Strategic planning for information services: a study of an application to Thai libraries and information centres

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Strategic Planning for Information Services:

A Study of An Application to Thai Libraries and Information Centres

by

NAMTIP WIPAWIN BA.(Hons), MA.(Library Science)

A Doctoral Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of the Loughborough University of Technology

1991

Supervisor: Dr. R.P. Sturges
Department of Library and Information Studies

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To
The Thai Library / Information Profession
Acknowledgement

All my deep and sincere gratitude to:

My supervisor: Dr. R.P. Sturges, who always has strategic thinking towards his supervision until this research reached its goal. This study surely could not have been fulfilled without his academic support, helpful advice, encouragement, kindness, understanding and positive attitude. I am indebted to him.

Director of research: Professor A.J. Meadows, who gave me the opportunity to make the process of learning in this department much more convenient and of most use; and to Miss D. Dixon, who supervised me during my first year in the U.K.

University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC - Bangkok). Professor Patjai Bunnak (Rector) , Miss Rana Polsawas (Vice-rector) and the university committee, who always gave me great support in various ways towards my study in the U.K.

All my teachers throughout my formal education life, especially to my MA supervisor at Chulalongkorn University: Assist. Professor Panpimol Koonlaboon, who always encourages the value of modern librarianship.

British Council (Bangkok) partially provide financial support, as well as UTCC, my aunt and most of all, my parents.

Director and head of 78 libraries and information centres of THAINATIS who generously provided information / ideas toward my field surveys in Thailand.

My English tutors in LUT:- Mrs. J. Stevenson and Mrs. J. Ward ,who helped me to ease the problem of language difficulty. All LUT staff such as library and computer centre staff.

All my friends, all of whose names I cannot mention, who always gave moral support and help when needed, especially my best friend in Thailand: Rattanaporn Prawatwachara and my great friend in the U.K.: Sarah Fletcher.

Without a great support in finance, love and care, from my beloved mother (who passed away two months after I began this study) and my wonderful father, I would never have had a chance to reach this stage of education.
ABSTRACT

A framework for information services strategy using the application of strategic planning processes to library information services is described in this study. A survey was carried out in Thailand in order to examine the internal and external environments of the Thai library and information society.

From the survey findings, it was found that misunderstanding of the full implication of information services by library and information professionals is the major obstacle to service provision in Thailand. The lack of relationship between user surveys and service provision create the missing link in effective information service provision and use. Improved interpersonal communication skills and the application of strategic thinking are needed in the information services process. A proper understanding of the communication chain relating to service elements is essential for future planning of information services. The development of an information society in Thailand depends on library and information professionals understanding their role better and appreciating the full potential for access to information.

The study of the application of strategic planning processes to one function of the library/information system, information services, is an early attempt to reflect its potential to improve the whole system.

Keywords

-Information Services
-Reference Services
-Strategic Planning
-Thailand
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<td>AIT</td>
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<td>AGRIS</td>
<td>The National System for Agricultural Science and Technology.</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>The Association of Southeast Asian Nations.</td>
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<td>ATUNET</td>
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<td>BI</td>
<td>Bibliographic Instruction.</td>
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<td>C.A.S.</td>
<td>Certificate of Advanced Study.</td>
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<td>CD-ROM</td>
<td>Compact Disc - Read Only Memory.</td>
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<td>CONSAL</td>
<td>Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians.</td>
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<td>IFLA</td>
<td>International Federation of Library and Information Associations</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>The International Monetary Fund.</td>
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<td>IMC</td>
<td>Instructional Materials Centres</td>
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<td>ISDS-SEA</td>
<td>The International Serials Data System Regional Center.</td>
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<td>I.S.</td>
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<td>I.T.</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
<td>The National Educational Council.</td>
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<td>NESDB</td>
<td>The National Economic and Social development Board.</td>
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<td>NIC</td>
<td>Newly Industrialized Country.</td>
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<td>NIDA</td>
<td>National Institute of Development and Administration.</td>
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<td>NLDC</td>
<td>The Consortium of National Libraries and Documentation Centres.</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
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<td>SDI</td>
<td>Selective Dissemination of Information.</td>
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<td>UNISIST</td>
<td>Universal Information System in Science and Technology.</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development.</td>
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Knowledge is vital to the quality of human life, but not every human has the ability to access the knowledge and information he or she needs. There is a desperate need to provide equal opportunities for access to the services of libraries and information centres. Drake (1989) suggests that during the next fifty years, we will learn how to provide information services that change our lives. The flood of information has affected both human behaviour and organisational structures and has thus had a great impact on all types of organisations.

The information explosion has virtually driven information services in the 1990s in both profit and nonprofit organisations. The major reasons for this change have been developments in information technology, financial constraints and the necessity to respond to an increasingly wide range of influences both from within the library / information profession, and from society at large.

Management techniques have not always kept pace with this, but the adoption of an approach known as strategic planning in nonprofit organisations as well as in the for profit organisation in which it was developed may offer answers to this problem. The use of strategic planning has been suggested as an effective way of helping library information services to define themselves and develop
strategies for surviving and succeeding in achieving their goals and objectives in an increasingly unstable and rapidly changing environment.

Strategic planning is a management tool which can afford an organisation the opportunity to optimize its resources. It was developed in the private sector and was widely advocated for government and nonprofit enterprises in the 1960s and in libraries in the 1970s. Strategic planning begins with an objective analysis of the library's current strengths and weaknesses and goes on to analyse how those weaknesses can be corrected. It should be capable of maximising existing library and information services' productivity and value.

This is particularly valuable because evidence from several studies suggests that careful consideration is required for information services to adapt to new technology and planning techniques especially when technology continuously changes.

In developing countries, especially Thailand, there is very little evidence to show that there has been application of the strategic planning process to library and information services.

Thailand needs to develop its information infrastructure fundamentally as a result of the enormous changes in economic and social development. These changes call for great change in library services provision. It is intended in this thesis to examine the potential for the use of strategic planning approaches in bringing about such change.
1.2 Description of the Problems

The Thai National Information System (THAINATIS) was established in 1986 with the aim of improving information collection techniques and cooperation, but it remains unclear whether any serious efforts to initiate and improve effective information services have been put into action. This is despite the efforts of the National Library which made a nation-wide survey of the human resources needed to handle library and information services in 1989.

Some evidence of the nature of the problem which exists had been assembled in a series of studies. Potipukkana (1971) surveyed reference services in university libraries. She found that users needed reference services and urged more time for these services. Insufficient reference resources, lack of qualified reference staff and unskilled users are the problems. One decade later, Sutammata (1981) still found almost the same problems as Potipukkana (1971) in reference services to academic staff.

The study of Kasasieng (1984) on the efficiency of reference librarians in four university libraries in Bangkok found that librarians' level of interest in providing services to users was only in the 'moderate' range.

A year later, the study of Kalakrit (1985) found that users do not want to disturb librarians and stressed the unfriendliness of librarians. The results of these studies have not gained much attention within the profession. Librarians are much more interested in organising their collections and following the progress of
information technology. No further research in Thailand has concentrated on this area of service provision and the relationship between information professionals and users.

If librarians fail to act as intermediaries between users and recorded knowledge, it is difficult to deny that they too are to blame for the failures of the library systems and services. Therefore, the need for well-designed information services which incorporate effective provision for the improvement of uses / intermediary interaction should be a commitment for all types of libraries.

This principle is not unknown in Thailand. An outstanding Thai senior professional librarian, Dhutiyyabhohi (1985), for instance, stresses that the quality of services offered to satisfy users is far more important than the size of the collection.

The author would contend that the success of information services depends on the extent to which they reflect the model of the strategic planning process.

1.3 Purpose and Scope of the Study

The purpose of the study is to design a framework for a strategy model for library information services in Thailand. Therefore, it is essential to examine the provision of library and information services in Thailand in the context of both their internal and external environments, with a view to assessing the usefulness of a strategic planning approach to their improvement and development.
This study is based on information derived from a survey of 78 libraries and information centres that participated in the THAINATIS project. This is the project in which major libraries and information centres in different regions cooperate in order to improve the process of information development in Thai society.

1.4 Assumptions:

1. It is assumed that information services are the heart of the library and information profession. Therefore, neglecting to provide effective information services can damage the effectiveness of the library/information profession.

2. Effective library information services and good public image derive from positive attitudes of information professionals.

3. It is also assumed that a framework for a strategy model for library information services in Thailand should reflect the internal and external environment for a better information society.

4. Information services are at least as important as library/information collections and techniques.
1.5 Definitions

The following definitions are applicable to this study:

**Ends** is the specification of objectives and goals.

**Information Service** is a product of libraries and information centres which provides information to users in two essential ways—directly and indirectly. Characteristic functions of information services are finding specific data or facts, interpreting the material or information found, translating, abstracting and literature searching (Reference Standards, 1961). It derives from the term 'reference services' but has not superseded it, sometimes used as Reference / Information Service (R/IS).

**Means** is the selection of ways in which goals and objectives will be pursued.

**Strategy Model** is a general method of representing an information service system.

**Programme** is a group of activities with a common purpose carried out within an organisation especially when incidental to the main activities of the organisation or existing only for a defined period.

**Reference Service** is personal assistance provided to library users in pursuit of information (Katz, 1967), defined by Wyer (1930) and Rothstein (1961) that there are three levels: 'conservative or minimum service', 'moderate or middling service', and 'liberal or maximum service'.

**Strategy** is a general method or policy for achieving specified objectives (French and Saward, 1983:350).

**Strategy Issue** is a goal and policy that can identify a vision of success.
**Strategic Plan** is a plan which sets out general methods or policies for achieving specified objectives; especially a plan for the future (French and Saward, 1983: 415).

**Strategic Planning** is the process by which strategic issues are identified and refined and from which fundamental goals, objectives, and policies for the organisation evolve. It includes a description of the resources, alternative strategies, strategy prioritization and selection, and means to achieve the objectives. The essence of strategic planning is to make present decisions on the basis of a knowledge of their futurity and thus to reduce uncertainty.
References


Chapter 2

General Characteristics of Thailand in the 1990s

The Kingdom of Thailand is situated in South East Asia. It is bordered by Burma to the West, Laos and Cambodia to the East and the Malaysian Peninsula to the South. Its total area is 513,115 sq. km. (198,115 sq. miles) (Demine, 1990) which is about the size of France. The country is divided into four physiographic regions - the North, the South, the Northeast and the Central regions, with 73 provinces (see Figure 2.1).

Thailand has a subtropical monsoonal climate of three distinct seasons: the hot season (March-May), the rainy season (June-October), and the cool season (November-March). Annual average temperatures range between 24 and 30 °C (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1988).

2.1 Population

The population has increased greatly during the past two decades from 34.4 million in 1970 to 55.4 million in 1989, giving an average density of 108.1 per sq.km. The population belongs to the Thai ethnic group with minorities of Laos, Chinese, Muslim Malays and hill people. However, estimates as to the proportion of these minorities to the total population vary and many minority groups have been assimilated into the Thai culture. 95% of the Thai population are Buddhists. The official language is Thai (เทนี่ ), which was derived from a South Indian script, first adapted as Thai alphabet in 1283 (Thailand into the 80s, 1980).
FIG. 2.1 : THAILAND – GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES AND 73 PROVINCES
Thailand is an overwhelmingly agricultural country, and 82% of Thailand's population live in rural areas (NESDB, 1986). The total active population was 73% of the whole population in 1985, mostly engaged in agriculture. The urban scene is dominated by the single great complex of the Bangkok Metropolis which had an estimated population of 5.9 million in 1988 (Demaine, 1987: 927). This metropolis overshadows other urban centres such as Songkhla (population 172,604), Chonburi (115,350), Nakhon Si Thammarat (102,123) and Chiangmai (101,594).

2.2 History

The first historical Thai Kingdom of Sukhothai (the first capital of Thailand) was established in AD 1238. The second capital (Ayuthaya) was established in 1350 and Bangkok has been Thailand's capital since 1782 (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1988). This long history still has much impact on Thai society. Whatever problems the country may have, Thailand has never come under colonial rule and her unique character results from this cherished independence. The Thai tradition and character, influenced as they are by Buddhism, have been unique in the region for many centuries.

In the late nineteenth century, King Mongkut (Rama IV, 1851-68) and King Chulalongkorn (Rama V, 1868-1910) opened Thailand to international trade and profoundly transformed the administration and adapted the reforms to the needs, traditions and character of the Thai people (Charac and Smithies, 1972). King Chulalongkorn insisted also that the children of royalty be educated by Western methods.
standards at the palace school and sent his sons to study in Europe in order to cope with Western influences. By its internal reforms and concessions to Western interests, Thailand was able to maintain formal independence (Nuechterlein, 1965).

In the early twentieth century, economic development forced Thailand to seek foreign loans and the country accepted European and US advisers into key governmental posts in order to improve its expertise in various fields and to finance economic and administrative modernisation.

King Wachirawut (Rama VI, 1910-1925), who was educated at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst and Oxford University, brought many Western reforms to Thai society; for instance in literature and the education system.

During the reign of King Prajadhipok (Rama VII, 1925-1935) a coup d'état ended the absolute monarchy and established a constitutional regime with the king's support. The permanent constitution of December 10, 1932, represented a compromise between the views of the young liberal element in the People's Party and the moderate view of the King and of the conservative army elements within the party. The basic law embodied the six principles of the People's Party, which were enunciated in the original manifesto distributed in Bangkok on June 24, and were accepted by all subsequent Thai governments: (1) freedom and equality of all people in politics, in business, and before the law; (2) internal peace and order; (3) economic well-being for everyone through adoption of a national economic policy; (4) equal privileges for all classes; (5) freedom and liberty for everyone where they did not conflict with the first four principles; (6) the most complete educational opportunities possible for all people (Thailand into the 80s, 1980). This constitution took time to develop.
In 1939 the country officially changed its name from Siam to Thailand for purposes of international recognition.

During World War II, Thailand initially declared its neutrality, then sought to negotiate nonaggression pacts with the three most powerful nations in Asia - Great Britain, France, and Japan (Nuechterlein, 1965 : 69). Most historians attribute its success in maintaining its independence during the twentieth century to a combination of luck and astute diplomacy.

From 1944 to 1975 Thailand joined the western powers against the communist bloc. The U.S.A gave enormous support in the crises of Korea, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

During the 1960s the U.S.A. guaranteed the security of Thailand, by placing army bases in Thailand to defend the country against the communism from Russia and China that influenced Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

Prior to 1975, Thai governments were always more concerned with the political structure and preservation of the country's stability than with economic development. Even though the country's economic growth was quite slow, Thai people have their pride in maintaining stability. The history of Thailand demonstrates her people's love of peace and independence.

2.3 Politics

Politics is a very sensitive and complicated matter to discuss but it has a vital impact on the development of information services in Thai society. Thailand has a
constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government. It has been commented that in 1990 the overall achievement of the government is that it has generated an atmosphere of democracy, after many years of varying degrees of authoritarianism (Asia 1990). Since 1978 the constitution makes the hereditary king head of the state and commander in chief of the armed forces. Legislative power resides in a bicameral National Assembly, comprising the 243 member Senate and the 324 - member House of Representatives. Senators are appointed to six-year terms on the recommendation of the incumbent prime minister, and members of the House are directly elected to four-year terms. The head of government is the prime minister, appointed by the King on the advice of the National Assembly; the prime minister names a Council of Ministers (cabinet) for appointment by the King. A multi-party system operates and there is no dominant party.

Eventhough the National Peace-Keeping Council peacefully took over the government on 23 February 1991 and formed a new government for reasons of security of the nation and eradicating the corruption of some ministers in the cabinet, the general trend of government policies does not seem to have been affected.

Thailand is a member of the United Nations and maintains the headquarters of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO). In 1967 Thailand helped to form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Strong links are maintained with Southeast Asian nations to ensure economic and political stability in the region. Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia and the resulting refugee crisis have been problems of great concern over the past several years.
As the governments have always been busy preserving political stability, most of the national plans concerned with economic and other policies have not achieved their goals. Politics has a great impact on social development. The Thais have been ruled by governments with varying kinds of political structures including military rule, dictatorship, authoritarian rule, democratic government, military rule and democratic government again and this has inhibited the growth of consistent policy aims. Leaders and governments have always claimed that the actions they had taken were for the security of the nation. Most Thais seem to get used to such actions and explanations. The traditional conservative nature of Thai politics nurtured by a partnership between bureaucrats and big business has had a major impact on the wealthy in particular groups.

The weakness of the administration has been that it has often failed to translate policy decisions and promises to the people into concrete action, leading to some disenchantment—particularly in the rural areas, where the economic boom, so visible in Bangkok and the towns, has only partially filtered down to farmers and peasants.

It is quite true that the primary characteristic of past and present Thai political systems is the exclusion from any participation of the vast majority of the population (Kemp, 1981). The lack of interest in politics is a fact that most Thais are unlikely to deny. In recent years, the government has tried to stimulate people to participate more.
2.4 Economics

The economic progress of Thailand accelerated in 1989 - 1990 following the economic boom in the Asian Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs). Thailand is growing slowly but now hopefully expects to be amongst the next NICs (Seward, 1989: 19). There is an attractive investment indication as shown in Figure 2.2. The indication towards the end of 1989 was that growth had again topped 10%.

Figure 2.2: Thailand: The Investment Indication, 1988 - 1989.

Source: ASIA 1990 Yearbook.
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted in late 1987 that 7% real annual growth could continue until 1992, with exports up a real 10-12% a year during that period and imports rising 9-10% annually (ASIA 1988 Yearbook: 250).

Growth has been diversified across a broad spectrum of industries: foreign investment, trade and production growth stemmed from an even balance of export and domestic markets and commodity prices were buoyant. Tourism continues to expand. The number of visitors, 4.2 million in 1988, was expected to grow to more than 5 million by the end of 1989, mostly for business purposes.

There were certain problems concerning government policy to transfer investment from the overcrowded Bangkok area to upcountry areas. The average income in Bangkok is 2.9 times higher than the national average, 7.2 times higher than that in the Northeast, 4.4 times higher than that in the North, 3.8 times higher than that in the South and 2.7 times higher than that in the Central Region (Bangkok Bank, 1987). The government also had still not resolved the challenge of financing rapid growth. In 1988 it appeared to be committed to numerous privatisation schemes which would get infrastructure expansion bills off the state budget.

Since 1960 the government has actively promoted industrial investments by means of tax relief and other incentives to local and foreign investors; in 1985, 74.6% of this investment was in Thai projects. Most of the industries established under this scheme in the early years were import-substituting. However, there has been an increasing shift to export-oriented industries, taking advantages of low
wage labour and available domestic resources. Manufacturing now accounts for about 20% of the national income. The biggest growth sector was construction. The combination of demand for housing, the need for new hotels and office towers and government infrastructure development programmes stimulated the sector to about 20% growth for the year.

The problem in Thailand goes beyond the implementation of economic development plans, and extends to general management of the economy. The ability of the government to follow a national policy has been limited by the presence of powerful interests which have obstructed the planning process and the pursuit of an effective national policy. According to a study by Lepor (1988) comparing the development strategies of the Republic of Korea and Thailand, the lack of real commitment of the Thai government to the notion of development planning is a major obstacle to economic growth. Also the government does not have large resources and must rely on the private sector, which is not very efficient because of the presence of monopolies.

Judging Thai economics according to the Gross National Product (GNP) does not give a fair picture of the real situation of Thailand, as the gap between rich and poor is very wide. It is a difficult but necessary task for the government to bridge this gap. Being self-sufficient and not dependent on a money economy, the Thais have, in reality, a much higher standard of living than is suggested by their income per capita (Sithi-Amnuai, 1979). Cady (1978) also believes that the gap in the standard of living is not a serious crisis, because the Thais accept their own fate according to Buddhist belief;

'One reason for the difference between Thailand and other Southeast Asian States is the tenacity of traditional Thai social standards even
under the pressure of a modern urban environment. Thailand's long experience with modernization sponsored by its own Kings, rather than imposed by foreigners, contributed to its capacity for tolerating and rationalizing paradoxical situations... The vitality of the Buddhist faith also does much to bridge social gaps, such as prevail between city and countryside.'

However, this gap has created social problems for the whole nation, as Watson (1980) commented: 'The future of Thailand politically and economically depends upon a greater rapprochement and understanding between Bangkok and the rest of the country, together with a greater sharing of facilities'.

During the Fourth National Development Plan (1977-1981), it was found that the beneficiaries of economic progress in the past were those who lived in the Bangkok Metropolis and the Central region. The great majority of rural people hardly benefited from the development. Rapid population increase, inconsistent with available resources and employment opportunities in these areas, also created many social problems, including those related to migration, urban congestion and housing.

Regarding the development objectives of the Fifth Plan (1982-1986), the government had emphasized the distributive aspects of income and development to other regions and rural areas, in order to reduce the problems of social and economic inequality and to improve the living conditions of the rural poor and their self-reliance.
From the First (1961-1966) to the Fifth Plans (1982-1986), the efforts made to solve these problems were creation of job opportunities, expansion in the coverage of education, development of a system of regional cities and specific developmental areas to absorb the inflow of rural to urban migration, conservation and preservation of existing natural resources and protection for the environment from being destroyed by the need for more farm land and by commercial greed.

The overall purpose of the Sixth Plan (1987-1991) is to make structural adjustments to the country's development system for greater economic expansion, which would not cause monetary and fiscal instability and which would at the same time solve the problems of trade and budget deficits, unemployment, deterioration of natural resources and the environment and the low social and economic status of Thai farmers.

The strategy is to encourage greater private participation and investment and to promote greater efficiency in producing goods and services in both public and private sectors so that Thai commodities will be more competitive in the world market.

Thailand's economy in the 1990s depends to a large extent on how successfully the Thai government can persuade private sectors to be more involved with government plans for participation in the world market.
2.5 Education

Modern education in Thailand originated with King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) who attempted to equip people to deal more effectively with the West by educating his sons and young scholars abroad in line with Western standards. In the past, the princes had been educated in the palace while ordinary people learnt from the monks in the temples.

The first public school in Thailand was established by King Chulalongkorn in the palace in 1871 (Sangpichitara, 1979) for the purpose of training boys for the civil service and later for being 'well-read men of good behaviour'. By 1884 many more schools had been opened in order to meet the urgent need for training of government officials. As they proved so popular, the public schools were extended to the provinces.

The Department of Education was established in 1887 (Sangpichitara, 1979) with full responsibility for education and religious affairs for the entire country. When it became a fully -fledged Ministry in 1892 new approaches were employed, placing more emphasis on 'popular education'. Thus government primary schools were established throughout the kingdom in order to achieve literacy, good citizenship and a better standard of living for the people.

The early 20th Century witnessed many developments in education in Thailand. In 1917 the first university in Thailand, Chulalongkorn University (Thailand, Kingdom of, 1977), was founded with four faculties namely, Medicine, Law and Political Science, Engineering, and Arts and Science.
The first nation-wide compulsory education act in Thailand was promulgated in 1921 in the reign of King Rama VI. This act stipulated that all children, both boys and girls, were to go to school. After the new revolutionary government came into power on January 24, 1932, the education system was changed because the philosophy of education had shifted from training people to be useful to meet the needs of the individual and society, to supporting the economic and political system.

Under the new philosophy, the government wanted to accelerate the establishment of schools throughout the country and to expand secondary education to serve adult education and vocational training.

After the adoption of the system of constitutional monarchy in the year 1932, a National Educational Scheme was formulated, taking formal recognition of individual educational ability, regardless of sex, social background or physical conditions. This scheme has been regularly revised to ensure that every citizen is provided with the four major aspects of education - namely, Puttisuksa (Intellectual education), Chariyasuksa (Moral education), Palasuksa (Physical education) and Hattasuksa (Practical education).

The National Education Commission reports that in 1982 enrolment percentages were 96.6 for primary schools (6 to 11 years old), 31.1% for the lower secondary schools (12 to 14 years old) and 20.5% for the upper secondary schools (15 to 17 years old) (McNabb, 1988: 1228).
Overall school enrolments increased dramatically during the 1960-1980 period; primary attendance nearly doubled, secondary enrolments increased five times and higher education attendance quadrupled. In 1981, combined enrolments for public and private schools were approximately as follows: primary school, 7.4 million; secondary school, 2 million.

There are fourteen state universities, twelve private universities and colleges and two open universities. The number of university students was 1,026,952 in 1985. According to the field study in 1984 the total number of graduates was 191,811 as shown in the following table:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Study</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Teacher Training</td>
<td>80,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial &amp; Business Administration</td>
<td>43,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>18,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Behavioral Science</td>
<td>13,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry &amp;Fishing</td>
<td>12,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>7,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>6,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Science &amp; Health-Related</td>
<td>3,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities, Religion&amp;Theology</td>
<td>2,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>1,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine and Applied Arts</td>
<td>667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass communication &amp;Document</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics &amp;Computer Science</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.1 : Thailand: The number of university graduates, 1984.

In the Third Plan (1971-1977), stress was placed on improvement in the quality and effectiveness of all levels of education. It was the first time in Thailand that the introduction of life-long education was seen as a major objective of the educational system. Increasing Non-Formal Vocational Education became essential for those in rural areas.

A major aim was to make primary education accessible to the whole eligible school-age population. Lower and upper secondary and college education was to be made accessible to 48.3%, 30.9% and 4.8% of the respective populations at the eligible ages. The plan suggested that non-formal education was to serve about 4.5 million people per year. It is not clear why those 40 million people who make up the economically active population were not included. It can be assumed that the reasons were expense and the degree of importance. As for educational equity, primary schools were to be established in all sub-districts.

The education plan invested mostly in formal education, especially elementary schools in order to give educational opportunities to all the eligible school-age population. Also, the government responded to rising demand especially for secondary and higher education and it determined that the efficiency and quality of the system should be improved. To support the plans, joint planning or co-ordination by governmental organisations is very important for both formal and non-formal education.
Undoubtedly, the education system and its policy should interrelates closely with information services development and effect the alternative ways that people can access knowledge and information.

2.6 Literacy

In 1990 a conference, held in Thailand by UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, to mark International Literacy Year brought together delegates from more than 150 countries, with the aims of solving the problems of illiteracy and increasing support for basic education (The Times, 1990).

The literacy percentage has been accepted as an important indicator of socioeconomic development of a country. In Thailand, the literacy rate was suggested by UNESCO in 1985 to be 91 percent *.

Educational authorities in developing countries stress that the total eradication of illiteracy is of prime importance for national development.

In Thailand, the Functional Literacy Programme, which originated in 1970, teaches a practical, vocationally based curriculum. As part of this programme, volunteer 'walking teachers' conduct classes in remote parts of Thailand among minority hill tribes and lowland Thais. In 1981 this programme was operating in 27 provinces.

* The Far East and Australia 1990, 995.
Village Book / Newspaper Reading Centres have been established to provide newspapers, journals and books for rural people on a wide range of topics. These centres were built to promote literacy through a national campaign and to help keep people informed about current events. By 1980 over 8,400 of these centres were in use. The Department of Nonformal Education also promotes a number of village-based development projects in remote areas of the country in cooperation with international aid agencies, including UNESCO, UNICEF and USAID.

Many departments of Nonformal Education programmes use the educational radio broadcasts prepared by the Ministry of Education's Bangkok Station, and 20 upcountry stations are run by the Centre for Educational Technology. Other units within the Ministry of Education offer in-service training courses for teachers and radio correspondence courses for the general public. Another major nonformal education programme within the Ministry of Education is the Vocational Adult Education Programme. Approximately 80,000 students were enrolled in these classes in 1980 (McNabb, 1988).

During the last two decades, the functional literacy programme has operated for the purpose of providing illiterate adults (aged 14 and above) and neo-literates with relevant information and the problem-solving procedures necessary to lead a happy and productive life. The activities involve classroom type instruction, volunteer walking teachers and the Hill-tribe Functional Literacy Programme. The programme is not aimed at teaching literacy skills alone but at locating and making use of sources of information in learners' own surroundings, at analysing problems and making decisions to deal with them.
Population Survey Division (1987) of the Thai National Statistical Office found that out of the 10,927,392 private households surveyed, 7,698,003 (70.4%) had radio receivers, and 5,001,219 (45.8%) television sets. The number of households in which newspapers were read was 3,774,909 (34.5%).

It is clear that radio and television are more popular or easily accessible than newspapers and other reading materials. Nonetheless, most Thais enjoy reading non-daily newspapers and other magazines for entertainment, as the statistics show that there were 216 non-daily newspapers and 1,189 other periodicals available (UNESCO, 1988).

Book production and library collections in Thailand are not large compared with some Asian countries, as shown in Table 2.2. The number of books published per year for each million of population is 138.848 in Thailand, compared with 1,000.313 in Republic of Korea and 200.768 in Malaysia. This table shows the need to expand library resources and book production in Thai society.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>THAILAND</th>
<th>Republic of KOREA</th>
<th>MALAYSIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>52.65 m.(1986)</td>
<td>41.57 m.(1986)</td>
<td>16.92m(1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specialised</td>
<td>764 (1981)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18,296 (1984)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: Book production and library collections in Thailand, Republic of Korea and Malaysia.

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook.
2.7 Future Development and Prospects.

Thailand preserves her independence through the strategic thinking of her leaders. Thailand in the 1990s will need trained human resources to convert this strategic thinking into action. There appears to be little doubt that her political and economic stability will enable Thailand to be one of the next Newly Industrialized Countries (NIC) in Southeast Asia. Thailand has been recognised recently as a secure and attractive area for investment. It has a buoyant and successful economy with high growth rates, inculcating in the Thais a sense of self-confidence and optimism (Seward, 1989).

For this to happen as fully as possible, it is essential to bridge the gaps between urban and rural development and enhance the flow of information in society.
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Chapter 3

Information Infrastructure in Thailand:
Information Services Perspective.

Library and information sources in Thailand have their roots in the temples where knowledge from religious inscriptions was orally transferred to ordinary people. For more than a century, a modern education system has been operated in Thailand. Four decades of development have contributed to setting up the existing libraries in almost every town of the country. This may look impressive but the libraries are still facing problems caused by the limited quality of information services.

At present there is one national library with nine branches, 277 special libraries, 375 public libraries (UNESCO, 1989), 88 academic libraries, 562 school libraries (Mainaikit and Suebsonthi, 1988).

The continuing decline of illiteracy from 21 percent in 1970 to 12 percent in 1980 and 9 percent in 1985 shows that there is a very large potential demand for improved information services. Resources and staff need to be improved so as to be able to promote effective information services. The information infrastructure in Thailand needs to be developed in the following areas: the information and communication system, mass media and communication, book and publishing industry, library and information technology, library education and library professional organisations.
3.1 Information and Communication System

There are many channels of information in society. The traditional channels of 'experience', 'personal knowledge', 'informal conversation' and 'mass media' still remain popular among Thai people in preference to 'formal information', 'libraries', 'professional journals, 'library personnel', and 'handbooks'. The traditional communication process continues to affect the communication system in Thai society today. Obviously, society changes rapidly with the progress of technology. The increase in information makes it impossible for people to handle information only in the traditional way; they must adapt in order to survive in modern society.

People use second-hand knowledge by reading printed materials because books and journals are the products of other people who have used libraries or other information sources; listening to accounts of what people have read or learned may be called third-hand knowledge. In modern society, second-hand knowledge dominates the process of learning. However, people in Thai society seem attracted to either first-hand or third-hand knowledge rather than the second-hand kind.

An information system is an organisation of people, materials (resources) and machines (information technology) that serves to facilitate the transfer of information from one person to another (Vickery, 1973). Ideally, communication takes place backwards and forwards between the participants. One-way communication is an obstacle to the flow of information services in
Thailand's information and communication system.

3.2 Mass Media and Telecommunication

The most widely available and widely used media of communication in Thailand tend to be those in which communication is basically one-way.

The mass media play a more important role in making information available than do libraries and information centres. People depend mostly on information from such media, for instance: newspapers, radio, T.V. and films. Recently, the study of Kaosa-ard, et al (1989) found that a total of 65.5% of the 1,035 respondents received agricultural information from television, 34.8% from radio and 22.9% from reading. The survey by Education Research Department (1978) also found that Thai people in rural areas have access to the media by radio (87%), films (74%), newspapers (47%), television (34%), serials and newspapers (16%). This shows the pervasiveness of the mass media in Thai society.

Information and ideas communicated through the electronic media are often received in a form that is rapid and transient. The recipients have little time to think about or evaluate what they have seen or heard (Usherwood, 1989), nor is there much opportunity for the interrogation in the media or for feedback which could modify the communication at the time of its reception.

Exploitation of the mass media in Thailand mostly supports individual interest rather than social and public interests (Pipatseritam, 1983). In fact those who control the system are those who have authority in commerce and politics. The media are run for business profit rather than for social benefit. The competitive urge for profit is greater than the sense of responsibility for society as a whole.
The first newspaper in Thailand was the 'Bangkok Recorder' published on 4 July 1844 (Sookpanich, 1965) for one year until it was withdrawn from production. In 1864 it was published again with other newspapers such as the Siam Daily Advertiser, the Bangkok Calendar, the Siam Weekly Monitor, the Siam Times Weekly, the Bangkok Press and the Siam Summary. It was most popular among specific groups such as civil servants.

At present, there are 23 newspapers in Bangkok, 14 in Thai, 4 in English, and 5 in Chinese (Paxton, 1989).

The number of sales per day for the whole country is as follows:- Thai language: Thai Rath (800,000), Daily News (300,000) and Siam Star (160,000); English language: Bangkok Post (34,000), Student Weekly (40,000), The Nation (18,500), Bangkok World (10,000);
Chinese language: Sin Sean Ye Pao (50,000), Siri Nakorn (40,000), Sakol (40,000).

The first film made in Thailand was in 1910 (Sangurai, 1982). At present there are 70 film companies. There are 823 cinemas around the nation (95 in Bangkok with 81,038 seats, and 728 cinemas in the provinces). Recently, the impact of video has made the cinema business less popular.

Radio was first transmitted in Thailand in 1931 (Prakorbpol, 1980). 1932 was the year when Thailand changed to a constitutional monarchy and radio was therefore used as a medium for the government and people. It was also used with the intention of educating people about the democratic system. There are at present 222 radio stations around the nation (72 in Bangkok, 150 in the provinces).
Television was first transmitted in 1955 (Prakorbpol, 1980). There are 10 stations (5 in Bangkok, and 1 in each of 4 regions- except the North which has 2 stations). It is under government control with commercial advertising on every channel.

Telex has been used since 1883. Telegrams are more widely used around the nation than Fax, which is used more for business purposes. In 1985 there were 830,480 telephones in Thailand, of which 586,180 were in Bangkok (TOT, 1985). Telecommunication by satellite was first used in 1967; and there were two ground satellite stations in the country (INTELSAT, 1986). The connection with satellite over the Pacific ocean is made by 132 channels and over the Indian ocean by 60 channels.

The road, railway and air transport system are convenient, except that the road traffic in Bangkok in rush hours is now a major problem. The telephone operates quite efficiently locally and internationally in every town of the country (except in villages and remote areas). About 75% of all telephone subscribers are in the city.

Telecommunications in Thailand have nowadays made much more progress and become more convenient than in the past decades. Telecommunication and transport (for instance, buses can reach every town in the country. Trains can reach almost every town). This is because the government has given priority to developing transport and communication infrastructures. A high proportion of the budget has been given for such projects.
3.4 The Book and Publishing Industry

The book industry in Thailand is quite small-scale compared with other Newly Industrialized Countries and industrialized countries. For instance, Thailand produced only 7,728 new titles in 1986, while the Republic of Korea produced 41,543 books in 1986 and the United Kingdom produced 52,861 in 1985 (UNESCO, 1989). The book publishers and book sellers claim that their output is normally based on market and consumer demand. Book production in Thailand is mostly in the Thai language and is therefore not particularly exportable. Nevertheless, the number of books produced in Thailand has increased by more than 50% since 1971 when there were only 2,174 new titles (UNESCO, 1974). The number of imported-books in English is very high. Thai publishing is quite an active business; there are more than a thousand firms in operation under both government and private ownership.

3.4 Library and Information Technology

Library and information technology in Thailand is still in an early stage of development, even though technology was first introduced in a Thai library as long ago as 1968 at the Asian Institution of Technology (AIT) Library and Documentation Centre. Since then, computerized library projects have been increasingly developed by university and special libraries. Most of the projects are in their experimental or research and development stage. The major libraries and information centres that provide computerized database
for information retrieval purposes are:-

- The Asian Institute of Technology's Library and Documentation Centre which established a computerized network with other university libraries in Thailand, called ATUNET (AIT - Thailand Inter - University Network) It operates six databases which are available for online searching through a visual display terminal. There are:

  - AAGE (Asian Information Centre for Geotechnical Engineering)
  - ENSC (Environmental Sanitation Information Centre)
  - IFIS (International Ferrocement Information Centre)
  - RERIC (Renewable Energy Resources Information Centre)
  - UNIO (Union List of Serials in Thailand)
  - BOOKCAT - holds records of 40,000 of the AIT Library's monographs (books) corresponding to acquisitions from 1971.

- The UN-ESCAP Library (The United Nations Economics and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific) has operated the ESCAP Bibliographic Information System (EBIS) since 1981.

- The Thai National Documentation Centre (TNDC) produces two mechanized bibliographic projects: *Master's Theses in Thai Universities* and *Index to Royal Thai Government Gazette*.

- The National Institute of Development Administration's Library and Information Centre (NIDA) is experimenting on an information retrieval system for books.

The use of a computer to produce the Union List of Serials is well-developed in Thailand. Computerized acquisitions, automated cataloguing and automated circulation system are not numerous. Many libraries are attempting to develop
computerized databases for information retrieval purposes but most of them are still in experimental stages. According to Suebsonthi and Mainaikit (1988), in 1983 micro and minicomputer are not available in most academic libraries, but in 1985 almost all of the central libraries of the fourteen state universities has used microcomputers for their library and information work.

Library and information technology has become a matter of great concern to all libraries and library schools in Thailand during the past decade. The studies of Raper (1987) and Jenprapapong (1986) in computer/information technology in Thai university libraries found that most librarians have a positive attitude to using computers in libraries.

Information technology was applied mostly in some major academic libraries, special libraries and information centres. A recent survey by Thungkawee (1991) found that 27 libraries (e.g. 10 special libraries and 17 faculty and university libraries) in Thailand provide CD-ROM service. Public and school libraries are still far from using that technology. Mainaikit (1988) concluded that main problems that face Thai libraries and information centres are the lack of appropriate computer technology, shortage of experienced staff trained in computer systems and technology and insufficient funding.

3.5 Library and Information Education

Library and information education has developed since 1951 (Atthakorn and Nandhivajrin, 1988) when a library training programme was first introduced at Chulalongkorn University by five American professors. By 1955 it took the form of a diploma course in Library Science at the Faculty of Arts. Since 1959
the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Library Science degree has been offered; and five years later the Master of Arts (MA) in library science could be taken.

There are three levels of library education in Thailand, firstly- university, secondly- teacher's training college, and thirdly- a training programme provided by the Thai Library Association (TLA) (Dhutiyabhohi, 1985). Formal library and information science courses are now offered at bachelor's and master's degree level in 12 universities and 27 teachers training colleges (at bachelor's degree level) in Thailand (Report of the Sixth Intra-Asean Cultural Programme..., 1989: 10).

Because of the impact of technology, course revision takes place regularly in response to the growing demand for specialized manpower with extensive knowledge of library and information science. Eight subjects that are offered are:- 'Information Storage and Retrieval', 'Information Technology', 'Computer Programming for Libraries', 'Library and Information Networks', 'Information Systems Analysis and Design', 'Management Information Systems', 'Information Needs and Users' and 'Education for Library and information Science' (Attakorn and Nandhivajrin, 1988).

Even though the number of Library Science texts in the Thai language has increased a little, it still has not met the students' demands. Imported textbooks in the English language do not appeal much to Thai students because of the language barrier. Translations have been made of some titles. More translations are needed.
In 1988 Chulalongkorn University library school offered a new programme to award a Certificate of Advanced Study (C.A.S.) in Library and Information Science for those who hold at least a Masters degree. At the present time, very few students attend this course because firstly it is a new course, and secondly because a certificate may improve skills but it does not yet guarantee promotion to higher grades.

The education structure and courses provided by Thai library schools stress existing theory and rules rather than ideas calculated to help students adjust to society. The Library / information profession needs to keep contact with people as well as resources and machines.

3.6 The Thai Library Association (TLA)

TLA was established in 1954 (ALA, 1986), with the help of the Asia Foundation, by a group of pioneer librarians who had attended training courses at the Chulalongkorn University. Since its establishment, the Thai Library Association has carried out the following activities (Chavalit, 1980):

1. Organisation of short courses, workshops and seminars.
2. Publication of books on library science and manuals and tools for library work. These include a translation of the abridged edition of the Dewey Decimal Classification and a compilation of subject heading lists for Thai books, library terms, etc.
3. Publication of the 'Thai Library Bulletin' and 'Library Journal'.
4. Production of library furniture and equipment.
5. Provision of consultation services in planning, organizing and furnishing libraries.

6. Organisation of promotional programmes for readership, book production and library development, such as travelling book exhibits, a national book week, a national library week, radio programmes, etc.

7. Coordination with library associations and institutions outside the country and participation in international programmes such as International Book Year, International Women's Year, etc.

The TLA has succeeded in getting information professionals of different categories together, but the problems that affect information services development still exist, for example in the communication between users and library/information professionals; and among library/information professionals themselves.

The Thai Library Association has been growing slowly but steadily to fulfill its role as a professional organisation. Provision of training programmes, educational texts, children's books and other projects, are all evidence of its efforts (Nandhivajrin, 1988).

Membership of the Association consists of five categories: Regular members, Associate members, Honorary members, Contributing members, and Institutional members.

Since its inception in 1960, the TLA annual conference has been a successful feature of its programme. The conference falls in either November or December normally lasts 5 days.
3.7 The National Library

The Thai National Library in Bangkok is one of the most important heritages and information sources of the nation. It was founded by royal decree on 12 October 1905 (Spain, 1952), under the title of Vajiranana National Library. It included the private collection of King Vajiravudh in 1925, the Damrong Rajannubhab library in 1947 and the Naradhippongprapan library for research in Social Science in 1979. The new library building was inaugurated on 5 May 1966 (Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, 1966) and it has been gradually developed. In order to expand the availability of services to other parts of the country, there are now nine branches in four regions.

At present, the collection consists of: printed materials (in Thai and English), Thai manuscripts and stone inscriptions (146,564 items) and audio-visual materials (phonograph records, tapes, televisions, video, maps and photographs). The staff consists of 46 professional librarians, 20 language specialists in charge of reading, transcribing and translating manuscripts and about 200 subprofessional assistants (Tikhara, 1988a).

The collection has expanded through the deposit requirements of the Printing Act of 1949, through purchase, gifts and exchanges, and it now houses the most complete collection of current Thai publications in Thailand. The National Library, which is a centre of THAINATIS, has a major role to play in enhancing information services throughout the country, as well as general services such as exhibitions, seminars, discussions, lectures, storytelling, films
and puppet shows. It has shown its significant role in cooperation with other types of libraries (such as academic, school, special and public libraries) in Thailand and also with other countries especially in the Southeast Asian region, for instance:

- Computerized National Bibliography Project. Volume 1 of the Thai National Bibliography, completed in 1975, it was published in 1978 and is now published quarterly. Sixteen leading library institutions have co-operated in the Computerized National Bibliography Project (Gesmankit, 1980). National Bibliographies have been established in English and Thai language but it is not a really complete bibliography because of the unsuitable printing law and non-cooperation among libraries (Amphanwong, 1972). According to the deposit requirements of the Printing Act of 1949, two copies of all publications published in Thailand must be submitted to the National Library. This matter has been largely neglected by publishers, because of the small amount of compensation given. Furthermore, there is not as yet a depository library designated by law to receive all titles of government publications. Consequently, the National Library has tried to get the law amended, but it has not yet succeeded.

- ISDS-SEA (International Serial Data System South East Centre). The Thai National Library is the membership of the National Libraries and Documentation Centres Consortium (NLDC-SEA Consortium). Gesmankit (1980), the former director of the Thai National Library, stated that the works undertaken in ISDS-SEA and NLDC projects, would be instrumental in enhancing the concept underlying cooperative arrangements for an inter-library loan system. It will represent a step in the right direction towards the improvement of services both in substance and extent for library users. This will eventually contribute greatly to the acceleration and improvement of the national development programme; and of
The functions of the National Library (Tikhara, 1988a) are:-

1. To acquire and preserve the national heritage in so far as it appears in all forms of reading material: stone inscriptions, manuscripts, printed and audio-visual materials, for the purpose of education and research.

The National Library has continuously done a great deal to acquire and preserve the national heritage, as can be seen from the great Thai collections in literature and history in Thai language. Newbery (1978) noted that before the end of the first World War the library was exchanging publications with similar institutions throughout the world and had collected many rare manuscripts and printed books in foreign languages dealing with Siam (Thailand).

2. To manage the collection of those materials efficiently by using library science techniques.

The collections use the Dewey Decimal Classification with AACR 2 cataloguing. These are divided in different rooms by the type of the collection and subject. The use of library science techniques is obviously applied to every function. Most professional librarians graduated from library schools both from within and aboard.

3. To support the government's policies of manpower development by providing them with adequate and up-to-date library materials.

To provide library materials to users is an outstanding function, but, with the exception of journals and newspapers which provide in one large room in the library, it is not certain whether these materials are up-to-date. The matter of
currency cannot apply to new books on the shelves because of delays in technical processing.

4. To serve governmental agencies, private organisations and educational institutions as their information resource.

The Thai National Library has served as the nation's information resource centre for generations. Referral service is normally used when the library does not have what the organisations want.

5. To promote book production in Thailand and to compile the National Bibliography.

Book production in Thailand depends on market demand from libraries, educational institutions, business and the general public. Cooperation with TLA to organise a Book Fair annually is a part of book promotion as is a book exhibition within the library.

The compilation of the National Bibliography with the application of computers is one of the main achievements of the Thai National Library, although it is always lagging behind schedule.

6. To provide an efficient information delivery system.

This purpose has not been satisfactory achieved. The delay of information delivery services reflects poorly upon the profession.

7. To cooperate with regional and international agencies in information exchange.

Cooperation and exchanging have been pursued enthusiastically by the National Library, for example: the ISDS-SEA, NLDC-SEA and THAINATIS projects.
In addition to the Thai National Library, the National Archives has also been an important information source for scholars and researchers in various fields for several decades. The Thai National Archives was established in Bangkok in 1952 (Tikhara, 1988b) as a division of the Department of Fine Arts, Ministry of Education. In the beginning, the National Archives were situated in the same building as the National Library. The present building, located close to the National Library, was constructed and opened in the same year as the National Library - in 1966. It is divided into two sections: the Archives Section (in charge of the historical records, their organisation, preservation and service); and the National Diary Section (responsible for the collection and organisation of current materials for national records and future scholarly research). The items include newspaper clippings, photographs and transcripts of radio broadcasts.

The Archives Section preserves the official files of the Royal Secretariat given to the National Library between 1936 and 1940. The large number of official files includes records of the reigns of King Chulalongkorn, King Vajiravudh and King Prajahipok and records of governmental organisation before 1932. Also, modern manuscripts such as diaries and personal correspondence of important statesmen, donated by their families, are preserved.

The archival reference service is usually provided for official agencies, researchers and students, mostly for research purposes. The importance of service provision in the National Library and Archives is enormous in information development.
3.8 Academic Libraries

Academic libraries in Thailand are found in universities, colleges, teacher-training colleges, technical institutions and military academies. These are the responsibility of the Ministry of University Affairs and the Ministry of Education.

The first Thai university library was Chulalongkorn University library, founded in 1917. At present, there are fourteen state universities (including two open universities), five private universities and eight private colleges. Before 1951 there were no trained Thai librarians in any of the libraries in Thailand (Spain, 1952). Since 1951 Chulalongkorn University has offered a programme of library training with support from the Fulbright Foundation and a library school was established. Today almost all college and university librarians are qualified. Since 1952 many have not only studied in library schools in Thailand but have also been abroad, especially to the USA. This means the library staff situation has improved considerably over the years.

Suebsonthi and Mainaikit (1988) noted that the year 1960 marked the beginning of a new period of university libraries development. Foreign organisations such as USAID, the Asia Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation have assisted by providing financial aid for the development of university libraries and their collections (Gordon, 1979). With the funds jointly allocated by the Thai and the United States governments, university library collections were broadened and strengthened, especially in the areas of science, technology and social sciences. Most library collections are quite comprehensive and adequate because foreign books fill the gaps where national book production is inadequate (Chavalit, 1980).
In 1983, there was a total of 1,001 state university library staff (355 professional and 646 non-professional staff); and 101 private university / college library staff (33 professionals, 68 nonprofessionals). Suebsonthi and Mainaikit (1988) indicated that in 1983, there were approximately 2,375,930 volumes (1,280,100 volumes are in Thai and 1,089,500 in English) in academic libraries. Most libraries have a collection of between 40,000 and 50,000 volumes in Thai, and 70,000 to 80,000 Volumes in English. For research purposes, university libraries maintain periodical collections making up a total of 14,300 titles, with a certain amount of duplication.

Between 100 and 250 Thai journals are subscribed to on average. The number of journals in English subscribed to varies according to the size of the libraries. Large university libraries have more than 400 titles, the number is more like to 50-100 for small libraries.

New technology in university libraries is in an early stage of development. Most university libraries have advanced photographic, reproduction equipment, printing devices (such as offset printing and duplicating machines, microform readers, printers) and photocopy machines. Suebsonthi and Mainaikit also pointed out that not until 1985 did most of the central libraries of the fourteen state universities use microcomputers for their library and information work. To facilitate supplementary university education, the libraries provide the materials and appropriate projection or listening equipment as well as special physical facilities.

University and college libraries provide circulation and reference services and these are their principal public services. Interlibrary loans are possible in most
university libraries. Some university libraries assist in research work by compiling special bibliographies, conducting literature searches for individual researchers, performing abstracting and related services. Most of the services are manually executed by the reference librarians and free of charge.

The general services are photocopying, library orientation, book acquisition, compilation of new publication lists, reading guidance, seminars, exhibitions and training.

As well as cooperation among faculty libraries within the same institution, university libraries have also been cooperating broadly with academic and other libraries both in Thailand and abroad. These activities include inter-library book borrowing and lending, union cataloging of holdings, Union List of Serials, cooperative acquisition, improving subject headings and classification analysis, bibliography, information and audiovisual service, publications exchange, periodical indexing, card catalogue production and in-service training of staff. Most of these cooperative activities are possible due to the mutual agreement of the libraries involved.

Consequently, university library development is likely to continue, with increasing emphasis on more and better information services. Other developments may include: building up library strength through close inter-library loan coordination and cooperation and the automation of library operations, primarily in the field of bibliographical services and information retrieval, which can then be extended to circulation services.
In 1968, the National Educational Council (NEC) set up a committee on university libraries development. The committee, comprising ten university librarians and one council official, attempted to implement the concept of cooperation by initiating programmes leading to a Union List of Serials and a Union Catalogue. However, due to an administrative change in the NEC a few years later, the committee and the planned projects were abolished.

In 1976, cooperation for university library development was initiated by a group of university library administrators during their regular meetings. The primary agenda related to academic librarians' status, university library standards and manpower, to name a few areas of concern. In 1977, this committee formed the Academic Librarians' Group (now affiliated with the Thai Library Association) to facilitate cooperation centrally among academic libraries and librarians.

A plan for library cooperation materialized when the first seminar on University library cooperation was organized in 1979 under the auspices of the university libraries and a subcommittee on Academic Libraries Development appointed by the Ministry of Academic Affairs. As a consequence, several subcommittees were established. They assumed responsibilities for cooperative acquisition, subject headings revision, development of bibliographical tools, journal and newspaper indexes and inter-library loans. The second seminar on academic libraries and their cooperative effort to fulfill learning and teaching needs was organized in order to assess the feasibility of a university library network.
3.9 School Libraries

School libraries have developed and changed during the last decade. Whilst many school administrators realize the importance of the library as an information resource for pupils, the philosophy of becoming Instructional Materials Centres (IMC) is still theory rather than practice.

School teacher-librarians attend to library work only when they are free from their teaching duty. Most library services are circulation and enquiry work. Some teacher-librarians have to do both teaching and library work and the library will therefore be open only when librarians have no classes to teach. Half of them have had no training in librarianship.

The development of school libraries prior to 1978 was very slow and most libraries were not well organized, even though Chavalit (1980) indicated that there was a course on librarianship in the curriculum of some teacher training programmes. The concept of librarianship at that time may have been unclear or other reasons made school library collections unsuitable.

Since 1978 there have been notable movements which have had an impact on elementary and secondary school libraries. The National Plans for Education of 1960 and 1977 have emphasized instruction in the use of libraries and training for students in the techniques of searching for knowledge. The secondary school curriculum, as revised in 1975, included an elective course on how to use libraries and how to read books. But the outcome is still in doubt.

In the present circumstance, library school policy, quality of teacher-librarians, user education, TLA's support, adequate staff and efficient plans are the areas that
need reconsideration from school authorities.

3.10 Special Libraries and Information Centres.

Special libraries and information centres seem to be able to set an example of the ideal of effective information services to users. The following may be defined as information services in special libraries: circulation, enquiry work, inter-library loan, SDI, online searching, photocopies and newsletters. Most users are involved in professional work of one kind or another.

The first special libraries in Thailand were founded over one hundred years ago in 1887 in the Department of Education (now the Ministry of Education). Special libraries were established in variety of institutions, in private and government business, societies, organisations and the local headquarters of international co-operative agencies. These libraries vary in size and in service according to the needs of users; some hold large collections of books, others carry out clearing-house activities in periodicals and statistics (Newbery, 1978). Generally, the library materials are very specifically related to the work of their parent organisations.

The collections in special libraries include books, periodicals, newspapers, conference proceedings, pamphlets, clippings, maps, charts, audio-visual materials, microforms and computerized databases.

Nowadays, many special libraries have been dramatically changed and developed by qualified librarians and have a large enough budget from their parent organisations. Most special libraries compare very favourably with public
libraries.
While special libraries develop in both number and services, many specialized information centres have also been founded. Most large private sector and government organisations have their own libraries or information centres, which shows the growing recognition of the need for information services.
At present, there is a 'Special Libraries Group' in the Thai Library Association (TLA) for the benefit of cooperation and development.

Examples of special libraries in Thailand are: the Bank of Thailand library (one of the best libraries in banking and accountancy in Thailand), the Bangkok Bank library, The Siam Society library, the Science Department library, the Ministry of Education library, the Ministry of Industry library, the National Institute for Development Administration (one of the best libraries in public administration and political sciences in Thailand), the Thai National Document Centre, faculty libraries in each university, the library of the Express Transportation (established in 1952), the library of the Provincial Electricity Authority (1959), the library of the National Housing Authority (1961) and the library of the Comptroller General Department (1965).

3.11 Public Libraries.

The first public library services in Thailand were introduced in 1916 but not until 1947 did the government have a plan for promoting public library services throughout the country. However, many problems occurred and development was hampered.
In 1952, there were 338 public library services in Thailand. There were no trained librarians at that time (Spain, 1952), therefore, library staff were clerks from government organisations who had no concept of modern librarianship. Eventually, the Thai Library Association played an important role in supporting the progress of public libraries such as selecting the outstanding library each year for the award at the TLA annual conference. In 1954 training programmes for library staff were set up. From 1962 to 1965 several efforts were made to improve and promote public library services. For example, in 1965 standards were set, though none of them actually reached the standards.

Since 1975, public libraries in many provinces (excluding Bangkok) are the responsibility of the Department of Non-Formal Education, while the public libraries in Bangkok are operated by the Metropolitan Administration.

The first public library in Bangkok, Suan Lumpini Public library, which was established in 1956 in the central park of Bangkok. The public library system in Bangkok now consists of nine branches. The collections house between 2,000 and 10,000 volumes, mostly in the Thai language, and between 20 and 60 titles of current periodicals. The basic library services are circulation and enquiry services. Some have special activities for children such as story telling, films, slide shows and games on some special occasions. Public libraries provide users with good collections of books and other reading materials (Varathon, 1988).
Public library services in the provinces are provided through libraries in town, mobile library units and village book reading centres. The collections of these libraries consist mainly of a few thousand books and a small number of periodical titles. This is due to lack of funds as well as to the shortage of publications in the Thai language.

In 1980 there were 27 mobile library services, which are especially important for people in remote areas who cannot reach the library in town (Kurian, 1988). These services were successful for several years, but are now becoming less popular among people due to the shortage of new books and service delays.

Village book-reading centres are provided for improving reading habits of people in the villages. It was planned to establish a book-reading centre in every village throughout the country. By 1983 there were 8,100 such centres. The Newspaper Reading Centres started in 1971 and by 1976, there were 6,122 of them (Styler, 1984), though many consisted of no more than one room with racks for newspapers and benches. The Adult Education Division supplies two or three newspapers a day and sends supervisors to assist and guide the village committees.
3.12 Discussion on Information Infrastructure in Thailand

Information affects all aspects of a nation's development: economic, scientific, technological, educational, cultural and social. Thailand needs a great deal of effort to create the environment of intelligence information services* within society, especially since the country is in the process of being transformed into one of Asia's Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs). Under present conditions, the section of the Thai population who are able to access better information services are those engaged in higher education, i.e. only 4.4% of the whole population. In 1988 the population was 54.5 million: 20.7% of whom were engaged in education and 54% economically active population (e.g. in agriculture, manufacture and commerce). Therefore, it can be assumed that the remaining 74.7% need information services of all kinds to develop their capability.

The fact is that 82% of the whole population live in rural areas, while only 18% are in urban ones, but information services reach mostly those in urban areas. That

* Intelligence information services are the ability to acquire new information and knowledge, make judgement, adapt to new environment, develop new concepts and strategies and act in a rational and effective way on the basis of information thus acquired (Jequire, 1983).
means only the minority (those in the field of education) can access information services. The need to bridge the gap between information-rich in urban and information-poor in rural areas is strong.

Social development nowadays depends increasingly on information and its transmission. If what society needs is information, not books in themselves according to Line (1983), then the need to provide better information services to improve human resources is indisputable.

A library contribution to the quality of life is only marginal if its information services and collections are inadequate for even the most basic communication needs (Hafner, 1987). Examples exist in many developed and developing countries to show that the main factor in solving social problems is the improvement of the quality of human resources by both formal and nonformal education.

According to Parapak (1988), without highly educated and skilled people, no nation can hope to become a serious participant in the world economy. Developing countries must give high priority to human development. Without a clear strategy, long-term planning and a determination to successfully master essential technologies, the developing world will remain only a dreamer of rather than a possessor of the benefits of information and communication technology.

The quality of human resources is clearly identified in Thailand as one of the leading objectives of the Sixth National Plan (1986-1991) (Prasith-rathsint, 1987). It is a duty of the Thai people to determine the service they need and also a duty of Thai
library/ information professionals to provide information services to meet users' demand.

The less the Thai library / information professional eases the flow of information services, the greater the risk the profession as a whole takes. What Thai society really needs is the efficient transmission of information and intelligence services. The library / information professional needs to cooperate with other professions in supporting efficient information services to those potential and even nonpotential users. Thai information professionals should make the best of their skills and knowledge to meet the needs of users.

The following factors (such as the culture of learning, the education system, the impact of technology, national plans and international organisations) provide both direct and indirect impact to the internal and external environment of information services in Thailand.

3.12.1 The Culture of Learning

The culture of learning through reading does not appeal much to most Thais. The way of learning through oral communication from scholars and the elder generation traditionally determines the way communication flows in most areas. At present, the mass media (such as radio, television and newspapers) are much more important in Thai life than libraries and information centres. According to the
research survey 'Agricultural Information and Technological Change in Northern Thailand' in 1989 by Kaosa-ard and others, television has become the most important source of agricultural information (including technological information) measured in terms of frequency of reception. A total of 65.5 per cent of 1,035 respondents received agricultural information from television and only 22.9 percent from reading, as is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 : Frequencies of agriculture information reception by source in Northern Thailand. ( n = 1035 , % of respondents )

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information source</th>
<th>Receivers</th>
<th>Non-receivers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local traders</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrichemical companies</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Farmers</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips / Exhibitions</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension officers</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaosa-ard, M., et.al. (1986)
It is interesting to consider whether the culture of reading acquired from Western society can be a beneficial influence in the learning process in Thai society. The sense of ease and fellowship (as part of Thai culture), in one way, is an obstacle to the process of information seeking behaviour, as Thai society is traditionalist and great respect is paid to persons in authority. One purpose of education is to allow people to use their own awareness and initiative to seek ways to develop themselves and society. The purpose of information services should support this educational purpose by providing freedom of choice in the information structure. Structure and culture have been suggested by Barlow (1987) to be the means whereby an organisation regulates activities and attitudes towards the achievement of the organisation's objectives. The culture of learning has therefore an impact upon information services structure and the educational system.

3.12.2 The Education System

Effective information services will be most beneficial only if the education system makes provision for innovative methods. The method of teaching - learning by memorizing without innovative thinking is only of real use if the student's purpose is merely to pass the examination. Thailand has a long experience with this method which has limited learners' awareness in acquiring additional information and knowledge.

In the present circumstance, formal education has priority over nonformal education
in the education system, as it is the policy of the government to give educational opportunity to all eligible school-age population. But the quality of life depends on both formal and nonformal education.

In 1982 enrolment percentages in education, reported by the National Education Commission were 96.6 % for primary school (6 to 11 years old), 31.1 % for the lower secondary school cycles (12 to 14 years old) and 20.5 % for the upper secondary cycles (15 to 17 years old) (McNabb, 1988) (See Figure 3.1).

![Student Population Ratio by level of Education (1981)](image)

Figure 3.1: Student / Population Ratio by level of Education (1981)
Source: Office of the National Education Commission

From this figure, it can be seen that a large number of students do not continue their education beyond the sixth grade. 65.5 % dropped out from primary school:- these
people can be termed 'conventional literate'. The proportion of the age group who attend higher education is only 4.4%.

Normally, access to information, for people who follow the higher steps of the ladder of the education system which the library and information centres are ready to serve, is less of a problem than it is to those who do not have this opportunity.

This survey found that most of those who use information services are engaged in education and use services for educational not other purposes. Therefore, it is essential for Thailand to give much more emphasis to nonformal education. Vocational training that the government is trying to implement alone is insufficient for human development. The ideal is that people should have the ability to access the right information at the right time in order to improve their careers and quality of life.

Ketudat (1989), president of the National Petrochemical Corp and advisory member of the National Education Commission, suggested that nonformal education methods should be more intensively used.

The National Liaison Committee for Non-Formal Education in Thailand has also admitted:

* 'Conventional literate' describes a person who has only the ability to read, write and comprehend texts on familiar subjects and to understand whatever signs, labels, instruction and directions are necessary to get along within their environment (Hunter and Harman, 1979).
'Despite the fact that there are more than fifty different organised programmes of adult and non-formal education in operation, still only a small proportion of educators are aware of the crucial role that non-formal education must play, if rapid and smooth social, cultural and economic development is to be achieved. In general it is only those officials who are working directly and indirectly, in the field of non-formal education and a few other educational officials at the highest level who are fully aware of the concept and its importance. The importance of non-formal education is not felt either by the central budgetary officials or the central planning officials'(SEAMEO, 1974).

The percentage of people involved in nonformal education in some developed countries can be a good indicator of the priority given to developing human resources. For instance, the percentage of the population in some European countries who had participated in adult education within the previous year is most impressive.

Table 3.2 : OECD* Adult Education.

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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All age</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD, 1986.

* OECD = Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
The Thai National Plan has established that nonformal education is to serve about 4.5 million people per year, about 8% of the whole population. It is clearly the intention of the Thai authority to give stress to formal education during this decade but there is a great deal of commitment to be made in the nonformal area for the benefit of the wider population. Library work must support users' awareness in the matter of information services in both formal and nonformal education.

The budget for information services also depends on present and future government policies, mission and plans. For instance, in 1980 the budget for nonformal education was only 1.8 per cent of the education expenditure, as shown in Figure 3.2, which is obviously insufficient to cater to the majority of population.

Figure 3.2 : Education expenditure, fiscal year 1988.

3.12.3 The impact of technology

Information technology (I.T.) is costly and sometimes users' fees cannot be avoided. Therefore, the application of I.T. depends on three factors: firstly, the need to facilitate particular aspects of service or the whole service, secondly, sufficient funding to cover the cost and thirdly, qualified staff for effective management.

The results of library technology in Thai libraries and information centres are evident from many cooperative projects, for instance:

- Union List of Serials in Thailand.
- Union List of Serials in Mahidol University Libraries.
- Union List of International Serials in Southeast Asia.
- Scientific Serials in Thai Libraries (SSTL)
- AIT's online automated acquisitions system.
- Computerized Thai Bibliography.
- Thai National Union Catalog.

In addition there are some pilot projects in acquisition and circulation in university libraries. Some library attempts to develop a computerized database for information retrieval purposes are:

- AIT operates six databases and is a member of DIALOG.
- UN-ESCAP has operated the ESCAP Bibliographic Information System.
The library profession has realized the impact of I.T. For example :- in 1988 TLA held the conference 'The Library of Tomorrow' which concerned the impact of computer in libraries and information centres; in 1987 the academic library committee and Ramkamheang University held the conference 'Academic Libraries in the Next Decade'.

3.12.4 National plan

The government first set out the policies to develop business information centres and organizations in the Third Plan (1971-1976) when facing problems of the lack of business and industrial information and unorganized information. Therefore, information was to be considered as the major resource in science and technological development. In the Fourth Plan (1977-1981) identified the need to improve the information centre in the Ministry of Industry and also information services for investors in business organisations. The Fifth Plan (1981-1986) emphasizes information policy in detail especially in the science and technology development plan.
The most significant date in library and information development was 2 December 1986 when the government approved establishment of the 'Thai National Information System -THAINATIS' proposed by the Ministry of Education.

On 21 April 1987, the National Library was nominated as the Secretarial Office of 'THAINATIS' committee. There are sub-committees in six different cooperative information centres: the Agriculture, Medicine, Humanities, Science & Technology, Economic, and Social Science branches. At present, the work of 'THAINATIS' committees is in progress. Furthermore, the government is in the process of considering the progress of 'THAINATIS' before approving the 'National Information Policy'.

The Sixth Plan (1986-1991) indicates the guidelines to develop a science and technology system and emphasized human resource development. Moreover, the urgent need for the National Information Network in Science and Technology to follow up the progress of research and development is stressed.

Generally, Thailand has been engaged in planning for national, social and economic development since 1961 under the office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB). The implementation of the Plans from the First (1961-1966) to the fifth (1982-1986) has resulted in a satisfactory record of economic growth for the Thai economy but not in rural human development and job opportunities.
Regarding the country's demographic situation, Thailand had experienced a rapid population growth after World War II. The population increased from 26.5 million in 1961 to 50.6 million in 1984, almost doubling within 23 years. This rapid growth was a major obstacle to national economic and social development. The government became aware of these demographic problems and, after wide public debate on the desirability of a population policy, it announced in 1970 an antinatalist policy via a voluntary family planning programme. This population policy has, since the Third Plan, become part of national economic and social development policy and planning.

The decline in the rate of population growth during the past decade has resulted in a change in the age structure of the country's population. The proportion of children aged 0-14 years has declined while that of the economically active population aged 15-59 years, and of the aged (60 and over) has increased.

According to Lepor's study (1988), only the first plan achieved its targets. The problem was the lack of commitment to reach those targets by senior government officials, who were heavily preoccupied with problems of political stability. Certainly, any kind of development needs a great deal of commitment from the highest authority of the nation.
3.12.5 **International organisations**

International networking and the links between international organisations have supported various aspects of information services development and provide great benefit to information service progress in society, through the work of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), IFLA (International Federation of Library and Information Associations), OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and others; for example:-

- **CONSAL (Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians)** has a great potential for promoting cooperation and joint ventures among its members at the regional level in Southeast Asia.

- **NLDC (The Consortium of National Libraries and Documentation Centers)** established officially, with government endorsements, links with the national libraries of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and the National Scientific Documentation Centre of Indonesia. The initial activities of these centres will facilitate document procurement and answer queries, using telex facilities for improved communication. Each national centre of the consortium is also the coordinating node in its own national information system and consequently this combined linkage provides a typical example of a pyramidal network at the regional level.

- **ISDS-SEA system** includes the international ISDS centres of the five Asian countries - which, in cooperation with the International ISDS Centre
in Paris, is responsible for identifying and registering the serials published in Southeast Asia.

Besides general, national and regional networks, specialized networks or structures exist which are focusing their activities on one specific topic only: for instance:-

ATUNET = AIT-Thailand Inter-University Network.
INFOTERRA = International Referral System for Sources of Environmental Information.
ISDS-Regional Centre for Southeast Asia.
ISDS-National Centre for Thailand.
NLDC-SEA Consortium = National Libraries and Documentation Centre of Southeast Asia Consortium.
SEAPRINT = Southeast Asian Imprint.
POPIN = Population Information Network.
HELLIS = Health Literature, Library and Information Services.
SEAMIC = Southeast Asian Medical information Centre.
ASTINFO = The Regional Network for the Exchange of Information and Experience in Science and Technology in Asia and the Pacific.
TECHNONET- for New and Renewable Energy.
CRRERIS (Commonwealth Regional Renewable Energy Resource Information system)
SAFIS (Southeast Asian Fisheries Information System).
SEAMIC (Southeast Asian Medical Information center).
APEIA (Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development)
NACA (Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia).
The Regional Network for Micro Biology in Southeast Asia.

The Asian Institute of Technology, which is situated in Bangkok has established four specialized information centres since 1973:

1) The 'Asian Information Centre for Geotechnical Engineering' (AGE)
2) The 'International Ferrocement Information Centre' (IFIC)
3) The 'Renewable Energy Resources Information Centre' (RERIC);
4) The 'Environmental Sanitation Information Centre' (ENSIC).

International organisations have contributed much to information services development in specific areas especially in science and technology.

**Summary**

In this chapter, the internal and external environments of information infrastructure in Thailand have been discussed according to information services perspective. The idea of future planning as presented in this research could not be achieved without careful consideration of strategic planning approach and how this can affect the improvement of the information services in Thailand. This is illustrated in the following chapters.
References

Chicago: ALA.


Chapter 4

Strategic Planning Approach to Library Information Services

Strategic planning is a process for decision making that has been applied to library systems since the late 1960s but which has not yet been applied to specific functions of the library such as information services. Strategic planning* derives from the change in terminology from 'business policy', 'long-range planning' to 'strategic planning' and 'strategic management'(Wren, 1987).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kemper (1967)</th>
<th>Kotler and Murphy (1981)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) establishing general objectives.</td>
<td>a) to analyse the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) identifying the environment</td>
<td>b) to conduct a resource analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(external, and internal).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) becoming aware of the need to change.</td>
<td>c) to examine basic institution objectives and goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) organising for change.</td>
<td>d) determine strategies to help it achieve its goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) forecasting the environment.</td>
<td>e) to develop a product / marketing opportunity strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) establishing specific objectives.</td>
<td>f) to design or improve the systems that information service will need to develop and carry out the strategies chosen to help it achieve its goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) evaluating, selecting, and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deciding on alternatives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) designing a plan of action.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) gaining formal approval.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) implementing change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 : Comparing the strategic planning process.

*Strategic Planning is used to describe the strategic planning system as well as other terms such as 'long-range planning' and 'corporate planning', but the term 'strategic planning' is much more relevant and acceptable to describe the process.
A framework for strategic planning in libraries was first developed by Kemper (1967) in 'Strategic Planning for Library Systems' which was the first significant attempt to apply the strategic planning management tool to libraries. Kotler and Murphy (1981) and Biddle (1988)'s theoretical approach to strategic planning does not differ greatly from the approaches of Kemper. The emphasis on the identification of internal and external environment as shown in the following Table 4.1 is common to them all.

The equal emphasis on the internal and external environment and a vision of an ideal future makes the strategic planning process distinguishable from traditional planning. Effective strategic management, particularly strategic planning, requires a thorough understanding of the organisation itself.

Rowe, et.al.(1989) adapted the five imperatives of Churchman (1968)'s system into a strategic four-factor model which illustrates a systems framework for strategic management as shown in Figure 4.1:-
Figure 4.1: A systems framework for strategic management.

Source: Rowe, et al. (1989: 13)
This figure shows important interdependencies between the four factors of strategic management: strategic planning, resource requirement, organisational structure and strategic control. Each of these factors links strategic management to the realities of the organisation's internal or external environment and each factor affects the other three directly or indirectly.

The basic result of Kemper's research was that although most of the libraries studied made use of some planning processes, procedures and mechanisms, very few were engaged in formal strategic planning efforts. Sixty-eight percent of the libraries surveyed had no written plans.

Kemper (1970: 237) suggests that a changing society...:

'... will require development of new techniques of forecasting long-range social, economic, and technological library environments, techniques of forecasting long-range institutional environments; formulation of analytical systems concepts; formulation of analytical operational planning concepts; development of sophisticated computer and mathematical models for forecasting environments; reconciling organizational uniqueness and specialization with national, regional, and institutional objectives; formulation of strategic planning information and communication systems; and defining the role of library education in developing planning concepts.'
By the end of the 1970s most library managers had become far more aware of the advantages and of the importance of applying contemporary management techniques to libraries than they had been a decade earlier. One of these management techniques, strategic planning, had also become a generally acceptable tool for consideration.

A decade later, Moore (1981) surveyed the use of strategic planning in libraries in the state of Missouri and found that 37% of library directors engage in long-range planning; and also a majority of the library directors express a need for strategic planning in the future, primarily for operations purposes. The purposes of using strategic planning or long-range planning in the organisations in the USA studied by Kono (1983) were found to be as follows: 65% for better allocation of resources and 52% for making decisions based on long-range forecasting. In Japan, 89% used it to clarify goals and policies; and 82% to examine basic problems. From the study of Paul and Taylor (1986), 62% of the respondents believed that strategic planning had its greatest impact on resource allocation, acquisitions and divestitures, new product development and similar decisions.

Later Biddle (1988) found that of the 83 American Research Libraries (ARL) which responded to the 1982/83 surveys of library planning efforts, 57% had either developed a long-range planning document or were in the process of doing
so. This increasing rate has given credit to the prediction of Gapen (1984) that in the 1990s all libraries will create their future by using strategic planning processes which will occur from the bottom up and the top down and come together in the middle.

At present, strategic planning has been considered an effective tool for creating economic power to meet the current and future challenges of providing information services in a complex environment where growth and change are both rapid.


Riggs (1975) studied an application of a Planning-Programming-Budgeting System (PPBS) to a Technical Services Processing Centre and found that strategic planning and the principles of PPBS can help better operational planning to reach an organisation's goals. 'Designing' and 'implementing' are very important components of the strategic planning process. Therefore, in order to design a framework for an information service, the need to understand the current situation and alternative strategies is pressing.
During the 1980s, strategic planning has been increasingly applied to many types of organisations because of the changing environment. For instance, the Society of Archivists (Newton, 1984) adopted strategic planning for Records Management and Archives. The following are other examples of this: the application of strategic planning for the Institutional Advancement of Small, Catholic, Liberal Arts Colleges for Women (Costello, 1986); a Strategic Planning Model for Small, Private Institutions in Higher Education (Jaggers, 1986); an analysis of the strategic planning process in selected public and private senior colleges in the State of Georgia (White, 1986); strategic planning in retailing at the business level (Park, 1987); the application of a strategic planning model for a school system (Valentine, 1987); strategic planning for Office Automation (Ferguson, 1987); and the application of strategic planning theory to the management of university libraries in the U.S.A and Canada (Biddle, 1988).

From all these studies, it can be seen that the implementation of strategic plans involves a vital set of activities having to do with three elements: structure, organisational process and people.

A good relationship between these three elements leads to well-developed strategic plans. Vernon (1985:48) studied some strategic planning in public libraries. She comments that well-developed strategic plans should consist of the following organisational elements: assessment of community needs; evaluation of current library services and resources; determination of the library's role within the community; establishment of goals, measurable objectives and priorities.
development and evaluation of strategies for implementation of change (plan of action); implementation of those strategies, i.e. establishing goal target dates; and monitoring and evaluation of progress toward the goals.

In 1985 the British Library Board adopted the first Strategic Plan 1985-1990, in which its primary aim was to develop a strategy which would enable the library to discharge in the most cost-effective manner its duties under the British Library Act of 1972. The strategy was expected to have the capacity to evolve and to adapt to new and unforeseen situations beyond the control of the library and it is therefore envisaged that the plan will be reviewed and revised periodically.

A year later, the American Library Association Council approved the strategic long-range plan for the association in order to identify clearly the most desirable end results, and to give clear direction to the work of the associations' members, leaders and staff (Parent, 1988).

The report by the Library and Information Services Council (1986) also emphasized the importance of strategic planning which is already common in the private sector and in other services within local government. In order to achieve effectiveness of services, strategic planning is considered as follows:

'Library and information services are a national heritage and require a conscious national effort to maintain them. These resources will not be fully exploited unless provision is coordinated nationally and locally... strategic planning will maximise existing library and information services' productivity and value...'
Because all library collections have value only when used, it is important to plan ways of exploiting resources economically for the benefit of all users and society as a whole.

Cummings (1986), Cimbala (1987) and Curzon (1989) have been concerned about change and the impact of technology which they considered the most important factor in the change of the library's character. These changes make strategic planning more essential than in the past. It is therefore increasingly difficult to achieve library objectives without some form of strategic planning.

Curzon (1989) emphasizes that: "...change is everywhere in today's library environment...a knowledgeable approach to the management of change enables library and information administrators to retain the long-range vision of their organization, to make choices about costly technology and facility investment, and to secure a permanent place as one of society's major information providers."

Kotler (1984) and Bryson (1988) suggested the use of strategic planning by public and nonprofit organisations and defined strategic planning as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organisation (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it. A good method of studying the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation is to analyse the internal and external environments.
Recently, the use of a business plan for library and information services was suggested by Cooper (1989) and Offor (1989) but it is interesting to note that this business plan has arisen from the strategic planning process. The fact that marketing also adopted strategic planning in their process because of the change of the market and business environment is discussed by Armstrong and Reibstein (1985), and Buell (1985).

Raper (1987) investigated diffusion and innovation processes of computer technology in Thai university libraries in terms of E.M.Roger's innovation-decision model; and one of her recommendations in the decade of technological change is the establishment of long-range plans or strategic plans.

The need to think strategically becomes essential in every organisation. As McKee (1989) stated: '...In today's organisational climate of enterprise and accountability, managers at all levels need to develop processes and strategies which are collective, supportive, evaluative and innovative.' A recent study by Benyon (1990) states systems theory (such as the soft systems methodology) as a practical method for systems design which is particularly useful at the strategic level.

Undoubtedly, library organisations and management need to develop a strategic planning process to suit their environments and to move in a positive direction. Rowe, et.al. (1989) comment on the future opportunities thus: 'In the coming years, leaders, managers, researchers, and educators will continue to grapple with the question of how best to utilize information systems for strategy. Those who find answers will benefit most'.

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Chapter 5

Findings regarding the Situation of Information Services in Thailand

5.1 Background

In order to design a framework for a strategic model for library information services in Thailand one must analyse the information service background in relation to its perspective of both the internal and external environments. This is necessary so that all relevant issues can be addressed, alternative strategies considered and the most appropriate ones adopted. Investigations were conducted in 1988 and 1989 by means of questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was sent to the 78 libraries and information centres that participated in the THAINATIS project (Appendix II). The members of THAINATIS were chosen as examples of recognised good practice within Thailand. Later, interviews were conducted in the 37 libraries and information centres which the questionnaire survey revealed had conducted user surveys.

5.1.1 The questionnaire

On 30th June 1988, 78 questionnaires were posted to the libraries and information centres in the THAINATIS project. By 30th July, 58 completed questionnaires had been received, giving a response rate of 73%. A reminder was sent on 5th
August 1988. By the end of August 1988, it was decided to work on the basis of the 58 received (55 were usable).

The questionnaire is divided into two parts which deal with the operation of information services and cooperation & planning. The first part is concerned with background information such as type of library, personnel, the collection and finance. The second deals with cooperation and future plans of information services.

The questionnaires, issued in Thai language, contained some linking questions to ensure that there was a logical sequence. The questions fall into 2 parts:

**Part 1: The operation of information services.**

1. How do they specify the term 'library service provision'?  
2. What is the main purpose of information services?  
3. What is the total number of library/information personnel?  
4. What is the academic background of the library/information personnel?  
5. What are the terms used for library/information personnel?  
6. Does the organisation have a staff development programme? (e.g. training, seminars).
7. What subjects are covered by the library/information resources?  
8. What sort of library materials do they have in their organisation?  
9. How do they use these sources to answer requests?  
10. If they use online databases, what databases do they usually use?  
11. Do they provide information services to general public users or only to members of the organisation?  
12. If they provide information services to general public users, who are they?  
13. Questions related to user fees.
14. Is their budget sufficient to run their information services?

**Part 2: Cooperation and planning.**

1. Does the organisation have any cooperation in service provision with other organisations?

2. What type of cooperation is this?

3. What activities is the organisation involved in?

4. Are they planning for new services in the near future?

5. What type of services are they planning for the future?

6. Comments upon the development of information services in Thailand.

**5.1.2 The Interview**

In response to the question whether or not the organisations had conducted user surveys, 37 organisations answered **YES**.

Interviews were arranged to investigate the information on user needs resulting from surveys the libraries had already done.

On 20th of November 1989, letters were sent to the administrators of 37 organisations to ask if an interview could be conducted in Thailand between 12th December 1989 and 20th January 1990. Thirty organisations gave permission while seven organisations indicated that the timing was inconvenient or that they had no information to provide.

The interview was planned to study the nature of user surveys undertaken by the...
organisations, to investigate the relationship between user surveys and service provision, and to study the application of information derived from these user surveys.

5.1.3 Method of survey analysis

The reason for using descriptive statistics is to apply general data to theoretical models of the strategic planning process, which is an early attempt to summarize useful information for future planning. The survey analysis used SPSS PC+ (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The package is utilized as follows:

1. Distribution Frequency and Percentage are used to analyse general data on the background of information services in Thailand.

2. Mean ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) are used to compare the different degrees of satisfaction in respondents' opinions:

   1.00 - 1.59 is least satisfactory.
   1.60 - 2.59 is less satisfactory.
   2.60 - 3.59 is moderately satisfactory.
   3.60 - 4.59 is more satisfactory.
   4.60 - 5.00 is most satisfactory.
5.2 Findings of the survey

The study aims to investigate the background of information services (I.S.) in Thailand and to establish how users' need affects service provision in the context of the services' internal and external environments. This investigation is made with the aim of developing strategies for the improvement of information services and future planning.

The findings of the study can be analysed under the following categories: the nature of service provision, library and information personnel, resources, technology, information service users, user fees, user surveys, cooperation and future plans.

The nature of service provision

The respondents used three different terms for library service provision in Thailand: 'reference service', 'library service' and 'information service'. 36.4% of respondents used the specific term 'reference service'. This involves personal assistance to users utilizing such tools as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, directories, abstracts and indexes to access information. 34.4% used the term 'library service'. Most of these were small libraries with a few professional librarians. 20% used the term 'information service', which often describes the provision of direct information but more frequently calls on a wider range of sources and involves the utilisation of technology.
Most respondents hardly distinguished between 'reference service' and 'library service', but the term 'information service' is used more in connection with library technology and usually provides direct information.

In the open-ended question, 72.7% of respondents indicated that the main purpose of information services in Thailand is to provide academic resources, while 16.4% stated that it was to collect documents and information sources and 10.9% thought its purpose was to collect data and technical reports. From these objectives, Thai library and information professionals more commonly provide resources than information. In consequence, less emphasis is placed on the provision of information from the library resources than on the provision of printed materials themselves.

Figure 5.1: The main purpose of information services.

![Figure 5.1: The main purpose of information services.](image)

Interpersonal communication' plays an important role in library information services in Thailand. Face to face contact with users, for instance, is more widely used than other types of communication such as telephone and postal request. This
clarified the nature of 'interpersonal communication' between library professionals and users. Because the main purpose of I.S. in Thailand is to provide academic resources, it cannot guarantee the use of effective interpersonal communication. From Table 5.1, the degree of the respondents' satisfaction with face to face contact between librarians and users is very high (mean = 4.85) and the range of respondents' opinion is not very varied (S.D. = 0.40). However, it is interesting to note that postal request shows a greatest degree of variability (S.D. = 1.09), which means that some respondents regard service provision by postal request is vital while others do not. This is unlike the method of face to face contact which almost all respondents agree is vital.

Table 5.1: Means, Standard Deviations, results for methods of service provision (by the degree of importance) (N=55).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods of service provision</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face to face contact with users</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By telephone</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By postal request</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possible range for mean scores is 1.00 - 5.00. The higher the score, the greater the importance.

Provision of information by means of an enquiry service is identified to be a major activity in most libraries and information centres in Thailand, while the use of online searching is still very limited, as illustrated in Table 5.2. This is an indication of the minimal use of I.T. in the process of I.S. The degree of satisfaction with enquiry services is higher than with Current Awareness Services, I&A services, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), bibliographical
services and online searching services. This is consistent with the respondents' indications that direct contact is used more than indirect contact. The opinion of respondents is quite varied in every category of services, except translation services in which most respondents clarify the tenuous degree of this kind of service.

Table 5.2: Means, Standard Deviations and results for different categories of service (by the degree of importance) (N=55).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of services</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enquiry service</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral Service</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-library loan service</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Awareness Service</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indexing &amp; Abstracting service</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information)</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography service</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online searching service</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation service</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possible range for mean scores is 1.00 - 5.00. The higher the score, the greater the importance.

Although, the importance of interpersonal communication has been the subject of widely discussion in the library / information profession, but in Thai librarianship, generally, it has not been paid much attention. Even though interpersonal communication is usually involved in the I.S. process, it does not necessarily follow that effective interpersonal communication has been part of the profession. If library / information professionals fail to act as intermediaries or communicators between information and users, ineffective information services inevitably result.
From this premise, it follows that the nature of service provision depends on good communication, especially that between library/information personnel and users.

**Library Personnel**

Table 5.3 indicates that most library personnel in Thailand are non-professional (43.4%). The number of librarians is about half that of non-professional staff, while other professional staff (such as audio-visual specialists, historians, computer programmers) amounts to only 8.7%. Even though users confront with both professional and non-professional staff, but non-professional staff have shouldered most of the responsibility in the area of service provision. Usually there are only one or two librarians in the reference/information service section, whereas most of the staff in charge of administrative sections are librarians. The ideal, which information services should aim at, is for these two groups to perform effective interpersonal communication in the course of their enquiry work.

Table 5.4 presents the terms used to describe library/information personnel who work in reference/information service. Most respondents use the term 'librarian' (67.3%). The next most common answer was 'information specialist' (14.5%). The term 'information specialist' is less used commonly than the term 'librarian', which shows that traditional reference services still dominate the service provision. The terms 'information specialist' and 'documentalist' have been defined and used in Thailand for no more than a decade. The terms 'information officer' and 'information scientist' are used for those who have a scientific background but work in the library or information centre. The terms used for library/information
personnel have the impact through their responsibilities in the profession.

Table 5.3: The number of library/information personnel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>(No.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other professional staff</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-professional staff</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (such as domestic staff)</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>758</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: The terms used for library/information personnel (N = 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information personnel</th>
<th>(Freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Officer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Specialist</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Scientist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Consultant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The degrees held by personnel who work in library and information centres in Thailand are no longer predominantly in library and information science. Figure 5.2 shows that 38% of library/information personnel had an academic background in library and information science, while 24% hold degrees in other subjects (such as science, agriculture, communication, history, language, computers and art). The difference between the proportion of personnel with library and information degrees and those with other subject degrees is therefore only 14%. 21.6% of the staff (non-professionals) had training in the library and information field while the rest (16.1%) had no experience at all.
In the present circumstances the Thai library profession needs librarians and information specialists, whether their background is in the humanities, the social sciences or the sciences, because many libraries are still in the early stages of applying modern library technology to their operations and services. It would be of great benefit if the Thai library profession had well-trained personnel with innovative thinking and full understanding of I.S. philosophy, technology and management. Thai librarianship certainly needs this kind of combination to perform well.

Figure 5.2: The academic background of library / information personnel (N=55)

These libraries and information centres were asked if they had a staff development programme or not. The results show that most of them (96.4%) provide staff development programme such as study leave, seminar and training. Only one library which does not provide this programme because there is only one full-time professional librarian. Even though staff development programme have been provided in the main, it does not necessarily follow that I.S. is developing successfully.
Library Resources

This survey reveals that most library resources in Thailand are in the form of books (89.2%), while other library materials (such as journals, research reports, audiovisual materials and others) are 10.8%. The ratio of Thai books to other library materials (8.3 : 1) is more than 2 times than that of Malaysia (books-78.5%, other materials-21.5%).* This shows how book-based resources dominate service provision. Since up-to-date information is more readily available from other library materials, Thai library information services may well be adversely affected by this imbalance in the collection.

Figure 5.3: Nature of library resources.

In the library/information service process, in-house collections are used rather than external sources as shown in Table 5.5. This shows that if a library collection is strong information services benefit. If not, the reverse is the case. In-house collections—especially books—are the primary source of information service provision in Thailand. Library resources are mostly concerned with general subjects (72.7%), 20% with science & technology and 5.5% with business. The

* From Unesco Statistical Yearbook (1990), the ratio of books to other library materials (in the libraries of institutions of higher education) are as followed: Switzerland (5.6 : 1), France (4.3 : 1), Malaysia (3.7 : 1), and W. Germany (3.2 : 1).
number of books on education (1.8%) is the lowest. In consequence, the typical book-based information service dominates the process of information transmission in Thai society.

Table 5.5: Sources for answering requests (by the degree of importance) (N=55).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-house collection</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External sources</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online database</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possible range for mean scores is 1.00 - 5.00. The higher the score, the greater the importance.

Library Technology

The number of libraries and information centres that provide online searching is still very small. Only 12 libraries in this survey provided it. The online searching host most used by information services in Thailand is DIALOG, used in six libraries and information centres. Nearly all major abstracts & indexes normally found in the library can be accessed online through DIALOG, which offers after-hours, lower rate, regular user-friendly access. Three academic libraries provide MEDLINE / CD-ROM (Compact Disc- Read Only Memory), while two agricultural academic libraries provide searching on AGRIS (The International System for Agricultural Science and Technology). CAS (Chemical Abstracts Services), AGRICOLA (National Agricultural Library), COMPENDEX (Engineering Index, Inc.), and UNIDO (The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) are each used by one library.
From Table 5.6, it can be seen that the microcomputer is the most used in the provision of information services (72.7%). It is so popular because of its low cost, convenient size, and versatility. The number of computers held is very small considering that 58 libraries and information centres responded to this survey. However, most respondents feel that the lack of computer for I.S. is their major weakness.

Table 5.6: Technology used in information service provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microcomputer</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word processor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minicomputer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Users

Most libraries and information centres in this survey (85.5%), provide information services to the general public and internally to members of the organisation. 14.5% of the organisations limit services to members only. It is shown that most libraries and information centres have a policy of encouraging users to access information.

Figure 5.4 demonstrates that the majority of users are university students (76.5%). The smallest group of users comprises people from business organisations (1.8%). This does not mean the latter group has less interest in I.S. but probably because they have other sources of information (such as personal collections and company
files) which they can access.

This situation shows that information services in Thailand are used by only specific groups of users. The wide range of sectors within the population has not been reached. Thus, it is unreasonable to expect people to appreciate that the library is a centre for providing information, particularly if the concept of information services has not been understood and practised by library / information professionals themselves.

![Figure 5.4: Categories of users.](image)

**User Fees**

Most libraries and information centres (80%) are not in favour of charging user fees except for computer searching and most respondents had no towards idea whether the fees which are now in effect would be raised in the future (90.9%). The high percentage of such opinions on this matter reflects the confusion among respondents of the uncertainty about what may happen.
The respondents do not identify insufficient funds as a severe problem of I.S. For instance, Table 5.8 shows that 41.8% regard their budget as sufficient for library service provision. The difference is small between the proportion of respondents who believe the annual budget to be sufficient and those who do not.

Table 5.7: Respondents' opinions regarding sufficiency of budget. (N=55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sufficient budget</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Thailand, the library directors and librarians have been shown to be key persons in promoting information service policy. Budget allocation is said to take place according to what will be needed in each section and also projects already under
way. In other words, the budget is allocated to suit needs determined by the administrators and library committees.

**User Surveys**

67.3% of the organisations conducted user surveys. Most user studies have been conducted by graduate students in fulfilment of the requirement for a degree in library science. In this survey it was also discover that user surveys were undertaken occasionally to solve specific problem. The methods of user surveys that have been conducted by most libraries and information centres are observation or informal interviews (60 percent), questionnaires (50%) and research / theses (46.6%). Several respondents appeared to suggest the favour of informal interviews, to find out users' need, which can save their time and budget.

In general, most library and information centres had conducted user surveys in order to identify problems and ways to solve them. 53.3% of respondents indicated the benefit of user surveys to understand users' need and to improve library services (40%). Only two organisations consider budget allocation as the benefit. The respondents also were asked to state the category of activities into which these 'user surveys' fell. User satisfaction (83.3%) is the major category rather than serials (36.6%) and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) (10%). Most surveys had been published as reports and theses but it is difficult to ascertain to what extent the research results were followed up.
Table 5.8 : Category of activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of activities</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User satisfaction</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serials</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataloguing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results will be of little value if they are not critically analysed and used to improve the performance and services of the organisation. However, twenty-six libraries indicated that they used the results of user surveys to improve their information services (86.6%). Only 13.3% did not use these results because they were considered to be unreliable. There is little evidence to support the claim that user surveys were used especially when most of them stated that user survey results had been employed in relation to particular aspects of service only. Even so none of them published how these results had been used.

User surveys are dealt with in Table 5.9. The majority of these were conducted as part of theses and focused primarily on the user needs. The response was quite high in most cases with each survey getting at least 60% response. Most libraries and information centres expressed satisfaction with the results and some indicated that changes were implemented as a result. This is a reflection of the high commitment to the quality of information services.
Table 5.9: The use of user survey results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEIC</td>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>Users' need</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always satisfied</td>
<td>satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SDI</td>
<td>Users' need</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sometimes satisfactory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNDC</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Skill / need</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always satisfactory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSTI</td>
<td>I.S.</td>
<td>Infor.need/use</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library use</td>
<td>User satisfaction</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>&lt;50</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>Serials</td>
<td>Users' need</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I.S.</td>
<td>Users' need</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library use</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infor.resource</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ref. services</td>
<td>Users' attitude</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMU</td>
<td>I.S.</td>
<td>Users' need</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Card catalogue</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RU</td>
<td>I.S.</td>
<td>Use / need</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gov. Publication</td>
<td>The use</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOU</td>
<td>Inf. resources</td>
<td>Users' need</td>
<td>every year</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bkk. Bank</td>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Lib. Lib. activities</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>satisfactory / T.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>'Organisation' means the organisation which reveals the level of use of user survey results.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEIC</td>
<td>The Thai National Energy Information Centre.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNDC</td>
<td>Thai National Documentation Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSTI</td>
<td>The Library of the Division of Scientific and Technological Information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIT</td>
<td>Asian Institute of Technology.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>Kasetsart University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Chulalongkorn University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMU</td>
<td>Chiangmai University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RU</td>
<td>Ramkamheang University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRIS / CMU</td>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture, Chiangmai University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOU</td>
<td>Sukhothaihammatirat Open University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok Bank</td>
<td>Bangkok Bank - Headquarters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Library</td>
<td>Thai National Library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) = 'Activity' refers to the category of user surveys. |

(3) = 'Purpose' means the purpose for conducting user surveys. |

(4) = 'Year' means the year in which the user surveys were conducted. |

(5) = '% estimation' means % of questionnaires returned. |

(6) = 'Form of result' means the form in which user survey results are kept. |

(7) = 'Use of result' means how user survey results were implemented. |

(8) = 'Comment' means the level of satisfaction with the results. |

'Thesis' means this user survey is part of a thesis.
Respondents were asked whether there was any plan to conduct user surveys in the future. The answer to this was quite clear; most of them (90%) did not plan to conduct such surveys. Surveys are carried out only occasionally according to the circumstances. This clarifies the lack of relationship between user surveys and service provision even though respondents specified that they use user survey results to improve service provision. This negative issue demonstrates the missing link between these two areas.

They were asked whether they thought the process of information services had changed because of technology or users' attitude. Users' attitude and demand were of great importance in this issue (36.6%). There is not very different proportion of respondents' opinions toward factor of change on both technology and attitude (30%) and the former factor as shown in Table 5.10:-

Table 5.10: Factor of change and problems of conducting user surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor of change</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users' attitude and demand</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both technology and users' attitude</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems of conducting user surveys</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited time and staff</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of users' cooperation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 5.10 it is clear that limited time and staff seemed to weigh heavily on respondents as the problem of conducting 'user surveys' (93.3 %). Lack of cooperation from users is another crucial problem (33.3 %) but lesser than the problems of timing and personnel. It is disconcerting to find that a library or information centre seriously intends to conduct user surveys in order to evaluate its services but is prevented from doing so because of such problems.

The use of, and the need for, libraries are the most popular subjects in library science theses in Thailand according to Table 5.9. Most survey research projects show the present situation in library use, users' personal backgrounds, their needs and their information searching behaviour, but no research evidence has shown that the libraries involved have used the results of their user surveys directly. This problem exists not only in Thailand but elsewhere; Harris (1985) agrees, the real problem of user surveys is the use of the results. Often decisions are taken according to the librarian's own judgment, rather than based on the results of user surveys.

The investigation of Vongprasert (1988) found that failure to find information was not always a reflection on users' inability, but on inefficient library operations. User surveys are potentially useful for bridging the gap between the kind of services needed by users and the kind presently in existence. Library user behaviour follows the pattern of assessment of need for information, followed by a search or inquiry, and then the retrieval of particular data. Information seeking behaviour varies according to the purpose of an inquiry and the user's characteristics, such as economic status and educational background. According to
the UNISIST Guidelines for the Conduct of User Studies:

Users are individuals, each with unique informational, educational, psychological, and social needs. A person may need 'Practical Knowledge" to solve immediate problems in his daily life and work. He may need 'Professional Knowledge' to further his continuing education or he may need 'Intellectual Knowledge, the kind that further his understanding of the arts, humanities, and sciences, and which enriches his personal life. Reading for pleasure, pursuing an innovative idea, or exploring knowledge just to satisfy one's innate curiosity, are other valid motives for reading, listening or looking. In addition people feel the need for ethical, religious and philosophical insight (UNISIST, 1981).

Cooperation

The percentage of cooperation between libraries and / or information centres is positively high ( 89.1 %). The most popular type of cooperation was inter-library loan (34.2 %), following by the exchange of information / documents (15.5 %). Nine libraries indicate cooperation in developing databases and networking. It is interesting that some activities such as public relations and staff training have less cooperated. Actually, cooperation has always contributed considerably to the development of library / information services and can also be most valuable in shaping a suitable strategy for the development of information services.
Table 5.11: Cooperation with other information services organisations. (N = 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cooperation</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of cooperation</th>
<th>(no.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inter-library loan</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange of information/document</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral services</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database/networking</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical work e.g., circulation, cataloguing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online searching</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographical services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed materials donations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 5.12 the survey revealed that 89.1% of respondents consider the keeping of statistics is important for ascertaining the extent of the use of the collection and services provided as well as for the allocation of budgetary resources.

78% claim to have active policies for promoting their services to users and parent organisations. As most libraries and information centres are government and non-profit organisations, very few (10.9%) emphasize competition as an important concept to them. The absence of the need for competition militates against the effective use of marketing strategies by libraries and information centres.
Table 5.12: Percentage of opinions towards statistics, promotion and competition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statistics (%)</th>
<th>Promotion (%)</th>
<th>Competition (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favourable</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavourable and no opinion</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Future plans**

Figure 5.6 illustrates the concern of planning that 81.8% of respondents plan for new services in the near future and most of their plans are for the application of information technology. Figure 5.7 shows the clear picture of their future plans, for instance: thirty-five out of fifty-five libraries and information centres plan for computer searching (such as online searching and CD-ROM), which is 59.6%. Obviously the great concern of respondents has been given to I.T., but in this circumstance, it is difficult to draw a conclusion that modern technology can improve the quality of I.S.

Five libraries plan for Abstracting & Indexing services. Two libraries plan for bibliographical services and the other two plan for improving A.V. materials services. Some of the future plans in each library are collection development, information networking, improving reference tools, training for staff development, retrospective search, telefesimile fax, periodical index databases and exchange of information.

This will, however, benefit from these plans only if they are made in the right direction.
Figure 5.6: Planning for new services in the near future.

![Pie chart showing planning for new services in the near future.

- Yes: 81.8%
- No: 10.9%
- No opinion: 7.3%

Figure 5.7: Type of future plan.

- Exchange of information
- Periodical index database
- Telefesimile fax
- Retrospective search
- Staff training
- Improving ref. tools
- Information networking
- Collection development
- A.V.materials services
- Bibliographical services
- Abstract&Index services
- Computer searching

Finally, in the opened-ended question, 72.7% of respondents expressed the idea that information services in Thailand have developed during this decade because of the impact of information technology. The attitude of users is also considered a major factor in the changing process of these services with regard to information technology development.
Summary

The results of the survey were not capable of being analysed by highly sophisticated techniques, but they did show although the condition of information services in Thailand looks simple, there are elements of it which have undeniable effects on the profession in general. The survey results indicate to evolve fundamental goals for the Thai library/information profession.

There are important issues in the survey findings, for instance: whilst information services in Thailand have followed the path of technological development, despite indications of concern for the future regarding this matter, proper preparations have not yet been made for it. In information service provision a gap still exists between what technology can do and how information staff can apply the technology to meet users' need. Also, the full concept of information services has not been adhered to by all library and information professionals. This can be seen from the lesser emphasis on provision of information and the only tenuous relationship between knowledge obtained from user surveys and the planning of service provision. Most libraries and information centres provide services at the minimum range*. 90% do not plan to conduct user surveys in the future. There is clearly a weakness which will limit the ability to provide effective information services, related to user needs and to the kinds of technology which can be used effectively.

* 'Minimum' defined by Wyer (1930) and Rothstein (1961) as the most limited level of reference services.
Some strengths in the information services have been shown in the survey such as cooperation, staff development programme, free services, concern for the future and the positive attitude towards information services development. It is uncertain that a high quality of I.S. can be achieved despite these major weaknesses such as uncertainty over the purpose of services, librarians' limited attitude towards potential service provision, excessively book-based resources, limited group of users at present served, lack of plans for user research are all the root of the negative performance of information services in Thailand today.
Discussion

The main weakness of Thai library information services in the 1990s is not the lack of appropriate modern technology, but clear ideas of how to develop effective services. After 40 years of Thai library services development, perception on this major issue are still blurred within the profession. How can the gap between information professionals and users be bridged? Considering the internal and external environment of I.S. in Thailand in the era of I.T., is it technology alone that can bridge this gap?

The findings reveal that the term 'information service' is used less than the term 'reference service' and 'library service' because the idea of information service is related more to direct answers and computer searching. Libraries and information centres in Thailand are still at an early stage of applying I.T. Actually, it is important to note that the term 'information service'* does not always imply 'modern technology' but embraces the effective availability and accessibility of

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*Information service' is not a new term in the library profession but has been used since late 1920 (Burgess, 1926), which derives from the term 'reference service' (Lynch, 1982). Reference service was developed from the concept of assistance to readers, introduced by Samuel Green (1876), in *Library Journal* that 'if libraries were limited to 'doing what comes naturally', they would acquire, preserve and organise materials, and make them available.' According to Durrance (1984), the concept of assistance to users was not initially accepted by the majority of the profession; the integration of reference service as an integral part of library service occurred only after World War I.
information to users by library information professionals. The major obstacles to an effective service are: the emphasis on information sources rather than on provision of information and a general lack of commitment to service provision. These problems reflect a flawed concept of information services and a far from complete appreciation of the implications of library service provision.

If the main purpose of L.S. is to provide academic resources, then the implication is that the resources themselves are more significant than the flow of information. Actually, the purpose of L.S. should be to allow information to flow efficiently from information sources to those who need that information (Whittaker, 1977). Following this concept, librarians or information specialists are the intermediaries or communicators between library collections and users. This idea has been supported by Line (1988) and Lynch (1982) in their studies of library information services. Rogers and McChesney (1984) addressed this phenomenon: 'Social conditions and formats have changed over the last 500 years, but not the essential role of the librarian - to serve as intermediary between the person seeking access to ideas and humanity's store of recorded knowledge.'

The majority of respondents in this research indicated that enquiry service through face to face contact with users is a major part of the process of service provision in Thailand. Direct contact between library / information personnel reflects the communication process within the profession. If interpersonal communication has been effective, a high quality of L.S. should have been achieved. An example of ineffective interpersonal communication can be seen in Kalakrit's study (1985), which found the users did not want to disturb librarians and were put
off by their unfriendliness. This may apply not only to librarians but also to non-professional staff who make up the majority of library personnel. This undoubtedly represents a critical problem that has discredited the Thai library / information profession.

The level of service provision, whether it is maximum, moderate, or minimum, generally depends on types of libraries and the profile of users. In every aspect, the condition of direct contact in the I.S. process should be two-way communication. It has been said that 'One of the greatest strengths of librarianship is its commitment to a set of humanistic values that puts a high premium on the person-to-person contacts that are maintained with users.' (Surprenant and Perry-Holmes, 1985)

If a clear concept of information service is lacking, a further concern is that this will prejudice users' judgement of all library services. Professionals' unclear vision leads to flaws in the services, for instance limiting of the scope of reference services to bibliographic instruction only. This restricted interpretation of communication with users by library / information professionals (which appeared in a library / information science textbook in the Thai language, published in 1988) (Chalersop, 1988) is one of the major obstacles in the provision of an efficient and effective information service. Bibliographic instruction (BI) (either by manual guides / technological tools or guidance) cannot fill the implication of the I.S. process without personal assistance according to the profile of users.

'Librarian' is a common term that has been used in Thailand for a long time and
the old image still exists in Thai society. Despite this some libraries and information centres are attempting to provide information services that keep pace with the changing environment. The concept of the 'information specialist' as a communicator who can facilitate the accessibility of information to users has not yet been fully applied in Thailand. This reflects the predominance within the profession of traditional reference services. This matter needs a great deal of attention from the profession so that an accurate and complete image of the profession can be developed.

The number of non-professional staff is twice that of the professional staff, thus the image of the former can also dominate the real image of the latter and this can have unsatisfactory implications. Baotong's study (1989), 'The performance of librarians of secondary schools in Bangkok Metropolis' showed that service provision is performed by non-professional staff rather than librarians. This study indicated a limited performance of professional activities such as library information services among school librarians. Those librarians were involved more in administrative duties.

Most Thai library personnel are from humanities backgrounds especially in library science, but it would be of great benefit to the profession if more library personnel were trained in strategic thinking* and scientific methodology.

*Strategic thinking is essential for the development of successful competitive strategies which stress the need to identify, create, and exploit sustainable competitive advantage and anticipate potential competitive responses (Gardner and Thomas, 1985).
The general survey of Pearson and Webb (1988) found that the majority of librarians are still coming from backgrounds in humanities and social sciences. They suggested that the library and information profession needs more librarians with a scientific and technical background to specialize in specific subjects and in technological development and innovations. On the other hand, Meadows (1989) comments that information professionals with humanities backgrounds can be as efficient in their use of computers for information handling as those with science degrees.

The quality of the library/information personnel in Thailand depends a great deal on the curriculum and quality of library schools, particularly their ability to enhance the profession's attitude towards I.S. Library and information science must respond to social change.

As the Thai term for 'library' is 'book-room', it is not surprising that book-based resources dominate the form of service provision. However, periodicals, reports and audiovisual materials also form part of the library collections. Library personnel generally are busy with their technical routine work such as acquisition, classification and cataloguing, which occupies attention for high level of service provision and user surveys. Indeed, limited time and staff were indicated as the main problems in conducting user research.

The survey indicates that most library resources are in general subjects, followed by science and technology. The increasing awareness of education in science and technology has stimulated interest in better library collections. Library resources
generally cover relevant collections according to the policy of the organisation. University, school, and special libraries contain library collections of study courses or programmes offered. Most public libraries provide entertaining collections such as novels and short stories. The situation improves when Thai Open University (OU) places its collections in different subject areas in almost every public library.

Even though inter-library loan is available, most libraries and information centres draw largely on their own collections. It must be noted that inter-library loan is utilized mainly by academic libraries. In practice, Thai library professionals emphasize technical work dealing with library resources rather than information services which include cooperation. This has been the case since 1951 when library science techniques were introduced into Thai library schools.

The number of libraries and information centres that provide online searching and CD-ROM is still very small because most libraries and information centres are in the early stage of applying I.T. for their operations and services. Computer programmers and information scientists have been appointed to help in the application of computer to library systems. Most organisations in the survey use microcomputers to some extent, but audiovisual materials, for instance, cassette tapes, video and television are more commonly used in most libraries and information centres than computers. Service delivery system (such as electronic mail and teletext) are rare in the I.S. process except in a few university libraries. The difference between the 'information-rich' and the 'information-poor' is demonstrated clearly in Thailand, where academic and special libraries are more progressive than school and public libraries.
The success of I.T. in Thai librarianship does not depend very much upon how sophisticated the techniques and technology are, but rather how well they are utilized to provide efficient information services. Those providing I.S. in Thailand tend to look towards the progress of technology rather than to consider the quality of the I.S. itself. The assumption that technology comes first, should not have been the main issue in the situation of library information services in Thailand. I.S. still does not have a significant place in Thai society. This is not through lack of technological development, but because a clear concept of I.S. has not been implemented in society. This has become evident in the course of this study.

Bawden and Blakeman (1990) state that the principle of service provision should be emphasized for information technology to be applied successfully. It is true that users should receive an adequate level of service provision before information technology can be used effectively, even though technology can facilitate the flow of information within a well-designed library / information system. Library / information professionals will have to select appropriate innovations and use creativity to find solutions to the problems and to deal with the changes caused by technology. Sound leadership and suitable curricula in library schools are needed to prepare future professionals (Josephine, 1990).

Most I.S. users are working within the field of education, such as students and R&D personnel. So information services are used by only a small proportion of the population - chiefly by those involved in the education process. This result reveals a similarity with the information environment in Indonesia, where most
information service users are people involved in R & D, lecturers, students and technicians (Pringgoaldisurjo, 1984).

Most libraries and information centres provide I.S. to both members and non-members of the organisation, in accordance with the concept of free access to information. Fees are charged only for online searching and CD-ROM. 98.2% do not charge user fees. Most respondents have no opinion on increasing such fees. This reflects an uncertainty about what the future holds for the operation of service provision. Free services can point in two different directions; one is freedom of acquiring knowledge which the libraries and information centres intend to provide, another is the low quality of service provision. From this study, almost half of the respondents considered their budget allocations to be sufficient even though their future plans involved the use of I.T. Sufficient budget for I.S. is realized only by those libraries with passive services rather than active ones. If information services such as online searching or computerized bibliographies are to be used substantially in the future, then greater financial support is necessary (Spyers-Duran and Mann, 1985). Clear thinking on the priorities of I.S. can lead to better use of existing budgets and more success in obtaining larger budgets for the future.

Improvement of services with a view to enhancing user satisfaction should be the main aim behind conducting user surveys. D'Elia and Walsh (1983) comment that assessing the level of 'user satisfaction' is potentially useful for evaluating the performance of existing services within a library. It does not show the real demands which must be ascertained in order to plan possible future services.
Most respondents claim they use user survey results to improve service provision but the majority do not plan to conduct user surveys in the future. This finding reflects the lack of a real relationship between user surveys and service provision and also the lack of intention to provide services according to what users need (but rather according to what the libraries can provide).

Libraries and information centres cooperate with each other more than they compete because most libraries and information centres are part of government and non-profit organisations. Library directors and librarians were seen by 96.6% of the respondents as key persons in the formation of information service policy, therefore they are undoubtedly involved in I.S. planning. Library statistics have usually been kept for the benefit of annual reports and budget allocation. They try to promote their I.S. by sending newsletters and providing activities for special occasions, for instance exhibitions. The marketing process is less used when the lack of relationship between user surveys and service provision occurs.

Most respondents (81.8%) plan for new services in the future, and in most of these cases this is computer searching. As everywhere else in developing countries, technological awareness emphasized more strongly than fundamental service provision issues.

Before following blindly along with technological progress, it is crucial for Thai librarianship to reconsider the basic philosophical concepts behind I.S. Major issues for I.S. are, what standards of service provision should Thai library information services attempt to provide and how users can most effectively
access information they need.

The following statement expresses this vital point clearly, and is particularly pertinent to the situation in Thailand.

'It is clear that information service professionals must do more than acquire greater familiarity with modern information systems and equipment. They need to establish roles for themselves in all pertaining to the creation and dissemination of data within the parent organisation. Since in many instances information specialists have not played an integral part in these processes they must win the acceptance and support of senior management before they proceed. Though they may initially face resistance, the battle will be well waged if it results in a larger participatory role for them in the strategic planning process and in the creation, flow and storage of records' (Kesner, 1988).

The Thai library / information profession needs to improve the quality of service provision as the most important criterion. The suggestion of Line (1981) is valuable: '...to improve services require an extensive knowledge of the techniques for doing so, and it requires also imagination, commonsense and courage.'
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Chapter 6

Information Service Strategic Issues: Discussion from Survey

The success of a library information service depends mainly on strategic issues, which generally represent practical choices that will enable I.S. to move from where it is today to where it wants to go in the future. An analysis of the survey findings in the light of a good example of a strategic plan—that of the British Library (1989-1994)—will illuminate some of these I.S. issues.

Nine key issues are highlighted in the survey findings (SF*) and the British Library Strategic Plan (BLSP*). These can be summarized as follows: goal and service provision; users needs and service development, personnel, resources, technology, finance and user fees, cooperation, future plans, and general trends.

First issue: Goals and service provision.

SF: - Providing library resources to users is the main purpose of Thai library information services. Face-to-face contact with enquiry work is widely used in the I.S. process. The level of service provision depends on resources available.

BLSP: - The strategy of the 1990s will be to achieve comprehensive access to

* SF = Survey Findings of Thai Library Information Services.
* BLSP = The British Library Strategic Plan (1989-1994). The reason for choosing the British Library Strategic Plan is that it is a current plan which has been developed successfully with a broad view of the long-term future by the British Library Board and committees.
recorded knowledge, rather than comprehensiveness of collection; our goal will be to guide users swiftly and accurately to the information they need. We shall achieve this through a redefined national bibliographic service which, while continuing to play a leading part in the national economy of record supply, will aim to direct users towards the international corpus of published literature of research value.' (BLSP 3.7p.12-13)

The survey findings showed that comprehensiveness of collection is emphasized more in the Thai library concept than ensuring easy access to the collection. Even though the process of I.S. involves interpersonal communication, little emphasis is placed on level of satisfaction users have in contact with library/information personnel.

By contrast, the main emphasis in the British Library plan focuses on better provision of services through greater accessibility to a collection and more guidance in the use of the collection through interpreting and exploiting its content. Thus users are provided with a gateway to the world of recorded knowledge. If the goal of I.S. is to achieve greater accessibility to recorded knowledge rather than to provide more comprehensive academic resources, the need to guide users efficiently to the information they require will be more important.

In the first British strategic plan (Advancing with knowledge: 1985-1990), the two main purposes are:

- to give ready access to collections and to other significant collections and databases;
to pursue and promote research about the collection, preservation, communication and exploitation of knowledge.

In the recent second plan (Gateway to knowledge: 1989-1994), the four main purposes are:

- to know users' needs and to make collections and services widely known;
- to build and preserve collections, particularly of British material, and to provide accurate and timely catalogue records;
- to cultivate cooperation with others, in the public and private sectors, both in the UK and abroad;
- to be enterprising and expert, alert to new opportunities, new ways and new technologies.

It can be seen from these purposes that commitment and determination to provide a better I.S. to serve a community of users is the goal of the library/information profession. If one important purpose is to guide users swiftly and accurately to the information they need, the library must have the appropriate tools (such as manual guides or technological tools) to assist them. No matter what may be the profiles of users, they still need communication with the information providers. The success of I.S. not depends only on how complete collections are, but also on how well the library/information personnel communicate with users.
In the Thai library profession, therefore, it must be emphasized that commitment to a high standard of service provision is needed in addition to *interpersonal communication* in the organisation.

**Second issue: Users' needs and service development.**

**SF:** *Most users are those in the sphere of education (such as students and R&D personnel). User surveys have been conducted to understand user needs and to improve service provision. User satisfaction is the major consideration in user studies. Problems of conducting user surveys include limited time and staff. Most libraries and information centres do not plan to conduct user surveys. Thus, there is a lack of relationship between user surveys and service provision. Quite a number of libraries indicate the use of user survey results but there is little to indicate how these user survey results have been implemented.*

**BL SP:** 'We shall actively investigate our users' needs, and develop our services in response...' (BLSP 3.10 p.13)

'...We shall seek to make our collections easier to use, and also to make access to them easier for those whose needs are best met by our research collections. At the same time we shall seek to provide better information about material held elsewhere, and refer readers to other libraries when this is in their interest. We are however aware that the improvement of our present service depends on better knowledge of the real needs of our readers. We shall conduct surveys of our users to refine and direct our selection policy.' (BLSP 5.3.1 p.17)

'In view of the changing role of libraries and the greater emphasis
on the provision of information services, we shall institute broad surveys of previous work in information needs and, during the period in question, will be receiving the results of a joint humanities information review, carried out in association with the British Academy.'(BLSP 5.10 p.23)

The need for and use of information have been popular topics in Thai library research during the past decade. In reality, most research on the need for and use of information were conducted as parts of MA theses for the fulfilment of degrees rather than to improve the quality of service provision. In some libraries, notebooks are placed at the front of the library for people to make comments. Some have informal interviews or short questionnaires. Usually, most libraries know what users need are, but they have limited personnel and budgets. Sometimes, the lack of support from higher authorities also block their attempts to provide a better service.

According to the British Library (BL), it is not enough to have a complete collection but rather library professionals must make collections easier to use in order to meet users' needs and they must also refer users to other sources when this is in the users' interest. If 'the improvement to present services depends on better knowledge of the real needs of users' according to the BL, user surveys are inevitable.

The library exists to serve a community of users, it must be seen to be making a contribution to the wealth and to the cultural and educational well-being of that community.(BLSP 1.3 p.7) Users' needs should have been given priority by libraries to develop their I.S.
The fact that Thai library administrators do not plan to conduct user surveys citing problems of limited time and staff to conduct user surveys, is a serious issue which needs to be addressed. It is very difficult to improve the condition of I.S if the view and real concept of I.S. has not realized by library/information personnel. The library certainly does not exist for the sake of existing and a collection is not there just to decorate society. Rather, it exists for the benefit of people in the community -to maintain and develop their civilization. A clear concept of the full implications of I.S. is urgently needed among Thai library/information personnel before any action can be taken. The policy of limiting use only to members of the organisation also does nothing to promote I.S.

Therefore, library/information personnel need to understand their role as well as the reasons why they should serve the community of users. User surveys are very important as well as user education, especially in Thai society.

**Third issue : Personnel**

**SF :** The number of non-professional staff is higher than the number of professional staff. This can cause the former to dominate the area of service provision. The proportion of personnel with library/information degrees to those with other subject degrees is about equal. Most libraries and information centres have staff development programmes.
"In many areas the quality and reputation of services depend on the development of staff over an extended period. While the Library has a priority to continue helping staff to develop as effective and responsible managers in order to deal successfully with the changes and developments envisaged in this Plan, continuing importance is also attached to fostering staff scholarship..." (BLSP 1/8.4)

'It has been increasingly clear that the Library's success in grappling with change depends as much on the skills, attitude and confidence of the staff as on the number of staff available. We have accordingly been increasing our investment in staff development, and at the end of 1988 announced a new strategy designed: -to develop staff knowledge, skills and attitudes within the Library's overall plans for the provision and development of services to the community, and on the basis of a partnership between line managers, trainers and individual employees working together.' (BLSP 7.1 p.2)

'We need managers who are innovative, forward-looking, and service-oriented, able to communicate with and get the best out of other people, and skilled in managing resources. The Library's association with the Management Charter Initiative, which has set out a code of practice for management development, is intended to provide valuable wider contact with an environment which encourages managers' commitment to staff development.' (BLSP 7.4 p.28)

'The Library needs many other special skills - in librarianship and information science, in automation, in financial and personnel management - and we shall recruit and train accordingly.' (BLSP 7.6 p.28)

In Thailand, all libraries and information centres have library professionals with at least a bachelor degree in library science either from Thai universities or from
abroad (especially the USA). The survey findings indicate that almost all libraries and information centres have staff development programmes (such as study leave, conferences, seminars and meetings). This is an indication of promotion and motivation, but it is not always an indication of better qualified library/information personnel. The problem of Thai library/information personnel being involved more in technical work rather than balancing this with service provision, had hidden the value of the profession being viewed as people working behind the screen. If the emphasis given to I.S. were as much as that given to technical work, the image of the library profession to users could have been better.

Librarianship today must not be only document-oriented but service-oriented, if it is to survive in society.

'A service-oriented library is crucially dependent on the skills, energy, and commitment of the people it employs.' (BLSP 1.3 p.7)

As already mentioned, it is clear from the survey findings that the proportion of personnel with library/information degrees to those with other subject degrees is about equal in Thailand. This reflects a new trend by which the profession needs to cooperate with other specialized personnel skills. Professional staff need to participate more in the I.S. process and also to cooperate well with non-professional staff.
According to the BL, the first strategic plan was given priority to staff development, to improve the quality and flexibility of staff skills to respond to changes in requirements, emphasising management, marketing and computing skills, and fostering staff scholarship. While the second plan mentioned special skills are needed in librarianship, library science, automation, financial and personnel management and many other areas. Library administrators also should be innovative, forward-looking, service-oriented and be skillful in interpersonal communication.

Riechel (1989) also suggested that 'In all situations, library personnel are expected to know the collection thoroughly, to be able to determine when it is appropriate to use hard copy or automated tools (or a combination of both), and to have the expertise to retrieve, correct and complete information from all sources, whatever the format might be.'

Therefore, the need for library/ information personnel to facilitate access to information for users lies within the scope of responsibility of the 'information specialist'.

Fourth issue : Resources

SF :- Most libraries and information centres provided information in the format of printed materials (especially books). Requests were answered by use of in-house collections rather than from outside sources.
BLSP: 'Collection policies of the Reference Division are determined by experience of users' present needs and by assessment of the perceived requirements of future users, as well as with regard to the existing strengths of the collections. These judgements are made in the framework of longstanding public expectations that

(i) all British and most overseas publications of research interest regardless of subject, language, date or place of publication will be found in the British Library;
(ii) the Library will hold extensive manuscript collections as well as printed resources in most areas;
(iii) the needs of business and industry will be met with particular speed and ease of access;
(iv) national and international treasures in book form will be extensively held and displayed. (BLSP 1/5.10)

'The Library is one of a number of organisations involved in the collection and bibliographic control of non-book materials - films, sound recordings, slides, video recordings and so on'. (BLSP 2/5.18)

'We have reviewed our collection policies for the humanities, taking into account use, availability elsewhere and the possibilities for resource sharing, our existing strengths and our service objectives. Our primary aim will continue to be the development of the collection of English language material. For foreign material we shall give most emphasis to high-quality research material published in Eastern and Western Europe and the Orient. The reduction in acquisitions funding will lead to shifts of emphasis in the allocation of resources between the three areas, in order to achieve maximum protection for collection development. We shall be guided by our users' needs and by the costs of acquisitions in each of these fields (BLSP 6.1.6 p.25).

'We shall make further efforts to apply the common stock principle to the scientific collections now divided between Science Reference and Information Service(SRIS) and Document
Supply Centre (DSC). At the same time, SRIS will shape its collection development policies to meet market demands, its forthcoming integration on a single site with Humanities and Social Sciences (H&SS), and the possibilities for cooperative schemes with public and private sector partners. Economics in collection development will be made, as will resource-sharing arrangements with other libraries where they are cost effective, but both will have to be skillfully managed to avoid serious, long-term damage both to the document supply service, and to the national science reference collection.' (BL SP 6.1.9 p.26)

Print-based resources dominated the form of service provision. Most library collections are in the form of printed materials. But it can be a disadvantage if book-based materials are used to the almost exclusion of other forms (such as periodicals, audio-visual materials (AV.), and electronic forms) which can provide up-to-date information.

In most academic libraries, collections of books, periodicals and AV. are provided to respond to the curricula according to university standards.

Most libraries and information centres indicated that requests are answered mostly from in-house collections than from outside sources. So users are often not referred to other libraries for information that the first library does not have.

It is not an easy task to build up a complete collection. One library cannot supply everything that users need. Therefore, resource sharing is essential to make the flow of information smoothly in the community and also for
economic reasons.

In the case of the BL, their long-term strategy in collection development is to work with others to achieve comprehensive access to recorded knowledge. The focus is less on adding to and caring for the collection and more on making progress both in the better organisation and exploitation of their own resources, and on their cooperative arrangements with other libraries. (BLSP 6.11 p.24)

I.S. cannot be attained without good library collections. Well-organised library resources depend on the quality of technical work and bibliographic instruction (BI).

Fifth issue: Technology

SF: 'The number of libraries and information centres that provide online searching is very small. These are mostly academic libraries. I.T. is in the early stages of development in the I.S. process. The most commonly used computer is the microcomputer.'

BLSP: The way in which the Library exploits information technology is crucial to its success. The most recent survey in 1983 indicated that the Library was investing heavily in all aspects of automation, spending some 7% of its resources in this area... Automation is, and will be, used to provide new kinds and levels of service; to improve the efficiency of support operations, such as reader admission, shelf checking, cataloguing and acquisition procedures; and to provide better management tools in accounting and support information.' (BLSP 1/8.12)

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'Information technology will be central in giving access to library catalogues and other sources of information, and in the sharing of the collection development, recorded creation, and preservation effort. We cannot foretell the ways in which technology will develop, but we shall monitor and seek to keep abreast of developments which promise benefit for the Library and Information Science Community.' (BLSP 3.8 p.13)

Very few Thai libraries and information centres use technology in the I.S. process. The number of libraries and information centres that provide online searching and CD-ROM is very small. Customers of these services are mostly university students, researchers and lecturers. Most libraries charge fees for these services. There is a great deal of interest in applying I.T. in several operations and services can be seen most in areas such as in acquisition, circulation, cataloguing and administrative duties.

For BL, the key areas for the advance of I.T. are

- conversion of the British Library Catalogue and other main catalogues;
- on-line public access catalogue (OPAC);
- automated book requesting system;
- electronic storage and delivery;
- CD-ROM products and services;
- direct data entry for catalogues;
- serials and monograph acquisitions control;
network capabilities for shared cataloguing; and
upgrading the infrastructure for inside and outside users.

(BLSP 8.4.1 p.31)

In the BL first strategic plan, indicated the exploitation of I.T., and will be, used to provide new kinds and levels of service, to improve the efficiency of support operations; and to provide better management tools in accounting and support information. Telecommunication developments are fundamentally important for the Library's future activities and will play an increasingly large part in the delivery of documents and other information to users.(BLSP 1/8.15)

The Thai library profession needs to apply I.T. in its organisation but it must first consider the appropriate services which will be of greatest cost-benefit to the organisation and its users. The success of I.T. depends greatly on how well it suits the environment and the users within it. Therefore, the need to improve technological tools and the service delivery system is essential to the I.S. process.

Sixth issue : Finance / User fees

SF :-  
Most I.S., except computer searching, are free. Almost half of the respondents had sufficient budget to organise library information services provision.

BLSP :  'We shall continue to provide a free service to readers needing help
in the use of user catalogues. We have, however, decided to make changes for enquiries which require a significant measure of staff research, and we are currently drawing up guidelines for their introduction in 1989/90.'(BLSP 5.6.1 p.20)

'We are committed to the provision of basic library services without charge to the user, while setting realistic pricing and revenue objectives for valued-added services.'(BLSP 5.2.1 p.17)

'We expect that our core collection-management and access activities will continue to be fully supported by the Grant-in-aid. Our other services will need to be self-supporting: any surplus they generate will be used to support and extend the basic activities.'(BLSP 3.11 p.14)

The attitude towards providing free services is still a very positive one in Thailand. It is interesting to consider why quite a number of libraries consider themselves to have sufficient budget to organise library information services. Usually organisations that provide active I.S. would have experienced the problem of insufficient budgeting. The claim to have sufficient finance can be seen as an indication of lacking initiative to promote better services. The point is more poignant when one considers that the cost of incorporation and use of technology in the organisation is quite high.

The BL will continue to supply some services free but those which require extensive research by staff will be charged accordingly. This is quite reasonable in any competitive society.

For example, 'Wherever possible, and without detriment to our user community, revenue-earning activities must be managed and priced so as to make a surplus.'(BLSP 1.3 p.7)
It is a very good idea to use financial management techniques in library operations and services, if the library is to develop better information services involving highly sophisticated technology to supply for the specific needs of particular groups of users. Libraries and information centres need to use the marketing process in order to match the supply and demand of I.S. and to meet users' needs.

Seventh issue: Cooperation

SF: *Most libraries and information centres cooperate with others, especially in the area of inter-library loans (mostly in academic libraries). The next most common form of cooperation is the exchange of information and documents.*

BL/SP: 'Our long-term strategy is to work with others to achieve comprehensive access to recorded knowledge...'(BLSP 6.1.1 p.24)

'... in straitened circumstances, cooperation with others, whether libraries or private sector institutions, is vital if we are to derive maximum value from our combined resources.'(BLSP 1.3 p.7)

The survey findings indicate the positive results of cooperation between libraries and information centres, especially in the area of inter-library loans. Cooperation in the form of inter-library loans or in the exchange of information and documents is not enough, however, to help the library fulfill its goal. There
is a great deal for Thai libraries and information centres to do to improve their organisation structures, performance and image.

Even though some cooperative activities have contributed to professional development, it is important to consider how successful they are in the long run. These activities include TLA annual conference, four library groups (academic libraries, school libraries, special libraries, and public libraries groups), and the THAINATIS group. There is clear evident that getting together in this way and having a break from routine jobs are appreciated by all the library / information personnel involved.

According to BL, their long-term strategy is to work with others to achieve comprehensive access to recorded knowledge. This can be achieved through all types of cooperation especially in the area of collection development and information services. The need to cooperate covers the library / information professionals themselves, libraries and information centres, public and private sectors. Therefore, connection through networking, resource-sharing and communication is a main theme in developing information services.
Eighth issue: Future plans

**SF:** The majority of respondents plan for new services in the future. Most of their plans involve in the area of computer searching. They try to follow the developments of I.T. to improve service provision.

**BLSP:** 'Effective service to users, both now and in the future, depends not only on those who are responding directly to our various publics but also to the efficiency of the services, systems and organisation which constitute the essential infrastructure of the Library.' (BLSP 8.1.1 p.30)

'The overriding emphasis will be on improved service to our traditional users, that is to the scholarly and research community in the humanities and the sciences, to the information specialists in business and industry, and to other libraries...'(BLSP 3.3 p.12)

'Furthermore we shall:
- offer a growing range of information services which add value by the integration and analysis of data;
- provide an external document supply service which, taking full advantage of new technology is swifter and more comprehensive than now;
- take a lead in the integration of networks of information providers;
- through the Centre for the Book, provide a focus for our relationships with scholars of bibliography, with creative writers, with publishers, and all who enjoy books.' (BLSP 3.4 p.12)

The survey findings indicate a high motivation towards future planning among the respondents. There is a good attitude because all respondents occupy top
positions in their libraries and information centres. Most of them want to provide better I.S. but face limitations such as insufficient time, staff and funds.

It should not come as any surprise that the future plans for I.S. especially involve the application of I.T. But before computing can be done, library personnel's attitudes toward effective I.S. must be improved. The future of the Thai library/ information profession depends on how well future plans can actually be carried out.

Therefore, it is necessary for Thai library / information professionals to practise strategic thinking especially in the matter of prioritizing the various components of future plans - the example of BLSP gives priorities to the efficiency of services, systems and organisations.
Ninth issue: General trends

SF: Following technological development is given a higher priority in the organisations than the supply of efficient I.S.

BL/SP: 'We have reviewed the management structure of automation development and operations and strengthened the Directorate of Computing and Telecommunications to enable the Library better to direct its limited resources towards these key programmes. We shall continue to monitor the arrangements to achieve the desired balance between the Directorate's overall responsibility for the automation strategy and the need for automation to be at the service of the operational areas of the Library.' (BLSP 8.4.2 p.31)

The survey findings indicate that I.S is developing because of the progress of I.T. The priority given to technology such as computers is greater than that given to filling the general gap between library/information personnel and users.

Technology is continuously developing in modern society. But the way I.S. develops needs to suit the society to the benefit of users. The management structure of each society may be different, but each shares one ultimate goal - a better quality of life.
Some foreigners criticize Thai society saying that, it easily and quickly absorbs technology but lacks the development to go with it. This means that whatever other countries have, Thailand will adopt as well but will never develop what it has adopted so that progress is made. This criticism can also apply to I.S. development in Thai libraries and information centres.

Therefore, it is essential for the Thai library/information professionals to reconsider their strengths and weaknesses in the management process and in the organisational structure.
Summary

This chapter has revealed how strategic thinking was practised by the British Library board and committees, and how Thai library/information professionals can exercise this method in the vision of I.S. in society.

The comparison between Thai I.S. and BLSP of nine key issues - such as goal and service provision, users needs and service development, personnel, resources, technology, finance and user fees, cooperation, future plans, and general trends - is capable of being of significant value in its contribution of alternatives in designing a framework of I.S. strategic models which are given in the following chapter.

The strengths and weaknesses of Thai I.S. including the need for strategic thinking have been identified. They show that a positive vision of the future lies in cooperation of information professionals towards setting clear goals and using all available resources to reach these goals.

A clear concept of the full implication of I.S. is urgently needed among Thai library/information personnel before any action can be taken.
It is not the intention of this study to show whether or not Thai I.S. offers the same level of services as BLSP. Rather, the study seeks to illustrate BLSP as a good example of strategic planning and to suggest how Thai I.S. can benefit by utilizing the ideas to its background and environment.

Major issues of Thai I.S. in this chapter lead to the building up of a framework for I.S. strategy models. This framework involves the inter-relation of several aspects such as interpersonal communication, information specialists, users, resources, manual guides and technological tools, BI, marketing, service delivery systems and technical work. Communication and networking are also main themes in developing I.S.

To sum up, the successful application of the strategic planning process in Thai library information services in the 1990's depends on a full understanding of the implication of I.S.
References


Chapter 7

A Framework of Information Services Strategy Models:
Case of Thailand

7.1 Overview

The strategic planning approach supports earlier discussion of both the internal and external environment of information services in previous chapters. This is the way to help Thai libraries and information centres formulate and resolve the most important issues they face. It can help them build on strengths and take advantages of many opportunities, while they overcome weaknesses and serious threats.

The future of information services in Thailand depends mostly on how strategic issues can be identified and how effective inter-relationships of the factors they include can be developed. For example: the link between information specialists and users. Users cannot access resources without appropriate tools; appropriate tools will not be sufficient without a service delivery system; a service delivery system cannot be effective without efficient information specialists and information specialists cannot manage without technical services.

I.S. models essentially represent a way to approach particular challenges which are or will be important parts of the library's overall strategic planning process. Models will enhance thinking about library effectiveness by showing the effect of change on the performance of the entire library system.
The answers will depend on the strategies we choose during this decade within the framework provided and an appropriate direction toward the future.

Before the flow and networking of I.S. strategy models can be shown, the strategic planning processes within I.S. must be identified. Models 1 and 2 are alternative structures for processes taking account of strategic issues in the case of Thailand.

(O=Opportunities, T=Threats, S=Strengths, W=Weaknesses)

Figure 7.1: Strategic Planning Process for I.S. (Applied from Weihrich, 1990)
These six steps of conceptual model for I.S. are designed from this research profile.

(1) Identify goals of I.S. in Thai libraries and information centres.

(2) Clarify present background of I.S. in Thailand (including examine situation profile of their strengths and weaknesses).

(3) Examine the external and internal environment that have the impact to the present situation.

(4) Develop alternative strategies from their opportunities and threats.

(5) Develop strategic issues in order to find the solution to the problems and suggest plans to improve the performance of I.S.

(6) Prepare for contingency plans.

The framework of I.S. models are as followed :-


B: Model 2 : Networking Information Services Strategy Models.

A : Model 1 : The Flow of Information Services Strategy Models
To enhance the performance of effective information services and the ability of users to access knowledge and information, nine key factors that combine in the flow of information services are as follow:-

-Information Specialist : i.e. 'librarian', 'information officer',etc.

-Interpersonal Communication

-User

-Resource or library collection.
- Manual guides / Technology tools
- Bibliographic Instruction (BI)
- Public Relations (PR) / Marketing
- Service Delivery System
- Technical Services

Figure 7.2: The flow of information services strategy models.

(Model 1)
These alternative factors have an impact on information services development.

The combination of these factors can be divided into 10 submodels as follows:

Model 1.1 Information Specialist - User.

The connection between user and information specialist in the communication system is called 'interpersonal communication'. The users can access information or resources with or without communicating with information specialists; but if users need specific information they will seek assistance from information specialists.

In a situation where most users are non-professional, the need for assistance is vital. One may argue that many users never ask any questions, undoubtedly because they do not know what to ask, especially for things which they have never before encountered.

The findings of the survey show that face-to-face contact between users and information professionals is most common in Thai libraries and information centres. Therefore, it is essential to improve the method of face-to-face contact.
between these two groups. Certainly, information specialists need cooperation among staff, libraries, mass media and information organisations. Training in communication and technology is essential as well as management. Users need assistance to access information in libraries either directly or indirectly.

Communication between information specialist and user is essential. Doctors must diagnose the disease at least as well as the patient. Similarly, information specialists must understand the library collection or resources at least as well as users understand them. Doctors need to communicate with patients while information specialists need to communicate with users. The latter two groups cannot ignore one another in the information society.

The findings from the interview show that most librarians or information specialists provide services according to the resources they have. The question of 'users' satisfaction' has been emphasised rather than 'users' need'. Therefore, the negative feeling towards the answer of 'I don't know' or 'The library does not have what you are asking for' is often relevant.

In the present circumstances, it is necessary to stress that users need user education, while librarians or information specialists need to change their attitude to the concept of information services.
Model 1.2 Resource - Manual guides / Technological tools.

A resource or information collection needs to be well-organised before information services can be provided. Secondary reference / information services such as card catalogue, OPACs*, microforms, handbooks (in manual or technological form) are essential in libraries that have large collections. Also manual guides/technological tools can help in the seeking of information from outside sources.

The relationship between resources and manual guides/technological tools depends on how information specialists know their resources and the subsequent quality of production of manual guides or technological tools which support their specific enquiry services.

If each library/information centre uses the same standards in organising resources and manual guides or technological tools, it will be easier to implement them and then to link the networks.

The survey reveals that most of the resources available are books. It is important for information specialists to know their resources and to have sufficient skills in using manual guides or technological tools to save the users' time.

*OPAC = On-line Public Access Catalogue.
In the case of Thailand, manual guides are more common than technological tools because most librarians/information specialists use manual guides to search for information. At present, only some academic and special libraries use technological tools.

Model 1.3 Resources-Information Specialists-Manual guides / Technological tools.

The information specialist normally uses manual guides/technological tools in order to access information resources. It is very important, therefore, for information specialists to know how to produce manual guides or technological tools as well as to know how to use them (Model 1.2). The relationship between manual guides or technology tools and resources must also be a strong one. Good collections plus good guides (or technological tools) will make good information sources. But this will only be the case if users know how to use the library very well or, as shown in Model 1.1, the level of interpersonal communication between user and information specialist is high.

A good collection and good guides will benefit users only when information specialists adequately play their role as intermediaries between resources and users. Manual guides and technological tools can help the users to help themselves and thus ease the task of information specialists. If users do not know how to use these, it is the duty of an information specialist to instruct or inform them on how to access whatever information they need.
For information specialists nowadays, the technique of seeking specific information in a specific area is much more important than knowing the resource itself.

Effective information services are the result of the following combination: good collections or resources, well-trained information specialists and good manual guides or technological tools.

Model 1.4 Resources - Users - Manual guides / Technological tools.

The ability of users to access resources can depend on how familiar users are with the information collection or how well they can use manual guides / technological tools. To link these two factors (resources and manual guides) to users, BI is essential from elementary school to higher education. Providing user education is very important in improving the ability of users to access information collections or resources and manual guides / technological tools.

An information service's success can be measured by the ease of accessibility to its resources. User education and collection development are important issues for the library / information professional to consider. If users know how to find and use information in the library collection it means that they are well advanced in the intelligence process and are ready to develop themselves in society.
Information services have the aim of making information available and accessible to users whenever they need it.

There are three levels of users in Thailand:

1. Users who know nothing about the library (low ability). They can be found everywhere.
2. Users who know something about the library (moderate ability). They can be found in the education, scientific and technology fields.
3. Users who know a great deal about the library (high ability). They are hard to find.

In a recent study Bohn (1990) found that the area in which the library needs to improve most is that of availability and accessibility. If the library organises its resources to make information available and users can access that information easily by using good manual guides or technological tools, the ideal information society can be achieved. A close relationship between these three factors is essential.

Model 1.5 Users - Resources - Information specialists.

Users may access resources with or without assistance from information specialists as mentioned in model 1.1. Nevertheless, it is essential for librarians or information specialists to know their users, so they can build up the
resources necessary to satisfy users' need and it is also essential for users to
know the business of the library and information centre. These factors
necessitate cooperation.

The relationship between these three factors is vital in making the flow of
information systems run smoothly. Smooth communication between
information specialists and users about information resources is the main
process of information services. In Thailand, ineffective interpersonal
communication of information specialists and users is the major obstacle to
information services development.

In some small libraries, users and information specialists access the collections
or resources without using manual guides or technological tools. This is
satisfactory only in libraries that have very small collections. Good resources/
collections can be of most use if information specialists provide effective
information services and there is effective interpersonal communication between
information specialists and users.

It is necessary for users to know that whenever they find a problem in the
library or information centre, there is always someone to help: that is the
librarian/information specialist.
Model 1.6 Users - Manual guides / Technological tools

-Information Specialists

Manual guides / technological tools are guides or tools to access library resources. The flow between users on the one hand and manual guides / technological tools on the other is only possible when user education is given - as in Model 1.4. Thus the gap is bridged between users and resources.

Information specialists can use manual guides / technological tools to help users access information. In this case, information specialists will act as instructors to users. They must have the technical knowledge required to operate in manual guides / technological tools.

The relationship between these factors is more important in large collections. Good manual guides / technological tools can help users access information quickly and the task of information specialists who produce manual guides or other tools can therefore be appreciated by users.

In this model, what the user needs is user education while the information specialist needs to produce and use either manual guides or technological tools effectively.
Model 1.7 Bibliographic Instruction (BI) -Resources -Technical services

Technical services manage information resources by acquisition, classification and cataloguing.

Bibliographic instruction is a part of user education that can help users to find information. Therefore, the relationship between BI and resources is important. It is indisputable that good resources and BI are the results of efficient technical services.

Technical services should cooperate with BI so that users can access resources easily. Technical services are concerned with organising resources, while BI is the instruction that makes the resources accessible. Normally, technical work is performed by technical librarians who are particularly familiar with resources, while BI is performed by reference librarians or information specialists.

Model 1.8 BI -Information Specialists -PR / Marketing

PR/Marketing is used by information specialists to promote information services and to help people understand the concept of information services. BI can also support PR/Marketing to make I.S. flow smoothly.

The relationship between information specialists and BI is increasingly
important nowadays. Marketing can be used by information specialists to offer
the right information in the proper way. It is wise for information specialists to
apply marketing to their organisations for promotion and economic purposes.

Information specialists who understand the role of marketing as well as they
understand the importance of B I can contribute greatly to the business of
library and information centres.

Model 1.9 Technical services -Users -Service Delivery Systems.

Technical services and service delivery systems such as teletext, viewdata,
Electronic mail, etc. can serve to ease the flow of information services.

Users are often quite far from technical services but the new development of
service delivery systems has made users aware of the benefits.

The result of the connection of the above three factors is a new form of service.
Users deploy the product of service delivery system that comes from technical
services. Service delivery systems are a product of technological developments.

Effective technical services and high quality service delivery systems can
undoubtedly attract users. This model is unlikely to be suitable for small public
and school libraries in Thailand but it can be applied to academic and special
libraries.
Model 1.10 PR /Marketing -Manual guides / Technological tools - Service Delivery Systems.

Good manual guides / technological tools and effective service delivery systems can also support PR/marketing. At the same time, promotion of high quality of service delivery systems and good manual guides / technological tools can be an effective way to market information services.

The relationship of these three factors is important, therefore, in maintaining effective information services. This model can be most useful in large collections which have sophisticated techniques, as in Model 1.9. Thus, models 1.9 and 1.10 can only function if the library / information personnel are well-trained in high quality information technology, management and librarianship.
B: Model 2: Networking Information Services Strategy Models.

A framework for networking information services strategy models in the case of Thailand can be suggested and divided into three levels:-

Model 2.1 National level
Model 2.2 Regional level
Model 2.3 Organisational level

Model 2.1 National Level

The proposal for National Information Services (NIS) is to ease the flow of the information and communication system throughout Thailand.

As mentioned earlier, Thailand has one national library with nine branches, 277 special libraries, 375 public libraries (UNESCO, 1989), 88 academic libraries and 562 school libraries (Mainai kit and Suebsonti, 1988). The TLA aims to promote library and information science education and library development; and to act as a coordinating body and a vehicle for exchange of professional information and ideas. Thai National Information System (THAINATIS) was established in 1986 to identify information sources and services to other organisations, improve the systems and services to reach standards to the same level as developed countries, to solve the problem of duplicate information sources, to complete information sources in every subject; and for cooperation and coordination of exchanging of information at the national and international level for the benefit of the nation and for the country's development. All
principles have been identified, but it remains unclear how far the plan for service provision has been developed.

The survey analysis reveals that respondents' opinion upon information services development in Thailand depend on the progress of I.T., on cooperation between libraries / information centres, and on the quality of staff to manage I.S. effectively.

The main function of information services in Thailand is to provide academic resources since most of the survey's population is engaged in the education field. Whether information service is by 'information' or 'instruction', the mission of library information services is to provide both information and instruction to users in any form from its own collection or by referring to outside sources. In order to ease the flow of information in Thai society, NIS should have been suggested in the following model.
Model 2.1: The Suggestion of National Information Services

![Diagram of National Information Services (NIS)](image)

Figure 7.3: National Information Services (NIS)

The inter-relationships of these factors can contribute to the flow of information in the information services process. Users can be categorized as individual, institutional, decision-makers, business / industry personnel and educators. The connection of users to NIS will be a direct process if it exists, but if not, users will seek information from the library / information centre or THAINATIS or other sources. If NIS has fulfilled its goal in national and international
networking, there will be no need for users to seek information directly from international organisations.

National Information Services should be the centre of all library/information organisations which deal with information and recorded knowledge.

Strategic issues suggest the establishment of National Information Services which can be one function of THAINATIS or a separate organisation, a centre for information services networks in Thailand.

In fact, national information services do not exist in Thailand yet. Normally, the users who access information through library/information centres are only those who already know how to use it. THAINATIS is a group of major libraries and information centres in particular fields which is involved more in technical services than in user services.

Therefore, if national information services are established, the flow of information will run smoothly between library/information centres and THAINATIS. Also, communication among international organisations will enhance mutual understanding among nations around the world. The benefit will be felt by users and groups who need information in specific fields in order to make decisions at national level.

Intelligence services can also be a part of national information services in so far as they involve selecting the right information for appropriate purposes. The national information services staff should be made up of information specialists
and scholars who have knowledge in each field and who can cooperate and work together.

Thailand needs a clear idea of information services, as is the case with other developing countries, and needs the right information for development. It is important to think and to plan ahead instead of waiting for opportunities to occur by chance.

Model 2.2: Regional Level

Thailand is divided into four regions, north, northeast, south and central. Cooperation among regional information services will ease the flow of information and enhance the operations of national information services. Also the library & information centres in each region can contact the regional...
information services if they want some information from another region.

Thailand already has regional information centres in the major universities but they cannot be complete without regional information services. It is important to have one group of staff who can work as regional information services staff. Technology is also essential to make these networks possible.

**Model 2.3: Organisational Level**

![Diagram of Organisational Level](image)

Figure 7.5 : Information Services - Organisational Level.

In the organisation, there are five main components contributing to the smooth running of information services: the user, the information specialist, resources, manual guides/technological tools and technical services.
The flow between each of these needs to be two-way, especially between information specialists and users. Traditionally, Thai libraries have been involved in technical services and resources rather than user services. Nowadays, it is important to allow the communication system to work at the organisational level.

7.2 Discussion

These are descriptive models that will be useful in preparing to develop the behaviour of systems, but cannot identify the 'best' course of action that should be taken. If these models can strengthen the connection between service provision and users then the information services strategy model can also represent the ideal information society in the future.

Why do people appreciate the work of public libraries in the UK. and the USA., but not in Thailand? One usually places the blame on budget allocation or economics rather than on matters of the priorities adopted. Each country is different in its social and economic background and choices of priorities need to reflect these differences.
It is true that Thailand has 375 public library buildings around the nation. But very little evidence has been shown that proves information services reach users effectively. Consequently, users have an image of the library as the place to keep books and see librarians as the custodians of books (Tumsap, 1984).

Librarians and information specialists should not take care only of library buildings, but they must understand their role as communicators and managers of the information business and make sure that information services reach users efficiently.

Library and information professionals cannot deny their duty as providers of information services. It is assumed that every user needs information. Generally speaking, if they fail to find this in the library, they will seek the answer somewhere else. When this happens it means that librarians have not provided adequate information services and have ignored their responsibility. The feedback from this will be a negative attitude of users toward the library/information profession.

A parallel may again be seen here with the work of doctors. If doctors know their role, their responsibility and their philosophy, they know how to treat patients in the best possible way.

Librarians are not different in the sense that they need to understand their role, responsibility and philosophy if they are to treat users successfully. It is therefore essential for librarians/information specialists to have adequate
technical knowledge, a sense of responsibility and a clear picture of their philosophy in information services if they are successfully to play their part in the information/communication system.

Model 1

The good relationships between the factors in Figure 7.2 are necessary to the establishment of effective information services and will enhance the ability of users to access information and knowledge. Specific models may suit particular libraries, depending on each library's background and environment. Effective information services are unlikely to be provided without this communication between these factors.

The benefits of the framework of models 1.1 - 1.10 are as followed:

1. to enhance ideal information services.
2. to balance the ideal information society.
3. to strengthen the relationships between information specialists and users.
4. to create a clearer picture of the information services concept.
5. to suggest alternative strategies for improvement.
6. to be applicable to libraries of any size.
7. to make the information and communication systems flow smoothly.
8. to improve the area of availability and accessibility in the library/information profession.
9. to stimulate each factor to fulfil its own role with others.
Model 2

The networking of the following factors shows the establishment of and relationship between each factor to the end of easing the flow of information systems and services. The establishment of NIS, RIS and OIS leads an effective flow of information in the information services process. These three levels need to use the same standards and must be organised by librarians and information specialists.

The benefits of framework models in national, regional and organisational levels are as followed:-

1. to support the flow of library and information systems.
2. to enhance the value of information services to users.
3. to help users access information and knowledge easily.
4. to emphasize services to users within the THAINATIS project.
7.3 Summary

This study emphasizes the application of strategic planning to information services and a framework of strategic models has therefore been suggested. Model 1 suggests the flow of information services strategy models which comprise the following nine key factors: information specialist, user, resource or library collection, manual guides / technology tools, bibliographic instruction, PR / marketing, service delivery system, technical services and interpersonal communication. A good relationship between these factors in each model will establish effective information services and enhance the ability of users to access information and knowledge. Model 2 suggests networking information services strategy models at three levels: national level, regional level and organisational level. Networking is another way to ease the flow of information in the information systems and services in Thailand. These models are the response to identified strategic issues.
References


Chapter 8

General Conclusions, Recommendations and Further Research

8.1 General Conclusions

If the quality of life is affected by the information and knowledge that people receive, information services are vital. Information services are indeed the ends of the library operation, while communication is the means. Library information services have to do with human activities as well as the collection and the tools to access information resources. The challenge for libraries and information centres nowadays is to reconsider the difference between ends and means and to seek to redesign the means to serve the ends (Buckland, 1990).

This study provides an early attempt to develop I.S. strategy models to improve the condition of library information services in Thailand. The key focus of this study has been to design a framework for information services strategy models and to enhance the balance between effective information services and the ability of users to access information and knowledge. The process that has been used is strategic planning, which is the application of thought, analysis, imagination, judgement and responsibility, rather than techniques (Drucker, 1988). The unique part of strategic planning is the equal consideration given to the internal and external environments. The major assumption made is that effective information services can bridge the gap between information professionals and users.
The unique characteristics of Thailand have greatly influenced the current position of information services, especially regarding the education system and the communication process. The methods of teaching and learning have also reflected the attitude of the Thai people towards accessing information. The mass media play a more important role in making information available than the library and information centre. The library operation emphasizes quantity rather than quality.

In Thailand, library professionals pay much attention to organising their collections by applying the use of I.T. rather than to improving the quality of service provision and the relationship between information professionals and users. This makes a significant contribution to the negative image of the profession.

Information technology in Thailand is still in an early stage of development. But the growing concern for I.T. has affected the attitude of library / information personnel by causing them to believe that the progress of information services depends on the development of I.T. This is true in a society where I.T. is fully developed and exploited, but in the case of Thai librarianship where I.T. has not reached the majority of people, the progress of information services does not depend only on the progress of I.T.

The problem is that Thai librarianship thus caters only for certain groups rather than for the whole population. This study demonstrates how one can look from micro to macro, which means understanding the centre of the problem in order
to develop the whole system. Therefore, the study lays stress on the 'information service' which is one function of library and information science. To understand the background of information services is to understand the heart of libraries and information centres within the present structure. To quote Shanon (1975):-

'Albert Einstein once stated that the proper formulation of a problem was even more essential than its solution. To find an acceptable or optimal solution to a problem, one must first know what the problem is. As simple and apparent as that statement may sound, too many management scientists completely ignore the obvious. Millions of dollars are spent each year in coming up with elegant and sophisticated answers to the wrong questions'.

The library profession has mistakenly assumed that information services have a high priority in people's lives. Some believe that the need for personal assistance in using information is understood in Thailand as well as in other countries, but this is questionable. Science does not begin with facts, it begins with the perception of a problem and the belief in the possibility of an answer (Goldstein, 1978). Therefore, information services are to be considered in the light of a failure to perceive their true significance.

Strategic planning has been suggested as an effective way to define information services and to develop strategies for surviving and succeeding in achieving goals and objectives in an increasingly unstable and rapidly changing environment. It is not an end in itself, but merely a set of concepts to help leaders make important decisions and take important action (Bryson, 1988)
Thailand's library service (especially the public library service) has been developing for over a century, but progress is slow. Academic and special libraries have shown more significant progress in some educational and scientific areas. The number of public libraries in Thailand is very impressive, but the existence of a library building does not mean that effective information services are available. Librarians are simply not providing active information services and ineffective interpersonal communication impedes the availability and accessibility of information.

In trying to understand why the library has not had a high profile in society, it is essential to reconsider the mission or the business of libraries or information centres. If the business of the library and information centre is to provide users with information services and to enhance their ability to access knowledge and information, it is necessary to ask how the profession can best achieve this.

The success of information services depends on how well the human factor can match information to human demand. In the library profession, technology is less important than its utilization, which has an impact on the organisational structure. The results of this study show that the application of strategic planning processes to information services can be a positive benefit. The mismatch between book-based resources and passive services and actual need results in ineffective information services. Consequently, the improvement of information services is necessary to overcome this mismatch. Thailand must find its own way to profit from the hard work of the library.
profession rather than just copying the developed world and finding an unsuitable solution.

This study has the main purpose of designing a framework for information services strategy models in Thailand. This framework can support future plans to enhance the progress of library and information work. Major issues from this study are analysed and summed up as follows:

8.1.1 The lack of a clear concept of the full implication of information services by library / information professionals causes continuous problems in the library / information system in Thailand. The professionals need to shoulder their responsibilities in service provision whether they are small or large.

The survey's findings reveal that the existing purpose of information services is perceived as provision of academic resources to users. It is unclear whether provision of academic resources means assistance in providing only resources or includes information and instruction. In the information services process, providing the information itself is necessary for users who have limited time or skills in acquiring information, while guidance (or instruction) is sufficient for users who have some skills in acquiring information. In Thailand, most users have limited skills in acquiring information, but surprisingly most libraries have not provided enough guidance.

In developed countries technology helps to facilitate library operations and users can thus access information, whereas in developing countries most
librarians are occupied by technical routine work and users do not fully realize the role of the library and its professionals. Even though these two cases are different, the concept of information services is universal. It is essential to reconsider introducing well designed 'reference / information service' courses including relevant elements of psychology and communication for library and information science. An appropriate concept of information services can be taught through well-designed curricula by the library schools and this training emphasises the priorities of Thailand rather than some 'universal' principle of information service.

8.1.2 It is necessary to have not only a good relationship between information specialists and users, but among the library / information staff themselves, because library operations are a matter of team work. The findings show the importance of face-to-face contact between information personnel and users which up to now has not been successful in building up a good image of library / information work.

This study has placed emphasis on personnel rather than on technology because it is the personnel who control the organisation and system in Thailand where information technology does not greatly affect the majority of information services. The image of the profession reflects the attitudes of individual personnel. The major question to be asked is 'What is wrong with the library profession?' No-one wants to accept any individual blame but the organisation structure is seen to be at fault.
The survey's findings indicate that the majority of I.S. personnel are librarians. So it is relevant to ask 'What's wrong with the librarians?' By improving the quality of individual librarians, the image of the library profession as a whole can gradually be improved.

Marketing methods must be applied in the existing competitive environment, especially in the present situation of tight budgets and increasing users' demands. Organisations must combine marketing concepts with library practice and philosophy because the key concept that links marketing and information science is communication (Oldman, 1976).

The first way to improve the public image of the library profession is to improve the quality of work of the library / information personnel. These attitudes towards the profession also have an important effect on how secure the library / information personnel are. The public image of the library / information profession always depends on how well information services are transmitted to the individual user.

8.1.3 All development nowadays needs strategic thinking. A major problem amongst Thai library / information professionals is the lack of strategic thinking. Thai library education tends to follow existing rules rather than to create its own improvements or adaptations to the rules according to the changing environment. Strategic thinking or systematic thinking must be taught in order to solve problems or to improve circumstances.
The example of strategic thinking can also be seen from the application of modern technology. Information technology has become a major issue during this decade. However, the gap between technology and services in the information flow is becoming wider. Sophisticated technology cannot be successfully deployed without effective information services.

Meadows (1989), for instance, asked: 'Are librarians and information specialists fully acquainted with the techniques of management, or of I.T.? Though the high quality of entrants into the information field offers hope for the future, there are still too many established personnel who are document-oriented, rather than people-oriented'. This is an extremely important point because the image of the library / information profession needs updating as a matter of urgency.

It is very necessary for information professionals to exploit their skills in the proper way. In developed countries, it may well be true that the most significant results and benefits of I.T. application will lie in the creation of new and integrated services (Bawden and Blakeman, 1990). But in developing countries like Thailand, the need to improve the existing functions and services should be given priority before any other actions are taken. The challenge for management lies in training the information specialist to communicate well with the user.
8.1.4 From this study, the application of technology is seen to have a higher priority than other factors. However, most respondents are not familiar with active information services and therefore do not consider budget allocation as a serious problem for information services. Passive information services with book-based resources cause obstacles in the flow of information in the information services process.

The policy of active I.S. needs to be understood by all staff as well as being the mission of the organisation. The policy on active I.S. is to:

- manage staff time and get the right staff for appropriate services.
- have a positive idea of I.S.
- evaluate service provision by a range of methods.

Cooperation in active information services policy within the profession and with other professions can be an advantage in widening the information services process.

Information professionals nowadays are not limited only to the library profession. Thai library professionals need to open the way to cooperate with other information professionals, such as education authorities, mass media, business, computer or information technology, so that information services will be of most benefit to users. Cooperation with other information professionals is as important as with users. If Thai library professionals have a clear picture of themselves, the place to stand beside other information professionals will always be vital and firm.
8.1.5 It is the responsibility of the library profession to ease the flow of information for a better information society. In reality, the majority of the Thai population accesses information through mass media rather than libraries and information centres. It is very important to consider why the mass media can influence the majority of Thais rather than libraries and information centres. Is this an indication that mass media personnel play a stronger role in society than library and information personnel? Or is this because information from the mass media is more convincing and up-to-date than from libraries and information centres? It is time for library / information professionals to reconsider what is the role they should play. If the missing role is the irresponsibility in providing supporting information and recorded knowledge to society and ineffective information services, it is vital to solve this crisis.

The flow of the information services strategy model is a framework to enhance the performance of effective information services and the ability of users to access information and recorded knowledge. Each factor must communicate with the others. The nine factors in this communication chain are information specialists, users, resources, manual guides or technological tools, bibliographic instruction, marketing, technical services, service delivery systems and interpersonal communication.
8.2 Recommendations and Further Research

Strategic planning has been developed positively during this decade and indeed no contemporary management process can succeed without it, because of its emphasis on the equality of internal and external environments. Strategic planning is concerned with choosing the objectives and future courses of action that are believed to be consistent with the relationship existing between the organisation and its environment.

This study shows the possibility of applying strategic planning processes to other functions of the library and information centres. Recommendations concerning further research are:-

The findings show that providing information with full potential is still the ideal of service provision. The value of information services can only gain acceptance when it is found useful for a better quality of life. Therefore, one aspect that would be interesting for further study is how intelligence information services * can enhance the ability of users to improve their quality of life.

* Intelligence information services are the ability to acquire new information and knowledge, make judgement, adapt to new environment, develop new concepts and strategies and act in a rational and effective way on the basis of information thus acquired (Jequire, 1983)
Another aspect is how the performance of information services from the library and information centres can support intelligence services. Thai society desperately needs the right kind of information to promote the better exploitation of the country's natural resources for enhanced production. In the context of information services, the quality of life is the end-result.

The effectiveness of library operation and services can also be seen from an evaluation of the quality of services. Whether it is for better library operations or for the benefit of users, performance measurement is the alternative to developing the library collection and personnel. The findings of this study indicate that technology (such as computer search) is in their future plan, but it is not certain that Thai librarianship needs technology to develop its information services. Even face-to-face contact between users and information personnel was indicated to have been used, but inefficient interpersonal communication can even widen the gap between these two groups. Technology may be attractive to users at first glance, but it is not the way to solve the problem of the better image of the profession. If the technique of performance measurement can be used for information services in Thailand, it must identify the cost and benefit but not the value itself.

Multitype library system and cooperation * may be suggested for information

* Multitype library cooperation is a means of mobilizing total library resources to meet the needs of the user without regard to the type of library involved (Hamilton, 1977)
services in order to fill the gap between technical work and service provision. For organisations that have limited staff, resources and funds, the creation for a centre of technical work is an alternative especially in public and school libraries. Multitype library systems involve the cooperation of every type of library. For example, if acquisition, cataloguing and classification are undertaken by staff in the centre or main office, then the information staff in each branch have more time to supply effective IS. to users. The benefit of a multitype library system will not only be economic but also for the greater benefit of users in accessing information and for librarians and information specialists in making available more information.

This study sets out to present a framework for effective information services. To improve the performance of information services by highly sophisticated technology can be of value only to skilled users who have the ability to access information. But to leave the majority of libraries and information centres and the majority of the population with low quality information services is certainly not the ideal of information society that Thailand needs. Therefore, the future of Thai information society depends mostly on how the library / information profession can use their full potential and responsibility in the area of accessibility and availability of information. The strategic plan of information services can lead to the right direction and ultimate goal.
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Appendix I

THAI NATIS
Structure of THAINATIS *

Executive Committee of THAINATIS

Secretary Office of Executive Committee (The National Library)

UNISIST Committee (Thailand)

CA = Centre for Agriculture
CE = Centre for Economics
CH = Centre for Humanities
CM = Centre for Medicine
CSS = Centre for Social Sciences
CST = Centre for Science and Technology
UNISIST = Universal Information System in Science and Technology

* Thai National Information System
THAINATIS Network

<connection line>

CEC Central Executive Committee
CA Centre for Agriculture
CE Centre for Economics
CH Centre for Humanities
CM Centre for Medicine
CSS Centre for Social Sciences
CST Centre for Science and Technology
N Net Institutions
THAINATIS Thai National Information System

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Appendix II

Questionnaire
&
Interview
Questionnaire

The List of 78 Thai Libraries & Information Centers of the Survey.

1. Kasetsart University Central Library.
2. Siam Society Library.
3. Faculty of Agriculture Library, Chiangmai University
4. Faculty of Agriculture Library, Khonkaen University
5. Maejo Institute of Agricultural Technology Library, Chiangmai.
6. Archive Center, Payab University, Chiangmai
8. Faculty of Medical Library, Chulalongkorn University.
9. Faculty of Medical Library, Chiangmai University
10. Faculty of Medical Library, Khonkaen University
11. Library of the National Statistics Office, Prime Minister office.
12. Ramkamhaeng University Central Library.
13. Chiangmai University Central Library, Chiangmai
14. Thammasat University Central Library.
17. Information Resource Center, Chulalongkorn University.
18. Library and Information Center, Bank of Thailand.
19. Faculty of Economics Library, Thammasat University.
20. Faculty of Economics Library, Chulalongkorn University.
21. Library and information center, Durakitbandit University.
22. Library of Bangkok Bank (Headquarters).
23. Department of Science Service Library, Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy.
25. Faculty of Engineering Library, Chulalongkorn University
26. Faculty of Science Library, Chulalongkorn University.
28. Faculty of Education Library, Chulalongkorn University
29. Silpakorn University Central Library, Nakorn Pathom
32. Srinakarintarawiroth University Central Library, Prasanmitr.
33. Medical Department Library, Royal Thai Army.
34. Library of the Parliament Secretary Office, Ministry of Agriculture.
35. Library of Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture.
36. Faculty of Animal Science Library, Chulalongkorn University.
37. Faculty of Science Library, Mahidol University.
38. Library of the National Energy Administration, Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy.
40. Documentation and Information Center, The Royal Forest
41. The Royal Irrigation Department Library, Ministry of Agriculture.
42. The Land Development Department Library, Ministry of Agriculture.
43. Department of Fisheries Library, Ministry of Agriculture.
44. Department of Agricultural Extention Library, Songkhanakarin University, Hadyai, Songkha.
45. Faculty of Natural Resources Library, Songkhanakarin University (Hadyai), Songkha.
46. Library of the Cooperative Promotion Department, Ministry of Agriculture.
47. Library of Bank of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (Headquaters).
48. Faculty of Medical Library, Mahidol University
49. Faculty of Medical Library, Songkhanakarin University, Hadyai
50. Faculty of Medical Library, Rama Hospital, Bangkok
52. Department of Medical Services Library, Ministry of Public Health, Bangkok
54. Thailand Cultural Center Library.
55. Book Development Center, Department of Academic Resources Service, Ministry of Education.
56. Music and Art Center, Bangkok Bank (Panfa Branch).
57. Library of Thailand National Development and Research Center
58. Library of Department of Commercial Registration.
59. Library of Academic and Public Relation Department, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy.
60. Library of the National Economic and Social Development Board Office, Bangkok
63. Commercial Data and Information Network.
64. Library of Department of Industrial Economics, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry.
66. Library of the Board of Investment Office.
68. Library of the Bureau of the Budget.
69. Documentation Center, Secretary Office, Parliament Office.
70. Library and Documentation Center, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affair.
71. Information Center, The Secretariat of the Cabinet.
72. Information Center, Department of Labour.
73. Library of the Civil Service Commission Office, Prime Minister Office.
74. Library of Industrial Trust Company of Thailand.
75. Library and Information Center, Asian Institute of Technology.
76. UNESCO Library (Bangkok).
77. American University Alumni (AUA) Library, Bangkok
78. British Council Library (Bangkok).
QUESTIONNAIRE: INFORMATION SERVICE PLANNING IN THAILAND.

The questionnaire is composed of two parts:

Part I - The operation of information services.

Part II - Cooperation and planning.

Part I - The operation of information services.

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to obtain information about the operation of information services such as its organisation, personnel, collection, services and finance.

1. Please specify the specific name of service provision in your organisation?

   _____ (a) Information service
   _____ (b) Reference service
   _____ (c) Library service
   _____ (d) Others (Please specify)

2. What is the main purpose of your organisation?
3. What method is to be made available to potential users of the service? Please rate each of them to show the degree of importance by checking one box for each scale.

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<td>(a) Face to face contact with users</td>
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<td>(c) By postal requests</td>
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4. If you offer the following services, please rate each of them to show the degree of importance by checking one box for each scale.

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<td>(c) Bibliography services</td>
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<td>(e) Current Awareness Services</td>
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<td>(j) Others (please specify)</td>
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5. What is the total number of your organisation personnel?

(a) Librarian __ persons.
(b) Professional staff __ persons.
(c) Non-professional staff __ persons.
(d) Others (Please specify) __ persons.

6. What is the term used for library / information personnel?

____ (a) Librarian
____ (b) Information officer
____ (c) Information specialist
____ (d) Information scientist
____ (e) Information consultant
____ (f) Others (Please specify)

7. What is the academic background of your information personnel?

(a) Library and information degree __ persons.
(b) Subject degree __ persons.
(Please specify subject______________________)
(c) Library experience __ persons.
(d) Others (Please specify) __ persons.
8. Does your organisation have a staff development programme? (Such as study leave, training, seminars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. Please specify the number of library resources in your organisation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library resources</th>
<th>No. of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research projects / reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. What subjects are covered by your information resources?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(a) General subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Science &amp; Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Others (Please specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. What sources do you use for answering requests? Please rate each of them to show the degree of importance for overcoming each by checking one box for each scale.
12. If you use **Online databases**, what databases do you usually use? (please specify)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) In-house collections</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(b) External sources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Online databases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Others (Please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Do you have library automation in your organisation? (Please specify number of items.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>No. of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Word processor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Microcomputer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Minicomputer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Others (Please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Do you provide information services to the general public users or only to members of the organisation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public users</th>
<th>Members only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. If you provide information service to public users, who are they?

____ (a) Personal purpose users
____ (b) Business organisations users
____ (c) Government officers
____ (d) Undergraduate/Postgraduate students
____ (e) Others (Please specify)

16. Please answer questions on user fees.

Yes No

(a) Do you charge fee from users? ___ ___
(b) If the answer to (a) is YES,
are there any free services in your organisation? ___ ___
(c) Do you think user fees will be increase in the near future? ___ ___

17. Is your organisation involved in these activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Keep statistics of information services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Conduct user surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Promoting information services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Compete with other information service organisations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part II - Cooperation and Planning.

18. Does your organisation have any cooperation with other information service organisations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19. If the answer to 18 is YES, please specify what type of cooperation do you have?

(a) ________________________________

(b) ________________________________

(c) ________________________________

20. Do you have sufficient budget to organise your information service each year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

21. Do you plan for new services in the near future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

22. If the answer to 20 is YES, please specify what type of services do you plan?

(a) ________________________________

(B) ________________________________

(C) ________________________________
23. Please comment freely what are the impact of 'information services' in Thailand.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION
The list of 30 organisations that allowed to conduct the interview.

1. The National Energy Information Centre (NEIC).
2. Thai National Documentation Centre (TNDC). Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research.
3. Library of the Division of Scientific and Technological Information (DSTI)
5. Thai National Library.
6. Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) library.
7. Labour Data and Information centre, Department of Labour.
8. Thailand Cultural Centre Library.
10. Thammasart University Library.
11. Chulalongkorn University Library.
12. Ramkhamheang Open University Library.
13. Chiangmai University Library.
15. Srinakarintaravirote Prasarnmitr University Library.
16. Sillapakorn University Library (Tapkaew Branch).
17. Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand.
18. Faculty of Education Library, Chulalongkorn University.
19. Faculty of Medicine Library, Chiangmai University.
20. Faculty of Medicine Library, Khon Kaen University.
21. Faculty of Science Library, Mahidol University.
22. Faculty of Agriculture Library, Chiangmai University.
23. Faculty of Agriculture Library, Khon Kaen University.
24. Maejo Institute of Agricultural Technology Library, Chiangmai.
27. Bangkok Bank Library (Headquarters).
28. Faculty of Economic Library, Thammasart University.
29. Department of Fisheries Library.
30. Population Control Information Centre, Department of Health.

7 organisations did not allow to conduct the interview.

1. Library. Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University.
2. Library. Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University.
3. Unesco Library (Bangkok).
5. Library. Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board.
6. Thailand Development Research Institute Library.
7. NIDA Library.
Interview

Introduction

According to the questionnaire in 'Information Service Planning in Thailand' conducted by the researcher in June 1988, of seventy-eight questionnaires were sent out, fifty-seven questionnaires (73 percent) were returned and fifty-five questionnaires proved to be usable for computer analysis, giving a response rate of 70.5 percent.

From the questionnaire survey asked whether the organisations had conducted user surveys, 37 organisations answered YES (which was 67.3 percent).

Therefore, it is necessary to consider the information on users' needs which emerged and which affect 'service provision'.

Objectives of the interview

1. to study the nature of the user surveys undertaken by the institution.

2. to investigate the relationship between 'user surveys' and changes in 'service provision'.

3. to study the use of 'user survey'.

4. to study the opinion of the library administrators upon users' need and service provision.
Interview questions

1. How often do you conduct user surveys?
   - Regularly
   - Occasionally

2. In connection with which category of service or process have you conducted 'user survey'?
   - User satisfaction
   - Cataloguing/Classification
   - Serials service
   - Public Relations
   - Others (Please Specify)

3. What is the benefit to your organisation of conducting user survey?
   - To understand users' need.
   - To improve library services.
   - To evaluate the organisation.
   - Budget allocation.
   - Others (Please specify)

4. What is the population surveyed in your 'user surveys'?
   - User
   - Non-users
5. Do you think the process of service provision changes because of technology / users' attitude / staff's attitude? (H = High, M = Moderate, L = Low)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information services concept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users’ attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff’s attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Have you used the result of user surveys to plan for new services?

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

7. What is your opinion upon the use of user surveys?

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

8. How do you use the result of user surveys?

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
9. Do you consider what is the problem of conducting 'user survey'? (Rate the degree of importance) (High / Moderate / Low)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited time and staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users' cooperation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Any comments on user surveys.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your cooperation
Appendix III
Examples of Thai Library Buildings

1. National Library
2. Academic Library
3. Public Library / School Library
4. Village Book-Reading Centre.
National Library (Bangkok)

Academic Library (Chulalongkorn University Library) Bangkok

Public Library (Khonkaen)
(School Library is usually one room in a similar building).

Village Book-Reading Centre (Khonkaen)