

# Public libraries and the unemployed in Sheffield, United Kingdom: search strategy, learning review and bibliography

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**Submitted to:**

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## **1. The Introduction**

Name:	Mr. Zapopan Martín Muela Meza
Department:	Information Studies
Registration Number:	030305010
Topic of research:	Public libraries and the unemployed
Supervisor:	Prof. Dr. Bob Usherwood

I have an undergraduate degree in librarianship (bibliotecología) at the University Autonomous of Nuevo León in Monterrey, Nuevo León, México, a masters degree in library science at the State University of New York at Buffalo, NY, USA. I entered the Department of Information Studies at the University of Sheffield to do PhD studies on the public libraries fields under the supervision of Prof. Bob Usherwood. The topics I have chosen are related the core of my MPhil/PhD Transfer and to my PhD per se. In the MPhil/PhD I am assessing the needs and problems of the unemployed people at the Broomhall Community of Sheffield. In the PhD I will try to discover ways of how the public library or other sectors provide services to those people in order to satisfy their needs.

The methodology I am using for my projects is qualitative. I have made a research essay for my supervisor of 5, 000 words on the subject just clarify better which methodologies and methods to employ. Tthis paper can be accessed at: <http://www.geocities.com/zapopanmuela/qualitativemethodologyinlis.htm> . But in this module I did not include anything related to methodologies, so nothing from that work, which covered over 40 pertinent bibliographic records, was included here. My searches were more focused only on the research problem itself which is: first, which are the needs and problems of the unemployed people in Broomhall and the second part throughout the whole doctoral studies will be how those problems are solved or alleviated through the library service provision.

The following must be recorded:

The format you have adopted for your bibliography.

The format I adopted was bibliographic following the Harvard Style as explained at my department in the 2003-2004 Handbook for Research Students.

The major databases you have searched and relied on.

The major databases I relied on to search my information were: Star at the University of Sheffield, COPAC, LISA, Dissertation Abstracts, Index to Thesis (the British thesis database), the Publications Database of the Dept. of Information Studies at the University of Sheffield and other which supported electronic journals.

The style you have used to cite and list references in your literature review.

Harvard Style as explained at my department in the 2003-2004 Handbook for Research

Students.

The search engines you have used for your Internet comparison.

AlltheWeb and Google.

The subject gateways you have used for your Internet comparison.

Mainly Resource Discovery Network and from there pointed me out to several other gateways like AskJeeves and The Internet Public Library.

## **2. The search strategy and the learning review**

a. A brief statement of the topic of your literature search.

As explained in the introduction section, my research problem for the MPhil/PhD transfer is to find out about the problems and needs which are faced by the unemployed people in the Broomhall community of the Sharrow Ward. The masters like project would be extended in scope and geographical coverage in the PhD thesis per se, then the idea would be to correlate the findings of the needs and problems of the unemployed people and the role the public library and other organisms from the voluntary or private or other sectors play in order to cope or ameliorate these people's problems.

My supervisor since August 2003 has been helping me and guiding me to have as much focused as possible the problem of research, the terminology and methodology and all the process in full.

b. An explanation of your choice of information sources.

The first battle horse was the Departmental database. Then I moved to the OPACs both the University of Sheffield Library STAR and COPAC, then I moved LISA. I also looked through some Hispanic American indexes but I did not find any pertinent records good to mention. The best choice was LISA in order to know the LIS standardized terms of the descriptors. The first few findings guided me to time after time better results, avoiding serendipity at all times, always searching for a purpose, with a purpose, with a defined strategy and avoiding as much unnecessary surfing and browsing as possible in order to optimize time. The free and open Web was searched through AlltheWeb and Google

through the advanced search option.

- c. A list of key words and terms which you searched.

Most of the terms I used or a combination of them, both, using syntax proximity and Boolean logic operators:

## Search

### Results

(( 'Community-analysis' in DE) or ( 'Community-information-services' in DE) or ( 'Community-libraries' in DE) or ( 'Community-networks' in DE) or ( 'Community-programmes' in DE) or ( 'Computerized-community-information-services' in DE) or ( 'Consumer-health-information' in DE) or ( 'Ethnic-community-libraries' in DE)) and (( 'Employees-' in DE) or ( 'Employment-prospects' in DE) or ( 'Employment-vacancies' in DE) or ( 'Job-applications' in DE) or ( 'Job-hunting' in DE) or ( 'Unemployment-' in DE) or ( 'Unemployed-' in DE))

( 'Employees-' in DE) or ( 'Employment-prospects' in DE) or  
( 'Employment-vacancies' in DE) or ( 'Job-applications' in DE)  
or ( 'Job-hunting' in DE) or ( 'Unemployment-' in DE) or  
( 'Unemployed-' in DE)

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[Display](#)

( 'Community-analysis' in DE) or ( 'Community-information-  
services' in DE) or ( 'Community-libraries' in DE) or  
( 'Community-networks' in DE) or ( 'Community-programmes'  
in DE) or ( 'Computerized-community-information-services' in  
DE) or ( 'Consumer-health-information' in DE) or ( 'Ethnic-  
community-libraries' in DE)

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(librar\* and employ\*) in DE

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590  
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((('Public libraries' or 'Institutional libraries') and Unemployed)  
in DE

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((('Public lib

raries' or 'Institutional libraries') and (Unemployed or 'welfare services' or Handicapped or Isolated or Disadvantaged)) in DE

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1196Display

(Public-libraries; Unemployed-; Welfare-services;  
Handicapped-; Institutional-libraries; Isolated-;  
Disadvantaged-;) in DE

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a. A brief account of your searches.

I have several months doing searches about this research problem and about the methodology being used.

Sometimes some of the literature results used by an author are worthwhile reviewing, but this has not been commonly the case, because in most of the literature reviewed few authors have used qualitative research methodologies. Thus, keeping originality in the focus, scope and methodology of the research problem is highly considered to the time of searching for literature, that is, although no one author might do the same type of research in the same way as other, still trying to figure out to find more innovative, creative and insightful views of the same problem is always at stake in all aspects of the process; the literature review research is one of the pillars of this project.

b. An account of your logging techniques.

I regularly login through the portal of the Library, although I have set already accounts for Athens as well.

c. A record of how you saved your search results.

This record I maintain it mainly in the same LISA database. I have set a permanent search



until 31 December 2006. Any one with access to the LISA database through WebSPIRS (Silver Platter Information Retrieval System) can go to the section of Load History and then it loads prior searches one has done. In this case by entering this email as follows: [Zapopan.Muela@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:Zapopan.Muela@sheffield.ac.uk) the historic searches pop up then one chooses which one to open, notice that the Z and M are case sensitive, it should be exactly like that.

d. An evaluation of the information sources you used and the results you obtained.

The results obtained are rather qualitative than quantitative.

From all the 75 references, only three were obtained through the open free Web. Two are books from pertinent academic sources, one from Great Britain and the other from Finland. The other reference is an article from another respected academic source from Murcia, Spain.

The remaining 72 records were obtained from the Departmental Database, STAR, and LISA in these common two steps: first the reference was found then the material retrieved physically either in a form of monographs, thesis, pamphlets, etc. from the libraries' stacks or as journal articles through the original journal articles. Most of the records from LISA was nearly impossible to retrieve them or read them.

All the records retrieved here are peer reviewed records, thus this is a guarantee that the information is of the high standards as far as a library and information science standards is about. Since the whole process of research is rather qualitative than quantitative, a strict and rigorous observance of the pertinence of the information being used is highly taken into consideration. It is more important the precision, pertinence and quality of the advancement than the speed or abundance; it goes *festina lente* as Romans said, in haste but slowly, that is, consistently, but slowly.

It is admitted before hand that this exhausting literature review process shown in this excellent course, needs to cover more sources of information that might have been left out. This module has been of great value and help for this project, and certainly was one of the best choices suggested by my supervisor.

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