EBSemSA (Shaw 1996), but at present no direct transactions are taking place between the seminaries. The only transactions that are taking place are with the involvement of the University of Natal. It is possible to subscribe to the Denis E. Hurley Library at EBSemSA but the subscription fee is substantial in order to discourage subscriptions. The reason for this being that the library is really there to serve St Joseph's students and too many people subscribe it means that a substantial part of the collection is unavailable to the students at any given time. (Russell 1996)

In the case of a user requiring access to reference, short loan or other non-loanable material from a cluster library the user may visit the library to use the material in-house. (Merrett 1996)

2.5.3 Cataloguing and data capture

The original arrangement was that each institution would catalogue their own material on-line and that the University would do their retrospective cataloguing. All the information is presently inputted at the University. Theoretically it is possible, but in practice it was not. The communication lines in Pietermaritzburg

are not capable of handling it. Mr. Jack Russell, librarian at St. Joseph's Theological Institute attempted cataloguing on-line but it took was time-consuming and the interference on the lines caused a distortion of information. Mr. Jack Russell inputs the necessary information onto regular word processing program which is then sent to the university. This process implies a duplication of work, but at the moment it is the only solution to the problem. The material from LUTHOS Library is brought around to the university for processing. This is possible because there is no significant distance involved.(Merrett 1996) Current cataloguing is undertaken by the librarian of each institution.

The retrospective data capture of the basic catalogue at St. Joseph's Theological Institute was completed in 1994 and new records are regularly supplied. Uncatalogued material in storerooms is being assessed for input now that the move to the new library is complete. The periodicals catalogue has recently been input and a visible index was created. No subject cataloguing has been done for the holdings of the Denis E. Hurley Library at St. Joseph's Theological Institute.

Retrospective data capturing of the material of the Dominican Library started in August 1994 and is was largely complete by the end of 1995. Photocopied title pages were used for input as the card catalogue was inadequate. Material in store and a donation from Springs need to be documented.

EBSEMSA's retrospective data capture is well advanced but there is a backlog of subject cataloguing. Work continues on annotating the card catalogue for data input. The periodicals have not yet been catalogued. Mrs. Annette le Roux, librarian at EBSemSA, is not a trained librarian and finds the cluster arrangement a great help because the cluster librarian can catalogue some of the new books directly onto the database. This arrangement eliminates duplication in cataloguing. EBSemSA still makes use of a card catalogue, and has printouts of the EBSemSA holdings as well as a printout of cluster holdings provided by the University Library. (Le Roux 1996)

The holdings of the Anhouse Library is not yet reflected on the cluster database. A graduate assistant working with the Cluster librarian is in the process of classifying and subject cataloguing the collection. Negotiations are currently undertaken concerning the documentation of the Jesuit Library. Agreement has been reached in principle but logistics remain to be arranged.

Retrospective data capture of the German language material of the LUTHOS library continues. English language material is being classified and subject catalogued by the Cluster librarian. Mrs. Scriba does preparatory work for the University Library staff. The card catalogue at LUTHOS Library has been discontinued, author and title finding lists provide access to the collection. The Dieter Lauenstein collection is not catalogued yet. Mrs. Inga Scriba has to do the preparatory work of the German language material for the University Library staff and she does not have the time to do so.

2.5.4 Acquisitions

In order to utilize the opportunity of rationalization of resources made possible by the library cluster acquisitions activities need to be coordinated in some way. Christopher Merrett, university librarian at the University of Natal, commented that acquisition activities aimed at rationalization of resources have been difficult in the past due to the different procedures of acquisition employed at the various institutions. A substantial amount of material is donated to St. Joseph's Theological Institute and spot ordering also takes place. LUTHOS Library receives new titles but is also reliant on donations. Therefore, they do not often get the opportunity to choose the titles they receive. The University, on the other hand, orders early and systematically. Other reasons why acquisition aimed at rationalization has been difficult to achieve was because not all the resources were reflected on the database and the delay between the ordering of the item and the inputting of the data onto the database. For these reasons it has been difficult to determine whether the item is owned by another member in the cluster. (Merrett 1996)

The rationalization possibility has been taken advantage of on a small scale. The University Library, for example, ceased subscription for a periodical, and the LUTHOS Library took over subscription for this particular periodical. (Merrett 1996) and EBSemSA has decided before not to acquire a certain item when informed that the University Library had acquired it. (Le Roux 1996)

The nature of the institutions naturally determines the strong areas within the collections. The cluster enables the individual institutions to build on its strong areas and neglect other areas already covered by the cluster. These will then become the weak areas in the collection (Merrett 1996) but because of the participation in this particular resource sharing network this does not pose a serious problem because the weak area in one institution is the strong area in another. The library resource sharing arrangement has affected the way in which institutions purchase resources. The common commitment to a contextual theology is reflected in the acquisitions of the institutions. (Langeveldt 1996)

Cooperative acquisition from a central cluster fund does not take place. The various institutions acquire what they would need for their institution the way they would do if they were not part of resource sharing network. The reason for this is that the institutions have found that high demand material has to be available in-house. Peripheral material and expensive material are the categories that allow for rationalization policies. An agreement has been reached among the institutions for the acquisition of an expensive item such as an encyclopaedia by each of the institutions for use within the cluster. (Scriba, I. 1996)

2.5.5 SABINET access

The Cluster of Theological Libraries offers the smaller libraries access to the national database, SABINET. The collections of the smaller libraries are reflected on the SABINET database as part of the University of Natal database. The smaller libraries have access to the SABINET database through the University Library. The

smaller libraries can borrow material reflected on the SABINET database through the interlibrary loan facility at the University of Natal.

The facility has never been accessed from St. Joseph's because the telecommunications problems makes it very difficult (Russell 1996) Two staff members at EBSemSA have used it (Le Roux 1996) but telecommunications problems hampers the possibility of accessing SABINET form EBSemSA.

As far as staff members of the various institutions are concerned the fact that the database cannot be accessed successfully in-house does not pose a great problem because all staff members have borrower cards from the University and can go directly to the University Library rather than trying to access it from their respective institutions. (Russell 1996) The SABINET search and interlibrary loan facility is utilized extensively by the staff members of the various institutions for their research purposes. (Langeveldt 1996)

St. Joseph's has a dial up modem and access to the UNP computer for information retrieval purposes. Mr. Russell, the librarian at St. Joseph's Theological Institute, would like to see better communications links as St. Joseph's is encountering problems with accessing the database, to the extent that Mr. Russell eventually phones the university to inquire rather than attempt to access the database. The ideal situation would be if St. Joseph's has an Internet connection, but it would be too costly. (Langeveldt 1996)

A staff member at EBSemSA has borrowed from the University of Natal before for their short-loan section (Le Roux 1996) Outside subscription is possible at the University Library at the substantial fee of R165-00.

Students often want to borrow books directly from the various institutions. Mr. Scriba says that students want the material directly form the LUTHOS library and cannot understand the process of requesting at their home institution. They then

beat the system by taking books directly from the library by asking a member of the library to borrow it on their behalf. Mr. Russell is also aware of cases where students borrowed for someone at another institution because the person needed the item urgently and could not wait a week. EBSemSA have also had students come directly to the library instead of using the interlibrary loan facility and then borrowing using the card of a member. EBSemSA had an open door policy when they entered the cluster, but had to change policy because their students were allowing students from other institutions entrance and the risk of books going missing was too great. (Shaw 1996)

2.6 Summary

The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Institutions (PCTI) is an association of the School of Theology of the University of Natal, St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa committed to providing a contextual theological education in a changing South Africa. The institutions cooperate and collaborate in many ways such as the cross registration of students and exposing them to more teaching staff, the coordination of activities like teaching, and joint events such as staff workshops, worship services, publishing venture and library activities.

The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is a subdivision of PCTI and is a group of six Pietermaritzburg libraries with theological collections. The objectives of the network are to create a centralized computer catalogue of local resources to assist the successful sharing of resources between the institutions and to act as a conduit to the national database, SABINET. The benefits of the network include a heightened awareness of locally available resources, the sharing of the resources via an interlending scheme, the integration of the combined collections on SABINET, creating potential for more rational acquisition policies and the use of computer and human resources, and the stimulation of donor interest in the light of rationalisation and resource sharing.

The central database is in the process of being constituted. Communication links have been established but continuous telecommunications difficulties remain a problem. Cataloguing and data capture is well advanced and is continuing while rationalisation of resources has been done, although a coordinated policy is difficult due to different acquisition policies at the different institutions.

CHAPTER 3
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE: RESOURCE SHARING
AND THE EVALUATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

3.1 Resource sharing

Libraries play an important role in the transfer of information. The major responsibilities of libraries have to do with the collection of information sources, the organization and control of sources, and provision of various types of services based on these sources. The library acts as a link between a particular community of individuals, usually defined geographically or by institutional affiliation, and the available information sources. The main aim of libraries is to make the information as accessible as possible, whether the resources are available directly or indirectly, as through networks. (Beeler 1974:xi)

Resources not owned by a library which are accessible through, for example, photocopying, interlibrary loan or referral activities are not as easily accessible, or rapidly acquired as the resources owned by the library. Nowadays what is owned by the library and what is not is becoming less and less important because almost any request can be satisfied through interlibrary lending arrangements. Computer terminals give ready access to information resources not physically present within the walls of the library.(Lancaster and King 1981:17) The general trend in modern libraries is a move from a holdings strategy to an access strategy, this means that libraries acknowledge that it is impossible to own all the resources necessary and attempt rather to provide access to these resources by means of sharing resources among each other.

In attempting to develop a methodology for assessing the value of a library one first has to describe the present situation, for example one would wish to establish from where do users obtain their information and what contribution does the information

make towards the task or goals that they are trying to achieve. (Blagden 1980:22) In assessing the overall performance of a library there appears to be two basic approaches: from the viewpoint of the user; and from the viewpoint of the library manager. There are three key elements involved in the evaluation: the user, the information use, and the library itself. (Blagden 1980:24) In this study, a user-oriented evaluation of the network was employed.

3.1.1 A need for resource sharing arises

The idea of the self-sufficient library was in the past a powerful influence on academic libraries. The illusion of self-sufficiency seemed to be confirmed by the relative prosperity of libraries for about two decades after World War II, before the economic reality began to undermine the concept of a self-sufficient library. The post-World War II expansion of research interests and specialization within academic disciplines put the idea of a self-sufficient library out of the reach of any single institution (Dowler 1995:9-11) After 1973 the idea of the self-sufficient library was even more unattainable due to increasing book production, the rising cost of publications and the declining lower library revenues. Increasingly, libraries were forced to look towards each other to form partnerships to remain relevant in this changed environment.

Resource sharing and cooperation between institutions has been practised for many years. The twentieth century brought with it an expansion in the scale of resource sharing activities. This expansion had its roots in the social, economic and technological changes that took place from 1900 onwards. The scale of resource sharing activity has escalated since the mid-1950's. (World encyclopedia of library and information services 1993:715) Resource sharing and cooperation agreements between libraries were necessary in order to deal with the information explosion, an ever increasing range of subjects, the escalating costs of resources, economic constraints exemplified by static or, in many cases, declining budgets. (Sewell 9:1981) The wide disparity between resources available to individuals by reason

of geographic location or socio-economic conditions (Sewell 1981:9; Bakewell 1990:3) contributed to a changed environment. Librarians were forced to seek cooperative solutions to the problem of coverage or access to the maximum range of literature at minimum cost in order to meet the requirements of users. There was a realization by librarians that no single institution can afford complete self-sufficiency.

In recent years libraries have become under even greater pressure to provide greater and faster access to information sources. Several trends are transforming the ways in which libraries share resources. Economic pressures, increased user demands for library resources, and technological changes are some of the powerful driving forces in restructuring research library collecting programs and in reshaping cooperative collection management strategies (Reed-Scott 1995:68) The technological advances of the twentieth century opens up the doors to librarians for even faster and greater cooperation activities.

Dowler identifies three important implications of the changes in research and the growing demand for new sources for libraries. He argues that the idea of the self-sufficient library has been exposed; that some library practices and assumptions are being altered, and that the competitive model of support for research within higher education is being undermined. (Dowler 1995:16) In order to address these implications there is a need for the boundaries between libraries, archives, museums and historical societies to weaken, just as the boundaries between academic disciplines are weakening.

The main problem in research libraries is a resource problem. There is a need for sharing resources among institutions because of the lack of sufficient funds to keep up with developing trends in information retrieval and dissemination, as well as maintaining the traditional role of the research library. The general scenario in research libraries is one of fixed manpower and financial resources and a rising demand for information resources. (Bakewell 1990:66)

3.1.2 What is resource sharing/library cooperation?

Many concepts of resource sharing exist. The terms "resource sharing" and "library cooperation" are interchangeable and refers to the working out of inter-institutional relationships (Lancaster and King 1981:9) for the reciprocal beneficial sharing of resources by two or more institutions. Resource sharing aims to maximise the resource base (MacDougall 1991:9) which increases the number of requests that can be satisfied. Resource sharing does not do away with the need for building basic collections of material relevant to the needs of the community served (Jefferson 1977:32) because certain basic needs should be satisfied immediately by the particular institution. Resource sharing recognizes both the interdependence of libraries in terms of materials and expertise and the fact that much library material is seriously under used. (Sewell 1981:12)

Resources can be shared in two ways: the normal exchange of material between libraries or by forming a network. The latter involves both coalition and the exchange of resources. The exchange of material between libraries involves only an informal agreement to provide material when needed by another library. A network involves the formal agreement to work together and broaden the resource base. In a network, resources such as materials, staff expertise and premises are effectively and economically utilized in order to serve and satisfy the larger user group.

3.1.3 The process of setting up a network

When setting up a network the following five stages are identified: (1) network planning; (2) network design, and implementation; (3) marketing and service promotion; (4) education and training; (5) information utility. Each stage from (1) to (4) is a compulsory precedent before the ultimate stage (5) can be reached. (Shaughnessy 1994:95)

A few essential factors need be taken into consideration during the network planning stage. The time spent on the planning of a network could mean the difference between success and failure. The first step towards the setting up of a network is the feasibility study. A feasibility study will reveal whether the idea of a network is realistic, whether there is a need for the network and the practicality of the envisaged network. (Shaughnessy 1994:15) Once the feasibility study is complete, it is important to determine the goals and objectives of the envisaged systems. This is important as it guides the further planning of what is expected of the system. The next stage of the planning process sees the identification of constraints. These could be for example, environmental constraints, organizational constraints and operational constraints. (Shaughnessy 1994:18) It is important to identify these early in order to plan with these constraints in mind. It will enable the network to be designed in such a way as to combat or overcome these difficulties. The importance of the identification and definition of user groups must not be underestimated. User needs must be identified and taken seriously. Many networked information services that are designed without potential user input are inadequately evaluated by those the service was intended for. (Chen and Hernon 1982:125) The ultimate value of a network lies in whether it serves the needs of its users. Therefore, criteria by which the performance of the system will be evaluated need to be specified. This is crucial to determine whether the system is a success, where it is succeeding and where it needs to improve. (Shaughnessy 1994:19)

The network design and implementation stage derives its guidelines from the network planning stage. The network is designed and implemented according to the information derived during the planning stage. During this stage, for example, the union catalogue is produced and the processes for requesting material is determined. Networks contain within them the potential to expand the effectiveness of libraries if they are properly designed and implemented. (Chen and Hernon 1982:125)

The marketing and service promotion stage aims to make the potential user aware of the network. The main obstacle is that the usefulness of the service is difficult to prove. The usefulness is not realized until the service is temporarily withdrawn or no longer available. (Shaughnessy 1994:99) Marketing of the network could be done through pamphlets, leaflets, posters and word of mouth. The education and marketing stages could be linked as they are closely related. The marketing and service promotion could incorporate an education and training programme for users. Education and training of users is crucial to the success of a network.

Once the first four compulsory stages are successfully executed, stage (5) will automatically be reached. The network will become an information utility serving the needs of the users.

3.1.4 What can be shared/coordinated?

The range of resource sharing activities encompasses virtually all the functions of a library and may take several forms. Whatever resource is being shared means not only that a library gives and receives but also that a library is involved in the process of determining how the resource should be shared and distributed. (World encyclopedia of library and information services 1995:715)

Resources that form a public information utility include materials (books and other communications media), systems, activities and staff expertise. (Sewell 1981:12) The most obvious form of resource sharing is that of library materials. Regarding staff development and training Fletcher suggests embarking on joint training courses and lectures. (Fletcher 1991:165)

Different scholars identified activities that can be coordinated. Cooperative activities as identified by Lancaster and King include interlibrary lending, the supply of photocopies, cooperation of cataloguing activities, coordination of acquisition and the physical processing of materials. (Lancaster and King 1981:19)

Sewell identifies the following functions as the most frequently co-ordinated functions: interlibrary loan, reference services, delivery services, acquisitions activities, union lists, continuing education, bibliographic access, photocopying, circulation, communications, processing, storage, literature searching, abstracting/indexing, referral, consulting, accounting and management, and microfilming. (Sewell 1981:49) Fletcher's checklist for academic cooperation includes collection development, library services, access to each other's catalogues, interlibrary lending, reference access, management, publicity, international links and professional involvement in the form of an agreement to represent not only yourself but also others in a national forum. (Fletcher 1991:171)

3.1.5 The case for resource sharing and library cooperation

Librarians are embracing resource sharing as an idea due to the fact that all research libraries are acquiring less of the world's publications due to rising publication costs and financial constraints. (Dowler 1995:5) Resource sharing activities are facing two challenges. Firstly, how to restore collaborative collection development as an integral part of resource sharing and secondly, how to create institutional and organizational structures that include the soaring number and variety of associations.

Shaughnessy identifies the gap between the broad range of information that is available and the inadequacy of local resources to meet the information needs as the main reason for Interlibrary loan arrangements. He also attributes the need for effective resource sharing to flat acquisitions budgets and annual increases of the prices of books, journals and other media. The natural tendency in cases of decreased ownership is to look toward other libraries for assistance, which leads to increased emphasis on interlibrary loan arrangements. (Shaughnessy 1994:4)

Recent developments in technology are fundamentally changing access to information and hold the promise of distributed, collaborative collection

management on a scale that has not been possible before. In the rapidly evolving environment of networked information, remote access and desktop delivery, technology offers the potential for realizing the a seamless web of interconnected, coordinated, and interdependent research collections that are accessible to geographically distributed users. (Reed-Scott 1995:69)

Libraries are becoming increasingly reliant upon each other in meeting the information needs of their users. Effective cooperation structures between institutions is therefore essential in order to remain relevant to the needs of the user. (Siggins 1995:83)

3.1.6 Main forms of library cooperation and resource sharing activities

MacDougall identifies exchange and coalition as two major forms of cooperation. Exchange includes the interlibrary lending of materials of all kinds, information for staff and reader inquiries, users, bibliographical information and staff, the inter-availability of tickets while "coalition is the working together regarding the development of service tools, development of resources, research, training and publishing." (MacDougall 1991:11). The exchange of material involves interlibrary loan arrangements and the sharing of staff expertise. Coalition has to do with the activities that take place in order for successful sharing of resources to take place.

3.1.6.1 Coalition

3.1.6.1.1 Cooperative acquisition and collection development

Early efforts to share resources focused on cooperative collections development. This is not at all surprising when one considers the rising costs of resources as well as the annual increase in the number of publications. In order to take advantage of the inherent potential of relationships among libraries, it is essential to reorient collection development. (Wessling 1995:121) Cooperative collection building must

be actively pursued and libraries need to embrace a plan to collectively meet the needs of their users.

Decreased purchasing power is causing library collections to look more and more alike. Libraries can only afford to buy essential materials that support only the most basic user needs. The result is that academic institutions are building duplicate libraries which support instruction in the core programs. The similar collections are also building common gaps which will surely increase and become more difficult to fill as time passes.

Cooperative acquisition or collection development is an essential part of resource sharing if institutions are to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by resource sharing arrangements. Instead of building duplicate collections libraries involved in resource sharing programmes can rationalize coverage and combat the problems of coverage, soaring prices of publications and shrinking budgets. Cooperative acquisition and storage of material has inherent problems unless a strong central monitoring control is established and recognized. The ultimate aim of cooperation is to broaden and deepen the total resources available at the least cost, and implicit in both cooperative acquisition and storage is the principle of exchange and distribution of material.(Jefferson 1977:56)

When embarking on a cooperative acquisition or collection development activity the analysis of existing collection strengths and weaknesses and the determination of development policies is the starting place. Co-operative acquisition may include the rationalization of coverage, joint ownership through contributions to a pool stock or joint ownership of materials paid for by a central fund. An agreement can usually be reached on the shared purchase of expensive or little used items or to fill identified gaps in total resources.

One way of cooperative collection development is to provide a centralized collection dedicated to the provision of service to other libraries. Where a shortage of storage capacity exists a joint storage project is an alternative to consider, for example in the form of a shared store on a cheap location which serves as a type of warehouse. The storage library serves the group of participating libraries which can follow an acquisition policy for common use. The core of the conflict is between the accessibility of stock and its storage away from the library, therefore central cooperative storage would only be possible for infrequently used material available through a quick supply loan service. (Jefferson 1977:54) It could also be argued that such an arrangement is not a sensible use of funds, even though it overcomes some of the inherent problems of interlibrary loan. (World encyclopedia of library and information services 1993:175)

Jefferson suggests a subject specialization method whereby participating libraries review books and come to some agreement regarding the purchase of the item. (Jefferson 1977:36) Subject specialization has the advantages of simplicity in allocation and assurance that within the cooperation area subjects are self-locating. From this followed the possibility of speedier inter-lending and of directing readers to specialized collections, as well as a degree of regional self-sufficiency. Disadvantages of subject specialization are the arbitrary allocation of subject fields and the fact that libraries might have to accession books of no possible interest to them. It is important to remember that if a decision is made where the existing strengths of a particular collection is built on even more, the strength in the one collection would become the weakness of the other collection. In other words, gaps would be created in other collections and should the particular library withdraw from the network. (World encyclopedia of library and information services 1993:716)

Dowler suggests the Integrated Regional Model for collaborative collection development. The Integrated Regional Model can take at least two forms: an integrated regional model or an integrated cultural model. Proponents of the

Integrated Regional Model argue that by focusing on broadly defined research domains we closely mirror the reality of trans-institutional research and because the initiative or at least support for shared resources comes from the faculties and others who have an interest in a particular research domain, there is likely to be less resistance to cooperative collection development. The focus on part of the community and its research resources creates a more manageable task than trying to build a coalition across an entire institution. Orientation towards a more integrated model of resources shared by institutions becomes an attractive target for funding agencies. Such a system of research must serve as a kind of cultural reservoir, in which reciprocity is a principal component. Viewed as a system any institution, even the smallest, can make a contribution to and participate in an integrated model of research resources. (Dowler 1995:20-22)

3.1.6.1.2 Joint user and staff training

User education programs could be developed collectively to provide users with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the network as a whole. This is likely to influence positively on the future use of the network. Network user instruction programmes should provide the users with an understanding of the concept of resource sharing as well as the operation of and the services available within the network. Joint user education programmes have the potential to be both economical and beneficial to both user and network.

Conducting joint staff education programmes and workshops increase the effectiveness and efficiency of staff members and has significant implications to the network as a whole. Cooperative training provide staff members to obtain a knowledge of the collection strengths of other network libraries, an understanding of their problems on a macro-level, an insight into the operation of particular functional and subject areas; and a strengthening of links between local libraries through personal contact and knowledge. (Stubley 1991:274) It provides an

opportunity for staff of member institutions to meet and discuss problems they encounter and to offer suggestions to overcome difficulties.

3.1.6.1.3 Development of service tools

In a networking arrangement libraries can work together to develop service tools that would benefit the members of the network. The possibilities in this regard are varied. Activities related to the development of service tools that can be coordinated include the joint provision of cooperative indexing, abstracting, or translation of material; cooperation in library automation; and joint provision of bibliographic information in the form of a union catalogue, whether manual or on-line, to assist access to. (World encyclopedia 1993:175; Fletcher 1991:168). The cataloguing of the resources of the libraries within the network can be coordinated in a way convenient and economical to the network in question. Cooperative cataloguing arrangements avoid the duplication of cataloguing in the case of two or more libraries owning the same title and a central point of cataloguing is convenient and practical in terms of manpower. Publishing activities can also be coordinated in a network.

3.1.6.2 Exchange

3.1.6.2.1 Interlibrary lending

Interlibrary loan provides a model of the successful transfer of resources among libraries to serve individual user needs. (Wessling 1995:127) The main form of exchange in a network is that of materials. Materials of all kind can be exchanged. In order for library material to be exchanged effectively structures must be set up to make this possible. A union catalogue must be created to allow for the exchange of bibliographic information. A structure must also be set to make possible the request and delivery of documents.

Information to satisfy the inquires of staff and users can also be exchanged between libraries. The inter-availability of library borrower cards is also a form of interlibrary lending, for example the availability of borrower cards to those with research interests such as academic staff and graduate students (Stubley 1991:271) In cases where users from the member libraries of a network have direct borrowing rights from all the member libraries in the network, a structure for the delivery of library materials becomes less important but not obsolete. The issue of inter-availability is not without its criticisms. The danger exists that libraries could lose control over their collections. In a case of an overdue book , or a lost book, on loan to a user from another library the question if who is responsible for contacting the user or replacing the book has to be determined.

Interlibrary loan is not without its weaknesses. These need to be kept in mind when entering an interlibrary loan arrangement. Interlibrary loan agreements fail to extend the provision of available material unless it is accompanied by a cooperative acquisition policy between the members of the network. For interlibrary loan to have a significant impact the construction of union lists is essential. This is a time-consuming and staff-intensive procedure. The processing of requests is also a time-consuming and staff-intensive exercise. Interlibrary loan agreements may also conflict with the library's obligation to its users. It is difficult to draw the line between the obligation of a member library of a network towards its own users and its obligation towards the network. The result of these weaknesses are low satisfaction rates, delays in the delivery of requested material, high costs, and low confidence in the network. (World encyclopedia of library and information services 1993:715)

Interlibrary loan services supplement resources by making available materials from other libraries. It relieves the pressure of meeting all the needs of patrons. Cooperative arrangements have grown out of the need for efficient and less costly interlibrary loan service and for a more equitable distribution of lending burdens.

3.1.6.2.2 Referral of users

Another means of resource sharing is the "exchange of users" commonly referred to as referral of users. The referral of users involves users themselves visiting the library in question to use the collection or item(s) they are interested in. This is particularly useful in the case of non-loanable material and material in high demand. The process may be assisted by the compilation and availability of directories of resources of member institutions. (World encyclopedia 1993:175) In such a case, the interlibrary loan facility which moves books from one institution to another is not used, but users still need bibliographic access to the available material. The database must be preferably accessed remotely for user's convenience.

3.1.6.2.3 Exchange of staff expertise

Library staff members from the various member libraries of a network can share expertise to make maximum use of the human resources available. For instance, the cataloguing can be performed centrally. This would mean that one or more staff members would catalogue all the material of the member libraries. Such an exercise would allow staff members to specialise.

Staff expertise can also be exchanged in terms of ideas. Staff members can share their experience and learn from each other.

Another form of exchange of staff expertise has to do with the physical exchange of staff members. Staff members rotate periodically between libraries. This is useful for both the network and the staff members since staff members obtain a better understanding of the dynamics of the network and the network is serviced by more informed staff.

3.1.7 Prerequisites for resource sharing arrangements

Certain factors ensure that resource sharing is successful. Some of these factors form essential parts of resource sharing while others are advisable for the achievement of resource sharing activities.

The success of a resource sharing activity depends on creating and operating a service within the right legal, administrative and fiscal framework. Legal considerations may include the law relating to free flow of information, legal deposit, access to government documents and patent information. It is advisable to set minimum service levels for participating institutions. The minimum service levels must be realistic, and will vary with the type and scale of the grouping. When drawing up the constitution of a resource sharing body, special regard must be paid to the goals and objectives of the individual co-operating bodies. It may be necessary to write in safeguards before participation can be ensured. (Sewell 1981:84) The success of a cooperation activity depends on the setting of and commitment to cooperative goals and on each member's awareness of their responsibilities within the network. For all resource sharing programs there is a need to articulate service policies and performance standards and to maintain the institutional arrangements and commitments.

Librarians do not question the need to share resources but are concerned with how to do so effectively. The greatest concern is how to create an infrastructure that would support successful resource sharing. Issues such as interlibrary loan, document delivery, technical issues, intellectual property rights, the cost of sharing and staffing and training of these services become real issues when resource sharing is considered. (Dowler 1995:5) As emerging technologies facilitates vastly improved access and information retrieval the issue is not whether or how to build mechanisms to share resources but how to build collections and information resources that can be shared.

In order for a resource sharing program to function adequately it is essential that satisfactory access to bibliographical details is provided. Sewell identifies 4 requirements that need to be achieved if existing resources are to be exploited successfully. These include directories of resources, the referral of readers, interlibrary lending, and references to documents. References to documents through indexes and abstracts and also in data information also enables the exploiting of existing resources. (Sewell 1981:49) Reed-Scott identifies three preconditions as critical to the success of resource sharing: on-line bibliographic access; efficient and rapid delivery of materials; and strong collections of research materials distributed at multiple sites. (Reed-Scott 1995:73)

In order to exploit the resources fully, the maintenance of an up-to-date catalogue can not be emphasized enough. The catalogue is the access point of users to the resources because it is the only way for users to know what is available in the other libraries in the network. In order for interlibrary lending to be successful access to the information contained in directories of resources and the records of holdings is required. This is the easiest when information is available on-line.

An efficient process for interlibrary loan or document delivery is crucial for the successful operation of the network. The typical interlibrary loan/document delivery process consists of six functions. The borrower must be able to identify the document; choose a particular document; submit a request for the document; the request needs to be processed; the document retrieved; and finally transferred to the lender. Most of these are under the control of the borrowing library. The document retrieval function is the only one of these under the control of the lending library. (Shaughnessy 1994:10)

An important aspect of successful resource sharing is the staff. As resource sharing agreements among libraries become more common, an increased number of library staff members will be faced with major changes in their jobs. (Siggins 1995:184) The impact on staff is critical to success. A shared leadership with participating

libraries taking an active role in determining policies and activities is critical to success. Effective cooperation must build on a partnership and close cooperation among subject or area specialists. (Reed-Scott 1995:74)

Successful resource sharing is dependent on the existence of adequate well-maintained services in participating libraries. To be an effective partner each has to maintain its basic services. (Sewell 1981:89) The success of a resource sharing arrangement is also dependent on the value it has to the individual members of the network. Each member must be able to identify the benefits of the arrangement for their institution. Some libraries borrow more than they lend but each library must contribute in some way to the overall success of the consortium. (Shaughnessy 1994:12)

Member libraries in a consortium must find a balance between local priorities and institutional requirements. Members must draw the line between self-interest and the common good of the consortium if the arrangement is to be successful. Many of the questions with which past collection management efforts grappled with remain relevant within a networking arrangement. Some of these questions include coordination problems, technical impediments, human resources and political issues.

3.1.8 The implications of resource sharing arrangements

The aim and ultimate implication of resource sharing arrangements between libraries is to broaden the resource base from where user requests need to be satisfied in order to satisfy more requests. Resource sharing is the only feasible solution to the problem of coverage due to increasing number of publications, rising costs and decreased library budgets. Resource sharing arrangements has implications for the operations of the library as it represents a different mindset. Instead of looking inwards to try and satisfy user requests, resource sharing focuses on building up relationships with other libraries faced with the same difficulties and

working out ways to assist one another in order to answer as many user queries as possible. Resource sharing arrangements effects the training and job description of staff. The changed focus of the library impacts on the job description of staff members which could be very unsettling. Resource sharing could also bring with it an increased workload, especially in the beginning stages of the network. The withdrawal from a networked information service has significant implications for all the members of a network and should be considered before entering a networking consortium.

3.1.8.1 From Holdings strategy to access strategy

Effective resource sharing, according to Brown, requires deliberately planned relationships between institutions and a move from a "holdings" strategy to an "access" strategy.(Brown 1991:2) As recently as ten years ago the primary emphasis was still on finding and obtaining what was needed from the library, Nowadays the issue of when an article or book can be obtained is becoming as important as gaining access to it. (Siggins 1995:183)

Cooperative arrangements contain within them the potential to come to the rescue of research by providing for the resources that individual libraries can no longer afford. Networking arrangements create a shift in the concept of the library as a warehouse of print-based collections to the idea of the library as the point of access to needed information. (Dowler 1995:8) Ownership of collections and the notion of self-sufficiency give way to agreements among libraries to cooperate in the provision of services and information. Improved communications, the computerization of administrative functions, fax and digital delivery of articles are improving the procedures and means for library cooperation.

Resource sharing highlights the integrated nature of holdings and access. A user can make some use of a collection regardless of access to holdings information when the material is on-site. In cases where the material is off-site and has to be

brought from elsewhere access to bibliographic information on holdings becomes crucial. It is impossible to request delivery efficiency from remote collections without access to holdings information about items available. (Wessling 1995:121)

A self-contained stand-alone database means nothing to anyone outside the system if they do not know that it is available. Nonexistent or incomplete access to serial holdings information is a serious impediment to efficient resource sharing. Issue-specific holdings information greatly facilitates efficient access, as demonstrated by high interlibrary loan fill rates when these data are available. The efficiency rate drops dramatically for any cooperative sharing of journal titles without issue-specific information. In addition, it becomes impossible to guarantee that all volumes of a journal are available long term when libraries are entering into serial cancellation efforts. (Wessling 1995:123)

Resource sharing requires that users will have the means to identify and locate needed material. If there is no or incomplete access to bibliographic information the efficiency of the network would decrease considerably. All databases should include the connection between an identified bibliographic citation and the specified document with links to alternative delivery options. (Wessling 1995:124)

As the use of interlibrary continues to increase, so does the need for a change in mindset regarding the nature of libraries. Increasingly libraries need to be regarded as centres where one can obtain information regarding the location of material and subsequent access to it rather than immediate dispensers of material. This implies that what is owned by the library is becoming less important. (Lancaster and King 1981:10) The important factor is obtaining ultimate access to bibliographic information regarding the whereabouts of the information and some way of gaining access to it.

3.1.8.2 Implications on library staff

As cooperative resource sharing agreements among libraries become more common, library staff will be faced with changes in their jobs. Staff members need to receive relevant training to cope with the changing working environment caused by the increase in resource sharing arrangements. Three categories of staff need to receive special training: library selectors who are required to be experts in resource sharing processes and practices; staff directly involved in developing resource sharing agreements; and staff who must adjust to stress brought on by change and reorganization. (Siggins 1995:185) The widespread availability of bibliographic data has increased user demands for document delivery. Document delivery is typically a very staff-intensive activity. (Shaughnessy 1994:5)

Resource sharing places increased workloads and stress on staff members because many libraries have not increased staff in interlibrary loan and document delivery units to meet the rapidly increased traffic levels. (Shaughnessy 1994:11) Resource sharing places stress on staff in the areas of education, attitude and skills. Staff members must acquire an understanding of the concept of resource sharing as well as the processes of resource sharing. Because resource sharing involves a shift in emphasis from acquisition and ownership of materials by the home institution to shared acquisition and remote access, staff must adjust their service philosophy. This is a critical factor to the success of a resource sharing effort because unwilling staff can sabotage projects.

Resource sharing projects forces staff members to acquire new skills while at the same time greater emphasis is placed on some older skills. Resource sharing brings with it an addition of new time-consuming tasks which requires effective time management from staff members. The shift in the focus of collection development to a combination of local purchase, shared collection responsibilities, and remote accessing requires adjustments in planning and priorities. (Siggins 1995:186) Interpersonal skills also need to be developed in staff members. Several changes

will begin to develop in the way in which staff perform their assignments, as well as the assignments themselves. Resource sharing is one of the many areas of library operations in which teams of staff will be developed. A more collaborative approach to decision-making will develop and division of assignments will occur. (Siggins 1995:187)

3.1.8.3 Implications if a network dissolves

Cooperative collection development strategies imply that libraries rationalize resources. A library would for instance not acquire a certain item because another library in the network already owns the particular title. In the case of the network disbanding or a library withdrawing, gaps will appear in the collection.

Subject specialization (where subject areas are assigned to libraries) as an acquisition strategy within a network will cause an imbalanced collection with certain collection strengths and weaknesses. The strength of the one member of the network would be the weakness of the other members of the network.

The disintegration of a network will mean that the individual libraries will be incapable of satisfying a large percentage of user requests. The libraries will once again be faced with the problem of coverage.

If the network database is reflected on a national database because only one network member is member of the national network, the dismantling of the network will not only affect the immediate user community of the network but all the members of the national network.

In the case of network resources rationalized to the extent that serial subscriptions were discontinued by some libraries because another library in the network subscribes to the particular serial, the end of the networking relationship will also imply serious gaps in the serials department. It is important before entering into

networking relationships to consider the responsibility of being part of a network in terms of serial subscriptions. When part of a network a library is responsible to continue subscriptions, especially if other libraries rationalized and discontinued subscriptions to the particular serial.

3.1.9 Benefits of resource sharing arrangements

All participating libraries should be able to identify the benefits of the arrangement for their institution. The principal objectives of resource sharing or cooperative collection development are to increase timely access to materials users need and that are not available in local collections and to expand the bibliographical coverage and the range of collections available. This in turn would increase the proportion of readers' requests which can be satisfied within an acceptable time. (Sewell 1981:84) Resource sharing arrangements basically serve as a strategy to link the user community with the information and documents it needs. Users have a greater number of titles to choose from than when served by only one institution. (Reed-Scott 1995:67) Fletcher is of the opinion that "if the interests of the library's clientele are not served, if there is no visible benefit to the parent institution, then the effort is doomed to failure." (Fletcher 1991:172)

A major benefit has been in the motivation and continued education of library staff, which in turn benefits the users. Staff members from the various members of a networking arrangement share ideas, experience, and expertise which has a positive effect on the individual institutions. The potential for the sharing of facilities for user training and education also exists. This can be of great benefit to the users and has begun, but is less extensively practised. (Sewell 1981:58) Networking is an opportunity for libraries to combine their role to provide bibliographic control for information with their role to provide training and support services for users. These two primary goals provide the base to formulate a library-wide vision for all staff to cooperate in providing efficient access to materials. (Wessling 1995:124)

Two significant factors to consider when entering into a networking arrangement are the staff costs involved and the joint provision of interlibrary transport. The economic implications of resource sharing vary with the kind of resource sharing activity. The greatest expenditure in a typical library is on staff. By sharing the skills of, for instance, cataloguers, cataloguing networks can enable recently acquired publications to be catalogued quicker and cheaper and without loss of quality. This is a benefit to the users because the material is available to them at an earlier date than would normally be the case.

Resource sharing may introduce additional costs but should enable the institution to provide improved access to resources at a cost lower than would otherwise be incurred. Where there is little or no improvement, there should be a saving of funds which can be used to maintain or improve existing basic services. Resource sharing schemes should not only be cost-effective, but should also offer an improved service such as easy access to a broadened resource base. (Sewell 1981:84) A resource sharing arrangement enables the shifting of costs through the reduction of duplicate collections. Instead of all the members of a network acquiring a certain publication only one of them would acquire it. This provides the potential for the widening of the resource base of the network because the costs of that item could be redeployed into acquiring material that does not yet form part of the resource base of the network. All arrangements have cost implications. Measuring the outputs of services in economic terms is not an easy task. Some try to determine what action users would take in the absence of these services and what this would cost. Resource sharing cannot be viewed as an activity for cutting costs, because it does not replace buying books. The reason for this being that one must have something to offer others.

Where resource sharing is on a basis of reciprocity, it must clearly depend on the existence of adequate well-maintained library services in participating institutions. In order to be effective each partner must maintain its basic services. The costs of resource sharing include overheads, administrative, operational and

communications costs. Resource sharing must enable a higher level of service to be provided than would be possible at comparable cost without resource sharing. Therefore, resource sharing is a means of reducing overall costs for participating libraries. However, savings are more likely to be achieved in the medium term than at the inauguration of a resource sharing scheme. (Sewell 1981:90) Several attempts have been made to compare the cost of acquiring and making available an item from the library's own stock with the cost of obtaining it through interlibrary loan. It is clear at least that the overall cost of an interlibrary loan will be less when the documents are supplied from a large centre specially set up to lend, than would be the case if they were supplied from libraries whose main objective is to meet user needs.

Resource sharing activities serve the purpose of improving overall resources by means of co-ordinating acquisitions policies. Joint acquisition is an action for increasing the total resources of the group. The inclusion of one library with overall national and regional responsibilities has an obvious advantage in that the resource base is increased even more to include the totality of the national resources.

3.1.10 The future

The future of resource sharing should aim at a more user friendly environment. The more users get exposed to resource sharing and become familiar with the approach, the more they would utilise it.

One way of making resource sharing more user friendly would be to grant all students of one institution full borrowing rights of other institutions. This will assist the user in that the user does not have to wait for the material, but that s/he can have immediate access to the desired material. The danger involved in such an arrangement is the potential loss of control of one's own stock. In the case of an interlibrary loan transaction the requesting institution is responsible for the item as

soon as it is in their possession, but once users from another institution visits directly there is no institutional control involved and the additional burden of tracing the user if the item is overdue is placed on the lending library.

Rationalization of acquisition of periodicals or books because another library close by has already purchased or subscribed to it, increases the potential for a wider resource base. Duplication of titles is avoided and money is spent on acquiring titles not yet in the network. Due to the rising cost of information resources the future of resource sharing is secure in the knowledge that the problem can be overcome by entering into acquisition agreements with other institutions.

Long-term regular exchanges of staff at all levels between libraries and joint appointments of specialist staff or subject specialists is an area that needs exploration. It has not been practised extensively as yet, but it has a lot of potential

Joint ventures in setting up binderies, publishing ventures, stores, photographic services and other services is not practised widely, but more and more institutions are entering into such agreements due to the cost-cutting potential of these ventures.

Institutions also enter into cooperative purchasing agreements to reduce the costs of commonly used items. This is not practised extensively because the in-house advantages of commonly-used items are undisputed. Agreements for little used items makes a lot more sense because the time factor in receiving it is not as critical as with high demand material.

The success of any scheme depends to a large extent upon an organization and administration able to use with the least expense of staff, time and equipment means that will bring about the desired result. This is only achievable if a deep commitment exists with all the institutions involved in the activity.(Fletcher 1991:129)

The first duty of university and college libraries is to their own users and they usually do not have financial support to provide services to others. Cooperation can be expensive in terms of both hard cash and staff time, and this expense need to be viewed in a cost-benefit manner. (Bakewell 1990:210)

3.2 The Evaluation of Library Services

In attempting to develop a methodology for assessing the value of a library service one first has to describe the present situation, for example one would wish to establish from where do users obtain their information and what contribution does the information make towards the task or goals that they are trying to achieve. (Blagden 1980:22) In assessing the overall performance of a library there appears to be two basic approaches: from the viewpoint of the user; and from the viewpoint of the library manager. There are three key elements involved in the evaluation: the user, the information use, and the library itself. (Blagden 1980:24) In this study, a user-oriented evaluation of the network was employed.

3.2.1 What is evaluation?

Performance evaluation is an assessment of how well a system or service is working, or as Blaise Cronin puts it, "the process of systematically assessing effectiveness against a predetermined norm, standard or expressed goals." (Bawden 1990:49) Evaluation is the process of identifying and collecting data about specific services or activities, establishing criteria by which their success can be assessed, and determining both the quality of the service or activity and the degree to which the service or activity accomplishes stated goals and objectives. Evaluation attempts to determine whether there is any change in performance; if so, if it is in the desired direction; and if so, to what extent. Evaluation is a decision-making tool that is intended primarily to ensure that the highest quality services are provided to intended users of that service and to assist decision makers in allocating

necessary resources to the services and activities that best facilitate the accomplishment of goals and objectives. (McClure 1993-4:592)

The totality of an information service should be evaluated in order to get a feel of overall performance and an idea of how the various components interact. (Bawden 1990:50) Musselman and Talvage advocate evaluation based on three attributes of service itself: quality from a user's viewpoint; value to the organization; effectiveness from a performance standpoint. These attributes can be further divided into such factors as accessibility, applicability, technical quality, timeliness, recall ratio and precision ratio. (Bommer and Chorba 1982:24)

Swanson (1975) identifies 7 possible objectives of evaluation. These include: to assess a set of objectives prior to implementation; to determine how well performance expectations are being realized; to determine the reasons for specific successes and failures; to uncover principles underlying success; to explore techniques for improving effectiveness; to establish a foundation for further research; and to redefine system objectives (Bawden 1990:7)

3.2.2 The need for measurement

Measurement is necessary and useful, not only for the library administrator, but also for governing bodies, library staff members, patrons, accrediting agencies and others. Increasing financial need, growing competition for funds, inflationary pressures and the need to justify the importance of library services to those responsible for funding them illustrates the need for measurement. (Lancaster 1977) Libraries are faced with demands to provide more and higher quality services. The costs of library services and materials have increased while resources for library operations have remained static or have declined. (Swisher and McClure 1984:1)

Evaluation is also invaluable for the provision of better services and products, the justification of existing services and an improved understanding of systems. (Bawden 1990:4) The development and implementation of network services have not kept pace with ongoing evaluation of networked services. The evaluation of these services could be user-based and/or system-based. Very few formal attempts have been made at user-based assessments of networked information services. A key aspect of networked information services is that there are numerous providers; there is a range of electronic information services available to users; and access to and use of these services continues to increase. (McClure 1993-4:592)

3.2.3 Levels of evaluation

Evaluation may be carried out on six levels, namely cost, effectiveness, benefit, cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, cost-performance-benefit. (Lancaster 1981; Lancaster 1977:1). The levels on which evaluation was carried out in this study are benefit and effectiveness. Effectiveness implies the extent to which the needs of the users are satisfied by the system and the degree to which stated goals and objectives are accomplished. (Swisher and McClure 1984:42; James 1990:9) Effectiveness refers to the degree to which resource allocations (staff, materials, equipment, time, space) can be minimized. (Swisher and McClure 1984:2) A clear understanding of organizational effectiveness is usually accomplished by having a written statement of goals and objectives, a formalized planning process, and established priorities for library activities. (Swisher and McClure 1984:26) Benefit implies an estimation of the true value of the information supplied. It is difficult to measure and is usually treated subjectively.

The three more complex evaluation methods attempt to interrelate the costs of the system with measures of its results (Bawden 1990:19) Cost-effectiveness relates measures of effectiveness in relation to cost while cost-benefit study attempts to relate the costs of providing some service to the benefits (outcomes) of having this service available. Cost-benefit analysis attempts systematically to compare the cost

of carrying out a service or activity with the benefits derived from the service or activity. The problem is that it can be difficult to measure the benefits of a library and information service in monetary terms - so many of the benefits are social benefits. (Bakewell 1990:48) Considering the performance of systems and services without an explicit consideration of the resources which must be invested to achieve a given level of performance is pointless. It is these resources, whether or not they are assessed in financial terms, which come under the heading of costs. (Bawden 1990:45) Examples of cost-effectiveness measures would include cost per document delivered to users, cost per question answered successfully etc. (Lancaster 1988:6)

3.2.4 Attributes of evaluation

Evaluation can be quantitative or qualitative, although the distinction is misleading. Some quantitative component generally forms part of any evaluation procedure, and until relatively recently it was taken for granted that evaluation was synonymous with quantification. (Bawden 1990:13) Qualitative evaluation is an umbrella term which covers a variety of techniques used to study the behaviour of individuals in the complexity of their real-life situations. A central concept is the idea of the case study in which one individual, group, transaction, process etc. is studied in depth, in the belief that it will shed light on a wider picture. (Bawden 1990:29) Few practitioners of the qualitative approach to evaluation regard it as an alternative to quantification. (Bawden 1990:29) Hounsell and Winn make the point that a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques, each compensating for the weaknesses of the other, is a particularly powerful one. (Bawden 1990:31) The results of qualitative evaluations should be used directly for the improvement of systems and services for the benefit of the user community. (Bawden 1990:27) A major benefit of qualitative evaluation is that they can allow the viewpoint of the user to emerge and become a real factor in a real evaluation. Qualitative data can provide depth and detail of understanding and emphasizes a holistic approach treating the totality of the system under study and its context. (Bawden 1990:28)

There are essentially two ways in which performance is evaluated, namely macro evaluation and micro evaluation. Macro evaluation attempts to assess, by any techniques available, the extent to which information services are actually used by various segments of their potential user community. (Bawden 1990:136) It involves the compilation of overall facts and figures related to the system, or components of it. The results may be purely quantitative. Examples of macroevaluation includes library statistics and library surveys. Microevaluation examines the reasons behind the results, especially the failures and attempts to identify ways in which performance might be improved. Microevaluation generally involves some kind of analysis of user response or behaviour. An example of microevaluation is unobtrusive observation. (Bawden 1990:51)

Evaluations may also be objective or subjective. Subjective evaluation is based purely on the opinions of the users of the system and tries to determine how people feel about a service. Objective evaluation, according to Lancaster, is essentially probabilistic. There can be no certain answer to the question as to whether a user will be able to find an answer to any given query in a reference collection, only a probability, depending in turn on component probabilities. (Bawden 1990:16; Lancaster 1988:7) Subjective evaluation is by definition macroevaluation while objective evaluation may be either macro or microevaluation.

3.2.5 The importance of objectives

Since performance evaluation essentially aims at assessing how well the system meets its objectives, these must be specific, clear and well-defined. (Bawden 1990:51) A general tendency towards a lack of clearly-defined objectives in libraries is a great problem for the evaluation of library achievement. Measurement of performance presupposes the formulation of clear objectives and attainable goals. (Bakewell 1990:40; Cronin 1991:75; Swisher and McClure 1984:30) Achievement is never possible except against specific, clearly defined targets. Only if targets are defined can resources be allocated to their attainment and can

priorities and deadlines be set. For objectives to be useful, evaluation is necessary, and the evaluative process needs objectives as its criteria. (Blagden and Harrington 1990:9)

A written statement of goals and objectives sets priorities for what the library is intending to accomplish. This statement provides a basis for evaluation. Statements of goals and objectives may include: a mission statement of the philosophy and purpose of the library; assumptions under which the library operates; a brief history or chronology of major events related to the library; goals (long range directions for organizational activities) and objectives which are short range, time limited, accomplishable and measurable. (Swisher and McClure 1984:31)

Formulating objectives in quantitative terms helps to ensure a client-centred perspective. Without the library mission linked to the institutional mission and the strategic objectives moderated into operational activity targets, it is impossible to satisfactorily evaluate the performance of the library. Formulating the objectives in such terms helps to identify library activities which contribute to achieving particular objectives. The activities of the library form the link between the objectives and the outputs.

3.2.6 Evaluation criteria and performance measures

A large number of factors will determine whether user demands are satisfied adequately. Various evaluation criteria are suggested by various scholars. Lancaster and Cleverdon suggest that a system needs to be evaluated on the basis of the interrelated criteria of cost, time and quality. (Lancaster and Cleverdon 1977) Lancaster identifies the major criterion by which one can evaluate the effectiveness of a library as the degree to which it maximizes either accessibility, exposure or both. The cost-effectiveness of a library can be evaluated by the degree to which it maximizes accessibility or exposure per dollar expended. (Lancaster 1977:6) Two important qualitative measures to consider are whether the user gets the

information as well as the degree of completeness and/or adequacy of the information received by the user. In addition, the extent of coverage and amount of effort required from the user must be considered. (Blagden 1980:22) Suchman (1967) suggests five criteria according to which success or failure of a programme may be evaluated: effort (what was done?); performance (what were the results?); adequacy (how well were the real needs met?); efficiency (could it have been done better?); and process (how and why did the programme work, or not?) (Bawden 1990:7)

Criteria identified by Samuelson by which performance of a system can be judged include flexibility, reliability, accessibility, availability, response time, priority, precision, timeliness, recall and pricing. In the past libraries have measured that which is easiest to measure (accessions, circulation etc), but these are input variables rather than output variables.

3.2.6.1 Performance measures

Performance measures are the means of determining the degree to which organizational goals and objectives are being accomplished, the effectiveness with which services are provided and resources made available, and the relationships among various library activities toward accomplishment of goals and allocation of resources. (Swisher and McClure 1984:37) Performance measures must be easy to apply and reliable.

Cronin identifies two types of performance measures: (1) those which relate to output ; and (2) measures which are essentially input-oriented. (Cronin 1991:75). Lancaster identifies a third performance measure namely, outcomes. (Bawden 1990:50) Input measures are easier to collect and evaluate than outputs which in turn are easier than outcomes.

Input measures investigate the system from the viewpoint of its operators, and look at the resources invested, and how they are deployed: money spent, in total and in detail; number of staff, in total and in particular functions; number of purchases, inquiries, loans, etc. (Bawden 1990:50) Input measures do not reflect on the performance. Certain standards can be achieved, but their attainment or non-attainment does not reflect on performance, or on the quality of the service offered. (Cronin 1991:75)

Output measures, on the other hand, try to look at user satisfaction, the extent to which the service is succeeding in its objectives and to what extent did the service attain the desired level and quality of response. (Cronin 1991:75) These measures approximate to effectiveness, or some benefits, and are difficult to define and apply.

Outcomes goes beyond outputs in dealing with the overall benefit, or impact of a service. Lancaster argues that the long-term objective of a library is to produce certain outcomes in the community to be served. While certain outcomes are the reason for its existence, the library is more directly concerned with the processing of inputs in order to generate outputs, which are the information services it provides. The primary input, financial resources, is used to acquire secondary inputs, namely information resources, personnel to exploit these resources, and physical facilities to store materials, offer services, and so on. (Lancaster 1988:1) The library can be viewed as an interface between the available information resources and the users to be served. Therefore, any evaluation applied to the library should be concerned with determining to what extent it successfully fulfils this interface role. (Lancaster 1988:2) Outcomes cannot be studied directly, but the criteria used to evaluate the outputs should be good predictors of the extent to which the desired outcomes are achieved.

The sequence input, output, outcome is one of increasing complexity. It would be desirable to determine to what extent the desired outcomes of a service have been attained. Inputs are tangible and easily quantified and are inherently quantitative in nature. The outputs are less tangible than the inputs but relatively more tangible than the outcomes. The outputs are easily quantified, for example, the number of documents delivered but this is not sufficient. Unlike inputs, the outputs can and must be evaluated in terms of quality. Thus, for each service provided, qualitative criteria for success should be identified. (Lancaster 1988:3)

A clear interrelationship exists among inputs, outputs and outcomes. This interrelationship has important implications for the design of information services and systems. Therefore, it is important to start by defining what the system is intended to achieve, that is, the desired outcomes. Then determine what services (outputs) are needed to produce these outcomes and how these services can be produced most efficiently and economically. This leads to the identification of the necessary inputs to achieve the desired outputs. The criteria used to evaluate these services should predict the extent of attainment of the outcomes that guided their establishment. (Lancaster 1988:4)

Certain input measures might be considered good predictors of desired outputs, just as qualitative measures of outputs can predict achievement of outcomes. For example, the more items that exist within the collection of the library, the more document delivery needs are likely to be satisfied. A different way of looking at evaluation is in terms of costs, effectiveness, and benefits. Effectiveness related to outputs, and the overall criterion of effectiveness is the proportion of user demands that are satisfied. Cost-effectiveness refers to the costs of achieving a particular level of effectiveness within an information service. (Lancaster 1988:5)

3.2.7 User-oriented evaluation

Cleverdon makes a distinction between user-oriented evaluation and management-orientated evaluation. Betty Sell uses the term user-oriented evaluation to refer to a methodology based on questionnaires to assess user satisfaction with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of services in an academic library. Johannes Boon describes a methodology for system evaluation from the user viewpoint, emphasizing qualitative user judgments of performance. (Bawden 1990:5)

User-oriented evaluation involves an appraisal of some operational information system or service. It is not synonymous with evaluation of an operational system as an isolated entity, but rather implies that the evaluation is specifically carried out to consider the system in its operational context. User-oriented evaluation is grounded in real problems and questions the practical value of the system in the everyday context. It represents a holistic, flexible and adaptive approach to evaluation. (Bawden 1990:91) User-oriented evaluation is a general style of evaluation, rather than a prescriptive methodology. A rigid prescription for user-oriented evaluation is a contradiction in terms. The concentration on the specifics of real cases allows the qualitative insights which are most likely to lead to service improvement. User-oriented evaluations must be carried out carefully and rationally but do not conform to the rigorous requirements of genuine experiment. (Bawden 1990:92) Such an approach takes into account the value of the information provided to the users, and includes in the analysis all relevant factors. It is the only approach to evaluation which can deal adequately with the true situation of information use. (Bawden 1990:7)

User-oriented evaluation is action research; each evaluation is carried out with the aim of generating information which may be used to improve information systems and services. These objectives may be very specific, or more general, and may be short-term or long-term. (Bawden 1990:93) The evaluation cannot be purely objective. An integral part of it includes a commitment to improved service

provision. (Bawden 1990:6) and will generally result in some recommendations for improvement, though not necessarily.

User-oriented evaluation will usually be micro rather than macroevaluation, although there will sometimes be occasions when a macro-approach is appropriate. (Bawden 1990:94) This is often the case at the commencement of an evaluation, when initial information is being gathered so as to identify interesting areas for more detailed investigation on the micro-level. A useful approach is to carry out an initial macro-level subjective study of user attitudes to a specific information service, isolating certain factors for a laboratory style study, then following up with a holistic user-oriented evaluation, taking cognisance of the results gained previously. (Bawden 1990:93) The regular collection of statistics and performance indicators for systems and services, on a macro-level, can also serve as a source of ideas for detailed evaluation, providing that the type of information collected bears some relevance to user needs, which is not always the case. The comparison of results from evaluations of the same general topic, carried out on the micro and macro level may be particularly informative, when the needs of real users are being considered. (Bawden 1990:95)

Failure analysis is an important and characteristic part of most user-oriented evaluations. When considering a real operational situation, with real user needs, the failure analysis can be thorough, realistic and informative in a way not possible in an evaluation carried out in a more artificial setting. The user-oriented style of evaluation is uniquely capable of channelling subjectivity, so as to draw out from it the maximum amount of information. (Bawden 1990:95) The reason for this is that user-oriented evaluation is flexible enough to be adapted to the specifics of each situation and therefore provides a balance of objective and subjective information. The primary focus of user-oriented evaluation is always going to be on qualitative evaluation techniques, but this is not to say that quantitative methods have no place. (Bawden 1990:96)

3.2.7.1 User-oriented evaluation of networks

Many networked information services are designed without input from the users and are inadequately evaluated by those the service was intended for. User-based evaluation and determination of user needs should be considered as part of the strategic planning process. It is important to identify the users of the service and how well are they able to identify and access a particular service; to what degree the network enhances or detracts from users' ability to accomplish specific tasks; and what information resources and services are most important for network clientele and how well does the network deliver these services. (McClure 1993-44:592) Also crucial to the evaluation of a network is the determination of costs and benefits of the network and to what degree do these services meet the objectives of both the provider and the user.

A user perspective should consider the culture of the communities involved and should consider issues such as the effects of networks on collaboration and scholarly communication; how the use of electronic networks can facilitate the tasks and goals of particular communities and users; what problems users have in attempting to exploit networks; and what design, management, and policy strategies can alleviate those problems. (McClure 1993-4:593) A user perspective assumes that information services should not be designed and implemented according to technical criteria alone but should take into account the particular communication behaviour, information use patterns, and work environments of potential users.

McClure identifies four ways in which the evaluation of network services can be approached. The different approaches are based on: (1) extensiveness which refers to how much of the service has been provided; (2) efficiency which refers to the use of resources in providing or accessing networked information; (3) effectiveness which refers to how well the network meets the objectives of the provider or the user; and (4) impact: this refers to how a service made a difference, for example the degree to which faculty members increased their research. Although the

evaluation of networks need to consider extensiveness and efficiency, much more attention needs to be given to effectiveness and impact measures. (McClure 1993-4:595)

3.2.8 User studies

A user study is any systematic examination of the characteristics and behaviour of users. Although it is not synonymous with evaluation, the relevance of such studies are clear. Satisfaction of user needs is the ultimate, and only justification for the existence of any information service, and obtaining information as to the way in which it is used, and the degree of success achieved by its users is a good part of its evaluation. (Bawden 1990:40) The concept of user studies is difficult to define. User studies are mainly relevant to "real life" operational systems, with real users and uses. Wilson makes the point that the planning and interpretation of user studies are ultimately bound up with the concept of information need, which only have meaning within the operational situation. (Bawden 1990:41)

The motivation to conduct a user study often arises from a need to evaluate services, in order to establish the extent to which resources are used, to re-assess priorities, or to justify the existence of all or part of the services offered. The questions typically addressed in a library user study have to do with who uses the library, and who does not; why is the service being used, or not being used; whether the service is being used effectively; whether user needs are being met, and if not, why not?; whether users are satisfied with the services; and whether the resources are being deployed effectively. (Cronin 1991:155-6).

The techniques employed for user studies has increased considerably. The most appropriate choice has to be made in every situation. (Bawden 1990:42) The predominant questionnaire approach has been supplemented by a broader set of techniques, which includes the interview, and various kinds of observations. (Bawden 1990:43) Michael Brittain presents the following approaches to user

studies: direct enquiry in the form of questionnaires and interviews on services presently used; the introduction to experimental services, with response tested by direct enquiry; the assessment of attitudes to services by means of open-ended questioning and direct observation. (Bawden 1990:44)

Brittain identifies one of the main problems of most user studies as looking at the situation through the eyes of information professionals, rather than the user. The studies are therefore carried out mainly in terms of information resources such as books, indexes, databases and processes such as reading, searching and borrowing. (Bawden 1990:44)

Attitudes will influence user assessment of services, but measuring attitudes is a complex issue. The difficulty lies in relating client satisfaction to efficiency or effectiveness and Blagden points out that respondents can be dissatisfied with a perfectly adequate service because of a variety of unmet needs which the service was never designed to meet. Another problem is that users rarely have strong views about libraries and therefore one needs a sensitive measuring instrument to tease out these differences. Users do not always know what they need or want and their opinions should not always be accepted without reservation. (Blagden 1980:55)

3.2.9 Document delivery studies

Two kinds of document delivery studies are identified, namely document availability and true document delivery. Document availability has to do with what can be immediately found in the local library while the latter involves what can be brought from elsewhere on demand. Document delivery studies are performed to evaluate the ability of the library or network to provide requested information. The evaluation criteria for document delivery are: whether the document can be delivered at all; and whether it is delivered in time to be useful.

Document delivery studies can be approached in two different ways: a user-centred approach and an objective approach. The user-centred approach makes use of techniques wherein actual needs of a sample of library users are identified, and the library is tested on its ability to satisfy these needs. There is usually a focus on failure where document delivery studies are concerned. The objective approach ignores any real users and relies on the construction of a citation pool of documents typical of those which the library should be able to supply. A sample of citations is drawn and a test is made to see how many of these are actually available, how accessible they are, or whether they may be obtained from elsewhere. This may be quantified by measures of waiting time. This sort of evaluation may be carried out either in a macro or micro fashion, with the latter examining such factors as exactly why the material was not available, whether there is any difference between types of material, subjects, etc. (Bawden 1990:130; Cronin 1991:88) The library's delivery capability is compared with that of a perfect library which has every demand immediately fulfilled. The difficulty that arises is that users learn the strengths and weaknesses of a library's collection and if there are alternative sources for the documents not owned, they often turn to these sources without making their needs known to the library staff. (Blagden 1980:55)

3.2.10 Failure analysis

Failure analysis anchors the study in user needs but does not address the issue of unexpressed needs. It is possible that users do not enquire from their library a particular document because they know that it will not be provided. The objective approach can overcome this to some extent if the list of items to be checked is chosen from the catalogue of a different library. In this event there is some overlap with collection evaluation. (Bawden 1990:131)

An attempt has been made to standardize the categories of failure to locate items as: not required; catalogue error; on loan ; library error (misplaced); or, user error. For both document availability and delivery a generalized categorization for the

sake of comparability may militate against the detailed analysis required for the improvement of the local situation. A user-oriented style of evaluation, placing these factors into the total context of information provision is likely to prove most fruitful in promoting service improvements. (Bawden 1990:132)

3.2.11 The evaluation of document delivery

Document delivery is evaluated to determine the capability to provide documents required by library users. The primary concern should be how many requests can be satisfied in time to be of use. Through interlibrary lending almost any request can be satisfied, however, the time it takes to satisfy the requests becomes important. Buckland uses the term satisfaction level to describe whether or not a reader can find a particular book on the shelves when s/he wants it. Clearly, the larger the collection, the more demands it is likely to satisfy. A resource sharing activity between libraries increases the number of titles available and should therefore increase the number of requests that can be satisfied. Buckland identifies other factors that may influence the satisfaction level. These include the number of copies held; the frequency with which a book is sought; and the length of time it is off the shelves when being used. A library's document delivery capabilities is governed then not only by the number of copies that are available, particularly of the most-used titles, but also by the loan period. (Lancaster 1977:207)

The evaluation of document delivery via interlibrary lending is far less difficult than the evaluation of document delivery from the shelves because a written record exists of all demands. (Lancaster 1977:234) Some aspects of the evaluation of interlibrary lending are not so straightforward. One reason for this is that it would be valuable to go beyond response time in order to determine what proportion of all items had arrived in time to be useful to the individual requesting them. Some indication of this could be derived, perhaps by counting the interlibrary loan requests that are cancelled by their initiators, as well as cases where items are borrowed but not collected by the requesters. It would be even more useful to

undertake a survey of the actual impact of interlibrary loan delays on library users. In other words, to determine (for a sample of requests) whether delays in delivery reduced the value of the material to the requester. It would also be valuable to know something about the number of interlibrary loan requests that are not made, for whatever reason. This would involve identifying and counting the cases in which a library user needs a particular item, cannot find it in the library, and fails to request it because he is unaware of interlibrary lending services, because he suspects that it would take too long, and so on. Obtaining this type of data is very difficult. Even estimating the number of cases is difficult. Yet it is important because library performance should be evaluated in terms of user needs as well as actual demands made. A microevaluation of interlibrary loan activities would require more than the counting of successes and failures. It would involve an analysis of the failures, categorization of the failures, and an attempt to determine why they occurred. Such analysis necessitates the identification of factors affecting the success rate, for a particular system or network. Thomson mentioned several factors that are likely to be of importance: size of the libraries involved; distance between libraries; characteristics of materials requested, including date and form of publication; how carefully, if at all, the citation was verified; the presence or absence of union lists in the region. (Lancaster 1977:235)

3.2.12 Evaluation of resource sharing activities

In order to determine the worth of a system to the users as well as whether it is fulfilling the original intentions systems need to be evaluated. Various methods can be employed to evaluate interlibrary lending. It is important to choose the appropriate method for the specific component of the service that needs to be evaluated.

Most techniques of evaluation of library services and systems are as applicable in the resource sharing situation as they are to individual libraries. When evaluating

the performance of a network the additional component of interlibrary lending of material needs to be considered.

Interlibrary lending is the most obvious way in which libraries cooperate. Libraries share resources in order to improve their cost-effectiveness and broaden the resource base which will enable them to meet more of their user requests. (Lancaster 1988:138) It is reasonable to assume that almost any item can be acquired from another library if needed by a user. The evaluation of the document delivery aspect is important in a resource sharing environment.

Tools for monitoring the efficiency of interlibrary lending include document delivery tests, failure surveys and the analysis of loan records. Statistical data is needed for research into long-term needs. Not all data needed in establishing a resource sharing system is of a statistical nature.

The performance and effectiveness of an interlibrary loan activity can be measured by three criteria as summarized by Lancaster (1977): (1) the proportion of requests satisfied; (2) the time required to satisfy them, and; (3) the cost of satisfying requests. The evaluation of the effectiveness of document delivery capabilities of any loan network or cooperative agreement must consider these factors. (Bommer and Chorba 1982:70) The success of an Interlibrary loan activity can be measured in terms of the percentage of requests satisfied, the time taken to satisfy these requests and the associated costs. Important in the evaluation of interlibrary loan activity is the fill rate. This refers to the number of items supplied in time to be of use to the requester. (Lancaster 1988:140)

The performance of Interlibrary loan networks in terms of probability of success and retrieval time needed to satisfy requests is enhanced when identification, location and availability information can be easily accessed. Existing computer technologies such as shared cataloguing networks and automated circulation systems can be useful in rapidly obtaining this available information. The desired

documents can be verified, located, availability status ascertained and requested, all in the same process. The entrance into a cooperation arrangement usually requires reciprocal services. The increased burden placed on the local collection by requests from other libraries must be ascertained. (Bommer and Chorba 1982:68)

Other possible criteria for the evaluation of resource sharing activities can be found in a report by Peat et. al. For interlibrary lending they advocate the collection of data on fill rate, delivery speed, transactions per request (i.e. the number of sources approached before a deliverable item is located), labour hours per request, and total cost per request. The tools designed to facilitate resource sharing must be evaluated in terms of their effects on resource sharing activities, for example, the cost of building and maintaining an on-line union catalog must be balanced against the effect this tool has on fill rate, response time, and cost per transaction. A more subtle criteria is the contribution that the union catalog might have toward achieving a more equitable distribution of demand over participating libraries, insuring that the largest library in the system is the source of last resort rather than the source that all libraries automatically turn to. In order to evaluate the success of some resource sharing activities the criteria would be less direct and perhaps less obvious. (Lancaster 1988:140)

Mansbridge has undertaken one of the few studies on availability within a network. The availability of items to a particular library, and the availability to the network of items in a particular library were both considered. In the long run, resource sharing activities must be evaluated in terms of the extent to which they increase the effectiveness of library services or reduce the cost of providing an effective service. (Lancaster 1988:141)

In order to facilitate the speed with which other libraries fill requests, the requesting library should verify all requests, supply complete and proper bibliographic information and process the requests according to standard format. The verification and location can be facilitated by accessing bibliographic tools,

union lists and networking systems. The more accurate the request is verified and routed, the easier it will be for the lender to locate the material. Requests, once received need to be controlled and monitored. Efficient and effective accomplishment of this process will make other libraries more willing to lend material in future. The amount of staff time and resources provided for document identification, verification and location are prime decision variables. Other factors that should be considered include: access to union lists and computer networks for locating documents, membership in cooperative networks, staff availability for processing requests and retrieval by mail service or electronic transmission with associated costs. (Bommer and Chorba 1982:69)

Document delivery capabilities for supplying material to other libraries depend upon the accuracy of request citations, availability of documents in the local collection, effectiveness of recall procedures and the volume of requests received. It is important to formulate policies regarding requests by non-network libraries and the manner in which documents will be provided. (Bommer and Chorba 1982:71)

Other angles of appraisal include reliability, flexibility, accessibility and availability, efficiency and effectiveness, acceptability and quality control. Each of these factors can be considered from a technical approach and also from a social and behavioral approach. A technical approach is when the efficiency of the system is considered. A social and behavioral approach focuses on the system as a social organism and how humans interact with the system. A simple resource sharing arrangement of an exchange type may operate on the minimum of formality, but any resource sharing involving the disbursement of funds, significant expenditure or capital outlay, requires a formal structure. (Sewell 1981)

3.3 Summary

This chapter reviews the literature on resource sharing and the evaluation of library services. Resource sharing refers to the working out of inter-institutional relationships for the reciprocal beneficial sharing of resources by two or more institutions as a response to the information explosion, financial constraints, and the increased volume of publications. Resource sharing activities that can be coordinated include all the functions of a library and resources that may be shared include books and other media, systems, activities and staff expertise. The main forms of cooperation is coalition and exchange. Coalition is the working together regarding the development of service tools, development of resources by means of cooperative acquisition and collection development, research, joint staff and user training and publishing. Exchange refers to the interlibrary lending of materials of all kinds including information for staff or reader inquiries, users, bibliographical information, staff, and the interavailability of tickets. When setting up a resource sharing network various stages are involved, namely network design and implementation, marketing and service promotion, education and training, and the network as an information utility. Each of these stages consists of essential steps that need to be taken cognisance of in order for the venture to be successful. Resource sharing arrangements have implications for the institutions involved in them such as an increased work-load for the library staff, a change from holdings strategy to access strategy and possible gaps in the library collection should the network dissolve.

The methodology of performance evaluation of library services is investigated, with special reference to the evaluation of the networking environment. Evaluation is defined as the process of systematically collecting data about specific services or activities in order to assess the effectiveness of the system or activity. Performance evaluation aims at assessing how well the system meets its objectives, therefore objectives these must be specific, clear and well-defined. Lancaster identifies six levels of evaluation namely cost, effectiveness, benefit, cost-effectiveness, cost-

benefit, and cost-performance-benefit. Evaluation can be qualitative or quantitative, subjective or objective and a macro evaluation or micro evaluation. Different scholars identify different possible criteria to determine whether user demands are satisfied. Performance measures identified are outputs, inputs and outcomes. Inputs consider the system from the viewpoint of the operators and looks at the resources invested, outputs considers user satisfaction and the extent to which the service is succeeding in its objectives) and outcomes consider the overall benefits, or impact of the service. The sequence between inputs, outputs and outcomes is one of increasing complexity and a clear interrelationship exists between them. User-oriented evaluation assesses user satisfaction. A user study is any examination of the characteristics and behaviour of users. The motivation to conduct a user study often arises from the need to evaluate. Two types of document delivery studies can be identified, namely document availability and true document delivery. Methods of evaluating document delivery, resource sharing activities and networks are discussed in the chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study was to determine whether the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries (PCTL) meets the demands of its users. In this study the descriptive and survey research methods were used to identify the present status of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries and to obtain current data about the service provision of the network. A user study was performed in order to evaluate the network from the viewpoint of the users. Survey research methods were used to obtain information necessary to answer the following research problem:

**Does the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries
meets its objectives and satisfies the needs of its users?**

This chapter describes the instrumentation and study procedure utilized in this study.

4.1 Survey Research

A research survey is characterized by the selection of a representative, random sample of persons, objects, and identifiable units from populations, large and small, to obtain knowledge of a contemporary nature. The samples are questioned and examined by means of interviews, questionnaires, attitude tests, participant observation; or a combination of these techniques to obtain information which can answer research questions or be used to test hypotheses.

The principal survey methods used are interviews and/or questionnaires. Interviews and questionnaires are used to investigate the same questions and are often alternatives. Interviews and questionnaires are not always alternatives, but can be

used together to good effect. (Line 1982) The purpose of both is to elicit information from humans which could otherwise be difficult or impossible to obtain. Both are based on schedules, and may be more or less formalized. The data gathered by using the above mentioned techniques are analyzed to show "how things happen"(Busha and Harter 1980:88) and this knowledge allows generalizations to be made about characteristics, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. Research survey techniques can save time and money, without sacrificing efficiency, accuracy, and information adequacy in the research process.

A research survey is commonly used in library and information studies and the three types are status, library and community surveys. Status surveys describe the status quo, that is, existing library practices, circumstances, systems, services, institutions, etc. (Swisher and McClure 1984:87) Many of the surveys conducted by librarians could be classed as status surveys because they merely assay conditions in a library, such as collection size, kinds of facilities and services available, amount of financial support, use and non-use of the library, and staff composition. Such surveys are conducted to record the status quo rather than to determine relationships between variables or to test hypotheses (Busha and Harter 1980:55) Community and library surveys are associated with attempts to gather information about various aspects of libraries their operational settings. A community survey is an attempt to gather recorded and unrecorded data about the various social, political, and economic facets of the library community so that more intelligent decisions can be made regarding planning, development and the conduct of services. Library surveys are systematic, in-depth examinations of libraries, library systems, or networks of libraries. Comparisons are made in these surveys between various libraries, or units thereof, and established professional standards.

4.1.1 The need for surveys

Surveys have become increasingly important for libraries to assist in trying to define their objectives. Surveys will isolate problem areas and will produce a set

of recommendations. Continued evaluation of resource sharing activities between libraries has not kept up. Surveys of resource sharing activities are necessary to know whether the resource sharing network is meeting goals and objectives, envisaged at the initial planning stages of the network. Such assessment can determine where the network is failing, where it could be improved and where it is succeeding. Surveys provide information, satisfy curiosity, and is useful for planning and evaluation purposes.

This specific survey was performed to satisfy curiosity and to evaluate the network under investigation to determine whether the network is satisfying the needs of the users and the attitude of the users towards the network.

4.1.2 Planning of the survey

Planning the survey was time-consuming but proved to be very fruitful since a great deal of information was gathered during this period. The question, "What am I trying to measure?", was asked throughout the planning stages of the survey to maintain the focus of the study. During the planning stages it was necessary to determine the scope of the investigation because the narrower the field of inquiry the more accurate the results are likely to be. Effort was put into obtaining background information as a framework for the main content of the survey. Very little documentation exists on the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries and thus it was necessary to gather comprehensive information from stakeholders in the project.

The procedure followed in planning the survey consisted of a thorough literature search, the preparation of a preliminary list of research questions, the determination of the sampling frame and decisions about the sampling of the population, the preparation of a cover letter indicating the purpose of the study and the deadline for the return of the questionnaires. The first decision that was made after defining the group was whether to use a self-administered questionnaire (i.e. one the

respondents complete themselves) or to conduct an interview. Factors influencing the decision included the number of persons, their geographical dispersion, the response rate required, the quantity and complexity of the required information and the amount of probing required to obtain the information. (Martyn and Lancaster 1981) After all these factors were considered a self-administered questionnaire was clearly the best option. The number of people in the sample made the use of interviews impossible due to time constraints. The type of information required from the sample was also suited to a questionnaire. The opinions of as many users as possible was needed for the study. A fair amount of time was spent on determining what type of information was needed and the type of questions to ask. Interviews with staff members from the various institutions were decided on to determine their lending habits. The number of staff members were small enough to make the use of the interview technique practical. The interview method also seemed appropriate because it would allow the interviewer to seek clarification to interesting responses. Interviews with the librarians would also provide a very good indication of what to expect in terms of level of awareness and skill of the students.

4.1.3 Reliability, validity and utility

The reliability, validity and utility of the instruments used are important concepts in the planning of any survey. Reliability of measurement implies stability, consistency, dependability, and predictability; and repeated measurement should produce the same data. (Swisher and McClure 1984:95) Procedures should be built into the research design to ensure the collection of reliable data prior to actual data collection. The questionnaire consists of clear, unambiguous questions that are easy to answer. The options provided for the closed questions are mutually exclusive and space is provided for marking of responses. This heightens the reliability of the data as unintelligible responses are eliminated.

The reliability and validity are affected by the awareness of people that they are the objects of an investigation. The influence on their behaviour might be so strong that

the results of the experiment are valueless. Respondents may be tempted to exaggerate their dissatisfaction with a library service if they are told that the survey results may be used to improve the service. This is the same as saying that "if you give us the answers we want, we'll give you a better service." This seriously affect the reliability of the results. The respondents in the survey are aware of the purpose of the study as an academic exercise.

The timing of the survey could also influence the reliability and validity of a survey. The questionnaires were distributed towards the end of the first semester. The reason was to allow the users, especially new users, time to familiarize themselves with the network. Another reason for choosing this particular time was that assignments had been submitted already. This would have provided students with the opportunity to make use of the network for the purpose of their assignments. Care was taken not to distribute questionnaires too close to the examinations as this was likely to lower the response rate.

Validity is an assessment of the extent to which data collection procedures actually measure what the researcher intended them to measure. Validity can never be established without reservation, but criteria can be suggested as a means to indicate the conditions under which data is considered valid. Validity is best discussed from two perspectives: the validity of research design and data collection methods, and the validity of making inferences from the subjects of the research to some population from which they came. Internal validity asks if the researcher has the correct interpretation of the data, has an additional factor(s) not been acknowledged, and did the instrument measure the variable intended. Another measure for internal validity is called face validity: this is a conceptual criterion which simply asks for a representative collection of items that accurately measure the variable under consideration. (Swisher and McClure 1984:98) The second perspective on validity is external validity. External validity asks if generalizations about the entire population can be made from findings obtained from research design units, or do unique factors associated with data collection techniques, the

research design, or the selection of subjects suggest that the results are not representative of a larger population.

4.1.4 Population under consideration

The population under investigation were the potential users of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries. The potential users are made up of the staff and students of the various member institutions of the Cluster, namely St. Joseph's Theological Institute, the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa, and the School of Theology at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. The population is not homogeneous and several groups can be identified. The group is naturally divided by institution, staff and student groups, and academic levels of study within the student groups. Although all registered borrowers at the University of Natal have access to the resources of the cluster network they were not included in the sample as they do not form part of the primary population of the network.

4.1.5 Sampling

4.1.5.1 The aim of sampling

The object of sampling is to select a part of the population which is representative of the whole population. A representative sample corresponds with population characteristics deemed important for the purpose of the specific inquiry. (Busha and Harter 1980: 56) and is large enough to allow for generalizations to be made about the parent population. A sample is biased if it does not represent the whole population. The methods used to select the sample should avoid bias. However, the choice of sampling method depends not only on the degree of accuracy but also on its practical convenience (Yates 1971:19) The population must be identified, an analysis made of its structure, and an assessment made of its characteristics.

4.1.5.2 The sampling process

Sampling is a highly skilled and complicated task. Once the sampling frame (records used for drawing a sample) is established a random selection has to be made from it. A sampling frame might be based upon lists of targeted respondents such as library employees, registered borrowers, library benefactors, library board members, or students. (Busha and Harter 1980) When a frame or a list exists, a technique called stratification can be used. The individuals can be placed into homogeneous categories of strata and random samples may then be selected from each stratum.

4.1.5.3 The sampling frame

A complete sampling frame assures that the sample which is finally drawn will not be a biased representation of the population. The sampling frame in this study is the primary targets of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries. The members of this sampling frame are all theology students. The staff members of the various institutions were not included in the sampling frame for the questionnaire because the borrowing rights of staff members and students differed. Staff members have direct borrowing rights from all the cluster libraries while students have to make use of the interlibrary loan facility available in the libraries at their home institutions. The sampling frame used in the study consisted of student lists obtained from the various institutions. The School of Theology, University of Natal provided a list the undergraduate students registered for Bachelor of Theology degree. The School of Theology was unable to make available a list of Masters and Doctoral students. Where student lists were not available the researcher obtained contact names and numbers from undergraduate students surveyed. Addresses of students were not provided on the lists, which provided a problem in the distribution of the questionnaire. To ensure anonymity the final sampling frame was not reproduced in this report.

The population under investigation was naturally divided into three distinct student bodies. Within the three distinct student bodies different levels of study were represented. In order to ensure adequate representation of all the groups in this heterogeneous sampling frame a large random sample was required. Many researchers regard one hundred as the minimum size for a sample. (Bailey 1987:96) Population size varies considerably at the various institutions, with the smallest sampling frame consisting of 33 and the largest consisting of 146. Various subgroups existed within the population frames which would have yielded even smaller samples. For this reason, as well as possible low response rate, the possibility of sampling errors that could result from this situation and the minimum sample size of 100 suggested by Bailey led to the decision to survey the complete sampling frame. When differences between the groups are tested, as is the case in this study, a 100% sample increases the accuracy of the study. Conducting a census provides the researcher with the best opportunity of getting the best results. It eliminates sampling and coverage errors, although not measurement errors.

It was possible for bias to be present due to the following reason: students registered for a Bachelor of Arts or Social Science studying theological subjects at the University of Natal were not included in the sampling frame. The reason for not including this group was because of the lack of address lists which made it impossible to locate the majority of this group. The units of this group does not form part of the primary target group because they are not theology students, but are merely registered for theological subjects within the School of Theology.

4.1.5.4 The sample size

The general rule regarding sample size is the larger the sample size the better. The size of the sample will be determined by the degree of accuracy required and, the degree to which the sample population approximates the qualities and characteristics of the general population and on the nature of the inquiry. (Powell 1985:79) The more homogeneous the population the smaller the sample can be and

the more heterogeneous the larger the sample can be. The degree of accuracy required will depend on what is to be done with the results of the survey. The more the sample is to be broken down into subgroups the larger the number should be. If differences between the subgroups are to be tested, the probable size of the differences is important. Samples that are quite small place significant limitations on the types of statistical analyses that can be employed. (Powell 1985:79) The size of the sample should be big enough to allow for some incompleteness or failure in response.

4.1.5.6 Sampling errors

Different types of sampling errors occur in various ways. Errors such as coverage errors, measurement errors, and sampling errors must be avoided when sampling the population.

Coverage errors result from inadequate sampling frames and low response rates. The set of units under study could be in error. Some units might be missing from the data set, and others might be included more than once, some might be erroneously included in the set, some wrongly allocated to a subgroup. (Chen and Hernon 1982:171) Great care was taken in the decision of which sets of units to include in the sampling frame. The omission of certain sets of units were substantiated by good reasons. The different sets of units are naturally divided by institution and no danger existed of units being wrongly allocated to subgroups. The response rates of the various subgroups differed, but were adequate for the purpose of the study. The response rate to the questionnaire was 33,33% at the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa, 63,83% at the School of Theology, University of Natal and 22,3% at St. Joseph's Theological Institute.

Measurement errors can occur in the data collected. Faulty questionnaires, poor quality interviewing, poor respondent recall, and mistakes in editing, coding, keypunching, analysis and the absence or incorrectness of some values are all

factors which can contribute to measurement errors. (Chen and Hernon 1982:171) A structured and simple questionnaire measuring only what is relevant for the purpose of the survey reduced the risk of measurement error. Care was taken in the coding and keypunching of the data to eliminate measurement error.

Sampling error is basically a function of sample size, and in the case of small populations, the relation of the sample size to the population, imprecise definitions of the population and the sample, errors in the design and execution of the sampling process, and errors due to woolly thinking on the research hypotheses to be investigated. (Chen and Hernon 1982:171) The risk of sampling error was reduced by surveying the whole population. The reason for surveying the whole population was due to the differences in population sizes at the different institutions. The populations were small enough to sample in their entirety. The selection of units within the populations would have rendered erroneously small samples.

There may also be errors in the interpretation of results, and errors in publication. Most errors can be caused in several ways and errors can and do occur at all stages of a survey. Some errors have a negligible effect on the overall results, but others may be of serious consequence and this will vary with the survey, therefore one should always attempt to reduce all errors.

4.1.5.7 Assumptions underlying study

The sampling frame is an accurate representation of the population under consideration and the questionnaires were answered by the category of users for whom it was intended and that the respondents answered the questions honestly, rather than trying to select the answers they thought were expected of them.

4.2 Data Collection

Data collection methods can be divided into three groups: observations, the use of records (documentary sources) and questioning. (Goldhor 1972:79). The choice of methods to use in the study was determined by the nature of the study and by the characteristics of the population under investigation. Various techniques can be used to assist with data collection. These include focus groups; critical incident technique; user logs; network-based data collection; interviews; group process surveys; site visits; scenario development; observation; surveys (McClure 1993-4:596) and the use of existing documentation.

Data collection techniques employed in this study include the use of existing documentation; transaction records (user logs); interviews; site visits, and a questionnaire.

Observations were suited to this study in the form of site visits. Site visits were useful for background information and provided a setting against which techniques were developed. Brochures and pamphlets collected during site visits provided very useful information. Site visits also proved helpful in explaining odd results in the later stages of the study. Documentary sources were consulted in regard to the historical development of the network as well as in regard to the interlibrary loan transactions conducted within the network. Questioning was used as an alternative to get user input in order to determine their attitude towards the network, the awareness of users in regard to the network and the use made of the network. Questioning of users was done by means of interviews and questionnaires. Library administrators and other stakeholders in the network were also interviewed. Interviews were used for providing background information. Leads and ideas were obtained from interviewees, which were subsequently followed up. Interviews with library administrators and certain individuals were not structured. Interviews with staff members of the various theological institutions to ascertain their borrowing habits from cluster libraries was structured. Interviews were very useful because

very specific information could be obtained in a very short space of time. A questionnaire (Appendix A) was designed with the aim of getting user input in terms of whether their needs are met and whether the network is utilized by the users.

4.2.1 Questionnaire

4.2.1.1 Questionnaire construction

The problems and pitfalls of questionnaire construction are discussed extensively in the literature on the methodology of surveys. Cognisance was taken of all factors that should be considered.

Objectives of The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries reviewed in chapter 3 provided the foundation for the questions. The questionnaire was not subjected to a pilot trial as experts critically assessed the questionnaire. The researcher's familiarity with the network provided a basis on which to design the questionnaire.

4.2.1.1.1 Basic structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed to answer the following:

"Does the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries meet its objectives and satisfies the needs of its users?"

In order to answer this question three subproblems were identified. The three subproblems are:

1. Awareness of the target population of the existence of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries
2. How much use is made of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?

3. Overall performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in meeting objectives

The rationale behind the structure of the questionnaire was to achieve brevity, organization, simplicity. The questionnaire was brief, attractive, asked unambiguous questions, interesting and easy to complete, analyzed with little effort, interpreted without difficulty. The physical layout was planned to achieve absolute clarity, as well as physical and logical consistency. (Swisher and McClure 1984:87) The layout was kept as simple and as short as possible, yet well organized and laid out. No unnecessary questions were included in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of 15 questions. Questions were arranged from general to specific, with less interesting sections, or sections containing more sensitive questions placed last in the questionnaire. Spacing was aimed at clearly delineating the various questions. Between the questions the eye is forced to see the end of one question and the beginning of another. The margins on the top and the sides, as well as the vertical spacing, give a sense of balance and openness to the questionnaire and avoids crowdedness of questionnaire pages. The space allocated to answers is adequate and bears some relation to the expected length of replies. The design of the questionnaire avoids ambiguity or unintelligible markings by respondents. Spaces were provided for respondents to tick.

The length of the questionnaire must depend on the nature of the inquiry and the educational level of the sample. In order to design a concise questionnaire the researcher must list clearly what he wishes to find out and then frame questions that will tell him what he wants to know. While the length of the questionnaire is important, the recipient's perception of its length is more important. Reinforcing the recipient's apprehension about the length of the questionnaire was avoided. Pages were not numbered, because that will do nothing more than point out the respondent how many pages there are. The numbering of question may be

considered in the same light, but because question numbers is useful for coding is was done.

Paper quality and type font should give the impression of clarity and neatness. The font was chosen for ease of reading. The questions were printed in bold font in order to stand out and clearly delineate the beginning of each question. Spacing between questions were used in the same way. The questionnaire was designed in A4 format, and covers three pages. Examples of the questionnaire and the cover letter are shown in Appendix A and Appendix B.

4.2.1.1.2 Type of questions

Questions were formulated in such a way that they are both reliable and valid. Factual questions have a high reliability, but cannot be used for something subtle. Questions were phrased as objectively as possible. The respondent must not be able to guess a preferred answer. Loaded questions were avoided. An emotionally loaded word is more likely to elicit the respondent's feeling about the word than the intent of the question. In order to encourage honest answers the respondents remained anonymous.

4.2.1.1.3 Unstructured questions

Unstructured (or open-ended) questions are useful in pilot investigations or when the researcher has little knowledge of the number or the variety of responses that might be expected. Unstructured questions are also appropriate when the researcher already knows that a large number of different responses will be received or when there is a need to collect data that fully reflect the feelings or perceptions of respondents. Unstructured questions were used in the questionnaire to elicit the feelings and attitudes of the respondents and to determine the respondents' understanding of the cluster system. Fully open-ended questions, essentially asking for a free and unconstrained expression of views from the respondent were used

although the analysis of the resulting data can be difficult because the researcher does not have the opportunity for clarification and explanation of interesting responses. (Bawden 1990:37)

4.2.1.1.4 Structured (closed) questions

Structured questions were used in order to minimize the response time to complete the questionnaire and to somewhat lead the respondent. Closed questions help the respondent because the respondent gets an idea of what type of data is required. The researcher is also assisted by closed questions because they are easy to code and wayward responses are eliminated.

Structured questions are useful because they offer the respondent a clearly delineated set of categories. The advantages of closed questions include the standardization of questions and the ability to pre-code. The disadvantages of closed questions are that any spontaneity of response by the respondent is removed, the list of responses may not be appropriate to all respondents and in some cases may be very long, and the researcher is less likely to obtain unusual responses. The structured questions used in the questionnaire reduced the time needed by the respondent and simplified the analysis of the data because the questions could be precoded even before the questionnaires were mailed. (Swisher and McClure 1984:88) Structured questions allow quantitative information to be given in one or several predetermined ranges so that the information can be keyboarded for analysis without further work. The general rule used in the construction of the questionnaire was to write structured response questions, making exceptions only when attitudes or opinions were required. The researcher's familiarity with the network provided a very good basis for the construction of structured questions, because responses could be very accurately anticipated. Where categorization of responses were used "other" was included as a possible choice for situations that were not anticipated. Space was built into the instrument to allow the respondent to qualify where "other" was elected. The advantage of categorization is that it avoids ambiguity and

misinterpretation. Scaled response questions were used where appropriate to elicit information in a more structured way. Rating scales were used for the measurement of attitudes. Attitude scaling was used. The simplest scale is dichotomous (one in which the respondent chooses between two alternatives e.g. Yes/No) because it gives the respondent little flexibility in his replies. This was suitable only for questions in which the answer is clear-cut. Two types of multiple-choice questions were used in the questionnaire. Both involved the use of checklists from which appropriate answers were chosen. In the first type of multiple-choice question used the respondent selects the single best or most appropriate answer and in the second type the respondent chooses all responses that apply.

4.2.1.2 Response rates

Questionnaires may elicit low response rates and are characterized by non-responsive bias. The response rate is improved if reminders are sent, but due to time constraints it was not possible. A response rate of 60% would be considered to be quite high for mail distribution. Any return giving an average response rate of 40% is likely to be prone to very substantial errors and biases due to non-response. (Line 1982) The response rate for this study varied considerably from institution to institution. The response rate at the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa was 33,3%, the response rate at the School of Theology was 63,83% and the response rate at St. Joseph's Theological Institute was 22,3%.

4.2.1.3 Distribution of questionnaire

Questionnaires were mailed or distributed in some other way to the selected sample. In most cases selected sample received the questionnaire in an impersonal way, which necessitated a self-explanatory questionnaire. A friendly, but professional, cover letter, was sent with each questionnaire explaining the purpose of the questionnaire, identifying the investigator and requesting co-operation. (Martyn and Lancaster 1981) Questionnaires were not sent to individually named

students and the questionnaires were confidential. For this reason the sampling frame will not be reproduced in this report.

The questionnaires, accompanied by a cover letter (examples of which are shown in Appendix A and B) were distributed in the last week of May 1996. The return date (7 June) was indicated on the cover letter. The students were allowed about 10 days to return the questionnaires. Difficulties were experienced in obtaining names and addresses of University students, and in distributing questionnaires to students at the University of Natal and at St. Joseph's Theological Institute. Questionnaires were posted in the postboxes of students at the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa. Reminders were not sent because of time constraints. In order to ensure that students do not complete more than one form each, a checklist was used for the university students and at EBSeMSA the questionnaires were distributed in student postboxes.

4.2.2 Existing documentation

A certain amount of data can be obtained from existing documents, particularly background information. The use of existing documentation is helpful to the researcher to familiarise him/herself with the situation. The technique is also useful to give direction to the study and to set the scene for the investigation. Existing documentation like brochures and pamphlets obtained from the various institutions were very useful in providing background material about the institutions and the activities of the cluster.

4.2.3 Site visits

The information required for the study concerns several libraries. Data was collected by a series of visits. It also served as a good way to fill in the background and provided a setting against which other research techniques were developed. At a later stage it helped to explain factors which have given rise to odd results. The

usual procedure involved outlining the sort of information wanted, and giving the librarian reasonable advance warning.

Site visits are similar to the case study approach except that site visits entails less time and is less formal and detailed. A site visit is planned to obtain first-hand information from tours to specific facilities or services, interviews with groups or individuals, or observation of specific activities at the site. A site visit is performed to obtain reports, brochures, and examples of products or services made available at the site. The site visit also provided the potential for direct comparison and contrast of the different libraries involved. The major benefits of the site visit are the opportunity of having first-hand information about users or activities in a particular setting, and the opportunity of evolving the data collection strategies on site depending on the topics the evaluator deems important to probe for obtaining additional information. (McClure 1993-4:599)

4.2.4 Interviews

An interview is the best way of getting an in-depth understanding of a situation from the viewpoint of the participant. Interviews can be formal, closed or structured. Stone considers that the semi-structured style is the most appropriate to library and information studies. The more structured the interview, the more reliable. (Bawden 1990:33) Interviews ensure a high response rate, the danger of misunderstanding and careless answering is reduced and the interviewer can help to remove suspicion. An inherent danger regarding interviews is that of the interviewer guiding the discussion. The differences of race, sex, age, colour, class can make rapport difficult. The reliability of the interview is determined by the extent to which the interpretation and phrasing of questions is left to the interviewer. The more the interpretation and phrasing is left to the interviewer the less reliable the interviews. With open-ended questions interviews have the advantage over mail questionnaire since people are more likely to speak long answers than to write them. The interview technique was essential to the study

because very little has been documented about the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries. Interviews with the people involved in the Cluster network was essential for the gathering of information. The librarians and administrators at the various institutions were interviewed to obtain background and status information. Staff members at the institutions were interviewed to determine their lending habits.

4.2.5 Transaction records (user logs)

Transaction records were useful to obtain information pertaining to the interlibrary loan activities. The transaction records revealed the amount of lending between the libraries and interesting lending patterns. The delivery rate could also be determined as well as the reasons for failure to deliver.

4.3 Summary

Survey research has become important in libraries to assist in trying to define their objectives by isolating problem areas and producing a set of recommendations. Surveys of resource sharing activities are necessary to determine whether a network is meeting goals and objectives. Survey research is characterised by the selection of representative, random samples from population in order to obtain knowledge of a contemporary nature. Samples are questioned by means of interviews, questionnaires, attitude tests, observation or a combination of these techniques. The principal survey methods used are interviews and/or questionnaires.

The planning of the survey was time-consuming, but important as a lot of information was gathered in this stage. The scope of the study was determined, a thorough literature search was conducted, research questions were prepared, the population was sampled, and the instrumentation was prepared.

The population under consideration was the potential users of the PCTL and includes staff and students from the various member institutions of the cluster. The aim of sampling was to select a representative sample that characterized the parent population and was large enough to allow for generalizations to be made. A complete sampling frame was chosen.

Data collection methods employed in this study included the use of existing documentation, transaction records (user logs), interviews, site visits, and a questionnaire. Site visits were useful for background information, documentary sources were consulted in regard to the historical development of the network and users were questioned by means of interviews and questionnaires.

The questionnaire was constructed to answer the research question. The rationale behind the questionnaire was to achieve brevity, organization and simplicity. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions and was kept as short as possible. The questionnaire was mailed or distributed in some other way. In most cases the selected sample received the questionnaire in an impersonal way. The response rates varied considerably from institution to institution.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This chapter presents data and interpretation of findings derived from the survey conducted among the users of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in regard to the research problem and the subproblems of the study which are as follows:

5.1 The Research Problem

Statement of the problem

Does the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries meet its objectives and satisfies the needs of its users?

Subproblems

1. Awareness of the target population of the existence of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries
2. How much use is made of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?
3. Overall performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in meeting its objectives

5.2 Data Presentation and Interpretation

SUBPROBLEM 1: Awareness of the target population of the existence of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries

Answers to question 5 and question 6 of the questionnaire provided information for subproblem 1.

Question 5 was intended to determine the level of awareness of the network among the respondents. The responses to the question revealed an extremely high awareness level. All the respondents from both Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSemSA) and St. Joseph's Theological Institute claimed to be aware of the facility. Only one of the respondents from the School of Theology was unaware of the network. The reason being that the person was new to the campus. The responses of a number of students show a lack of understanding of what the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is. The misunderstanding is illustrated by the mention of lack of transport as a reason for non-use of the facility. An important relationship exists between awareness of a system and understanding of a system. Awareness of a system can exist without an understanding of the system. Awareness is merely the first level of understanding the operations of a system. Understanding a system fully is brought on by use of the system. Awareness of a system is the first stage in making use of the system before moving to the next level of understanding the system which is critical in using a system and consequently satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Question 6 was intended to determine the sources responsible for bringing about awareness of the library network among the users. Various options including a friend, a lecturer, a librarian, leaflets or notices and other were provided for respondents to tick.

TABLE 1

Sources of awareness of Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries

Institution	Lecturers	Librarians	Leaflets & notices	Friends	Other
EBS	1	7	4	0	0
UNP	15	9	16	8	2
SJ	21	16	8	6	2
TOTAL	37	32	28	14	4

Awareness of the network was attributed to various factors. Lecturers at all institutions seemed to be the major source as can be seen in Table 1. The second important source of awareness of the network was librarians. This was followed by promotional material, such as leaflets or notices. Respondents were also made aware of the network by friends, student notice board, word of mouth, and the on-line public access catalogue at the University of Natal.

SUBPROBLEM 2: How much use is made of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?

The second problem of the study was to look at the extent of use made the PCTL. To do this data from inter library loans, interviews with participants on materials borrowed and questions 7, 8 and 9 of the questionnaire provided the data needed for this problem.

Question 7 attempted to establish the number of users who have borrowed material from cluster libraries other than the libraries at their home institutions. The majority of the respondents to the questionnaire have never borrowed material from any of the libraries in the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries other than the library at their home institution. Forty-two of the respondents who are aware of the facility, namely 57,53%, have never borrowed items from another

cluster library. When non-use of the network at the different institutions are compared an interesting observation is made. Ten respondents from EBSemSA (90,91%) and 78,78% of the respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute have not used the library service while 82,76% of the respondents from the School of Theology have used the library service before. Clearly, an imbalance exists in the user patterns of the different institutions. The majority of the lending is done by the respondents from the School of Theology. The imbalance in the number of requests by the respondents from the various institutions is confirmed by the interlibrary loan records.

Question 8 was aimed at determining how frequent individual users borrow material from other cluster libraries. The EBSemSA user who has borrowed material before claims a frequency of once a year. Of the six respondents from St. Joseph's who have used the facility before, three have borrowed once only. One respondent has borrowed three books in the first semester of 1996 and one respondent borrows when there is an assignment that requires him/her to borrow material from other cluster libraries. Twenty-four users from the School of Theology have borrowed from other libraries in the network. The frequency of use ranged considerably. Some respondents were very specific as to the amount of times they use it while others just indicated whether use is frequent or infrequent. Two respondents borrow once a month, one respondent twice in three months, one respondent once per semester, one respondent borrows weekly; and two respondents borrow two to three times per semester. Eight students responded that it depends on the availability of material in their own library and need. If the required material is out on loan they will seek help from other cluster libraries. Students will also borrow if their work required more information than available in their own library. Three students claim to borrow from other libraries very frequently. One of the three uses Luthos library frequently for doing assignments. Five students admit to using other cluster libraries infrequently. The reason given by one student is that it is too much effort to obtain books from St. Joseph's or EBSemSA. The "effort" referred to by the student is the process of filling in the

reservation card to obtain material from elsewhere. Another student does not use the other cluster libraries frequently because the University of Natal Library has a wide range of books on the topics the particular student studies.

Question 9 was aimed at isolating possible reasons for non-use of the Cluster facility by individual users. Respondents were provided with responses to choose from. The responses included: I do not know how to access the on-line (computer) catalogue, I find all the material I need in my own library, I have to wait too long to receive the material, I am unsure of the process, and other.

The main reason provided by nine respondents from EBSemSA for not using the network facility is that they find all the material needed in the home library. One respondent is unsure of the process and another respondent does not know how to access the on-line computer catalogue. Two respondents do not use the facility because they have to wait too long for material to arrive.

Five respondents from the School of Theology have never used the facility. Three of the respondents find all the information they need in their own library. One respondent does not borrow from other libraries because the waiting period is long before the requested material is received. The other respondent is new to the campus and has not had the opportunity to use the network.

Twenty-seven respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute have never used the network, although aware of it. Sixteen respondents find the collection in their library sufficient for all their needs. Eight respondents are unsure of the process and seven do not know how to use the on-line catalogue. Seven respondents do not borrow from other institutions because they have to wait too long to receive the requested material. One respondent does not use the facility because friends at other institutions borrow on his/her behalf. Two respondents indicated that they do not use the network because they do not have transport. This indicates a misunderstanding of what the network is.

The transaction records, as obtained from the University of Natal Main Library, reflects the true number of requests for material submitted within the cluster library network. The interlibrary loan transaction records supplement the data collected from the respondents. These records are entries of all requests submitted to the network and indicates the date the request was submitted, the name and borrower number of the patron, the availability of the item and the return date. The transactions for the period 1 June 1995 - 31 May 1996 were used for the purpose of the study. This includes the time of distribution of the questionnaire.

TABLE 2

The total number of cluster requests between 1 June 1995 and 31 May 1996

REQUESTING LIBRARY	LENDING INSTITUTIONS				
	UNP	ELC	DOM	SJ	EB
UNP	-	46	45	471	192
ELC	0	-	0	0	0
DOM	0	0	-	0	0
SJ	27	0	0	-	0
EB	9	0	0	0	-
TOTAL	36	46	45	471	192

A total of 790 items were requested between 1 June 1995 and 31 May 1996 within the cluster network. The University of Natal submitted 95,44% of the requests, while only 4,56% of the requests were submitted to the University of Natal. Of the requested material 59,62% was requested from St. Joseph's Theological Institute, 24,3% from EBSemSA, 5,67% from the Dominican Library and 5,82% from the Evangelical Lutheran Centre.

The staff members from the various member institutions of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries (PCTI) have direct borrowing rights from the various cluster libraries. This provides staff members with two options of utilising

the cluster library network. Staff members have the option of borrowing directly from cluster libraries or requesting resources via the interlibrary loan facility. As a result, direct borrowing by staff members of the various institutions is not reflected in the library records of the interlibrary loan transactions. In order to determine the amount of lending by staff members and the user patterns of staff members a number of questions were put to the staff members. (Appendix C)

The questions were administered to the staff members either by means of electronic mail, surface mail or structured interview. Difficulties were experienced in setting up appointments with staff members from the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa and St. Joseph's Theological Institute. Staff members from the School of Theology were mainly reached by electronic mail and personal interviews.

A percentage of 52,94% of the respondents use material from cluster libraries other than the library at the home institution. The reason given by all the respondents who do not borrow from the network is that the resources in the home institution are sufficient for their needs. The respondents who do borrow from the network indicated that they borrow infrequently. Only one respondent indicated regular borrowing.

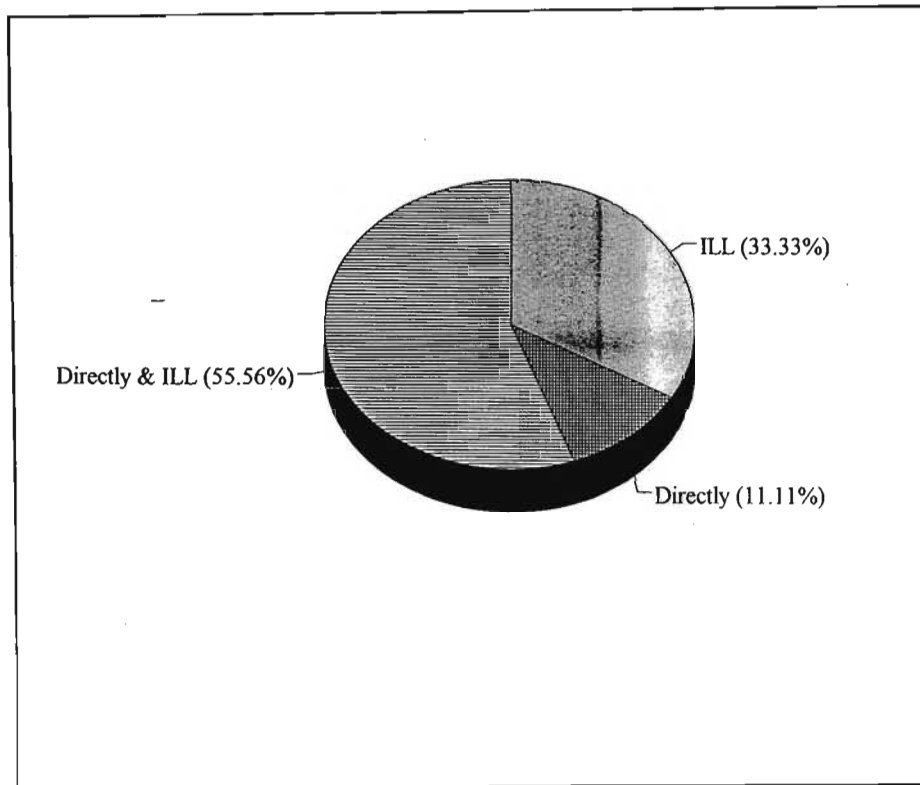


FIGURE 1

Borrowing patterns of staff members

Figure 1 above illustrates the borrowing patterns of the staff members from the cluster institutions. The interlibrary loan facility is used exclusively by 33,33% of the respondents, 11,11% of the respondents only borrow directly from the libraries and 55,56% of the respondents borrow both directly and via the interlibrary loan facility. Therefore, the transactions of 88,89% of the respondents are reflected in the transaction records and 66,67% of the respondents borrow directly from the cluster libraries and these transactions are not reflected in the transaction records.

SUBPROBLEM 3: Overall performance of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in meeting objectives

The third problem of the study intended to address the overall performance of the PCTL in meeting objectives. Data obtained from interlibrary loan transaction

records, interviews and questions 3, 4, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of the questionnaire provided the information for subproblem 3.

TABLE 3
Library user patterns of respondents

Source	UNP	SJ	EBS	TOTAL	%
SJ	15	33	0	48	64,86%
UNP	30	5	1	36	48,65%
DOM	4	9	0	13	17,57%
ELC	18	0	0	18	24,32%
EBS	8	0	11	19	25,68%
PERS.	14	15	4	33	44,59%
OTHER	2	5	0	7	9,46%

In response to question 3, respondents from EBSemSA indicated that the Stuart Lear Library, EBSemSA, was their main source of information (Table 3). All the respondents from EBSemSA find the information needed for their academic work in this library. Four of the respondents utilise personal collections for academic purposes and one respondent finds information in Main Library, University of Natal as shown in Table 3. The respondents from the School of Theology, University of Natal utilise a variety of libraries to obtain information for their academic work. All thirty of the respondents from the School of Theology find information they need in the library at their own institution. Fifteen of the respondents find the information needed in the Denis E. Hurley Library at St. Joseph's Theological Institute while eighteen respondents find the information they need at Luthos Library. The Stuart Lear Library provides information for eight of the respondents from the School of Theology and the Dominican Library to four respondents. Personal collections form a source of information to fourteen of the respondents. Two respondents obtain information from libraries other than the ones mentioned above. The one respondent obtains information through the national

interlending network, SABINET, and the other from Mapumulo. The Denis E. Hurley Library at St. Joseph's Theological Institute is most commonly used by the respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute. All the respondents find information pertaining to their academic work in this library. Five respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute find information in the University Library and nine respondents find information in the Dominican Library. Personal collections are used by fifteen of the respondents and community libraries such as Oblate community library, OMI library, Abbott Francis House library and Marionhill House library were mentioned by five respondents.

The Denis E. Hurley Library at St. Joseph's is the library where most of the respondents find the information they need. The reason for this could be that most of the respondents were from the School of Theology and from St. Joseph's Theological Institute. Lending between seminaries have not been developed, therefore all the borrowing from the seminary libraries were by the University of Natal. As shown in Table 2, the most heavily used collections are the collections of St. Joseph's, the university library and personal collections. A notable observation is the number of respondents from the School of Theology (60%) who make use of material from the Evangelical Lutheran Centre.

Students were asked their perceptions of the likelihood of the library at their own institution to supply the information required for their academic requirements in question 4 of the questionnaire. EBSemSA respondents are confident that their information needs will be satisfied by the Stuart Lear Library. Six respondents are of the opinion that the Stuart Lear Library is very likely to contain what they need and five respondents that the library is likely to obtain what they need. Respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute are also confident that their information needs will be satisfied at their home library. Eighteen respondents consider it very likely that their information needs will be met while fifteen consider it likely that they will find what they need in their own library. The respondents from the School of Theology, University of Natal are less confident that the university

library will have what they are looking for. Fifteen of the respondents from the School of Theology feel that the Main Library, University of Natal is very likely to supply the information they need and eight respondent are of the opinion that the library is likely to satisfy their needs. Five respondents responded that the University library is unlikely to supply the information required and two respondents were uncertain as to whether the library will have what they are looking for.

TABLE 4
Users attitude towards lending policies

Institution	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	No comment
EB	8	3	-	-
SJ	12	16	1	4
UNP	2	16	7	2
TOTAL	22	35	8	6
%	30,99%	49,3%	11,27%	8,45%

The responses to question 10 which pertains to the attitude of users towards the lending policies (four books for a period of two weeks) varied considerably. EBSemSA respondents do seem to be content with the current lending policies. Eight respondents indicated the lending policies to be good and three respondents find the lending policies satisfactory. The majority of respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute are content with the lending policies. Twelve find the lending policies good and sixteen find the lending policies satisfactory. One respondent considers the lending policies poor and four preferred not to comment on the issue. Respondents from the School of Theology are less content with the arrangement. Only two respondents find the lending policies good, sixteen respondents find the lending policies satisfactory while seven respondents consider the lending policies to be poor and two respondents did not want to comment on this issue.

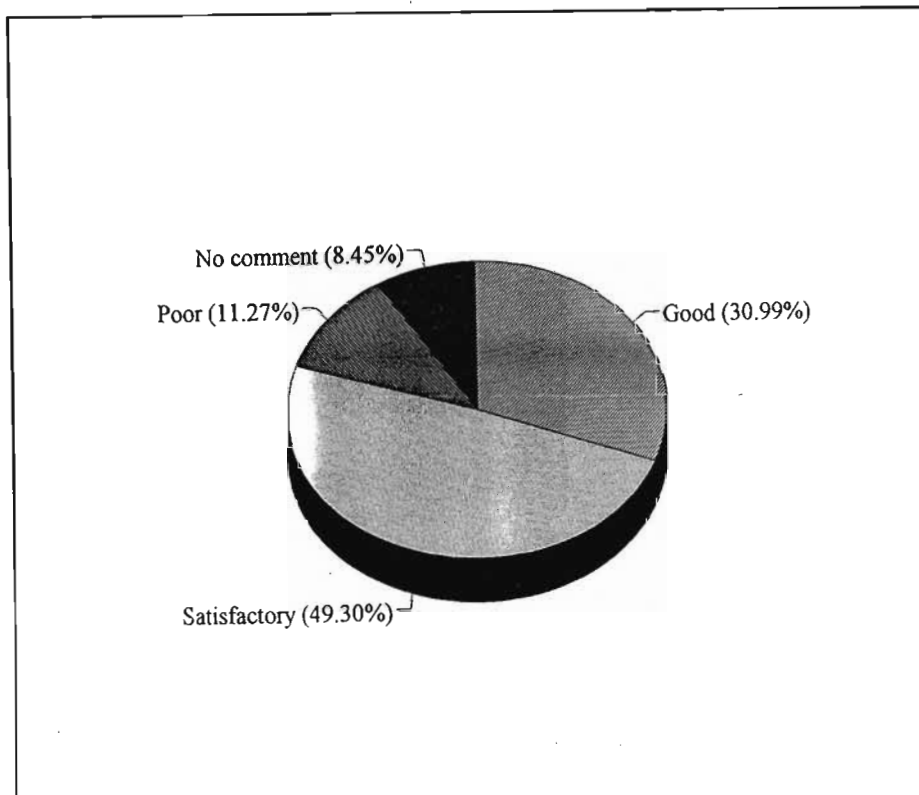


FIGURE 2

User satisfaction with lending policies

Respondents are seemingly satisfied with the lending policies of 4 books for a period of two weeks. The lending policies were indicated as being satisfactory or good by 80,29% of the respondents. The lending policies were considered poor by 11,27% of the respondents and 8,45% of the respondents preferred not to comment.

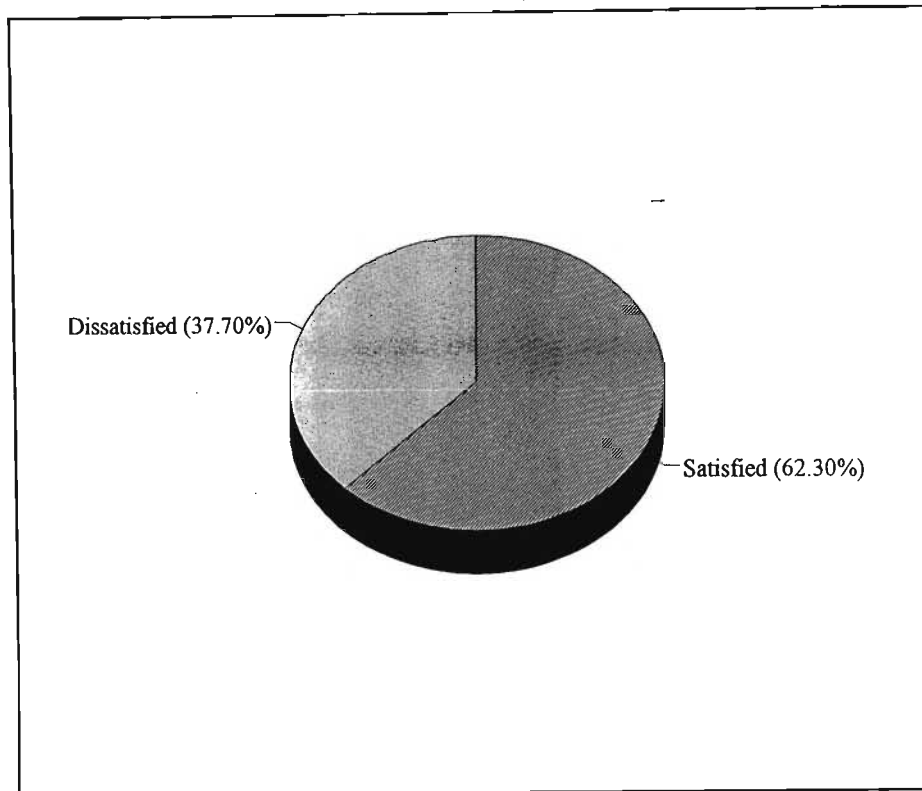


FIGURE 3

User satisfaction with the regularity of the service

The response to this question, as seen in Figure 3 above, indicates that the majority of the respondents, 62,3%, are satisfied with the regularity of the service. The regularity of the service was viewed by 37,7% with dissatisfaction.

The question of satisfaction with the regularity of the service (once a week) provoked divided opinions from the respondents from the School of Theology and St. Joseph's Theological Institute. Fourteen respondents from the School of Theology were satisfied with the regularity of the service while ten were not. All ten of the dissatisfied respondents referred to the long waiting period of a week as unsatisfactory because sometimes material is needed urgently. All ten respondents want the service to be more regular. The students feel that they cannot wait a whole week for a book to arrive. One student commented that the books sometimes arrive too late to be of use for the purpose it was intended for.

One suggestion is that the regularity of the service should be increased to twice a week. One respondent said that the material in the University of Natal library does not satisfy, there is only one copy among many students and therefore the service should be improved. Fifteen respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute were satisfied with the regularity of the service while thirteen were not. The respondents feel that the service is not regular enough because when they need books they need them urgently. One respondent says that s/he has regular deadlines and cannot wait for books for a week. Waiting a whole week is frustrating and wastes valuable time. One student cannot understand why s/he cannot borrow directly as it would avoid this problem. Three respondents suggested that a twice a week service is likely to satisfy. Two students say that sometimes the books are on loan in the other institution and fail to arrive.. Nine EBSemSA respondents were satisfied with the regularity of the service while not one respondent expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangement.

TABLE 5
Availability of requested material

	USUALLY	MOST OFTEN	SOME-TIMES	RARELY	NEVER
SJ	3	1	1	-	1
UNP	8	7	9	1	-
EB	1	-	-	-	-
TOT	12	8	10	1	1

Responses to question 12 indicate that twelve respondents (37,5%) found that the requested material is usually available (Table 5). Eight respondents (25%) indicated that requested material is most often available and ten respondents (31,25%) indicated that requested material is sometimes available. One respondent (3,13%)

indicated that material is rarely available and another respondent (3,13%) that material is never available.

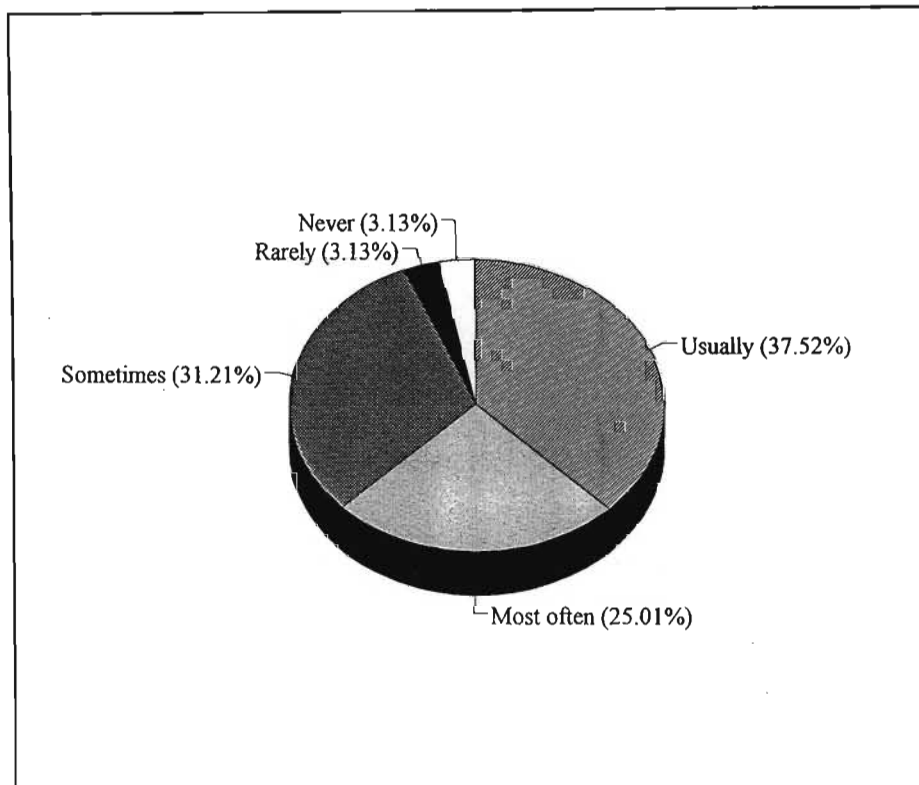


FIGURE 4

Respondents' expectation of the availability of material

Figure 4 illustrates perception of the availability of material in the network. The response is favourable as most of the respondents perceive the requested material to be usually or most often available. A percentage of 31,21 of the respondents perceive material to be available sometimes while only 3,13% respectively perceive material to be rarely or never available.

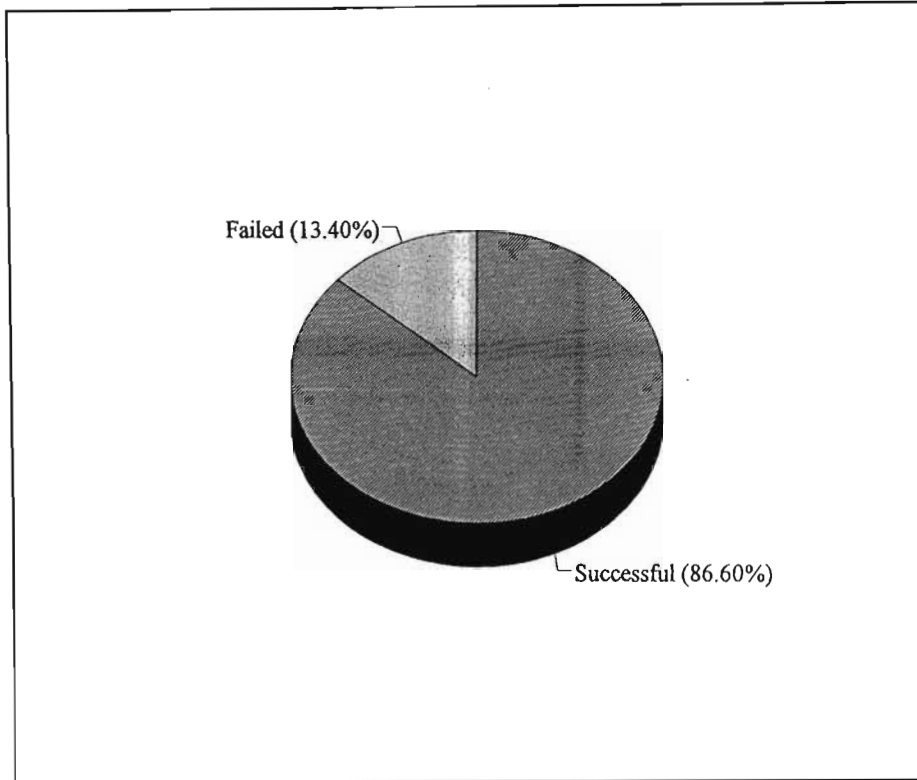


FIGURE 5
Requests submitted 1 June 1995 - 31 May 1996.

Figure 5 illustrates the filling of requests by the PCTI. A total of 790 requests were submitted to the network between 1 June 1995 - 31 May 1996, of which 684, i.e. 86,58%, were successfully filled.

TABLE 6**Successful Cluster Requests from 1 June 1995 to 31 May 1996.**

Requesting Library	LENDING LIBRARIES				
	UNP	ELC	DOM	SJ	EB
UNP	-	38	36	402	172
ELC	0	-	0	0	0
DOM	0	0	-	0	0
SJ	27	0	0	-	0
EB	9	0	0	0	-
TOTAL	36	38	36	402	172

A total of 684 requests were successfully executed during the period 1 June 1995 to 31 May 1996. An overwhelming majority of the transactions were by the University of Natal Library. Of the total of 684 successful transactions, 94,74% were in the favour of the University. Most of the items borrowed by the University were St. Joseph's Theological Institute. The number of items borrowed from St. Joseph's Theological Institute represents 62,04% of the items borrowed by the University of Natal and totalled 402 items. The University of Natal borrowed 172 items from EBSemSA, which represents 26,54% of the total lending by the University Library. The Dominican and Luthos libraries lent 5,55% and 5,86% of respectively to the University Library. Only two of the Cluster Libraries borrowed items from the University of Natal Library during the period under investigation. St. Joseph's Theological Institute borrowed 27 items, 75% of the cluster lending from the University, and EBSemSA borrowed 9 items, or 25% of the cluster lending from the University.

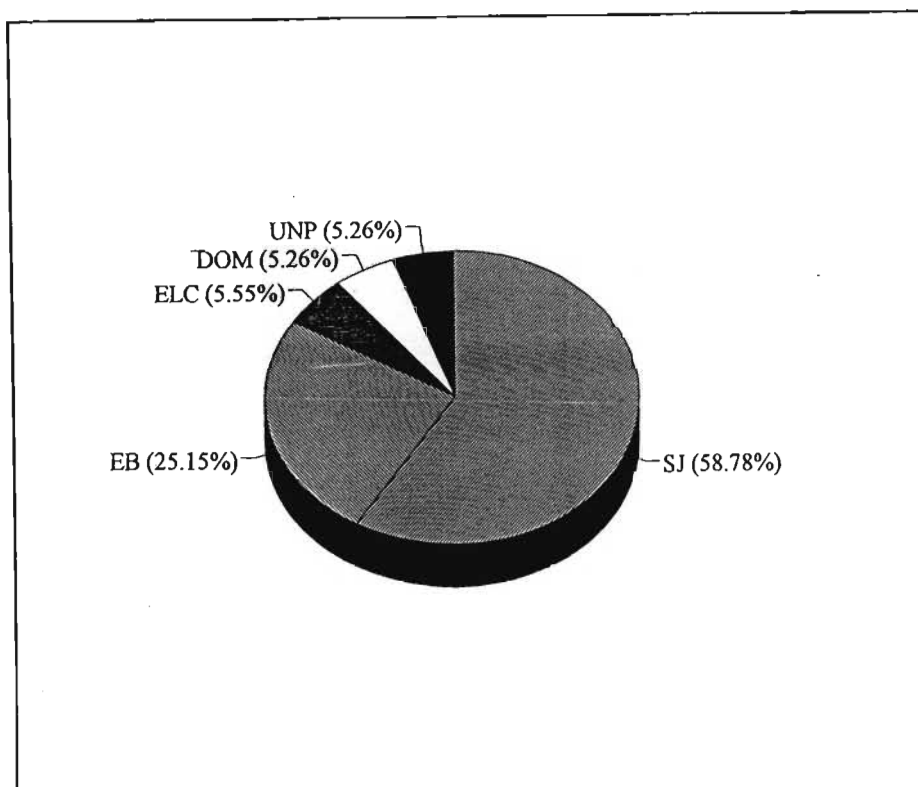


FIGURE 6

The contributions of the individual libraries to the successful requests

St. Joseph's Theological Institute supplied 58,77% of the successfully executed transactions, EBSemSA supplied 25,15% of the successfully executed transactions, the Evangelical Lutheran Centre supplied 5,55% of the successfully executed transactions and the University of Natal and the Dominican library each supplied 5,26% of the successfully executed transactions. If it is taken into account that the University of Natal can lend and borrow from all cluster libraries while the other cluster libraries supply material exclusively to the University, it is evident from the above table that most of the lending is in favour of the University of Natal.

TABLE 7**Failure rate for requests submitted between 1 June 1995 - 31 May 1996**

INSTITUTION	FAILURE	REQUESTS	RATE
EBSEMSA	20	192	10,42%
ST. JOSEPH'S	69	471	14,65%
LUTHOS	8	46	17,39%
DOMINICAN	9	45	20%
UNP	-	36	0%
TOTAL	106	790	13,42%

The failure rate of the libraries in the network to satisfy requests submitted to the network is 13,42%. The highest failure rate is by the Dominican Library (20%), followed by LUTHOS library (17,39%), the Denis E. Hurley Library (14,65%) and the EBSEMSA Library (10,42%).

Students' were asked to state difficulties or disadvantages they encounter when using the network. The responses to this question can be categorized into (1) time; (2) process; (3) lack of awareness and (4) advantage.

Difficulties and disadvantages of the network mentioned by respondents from EBSEMSA were very limited. Respondents from the School of Theology provided a more varied response. Respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute also offered varied responses. The most common of these has to do with the delivery time of the material.

(1) Time: The delivery time of a week is mentioned as a disadvantage of the network. Eight respondents from the School of Theology and St. Joseph's Theological Institute respectively and one respondent from EBSEMSA find the waiting period of a week to be a disadvantage. The waiting period is a problem because the users do not have the time to wait for requested material to arrive.

Students feel that urgently needed material cannot be obtained timeously and the waiting time wastes valuable time. Sometimes the delay caused when requested material is on loan in the other institution leads to the material to arrive too late to be of any use. A suggestion was made for a more regular service.

(2) Process: Four respondents find the process of obtaining material tedious, cumbersome and time-consuming. The complicated process is a definite disadvantage. One student finds the network too bureaucratic and feels that the institutions give first priority to their own students. One student commented that although the lending policies, the delivery service and the unavailability of material are not problems in themselves, combined they make the service a hassle to access.

One student finds it a disadvantage that books cannot be renewed. Four respondents find the fact that students cannot borrow books directly from the member libraries of the network a disadvantage. It is frustrating because they do courses at the other institutions but cannot borrow books when they are there. One of these respondents often ask friends at the other institutions to borrow on his/her behalf when on the other campuses. Two respondents find the lending period too short and considers it a disadvantage. Two respondents find it difficult because they cannot see the books. The titles of the books are sometimes misleading, and a book thought to be useful from the title proves to be useless when it arrives.

(3) Lack of awareness: Four respondents, 2 respondents from EBSemSA and 9 respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute respectively, are not aware of any disadvantages and advantages.

Four students mentioned the issue of transport as a disadvantage. The particular respondents mention lack of transport as a reason for non-use of the network. This illustrates a misunderstanding of the nature and operations of the network. Another disadvantage mentioned is that the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological

Libraries is not promoted and publicized adequately. As a result not many students know enough about network to use it.

(4) An advantage: Thirteen respondents reported no difficulties or disadvantages in using the Cluster Library network. The respondents to this question find it an excellent idea and view the Cluster Library network as an advantage because they have access to more books.

Students were also asked to offer suggestions on how the Cluster library facility could be more effective. Respondents from EBSemSA did not offer any suggestion that would increase the effectiveness of the network. Respondents from the School of Theology and St. Joseph's Theological Institute offered some interesting suggestion for increasing the effectiveness of the network. Suggestions offered by the respondents from the School of Theology and St. Joseph's Theological Institute to increase the effectiveness of the Cluster Library Network include: (1) increase regularity of service; (2) user education; (3) direct borrowing rights/interavailability of borrower cards and (4) streamlining of process.

(1) Increase regularity of service: Ten respondents are of the opinion that the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries would be more effective in satisfying their needs if the regularity of the service was increased. Twice a week was suggested by three respondents as the desired regularity of the service.

(2) User education: Five respondents suggested that the effectiveness of the service would be heightened if the service was publicized more and if awareness of the facility is raised. User education was suggested by three respondents to heighten the awareness of the activities of the library network. A workshop on cluster cooperation was suggested.

(3) Direct borrowing rights or interavailability of borrower cards: Seven respondents suggested the introduction of a cluster library card which will enable

users to borrow directly from the member libraries without the intervention of a librarian from their own institution. This would make the cluster library network more accessible and would eliminate the delay caused by the interlibrary loan facility. Respondents want all students to be treated as Cluster members and not as students from different institutions.

(4) Streamlining of process: Eight respondents suggested that the process of borrowing from other libraries be streamlined because a lot of time is wasted. One respondent suggests telephonic contact between librarians to determine the availability of material. One respondent wants it to be more user-friendly.

Other suggestions included a lending period of longer than two weeks and the purchase of more material, especially more modern theological works in English. A suggestion was made that more copies of titles that are in high demand are purchased.

The final question of the questionnaire provided respondents with the opportunity to make comments or suggestions regarding the Cluster Library service and its operations. Only three respondents from EBSemSA responded with comments and suggestions. The one respondent feels that the service is necessary and that it needs to be maintained. Librarians should remind students at their institutions to borrow through the facility if they do not have a particular book. The second respondent feels that the students should be encouraged to use books available in all the libraries. The third student finds the network system efficient and the librarians helpful.

Six students from the School of Theology find the Cluster Library facility to be good and useful because it provides access to more books and aids their studies. One of them feels that it needs wider publication. Three students suggest the increase the regularity of the service. Tuesdays and Thursdays are suggested as convenient days to make available ordered material. One student suggests that each

institution should take turns at the delivery service to facilitate the frequent transportation of material. A suggestion was made that students must have access to on-line catalogue at the Luthos library. One student thinks the lecturers should check first with the librarian before they recommend books that are not in their library, or they should put a copy on short-loan for photocopying purposes. One student says that it would be helpful to be able to phone the libraries as it will make the process quicker than the card system. Another student comments that the use of post by the university to inform students contributes to the delay of books and suggests that students should be informed telephonically as soon as the books arrive. An open-door policy is suggested by one respondent and another respondent feels that more books should be made available at libraries other than University of Natal since there are students at the clusters who are taking courses at the university and are having difficulties with limited books in their own libraries. A suggestion was also received for more modern books to be added to the collection.

Once again the most varied responses were from the respondents from St. Joseph's Theological Institute. One respondent wants to see an organised way of introducing students to the network. Three respondents suggest library cards which are specifically for cluster users. Currently membership of the cluster library focuses on institutions. This respondent feels this membership should be extended to individual users without necessarily making arrangements via a particular librarian. One respondent says it is a good move towards ecumenical enhancement. Nine respondents think it is a good system because other libraries have useful books. Two respondents think that users should be encouraged to make use of it, even if they have to be forced. One respondent feels there is a need for more philosophical books in libraries and another respondent calls for flexibility and the supply of more books relevant to the needs of the different user groups in the network. One respondent thinks the service should be continued as is. Five respondents brought up the question of transport. They seem to think that they have to visit the library personally. This indicates a lack of understanding of the network and what resource

sharing is. One respondent suggested a service where transport is provided for users to attend the libraries personally.

The objective of the PCTL to create a centralised computer catalogue of the resources of the member libraries of the network which will enable bibliographic information to be accessed locally on-line is well advanced and recent acquisitions are inputted regularly. On-line access at St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa continues to be a problem due to inadequate telecommunication facilities. Hardcopy catalogues have been provided to combat the problem and to assist with the accession of bibliographic information.

TABLE 8
SABINET requests submitted by the University of Natal

Institution	SABINET	Total requests	%
SJ	164	471	34,82%
EB	84	192	43,75%
DOM	26	45	57,77%
LUTHOS	30	46	65,22%
TOTAL	304	754	40,32%

The union computer catalogue acts as a conduit to SABINET, a national database. Extensive use has been made by of the cluster resources by libraries throughout the country. A large component (40,32%) of the requests submitted to the cluster by the University of Natal was for libraries outside the network via the SABINET lending facility. Evidently, the collections of the PCTI have been integrated successfully on the national database. Smaller member libraries who previously did not have access due to financial reasons were allowed access to SABINET. The SABINET access gained by the smaller libraries through the SABINET

membership of the University Library has been used once by a staff member from EBSemSA.

The primary objective of the network is to open up of the resources of the cluster network to all the members of the cluster via an interlending scheme. Structures have been put in place to facilitate access to bibliographic information in the form of a union catalogue, procedures for submitting a request and the delivery of the requested documents. A total of 790 requests were submitted of which 684 requests were successful. The interlibrary loan transaction records exhibits interesting lending patterns. The member libraries do not rely equally upon each other to satisfy user requests. The majority of the requests are in the favour of the users from the University of Natal. Arguments offered to explain the low lending by the seminaries include:

- (1) University of Natal library users receive instruction on using the on-line catalogue and have access to it at all times, while on-line access at the seminaries are limited to the librarian. Difficulties experienced with computer links have made it impossible train users at the seminaries to use the search facility themselves. (A. le Roux; J. Russell)
- (2) Users from St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary are undergraduate students and do not need very specialized material. (J. Russell; A. le Roux)
- (3) Users from St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa have a heavy workload with regular deadlines which does not allow them the time to wait for interlibrary loan material. (J. Russell; A. le Roux);

- (4) The collections of the local library is sufficient in most cases. This contributes to the low lending figures by the seminary users. The foci of the collections at St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa are also the foci of the teaching and is therefore sufficient to support the core teaching programme and satisfy the needs of the users. (A. le Roux; J. Russell) This could change as cross-registration increases and when anticipated postgraduate programmes are embarked on by the seminaries.

The objective of rationalisation has been taken advantage of, even if not to its full potential. The difficulty in coordination acquisition policies is the different ways in which the institutions involved acquires new items. The acquisition procedures of the University Library are very structured. The other institutions involved in the network rely heavily on donations, most often from abroad. Rationalisation of serial subscriptions have been done and the acquisition of expensive material such as dictionaries, bible commentaries and encyclopedias have been coordinated.

The library network is committed to the growth of library resources in the Pietermaritzburg area and the increased cooperation between the member libraries. A combined cluster catalogue is being constituted to enable maximum use of the available resources. A structure has been set up for the transport of documents between the libraries on a weekly basis. The cluster catalogue is available to the wider South African community on the national database, SABINET.

A growing awareness of locally available bibliographic resources and a heightened understanding of the concept of a shared resource has been achieved. Both Mr. le Roux and Mr. Russell have observed a growing awareness of outside resources as students come into contact with students from other institutions. Students at the seminaries are aware that they can borrow from the University of Natal.

The seminars have reported stimulation of potential donor interest in the light of local rationalisation and resource sharing. (Cluster guide 1993) Donors are more likely to provide resources when they know that it will be utilized extensively throughout the country. The participation in the network is good motivation for requesting funding upon which the seminars rely heavily.

5.3 Summary

The awareness level among the respondents is extremely high, although the understanding of the activities of the network is not always correct. Awareness is attributed to various sources, lecturers and librarians being the most important. The majority of the respondents have not used the network before even though the general opinion is that the network is good, efficient and an advantage because users have access to more books. The respondents to the questionnaire seem to be positive about the network. There is a realisation that the network is to their advantage because of an increased resource base. Users consider it a good idea with a lot of potential.

A percentage of 52,94% of the staff members questioned do use material from cluster libraries other than the home library. The interlibrary loan facility is used exclusively by 33,33% of the respondents, 11,11% of the respondents only borrow directly from the libraries while 55,56% of the respondents borrow both directly and via the interlibrary loan facility. Therefore, the transactions of 88,89% of the respondents are reflected in the transaction records and the direct borrowing from the cluster libraries by 66,67% of the respondents is not reflected in the transaction records.

This situation was confirmed by the transaction records. The transaction records for the period 1 June 1995-31 May 1996 reveal unequal lending patterns between the institutions. The lending is overwhelmingly in the favour of the University of Natal: 95,44% of the requests submitted during this period were submitted by the

users of the University of Natal library. A possible reason for this is the access to the on-line public access catalogue enjoyed by the users at the University of Natal.

The majority of the respondents who are aware of the network (57,53%) have never borrowed material from the network. The majority of the respondents from the School of Theology have borrowed material from the network, while the majority of the respondents from the Evangelical Bible College of Southern Africa and St. Joseph's Theological Institute have never borrowed from the network before. Responses from the seminary students reveal infrequent use of the network, while the responses from the students from the School of Theology indicate a much more frequent usage of the network.

The national lending of cluster material via SABINET formed a substantial percentage of lending by the University of Natal from the other cluster libraries. Of the requests submitted by the University of Natal, 40,32% was for SABINET inter-lending. This satisfied the inherent advantage of opening resources up to the wider South African community, although, this significantly reduced the amount of lending by theology students (the primary targets of the cluster system).

Respondents who do not borrow from the network because their library provide for all their needs form 34,84% of the respondents. Mr. Jack Russell, librarian at St. Joseph's Theological Institute argued that this is because students are largely undergraduates, and that the lending by the seminaries will improve as cross-registration increases and when the graduate courses at the seminaries are introduced.

Delivery time is indicated by 14,08% of the respondents as a disadvantage of the library service. The respondents feel that the waiting period is too long and would prefer a more regular service, especially at St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa because the workload does not allow the students any time to wait for books to arrive.

A percentage of 16,9% of the respondents would like to have direct access to different cluster libraries in the form of the interavailability of borrower cards which would enable users to borrow urgently needed material directly. This is validated by the cross-registration of students between the institutions. The danger of the interavailability of borrower cards is the potential loss of collection control, especially for the smaller libraries in the network.

The respondents are positive about the availability of requested material in the network. More than 60 % of the respondents indicated that requested material is usually or most often available. The failure rate for document delivery is 14,06%. In this respect the network is very successful. User perception of the availability of requested material in the network is positive and confirms the high delivery rate. The reasons for unavailability varies and include lost, on loan, reference material, on short loan, etc.

The potential for rationalisation of resources within the network has been taken advantage of to a very small degree and needs to be concentrated on. Rationalisation of resources proves difficult due to different acquisition policies at the respective institutions.

An important criteria for a resource sharing arrangement is whether it benefits all the participants in the network. Although the University of Natal library is benefiting in terms of being the heaviest lender the other institutions benefit in terms of the input of professionally qualified librarians, network involvement is good motivation for receiving donations on which they depend. All the institutions benefit from the experience and expertise of staff members at the various institutions. The University of Natal is investing a lot of staff hours into developing the database, but benefits in turn because their users make the most use of the interlibrary loan arrangement. One could argue that this is because all users at the University of Natal have access to the on-line public access catalogue at all times and receive instruction on how to use it while access to the on-line catalogue is

restricted to the librarian in the other cluster libraries. The users have access to hardcopy catalogues.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Recommendations

A coordinated user education program, perhaps in the form of an annual workshop, could be introduced to formally introduce users to the network. During this workshop the users are introduced to the concept of resource sharing and the aims and services of the network. This would ensure that the correct information is conveyed to the users. Ongoing publicity in the form of pamphlets, leaflets and notices should be increased. Lecturers and librarians could also play an important role in the promotion of the network to the users by encouraging and informing the users. The user education programme may also include a tour of the relevant libraries to help users to familiarise themselves with the network.

The delivery time poses a problem to a lot of the users. Users, especially the undergraduates, have a very heavy workload and regular deadlines. Users do not want to wait a whole week for material to arrive. A more regular service, for example twice a week, would satisfy the needs of the users.

Interavailability of library borrower cards, which would enable the users to visit the libraries directly, is an issue that needs to be considered. Students taking courses at another cluster institution would be able borrow books when on that campus. Presently the student has to order through his/her own library. This means that the student has to wait at least a week to obtain the book s/he wants. The interavailability of borrower cards would certainly minimise the problems students are experiencing with the delivery time problem. Urgently needed material could be obtained using this arrangement. It would also stop the nonborrowing because students know it would take too long. The interavailability of borrower cards and a more regular service could be treated as alternatives. If the regularity of the service is increased the interavailability of borrower cards would not be necessary

and vice versa. Another possibility is the extension of interavailability of library borrower cards to users with research interests, such as academic staff (already have direct borrowing rights) and postgraduate students. The interavailability of library cards could mean sacrificing control of collections and would therefore require a feasibility study. The interavailability of library cards could possibly mean an increased workload. This would have to be weighed up against the workload experienced by the interlibrary loan arrangement. Another issue to consider is that the lending library is responsible for the book in the case of interlibrary lending. When lending directly to individuals from other institutions the individual's home library could not be held responsible for the book. If the book is not returned it is now the responsibility of the lending library to contact the individual.

The access to the on-line catalogue leaves a lot of room for improvement. In order to do so the telecommunications lines need to be improved. This is essentially out of the control of the library network as it is a problem of inadequate telecommunication lines in the Pietermaritzburg area. Although hard-copy printed catalogues are available at St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa access is not equal. When performing a regular search at the University library the information is readily available, while a special effort has to be made in the case of printed catalogues. This is likely only to happen when there is nothing suitable in the home library.

For the network to fulfil its potential, lending between seminaries must develop. Every institution must have on-line access to the cluster database and should be able to access it at will. A user training programme in using the on-line public access catalogue (OPAC) should be conducted for all the students within the cluster. A cooperative collection building programme needs to be embarked on if full advantage is to be taken of the potential of resource sharing networks. Collective purchasing and collection building within the network towards the ultimate broadening of the resource base is needed.

6.2 Conclusion

The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is a good attempt at the beneficial sharing of resources between institutions, especially considering the wealth in of theological material in the area. PCTL supports the cooperative teaching programme of PCTI. The various denominational affiliations and foci of the respective collections forms a well balanced, well-rounded collection. The cluster arrangement broadens the resource base and the potential satisfaction level.

A lot of effort, thought and planning has gone into the project. The network has a lot of inherent problems to deal with, namely the geographical distances between the institutions, inadequate telecommunications lines, and different acquisitions policies which makes the coordination of acquisitions difficult.

One of the core objectives of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is to broaden the resource base of theological literature and related material to users in this region. Therefore, awareness of the existence of this service and how it operates is central to achieving this goal. The level of awareness of the existence of the Cluster is good although there is some misunderstanding of its operations.

The extent of usage of the service at the member institutions is skewed. While 82.8% of the University of Natal users have used the service, 90.9% and 78.8% of EBSemSA and St. Joseph's, respectively have not borrowed through the cluster. These figures are corroborated by library records which show that 95.4% of all requests made during 1 June 1995 to 31 May 1996 were in favour of the University of Natal. Another interesting observation which points to an unequal contribution to the network is that EBSemSA was responsible for 58.8% of successful transactions in contrast to only 5.3% accounted for by the University of Natal.

The users were generally satisfied with the service provided by the Cluster. An overall 80.3% were satisfied with the lending policies of a two-week renewable

period and 62.3% found the regularity of the service adequate for their needs. In terms of the execution of the requested transactions the Cluster performed well with 86.6% of all transactions successfully filled.

The success of a networking arrangement is dependent on access to bibliographic information of the resources available in the network. The on-line access to information at the Evangelical Seminary and St. Joseph's Theological Institute leaves a lot to be desired. The on-line access should definitely improve and users should receive instructions on how to retrieve information. The user instruction should involve practical tuition and could be done in the form of a workshop and library visits. Access must be more equal.

At present no lending is taking place between the seminaries. Lending between seminaries should develop in order to exploit the potential of the network. An existing structure for document delivery could be extended to facilitate this development.

The librarians at all the libraries are positive about the arrangement. The librarians from EBSemSA and St. Joseph's Theological Institute are not professionally qualified but find the support from the cluster librarian and the qualified staff at the university very helpful. The cluster library arrangement is viewed by all the institutions as a good arrangement in that staff from different institutions have different skills, ideas and the different input is valuable. Staff members feel that they can learn from each other's experiences.

At the moment the University of Natal is the dominant partner, particularly when one looks at the lending figures. This could be as a result of the computer hardware advantage. The other cluster libraries benefit, although not evident in the lending figures, in other ways, for example from the input from professional staff and the access to the resources of other institutions including the SABINET database.

McClure identifies four (4) ways in which the evaluation of network services can be approached. The different approaches are based on: (1) extensiveness: this refers to how much of the service has been provided; (2) efficiency: this refers to the use of resources in providing or accessing networked information; (3) effectiveness: this refers to how well the network meets the objectives of the provider or the user; and (4) impact: this refers to how a service made a difference, for example the degree to which faculty members increased their research. Although the evaluation of networks need to consider extensiveness and efficiency, much more attention needs to be given to effectiveness and impact measures. (McClure 1993-4:595)

As Leedy points out, it is important to keep in mind that research is never conclusive. In exploring one area one comes across additional problems that need resolving. Research creates more problems than it resolves. (Leedy 1989:9) The problems created in the research need to be explored. The recommendations produced by the study form new research ground, and should be treated as such.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PIETERMARITZBURG CLUSTER OF THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIES MEETS ITS OBJECTIVES

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS HONESTLY AND COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE:

1. What is your current academic status (eg. fourth year B.Th) ? _____

2. Which institution are you registered with? _____

TICK ALL THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSES:

3. Where do you find the information needed for your academic work?

- (a) Main Library, University of Natal _____
- (b) Denis E. Hurley, St. Joseph's _____
- (c) LUTHOS Library, Golf Road _____
- (d) Stuart Lear Library, EBSemSA _____
- (e) Dominican Library _____
- (f) personal collection(s) _____
- (g) libraries at other institutions _____
- (h) other _____ Please specify: _____

4. How likely is it that the collection of the library at your home institution will have what you are looking for?

- (a) very likely _____
- (b) likely _____
- (c) unlikely _____
- (d) uncertain _____
- (e) never _____

5. The Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries is a facility whereby staff and students of member institutions can borrow books and journals from other institutions with theological collections. Are you aware of the facility?

- (a) yes _____ If yes, answer all the remaining questions.
- (b) no _____ If no, go to question 13

6. How did you learn about the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries?

- (a) a friend _____
 - (b) a lecturer _____
 - (c) a librarian _____
 - (d) leaflets or notices _____
 - (e) other _____ Please specify: _____
-

7. Have you ever borrowed material from a Cluster library other than the library at your home institution?

- (a) yes _____ If yes, please ignore question 9
- (b) no _____ If no, please ignore question 8

8. How frequently do you borrow material from a Cluster Library other than the library at your own institution? _____

TICK ALL THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSES:

9. I do not use the Cluster Library Network because:

- (a) I do not know how to access the on-line (computer) catalogue _____
- (b) I find all the material I need in my own library _____
- (c) I have to wait too long to receive the material _____
- (d) I am unsure of the process _____
- (e) Other _____

Please specify: _____

10. How do you find the lending policies of 4 books for a period of two weeks ?

- (a) good _____
- (b) satisfactory _____
- (c) poor _____
- (d) no comment _____

11. Are you satisfied with the regularity of the service (once a week) ?

(a) yes —

(b) no — Why not ? _____

12. How frequently are the materials you request through the Cluster network available?

(a) usually —

(b) most often —

(c) sometimes —

(d) rarely —

(e) never —

13. What difficulties or disadvantages do you find in using the Cluster Library network? _____

14. How could the Cluster Library facility be more effective in meeting your demands as a user? _____

15. Please make any comments or suggestions you like regarding the Cluster Library service and its operations _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

(Please leave the completed questionnaire ...)

APPENDIX B

Department of Information Studies
University of Natal
Private Bag X01
Pietermaritzburg
3201

Dear Student,

In partial fulfillment of my Masters degree I am conducting an investigation of the Cluster of Theological Libraries in Pietermaritzburg to determine whether it meets its objectives.

In order to do this I am conducting a survey among theology students at the School of Theology, University of Natal, St. Joseph's Theological Institute and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSemSA).

I would appreciate it very much if you would take the time to complete the following questionnaire.

Please leave the completed questionnaire in the box provided.....

Thanking you in advance

KAREN VAN ROOYEN

APPENDIX C

Dear Staff member,

As part of my Masters project I am conducting a study of the Pietermaritzburg Cluster of Theological Libraries in order to determine whether it meets its objectives.

I would appreciate it if you would answer the following questions as honestly and completely as possible:

1. Do you use material from Cluster Libraries other than the library at your home institution ?
2. If no, why not ?
3. If yes, how often ?
4. When borrowing material from Cluster Libraries other than the library at your own institution, do you make use of the Interlibrary loan facility or do you visit the library directly?

Thank you for your time

Karen van Rooyen.