

EDUCATION LIBRARIES —An International Perspective

by
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Abstract

This article is adapted from a paper originally presented in June 1997 in Seattle at the 88th Annual Conference of the Special Libraries Association.

A definitive explanation of what comprises an education library is followed by a description of methods used in seeking out such libraries on an international basis. By pursuing a specific research path, the mission, purpose, and goals, and history of each selected education library is surveyed, and the size, clientele, type of collection, services, publications, and databases are given a comprehensive examination.

When I first started working on this project, I was under the misapprehension that most countries in the world have education libraries, and if they do, it is a well-kept secret. Some informed me that I had chosen a very difficult topic, and discouraged me from pursuing it. Others were very interested in the topic and asked to share my research results with them. I am pleased to say that I did indeed find some countries with education libraries.

The following topics are covered in this paper:

1. Definition of an education library
2. Research path followed
3. List of questions posed to the education libraries covered:
 - 3.1 Mission of the library
 - 3.2 Goals of the library
 - 3.3 Purpose of the library
 - 3.4 History of the library
 - 3.5 Size of collection
 - 3.6 Type of collection – including specializations such as psychological tests, curriculum, textbooks
 - 3.7 Size and type of clientele served
 - 3.8 Hours of the library, borrowing privileges, ILL and other auxiliary services
 - 3.9 Publications of the library or center
 - 3.10 Web site, if any

Definition: An education library is a national, independent, well-equipped, well-endowed institution, dedicated to research and publication in the field of education. It provides materials to address the needs of educators, teachers, and government departments concerned with education.

Research path: The first step was to look at Concordia University's OPAC called CLUES. Some usable material was located, such as:

The World Guide to Special Libraries
Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers
The World of Learning

Subject Collections: A Guide to Special Book
Collections and Subject Emphases as Reported by
University, College, Public and Special Libraries
and Museums in the United States and Canada.

A search was conducted on LISA but no relevant information was found. Some of the libraries gleaned from these reference publications were contacted by fax, as most did not have e-mail addresses or web pages listed. Last but not least, the Internet was searched, and from the home web page of Concordia University, a connection was made to the University of London: Institute of Education Library and Media Services <http://www.ioe.ac.uk:80/> library. From this web page two education libraries were located – one in Hong Kong and one in Sweden.

The next step was to contact selected national libraries throughout the world. The idea was to find at least one education library per continent. This, unfortunately, was not possible. Some national libraries were contacted by e-mail; others had a web page listed. Some answered, some did not. Replies were received from Sweden, Ireland and Finland. No answers were received from Argentina, Austria, Mexico, The Netherlands or Japan. Most national libraries collect material relevant to their own countries, but they do not necessarily single out education, or concentrate on this topic.

International associations, such as CEPES, were also contacted by e-mail, as well as The UNESCO European Center for Higher Education. According to their replies, their activities are focused strictly on higher education. Therefore, they do not gather the type of information sought for in this paper. With the responses received, however, enough material was gathered in the following countries to make this paper possible: Finland, Sweden, Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia.

In Canada education is a provincial matter, and there are ten provinces. The National Library is located in Ottawa, the national capital. While some educational materials are accessible through this source, there is no national education library in Canada.

SWEDEN

National Library for Psychology and Education

Address: Frescati Hagväg 10, PO Box 50063,
S-10405, Stockholm

Web page: <http://www.sppb.se/indexeng.htm>

E-mail: sppb@sppb.se

Staff: 20 employees

Collection:

40,000 items are contained in the Nordic database PEPSY, with references in the field of education published in Nordic countries since 1980. Until 1989 this database was published in print, but according to recent information it has been discontinued. Participating in this database are five Nordic national libraries in education: Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland.

The PEPSY indexing languages are English – Danish – Finnish – Icelandic – Norwegian – and Swedish. Access to PEPSY is free of charge. The controlled vocabulary used is from the *European Education Thesaurus*. The host is JUL (Finland).

Publications:

Since its appointment as national resource library for education, sppb has also been responsible for the following databases: Australian Education Index; British Education Index; Canadian Education Index; ERIC; PsycLit; Swedish Bibliography of Popular Adult Education 1850-1950; references also registered in LIBRIS since October 1995.

The bibliography has been compiled by Ake K.G. Lundquist, and is based on the holdings of the University Library in Lund. This bibliography contains periodical articles, monographs and reviews published in periodicals. As of September 1996, there were 4500 entries in this bibliography. Some, but not too many, contain non-Swedish materials. Further information about this bibliography is obtainable from: Eric Fridén, e-mail: efn@sppb.se.

The National Library for Psychology and Education contributes to the Swedish bibliographic database with educational journal articles.

Educational Resources:

Important national educational resources available at sppb are:

Information Rosenbad, the Swedish government
Website Dept. of Education
National Agency for Education
Council for Renewal of Undergraduate Education
Educational Resources by the National Agency for Education

Important international resources available at sppb are:

General Education Resources
American Educational Research Association
Vose School Education Resources Page
Kid's Web – A World Wide Web Digital Library for Schoolkids
Online Educational Resources

FINLAND

Jyväskylän University Library

Web page: <http://www.bibelot.jyu.fi>

The Jyväskylän University Library (JUL) was founded in 1863 and is one of the largest research libraries in Finland. Since 1977 it has been the National Resource Library for Education, Sport Sciences and Psychology.

Mission:

The mission of the library is to provide information and interlibrary loan services, circulation of materials, and user instruction.

History:

In 1863 the library is founded as the Library of the Jyväskylän Teacher Training College, the collection consisting of 446 items, one staff and 40 students. In 1912, it becomes the Jyväskylän Research Library. The collection rises to over 5,000 items, and 3 staff. In 1919, the library becomes the legal depository library for Finland. In 1936, it is now called the Jyväskylän University Library (JUL), with a collection of 338,000 items, 17 staff, and 2,748 students. In 1977, JUL becomes the Finnish National Resource Library for Education, Psychology and Physical Education. In 1981 the legal deposit is extended to A-V materials. By 1993 the collection consists of 1.2 million items; the library staff has risen to 80 and there are 9,605 students. Current figures indicate a collection of 1.3 million.

Collection:

Besides Finnish books and periodicals, the library has monographs and periodicals in dozens of foreign languages as well as theses accepted by JUL. The holdings also cover scholarly and scientific publications, particularly in Education, Sport Sciences, and Psychology. In 1919 the library became the depository library for all Finnish publications. Audio-visual materials were added to the depository library in 1981, which also includes maps and newspapers.

The library has 30 - 40 CD-ROM databases, including ERIC, International ERIC, PsycLit, Sociofile, and Philosopher's Index as well as a couple of domestic databases. JUL is responsible for the PEPSY database, which is currently in the data center of the University. It has been decided to discontinue updating PEPSY because it is no longer valid. Nordic cooperation will continue in the form of web pages, which will contain the national databases.

Auxiliary Services and Opening Hours:

There are 5 branch libraries, each specializing in particular areas. They are as follows: AALTO Library: Literature and Linguistics and Teacher Education; Mattilanniemi Library: Social Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science; Sport Science Library: Sport and Health Sciences; Tourula Library: Media and Communication Studies and Continuing Education; Ylistönnrinne Library: Physics, and Chemistry.

On the web page is shown a very detailed timetable indicating hours when the branch libraries are open during the term and during vacations.

Publications:

JUL compiles an Educational Thesaurus and is currently preparing a virtual education library.

AUSTRALIA**Australian Council for Educational Research**

Address: 9, Frederick St.
Hawthorn
Victoria 3122
Australia

Information was received from the National Library of Australia stating that there is no National Library of Education in this country.

Research and Publishing:

This organization undertakes independent educational research and publishing in the following areas: books at all levels for teachers as well as for students and parents; books for psychologists, counsellors, and administrators. Also collected are educational and psychological tests.

Publications:

Australian Journal of Education
The Australian Education Index
Bibliography of Educational Theses in Australia
(Annual)
Research Information for Teachers

HONG KONG**The Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research (HKIER)**

Web page: <http://www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/hkier>

Mission and Goals:

Foremost, the goals of the Hong Kong Institute of Education Research are as follows: to help strengthen the role of the Chinese University in Hong Kong as the leading institution for educational research and addressing the needs of the teaching profession; to be an active consultative agent to international organizations, public agencies and local education bodies; to assist the Chinese University of Hong Kong in reaching out to local schools as well as overseas institutions; to initiate projects that will facilitate educational planning, produce policy alternatives and enlighten policy makers and members of the education profession; to serve as a central research facility and to create and support a climate wherein interdisciplinary research projects may flourish.

Objectives and Purpose:

The chief objectives of the Institute are: to conduct strategic research with strong policy implications for educational development in Hong Kong and China; to consolidate resources effectively and to facilitate the development of educational research; to disseminate research ideas and findings through its publication activities; to offer educational development programmes and consultative services; to promote the HKIER's international status and to attract more external funding.

History:

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Research was established in 1993. Its birth marked a significant development in the Faculty of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The Faculty of Education has played a leading role in teacher training and educational research in Hong Kong. Over the years the need for the establishment of an independent, well-equipped and well-endowed institution dedicated to research and publication in the field of education was felt more and more. The establishment of this institution is the result of the Faculty of Education's endeavors to foster teacher education, educational and curricular research. Today the HKIER is an independent research branch of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which is linked closely to the Faculty

of Education. Its founding was made possible by the generous support of the K.P. Tin Foundation and it is supported by means of private donations, University funds, research grants and revenues generated by the institute's professional education programmes and consultancy services.

Organization:

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Research comprises two sections headed by a director. An associate director manages each division, i.e. the Development Division and the Research Division. The Development Division is responsible for publishing journals in education, book series, and research monographs. It also facilitates the development of projects for the production of instructional and training materials. Consultative services, lectures, workshops and seminars to other educational institutions and also to government bodies in China are also offered. The Research Division oversees activities regarding the promotion, funding, implementation, and management of research programmes. It also organizes and sponsors conferences and seminars.

Publications:

Education Journal is published jointly with the Chinese University Press twice a year, in summer and winter. Its mission is to promote the exchange of ideas among practicing educators and educational researchers from Hong Kong and abroad. The *Education Journal* publishes articles on empirical and theoretical studies, research reports, commentaries, and book reviews. All of these cover a systematic analysis of educational processes and systems from different approaches and points of view.

SINGAPORE

National Institute of Education (NIE)

Address: Nanyang Technological University
-Bukit Timah Campus
Web page: <http://www.nie.ac.sg:8000/~wwwlib>

History:

Founded in 1950 as a library for the Teachers' Training College, the NIE is the largest education library in Singapore. It is located at Nanyang Technological University (Bukit Timah campus) and provides resources to support the teaching and research programmes in Arts, Education, and Physical Science. In 1988 the library was computerized, and its integrated library is known as ATLAS. The online catalogue provides information on the holdings of the Ministry of Education and the Instructional Media Library.

Collection:

This is comprised of 200,000 volumes and 1,000 journal subscriptions, mainly in the subject areas cited above. Also contained in the collection are ERIC documents, theses, curriculum resource materials for teachers, course notes, and examination papers. Access is also provided to fee-based online databases (i.e. Dialog and FirstSearch) and to regional databases such as REIN (Regional Educational Information Network). Launched in 1990, this database contains bibliographic records and full text of Ministry of Education policy statements, curriculum development at both national and local levels, and statistical information relating to the education system. Contributors to this database are SEAMEO member countries, i.e. Brunei Darulsalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

SEARRAG (South East Asian Research Review and Advisory Group), a database launched in 1989, serves as a clearinghouse for state-of-the-art reviews of educational research materials in Southeast Asia. Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, this database contains citations and conference proceedings contributed by national collecting centers in Brunei Darulsalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

Another database worth mentioning (in addition to Dialog and FirstSearch) is SILAS (Singapore Integrated Library Automation Service). It is a national database for Singapore libraries. The vast majority of the bibliographic records are from The Library of Congress, but a significant percentage is input from local libraries. The database indicates which library holds a particular item.

It is interesting to note that searches conducted by the library staff are charged at a flat rate of \$20.60 to students, per search, including the printing of up to a maximum of 50 citations.

Further details regarding the collection are provided floor by floor; e.g. the reference collection on the first floor also contains course notes, examination papers, instructional materials, microfilm, newspaper clippings, psychological tests, theses and dissertations. On the third floor the collection houses Children and Young Adult's books. In the Audio-Visual collection there are cassettes, compact discs, multimedia kits, slides, art reproductions, software, videocassettes, and videodisks. CD-ROMS such as ERIC, PsychLit, etc. are also available to the library users. At the moment there are electronic journals in the field of physics, but not in the area of education.

Library Clientele:

The library serves 7,600 users, mostly staff and students of the institute, but it also serves educational professionals in the Ministry of Education and reaches out to schools and other related organizations.

Opening Hours:

These are provided in great detail both for the academic year per semester and vacation times.

Publications:

Published by the institute are handbooks for staff and students, a guide to searching the online Chinese catalogue and Chinese accession lists 1990-present. Publications by the staff include:

JOBS (Jobs Orientation Backup System) – a Career Guide Creating Your Own Web Page
NICER Research Bulletin, v.1 no. 1-NIE
Centre for Educational Research
Principals' Executive Centre (PEC) Bulletin

CANADA

This paper would of course not be complete without mentioning Canada. In Canada education comes under provincial jurisdiction. The National Library, established in 1953, has three primary responsibilities: to collect, preserve, and promote access to Canada's published heritage; to foster library development across the country; and to encourage the sharing of resources among libraries.

The National Library is the nation's foremost centre for research in Canadian studies. Until recently the Library Development Centre, or LDC, was housed here. This Centre served professional librarians and included school and other professional materials, but it has been discontinued due to budgetary restraints. The collection has been merged with the general reference collection.

A children's literature service at the National Library serves schools and education collections throughout the country.

ONTARIO:

Six Ontario educational organizations have combined forces and pooled their resources to create the 4th all-new edition of EducationONEducation. This CD-ROM puts more than 12,000 Ontario curriculum resources at the fingertips of educators. It includes complete databases from the media sources used the most by Ontario teachers. These are:

Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques (CFORP)
 Ministry of Education and Training (MET)
 Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse (OCC)
 ONTERIS, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)
 Ontario Educational Software Services (OEES)
 TV Ontario

For the first time, this 1996 version includes a Common Search feature with Mac and PC (DOS and Windows) interfaces. A user can search for resources by subject, key word, or grade level in either English or French or both simultaneously. Complimentary copies of this CD-ROM have been distributed to more than 6,000 school resource libraries, school board media centres, libraries, faculties of education, and school board computer consultants in the province of Ontario. It can be ordered for \$24.95 including taxes and shipping.

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