



The professional Brazilian library system and its capacity to adapt to changes: overview.

Profa.Dra. Regina Célia Baptista Belluzzo¹
Profa. Ms. Márcia Rosetto²

Meeting: 83 Division VIII with Education and Training (1)

Simultaneous Interpretation: Yes

WORLD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CONGRESS: 73RD IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE AND COUNCIL
19-23 August 2007, Durban, South Africa

<http://www.ifla.org/iv/ifla73/index.htm>

Summary: General view of Brazilian reality and conditions offered to professionals to work as mediators in passing on information including the program of continuous capacity according to the pattern of IFLA and others with basis on new conducts and competence development as requirement to face the challenges of contemporary society.

1 Brief general description of the country

Brazil is located on the East Coast of South America bordering the Atlantic Ocean. With 8.514.215,3 km², it is the biggest territorial extent country in the world. With vast natural reserves of water, the biggest rain forest on earth; and flora, fauna, air, land, minerals and water with a great meaning for the planet, distributed in 26 States and a Federal District, where the capital, Brasilia, is located.

According to the last official census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2000) Brazil has 169,544,443 inhabitants, however, as the estimate of the IBGE (2007), currently the country has a population of 188,240,994.

Brazil, along with its existence, has been characterized by its huge interracial crossing from different groups with different identities, in different regions, which allowed decentralization and homogeneity in population distribution among, Caucasians, African-Brazilians and natives (aboriginals),

¹ Professor of the University of the State of São Paulo – UNESP, Bauru – São Paulo; rbelluzzo@gmail.com; Consultant of the Information and Knowledge Management and Editor in Chief of the Brazilian Journal of Librarianship and Documentation (RBBB/FEBAB).

² Librarian of the University of the São Paulo – USP, São Paulo – São Paulo; mrosetto@sibi.usp.br; President of the Brazilian Federation of Librarians Associations, Information Scientists and Institutions.

who, still resist to the introduction of a global culture, which is an important factor to the Information Society.

About 30% of the population is less than 15 years old, 65% between 15 and 64 years old and 5% equal or more than 65 years old. The growth rate from 1991 to 2000 was 1.63% a year, and the last decade showed an extraordinary demographic growth of the young population: In 2003 the country had 33.85 million young people between 15 and 24 years of age, which represent 19.5% of the population; 81.22% are located in urban areas and for every 100 women, there are 96.9% men; the mortality rate in children is 37 for 1,000 births. Life expectancy is 64.4 years; for men 59.5 years and for women 69.6 years.

The official name of the country is "República Federativa do Brasil" the Capital is Brasília, there are 26 States and a Federal District (Brasília). Today, there are 5.564 cities in the country (IPC TARGET, 2006).

Registers of the first Brazilian libraries were met since the 16th century. Until this time almost nothing is known about the existence of the book in Brazil. During the colonial period until the end of 18th century, the religious group Company of Jesus had made a great effort to make the access to written word easy, for the instruction to their pupils as well as for the graduation of its masters.

The Brazilian public libraries were only established in the 19th century and were created in their great majority by government initiative, becoming responsibility of the Cities, States and the Union.

During the first years of the Republic, the Education was precarious and the Library was synonymous of book and the information dissemination was verbal and utilitarian. In 1912, the National Library created the first course for the formation of librarians, nowadays there are about 38 Schools of Librarianship and Library Science, and more than 25 thousand graduated librarians in the country. This is one of the During the age Vargas (1930-1945) the National Institute of the Book was created, with the objective to propitiate ways for the production, the improvement of the book and of library services, also having as intention, to improve the rate of illiteracy and to make the qualification of the workers in the Brazilian industry possible. The great contribution of this Institute lies in the inclusion of public libraries in the governmental agenda.

Thus, state governments had taken the initiative to create State Libraries. These libraries were legally created by State Decree. However, there was a lack in the vision of the administrators, because generally there was not a forecast of the necessary infrastructure. Improvised library premises, outdated collections and filled with donations, precarious installations, lack of suitable human resources etc. These were the features of these institutions called Libraries, which still today face such problems in some regions.

The application of economic resources in the production of the book, is recent among the Brazilian cultural activities. In the 30's and 50's, the Government promoted the distribution of what it was considered bibliographical patrimony and invested in the didactic book for free delivery to public education students, in detriment of the insertion of libraries in the organizational structure of the school (SOUZA, 2005).

The Brazilian Government adopted an important position when it instituted the National System of Public Libraries (SNBP), by means of Presidential Decree 520, from May, 13 of 1992, whose main objective is to

contribute for the strengthen of public libraries in the country, assuming as basic purpose for the development of its action, a social function for the public library. Brazil has searched for a model of public library which takes care of the demands of the society and fulfills, strictly, with that is determined inside of a National State, the Manifesto for the Public Library of the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural the Organization (UNESCO) updated in 1994, has been used as a mechanism for the formularization of a politic of public libraries (www.unesco.org). Another document that also defines the functions of a public library is the Declaration of Caracas, result of a meeting of public libraries in 1985.

The spreading of this Declaration coincides with the moment that Brazil discussed strategies to make possible public politics, directed for various sectors of the civil society, and for the pressures broke out for the accomplishment of the Constituent, whose process of mobilization was extremely favorable to stimulate the reorganization of categories which includes librarians, that in different states of the federacy, start to think new models of management for public libraries. In this period the initiatives developed from North to South are innumerable, asking the attention for practical democratic incentive to the reading. Cultural action in the public library and strategies are argued to become it a canal of intermediation between the society and the information.

According to the results of the Profile of Brazilian Cities (MUNIC) (IBGE, 2000), 4,200 (76%) of the 5,507 existing cities then in the country in 1999, had at least one public library. Although there are no elements in the research that allows to characterize the quality of the installations, the size and diversity of the collections or the accessibility of the population to the library, in the context of the gravity of the problems in the educational question in the country.

Considering that many official organisms that make themselves responsible for the collection and spreading of statistical data in the Brazilian context, do not have dedicated attention to the public libraries it was not possible to get an information consolidated about the use and ratio of the population that use these organizations. Moreover, despite the SNBP has as one of its goals the development of a system of statistics and indicators, this action was not legalized yet.

Besides public libraries, the country also has university, specialized, governmental, and school libraries. The latter ones are not shown in statistics, which makes it difficult to set up local and national programs to improve their condition.

Currently, in Brazil, a great attention in relation to the related public policies of the promotion of the book and reading has occurred, in this scene, National Plan of the Book and Reading (PNLL, 2006) is the program that counts on the governmental support for all levels of structure of power.

The initiatives directed toward the “universalization” of the access to the benefits of the technology of information have financial resources available originating from the telecommunication sector and consists of a fund of financing for the expansion of the net in this area, in places and segments where they are not commercially feasible. In this challenging panorama, where education constitutes central element of transformation of the Brazilian society, with sight to a qualitative jump in economic, cultural and citizenship, the tools of the Technologies of Information and Communication (ICT) also emerge as new

tools, modern instruments and with wide reach, that need to be incorporated with seriousness and rationality to the public libraries.

There is no information about the distribution of the access to computers in public libraries in Brazil. However, it can be inferred that, since there is no equitable distribution of public libraries itself in the country, neither an equitable access to computers or Internet are available. The information that follow, about digital exclusion can give an idea of the nature of the population who is not covered with access the computers.

Although referring to the year of 2003, it is important to mention, that Foundation Getulio Vargas (FGV) constructed the Social Map of Brazil, fruit of a partnership with the Committee for the Democratization of Computer Science (CDI), the Sun Microsystems and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Still as a result of such partnership, the Map of the Digital Exclusion was constructed, after 10 months of detailed studies and which became reference in the planning process and definition of public policies and strategies for overcoming the exclusion, defining programs of investments of private companies and actions of non-governmental organizations (www2.fgv.br/ibre/cps/mapa_exclusão).

Table 1 : Map of the digital exclusion (Brazil)

Universe	Total Pop.	Men %	Education	PIA	Income
Included	16,209,223.00	48.89	8.72	462826.66	1677.15
Excluded	153,663,627.00	49.25	4.40	529046.90	452.44
Total Brazil	169,872,850.00	49.21	4.81	522728.18	569.30

Source: Digital Exclusion Map, FGV/RJ, April of 2003.

2 Library staff and professional infrastructure

Among the almost 20 thousand librarians enrolled in the Regional Council of Librarianship, there are few working in public libraries or school libraries proportionally in comparison with the number of librarians that work in specialized and university libraries. This affirmation can be exemplified by the raised data by librarians from the South and Southeast, where they were identified in a sample of 1477 librarians, 146 (10,7%) working in a school library and 166 (12,3%) working in a public library, usually with low salary.

The academic formation in Librarianship in Brazil dates from the beginning of the 20th century, but the legal recognition of the profession only occurred in 1962, with the approval of the Law 4,084, regulating about the exercise of the profession of the librarian. The work market has presented changes with the new technologies and there are requests from the society for the valuation of the function and the librarian professional knowledge. Although librarianship is inserted in the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT) as a liberal profession, still is in the public services where the librarian finds more chances of career performance.

Currently, there are 38 courses of bachelor in Librarianship and Information Science in federal and private institutions of superior education in Brazil, and postgraduate courses (*Stricto Sensu*), 14 courses for master's degree and 8 for PhD, besides 19 other specialization courses (*Lato Sensu*) (<http://www.abecin.org.br/portal/abecin/main.php?sl=ens>).You can see its

distribution in table 2.

Table 2- Courses of Posgraduate in Librarianship and Information Science per Units of Federation

Units of Federation	<i>Stricto Sensu</i>		<i>Lacto Sensu</i>
	Master of Science	Doctor	Specialist
Amazonas			1
Pará			1
Ceará			1
Paraíba	1		1
Pernambuco	1		
Bahia	1		
Minas Gerais	1	1	2
Rio de Janeiro	2	1	1
São Paulo	4	3	7
Paraná			1
Santa Catarina	2	1	1
Rio Grande do Sul	1	1	1
Distrito Federal	1	1	2
Brasil	14	8	19

Source: Researchers credit (2007)

On the other hand, it has been the responsibility of post-graduation programs the research in the field of Librarianship and Information Science in Brazil. The Brazilian Institute of the Scientific and Technological Information (IBICT) created the master's degree course in 1970, a historical period of restrictive freedom in the choice of theme and methodology. This way, the studied objects have shown little difference, if any, among the authors.

Table 3 – Main program research lines of post-graduation in Librarianship and Information of Science in Brazil

Administration of library services, files and information.
Communication of scientific, technological, and business information.
Social and political configurations of information.
Structures and information languages.
Formation and work market of the information professional.
Information management.

Management of information services.
Information and contexts.
Information and society.
Information and technology.
Management and technological information.
Organic information.
Industry and business information.
Information organization.
Planning and administration of reading programs.
Planning and management of information and knowledge.
Information processing and technology.
Processes and indexation languages.
Information production and dissemination in the organizations.
Theory ,epistemology , interdisciplinarity.
Information treatment and bibliometrics.

Source: Researchers credit with based on information obtained from Post-graduation Programs in Librarianship and Information Science (2007)

The librarian profession is instituted by its representative entities. The Librarianship, in the country today, presents the structure mentioned in table 4.

Table 4: Composition of Brazilian Librarianship

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Council of Librarianship – CFB – that congregates Regional Council of Librarianship – CRB – that has as main objective to control the exercise and the Professional ethic;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brazilian Federacy of Associations of Librarians – FEBAB - that congregates the State Associations, which have as objective the representation of the profession in governmental and private spheres and to promote its modernization through events, publications and courses, as well as the strengthening of the image of the professional in the country among other actions; unions that defend the professional through the legislation of forums working and negotiating together with the companies and government the salary bracket of the professionals, as well as other benefits that the propitiates the workers in a general way;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Associate of Research and Post-graduation in Information-Science – ANCIB – that congregates the researchers of the area of Information Science, including the librarians. It has as important objective to promote the informational discussion and development of research in the area, resulting in the increase of the national scientific production;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brazilian Association of Education of Information Science – ABECIN – that congregates the schools of Librarianship, document and Information Science of the country, with the objective to discussion all the inherent questions to the graduation of a professional, the labor market and the professional of information.

Source: Adaptation of Valentim (2000).

The quantitative survey, concerning the staff placed in specific occupational activities, has been a recurrent problem in Brazil. Different research, cadastre or data bases, pertaining to the IBGE, Ministries or Council of Class (Regional Council of Librarianship, etc.) they supply different numbers of professionals, even when - in thesis - they are mentioned to the same occupational groups. This makes the international comparisons even more difficult, as they disclose, for example, the estimates of staff placed in Research and Development (P&D), propagated for UNESCO.

The Census of the IBGE (2000) also pointed the existence of 32.5 thousand Professionals of Information, as figure 4, among librarians, documentalists and information scientists, configuring reasons of 19 professionals per 100 thousand inhabitant, respectively.

Table 5- Professional of Information per Units of Federation

Units of Federation	Professionals of Information
Rondônia	284
Acre	124
Amazonas	381
Roraima	291
Pará	942
Amapá	57
Tocantins	475
Maranhão	597
Piauí	467
Ceará	1.000
Rio Grande do Norte	768
Paraíba	711
Pernambuco	1.364
Alagoas	219
Sergipe	228
Bahia	2.043
Minas Gerais	3.961
Espírito Santo	530
Rio de Janeiro	3.297
São Paulo	6.102
Paraná	2.545
Santa Catarina	1.494
Rio Grande do Sul	2.216
Mato Grosso do Sul	388
Mato Grosso	392
Goiás	909
Distrito Federal	742
Brasil	32.527

Source: Demographic Census (2000)

Despite the developed actions, in governmental scope as well as in

ONG's and other institutions of private nature, data of the Managing Committee of the Internet in Brazil (CGI.Br) (<http://www.cgi.br>) agency that co-ordinates and integrates all the initiatives of Internet services in Brazil, shows that the large majority of the population never had access to world-wide net of computers. Only 33.3% of Brazilians already had contact with the Internet.

The PNLL (2006) is, at the moment, considered a national priority in order to reduce the existing functional illiteracy in the country. Its importance for the public libraries lies in the possibility to stimulate these organizations to the fulfillment of its true mission and to transform its image toward the communities, since the common citizen does not consider public libraries as important spaces of expression and construction.

3 Librarian Education and the New Media of Information Mediation

It has been accepted that the main characteristics of information – complexity, accomplishment of new connections and permanent update – mean a new approach in people education, and there is an influence on the education of librarians as information and knowledge managers as well. This area of Education is not properly ready to face the growing requirements of creativity levels, information use and dissemination, knowledge transfer and adaptation as well as new socially representative situations, all likely to appear throughout lifetime. Then, there is an important challenge for Education to meet these requirements: the development of intellectual abilities concerning critical thought and autonomous learning – that is information processing, elaboration and structuring for knowledge production.

Based on this social scenery and on education reality which require a social practice towards information access and use in an intelligent manner to achieve individual and group knowledge production and dissemination, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA, 2005) proposed to adopt a new model for its activities, by means of three pillars: Society, Members and Profession. So, based on the adoption of this new model and also on a theoretical–practical model tested in national context, a new proposal concerning a program of continuous education for librarians is necessary, supported in principles and management actions as well as in innovation of libraries and information services focusing on digital era spectrum. Also, the need of mobilization to the issues presented by the World Summit on Information Society and by other similar forums and their connection with library associations' activities as well as the strategic alliances for the “inclusion of libraries in the agenda” of government policies is highlighted.

Their main action lines should be presented as: a) pre-service qualification (developed in two moments – the first being of a more general nature, presenting concepts and development of attitudes based on the mission and values of library and information services, and the second one aiming to provide specific technological update, considering knowledge as a process and not only as a product); b) qualification in service (by means of planning and provision of a permanent practice of improvement and update in different areas and procedures); c) qualification out of service, in exchange and articulation with other institutions to support the participation of library teams in events, special courses, projects and others, either national or international. It is highlighted that the proposal is aimed to present general guidelines and

indicators that can be implemented in future actions, with suggestions that can add value to those already presented. This is the first step for library teams to think about the need to define a qualification policy related to the consolidation of modern principles of information and knowledge management as well as constant update and continuous education of professionals who work in Brazilian context of libraries and information services.

Teaching, in this context, means the encouragement and solidarity of the individual, failure prevention and the fight against inequality, helping experimental teaching and the scientific spirit, opening new horizons and offering a comprehension of the origin and the roots of the scientific and technological identities. Such conditions are essential for an guided change in human development and the relations in our present society. Besides that, each person should have a chance to get the necessary knowledge to understand the Information Society and the Knowledge Economy, as well as actively participate in them and have some benefits. Literacy and primary education are essential factors to create a society of integrating information.

According to the above and because of the constant and quick social changes, we can say that there is a consensus that the 'workers of knowledge' are managing themselves, learning throughout their lives and that those who 'know how to learn' or are 'continuously learning' are considered the best professionals. Because of this, we try to contribute to these needs, presenting a proposal for a continuous formation program for librarians which is based on principles and conducts of management and on library innovations, with the digital era in mind. Also considering that the main concepts of this scenery are present in the dimensions of the 'three pillars of the IFLA'.

To consolidate the libraries and the information service in the present social context, there is a need for these organizations to be able to use the tools for the creative management, where it is essential, which leads its professionals to an understanding that it is important to change from 'knowing how to do it' to 'knowing why to do it'. Then, it is believed that a program that is based on such requirements can guaranty that the professionals will have the conditions needed to perform it, and above all, to develop new and more complex competences. They certainly need to share their knowledge with others, using the principle of 'knowing how to do it' and being always developing their competence, getting ready for life, for new challenges, and 'to learn how to learn'. We should also consider that all organizational knowledge depends on individual knowledge, and the model presented above has that very thing in its conception.

We need to emphasize that the model of the IFLA (2005) – the three pillars – is also supporting this proposal, as a result of lots of discussions that occurred in meetings with the representatives of the Brazilian Librarian Association, by the FEBAB, during the National Seminar of University Libraries, that took place in Salvador (Bahia) /2006. With regard to the Society Pillar, the important factors or inputs are: the function and the impact of libraries and the information service in a society where information and knowledge are valued under many different changes and contexts: it is necessary to include the need of libraries in the government agenda. The Profession Pillar has its support in the activities established so that the librarians can be social actors of the innovation management and be part of the programs of the IFLA related to the 'best practices' in the digital era. For the last pillar – members and associates –

are considered to be the movement in cooperation and participation and the strategic alliances as links, as well as professional relations as a way to share knowledge and its application to reality and to the social context, where are the professionals and their associations.

The main objective of the program is to offer to librarians, in all levels, the permanent working and improving conditions so that they can have professional fulfillment and guaranty quality in their service.

For best development of the different kinds of recommended actions for the implantation of the program, it is necessary that we observe the principles shown in table 6.

Table 6 – Principles that should be observed when implementing the program of librarian capability.

To use models related to the Mission, Objectives and Values of the library or of the information service and the strategic actions related to the transformation in access mediators and the use of information and the centers of management for the innovation and social development.
To formulate and coordinate the plan of annual capability based on the development of the lines of action that can promote the librarians' abilities and the value of the profession and responsibility with the purpose of personal and professional improvement as well as organizational efficiency.
To develop actions towards the formation of managers with a cooperating posture so that they can be ready to exercise their function and encourage the development and work of the librarians.
To implement instruments to evaluate the workers satisfaction as well as actions to identify, analyze and solve problems, and improve the products offered to customers.

Source: Researchers credit (2007)

Based on the above, plus the results obtained from steps that must be developed in different conducts and forms of strategic management, translated in workshops, situational diagnostics of libraries and information service, competence matrix that must be built (BELLUZZO, 1995,1997), the focus of attention was established that must first be on the managers of the organization and the coordinators of the Work Groups (Communities of Practice) (FIGUEIREDO, 2005; TARAPANOFF, 2006) These will define the new directions, structural strategies, and methodologies that will be used *in continuum* for the complementation of the knowledge and abilities before the management of new systems and technical procedures. It has the purpose of implementing a new culture of learning in the libraries and in the information services that will allow its transformation into producers of knowledge to meet social demands. Next, we present the main lines suggested for the development of the program, which means that all the librarian associations and other institutions alike, besides the librarians themselves, should be able to

participate in the many activities that contribute to the transformation of libraries and information services to centers of attention for the political decisions in the country.

Public politics and strategic actions in the Information Society.
Strategic Planning in Information Services.
Management and innovation in Information Services; from the traditional to the virtual.
Quality and productivity in Information Services: focus on the client and in the competence in information.
New educational and communication examples and the function of libraries and Information Services.
Libraries and Information Services: new language and semantics and technological architectures.
Team management and relationships in Libraries and Information Services.
Contents, files, and organizational memory management.
Project management and the use of specific technologies.

Table 7 – Theme suggestions for the development of the librarians’ capability program supported in the ‘inputs’ offered by the three pillars of the IFLA and others.

Source: Credit of the researches (2007)

3.1 Briefing of the steps

Step 1- Development of Module and Capability Activities in Specific Technology and General Methods.

The purpose of this first step is to enable the coordinators and managers of the Work Groups to handle the adoption of the new conducts of management in the libraries and information service, offering them concepts and techniques related to dimensional strategic and operations. For the first check, we should consider the social changes and the new competences that should understand the technical and administrative knowledge as well as the attitudes as a whole and points of view that are fast and applicable in any opportunity or need that might come up.

For the capability modules development, we suggest some lines of action, such as: workshops or round tables with guest specialists; development and updating courses, post-graduation courses, and technical and scientific events.

Step 2 – Multiplication action with the Work Groups (Communities of Practices)

The second step has as its purpose in the advertising of the concepts and the management procedures practiced by the managers/librarians with the members of the Work Group (Communities of Practices) and procedures and on the reaching of goals as well as the project results, besides the sharing of knowledge.

After developing Steps 1 and 2, the program should offer conditions of continuity by means of multiplication dynamics among the managers and the staff so that they can evaluate the proposed actions.

Step 3 – Final Multiplication Seminar

Step 3 should include the presentation and evaluation of the results for a model validation, the elaboration of new plans and capability or the actions (re)planning with suggestions of proposed improvement in a collective way. This seminar may also take place virtually and should be open to the community so that its actions might be used as reference to other Services or Information Units.

The program implementation should take place by means of defined instruments from the elaboration of the educational proposals as support to the actions developed by the Work Groups (Communities of Practices). It must include the factors according to dimensions: adaptation and relevance; techniques and instruments; specialists participation and the collecting and analyses of obtained information. This process will comprehend the actions of reaction evaluation, follow-up and final evaluation, including the program feedback in its different phases.

4 Final Considerations

We look forward to offering a contribution to the needs of the capability programs to librarians as a strategic action focusing on the changes in the forms of people management and the competence in libraries and information services and the consolidation of its transformation in mediators of the access and use of information in an integrating and intelligent way, making sure that this can help in the conscience awakening and the motivation that are necessary to process actions that assure Future Construction, which must begin Now and Forever. Some parameters for better updating and the development of the necessary competences are offered here, making it possible for them to be ready to exercise their rights as citizens and as multiplication agents of the development of other human beings for collective benefits.

Finally, it is also important to emphasize that many professions appear

and disappear according to different places and times, due to the creation and use of new knowledge and of different needs. So this has also been happening to librarians and their profession in Brazil since its creation. They have been facing a lot of challenges, specially because of the political, economical, and cultural scenarios. They fight to make sure that they serve the community with a good quality service and with professionals who are well prepared in order to eradicate illiteracy all over the country, encourage reading and the exercise of citizenship, as well as long-term learning and the access to cultural activities.

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