

Library Research in Norway and Finland from the 19th century to the 21st century

A comparative study

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1. Introduction

Public libraries have their roots from the 18th century enlightenment movement in Europe, and have since then evolved to reflect the changing society that they serve (Paul T. Jaeger, Bertot, Kodama, Katz, & DeCoster, 2011). Today public libraries are adjusting, taking on the challenge of changing times and facing a specter of issues trusted upon them that they need to resolve. What direction to take library development, what aspects of the library as an institution to keep and what to leave behind in the past, are some of the issues brought forth by a society that is very different from that of which libraries once were first introduced to. Library planning and library development is in big focus, especially as some public library institutions today are facing a minor identity crisis.

Loan numbers have been decreasing (as can be seen in Scandinavian¹ public library statistics) and it is no longer granted that people will use their local library - at least not in the traditional book lending fashion (Lagerstrøm & Killengreen Revold, 2015). For the longest time the public libraries' identity has been very much defined by the notion that it is one of few institutions to offer equal and free access to information in society – a notion that has been very much challenged in recent years. Now there are countless of other sources of information brought to the public. The internet, Google for instance, is making the role of public libraries a harder task to define.

Libraries have to think new and innovative, and many libraries today have had the need to re-define their role and purpose. Granting equal access to information and promoting education, information and cultural activity are key points of some of Scandinavia's library laws. Some of the Nordic libraries also claim that their role in society is to strengthen the democratic system², and with these claims comes the notion that they are of important social value. It is

¹ I use the term "Scandinavia" and "the Nordic countries" as synonyms in this thesis. I state this to avoid any confusion as "Scandinavia" is sometimes used to refer to simply three countries (Norway, Denmark and Sweden), whilst Finland and Iceland are sometimes included in the definition. The term "The Nordic countries" include all of the five Nordic countries Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

² The library law of Norway <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1985-12-20-108>, and the library law of Sweden https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/sfs_sfs-2013-801/ (accessed 16.5.16).

however not enough for libraries today to simply claim their importance, but they also have to prove their value with documented data.

Data gathering in the library sector has a long tradition and library research has been motivated by many different causes in the past: a hundred years ago library research methods and research goals differ from modern day research, at least to a certain degree. The purpose of this thesis is to take a closer look at trends in library research, how they have changed over time and what factors might have had an effect on the nature of library research topics and methods. My thesis will be narrowed to the time period from the late 1800s up until today, with a focus on Norwegian and Finnish public libraries.

This will be done through a comparative study on library development and library research in these two countries, especially focusing on the similarities and differences in library research through time.

1.1 Method

In my original problem statement for this thesis I was to include all the Nordic countries but I've had to narrow down my original plan due to lack of resources and poor access to the relevant research material due to shortage of time and little or no response from my material lending sources. Instead I've settled to taking a closer look at mostly Norway and Finland, also making it possible for me to gain a more detailed and in-debt view of two countries rather than a somewhat overall view of four. Originally the thesis was meant to also include Denmark and Sweden in a broader sense but although they will not be focused on in detail, they will however not be completely excluded as I do take them into account in some degree.

I've based my thesis mainly on published research material such as books, journal articles, research reports, statistics and some electronic resources. I've used many books and articles concerning library history and the development of the library institution, as well as the development of library and information science (LIS) institutions. I've also used many publications concerning library research and the development of library research.

This thesis is based on publications that give an overview of LIS research, as well as study reports, user studies and other types of documentation of library research. I've also used many works that describe library history and library development from a historical point of view. Much of the published literature is in English, but I've also used publications that were written in some of the Scandinavian languages; Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish.

As a basis for choosing this topic for my thesis I had my practical work experience at the Tromsø City library, where I worked for 8 weeks. Whilst there I received some practical training in the duties of a librarian and assisted in the everyday tasks in the running of the library. I also gained an insight in "the behind the scenes" procedures as I participated in meetings, had an office space at my disposal and participated in other on-goings at the library.

During my stay at the city library I assisted in a nationwide user study on library user behavior involving five big city libraries; The Oslo public library (Deichmanske bibliotek), Stavanger library, Trondheim library, Bærum library, Bergen library and Tromsø library. This user study worked as an inspiration source for the topic for this thesis, and will be discussed in more detail later in this paper (Egaas, Undlien, Tangen, Sæteren, & Flaten, 2008).³

1.2 Literature Review

In this thesis I aim to take a closer look at the development of library research through the years, looking at what factors might have had an impact on the nature of the library research conducted. This I'm going to do partly by looking at historical events in library development and partly by looking at the development of LIS institutions in Finland and Norway. A lot has been written about library history both in Norway and in Finland. There has also been a lot of research on library and information science research as a field in itself.

Library history has been a popular topic and many scholars have written on the matter. To mention a few from both Norway and Finland: Lis Byberg (Byberg, 2009), Mäkinen (Mäkinen, 2013) and Ellsworth (Ellsworth, 1968).

³ <http://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/Her-fotfolger-Deichmanske-bibliotekbrukerne-sine-8239892.html>
(Accessed 4.5.2016).

Lis Byberg's *A Short History of Norwegian Libraries and "How They Got That Way"* (Byberg, 2009) is a short overview of the history of Norwegian library development from the 1800s to the 21st century. In it she discusses how library advocates changed the library institution, how library laws were introduced and how the library institution's activities became more centralized and slowly developed to today's modern library practice.

Other works that discuss Norwegian library history is the article by Rudolph Ellsworth *Emerging Patterns in Norwegian Librarianship* (Ellsworth, 1968). He discusses Norwegian library development from the late 1800s to 1963. He discusses in detail the library development stages from the years of the Norwegian "library revolution", library Acts throughout the years, state funding progress and library development goals of library advocates throughout the years.

Finnish library history is also discussed in many publications. Ilkka Mäkinen is one scholar who has written quite a lot on the subject. In the article *A family of nations, a family of libraries: What explains the similarities and differences between the public library systems in the Nordic countries?* he discusses the differences and similarities between the library institutions in The Nordic countries, taking into account historical and ideological developments of each country. He writes that the Nordic library institutions are similar in many ways, but also differ drastically from each other. In the article he discusses the background of these similarities and differences (Mäkinen, 2013).

Byberg and Frisvold's (Byberg & Frisvold, 2001) *Hvorfor folkebibliotek? Et tilbakeblikk på bibliotek og politisk legitimering ved tre hundreårsskifter*⁴ article discusses what sort of methods library advocates used to politically legitimize libraries and library development in their day. A historical perspective is given into library development and what sorts of arguments and ideological foundations were used to further push for library development and legitimization (Byberg & Frisvold, 2001).

What these publications have in common is that they portray library development from a historical point of view; in line with what library laws were passed, what sort of legislation was proposed and what sort of ideals library advocates had at the time of their work. They

⁴ Why Public Libraries? A lookback at libraries and political legitimization through three hundred years. Note: own translation.

describe library development through historical events, but do not give very much detail around library research that was conducted at the time although there must have been some activity in this field to promote library development.

Although library research is mentioned every now and then, the publications do not go into much detail about how research was conducted, the methods used or how it affected the development of the library institution. These aspects are usually discussed in other types of publications dedicated to give an insight directly on this matter.

Amongst others, scholars such as Aarek (Aarek, 1992), Audunson (R. Audunson, 1992) and Vakkari (Vakkari, 1985) have written about the history and methods of library research.

Hans Aarek's article *Bibliotekforskning i Norge*⁵ (Aarek, 1992) tries to define what library and information science is as well as give a picture of the LIS field in Norway. He discusses what institutions conduct library research, financing sources, publication platforms etc. He presents some historical background to library research, but not in very great detail and he does not directly connect the research that has been done to library development, but rather just presents examples of LIS institutions and library research that has been done in the past.

*Brukerundersøkelser - teoretiske og metodiske tilnærminger*⁶ (R. Audunson, 1992) by Ragnar Audunson discusses library research in more detail and especially user studies conducted in Scandinavia as well as internationally. He discusses some of the methods applied in the research of user behavior and writes of some of early history of user studies in library planning. In addition he discusses trends seen both domestically and internationally.

Another text discussing user studies is *User studies and library planning* by Lowell Martin (Martin, 1976). He describes several kinds of user studies and reviews them on the basis of how well they contribute to library planning. He criticizes certain types of user studies, and points out that some of these studies result in an overflow of data that is non usable for librarians. He suggests different approaches to get more relevant and usable data for library planning.

⁵ Library research in Norway. Note: own translation.

⁶ User studies – some theoretical and methodological approaches. Note: own translation.

In the article *Historia literariasta kirjastotieteeksi ja informatiikaksi* (Vakkari, 1985) Vakkari discusses the development of library and information science from the 18th century to the 1980s, with a special focus on Finland. He describes the library research done, who was responsible for the research and on whose behalf the research was conducted.

These articles do not discuss library history in great amounts, but rather give some insight to library research methods and activity. Other scholars have attempted to create an overall view of the activity around library and information science research, both internationally and locally in Scandinavia. The, methods, popular topics, character and development of LIS are discussed and put into a timeline by many authors. To gain an understanding of the character of library research in Norway and Finland I have used some articles that give an overview of the LIS research situation throughout the years.

In the article *Library and Information Science research in the Nordic Countries 1965-89* (Vakkari, Aarek, Järvelin, Kajberg, & Klasson, 1992) the authors have mapped LIS research activity in the Nordic countries in the years 1965-1989. This was due to the lack of knowledge of previous studies and publications amongst ordinary LIS researchers at the time of the study. In the article they present the LIS research institutions of each country and discuss what sort of research has been conducted. They also discuss development of LIS in different organizational contexts and the main themes of LIS research in Norway, Finland, Denmark and Sweden in the particular years mentioned.

In the publication *Evolution of library and information science, 1965–2005: Content analysis of journal articles* by Vakkari, Tuomaala and Järvelin (Vakkari, Tuomaala, & Järvelin, 2014) the authors analyze library and information science research published in articles in core LIS journals in 2005. They also examine how the research articles are distributed by topic, and what approaches, research strategies and methods were applied in LIS articles, with comparison to the years 1965 and 1985.

*Forskning inom bibliotekvetenskap och inforamtik i Norden*⁷ by Vakkari, Aarek, Järvelin, Kajberg, and Klasson is a study that mapped LIS research in the Nordic countries (Vakkari, Aarek, Järvelin, Kajberg, & Klasson, 1993). The project compared the development of LIS in

⁷ Library and information science research in the Nordic Countries. Note: own translation.

the Nordic countries: the methods, problem solving approaches, publication platforms, research values etc. This was done through an analysis of the content LIS literature and publications.

International Library and Information Science Research: A Comparison of National Trends reported by Rochester and Vakkari (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003). The report compares national library trends in library and information science research. The publication presents a summary of findings from the previous national LIS studies, and compares most popular topics, subtopics and methods. The countries included are Scandinavia, Spain, Turkey, Australia, China and the UK.

Describing and measuring the value of public libraries: The growth of the Internet and the evolution of library value (Paul T. Jaeger et al., 2011) written by Jaeger, Bertot, Kodama, Katz, DeCoster. The paper discusses how public libraries can illustrate their value as social institutions in a society where they have to defend and justify their funding. The paper explores varied concepts of value and different understandings of public libraries as places and their contributions to society. It also discusses some of the different approaches libraries have taken to prove, illustrate, articulate and demonstrate their value.

Perceived outcomes of public libraries in Finland, Norway and the Netherlands by Vakkari, Aabø, Audunson, Huysmans and Oomes (Vakkari, Aabø, Audunson, Huysmans, & Oomes, 2014). This is a study comparing the perceived benefits of public libraries and their structure in the major areas of life in Norway, Finland and the Netherlands. The article discusses the emerging field of measuring the public value of libraries in the library and information science field. In the article they report their findings on what benefits the people derive from the public library service in each country, and compare the perceived outcomes to each other.

Perceived outcomes of public libraries by Vakkari and Serola (Vakkari & Serola, 2012). The study discusses the outcomes of public libraries as perceived by individuals in the major areas of their lives, and was conducted through a nationwide representative survey. The results are analyzed and the benefits revealed by the participants in the study are perceived as outcome types that are systematized. The data is based on a representative sample of 1000 Finnish adults and give a systematic account of the benefits in 22 areas of life that adults derive from using public libraries.

2. Library and Information Science – a Definition

Library and information science (LIS) has been an academic discipline since the 1960s but has its roots from the 19th century. According to Åström the field of LIS is so diversified that it is hard to define, and no-one has managed to present a generally accepted definition of LIS as of yet (Åström, 2006). Since the beginning the field has gone through various types of methods and research topics, ranging from library and book history to the study of information seeking behavior and information storage in databases.

“Performing meta-studies on the field is a long tradition within LIS: to define its boundaries and motivate its existence in academia, to promote particular views on how LIS research should be conducted, as well as to pursue an increased self-understanding of the field. This has been expressed in various ways: by setting research agendas for research to come (...), in historical studies on the field (...), by defining research areas through quantitative studies of LIS literature (...) and by discussing the nature and main objectives of LIS (...). Despite decades of definitions and discussions, the self-understanding of the field is still diversified.” (Åström, 2006).

The field has a background in several phenomenon such as the library institution, education, information growth and development of information technology (Höglund, 2000). The field uses a variety of methods including methods from fields such as psychology, sociology, economy, administration, literature science, ethics and history as well as more formal sciences such as statistics, mathematics, logistics and information science (Aarek, 1992).

“Library Science has also been defined as the systematic body of knowledge related to the books and the library, including diverse aspects dealing with books as autonomous entities, but also those related to the entity of which they are part of.” (Martinez- Arelleno, 2013).

In library and information science there is therefore room for quite many forms of research and research topics. In this thesis I will be focusing on the sort of research that revolves around libraries as an institution and especially library development. Library research has a long tradition, but I will be focusing on library research conducted from the 19th century onwards.

I will especially focus on the two Nordic countries, Norway and Finland in regards to library development and library research. Sweden and Denmark will be included in some degree as I also take more of a worldwide look at international trends in LIS research.

3. Library History and the Development of Library Research

According to Åström library science dates back to the 19th century when the concept was first introduced in a handbook for librarians by Martin Schrettinger who coined the word “Bibliothekswissenschaft” (Åström, 2006). In this chapter I will be laying fort some examples of early day Norwegian and Finnish library research. As it was often done in connection to the development of the public library system I will also present some historical background on libraries.

3.1 Library History in the Nordic Countries

Today the Nordic countries have resembling public library systems, and offer some of the same services to their public. This can be explained by geographic location, shared history and a similar belief system in the form of a shared Western European political, religious and cultural tradition (Mäkinen, 2013). The Nordic countries’ library systems are tightly connected to the concept of the welfare state and the ideology that comes with it. The Nordic library institutions developed in similar but separate paths taking inspiration from one another in library development and today Scandinavian library laws contain much of the same proclamations.

The Nordic countries introduced library laws and legislations in the early 20th century and library acts and degrees were passed in the first half of the 1900s; Sweden in 1905, Denmark 1920, Finland 1928 and Norway 1935. The library laws have since been refined and altered, and today they define the library institutions role and purpose in society. Granting equal access to information and promoting the spread of information, education, and cultural activity through active dissemination and by free services and material are key points of the library laws of Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.⁸

⁸ Library Act of Norway <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1985-12-20-108>

The Public libraries were early on financially supported by the representative state of each country, although only in small amounts at first. Norway was first in the lead by granting funding in 1876. This was followed by Denmark in 1882, Sweden in 1905, and Finland in 1917. Finland was under the rule of the Russian Empire for some time and became independent in 1917. Before this a private fund had been used to fund public libraries since the 1880s (Mäkinen, 2013).

Nordic library advocates got an eye open for library innovations in the late 19th century, especially library innovations from the US. Library enthusiasts traveled to the United States to take a first-hand look at some of the solutions of American libraries, and later brought the open shelves, the Dewey classification system and a new kind of professionalism with them to Scandinavian libraries (Mäkinen, 2013).

Today Norway and Finland share many similarities in their library institutions, or as Vakkari et al explain:

“The legal framework in Finland and Norway is similar to each other in the sense that both these countries have a public library law stating that the provision of library services is a local government responsibility, that the services shall be free of charge and laying down some standards regarding the professional education of the library staff.” (Vakkari, Aabø, et al., 2014).

Norwegian and Finnish library practice is similar in many ways. Library schools and LIS departments are however somewhat different in organizational outlay and academic affiliation. How are the similarities and differences seen in library research? Both Norway and Finland conduct a fair amount of library research today, but there are some differences and similarities in the approaches. To find out why this might be, I will firstly present some historical background to library research, starting with Norway.

Library Act of Sweden https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/sfs_sfs-2013-801/

Library Act of Denmark <https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/r0710.aspx?id=145152>

Library Act of Finland <http://www.finlex.fi/sv/laki/ajantasa/1998/19980904> (accessed 24.4.16).

3.2 LIS Research and Library History in Norway 1860-1980

It is difficult to give an exact estimation of what should be counted as library research in the past, as the institutional and theoretical frameworks that we are working with today did not exist in the previous centuries. In an effort to give a historical view of Norwegian library research it is somewhat hard to make out where to draw the line as to what can be counted as library research and what cannot. Aarek writes as follows on the subject of Norwegian library research:

“To gain an overview of Norwegian library research we have to have a wide definition of what is to be counted as research.” (Aarek, 1992).⁹

He takes somewhat of a historical view and refers back to the library advocates of the previous centuries in explaining that gathering and processing information for use in public planning and decision making has a long tradition in Norway.

He specifies that parts of this tradition is research based, and he briefly mentions that this tradition goes back to the 19th century when library advocates Henrik Wergeland and Eilert Sundt systematically gathered information of Norwegian libraries to further develop the Norwegian library system (Aarek, 1992). Their work can perhaps be seen as some of the first library research that was done in Norway, although it strays far from the definition of library and information science research as we know it today. Åström writes the following:

“The practice related origin of LIS can be traced back to the 19th century if not further, with the development of general rules for classification and cataloguing, as well as attempts at formalizing library praxis and routines.”(Åström, 2006).

Sundt and Wergeland gathered information systematically to plan the further development of the library institution. Wergeland was active in the first half of the 19th century, and Sundt in the last. Sundt was in his time advocating for state funding for libraries and sent out questionnaires to all libraries in 1861, mapping their economic situation and activities. He

⁹ Note: own translation.

published a report of his finding a couple of years later. A partial state funding was granted in 1876 as Parliament established terms for financial assistance for libraries.

At the end of the 19th century library innovation and development was discussed in various journal publications, and especially in the journal *Keingsjaa*, which was a very influential publication amongst intellectuals. In 1894 the editor of the magazine, Hans Tamb Lycke, published the first of a series of articles about American librarianship focusing on such matters as library legislation, library schools, library associations, the development of technical library practices etc. (Byberg, 2009).

In the late 1880s, early 1900s a “library revolution” took place in Norway, as the head librarian of the Deichman library of Kristiania (Oslo), Haakon Nyhuus, took it upon himself to modernize the library institution. Like many of the other Scandinavian countries, Norway took inspiration from the US and reorganized the public library completely. After a seven-year stay in the US, Nyhuus started the reorganization of the library institution with the Deichman library, bringing changes such as the adaption of uniform cataloging rules, the use of standard cataloging equipment, the open shelves and the new Dewey classification system (Ellsworth, 1968). The amount and variety of literature for the public was also increased and small library branches were built strategically close to where people lived.

As a result of the reorganization a three man committee by the Ministry of Church and Education was established to prepare a national plan for library reform. The committee consisted of head librarian Haakon Nyhuus, Karl Fischer of the Royal university library and Jacob Vilhelm Heiberg of the Ministry (Ellsworth, 1968). They performed statistical data gathering on Norwegian libraries (Byberg, 2009). Motivated by a desire to prove state library funding necessary for library development, they mapped the condition of Norwegian libraries, their funding and book collections.

Later they published a report on the matter called: “Public Book Collections in Norway: Their History and present condition together with proposals for a new arrangement.” (Ellsworth, 1968). Their research revealed that the main priority for state funding should not be the establishment of new libraries, but rather the development of current ones. In this sense, information gathering for library planning has a long tradition in Norwegian library development (Aarek, 1992).

The committee proposed the introduction of major changes in library organization and activities, such as the preparation of annual printed catalogues to be sent to all libraries and cataloging the books in the catalogs according to the Dewey system. They also proposed that there should be studies conducted to determine how libraries are used and which books are read (Ellsworth, 1968). Ellsworth does not mention if this proposal was carried out, but it was nevertheless one of the first steps towards library research. This, if it was actually fulfilled, would be user-centered library research, a method of study common to this day.

The research conducted by the committee contributed to the library reform plan that was adopted by Parliament in 1902, and an own library office was established in the Ministry of Church and Education. After this, a centralized library policy was introduced in Norway.

“At the beginning of the 20th century a national centralized library system was created, where the books were purchased collectively with the aid of ready-made catalogues and sent to the libraries ready for lending. The system was voluntary – the only condition for receiving the subsidy was that the municipality itself supported its library – but the results were impressive.”(Vatanen, 2001).

The research done by the committee showed that the funding currently granted was not spent financially wisely, and solutions were proposed to fix this problem (Byberg & Frisvold, 2001). The end result was to centralize library activity, routines, purchases and distributions of books. The new system turned out to be economically favorable as it reduced costs of purchases. Their research also revealed a lack of knowledge in libraries of what sort of books to purchase and what was “proper” for the public to read.

As a result the library authorities created lists of officially promoted books that “fit in” the book collections for libraries to purchase. In fact, it was stated in the library reform of 1902 that it was not possible to get state funding for purchases of books if they were not on the list issued by the church department (Salvesen, 2001). The list-making tradition was followed all the way up to 1980 (Byberg, 2009). According to Gunhild Salvesen this was the way authorities controlled the quality of activities, and the quality of book collections in Norwegian libraries (Salvesen, 2001). Today quality of library services would most likely be studied through other methods of research – which will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis.

As previously seen library development was heavily influenced by the American library movement in the US. This was also seen in Norwegian library management that was strongly influenced by American Taylorism (also known as scientific management). According to Salvesen one can see that Tayloristic principles were being taken into use in library management in the turn of the 19th century. She explains that this can be seen in the type of control that the library advocates, such as Nyhuus, was proposing for sustaining quality in Norwegian libraries (Salvesen, 2001). The book lists are one example of a centralization of library management work in the hands of the few educated people.

Another centralization proposal was a new type of job; after 1910 a new profession was introduced to Norwegian libraries proposed by library developer Karl Fischer. He suggested a library inspector, should be incorporated in the library system with the responsibility of quality checking libraries and book collections. According to Salvesen, the main role of an inspector was to gather information on the amount of loans per user, the condition of library facilities, and book quality. Fischer suggested that such inspector departments should be established in every county, but lack of money prevented the proposal for a long time (Salvesen, 2001).

Library inspectors were a part of the Norwegian library institution from the early 1900s up until the 1980s in a varying degree, depending on the economic situation in Norway. It was not until 1940 that the fiscal situation was good enough to appoint inspectors in every county. They had an important role as quality checkers and were standard practice for determining library needs. According to the library act of 1967 they were also required to function as advisors and guide the libraries (Salvesen, 2001). Today library needs are commonly looked at through the eye of the library patron and how well the library meets the needs of the library user, but this practice did not become common before later.

Instead library development and research was centralized in the hands a few library professionals, giving them the power to decide what factors made a good quality library. This type of quality measuring and control was popular up until the 1980s. It did not consider the need of the library user, from a user's perspective, but rather communicated what library professionals thought was best for the library.

It appears book lists and quality inspectors were the main form of library quality measuring from the beginning of the 20th century, and as far as I can tell, there were little other methods for this until the 1970s. Measuring quality of library services gained a new turn in the 1970s and 1980s when the library patron started to gain some attention in library research. In the 1980s several user studies were published in the journal *Bok og bibliotek* (Book and Library). One particular study researched if the current book material in libraries was customized enough for the youth, as libraries had experienced a decline of teenagers visiting the libraries.

User studies had been conducted since the late 1970s, and were usually a type of a qualitative user study with a focus on finding out who the average library user was, creating user profiles of the average library patron. This was an international trend, also seen in Norway.

Statistics Norway¹⁰ conducted such studies in 1978 and 1988, listing variables such as age, sex, education etc. Typical of these sorts of studies is that they do not rely on any sort of theoretical framework around library or information seeking behavior (R. Audunson, 1992). The user studies conducted in 1978 and 1988 were not conducted by libraries themselves but by the professionally autonomous organization with the overall responsibility of official statistics in Norway. Two other examples of a quantitative study are Ivar Viland's study of the library patrons in 1973, and S.A. Eriksen's study of library patrons from 1979.¹¹

Some library research was also conducted through the new directorate that was established in 1949. *Statens bibliotektilsyn* –The National Library Inspection, was created for public libraries and school libraries with the purpose of library inspection and collecting statistical data from the public library section (Byberg, 2009). The National Library Inspection also undertook library research, but mostly on practical matters such as the implication of projects and experimental activities. Some library research also fell to other research departments such as Bibliotekskolens forsknings- og oppdragsavdeling (BRODD) that was established in 1983 (Vakkari et al., 1993).

¹⁰ Statistics Norway has overall responsibility for official statistics in Norway, and carries out extensive research and analysis activities. New statistics and analyses are published on a daily basis on <http://www.ssb.no/en/omssb/om-oss/kort-om-ssb> (accessed 6.1.2016).

¹¹ Bibliotekspublikum i Bergen og Trøgstad: kultursosiologiske undersøkelser. Bergen: Norgesandelshøgskole. 1973Viland, Ivar. Bibliotekbrukarane: kva veit dei, kva gjerd dei, kva vil dei. Nordland distrikthøgskole, Bodø. Eriksen, S. A. 1979.

3.3 The Institutionalization of Library and Information Science in Norway

The institutionalization of LIS began slowly in Norway. Institutionalization of the field essentially meant a centralization of research, a shaping of a theoretical framework, education and educated people. Institutionalization of an academic field guarantees a continued research effort, and the institutionalization LIS was highly pursued by many in the late 1990s. Today library and information science is taught at two universities and one University College (høgskole).

The wish to institutionalize LIS in academia is something both Norway and Finland have managed to make come true today, with somewhat different results. LIS is a wide field with roots in many phenomena. Library research is part of that field, and has its roots in the development aspirations of various library advocates. Today, the LIS education offered in Norway give the students qualifications for work in many sectors. For example, the study program at the University of Tromsø (documentation science) promises job possibilities in museums, archives and libraries.¹²

Before there was even a cry for the institutionalization of LIS, there was a more modest request of simply founding a proper librarian school so one could have a centralization of library education and in turn make libraries of better quality. Baadsaag writes that a lot of the Norwegian library research has been of a very practical nature and has mostly been done with the motives of the further development on the library section (Baadshaug et al., 1992). When people first started to ask for a more centralized education in the field they did not anticipate the big changes that would be coming in the last part of the 20th century – the information society as we know it today.

According to Bjørg Nedregotten there are many reasons why library research is of importance. She explains that access to information represents one major restrictive force in the administrative and planning work of society and organizations. She continues by stating that information is now more important than ever and refers to her age as the “information society” (note, this was written in 1993).

¹² https://uit.no/utdanning/program?p_document_id=446379 University of Tromsø, Medie- og dokumentasjonsvitenskap, master. (Accessed 02.10.16).

She writes that it is important to have a policy on how to correctly handle the process of information and knowledge distribution in the same way that there is a social policy, industrial policy, and economic policy etc. She continues by stating that there is a lack of research based data to handle these kinds of issues but also reminds us that there already exist institutions in Norway that could work as good tools in this area – the libraries. She states that the process of information and knowledge distribution already takes place in Norwegian libraries, but that there is a lack of knowledge in the field. Library research could work as a base to properly establish a great policy (Nedregotten, 1993).

Today the growth, flow and access to information has multiplied on such a scale that if in the 1990s we lived in a “information society” the 2010s are off the scale, and it is even more important to have the tools to handle it. Promoting better education for librarians has a long tradition in Norway, but being a cause very much connected to the financial situation and funding issues, the process to establish good schools have been slow, and for some periods completely stagnated. For instance, in the 1930s the Norwegian library institution was suffering from low funding, and lack of a proper library education. Courses were organized by the state to promote better education but a school was not founded until 1940. In a radio interview with Swedish, Danish and Norwegian library advocates, Arne Kildal said as following in 1936:

“Both [the growth of] the economy and a stronger academic education will eventually lead to an increase in loan numbers - and better books. As of now the circulation of books per year in Norway is 4 ½ million, whilst it is 9 million in Denmark and 15 million in Sweden.”(Banke, Küntzel, & Kildal, 1936).¹³

He was clearly of the opinion that a better education of library personnel would guarantee an increase in library use by the people. Making libraries of better quality and in turn make people use the libraries increasingly have often been used as justification in the founding of library education programs and library schools. And with schools comes research.

¹³ Note: own translation.

The school founded in 1940 was called Statens bibliotek- og informasjonshøgskole – SBIH (State Library and Information College). Some research was done at the school, and some of the theses written at the college can be considered research, although not in the proper manner according to Vakkari et al. (Vakkari et al., 1993). The research done at the school was very practically-oriented, and student as well as library practitioners and associations valued practical knowledge over more theoretical research and experience. According to Audunson it was nevertheless an important stepping stone for what was to develop into today's library and information science research (R. Audunson, 2010).

The school did not have an academically educated staff, and qualifications received at the school were highly practical. One major force in pushing for the elevation of academic standard in library education was Gerd Wang who became the principal of the school in 1952. This she did partly by increasing lecture time and diminishing practical work experience time, and partly by moving the school from under the administrative care of the National Library Inspection (statens bibliotektilsyn) to the department of university and university colleges in the ministry.

This changing of affiliation assured the school access to scholarships so that the school could gain more teachers, and it in turn increased the number of full-time staffers. Frisvold writes that the library-cause did not automatically receive goodwill from the state and decision makers, and getting as far as Wang did demanded determined hard work (Frisvold, 1999). The school merged with Oslo and Akerhus University College of applied sciences in 1994. The Oslo and Akerhus University College still exist today, and is now offering a doctor's degree in library and information science.¹⁴

From 1980-1994, before the merge with Oslo University College, Tor Henriksen worked as principle for the school. He was according to Audunson one of the strongest forces for the development of library and information science research. He established wide international relations with research communities inside and outside of Scandinavia, connecting the Norwegian community to a worldwide platform. The school became a part of the University College system during his reign as principal (R. Audunson, 2010).

¹⁴ <https://snl.no/bibliotek%2Futdanning> (Accessed 5.6.2016).

Another important contribution to the development of library and information science research was the establishment of Norsk Dokumentdata (Norwegian documentation data, literal translation) in 1973 (R. Audunson, 2010). Norsk dokumentdata was a research program that lay under the administrative charge of the Royal Norwegian Council for scientific and Industrial Research (Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige forskningsråd – NTNF). Norsk dokumentdata conducted research that mainly focused around library automatization but also administrated a study program that was the forerunner of the master program for library and information science that exist today (R. Audunson, 2010).

In the 1990s a new program was initiated by Norges Forkningsråd (The Research Council of Noway) to promote formal research expertise in the form of doctoral programs. The program that started giving out scholarships in 1996 ended in 2001 with magnificent results for the University College in Oslo. When the program started none of the 25 employees had doctoral degrees, but by the end 10 teachers had this competence (R. Audunson, 2010).

Library and information science is a diverse field that has no unified method or terminology which can also be seen in the establishment of the study program dokumentasjonsvitenskap (documentation science) in the city of Tromsø in Northern Norway. The discussion of establishing a library education to Tromsø can be read in an assessment from 1989 (Bjørhovde et al., 1989). In the assessment it was discussed that the term “document” had been changing meaning in recent years, and it was argued that there were limitations of the traditional definition of the word (books, magazines and other publications printed on paper). In the early days the libraries had a responsibility to make sure these types of documents were secured for the present time and the future.

However, the term has been widened to not simply include paper-based documents, but also movies, photographs, videos and so on - documents that increasingly have become a part of our everyday information society, research and education (Bjørhovde et al., 1989).

With that notion a new sort of education was proposed to ensure qualified staff in the future’s libraries. The assessment saw it preferable that a new library education was to be established and that the education should give basic knowledge in documentation science, as well as library and archive work. It was preferred that such an education would not be composed to simply be of a traditional vocational character aiming only to educate the student for library

work. Rather it was suggested that the education should give the student a wider education basis, preparing he or she for a variety of work in many different institutions (Bjørnhovde et al., 1989).

Audunson writes as follows of the Norwegian LIS institutions:

“More recently programmes in the field have been developed at Tromsø University (documentation science) and at the Norwegian University for Technology and Natural Science. Agder University also offers courses in school librarianship. There can be no doubt, however, that the programme at Oslo University College (OUC) still dominates. With an academic staff varying between 25 and 30 faculty members, 5 PhD-students, approximately 50 students in the Master programme and 350 students in the Bachelor programme, the vast majority of the physical, human and intellectual resources invested in Norwegian LIS education and research are located in OUC.” (R. Audunson, 2008).

3.4 LIS Research and Library History in Finland 1880- 1980

Finland ranks amongst the highest in loan statistics in Scandinavia with an average of 16, 9 loans per person in 2014.¹⁵ The first Finnish libraries were founded on a model taken from Sweden, but during the First World War one could see a real separation from the Swedish heritage and from any Russian influence, as Finland was fighting to become its own independent country with its own culture and language.

The fight for independence can be seen in Finnish library development at the time, as it was influenced by motivations connected to cultural and linguistic emancipation. Finland was fighting a russification process in the late 1880s early 1900s and as a countermovement of the russification attempts Finnish culture, language and art flourished. A nationalistic movement arose in Finland and libraries played a major part as they were seen as institutions that could strengthen the Finnish language and bring forth a linguistic emancipation (Mäkinen, 2012).

¹⁵ <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Verkkouutiset/2015/04/kirjastotilasto2014.html> (Accessed 11.04.2016).

“The situation began to aggravate during the 1890s and the climax was at the turn of the century. Library activity was at its height during the same years. The Finnish resistance was for the most part peaceful, something that libraries represent, but some individuals resorted to violence (...) Popular libraries, whose growing number made it possible to distribute the new books to the people, were seen as activators of the love of reading and satisfiers of the thirst for knowledge.”(Mäkinen, 2012).

In this period library research came in the form of statistical studies, which was a popular science at the time (Kleemola, 2015). The data was collected in an effort to strengthen the scattered and often arbitrary activity of the rural libraries. Teacher Kaarlo Werkko (also known by the name K. J. Wickström) studied library development in the late 1880s early 1900s, sending out questionnaires via post to the different libraries around the counties of Finland (Vakkari, 1985).

With an aim to gain an overview of development work and statistics over Finnish libraries, Werkko gathered data which he later published under the name *Information and thoughts on Finland's popular libraries and children's libraries, as well as on reading circles and lectures up to the year 1875* (note, own translation).¹⁶ In this report he also proposed how to further develop the libraries of Finland (Vakkari, 1985).

At this point of time the existence of public libraries as we know them today did not occur, but Werkko rather refers to the forerunners of modern libraries. They were called “popular” or “people’s libraries” (kansankirjasto) which was a term associated with the lower classes. A shift in terminology occurred during the 20th century, and today the Finnish public libraries go under the term “yleinen kirjasto” which in meaning includes all social groups of Finland indicating the library is open for everyone (Mäkinen, 2001a).

Werkko concluded in the study that Finnish libraries were underdeveloped and suggested ways to improve the situation. In his opinion the main foe was the public who had little interest in reading, and the few who did had little interest in serious literature but rather read for pleasure (Kleemola, 2015).

¹⁶ Original title: Tietoja ja mietteitä Suomen Kansan- ja lastenkirjastoista ynnä lukuyhdistyksistä ja luennoista vuoteen 1875.

Werkko also introduced the idea of a municipal library network but the thought did not become reality before 1899 - 20 years after Werkko first published his book. At that time it was decided in a meeting of the Society for Popular Education that a municipal library network plan was to be adopted with the goal of creating one main library in connection with other branch libraries and children's libraries (Vatanen, 2001).

Another man avidly using statistical data in library research was Leo Schadevitz (also known as Leo Harmaja). He performed a statistic-based study on Finnish libraries and tried to define their role in society. He was of the opinion that public libraries should be used as institutions to enlighten the people, especially the lower classes.

Schadevitz urged his readers to spread and promote the yearning for reading to the people and he explained that enlightenment was one of the few tools a small nation like Finland had to stand against the overthrowing of the Finnish people (Kleemola, 2015). The "desire for reading" or "reading interest" (lukuhalu in Finnish) acquired an important meaning in the jargon of Finnish national enlightenment during the 19th century. The desire for reading was indirectly being studied through statistical data, such as the number of libraries, books borrowed, newspapers subscribed to etc. (Mäkinen, 2008).

There were also others who published research on libraries at the time, for instance Streng (1896, 1899) and A. Granfelt (1914).¹⁷ According to Vakkari their publications often contained a description of the status quo in the libraries (Vakkari, 1985). A statistical review of the situation of Finnish libraries was compiled by A. A. Granfelt, and used the findings to argue for the further development of libraries.

"Granfelt thought that the statistics proved the development of the libraries to be bound first and foremost to the support from the municipalities and therefore considered the greatest importance of the proposed central library and the state subsidy to lie in the awakening of the library interest in the municipalities." (Vatanen, 2001)

¹⁷ Streng, A., Kansakoulujen ja kansankirjastojen leviäminen maalaiskunnissamme vuoteen 1879. Valvoja 1896.
Streng, A., Kansankirjastoista maaseudullamme. Kansanvalistusseura 1874-1899. Hki 1899.
Granfelt, A., Silmäys yleisten kirjastojen ja kansankirjastojen kehitykseen. KM 1914.

Library statistics began to be gathered during the 1920s, and later the statistical work was assigned to the state library administration. The state library administration's responsibility was to gather systematic library statistics every two years, hence there exists continuous library statistics from the 1930s onwards (Mäkinen, 2008).

A trend in library research was at the time library and book history. This was a dominating topic in library research up until the 1960s, according to Vakkari (Vakkari, 1985). He explains that a reason for this interest in book history could be that most library researchers had a background in a humanistic science and therefore this influenced the character of library research at the time. He argues the reason so many humanists became library researchers was because of the restrictions put upon the jobs offered and qualifications needed to get jobs in the library field - qualifications that many humanists possessed.

Finland also took some inspiration from the United States when developing libraries. Some influences were seen already before the turn of the 20th century as, for example, American type reading rooms were introduced to some of Finland's urban libraries. According to Vatanen, by the year 1905 every town seems to have had a reading room. However, she continues:

“On the other hand we cannot regard the first cases of the use of American library technique as signs of a fundamental change in the Finnish library world, even when the techniques were applied in the professional circles long before the end of the 19th century. For example, the decimal classification introduced by Valfrid Vasenius at the beginning of the 1880's in the Swedish Lyceum of Turku was a separate phenomenon, where Dewey's famous classification, central in the arsenal of the Public Library Movement, had hardly anything to do. Even Vasenius himself chose another, much more simple classification in his guidebook for popular libraries published in 1891.» (Vatanen, 2001).

An initiative came from the National Board of Schools to appoint a committee to deal with library matters with the main task of distributing the state subsidies to libraries. The Committee on People's Libraries was established in 1906. In connection with the work of the committee, William Sippola toured Scandinavia, with Norway as the main target of the tour. The Committee came with many new proposals on how to organize library work.

“The proposals followed the American-influenced line of the Society for Popular Education; the influence of Sippola’s study tour to Norway was evident. The subsidies proposed by the Committee were meant to direct and persuade the municipalities to invest in their libraries. The aid given in the form of books presupposed from the municipalities a contribution of their own and the fulfilling of certain preconditions. The costs of the municipal main libraries to be covered by the subsidy, besides buying books, also included the salary of the librarian.” (Vatanen, 2001).

As libraries were seen as very important tools to educate the people, the book selections together with establishment of libraries, was one of the first topics of the library discussion. At the end of the 19th century there was a scarcity of Finnish-language literature, and it was difficult to obtain new books. There was also a concern that people would get hold of unsuitable books, and therefore lists of recommended books were produced to people’s libraries. The Society for Popular Education had the production as their responsibility (Vatanen, 2001).

The first library act was passed in 1928, at which point Finland already had about 1700 libraries in the country (Tuominen & Saarti, 2012). The library act of 1928 assured municipal libraries to be established all over the country and secured a minimum state support for public libraries. The law also consolidated the public library system with the State Library Bureau and library inspectors (Mäkinen, 2013). Library inspectors gave advice on room arrangement, selection of books and other library problems (Hatch, 1971).

During the 1940s public library advocates started to gain an interest in research for solving practical library problems. At this time library research did not have any connection to academic institutions, such as universities, and did not get any academic input in research methods or topics. In 1941 a few librarians gathered together in Helsinki and founded a library association called *Suomen kirjastoseuran opintokerho*. The group was founded to learn about and keep an eye open for library problems and solutions, mostly through reading foreign publications on practical library matters (Vakkari, 1985).

Influenced by what they read, the group eventually became interested doing some research of their own on the situation in Finnish libraries. Three large scale research projects were conducted by their initiative. One of these studies was during the years 1945-46 when a large

scale survey was issued amongst the city- and rural libraries. The survey mapped library use, library collections and the library patron's opinions on book collections.

According to Vakkari the questionnaires were not very successful, as only a quarter of the bunch was delivered back. But the study is interesting still because it is an example on how library researchers tried to solve current library problems, and also it was one of the first attempts to connect library research directly to library patrons. Before this, libraries were researched mainly by using statistics or in the fashion of library history (Vakkari, 1985).

During the 1950s there was a cry from the state library inspectors to further develop public libraries (Mäkinen, 2008). At the time Finland was behind in library development compared to its neighboring Scandinavian countries. This was an issue addressed after the Second World War. Nothing was however done since Finland was struggling with economic stress after the war, and the 1950s have later been known as "the decade of wait" in the Finnish library community.

This was a "frustrating limbo" according to Mäkinen with little library progress (Mäkinen, 2012). In 1961 a new library act was passed which assured good resources for public libraries. The new library act aimed to make Finnish libraries high quality services provided by the growing welfare state, and this was an epoch-making change in library development in the country.

The new library act of 1961 gave Finnish libraries a much needed financial support boost which then again supported library research and development. The 1960s was a game changing time for public libraries, and more money invested in libraries lead to increased use by the public. The increased supply and demand called for more library research to ensure that libraries could efficiently improve their services and collections (Vakkari, 1985). With it came a demand for a better librarian education, and certain voices demanded librarianship to be studied at an academic level. At the time there was no scientific community or tradition of research around library and information science (Vakkari et al., 1993). It was argued that as long as librarianship was not a serious academic field it was not possible to study libraries in a serious manner, which again would slow down library development.

3.5 The Institutionalization of Library and Information Science in Finland

Before the Second World War librarianship was taught through occasional courses lasting from a single day to a few months. A pre-academic one-year diploma course was established at the School of Social Sciences in Helsinki in 1945. Mäkinen writes that the institution later moved to Tampere in the 1960s where it became the University of Tampere (Mäkinen, 2001b). Up until the 1970s Finland and Norway had a similar library education system, where the main education was given at a university college. Both teaching activity and research projects were highly connected to professional values with no aspirations for any academic level. Mäkinen writes that after 1970 Finland however took a step towards another direction in the organization of their LIS education by introducing it to academia (Mäkinen, 2007).

Library and information science was established as an academic field in 1971 when the first professorship was established in Tampere University, then later in the University of Åbo (1982) and the University of Oulu (1988) (Vakkari et al., 1992). In the beginning the main focus of LIS research was oriented towards creating a theory and method for the field (Vakkari et al., 1993).

According to Åström the two oldest LIS institutions in Scandinavia are Finnish, and used to be hosted by social science faculties. These were the University of Tampere department, (UTA) and the department of information studies at Åbo Akademi University (ÅA). The UTA has since 2001 been part of a new Faculty of Information Sciences, where research has been a priority from the start. Despite being in the lead in institutionalization of LIS, the process was slow and although the first professorial chair was founded in 1971 it was not appointed until 1977, and the first PhD graduation was in 1988. (Åström, 2008).

“Now, the department employs about 15 faculty members; and in addition to that: they also lists some 15 researchers/research assistants affiliated with the department. Research activities are divided into four research groups: two oriented towards information retrieval, one information management group and one focusing on information seeking. In addition to these groups, the department also states the history and nature of LIS as a research specialty. These groups does not serve as any kind of departmental structure; and several faculty members are also members of more than one research group.”(Åström, 2008).

During the 1960s and 70s, LIS was characterized by the want of research that gave instant results to practical problems. When the field was taken into an academic level, researchers distanced themselves from this “naïve behaviorism” approach (Vakkari et al., 1993). The most important aspect was now that the research conducted should contribute to strengthening the validity of the field to become academically legitimate. Because of this there was a delay of a practical approach in library research (Vakkari et al., 1993).

“The issue centered around the question, whether the basis of LIS conception should be placed in the institution, i.e., the library, or people’s information needs and information-seeking behavior. Järvelin and Vakkari (1981, 1988) defended a viewpoint that the founding concept of LIS research should be information seeking (*tiedonhankinta*). Their ideas anticipated the great paradigmatic shifts in the overall theoretical approach of LIS, such as the user-centered perspective on information seeking research advocated by Dervin and Nilan (1986).” (Mäkinen, Järvelin, Savolainen, & Sormunen, 2015).

In the 1980s, after establishing legitimacy in the academic field, and after producing a research generation with a good education, LIS started to open its eyes for practical research and solutions (Vakkari et al., 1993). The high level of education granted the researchers to more easily identify the practical problems of the library and information science institutions.

4. Norwegian and Finnish LIS compared internationally

If we take more of a worldwide view on the institutionalization of library research, Norway was behind in this process in the 1990s. According to Nedregotten library research was not its own research discipline, but the library institution was rather a field highly associated with politics. She continues by stating that Norway was in a rather unique position in that compared to other developed countries, Norway was the only one yet to institutionalize and develop the research field that was as known as library and information science (Nedregotten, 1993).

Meanwhile internationally things were looking different. Library research was at this time, in the early 1990s, being conducted in several American universities for instance. In the United States LIS was already taught at several universities and other research institutions, for

example at the University of Berkley in California. The Americans were in fact quite early on introducing library science to an academic level, as Åström explain:

“In the 1870’s, the Columbia School of Library Economics became the first university affiliated school for training librarians; and in the 1920’s, the Graduate Library School was founded at University of Chicago, establishing library science as an academic field of research by the creation of a PhD program (Buckland, 1996; Schrettinger, 1829; Wiegand, 1999).” (Åström, 2006).

Finland, England and Sweden are European examples of countries that already had established a good footing in the institutionalization of LIS in the 1990s. England had its own LIS group called the *Library and information research group* and the British Library had its own research department: British Library Research and Development Department (Nedregotten, 1993).

Sweden had recently gotten their first LIS professorship at the University of Göteborg. In addition there was LIS research activity in multiple other universities such as Linköping, Lund, Umeå and Uppsala. At the same time the University of Tampere in Finland had already established the Department of Library and Information Science with student taking doctoral degrees (Nedregotten, 1993).

Meanwhile in Norway, the exact definitive definition as what to call the merging field was still up for discussion. While the research went under the name LIS in other countries, Norway was still undecided on the official terminology according to Nedregotten (although she does not specify what the alternative terms in use were at the time) (Nedregotten, 1993). Today the institutionalization of library and information science in Norway has taken a leap and is taught at the universities of Tromsø and Trondheim.¹⁸ The Oslo University College also has its own LIS institution – The Department of Journalism, Library and Information Studies.

¹⁸ <https://utdanning.no/studiebeskrivelse/bibliotekarutdanning> (Accessed 11.04.2016).
<https://snl.no/bibliotek%2Futdanning> (Accessed 16.5.16).

5. Examples of Library Research 1990s- 2010s

In this chapter I will present some library research methods and projects that have been conducted. I do this to demonstrate some of the types of research that has been conducted by either libraries themselves or by the initiative of scholars. By giving some examples I can demonstrate some of the different focuses in library research and also how it is changing depending on the advocates behind the research and the motivations behind it.

5.1 User Centered Library Research

There has been a tradition in measuring library success in how many loans are registered per year, where a high statistic signifies an accomplished library. Loan numbers are compared library to library, country to country. Low loan numbers are often interpreted to mean that libraries aren't living up to their full potential and that people are lacking interest in the use of libraries. There are however many aspects of the library institution that statistics cannot portray.

When the internet started to become more and more common in the everyday lives of people during the 1990s it was a start of a drastical change in the way we live our lives. It also changed what sort of services people started to expect the library to offer. Information and information services are today accessible from many different sources, and it is also possible to gain easy access to books, music, videos and other material outside of the library. Therefore libraries have to think innovative, and new services are introduced to the people.

Some of the things introduced to Scandinavian public libraries lately are child theater plays, knitting clubs, study circles, video game corners, book cafes, and workshops that offer 3D printing (only to mention some). In Norway for a long time the state strongly regulated library development, regulations that tended to be controlling and not encouraging towards library development, according to Byberg. But this all started to change in the second half of the 20th century. She writes as follows of Norwegian library practice:

“After years of endless discussion of what a public library should be, many librarians became impatient. They did not wait for a common statement from associations or library authorities;

they simply went ahead and started new services for their local users, making full use of modern technology. The core activities in Norwegian libraries are, in many ways, the same. But the variety of additional services in local libraries is very promising for the future.”(Byberg, 2009).

New services were introduced, but to gain an insight in how successfully, one had to conduct certain types of studies. Studies that sought to understand quality of library services from the perspective of the library patron were now being conducted. Library user studies were taken into use to study the performance of a library measured in terms in how well it was meeting the needs of the library user (Powell, 1988). The international Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science defines user studies as follows:

“In general, they have been used to provide data of evaluation of libraries and other information agencies and to facilitate planning for collection development, programs and services.” (Feather & Sturges, 2003).

Herrera et al. writes the following of the purpose of user studies:

“(…) they are a means of determining user needs, the extent to which they are met, user response to library services and the effectiveness of the system; also because they are an effective way for the library to introduce user feedback.”(Herrera, Lotero, & Rua, 1987).

This definition of library user studies fit very well with the purpose of user studies conducted today. This was however not always the case, as some of the early user studies conducted in libraries rarely gave any information on such aspects as “user satisfaction with services”. The definition above was written in 1987, which is around the same time as user studies started to gain some criticism for being too simple and one sided, giving a lacking picture of the reality around library use. Library user studies have a history dating back to at least the beginning of the 1900s, but according to Lowell Martin these early studies were conducted by nonscientific investigators, and only in the 1920s and 30s did researchers strive for more reliable samples and valid conclusions (Martin, 1976).¹⁹

¹⁹ Martin mentions Gray, William S., and Monroe, Ruth. *Reading Interests and Habits of Adults*. New York, Macmillan, 1929. And also: Waples, Douglas. *People and Print*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1939.

In the United States the early user studies constructed user profiles mainly from demographic variables such as age, sex, education, race and ethnicity, marital status and economic status. The same tendency can be seen in Scandinavia where the main focus of user studies was to get a clear understanding of *who* the library visitor was, building a profile of the average library user. A Scandinavian example of this tradition is a Danish study of Poul Heinrich Kuhl, *The Public Library and The Population* (Folkebiblioteket og befolkningen, 1979) (R. Audunson, 1992). In Norway similar studies were conducted by the Statistics Norway (Statistisk sentralbyrå) in 1978 and 1988.

Internationally, these types of demographic user studies started to get some criticism during the late 1970s as it was pointed out that studies relying on demographic data had little use in explaining adult library use, were difficult to interpret and not relevant to the needs of library administrators (D'Elia, 1980).

Scholars such as George D'Elia and Douglas Zweizig criticized the methodology of the demographic studies and pointed out some of the main weaknesses. The studies for instance had a tendency of looking at library users as living in a very one-dimensional information society, where the library was the main focus of attention. D'Elia and Zweizig argued that if one wanted to gain a better understanding of a library visitor's choices and nonchoices in library use, one had to look at the whole picture, not simply the library.²⁰

Another criticism from D'Elia and Zweizig was that library user studies relied on too simple a methodology, where one variable was researched in connection to use/nonuse of library services. These were variables such as the correlation between library use and age, library use and the level of education, library use and the sex of the user etc. Although these demographic user studies gained some criticism it seems they were still being conducted throughout the 1970s and 80s (Vakkari et al., 1992). Martin writes that there were studies that researched how libraries were used and how successfully, although these types of studies were few in number:

“Studies of how libraries are used, and with what success, have been less frequent than the who, what, when, and where variety. This is surprising in one sense, because the alert

²⁰ George D'elia *The Development and Testing of a Conceptual Model of Public Library User Behavior* (1980), Douglas Zweizig *With Our Eye on User - Needed Research for Information and Referral in Public-Library* (1976).

practitioner can usually make a fairly reasonable estimate of who the library users are without a formal study, but this is much less true concerning their success or failure in getting what they seek.” (Martin, 1976).

Today user studies have broadened their view of library patrons and library use, and there exists a variety of user studies. User studies in Norway were partly conducted through the National Higher Library and Information School (Statens bibliotek- og informasjonshøgskole - SBIH) but the early attempts lacked a theoretical framework (R. Audunson, 1992). User studies are still conducted to gather demographic data but nowadays the studies also take other aspects into consideration.

Lately there has been an interest in mapping the behavior of the library patron while inside the library. To take an example, library user studies have recently been of the type that reveal how library services are used, where the user usually spend their time in the library and what sections of the library is most popular. This can be done through different types of “shadowing” studies or “seating sweeps”.

In Norway many such studies have been conducted in both smaller local projects as well as on a country wide basis. The latest big user study was performed in 5 big city libraries where the method of “shadowing” the user was taken into place. The latest study was conducted in the autumn of 2015.

Here a library patron was picked at random as she or he stepped into library facilities and their activities were observed from a distance. Taking notes of his or her actions and duration of actions the observer could get a fairly good picture of library user behavior. Library whereabouts were also noted and at the end of the patrons stay, one had the option to contact the patron personally to ask further questions.

The study picked up what the library patron was doing (looking for books, socializing with others, contacting library staff, talking on the phone etc.), for how long they were doing it (counted in minutes) and at which library departments they were spending their time at (library “zones”). A previous similar study was performed in Norway in 2007 which resulted

in the publication “Hvem er de og hvor går de? Brukeratferd i norske storbybibliotek”²¹ (Egaas et al., 2008). In the previous study there were fewer libraries participation in number; Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger and Kristiansand. The data gathered in both studies were sent to a knowledge company, the Sentio Research Group, who analyzed the data and produced a report on the findings.

A couple of user centered studies were published in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Finland as well (Ginman, 1983; Vakkari, 1978, 1983). One of these studies was by Pertti Vakkari who studied library activity through a user centered approach. According to Okko, Vakkari realized that one could not fully understand the reality around library activity, without taking user behavior into consideration. To get a grip on the reality around library activity one had to gain an understanding of reader behavior in accordance to use and non-use of the library (Okko, 1989).

5.2 Track the Traffic, Seating Sweeps and Surveys

Another method used to map library user activity has been the “seating sweeps” which in Norway is better known as the TTT method.

“It is based on regular and systematic “tours of observation” through the public areas of the library. It can be carried out by the library’s own staff rather than by hired consultants. The data gathered will tell you, in some detail, about the structure of activities in the various parts (zones) of the library throughout the day (daily cycle) and the week (weekly cycle).”(Høivik, 2009).

Mott Linn discusses a similar approach, but calls the method “seating sweeps”(Linn, 2013). The sweep consists of a walkthrough of the library, where the librarian registers their observations onto a sheet and the basics are the same as the TTT method. Many TTT studies have been conducted Norwegian libraries, as many as in 50 libraries in 2009 (Høivik, 2009). TTT stand for Track the Traffic (in Norwegian, Tverrgående Trafikktelling), and is a method developed by the former associate professor at the Oslo and Akerhus University College of

²¹ Who are they and where do they go? User behavior in Norwegian big city libraries. Note: own translation.

applied sciences, Tord Høivik. The method was formerly known as Count the Traffic (CTT), but was later changed to TTT so as to have the same expression in Norwegian and English.²²

Høivik has published many a paper on the method firstly going under the name CTT and later under TTT. Among these are *Private lives and public libraries. A quantitative approach to the study of user behavior* (2009). There are also a number of papers written on the “sweeping” technique, amongst others Lisa Given and Gloria Leckies’ “Sweeping” the library: *Mapping the social activity space of the public library* (2004) as well as Mott Linn *Seating Sweeps: An Innovative Research Method to Learn About How Our Patrons Use the Library* (2013).

In Finland there appears to be a tendency of leaning towards the survey kind of user study. If one takes a look at the most recent published material in library research (2006-2015) many of the library user studies conducted are based around either an electronic or material questionnaire.²³ The survey method has also been conducted via phone interviews, and one such study was performed in Oulu in 2011, when patrons were asked to describe their staff experiences (Heikkinen et al., 2012).

In these types of surveys the library patron is asked to personally estimate the quality of library services. Libraries in the Helsinki area have previously also used the mystery shopper approach, where the researcher pose as library patrons and assess the quality of library service (Heikkinen et al., 2012).

An example of a user study conducted in Finland is the Kokkola city patron survey by Tomi Virtanen (Virtanen, 2011a). The survey was placed inside the library as well as posted online, and gathered over 500 responses. Virtanen explains:

“In the business world, they speak of a customer-oriented business model, evaluating activities from the perspective of the customer, whereby its services and resources can be directed to the appropriate areas. Kokkola City Library – Regional Library decided to learn a lesson from the business world in autumn of 2010 by commissioning a survey, in which the structure of the current patron base, the use of library services and patrons’ opinions of the

²² TTT: Home page. <https://samstat.wordpress.com/ctt/> (accessed 5.12.2015).

²³ <http://www.kirjastot.fi/fi/neuvosto/kirjastoalan-selvityksia#.Vw-MFnLmkg> (accessed 14.4.2016).

library premises and development of services for the future were surveyed. “(Virtanen, 2011b).

Virtanen explains that the theoretic background for the thesis is based on a customer orientated business model and market segmentation (Virtanen, 2011a). The questionnaire was issued to define the typical library patron of Kokkola’s Public Library, what services they used and also asked the library patrons opinion on how they would like to see the library develop its services in the future.

A similar survey study was conducted in the Jyväskylä city library in 2011, where library patrons were asked to fill a questionnaire describing their library use. The survey managed to gather data on age, sex, education, nearest library, estimated count on library visits and feedback and opinions on library opening hours and service quality (Kaupunginkirjasto, 2011)

Here we see a difference in approach in Norway and Finland. The two approaches differ in the way that one relies on the accuracy of library patrons to describe their library experience, while the other (shadowing and seating sweeps) relies on observations by either the library staff or hired personnel. Linn writes as follows:

“There are numerous procedures to assess the ways libraries assist their patrons. Some, such as the number of books circulated, the door count, and the number of students receiving bibliographic instruction, do not address the way customers use the various parts of the library. Others, such as surveys, are of questionable validity due to concerns about whether the patrons’ “self reporting” accurately describes what they do or if what they say is biased (...) Sweeps can provide this important information to library planners so that they can spend the renovation’s budget in ways that better address the needs of the library’s clients.”(Linn, 2013).

On the other hand user studies relying on observations also depend on the accuracy of the reporting of the observer. Studies such as the one performed in Tromsø, leaning on the shadowing of the user (and seating sweeps or TTT for that matter) heavily depend on what the observer registers on their forms. Many factors may influence how we observe something,

and sometimes it is not obvious what the library patron is doing in which case registering their activities may be difficult.

Either way, all of the user studies mentioned above can shed a light a variety of library aspects. Libraries can get feedback on service quality, but also gain an insight in how libraries are used by library patrons. These types of studies are many times conducted on a libraries' own initiative to live up to the expectations of their users, and are shows internal initiate. There are however other external factors that also play into the shaping of library research, and a new trend has come forth, which I will discuss further in the next chapter.

5.3 The Return on Investment Perspective

Libraries feel both internal and external pressure, put upon them by customer and staff as well as policy makers and expectations from society. Libraries have to constantly keep up with the changing times to stay relevant and at the same time make sure the services they provide are of satisfactory quality for the library patron. Libraries are no longer institutions that's existence are taken for granted (Vakkari, Tuomaala, et al., 2014), and there is a constant pressure for libraries to justify their existence as an institution - a pressure that they are very aware off. Vakkari et al. writes as follows of the current situation:

“Search engines like Google and recommender functions on sites of e-book vendors like Amazon have partly taken over the information and advisory function of front-office staff. Add to that the public spending cuts due to the current economic recession in large areas of the world, and it becomes quite understandable that local and other authorities have begun to question the self-evidence of their investment of taxpayers' money in the public library systems.“ (Vakkari, Tuomaala, et al., 2014).

Scholars have become dissatisfied with measuring traditional library “outputs” such as library visits, loan statistics and special activities, as they are seen to have limited validity as measurement for library value. Rather there has been a shift in focus to measure library “outcomes” in what libraries bring to the lives of library patrons and communities. Vakkari and Serola explain that instead of counting the number of book loans in libraries one rather

seeks to understand how the loans benefit the reader, for example in increased knowledge or quality of leisure time (Vakkari & Serola, 2012).

“A book having been borrowed does not equal a book having been read or consulted. One would want to know what reading a book has contributed to a person’s worldview or knowledge. Here, we touch upon the distinction between *outputs* and *outcomes*.”(Huysmans & Oomes, 2013).

As the public sector has had to prioritize funds and spending during the recent recession, libraries have had a difficult time proving their value in a political climate that favors financial decisions based on market value - especially in a climate that looks at libraries through a Return on Investment (ROI) Perspective (Sykes, 2003; Van Moorsel, 2005).

According to Jaeger et al. library activities and contributions cannot easily be translated to monetary terms, which makes them easy targets for budget cuts (Paul T Jaeger, Gorham, Bertot, & Sarin, 2014). Libraries have to prove that to policy makers that they are worth investing in, but this is somewhat a difficult task. Jaeger et al. writes as follows:

“No matter how the public library tries to demonstrate its myriad contributions, however, a political climate dominated by the neoliberal economic ideology and the neoconservative political ideology may prevent it from successfully arguing for its continued relevance.” (Paul T Jaeger et al., 2014).

Under the neoliberal economic ideology economic, political and social decisions are driven by market concerns and organized by the language and rationality of markets (Paul T Jaeger et al., 2014). Jaeger et al. refer to American libraries in their publication *Public libraries, public policies, and political processes: Serving and transforming Communities in times of economic and political constrain*, but the same trend can be seen in Scandinavia. Increasingly so, libraries are asked to prove their claims of importance and public value either qualitatively or quantitatively. Measuring the public value of libraries is an emerging field in library and information science, and a trend is the advent of evidence-based policy (Vakkari, Aabø, et al., 2014).

In Scandinavia the justification and legitimization of libraries has been very much connected to fundamental political values, such as equality and democracy. The reasoning behind these claims is that by granting equal access to information and knowledge the people are given the right sort of tools to educate themselves to be better equipped in public debate and to protect their personal interests with the authorities.

In this way libraries are justifying their existence in values that are axiomatic according to Audunson. He writes that values such as democracy, freedom and equality are taken for granted, and do not usually need to be justified. This being the case these values can therefore not be measured in monetary terms. He argues that institutions that have so strongly connected themselves with axiomatic values may come in a crisis and can be facing a problem in a market oriented society (R. A. Audunson, 2003).

Scholars have tried different sort of methods to prove libraries are still important institutions in society, amongst these is the measurement of library outcomes. However, Aabø points out that it is difficult to measure the outcomes of a public library as libraries are institutions slightly out of the norm.

“In contrast to other public institutions such as schools or hospitals that produce educational and health care services respectively, public libraries, although they are mainly small institutions, provide a wide range of services directed towards very different spheres of life – *towards* children and adults, local businesses, services to disabled or elderly people, the educational sector from kindergartens to universities, etc.; *for* leisure time activities, personal cultivation, development of personal and civic skills; *by being* a cultural and social meeting place, a public room, a place for studying and contemplation, etc. It follows that the results or outcomes of public library services are not easily defined and characterized.” (Aabø, 2005b).

Measuring the outcomes of libraries, for example in the way they benefit the local community and library patrons is not an easy task. Aabø writes that as the economic sector continues to be restrained, it seems necessary for public libraries to be able to determine their value in monetary terms (Aabø, 2005a). Referring to her work *Are public libraries worth their price? A contingent valuation study of Norwegian public libraries*, she writes as follows:

“This project was motivated by the need to demonstrate public libraries’ economic importance in a time where economic pressure is increasing. The purpose was to provide a better understanding of the total value of public libraries, both their use and non-use values, as viewed by the population.”(Aabø, 2005a).

The market driven perspective is seen in other ways as well. In the Kokkola City library survey inspiration was taken from the business world, as Virtanen explained (Virtanen, 2011b). In the study of the Kokkola city library it was stated that they had taken inspiration directly from the marketing world, taking a lesson from the business world in conducting their user study.

“In the business world, they speak of a customer-oriented business model, evaluating activities from the perspective of the customer, whereby its services and resources can be directed to the appropriate areas.” (Virtanen, 2011b).

This approach is also seen in Norway where one can see it is more and more common to treat a library like a business, and libraries are increasingly being seen through a business lens. Libraries in Norway have been using logos, business cards and grocery bags in a very commercial like manner, promoting library campaigns in the same fashion as commercial companies promote their goods (Sandberg, 2006). The business perspective is also seen in the planning of the new facilities of the Deichmann library of Oslo where one third of the library will be set aside for the use of external parties. It is planned that a large amount of the library area will be lent out to cover the costs of running the new library facilities.²⁴

5.4 The Value of Public Libraries

Several studies have been conducted internationally with the emphasis on library outcomes, and studies like these have also been conducted in both Norway and Finland. The Finnish study of Vakkari and Serola (2012) is according to Vakkari et al. (Vakkari, Tuomaala, et al., 2014) most likely the first of its kind in Europe. In their study they have tried to empirically determine benefits Finnish people receive from using public libraries. Five aspects of life

²⁴ <http://www.osloby.no/nyheter/byutvikling/Byradet-har-konkludert-Slik-skjal-nye-Deichman-tjene-penger-8451269.html> (accessed 2.5.2016).
<http://www.osloby.no/nyheter/Store-deler-av-nye-Deichman-skjal-brukes-til-noe-annet-enn-bibliotek-8267330.html> (accessed 2.5.2016).

were categorized to analyze the outcomes: work, business, everyday activities, education and leisure time. According to Vakkari and Serola a study of this range, on a nationwide scale, carry a deeper scientific weight compared to particular program assessments (Vakkari & Serola, 2012).

“Although particular program evaluations are important for developing particular services, they cannot substitute for the analysis of the role of the public library as a social institution. Conclusions drawn from the kind of research presented here can potentially have broader nationwide policy implications for libraries.” (Vakkari & Serola, 2012).

Studies measure library outcomes have also increased in number in Norway. One of these studies is the study by Svanhild Aabø who studied the value of Norwegian public libraries. She explains that the study can be seen as supplement to research aiming to exploring the overall role and value of public libraries. The study relies on a contingent valuation method that is based on representative questionnaire surveys (Aabø, 2005a). The monetary value of public libraries was estimated from the Norwegian population’s perspective. Users and non-users were asked through a phone survey to evaluate the public library in her or his municipality, and estimate whether or not libraries were worth their price.

Another study that focuses on library outcomes in Norway is the “Public Libraries – Arenas of Citizenship” (PLACE) study performed in three townships in Oslo and Tromsø. The investigative team of Aabø, Audunson and Vårheim carried out two quantitative surveys in the pursuit of finding out how libraries function as meeting places with the aim of understanding the role of libraries in the making of social capital.

“This interest is, to a large extent, related to society becoming more and more complex and fragmented due to the growth of multiculturalism and digitization and the resulting need for meeting places with the capacity to promote (a) social inclusion, and (b) that minimal degree of communality in values, norms, and bridging social capital that citizenship presupposes. Two dominating trends that shape today's society are digitization and multiculturalism (...).”(Aabø, Audunson, & Vårheim, 2010).

Two quantitative surveys were carried out in 2006 and 2011 in three communities in Oslo and Tromsø to measure the role of the library as a meeting place. Drawn randomly from a

database of phone numbers, participants were asked by a questionnaire on their library use, and about their social interactions in the library. They were asked to answer questions on their social conduct, for example, if they ever had accidentally met a friend in the library or if they ever met and talked to strangers etc.(Aabø et al., 2010).

“Based on the survey respondents' reports, six categories of meetings were identified: the library as a community square, where one accidentally bumps into neighbors and acquaintances; the library as a place where one is exposed to diversity and otherness; the library as a public sphere, that is, a place where people live out their role as citizens; the library as a place for joint activities with family and friends; the library as a *meta-meeting* place, that is, as a channel to identify other social arenas and organizations in the community; and the library as a virtual meeting place.”(Aabø & Audunson, 2012)

The results of the PLACE study raised new questions with scholars who sought a deeper understanding on social interaction in the library space. Aabø and Audunson later conducted a new in-depth observation and interview based research at the same three libraries in Oslo that were used in the PLACE study to gain an understanding on patrons were spending their time at the library. As the PLACE study revealed the library to be used as a sort of a meeting place, now one had to find out what the user's activities were:

“For which purposes are frequent library visitors staying in the library for a long time? What are visitors who come together to the library to perform joint activities actually doing—and why are they doing it? Twenty-five percent of the respondents reported going to the library with others. What do families do together? What do friends do together? (...) There is a need to improve and broaden knowledge about how patrons use the library space and how the library is used as a meeting place in the local community.” (Aabø & Audunson, 2012).

6. Comparison of Library Research – Norway and Finland

In this chapter I will be comparing Norwegian and Finnish library research beginning from the 19th century. In library research there has been a fascination for numbers (Egaas et al., 2008; Salvesen, 2001) both in Norway and Finland. In Norway early library research was motivated by a need to enlighten the people as this was seen to bring progress to society. Information was gathered through questionnaires and statistical data gathering and the findings were used to resolve practical matters in library development, and to advocate for the increase in state funding.

Both Norway and Finland took inspiration from the US in library development, Finland lagging slightly behind Norway.

“At the beginning of the 20th century it was Norway that had the most well-developed library system among the Scandinavian countries. There the development had been enhanced by the system of state subsidies beginning already in 1839, but the true library movement was started in the 1880’s by the leaders of public opinion who had visited and studied in the United States. The most advanced library was the Deichman Library in Kristiania (since 1924 Oslo) led by Haakon Nyhuus, but even other bigger towns had American trained librarians.» (Vatanen, 2001)

In the period that Norway was going through a “library revolution”, late 1880s to early 1900s, Finland was fighting a russification process. Where Norway was motivated with spreading practical knowledge and enlightenment, Finland was motivated with the desire to strengthen the Finnish language and bring forth a linguistic emancipation. This was seen best to be done through the enlightenment of the people, and through the spread of “a yearning for reading”. This was seen as one of few tools Finland had to stand against the overthrowing of the Finnish people.

As in Norway, much of library research in Finland was done through the gathering of statistical data. Statistical data was also gathered to gain an overview of the situation of the reading habit amongst the people in Finland in connection with the yearning for reading. This was done by monitoring the numbers of libraries, books borrowed, newspapers subscribed to

etc., and library advocates were behind the early interest for library statistics (Mäkinen, 2008).

Trying to strengthen the arbitrary activities of Finnish libraries, data was collected by using questionnaires sent via post. The aim was to get a historical and statistical overview of Finnish libraries, and the published library research sometimes came with suggestions as to how to further develop the Finnish libraries.

Norway had somewhat of a similar approach to library research in the same period of time, and a large scale statistical research project was conducted in the early 1900s. Before this Haakon Nyhushad traveled to the US bringing back innovative ideas as how to organize a library, beginning with the Deichmanske library of Oslo. The research resulted in a broader knowledge of the conditions of Norwegian libraries.

Weaknesses of the library system were exposed and as a solution a centralized library policy was introduced in the beginning of the 20th century. A library reform was applied to the whole country, after the successful reorganization of the Deichmanske library of Oslo. The new system came with its own tools to quality check libraries and keep them in good standards.

“The reform included larger state subsidies, library inspection, a state library bureau, selective book lists to support book selection, centralized cataloguing, and professional education for librarians etc. A centralized public library system was founded. The state subsidies took the form of books selected by the state library authorities. The books were properly bound and sent to the libraries ready for use with cataloguing cards.” (Mäkinen, 2013).

With the centralized library system that was far ahead of the other library institutions at the time, also came a list making tradition that was taken into place in Norwegian libraries. The lists were a measure used to ensure that the book collections were of high enough standard. In addition, library inspectors were introduced to the library system. These tools were the standard method of ensuring library needs for a long time, up until the 1980s.

“As late as in the 1980s, a number of state recommendations regarding book collections, opening hours and staff and library premises were approved.”(Byberg, 2009).

Library inspectors and book lists were also a part of Finnish library practice, and the library act of 1928 introduced the inspectors in to the library system. Library inspectors were at the disposal of libraries to give advice on room arrangement, selection of books and other library problems (Hatch, 1971). After Finnish independence in 1917 a large part of library research revolved around library history, and the research had a strong humanistic character around it.

The tradition of library history was still popular in the 1960s and 1970s, with a huge chunk of Finnish library research revolving around it. Both internationally and domestically library history was one of the strongest blocks of Finnish library research (Vakkari & Järvelin, 1989). In Finland this tradition continued longer than it did internationally because of the slow process of the consolidation of the discipline. The LIS research done in this period of time was characterized by the want of research that gave instant results to practical problems. When the field was taken into an academic level researchers in Finland distanced themselves from this practical approach (Vakkari et al., 1993).

Norway in turn had a much lower publication rate when it came to library history literature compared to its neighboring countries. According to Vakkari et al. the most common fields of study in LIS in the years 1965-89 was information seeking, especially user studies or use studies. These kinds of studies were the third most prominent theme in the Nordic countries. The percentage of these kinds of studies in the Norwegian LIS literature was especially high during those particular years, compared to other Scandinavian countries (29%) (Vakkari et al., 1992).

Things started to change after the 1970s. In an analysis of the LIS research done in Finland in the years 1970-1988, Vakkari and Järvelin found that research published both domestically and internationally tended to revolve around library and information service, information storage and information retrieval. Internationally these topics were even more common than in Finland. Knowledge retrieval was however a field that was discussed more in Finnish forums than international ones - being published three times as many research articles on the matter domestically than internationally (Vakkari & Järvelin, 1989).

With this data, Vakkari and Järvelin conclude that Finnish researchers were more interested in the library patron and their behavior in connection to library services than their international research counterparts. They explain that this elevated interest in these types of topics may

have been caused by the lack of knowledge of other aspects of library and information science research amongst Finnish researchers. At the time they had a very small research foundation and in addition researchers had to make do with the material available (Vakkari & Järvelin, 1989).

Library and book research that previously had been in focus, started to decline as the 1970s approached, and a new trend arose. LIS researchers now became more interested in studies involving the mapping of information transmission and usage, data saving problems in databases, publication activity as well as research concerning book collections (Vakkari, 1985). After 1975 60% of all reports and 50% of all articles concerned these matters, the biggest interest among these topics being research of information transmission and usage. According to Vakkari this topic was mainly studied through user studies (Vakkari, 1985).

7. Discussion

7.1 Before the Institutionalization of LIS

In this thesis I have taken a closer look at trends in library research and how it has changed over time. I've especially focused on the underlying factors that might have had an impact on the nature of library research, the choosing of research topics and research methods throughout the years. I have compared Norwegian and Finnish library research with special focus on its roots, its development and its modern outcome. In this chapter I will be presenting some discussion around certain contributing factors to the differences and similarities in Norwegian and Finnish library research, starting with the time period before the institutionalization of library and information science.

“When analyzing the development of LIS, two sets of characteristics appear as central: LIS being a field of research, a discipline and a field of professional practice; and the dual origin of LIS, developing from a field of practice; and, out of other research fields” (Åström, 2006).

The practice related origin of LIS can be traced back to at least the 19th century. This is when library advocates started to develop a more structured frame for library work through

introducing general rules for classification and organization, as well as attempting to introduce a formalized library practice (Åström, 2006).

This practice can be seen in both Norway and Finland. At the turn of the 20th century both countries were driven by the need to enlighten the people, although their motivations slightly differed. One can see that statistical data was gathered to further develop the library institution in both of the countries, and the research was used in library development to push for changes advocated by library enthusiasts. The research was used to legitimize the establishment and funding of libraries, as well as heighten the quality of book collection and books available. These early efforts built the foundation of the modern library institution, and slowly shaped libraries into the today's modern libraries.

During the turn of the 20th century there was an interest in book, book collection and library history in Norway and in Finland. In Finland a large part of library research revolved around library history, and the research was characterized to be very humanistic oriented. Library history was a dominating topic in library research up until the 1960s, according to Vakkari. One of the reasons behind this was that the people that got the positions in libraries often had a humanistic background (Vakkari, 1985).

The same interest can be seen in Norwegian library research in the early years. Rochester and Vakkari come with suggestions as to why this topic in particular was popular and why statistical and survey research methods were dominating:

“The popularity of the survey, conceptual and historical research methods may be due to these methods being relatively cheap to employ; LIS researchers working with little financial and other support can use such methods. They can be employed by researchers working alone.» (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003).

Another reason why library research revolved around library and book history might have been the fact that, at least in Finland, many library researchers had a background in a humanistic science and therefore this influenced the character of library research at the time. This was due to the strict restrictions put upon library job, which many humanists possessed through their education (Vakkari, 1985).

There are many similarities in Norwegian and Finnish library research, and they did follow many of the same steps in library development in that period of time. Both had influences from the US, although in a slightly different manners.

After the Nyhuus came back from the United States and brought forth a “library revolution” in Norway in the late 19th century, there was stagnation in library development. Nyhuus and other library advocates at the time were some of the first to introduce new ideas to the Norwegian library institution, but their efforts did not create a strong library research community in Norway. Their ideas were mostly taken from the US and little own research was done.

It seems Norway stuck longer with the American principles in library management (Taylorism) which in turn may have slowed down library development, and library research as this put the responsibility of management in the hands of a very few people. For example, the list-making tradition was followed all the way up to 1980 (Byberg, 2009). According to Gunhild Salvesen this was the way authorities controlled the quality of activities, and the quality of book collections in Norwegian libraries. In addition, library inspectors had an important role as quality checkers and were standard practice for determining library needs (Salvesen, 2001). In Finland Library inspectors gave advice on room arrangement, selection of books and other library problems (Hatch, 1971).

The fact that there was already such a strong framework around library practice may have prevented library development and library research in the way of creating new innovations, introducing new ideas and prevent creating new theory around LIS research. This due to the fact that it was not seen as necessary to develop something if it was generally accepted to be working very well. In Norway for a long time the state strongly regulated library development, regulations that tended to be controlling and not encouraging towards library development.

“A strong homogenous culture had developed among librarians, as a result of the long period of detailed state regulations. The negative side of this strong culture was that it tended to be controlling, and not encourage towards librarians who wanted to develop their libraries in untraditional directions.” (Byberg, 2009).

Also seen, is a strong library profession-centered perspective in library research in both countries. The research done was of a very practically-oriented nature, and student as well as library practitioners and associations valued practical knowledge over more theoretical research and experience. This might have been caused by the lack of institutionalization or as Rochester and Vakkari explain:

“The weak social institutionalisation of LIS implied in research output a more system-oriented understanding of LIS, concentration on library-related problems, and seeking for solutions that have immediate applicational value.” (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003).

This can especially be during the 1900s when it was more natural for Norwegian library research to lean on professional library values, as library and information science took some time to be institutionalized – at least compared to Finland. Vakkari et al. writes that while LIS researchers aim to produce theoretical, scientific knowledge, the library profession may prefer technical solutions to practical problems (Vakkari et al., 1992).

This practical approach to library research was also the case in Finland where for example the librarian group *Suomen Kirjastoseuran opintokerho* that was founded in the 1940s focused on solving practical library matters. At first through no research of their own but rather through reading foreign publications on library matters. Later the group however conducted some research of their own and three large scale research projects were brought forth by their initiative. One of these studies was conducted during the years 1945-46 when a large scale survey was issued amongst the city- and rural libraries with the aim of mapping library use, library collections and the library patron's opinions on book collections. Although the survey was not very successful it is an example of one of the first attempts to connect the library patron to library research (Vakkari, 1985).

A game-changing time for Finnish libraries was during the 1960s when the library act of 1961 was passed. The act granted Finnish libraries a much needed financial support boost which in turn supported library research and library development. The increased public usage seen in public libraries, called for more library research to ensure that libraries could efficiently improve their services and collections (Vakkari, 1985). With it came a demand for a better library education, and certain voices demanded librarianship to be studied at a university level (Vakkari et al., 1993).

7.2 After the institutionalization of LIS

Up until the 1970s Finland and Norway had a similar library education system, where the main education was given at a university college or some similar institution. Both teaching activity and research projects were highly connected to professional values with no aspirations for any academic level. When the academization of LIS started to become debated in Finland it was argued that as long as librarianship was not a serious academic field it was not possible to study libraries in a serious manner, which again would slow down library development. At the time there was no scientific community or tradition of research around library and information science (Vakkari et al., 1993).

Finnish LIS research was almost non-existent before the establishment of the institution of LIS in Tampere in 1971. In the time period 1950-1969 there were 34 articles and monographies published in Finland - the majority of these texts being about book and library history. Other research areas, such as the study on library use and library collection research started during the 1960s. Järvelin and Vakkari write that during this time library and information science research was about to decline because of the lack of a proper organization to support the research, and little research was done at the libraries themselves (Vakkari & Järvelin, 1989).

When LIS became a discipline at the University of Tampere in 1971 it established itself as a part of the traditional university structure, with professors, research positions and a doctoral program – all together guaranteeing a continuity of research (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003).

Audunson writes that institutionalization of LIS can be characterized in two ways:

«Along this road towards Academia, however, two paths can be identified. We can call them the discipline-oriented and the profession-oriented. Proponents of the disciplinary approach strive to develop LIS as a discipline such as chemistry, history and sociology, placing the emphasis on the core subjects of Information Retrieval (IR) and IR-systems. Links to the professional field of librarianship are loosened or to some extent cut off. Departments are renamed. Programmes in library and information science become programmes in information science alone.»(R. Audunson, 2008).

He continues by stating that in Scandinavia, the University Tampere in Finland represents a successful development in the direction of the discipline oriented LIS. He writes that Tampere University employs a number of researchers with a high international reputation in research on information retrieval and information-seeking behavior (R. Audunson, 2008). LIS institutions that are information science oriented (such as the department at the University of Tampere) have been finding it easier to receive attention in the academic world compared to the ones that are humanistic affiliated (Åström, 2006).

As for Norway, it took slightly longer to introduce LIS into an academic university level, which was reflected in the research conducted. Rochester and Vakkari point out that when the structural opportunities for research are almost completely lacking, the profession offers the only obvious road for creating them. This was the situation in Norway.

“The researchers usually had a professional background, thus, it was only natural to identify themselves with the ideals of the profession. The implication of this identification was the sharing of the ideals concerning the nature of the discipline and research. The discipline was linked to the problems of library and information service organizations. (...) The strong links with the professional structure also caused a stronger emphasis on applied research. The weak social institutionalisation of LIS implied in research output a more system-oriented understanding of LIS, concentration on library-related problems, and seeking for solutions that have immediate applicational value.” (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003).

In Norway Library education was placed under an independent library schools or attached to other similar institutions below the university level until the 1990s. This resulted in different focus and outcome of library research. Driven by the desire to legitimize the field, LIS researchers in Finland worked on firstly developing theory and method to validate the field. This in its turn caused a distancing from the norms of the profession, according to Rochester and Vakkari (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003). The most important aspect was now that the research conducted should contribute to strengthening the validity of the field to become academically legitimate. Because of this there was a delay of a practical approach in library research in Finland (Vakkari et al., 1993).

“The primary goal for the academics is to educate competent researchers and to do good research. The primary contribution is the internal development of the discipline, the creation of new theories and concepts, and the improvement of methodology. The practical applications that are of importance to the profession are of secondary importance to the discipline.” (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003).

More practical matters were taken into account in library research at a later time. Whilst in Norway the research was characterized by being of a very practical orientation, without a strong theoretical framework.

Vakkari et al. writes that in all of the Nordic countries some of the LIS research and development work was conducted by libraries themselves, mainly in the form of investigations and evaluations. They explain that while LIS researchers aim to produce theoretical, scientific knowledge, the library profession may prefer technical solutions to practical problems (Vakkari et al., 1992).

Now that we have looked at some explanatory factors on the differences on professional versus academic library research, it is time to look at some differences in research in LIS institutions themselves.

Today the Nordic countries show a large variety in LIS institutions and academic affiliation. Nordic LIS institutions are extremely heterogeneous, displaying a wide range of organizational types. According to Åström, these institutions can be everything from large independent schools to small units in humanities faculties. Depending on organizational structure, research activity is formalized in different ways. In the large independent schools different research orientations are organized in departments or other sub-groups. Meanwhile the smaller units, such as the LIS institutions at humanities faculties that share department structure with other disciplines, usually have no formalized structure in terms of research organization. Åström also states that these smaller units lack a fully developed research infrastructure (Åström, 2008).

Åström makes a connection between faculty affiliation and research topics at the university-based LIS institutions. He uses the study program Library and Information Science at Uppsala University (UU) in Sweden as an example of a university based LIS institution whose

research is very humanistic oriented having a humanistic academic affiliation. The study program at the University of Tromsø in Norway also has a humanistic affiliation, as can be seen in the chart below. The other academic LIS institution in Norway has an information/information technology oriented affiliation which is at the University of Trondheim.

Country	Department	Acad. affiliation
Denmark	<i>Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen/Aalborg (RSLIS): www.db.dk/english/</i>	Independent
Finland	Department of Finnish, Information Studies and Logopedics at Oulu University (OU): www.oulu.fi/hutk/info/englishpages/	Humanities
	<i>Department of Information Studies at University of Tampere (UTA): www.info.uta.fi/index_en.php</i>	Info/Info. tech.
	<i>Department of Information Studies at Åbo Akademi, Turku (AA): http://web.abo.fi/fak/esf/bii/index_eng.htm</i>	Soc./Beh. Sci.
Norway	Department of Computer and Information Science, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim (NUST): www.idi.ntnu.no/	Info/Info. tech.
	Department of Documentation Studies, University of Tromsø (UoT): http://uit.no/humfak/dokumentasjonsvitenskap/	Humanities
	Dept. of Journalism, Library and Information Studies, Oslo University College (OUC): www.hio.no/enheter/avdeling_for_journalistikk_bibliotek_og_informasjonsfag	Univ. College
Sweden	<i>Library and Information Science, Department of ALM, Uppsala University (UU): www.abm.uu.se/</i>	Humanities
	Library and Information Science, Department of Cultural Sciences, Lund University (LU): www.kult.lu.se/	Humanities
	Library and Information Science, Department of Sociology, Umeå University (UmU): www.umu.se/soc/biv/	Soc./Beh. Sci.
	<i>Swedish School of Library and Information Science, GU/Borås University College (SSLIS): www.hb.se/bhs/eng/</i>	Univ. College

Source: (Åström, 2008).

The Finnish Department of information Studies at the University of Tampere (UTA) is also an institution that is information/information technology oriented. In both cases the LIS departments have formed larger units with related fields such as computer science, information systems and so on. The Finnish departments are closer to mainstream LIS research with strong information retrieval and information seeking groups at the UTA department (Åström, 2008).

Finland also outnumbers Norway's academic LIS institutions with one, as there are three in Finland and only two in Norway. There is however the Oslo University College in Norway with a department of Journalism, Library and Information Studies.

“When comparing these institutions, the organizational structure seem to have an impact on the extent of which research strategies and goals needs to be coordinated with LIS research in general: although variations in terms of research orientations is as noticeable at, e.g. both RSLIS and UU, the level of coordination at the two institutions is widely varying from organizational to a personal levels. Furthermore: at mid-sized departments at social and information science faculties, coordination is retained by focusing research on a limited set of research areas.” (Åström, 2008).

One could assume library research to be affected by whether or not it conducted at a university LIS institution, but Åström concludes that this is not likely the case. He explains that for example in both Sweden and Norway there are university affiliated LIS institutions with great variations in terms of how research is organized and to which extent it is in alliance with “mainstream” LIS research (Åström, 2008).

“These variations, together with the development of publishing activities the independent and university college-affiliated institutions, show that the organization and orientation of research is rather associated with, e.g. faculty affiliation or departmental issues, rather than whether the institution is located at a university or in some other organizational setting.” (Åström, 2008).

As discussed earlier the strength of social institutionalization in LIS does have an effect on library and information science research. Rochester and Vakkari explain that social institutionalization is made up of two dimensions.

“On the one hand it refers to the degree of internal organisation and boundary-definition, and on the other hand to the degree of integration in the social structures in terms of legitimisation and resource allocation. (Whitley 1974: 72) The first dimension includes the foundation of research associations and formal communication channels like scientific conferences and journals. The latter dimension refers to the degree of integration of the field into university departments and teaching curricula. University departments, chairs, teachers' and research

posts, and doctoral programs are the hallmarks of a mature social structure of a specialty.” (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003).

They continue by stating that if the degree of social institutionalization is weak the LIS implied in research output a more-system oriented understanding of LIS. The research will be more concentrated on library-related problems, seeking solutions with immediate applicational value. According to Rochester and Vakkari Finnish LIS research is more oriented towards wider information problems, whilst Norwegian research shows identification with the profession focusing on library oriented topics. (Rochester & Vakkari, 2003)

Library research might be affected, not only by organizational structure of LIS institutions and their affiliations, but also by the difference in their approach to funding.

“Furthermore, reputational autonomy and control over criteria for research evaluation is how research is also related to the allocation of economic resources (Whitley, 2000). In general, there are two main ways of financing research: by appointed positions financed by the institution, including time for research; or by external funds from, e.g. research councils.” (Åström, 2008).

He states that the second alternative is the more common one, although with large variations as to the origin of the research funds. For example, at the Department of Information Studies at Åbo Akademi in Finland a major part of funding comes from a research council called the Finnish Academy that supports research projects conducted by senior faculty members. Permanent university teachers are granted 35 percent of their time to research. PhD students have to apply for their own scholarships from various organizations to fund their research (Åström, 2008).

Library research has recently also been affected by the financial pressures from outside the library. Lately one can see that the pressure of justifying funding to policy makers and economic recession has had an impact on library research where there has been a shift of studying library “outputs” to library “outcomes”. Scholars feel there is a limitation in measuring “outputs” such as the number of loans, library visits etc. and rather focus on measuring how libraries benefit people’s lives and society on a larger scale. This is again an example on how financial pressure might alter research methods and research goals. Libraries

are more and more often looked through a commercial lens and some libraries have even started to act like businesses.

A recent trend in both countries is the measurement of library outcomes instead of library outputs. This has been seen in both Norway and Finland. Cost-evaluation is a part of every development decision, and lately very much so in libraries. Libraries increasingly have to prove that they are worth investing in. This is however not easily done, as a library's value is not always measurable in monetary terms. Certain attempts have been conducted such as Svanhild Aabø's study from 2005 where she tried to measure library value in monetary terms by asking library users and non-users on their opinions on the costs of libraries (Aabø, 2005a).

Other scholars have attempted to measure how the library is important for lives and society by measuring different types of outcomes. The study of Aabø et al. (Aabø et al., 2010) studied how libraries function as meeting places and the making of social capital. The study of Vakkari et al. measured the ways libraries might benefit the lives of Finnish library patrons (Vakkari, Aabø, et al., 2014).

Library research is still driven by the need to gather an insight on library use, library user behavior and service quality. Many times these types of studies are conducted by the initiative of the libraries and it is very professionally oriented. In these types of studies it is most important to gather data that is practical for the library and librarians. Some of the methods used are surveys and questionnaires, shadowing and seating sweeps which all give an insight to the life inside a library and can be used in library development.

Another point that might be worth mentioning is that Norway's and Finland's LIS institutions have developed from different starting points. Åström writes that there are various lines of development in LIS:

“In LIS however, we can see one line of development where research areas have developed, to be incorporated into disciplinary LIS. But we can also see a disciplinary development out of the field of practice through library schools, then trying to establish research activities.” (Åström, 2006)

For example, the LIS department at Oslo University College originated from the State Library and Information College founded in 1940 that was a library school. In Finland a pre-academic one-year diploma course was established at the School of Social Sciences in Helsinki in 1945. But this was not a library school of its own. Mäkinen writes that the institution later moved to Tampere in the 1960s where it became the University of Tampere (Mäkinen, 2001b). The LIS department in Tampere is not a continuation of a previous library school, but it was established with a professorship in 1971 and therefrom they started to create a theory and method for the field.

8. Conclusion

Library research is being affected by many things, as seen in this paper. In the beginning, before library research had had the time to grow into a serious science, libraries were studied through questionnaires and statistical data gathering usually conducted by library advocates. There was no scientific community around library research and the methods chosen were either picked because they were low-cost or because there were no knowledge of other types of methods. Another factor that could have had an effect on the topics and methods chosen in library research was that researchers had to make do with the material available. The popularity of library and book history is an example of this, as there was accessible material on this research topic.

Information on library problems and their solutions were brought from the US in many cases as many library advocates went there to get their degree. Articles about American library innovations were published in journals and discussed amongst library enthusiasts. Norway and Finland started using libraries as tools to enlighten the people, and with these motivations some library research was conducted. The research methods were however used entirely without any theory around them, and were conducted to get an overview of the library situation at the time as the activity was arbitrary and lacking centralization.

When libraries started to gain some more funds and develop a more centralized systems, other quality measurements were taken into place – such as the book lists and library inspectors. After some time the measurement tool for library quality shifted from institution centered

book lists and inspectors to more library patron centered methods of research – such as user studies.

The institutionalization of LIS has taken different paths in Norway and Finland, and this has had an impact on the library research that has been conducted. Despite Finland lagging behind in library development in the first half of the 20th century, they were first in the lead of the Nordic countries in the institutionalization of LIS in 1971 and show today a strong social institutionalization of the field.

There has been a difference in the strength of social institutionalization of LIS in Norway and Finland. The difference in the nature of the research in these two countries may therefore be explained by the difference in the institutionalization of LIS and its introduction to academia. For instance, after 1971 Finnish LIS focused on creating a theory for the field and their motivations were to strengthen the academic discipline of LIS. In Norway on the other hand research has often been done to strengthen the library as an institution.

Therefore one can see a different focus in library research in Norway and Finland, where research in Norway has been, and is still very practically and professionally oriented towards the library profession whilst Finland is more academically oriented and more in accordance to the values that exist in LIS as a university discipline.

“In the development of academic library education Finland has not followed its Scandinavian neighbors, where there have traditionally existed separate library schools without strong emphasis on research. The Scandinavian library schools have offered an all-round curriculum in many fields that are needed by future librarians, e.g. literature, administration etc. In Finland the departments of information studies at the universities have concentrated on research and core courses of the discipline, i.e. information retrieval, information seeking and later also information management.”(Mäkinen, 2001b).

As seen in the discussion chapter academic affiliation might also have an impact on the library and information science research conducted today. Finnish LIS institutions such as the Department of Information Studies at the University of Tampere conduct more “mainstream” LIS research compared to academic LIS institution that are for example humanistic oriented,

such as the study program at the university of Tromsø (the study program of documentation science).

Library research is also affected by financial pressure, in that it forces library researchers to think new and innovative. A new trend in library research has come forth in a climate where libraries have to increasingly prove that they are worth the money invested in. Cost-evaluation is a part of every development decision, and lately very much so in libraries.

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Aftenposten.no

<http://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/Her-fotfølger-Deichmanske-bibliotekbrukerne-sine-8239892.html>

Aftenposten.no – Osloby nyheter

<http://www.aftenposten.no/osloby/nyheter/byutvikling/Byradet-har-konkludert-Slik-skal-nye-Deichman-tjene-penger-8451269.html>

Aftenposten.no – Osloby nyheter

<http://www.osloby.no/nyheter/Store-deler-av-nye-Deichman-skal-brukes-til-noe-annet-enn-bibliotek-8267330.html>

TTT homepage

<https://samstat.wordpress.com/ctt/>

Store Norske Leksikon

<https://snl.no/bibliotek%2Futdanning>

Statistics Norway - statistisk sentralbyrå

<http://www.ssb.no/en/omssb/om-oss/kort-om-ssb>

Utdanning.no

<https://utdanning.no/studiebeskrivelse/bibliotekarutdanning>

Ministry of Education and culture, Finland

<http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Verkkouutiset/2015/04/kirjastotilasto2014.html>

Libraries.fi – Finnish library services

<http://www.kirjastot.fi/fi/neuvosto/kirjastoalan-selvityksia#.VzxKvuTLmkr>

The library law of Norway

<https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1985-12-20-108>

The library law of Finland

<http://www.finlex.fi/sv/laki/ajantasa/1998/19980904>

The library law of Sweden

https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/sfs_sfs-2013-801/

The library law of Denmark

<https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/r0710.aspx?id=145152>

