

Singing in harmony: statistical benchmarking for academic libraries

Cathie Jilovsky

CAVAL Ltd
4 Park Drive
Bundoora
Victoria
Australia. 3083

Email: cathie.jilovsky@caval.edu.au
Ph: +613 9459 2722, Fax: +613 9459 2733

Cathie Jilovsky is Chief Information Officer at CAVAL, an Australian library consortium. Her career has focused on the development, support and management of library and information systems. She has a particular interest in the collection and publication of library statistics.

Purpose: This paper describes a pilot project for the benchmarking of library statistics for Asian Academic libraries.

Methodology: The project was facilitated through the development, setup and management of an online statistics service for a group of 22 academic libraries in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. CAVAL, an Australian library consortium, managed the project with sponsorship provided by the iGroup, Asia. The objectives were to develop and provide an online statistics website, to improve the collection processes for the individual libraries and to develop a sustainable service for statistical benchmarking. The paper describes the design and implementation of the pilot project, outlines some of the challenges and concludes with an evaluation.

Findings: The pilot project was an opportunity for libraries in the region to participate in the creation and usage of a shared statistical database. At this point in time the utility and value of cumulative statistical collections is not standard practice in Asian libraries. As a consequence participation in the project was an opportunity for library staff to gain some experience with the practicalities, and to raise their awareness of the need for a critical mass of centralized data in order to benchmark.

Practical implications: CAVAL will maintain the Asian Online Statistics website into the future. Some of the participating libraries are keen to continue to contribute data and to grow the database, however for this to happen further funding will be required. Discussions are ongoing as to how this can be achieved.

Originality/value: This project was the first opportunity for libraries in this region to gain experience with contributing to and benchmarking with a shared statistical collection

Keywords: Library statistics, Asia, Academic libraries, Benchmarking, Australia

Case study

Modern academic libraries need reliable and accessible data in order to be able to measure and assess the quality of their services and the satisfaction of their users. Efficient and effective tools are essential in order to make better business and service decisions, and to make the library more visible. An important component is the gathering, storing, analysis and the provision of access to data about aspects of the library such as library users, operations, personnel, services and collections. CAVAL has developed an online statistical benchmarking service which provides for the collection and storage of library statistical data, and the capability for individuals to manipulate data in a sophisticated fashion with results being displayed in real-time on the desktop.

Singing in harmony in the musical sense is a combination of sounds that is pleasing to listen to; this meaning is commonly expanded to refer to people or a system that work together in a pleasing way. The creation of the harmony does not detract from the individuality of each participant or component. In the same way individual statistical data elements contribute to a consistent statistical database.

International Library Statistics

The collection of statistical data by and for libraries has been a core activity of academic libraries in developed countries for over a century.

University Library Statistics in North America have been collected since 1908. The Gerould Statistics (<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/libsites/gerould/>), named after James Gerould, cover the years 1907-08 through 1961-62. Since then statistics have been collected and issued annually by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) (<http://www.arl.org/stats>) for its members. The current ARL statistics, collating data for its 123 member libraries (14 in Canada and 99 in the USA), include data on collections, staffing, expenditures, library services, and library and university characteristics.

Statistics have been collected annually for the Australian University Library community since 1953, and were originally published in the "News Sheet of the University and College Libraries Section, Library Association of Australia". Later the data were published as the September supplement of Australian Academic and Research Libraries (AARL) until this was discontinued in 2008. New Zealand University library data has been included since 1974 (Jilovsky 2005).

CAVAL (<http://www.caval.edu.au>), a consortium owned by 11 Australian universities that provides a range of services to member libraries and other customers in the region, has managed the collection of the Australian Academic and Research Library Statistics for CAUL (Council of Australian University Librarians) statistics since 1992. CAVAL developed an online statistics website (<http://statistics.caul.edu.au>) for CAUL, based on the well-known ARL (Association of Research Libraries) statistics website (<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/arl/>), which has been operational since 2005. Since that time retrospective data back to 1995 for all Australian and New Zealand university libraries has been loaded, and the functionality of the site continues to be improved through the regular specification and implementation of enhancements.

Statistics for the Canadian research library community, comprising the 27 major academic research libraries, Library and Archives Canada, the Canada Institute for Scientific & Technical Information (CISTI) and the Library of Parliament, are published by CARL (Canadian Association of Research Libraries). Statistics from 1998/1999 are available on the web (<http://www.carl-abrc.ca/projects/statistics/statistics-e.html>).

SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries) promotes excellence in library services in higher education and national libraries across the United Kingdom and

Ireland. This includes the collection and publication of statistics, with the aim of providing sound information on which policy decisions can be based. Since 1995 the processing of data has been carried out by LISU (Library & Statistics Unit at Loughborough University <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dils/lisu/>), which includes the backfile from which trends can be inferred. SCOUNL Statistics on the web (<http://www.sconul.ac.uk/statistics/>) are available for contributors only however the annual printed report is available for purchase.

For these libraries the move from paper-based collection methods to email and then online websites was a natural progression, and was implemented by the managers of these collections as the technology became available and affordable.

The IFLA (International Federation of Library Association) Statistics and Evaluation Section (<http://www.ifla.org/statistics-and-evaluation>) promotes the compilation and use of statistics for the successful management and operation of libraries and for the demonstration of the value of libraries outside the profession. The Section concerns itself with the definition, standardisation, collection, analysis, interpretation, publication and use of statistical data from all types of library & information service activity.

The “Global Statistics for the 21st Century” project was an international collaborative program between the IFLA Section on Evaluation and Statistics, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and the ISO Committee TC46/SC8 (Information and Documentation: statistics and performance measurement). The outcomes were presented in August 2008 at the “Library Statistics for the 21st Century World” Conference held in Montreal, Canada, along with papers describing initiatives and developments in the fields of library statistics, benchmarking and indicators around the world (Heaney 2009).

Asia Academic Libraries Online Statistics: Pilot Project

In the Asian library community there is not a tradition of centralised collection of statistics. The Asia Academic Libraries Pilot Project was conceived as an opportunity for libraries in the region to explore the concept and to trial the processes.

The iGroup (Asia) (<http://www.igroupnet.com>) provided sponsorship for CAVAL to develop and provide the means for libraries to benchmark regionally across Asia. This was facilitated through the development and implementation of an interactive statistical website (<http://statsasia.caval.edu.au>) for the collection and presentation of statistics for a pilot group of 22 Asian academic libraries.

The participating libraries were

- Hong Kong - Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong Institution of Education, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Lingnan University, The University of Hong Kong
- Malaysia - International Islamic University Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, University of Malaya, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
- Singapore - Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore
- Thailand - Chiangmai University, Khon Kaen University, MAEJO University, Mahasarakham University, Silpakorn University, Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, Suranaree University of Technology, Walailak University.

The objectives of the pilot project were to

- develop and provide an online statistical website for Asian academic libraries
- implement sophisticated functionality for online benchmarking
- improve the data collection processes for the individual libraries

- provide an sustainable online statistical service for Asian academic libraries.

Participating libraries were offered a range of benefits, including

- local benefits - tracking each individual library over time, developing staff expertise
- institutional benefits - showing the contributions of the library
- national benefits - comparing with other institutions, gaining a national overview of library services
- regional benefits - comparing with similar libraries in other countries, learning from the differences
- global benefits - greater understanding of the role of libraries, opportunities to be involved and contribute to this regional development.

The project began in 2006 with introductory workshops in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Hong Kong. These workshops were generously sponsored by the iGroup (Asia) and explored the use of statistics and other measurement tools to describe, measure, evaluate and benchmark the performance of libraries and their contributions to teaching, learning, research and community service. Following positive feedback to the proposal to setup an Asian Online statistics site based on the CAUL Online Statistics and agreement by the iGroup (Asia) to sponsor the pilot project, initial site development and setup was undertaken (Jilovsky 2008a).

In 2007 a second set of workshops was run which focused on the details of participation, including the functionality to be available from the online statistics site and detailed definitions of the data elements for which data is to be collected (Jilovsky 2008b).

The data collection phase

Developing a statistics service for groups of libraries with cultural and language differences, and physically located across a wide geographic area provided some challenges. The practical issues encountered by CAVAL included allowing for different currencies and different academic and financial years, and providing appropriate assistance and information for participants with varying technical backgrounds and local infrastructure support.

Although many of the participating libraries initially indicated an interest in benchmarking with CAUL and ARL libraries, as the project progressed it became clear that there was a reluctance to share or disclose some data, particularly relating to money.

Nonetheless most libraries began the data collection process enthusiastically and the data for Phase 1 (statistical data for 2005 and 2006) was entered, over a period of time, into the website database at <http://stats.asia.caval.edu.au> by all libraries except one. Most libraries responded to reminders and CAVAL staff assisted with clarifying issues relating to both the statistical definitions and the use of the Input Module software.

The JULAC (Joint University Libraries in Hong Kong) (<http://www.julac.org>) Statistics Committee approached CAVAL about the possibility of expanding the pilot website statistical database to incorporate the statistical elements collected by the 8 University libraries in Hong Kong. A workshop was held in November 2007 to analyse and compare the data elements, to discuss differences and to develop an action plan to align the JULAC data with the pilot project data. Following agreement on a methodology and funding for the incorporation of additional data elements and enhanced functionality into the pilot website, the work was undertaken and completed in mid 2008. JULAC libraries were then able to enter all their JULAC statistical data alongside the pilot data, and use the site functionality to produce statistical reports and graphs using the full dataset.

Despite ongoing encouragement and several reminders, only 10 of the 22 participating libraries completed the entry of data for Phase 2 (2007). This is summarized in the table below. Note that for the data collection to be classified as 'Complete' any errors detected by the software validation routines must have been resolved.

	PHASE 1	PHASE 2
THAILAND		
Chiangmai University	Complete	Incomplete
Khon Kaen University	Complete	Complete
Maejo University	Complete	Complete
Maharakham University	Complete	Incomplete
Silpakorn University	Complete	Incomplete
Suan Dusit Rajabhat University	No data	No data
Suranaree University of Technology	Complete	Incomplete
Walailak University	Complete	Incomplete
MALAYSIA		
International Islamic University Malaysia	Complete	Incomplete
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	Complete	Incomplete
University of Malaya	Complete	Incomplete
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia	Complete	Incomplete
HONG KONG		
Chinese University of Hong Kong	Complete	Complete
City University of Hong Kong	Complete	Complete
Hong Kong Baptist University	Incomplete	Incomplete
Hong Kong Institution of Education	Complete	Complete
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Complete	Complete
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Incomplete	Complete
Lingnan University	Complete	Complete
The University of Hong Kong	Complete	Complete
SINGAPORE		
Nanyang Technological University	Complete	Complete
National University of Singapore	Complete	Incomplete

Functionality of the CAUL and Asian Online Statistics sites

The CAVAL online statistics sites for CAUL and for the Asian Academic Libraries consist of Open Source products (MySQL and Linux). The benefits include no license costs and low hardware specification requirements. CAVAL hosts and manages all aspects of the services - system operation and maintenance including, hardware, operating system, database, web server and network components. CAVAL also provides project management for the development and implementation processes and supplies regular progress reports to participating libraries.

Both sites provide functionality to

- compare institutional data – up to fifteen institutions can be compared using an unlimited number of variables
- calculate ratios and other statistical measures, displaying results online for all the institutions in the dataset in ranked order.

- display summary statistics – online display of descriptive statistics for all of the institutions in the data set
- produce graphs – allows the production of an online graph for one institution and up to fifteen variables, or up to fifteen institutions and one variable.
- download data - extract and download a subset of the data by selecting the required institutions, regions (Countries or States), variables, and range of year(s)
- input data - online input of data by staff from contributing institutions, incorporates data validation and online help.

The data for both sites is divided into 6 sections. The 35 variables selected for the Asian Statistics pilot are a subset of the 85 variables currently used for the CAUL Statistics. The sections are

- Library Organisation - general information about the library, including the number of libraries, opening hours, seating facilities, staffing details, shelving and archive capacities
- Library Staff - data about the staff of the library, broken down by both type of staff and position classifications
- Library Services - data about services provided by the library, includes Information Literacy and instruction, Loans, Document Delivery Services, Inter-campus and inter-branch lending and turnstile counts
- Information Resources - data about the library's Information Resources broken down by bibliographic level i.e. serial or non-serial. Non-serial includes monographs and other non-serial works in any medium or format. A pilot set of 4 data elements relating to e-books are included in the collection of the CAUL 2007 data collection
- Library Expenditure – data about the library's expenditure, broken down into acquisitions, salary and operational expenses
- Institutional Population - includes all staff and students belonging to the institution, including non-academic staff.

Evaluation of the Asian Online Statistics Pilot Project

The project formally concluded with a survey in order to review its usefulness and to obtain feedback from participants. The survey was conducted in December 2009 to January 2010. Eleven responses were received. Eight respondents answered all 12 questions and three respondents only answered some questions. Although the email sent to respondents encouraged responses from individual staff members rather than one institutional response, this did not occur. On this basis 11 responses from 22 libraries is a 50% response rate.

The online survey was divided into six sections

1. Good Statistics - what do you want in them?
2. Use of Statistics - how do you use them? who uses them?
3. Pilot Project functionality - how user-friendly was the website? did the functionality meet your needs?
4. Pilot Project Data Elements - was useful data collected?
5. General Comments - what were the strengths and weaknesses of the project?
6. Demographic Information.

The twelve survey questions are detailed in Appendix 1.

The results for each of the twelve questions are discussed below. Given the small number of responses (11), the analysis and conclusions drawn are necessarily of a general nature.

1.	Good Statistics are		AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	Clear		18%	82%
	Valid		18%	82%
	Useful in practical ways		36%	64%
	Easily collected / already collected for another purpose		55%	45%
	Other – please specify			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good enough - i.e. no need to be 100% perfect (but not too imperfect) • can be used for benchmarking with peers of similar status 				

Respondents agreed that ‘Good Statistics’ are ‘clear, valid and useful in practical ways’ and recognised that data that is ‘easily collected and/or already collected for another purpose’ is a positive contribution.

2.	The statistics from this project are useful for	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	Reporting to senior management	20%	20%	30%	30%
	Analysing and understanding activity	20%	30%	30%	20%
	Making decisions on resource allocation		60%	10%	30%
	Reviewing progress against plans		70%		30%
	Other – please specify				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incomplete data made it a bit serendipitous whether a search would pull up anything useful. University senior managers not interested in "less developed countries" (i.e. Thailand, Malaysia. Even in knowing where they are "doing better" than us (e.g. in buildings and seats). Library most interested in Singapore and Hong Kong. 					

Half of the respondents to this question were neutral about the usefulness of the statistics from this project. Use for ‘reporting to senior management’ and for ‘analyzing and understanding activity’ was viewed more positively than ‘making decisions on resource allocation’ and ‘reviewing progress against plans. The comment identifies two additional components of usefulness – data completeness and peer libraries that are considered appropriate.

3.	In your institution, statistics are used by		NEUTRAL	AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	University Managers		9%	55%	36%
	Academic staff & others outside the library		55%	36%	9%
	The University Librarian or equivalent			36%	64%
	Other library managers		11%	78%	11%
	Other – please specify				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore & Hong Kong libraries would also be using statistical data for LIBQUAL survey profiles. So "benchmarking" is one element of potential value. 					

Greatest use of statistics is made by ‘the University Librarian or equivalent’, followed by ‘University Managers’ and ‘other library managers’. The majority of respondents were neutral on the use of statistics by ‘Academic staff and others outside the library’. One respondent noted that the academic libraries in Singapore and Hong Kong also use the LIBQUAL (<http://www.libqual.org>) library assessment tool, and include statistical data in their library profile.

4.	The pilot project website was	DISAGREE STRONGLY	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	User friendly		10%	40%	50%	
	Responsive and fast		20%	30%	50%	
	Reliable		20%	50%	30%	
	Equipped with easy to use Online Help		40%	50%		
	Other – please specify					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was used to the Australian stats online so found it very easy and familiar. I found the multiple institution selection for ratios a bit clunky (but I had in Oz also). The JULAC only bits were distracting for non JULAC persons (perhaps could be greyed out for others?)
--	---

Half of the respondents rated the pilot project website to be 'user friendly, responsive and fast'. The majority were neutral in regards to it being 'reliable' and 'equipped with easy to use Online Help'. One respondent commented that the JULAC data was 'distracting' for users interested in data from countries other than Hong Kong.

5.	Did you need to modify your workflows to collect and enter your data	RESPONSE PERCENT
	No	30%
	Yes – please explain	70%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definitions of data are different, e.g. vols were used for collection size, whereas we used to use title Due to different definitions of statistical items. Established processes had to be changed Just some of the serials data is collected in a different way so reliable figures could not be provided, including expenditure on e-resources (which has recently been fixed). Everything else was easy as our intranet has the data on it. For example, changing all volume statistics to title statistics Definition is quite different from our existing ones 	

Most respondents indicated that modifications to existing workflows were required in order to collect and enter data for the pilot project. Many of the comments indicated that differences in data definitions were the most significant reason.

6.	Which website functions did you use?	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	Institutional Data		30%	30%	40%
	Ranked Lists	10%	50%	10%	30%
	Summary Statistics	11%	44%	11%	34%
	Graphs	22%	45%	22%	11%
	Download Data	11%	56%	11%	22%
	Input Data		30%	20%	50%
	Help	17%	50%	17%	16%

Ten percent of respondents indicated that they did not use all of the website functions, however 'Institutional Data' (the first menu option) and 'Input Data' were used by all. The 'Input Data' function was ranked as the most used, followed (in order) by 'Institutional Data', 'Summary statistics', 'Ranked Lists', 'Download Data', 'Help' and 'Graphs'. It can be extrapolated that the incomplete data coverage limits the usefulness of 'Graphs' functionality.

7.	Was there any other functionality which would have been useful?	RESPONSE PERCENT
	No	80%
	Yes – please explain	20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not functionality - coverage of data. Conversion of currency to USD 	

The majority of respondents did not suggest any additional functionality. The incomplete coverage of data was noted as an impediment to the usefulness of the site as was the conversion of currency data to a common rate.

8.	The following functions were/would be useful	DISAGREE STRONGLY	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	Conduct online qualitative benchmarking		20%	10%	50%	20%
	Develop flexible comparison of selected			30%	40%	30%

libraries across selected years					
Create data sub-sets for comparison			60%	20%	20%
Produce graphs and tables from the data			30%	40%	30%
Generate rankings of institutions by selected criteria			40%	30%	30%
Generate summary statistics for each country or for the region		10%	40%	20%	30%
Benchmark against ARL (US and Canadian) libraries	10%	20%	20%	30%	20%
Benchmark against Australian and New Zealand libraries	10%		40%	30%	20%
Download the data year by year in spreadsheet format			50%	30%	20%
Other – please specify			67%	33%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe too hard but UK and European stats would be useful as it currently requires searching and translation and is very piecemeal. 					

The responses to this question show that the majority of listed functions were indeed useful. However ten percent of respondents disagreed that benchmarking against either ARL or CAUL libraries is useful. One respondent commented that benchmarking against British and European statistics would be a useful addition.

9.	For each data element category used for the pilot project please indicate whether or not it was useful.	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	AGREE STRONGLY
	Library Organisation		12%	50%	38%
	Library Staff		12%	50%	38%
	Library Services		25%	38%	37%
	Information Resources	12%	12%	38%	38%
	Library Expenditure	12%	12%	38%	38%
	Institutional Population		25%	38%	37%

There was agreement by all respondents agreed that the 'Library Organisation', 'Library Staff', 'Library Services' and 'Institutional Population' data categories were useful. A minority indicated that the other two categories 'Information Resources' and 'Library Expenditure' were not.

10.	Was there any other useful data that could have been collected?	RESPONSE PERCENT
	No	88%
	Yes – please explain	12%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again too hard, but knowing how many ILL and how many articles (document delivery) would be useful. Traffic for e-resources would be useful, especially traffic and full text downloads from Library subscribed resources 	

There was only one suggestion for additional data that would have been usefully collected, and that was statistics relating to Inter-library loans, document delivery and e-resources traffic.

11.	Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot project, the statistics collected, the online website and on any other matter.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more clarification of some variables • Graph function is useful • Data elements are not well defined • Strong reluctance to change and to pay for a service which is perceived as currently being free. Also a great reluctance to make some data public. • The vehicle is reasonably ok. The big problem is participation and coyness for "sensitive" data (i.e. expenditure). Without a critical mass of data the usefulness is limited. From our point of view if the Singapore and Hong Kong libraries participated fully the stats would be worthwhile. We would be happy to

	<p>continue to input if these libraries did also. It is not a big effort for us and it will bear fruit in the future as the datasets get more mature and trends can be shown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths: an international experience • Weaknesses: not benchmarking against libraries in developed countries (UK, Europe, US, Canada); University Management would not be interested in benchmarking against less developed Asian countries.
--	---

The majority of respondents provided some comments to this free-text question. The weaknesses of the project were perceived as being

- Insufficient or unclear definition of some data elements
- Reluctance to make some data public
- Lack of a critical mass of data
- Not benchmarking against developed countries
- Reluctance to pay for future services.

The strengths were perceived as being

- International experience
- The statistics software, particularly the graphs function.

11.	Demographics.	RESPONSE PERCENT
	Hong Kong.	63%
	Malaysia	12%
	Singapore	13%
	Thailand	12%

Only eight of the eleven respondents completed the Demographics question. There was at least one respondent from each participating country - five from Hong Kong, one from Malaysia, one from Singapore and one from Thailand.

Conclusion

The Asian Online Statistics Pilot Project was an opportunity for libraries in the region to participate in the creation and usage of a shared statistical database. At this point in time the utility and value of cumulative statistical collections is not standard practice in the region. As a consequence participation in the project was an opportunity for library staff to experience with the practicalities, and to raise their awareness of the need for a critical mass of centralized data in order to begin benchmarking.

CAVAL will maintain the Asian Online Statistics website into the future. Some of the participating libraries are keen to continue to contribute data and to grow the database, however for this to happen further funding will be required. Discussions are ongoing as to how this can be achieved.

The CAUL Online Statistics website has become a vital and regularly used tool for identifying and benchmarking data about Australian and New Zealand academic libraries. The Asian Online Statistics site has the potential, over time, to expand and develop to provide a similar service to libraries across the region. The technical design and setup of both sites has been designed to enable future benchmarking between Australian, New Zealand and Asian libraries, and beyond. CAVAL has a long history of cooperation and collaboration with libraries which provides a solid platform from which to further develop international statistical benchmarking services – harmonious songs for the future.

REFERENCES:

Heaney, M. (Ed) (2009). *Library Statistics for the 21st Century World*, K.G. Saur (IFLA Publications Nr 138), Munich.

Jilovsky, C.D. (2005). "Library Statistics: reflecting yesterday, today and tomorrow", paper presented at the 6th Northumbria Conference on Performance Measures for Libraries and Information Services, 22-25 August 2006, Durham, United Kingdom.

Jilovsky, C.D. (2008a). "Online Statistics for Australian, New Zealand and Asian Academic Libraries", in Heaney, M. (Ed.) *Library Statistics for the 21st Century World: Proceedings of the conference held in Montreal on 18-19 August 2008 reporting on the Global Library Statistics Project*, K.G. Saur (IFLA Publications Nr 138), Munich, pp. 211-220.

Jilovsky, C.D. (2008b). "Asian Library Statistics: a Pilot Project", in Hiller, S., Justh, K., Kyriallidou, M., Self, J. (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 2008 Library Assessment Conference: Building Effective, Sustainable, Practical Assessment August 4-7, 2008, Seattle, Washington*, Association of Research Libraries, Washington DC, pp. 259-262.

APPENDIX 1

ASIAN ONLINE STATISTICS PILOT PROJECT – EVALUATION SURVEY

Thank-you for your participation in the Asian Online Statistics Pilot Project.

This survey is being undertaken for two reasons:

- (a) to formally conclude the project and review its usefulness, and
- (b) to assess the interest in future statistics projects or services for libraries in the region.

We are interested in receiving responses which reflect the views of people who use the statistics, people who contributed their institution's statistical data, and the manager of the library service.

The survey is divided into six sections

- 1. Good Statistics - what do you want in them?
- 2. Use of Statistics - how do you use them? who uses them?
- 3. Pilot Project functionality - how user-friendly was the website? did the functionality meet your needs?
- 4. Pilot Project Data Elements - was useful data collected?
- 5. General Comments - what were the strengths and weaknesses of the project?
- 6. Demographic Information

GOOD STATISTICS

- 1. Good statistics are
 - DISAGREE STRONGLY / DISAGREE / NEUTRAL / AGREE / AGREE STRONGLY
 - Clear
 - Valid
 - Useful in practical ways
 - Easily collected / already collected for another
 - Other - please specify

USE OF STATISTICS

- 2. The statistics from this project are useful for
 - DISAGREE STRONGLY / DISAGREE / NEUTRAL / AGREE / AGREE STRONGLY
 - Reporting to senior management
 - Analysing and understanding activity
 - Making decisions on resource allocation
 - Reviewing progress against plans
 - Other - please specify
- 3. In your institution, statistics are used by
 - DISAGREE STRONGLY / DISAGREE / NEUTRAL / AGREE / AGREE STRONGLY
 - University managers
 - Academic staff & others outside the library
 - The University Librarian or
 - Other library managers
 - Others - please specify

PILOT PROJECT FUNCTIONALITY

- 4. The pilot project website was
 - DISAGREE STRONGLY / DISAGREE / NEUTRAL / AGREE / AGREE STRONGLY
 - User friendly
 - Responsive and fast
 - Reliable
 - Equipped with easy to use Online Help
 - Other - please specify
- 5. Did you need to modify your workflows to collect and enter your data?
 - No

Yes - please explain

6. Which website functions did you use?

Institutional Data
Ranked Lists
Summary Statistics
Graphs
Download Data
Input Data
Help

7. Was there any other functionality that would have been useful?

No
Yes, please specify

8. The following functions were/would be useful

DISAGREE STRONGLY / DISAGREE / NEUTRAL / AGREE / AGREE STRONGLY

Conduct online quantitative benchmarking
Develop flexible comparison of selected libraries across selected years
Create data sub-sets for comparison
Produce graphs and tables from the data
Generate rankings of institutions by selected criteria
Generate summary statistics for each country or for the region
Benchmark against ARL (US and Canadian)
Benchmark against Australian and New Zealand
Download the data year by year in spreadsheet format
Other - please specify

DATA ELEMENTS

9. For each data element category used for the pilot project please indicate whether or not it was useful. Details of the data elements and categories are on the Help page of the pilot website at <http://statsasia.caval.edu.au/help.php>.

DISAGREE STRONGLY / DISAGREE / NEUTRAL / AGREE / AGREE STRONGLY

Library organization
Library staff
Information
Library expenditure
Institutional population

10. Was there any other useful data that could have been collected?

No
Yes, please specify

11. GENERAL COMMENTS

Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of this pilot project, the statistics collected, the online website and on any other matter.

12. DEMOGRAPHICS

Please tell us which country and institution you are from