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# Information commons service model and community colleges in New Jersey

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INFORMATION COMMONS SERVICE MODEL AND
COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN NEW JERSEY


by
Mary E. Moody


A Thesis


Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
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of
The Graduate School
at
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May 1, 2008

Approved by _____

Date Approved　MAy 15, 2008

# ABSTRACT

Mary E. Moody

INFORMATION COMMONS SERVICE MODEL
AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN NEW JERSEY
2007-2008
Dr. Marilyn Shontz
Masters of Arts in School and Public Librarianship

The purpose of this study was to determine if characteristics of the information commons model were being adopted by community college libraries in New Jersey. The study examined how closely these characteristics matched the models represented in the current four-year college and university literature. Email questionnaires were sent to library directors of community college libraries in New Jersey. The intention of the survey was to ascertain the library structure, budget, and staffing of community college libraries in New Jersey. Community college directors were asked to report on services their libraries provided and to rate library services commonly associated with an information commons service model. The results of the survey confirmed that New Jersey community colleges had incorporated some aspects of the information commons service model.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to dedicate this to my daughters Kelly and Katie and give sincere thanks to all of my family and friends that provided moral support throughout my graduate studies.

My Mom and sisters Terri and Laurie without your support I would have never went back to school. Betsi, Helen, and Bill your friendship, humor, and encouragement has meant so much to me.

Special thanks to Barbara Laynor and Ann Kishbaugh and all of the Rohrer E-Library staff. I truly appreciate all the guidance and kind words you have given me throughout the years.

My sincere thanks to Professor Shontz and Professor Willett for all your support and dedication to the program.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The information commons can be defined as "…a new type of technology-enhanced collaborative facility on college and university campuses that integrates library and computer application services" (Reitz, n.d.). The information commons has evolved from the anticipation and response to user needs. According to the current literature, faculty and students want electronic resources, production software, and collaborative meeting spaces in their libraries. A majority of articles on the adoption of the information commons model focused on four-year colleges and research universities. There is a scarcity of articles that look at the information commons model as it might serve students in two-year community colleges.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2006), "…community college students are more likely to be older, female, and from low-income families, and less likely to be white." In the early 1990s, the term "digital divide" was coined; it described the lack of access to information and communications technologies by segments of the community. The population described by the NCES of community college students resembles the same population that resides on the less fortunate side of the digital divide. Technology is a vital piece to the information commons model. Many articles discussed how the academic library must play catch up to their tech savvy students. This is in stark contrast to community college students. According to Santos

1

(2003), those least likely to have access to computers and new information technologies are most likely to enroll in community colleges. *From Digital Divide to Digital Democracy* (2003), discussed how community colleges can help close the digital divide. Unfortunately, there is no mention of community college libraries and their potential role in closing the gap.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine if characteristics of the information commons model were being adopted by community college libraries in New Jersey. The study examined how closely these characteristics matched the models represented in the current four-year college and university literature. Questionnaires were sent to library directors of all community college libraries in New Jersey. The intention of this study was to help fill a gap in the dialog regarding the information commons in academic libraries.

## Definitions of Terms

Collaborative meeting spaces: An area that is designated for collaborative study by students, faculty, or staff (Barton, & Weismantal, 2007).

Community colleges: Educational institutions which provide post-secondary education; also known as 2-year colleges (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006).

Community college libraries: Institutions involved in the dissemination of information; an intermediary between the user [student, faculty & community] and the information created (Rubin, 2004).

Digital divide: A term to describe the lack of access to information and communications technologies by segments of the community (Digital Strategy, 2007).

Digital literacy: The ability to use digital technology, communication tools, and create information (Digital Strategy, 2007).

Information commons: A technology-enhanced collaborative facility on college and university campuses that integrates library and computer application services (Reitz, n.d.).

Learning resource centers: Some community college libraries used this term instead of library; its use is in decline. The intention of calling the library a learning resource center was to emphasize the different types of resources and services offered to students and faculty (Moore, 2006).

Learning commons: According to Roberts (2007, p. 805) "...this is the natural progression from the information commons model...". The learning commons emphasizes knowledge creation while information commons emphasize knowledge seeking. The learning commons has also been used as a synonym for information commons.

Library directors: Persons responsible for resources and expenditures of the community college library.

New Jersey community colleges: Two-year colleges listed in *Peterson's Guide to 2-year Colleges* (2008).

Productivity software: Computer programs for word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations tools (Graham, 2003).

User center service: A policy where user needs drive the direction of service (Haas & Robertson, 2004).

Assumptions and Limitations

The scope of this study was limited to community college libraries in New Jersey. This did not represent community colleges throughout the United States. This study primarily focused on the technology piece of the information commons discussion. In the literature, the information commons was referred to as an information hub, information arcade, or learning commons. This paper used information commons; which was the most often used term in the literature. There was an assumption that the demographics reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics accurately portrayed students in New Jersey. There was also an assumption that the population of "have-nots" described in the literature on the digital divide was accurate. Responses from library directors did not necessarily reflect the attitudes, opinions, and actions of librarians under their supervision. It was assumed that the library directors were honest and forthcoming.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction to the Information Commons Service Model

In the late 1990s, academic libraries began revaluating their role on campus. The information commons service model, also known as information arcade, collaborative learning center, and information hub, was introduced into the literature. According to *ODLIS: Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science,* (Reitz, n.d.) an information commons is a technology-enhanced collaborative facility on college and university campuses that integrates library and computer application services. An information commons brings together "...resources and services typically found in an academic library's reference department and the campus computer lab" (Haas, 2004, p. 11). Church (2002, p. 58) described an information commons as "a space that simultaneously supports access, collaboration, and production in scholarly endeavors."

The information commons is "...in response to and in anticipation of user needs" (Dallis & Walters, 2006, p. 248). Students want electronic resources, Internet access, and computers in their campus libraries. There are articles throughout the library literature discussing the expectations of "millennials", "net-gen" and/or "generation Y" college students (Gardner & Eng, 2005; Lippincott, 2006). According to a speech given by John O'Brien to the League for Innovation, "...as millennials reach 30 and move into faculty positions, colleges should be prepared to meet the needs of these tech-savvy

people..." (Foster & Read, 2006, p. 36). Students and faculty have high expectations of their college libraries' electronic services. The Pew Internet & American Life Project (Jones, 2002, p. 2) reported:

> One-fifth (20%) of today's college students began using computers between the
>
> ages of 5 and 8. Eighty-six percent of college students have gone online,
>
> compared with 59% of the general population. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of
>
> college students say they use the Internet more than the library, while only 9%
>
> said they use the library more than the Internet for information searching.
>
> Eighty percent of college students use the library less than 3 hours a week.

According to Samson & Oelz (2005, p. 347), "...library user demand for the integration of electronic resources with production software and technical support evolved into the formation of the information commons."

<div align="center">Information Commons in Academic Libraries</div>

The literature on information commons predominantly focused on four-year colleges and universities. There were numerous case studies of the implementation of an information commons in four-year academic institutions (Barton & Weismantal, 2007; Church, 2005; Crockett, 2002; Dallis & Walters, 2006; Graham, 2003; Greenwell 2007; McKinstry & McCracken, 2002; Samson & Oelz, 2005). One source, *The Information Handbook* (2006) primarily focused on four-year institutions; there were only two community colleges mentioned throughout the book. Haas & Roberston (2004), conducted a survey of academic libraries that had implemented an information commons model; the participants were all four-year institutions.

Community College Libraries

In the past, community college libraries were referred to as learning resource centers, educational resource centers, and instructional resource centers. These terms are declining in use. In 2004, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) revised the standards for libraries in higher education to include community college libraries. Prior to 2004, there were separate standards for community, junior, and technical college learning resources programs (Association of College & Research Libraries, 2004). There has been a long history of community college libraries' offering integrated services. According to Bailey (2005, ¶7), "… community college libraries have set a pre-information commons precedent for the integration of library and related services…"

A common theme in the information commons literature was the concept that the information commons model was in response to user needs and technology (Cowgill, Beam & Wess, 2001; MacWhinnie, 2003). Community college students are not as tech savvy as their four-year counterparts. According to Santos (2003), those least likely to have access to computers and new information technologies were most likely to enroll in community colleges. Compared with students attending four-year colleges, community college students tend to be from low-income families, older, female, and less likely to be white (National Center for Educational Statistics, n.d., p.9). The digital divide described the lack of access to technology due to economic, educational, social and geographic reasons. The demographics of students attending community colleges are similar to the "have-nots" in the digital divide. The *Access in the Information Age: Community Colleges Bridging the Digital Divide* (Santos, 2001) stated that stand alone public access

computers on campus were not the solution. There must be technical support for users. Unfortunately, there was no discussion on how community college libraries can or should provide computers that integrate electronic resources with production software and the support for both resources.

Information Commons Model and Community College Library Dichotomy

The information commons model was described as an inventive and flexible approach to serving the academic community. The information commons model was a scalable model that can suit various size libraries. A major component of the information commons model was to provide a technology enhanced facility. The lack of articles in the literature made it difficult to ascertain what community college libraries provided in terms of technology. Throughout the literature there was an underlying sentiment that academic librarians needed to play catch up to their tech savvy students. If so, community college librarians have a greater task as community college students are not as digitally fluent and less likely to own a computer or other information technologies compared to their counterparts in four-year institutions.

Summary

There was a limited amount of research pertaining to community college libraries. According to Moore (2006, p.43), "…research is necessary to discern whether or not the information commons, learning commons, or a similar models will be adopted as the model for future community college libraries…" Shill & Toner (2004) suggested researchers examine the creation of an information commons and/or the provision of productivity software on library computers' impact on library usage. This paper

examined if community colleges in New Jersey adopted any of the characteristics of an

information commons model.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The purpose of this applied research study was to determine if community

colleges in New Jersey were adopting characteristics of the information commons service

method. A review of the literature was undertaken. Data were collected using an

electronic survey. In general, surveys are used for descriptive, explanatory, and

exploratory purposes (Moore, 2006). According to Powell & Connaway (2004, p. 87),

"...purposes of descriptive surveys usually are to describe characteristics of the

population of interest, estimate proportions in the population, make specific predictions,

and test associational relationships." An online survey was designed to elicit descriptive

statistics from directors of community college libraries. Surveys are a common research

methodology used to collect data from disperse geographic locations. Haas & Robertson

(2004), used a similar methodology when conducting their study of information

commons in Association Research Libraries members.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if characteristics of the information

commons model were being adopted by community college libraries in New Jersey. The

study examined how closely these characteristics matched the models represented in the

current four-year college and university literature.  The intention of this study was to help

fill a gap in the dialog regarding information commons and community college libraries.

## Population and Sample

The population selected for this study was directors of community college

libraries in New Jersey.  *Peterson's Two-Year Colleges (2008)* was the source used to

obtain the listing of colleges.  The population was purposive and non-random.  Due to the

parameters of the study the population and sample were the same.  There were twenty-

three community colleges identified in New Jersey.  The findings represented the

respondents to the survey.

## Method of Data Collection

Data for this study were collected electronically.  An introductory email (see

Appendix A) was sent to all directors of two-year colleges in New Jersey.  The

introductory email included information about the purpose of the study, a statement of

confidentiality, and a link to an online survey (see Appendix C) hosted by

SurveyMonkey.com.  The surveys were designed, stored, and analyzed using Survey

Monkey.com.

## Instruments Used

The reasons for using an electronic survey were twofold.  To begin with, a strong

component of the information commons service model was technology.  It seemed only

fitting that an electronic means would be appropriate for data collection.  Secondly,

electronic surveys can be completed and submitted quickly.  The survey questions

included closed ended questions, Likert-scale, multiple choice, and categorical questions.

The survey questions were based on concepts found in the information commons service model. The questions were designed to elicit demographic, informational, and attitudinal data. The closed ended question lent itself to data analysis.

## Variables

The independent variables were the responses submitted by the community college directors. The dependent variables were based on the concepts from the literature on information commons service model. There are three basic tenants of the information commons paradigm.

- Information commons model is a technology enhanced facility.

- Information commons model allows for both reference and computer assistance for students.

- Information commons model includes collaborative learning spaces.

## Reliability and Validity

The survey was pre-tested by community college librarians, Dr. Shontz, and library students currently enrolled in the thesis class at Rowan University. The research method was similar to a previous study by Haas & Robertson (2004). This study was designed to be repeated with another population of community college libraries.

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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Procedures and Methods

An invitation (see Appendix A) to the online survey was emailed to all

community college directors in New Jersey. The email included a brief letter of

introduction and a link to SurveyMonkey.com. SurveyMonkey.com is commercial

online survey vendor. The survey was available from February 14, 2008 to February 22,

2008 and there were ten respondents. A second invitation (see Appendix B) was sent to

directors who did not respond. The survey was re-opened on February 24, 2008 to March

7, 2008 and there were five more respondents. The online survey consisted of fourteen

questions (see Appendix C). SurveyMonkey collected the responses and provided

statistical data. Further analysis of the data was conducted with Microsoft Excel.

Microsoft Excel was used to compute descriptive statistics and present finding in charts

and tables.

Response Rates and Adjustments

The *Peterson's Guide to Two-Year Colleges (2008)* was used to determine the

population of this study. The guide listed 22 two-year colleges in New Jersey. Two of

the colleges listed in the guide were excluded from the study; The Assumption College

for Sisters and Berkely College. The Assumption College for Sisters was an institution

that had an enrollment of 33 women. Berkely College library served a four-year college

program.  Fifteen questionnaires were returned and useable.  The response rate for this study was 75%.

## Presentation of Results

One of the objectives of the survey was to determine the structure, budget, and staffing of academic libraries serving two-year colleges in New Jersey.  A little over half the libraries consisted of one main library serving the college community (see Figure 1). Four libraries reported that their total annual budget was between $0 - $250,000.

*Figure 1*.  Library Structure of Community Colleges in New Jersey
n=15
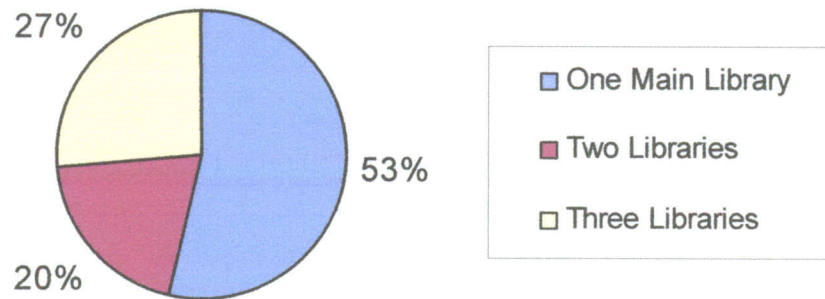


Three libraries reported an annual budget between $251,000-$500,000.  Two libraries reported an annual budget between $500,001 - $750,000.  Five libraries reported a budget over $750,000, and one participant did not report their budget (see Figure 2).

*Figure 2.* Total Annual Budgets of Community Colleges in New Jersey
n=14
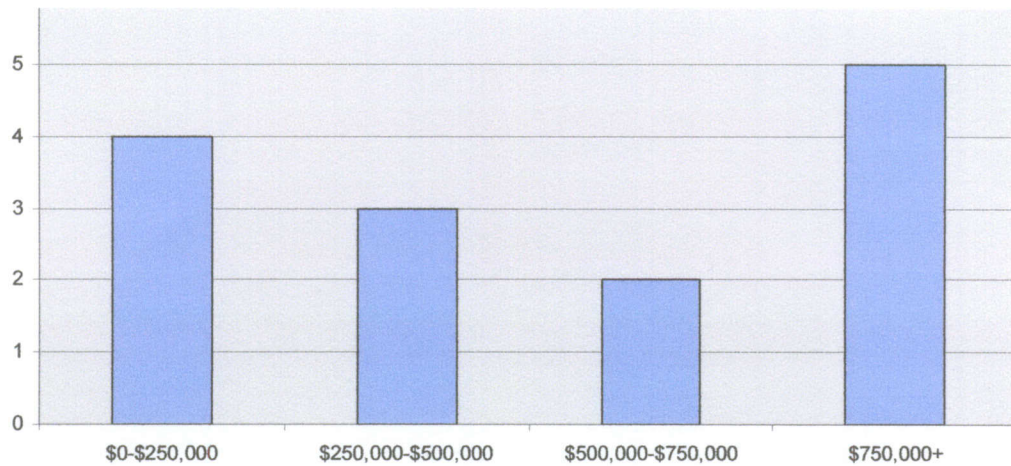


Seventy-three percent of the libraries reported that they had 2 – 5 librarians on staff.

Twenty-percent of the libraries reported 6 – 9 librarians on staff. Seven percent reported

having over 9 librarians on staff (see Figure 3).

*Figure 3.* Number of Librarians in Community College Libraries in New Jersey
n=15
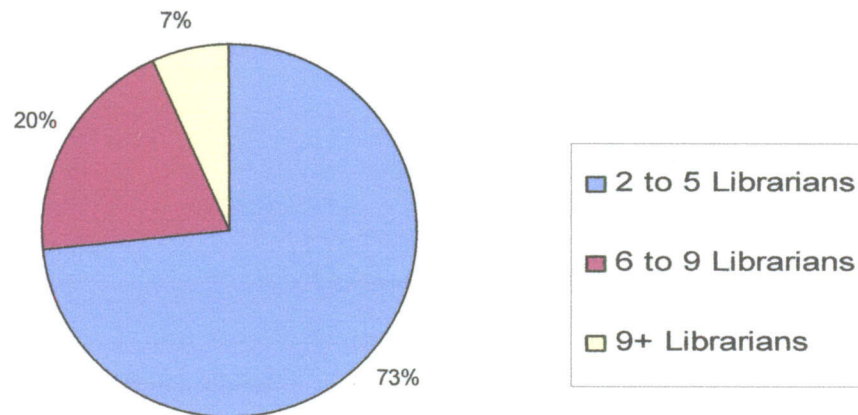


One component of the information commons was the physical structure of the

library. Nine respondents reported having collaborative meeting spaces. Four

respondents reported having social function spaces, and three reported having a snack

bar. Respondents could choose more than one answer (see Figure 4).

*Figure 4.* Facilities in Community College Libraries in New Jersey
n=15
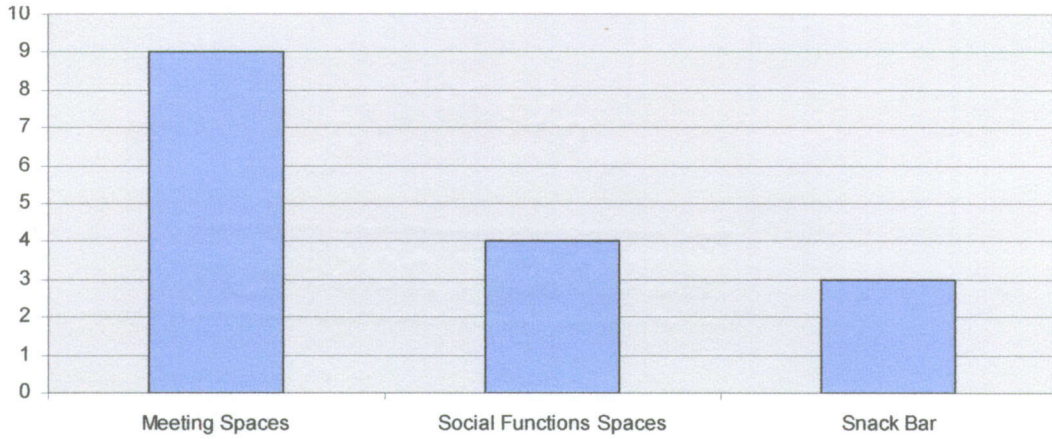


Information commons is often defined as a technological enhanced facility.

Only 1 out of 15 respondents reported that they did not provide any site with wireless

Internet technology (see Figure 5). All respondents had student computers

*Figure 5.* Wireless Internet Access in Community College Libraries in New Jersey
n=15



- All Library Facilities Had Wireless Internet
- Only in One of the Libraries
- Only in Two of the Libraries
- No Wireless

21
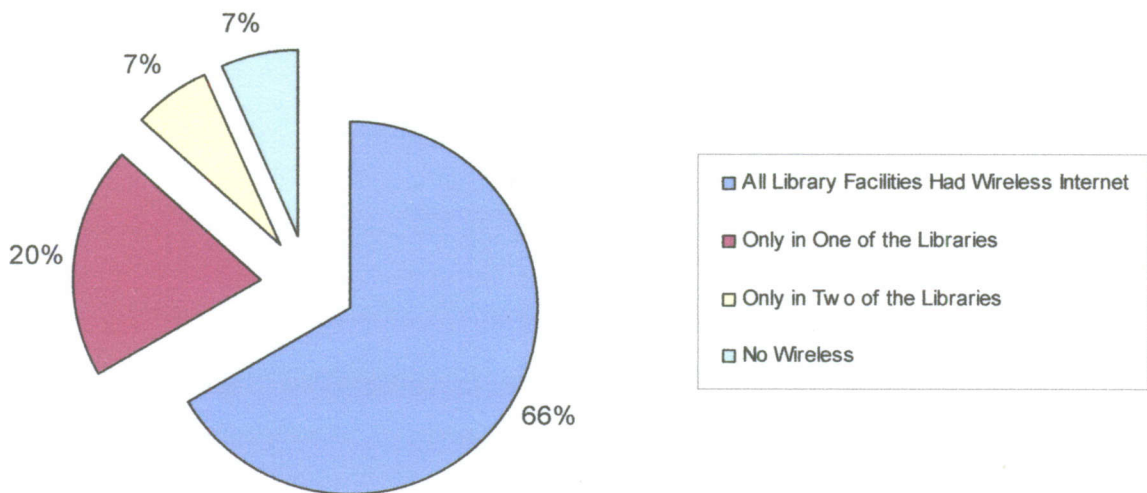
(see Figure 6). Only one library reported that their student computers did not provide

*Figure 6.* Number of Student Computers in Community College Libraries in New Jersey
n=15
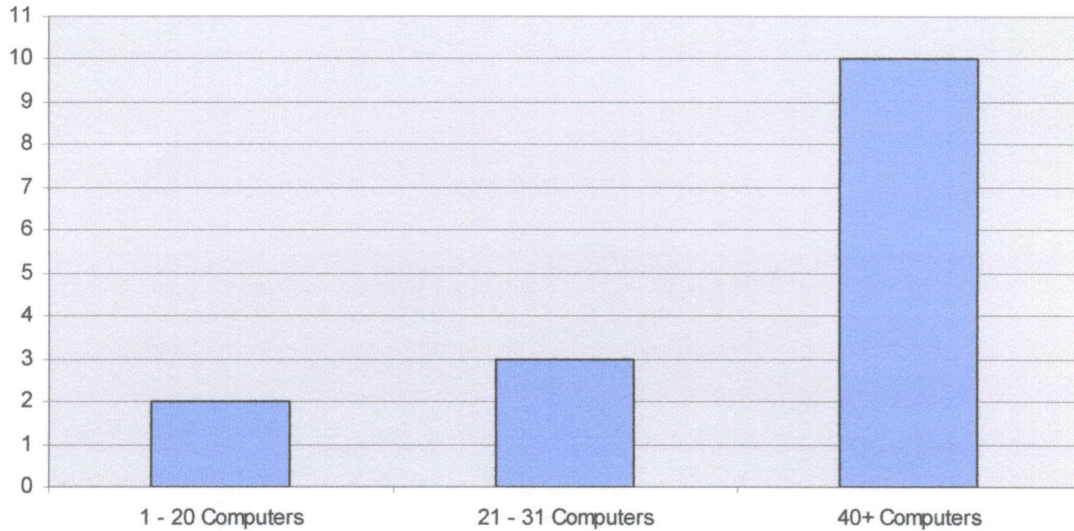


access to library resources and productivity software (see Figure 7). All of the student

*Figure 7.* Percentage of Student Computers with Electronic Resources and Productivity
Software in Community College Libraries in New Jersey
n=15
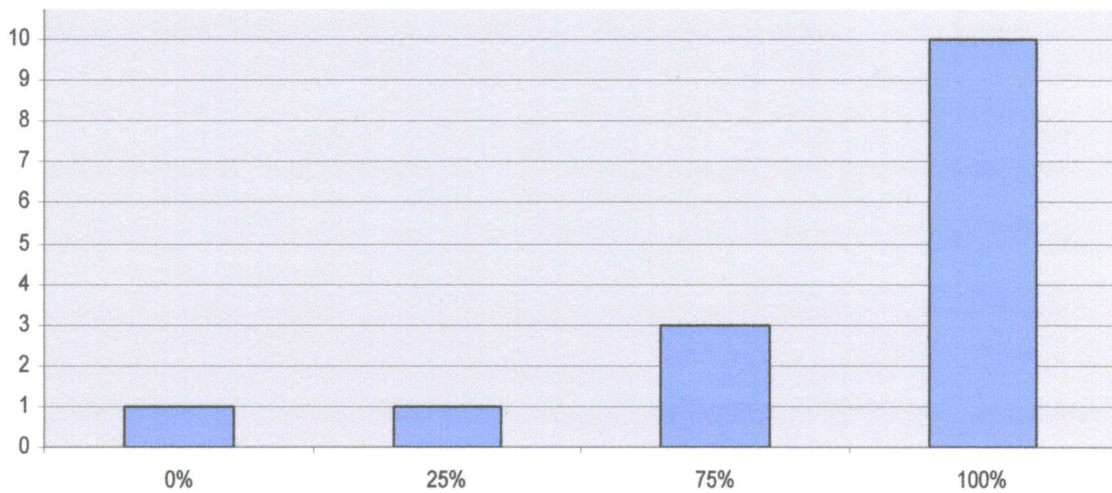


computers that had productivity software included word processing, presentation

software, and spreadsheet software (see Figure 8).

*Figure 8.* Types of Software Installed on Student Computers in
Community College Libraries in New Jersey
n=14
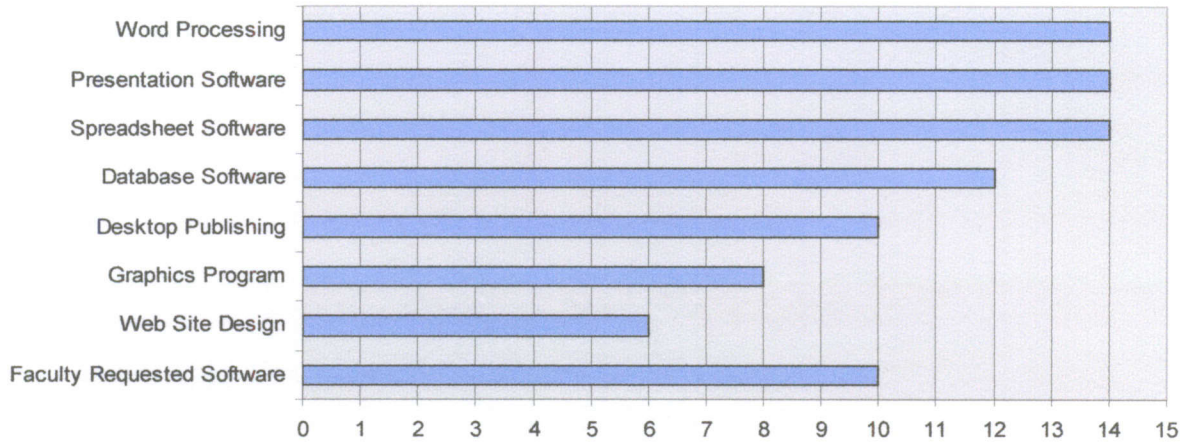
One hundred percent of the 11 respondents desired word processing, presentation,

and spreadsheet software for student computers. One library director reported that she

did not want any software on student computers. Four participants did not answer this

question (see Figure 9).

*Figure 9.* Types of Software Desired by Respondents for Student Computers
n=11
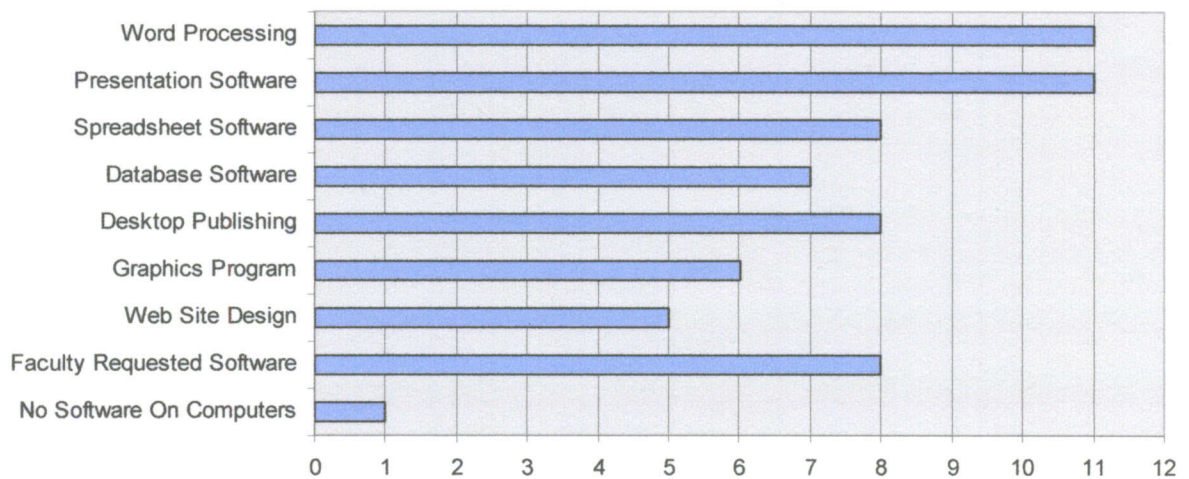
The information commons model included responsibilities and roles of librarians.

Sixty-one percent of respondents reported that IT staff not affiliated with the library were

responsible for hardware issues. Twenty-two percent reported library IT staff were

responsible for hardware (see Figure 10). In regards to software questions, one

*Figure 10.* Community College Staff Responsible for Hardware Issues
n=15



library out of the 14 respondents reported that the librarians and library staff did not

answer software questions. There were only 14 responses to this question because one

participant did not have any software on student computers (see Figure 11).

*Figure 11.* Community College Staff Responsible for Software Issues
n=14
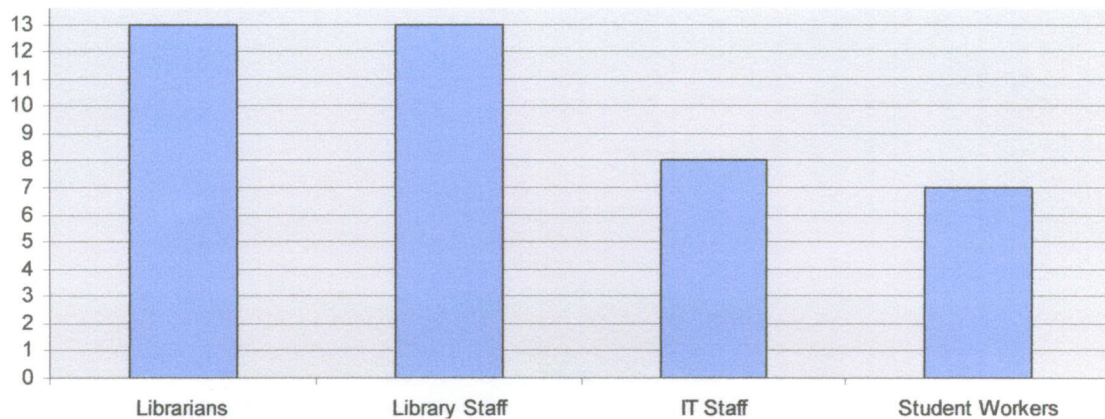


Electronic library resources require a level of technical skills. The survey asked respondents if librarians assisted with the technical aspects of using electronic resources, i.e., exporting citations from databases, emailing electronic journals, transferring articles onto portable storage devices, and cutting and pasting text into word processing software. Fourteen out of the fifteen respondents reported that their librarians assisted with exporting citations from databases, emailing electronic journals, and transferring articles onto portable storage devices. Twelve out of the fifteen also assisted students with copying and pasting text from electronic resources into word processing software (see Figure 12).

*Figure 12.* Number of Community College Libraries Where Librarians Assisted Students with Technical Aspects of Electronic Resources

n=15
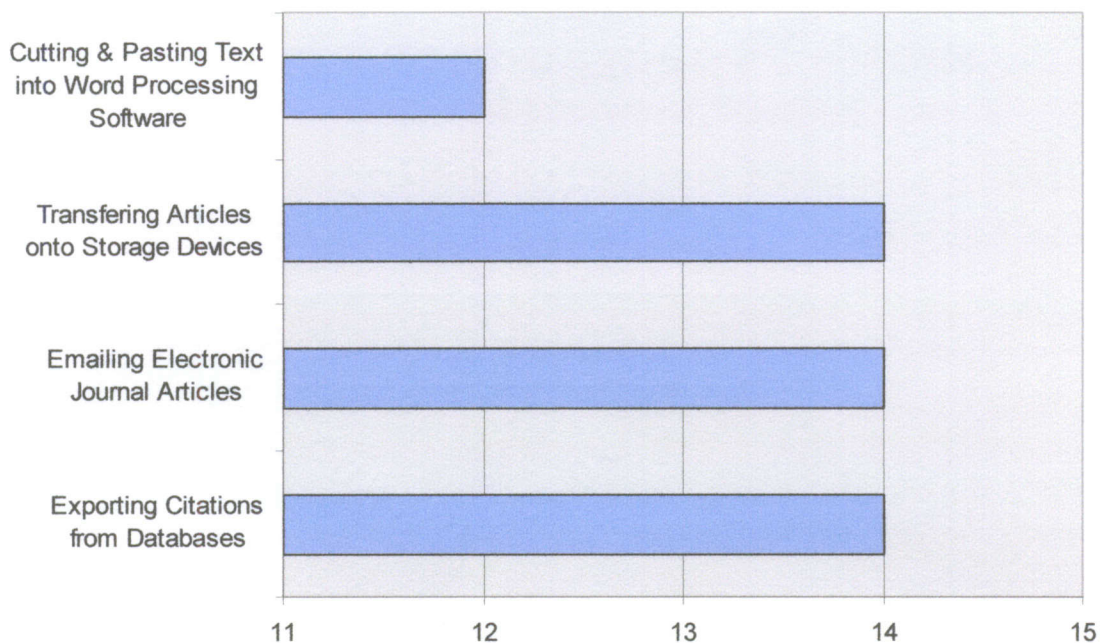


The information commons model had various types of designations throughout the literature. Five respondents reported that they designated an information commons in their facility. Three respondents reported that they had an e-library and three libraries reported they have a learning resource center. One respondent reported that they use the learning assistance center designation (see Figure 13).

*Figure 13.* Community College Library Designations Associated
with the Information Commons Service Model
n=15
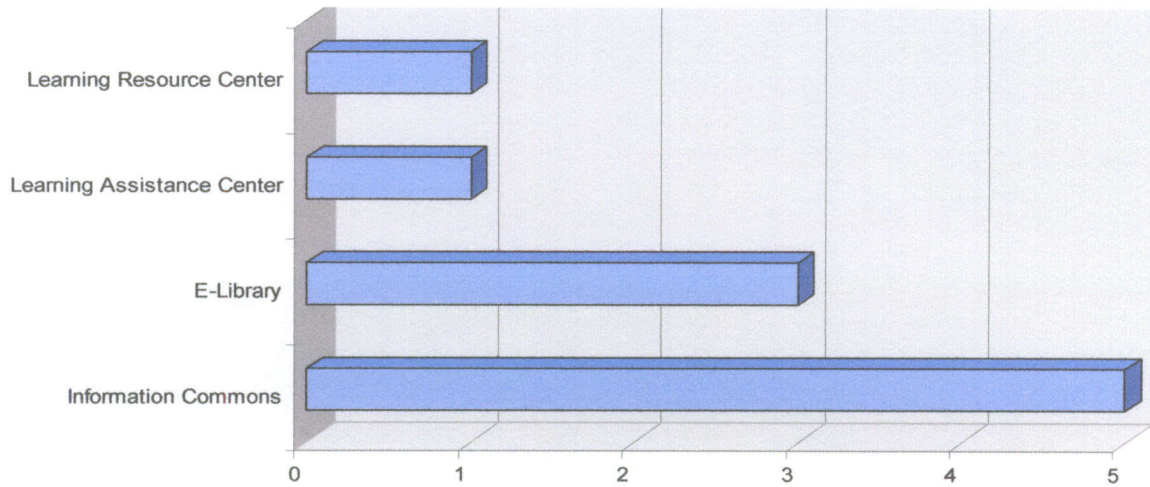
The last question on the survey asked directors to rate services commonly

associated with the information commons service model. One respondent did not rate

any of the services; one participant did not rate electronic resources and seating

arrangements. One hundred percent of the respondents reported electronic resources and

Internet access were vital to library services, and rated social spaces as not vital to library

services. Sixty-four respondents reported that wireless Internet was vital to library

services. Information commons seating arrangements was reported as vital to library

services by 46.2%. Services such as online reference, production software, collaborative

meeting spaces, and library presence in the computer labs all fell in the 20% to 30%

percent range for vital to library services. Seventy-one percent rated social function

spaces as somewhat to not important to library services (see Table 1).

*Table 1*. Directors' Rating of Services Associated with the Information Commons Model
n=14

| | Electronic Resources | Seating Associated with Information Commons | Internet Access | Wireless Internet | Online Reference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vital to Library Services | 100% | 46.2% | 100% | 64.3% | 21.4% |
| Important | 0% | 38.5% | 0% | 35.7% | 42.9% |
| Somewhat Important | 0% | 7% | 0% | 0% | 35.7% |
| Not Important | 0% | 7% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| | Production Software | Collaborative Meeting Spaces | Information Commons Designation | Library Presence in Computer Labs | Social Spaces |
| Vital to Library Services | 21.4% | 35.7% | 35.7% | 21.4% | 0% |
| Important | 64.3% | 35.7% | 28.6% | 35.7% | 28.6% |
| Somewhat Important | 14.3% | 21.4% | 28.6% | 21.4% | 35.7% |
| Not Important | 0% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 21.4% | 35.7% |

Summary

There were 20 community college libraries in New Jersey that met the criteria of this study. Fifteen library directors completed the online survey; which resulted in a 75% response rate. All of the surveys were used in this study. The responses revealed that community college libraries in New Jersey were not monolithic. Directors of community college libraries had similarities and differences in what they view as vital to library services.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine if characteristics of the

information commons model were being adopted by community college libraries in

New Jersey. The study examined how closely these characteristics matched the

models represented in the current four-year college and university literature.

Questionnaires were sent to library directors of all two-year college libraries in New

Jersey. There was a 75% percent response rate. Sixty-three percent of the

respondents requested a copy of the survey. The intention of the survey was to

answer the following questions.

1. Had community college libraries incorporated characteristics of the

    information commons service model?

2. What were the similarities and differences between four-year college

    libraries and two-year college libraries incorporation of services

    associated with the information commons service model?

Community College Libraries in New Jersey

Out of the 15 respondents 8 reported that their community college library

facility consisted of one main library. Three respondents reported that they had 2

library facilities and four reported 3 or more library facilities. Half of the respondents

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reported budgets under $500,000 and half reported budgets over $500,000. The majority of libraries reported having 2 – 9 librarians on staff. Only one library reported having over 9 librarians on staff. Forty-three percent reported having collaborative meeting spaces for students and faculty in their libraries. Nineteen percent reported having social function spaces, such as an art gallery or retail shop. Fourteen percent reported having a snack bar/cafe within their facility. Clearly, New Jersey community college library facilities and budgets cannot be viewed in monolithic terms. Services go from one main library with a budget under $250,000 to library services with three facilities and a budget over $750,000.

Similarities Between Four-Year College Information Commons

and Two-Year College Libraries in New Jersey

The importance of electronic resources, Internet, and wireless Internet was found throughout the literature on academic libraries. When asked to rate services, New Jersey community college directors gave Internet, electronic resources, and wireless Internet the highest ratings of importance. Reitz (n.d.) defined the information commons as "…a new type of technology-enhanced collaborative facility on college and university campuses that integrates library and computer application services." All of the community college libraries had student computers in their libraries. Ninety-three percent of survey participants reported that they had wireless Internet in at least one of their facilities. Ninety percent of survey participants also reported that they had collaborative meeting spaces.

Haas & Roberston (2004), conducted a survey of libraries that had implemented an information commons model; the most common software found on

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student computers were word processing, spreadsheet software, and to a lesser extent presentation software. Sixty-seven percent of community college respondents reported that all of their student computers had productivity software. One hundred percent of the student computers with productivity software had word processing, spreadsheet software, and presentation software.

The information commons service model reexamined the roles of librarians. One aspect of the information commons was the combination of reference and computer software assistance. Eighty-five percent of respondents reported that librarians answered software questions in their community college libraries. Ninety-three percent of the participants reported that librarians assisted with technical aspects of using electronic resources, i.e., exporting citations from databases, emailing electronic journal articles, and transferring articles onto portable storage devices.

Differences Between Four-Year College Information Commons

and Two-Year College Libraries in New Jersey

Response to user needs and technology was the theoretical underpinning of the information commons service model. Throughout the literature on information commons in 4-year colleges and universities there was a sentiment that the libraries need to catch up to their tech-savvy students. This is not the case for community college students. According to Santos (2003) those least likely to have a computer were most likely to enroll in community colleges. All college students want computers and access to electronic technologies in their libraries. The reasons why were different. The 4-year college students tend to have high electronic expectations; while 2-year community college students need access to computers.

Community college libraries have a longer history of providing integrated

services than their 4-year college counterparts. Learning resource center and learning

assistance center were common names for community college libraries. Sixty-seven

percent of the respondents used a designation that was indicative of integrated

services. Thirty-three percent of the libraries incorporated the information commons

designation.

Many four-year colleges and universities with information commons used

students to assist with software questions. Only 50% of the responding community

college directors reported using students to assist with software questions.

Ratings of Services Associated with the Information Commons Service Model

Directors of community college libraries were asked to rate library services

associated with the information commons service model. The rating scale consisted

of four choices: vital to library services, important to library services, somewhat

important, and not important. All of the respondents rated electronic resources and

Internet access as vital to library service. Wireless Internet was considered vital by

64% of the respondents. Generally, electronic services were given a higher rating

than the physical construct of the space, i.e., seating associated with information

commons, social spaces, and a specific designation of an information commons. This

is not surprising considering that community college students were less likely to own

a computer as compared to their 4-year counterparts (Santos, 2003).

Significance of Results

New Jersey community colleges had incorporated aspects of the information

commons service model. Church (2002, p. 58) defined an information commons as

"...a space that simultaneously supports access, collaboration, and production in scholarly endeavors." Fourteen out of the 15 respondents reported having a space that met the criteria described by Church. Bailey (2005,¶7) described community colleges as a "pre-information commons" that was not "...the integration of services conceptually and intellectually based on learner needs in a high technology environment." The results of this survey did not support this sentiment. The technology aspects of the information commons service model loomed large in the survey results. Thirty-five percent of survey respondents reported having an information commons. Twenty-one percent reported having an e-library; a term that was synonymous with information commons.

## Recommendations for Further Study

Electronic resources were considered vital to library services by community college library directors and their 4-year college and universities counterparts. Only 21.4% of community college directors rated production software as vital to library services. It would be interesting to survey librarians who use the electronic resources with students on a daily basis. There are numerous examples of how productivity software enhances subscription based resources. For example, ArtStor, an image database is most effective if you can copy and paste the image into a word processing or presentation software. Artstor does not have an email option; if you use Artsor with a computer that does not have software it is not being utilized to its full potential. EBSCOhost has a citation feature which allows users to copy and paste a citation of an article. A feature much appreciated by students. If you have word processing capability users can simply copy and paste the citation into their word

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processing document. NoodleBib, an online citation tool, will alphabetize and format a reference page and export it into a Microsoft word document. Many databases allow users to send articles via email. Some databases, such as LexisNexis, send articles as an attachment in a Micorsoft word document. Obviously, it is difficult to open a word document if you do not have software installed on the computers. The problem is compounded when you consider that community college students are not as tech-savvy as their four-year counterparts. Research on electronic resources and the role of productivity software warrants further study.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL

Introductory Email Sent 2/14/2008

Dear [Director's Name];

I am a graduate student in Rowan University's Master's degree in librarianship program and am currently working part-time at Camden County College Libraries (both E-Library & main branch). I am in the process of writing my master's thesis about the information commons service model and community college libraries in New Jersey. I am writing my thesis under the direction of Dr. Marilyn Shontz. If you would like to contact Dr. Shontz she can be reached at the following email: shontz@rowan.edu

I would greatly appreciate if you would answer a brief online survey. All responses to the survey will be kept anonymous and confidential. If you would like a copy of the results please include your email at the end of the survey.

The survey can be accessed by the following URL link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=BuAnD4xF_2fZuU0eSR7Ooyaw_3d_3d

I would appreciate your response by February 22, 2008. If you have any questions, please email me: moodym17@students.rowan.edu


Thank you for your assistance,

Mary Moody
Rowan University

APPENDIX B

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Hello [Director's Name];

About two weeks ago I sent an email regarding a survey on the information commons service model and community college libraries in New Jersey. If you have already completed the survey; please disregard this email and thank you.

I have extended the survey until Friday March 7, 2008. The survey can be accessed by the following URL link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=BuAnD4xF_2fZuU0eSR7Ooyaw_3d_3d

I would greatly appreciate your input. All responses to the survey will be kept anonymous and confidential. If you would like a copy of the results please include your email at the end of the survey.
I am writing my thesis under the direction of Dr. Marilyn Shontz. If you would like to contact Dr. Shontz she can be reached at the following email: shontz@rowan.edu

If you have any questions, please email me: moodym17@students.rowan.edu


Thank you for your assistance,

Mary Moody
Rowan University

APPENDIX C

SURVEY

Information Commons Service Model and Community Colleges in New Jersey

1. What is the structure of your library services?
   - One library/learning resource center
   - Two library facilities (may include any information commons, learning resource center, E-Library etc.)
   - Three or more library facilities ((may include any information commons, learning resource center, E-Library etc.)

2. What is your total annual budget for all library facilities?
   - $0 - $250,000
   - $250,000 - $500,000
   - $500,001 - $750,000
   - $750,001 +

3. How many librarians are on staff (please include all facilities)?
   - 1
   - 2-5
   - 6-9
   - 9+

4. Do any of your library facilities have the following?
   (check all that apply)
   - Social function spaces, such as an art gallery or retail shop
   - Collaborative meeting spaces for students and faculty
   - Snack bar/café

5. Do you have wireless Internet?
   - Yes, all library facilities
   - Only in one of our facilities
   - Only in two of our library facilities
   - No wireless Internet

6. Who is responsible for hardware issues in your library?
   - IT library staff member
   - IT staff not affiliated with library personnel
   - Librarian

7. How many student computers do you have in your library facilities?
   - 1-20
   - 21-30
   - 31-41
   - 40+

8. What percent of student computers have access to both electronic library resources and productivity software (word processing, presentation software, etc.) within your library facilities?
   - 0%
   - 25%
   - 50%
   - 100%

9. What types of software applications are installed on your student computers? (check all that apply)
   - Word processing (e.g. Microsoft Word)
   - Presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint)
   - Spreadsheet software (e.g. Microsoft Excel)
   - Database software (e.g. Microsoft Access)
   - Desktop Publishing (e.g. Microsoft Publishing)
   - Graphics program (e.g. Photoshop)
   - Web Site Design (e.g. Microsoft FrontPage)
   - Class software loaded at the request of faculty

10. Who answers software questions? (check all that apply)
    - Librarians
    - Library Staff
    - IT Staff
    - Student Workers

11. Do your reference librarians assist students with the technical aspects of using information found with online resources?
    - Exporting citations from databases
    - Emailing electronic journal articles/resources
    - Transferring articles onto a portable storage device (e.g. flash drive)
    - Cutting and pasting text into a word processing program

12. What type of software applications would you like on your student computers? (check all that apply)
    - Word processing (e.g. Microsoft Word)
    - Presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint)
    - Spreadsheet software (e.g. Microsoft Excel)
    - Database software (e.g. Microsoft Access)
    - Desktop Publishing (e.g. Microsoft Publishing)
    - Graphics program (e.g. Photoshop)
    - Web Site Design (e.g. Microsoft FrontPage)
    - No software applications

13. Does your library use any of the following designations?
   - Information Commons
   - Information Arcade
   - Information Hubs
   - Learning Commons
   - E-Library
   - Learning Assistance Center
   - Learning Resource Center
   - Electronic Information Center
   - None of the above

14. Please rate the following services:

| | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Vital to Library Services |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Electronic Resources | | | | |
| Seating associated with information commons spaces (e.g. mixture of desk style & comfortable soft seating, informal seating, such as bean bag chairs or diner style booths etc.) | | | | |
| Internet Access | | | | |
| Wireless Internet | | | | |
| Online Reference (i.e. email, chat) | | | | |
| Productivity software on student computers | | | | |
| Collaborative meeting spaces for students and faculty | | | | |
| Information commons designation within a library (i.e. references services, computers with Internet and productivity software in a specific area) | | | | |
| Library presence in computer labs outside the library (handouts, posters, etc.) | | | | |
| Social function spaces (café, art gallery) within the library | | | | |