

PROMOTING THE STATUS OF RESEARCH



When it comes to the promotion and marketing of libraries and library and information services there is an abundance of literature, workshops and promotional self-help packages. In today's climate of funding cuts, it is almost *de rigueur* to have book launches, cooking demonstrations, digital printers, or whatever the latest fad is, to attract patrons in to the library. These are perfectly understandable tactics to keep libraries a vibrant, welcoming community space but Terri Pamment suggests another aspect of promotion, that of research.

The creation and promotion of research is central to the growth of any profession; it is an essential tool to address an ever-changing environment, and to anticipate and prepare for future trends. This is an area where an individual can make their mark and promote not only their work, but their profession.

Historically, McClure and Bishop suggested in their paper on the status of research in library and information science in 1989 that the promotion of LIS research is restricted by fundamental conflicts about the nature, role, purpose and value of research, attributed to our profession's historical stance of being more concerned with preserving knowledge than with creating it.

McClure and Bishop suggest 'to raise the status of research five key issues need to be addressed: image and perceived importance of the status of research, research competencies, communication between researchers and practitioners, continuing research on the status of LIS research, and strengthening commitment to research in professional associations.'

Bhatti and Chohan used that last point as a basis for a study published in 2012, on the inadequacies of the Pakistan Library Association in realising an active research role in the LIS profession. In their study, based on a literature review, they make a number of suggestions to the Association to foster research in LIS. All resources cited were external to Pakistan and included IFLA, the American Library Association and a number of Australian researchers.

By now you may be wondering about the relevance of a 25 year old paper and a recent study on the shortcomings of the Pakistan Library Association. The first demonstrates the LIS research environment as it used to be and the second, unfortunately, indicates how it still is in societies less fortunate than Australia.

The purpose of this article is to unashamedly promote all that is good in research in today's Australian library and information industry. Although the industry has advanced since 1989, there are still opportunities for improving the image and importance of research and encouraging communication between researchers and practitioners.

ALIA not only supports research but actively contributes through the ALIA Statement on Research, the ALIA Research Advisory Committee and the ALIA Research Grant Awards. Nominations for the Awards are open 1 February – 30 June each year (check the ALIA website for more information).

Become involved in your profession and consider using research as a means to promote your passion and to further your professional development.

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FROM OUR COLLECTION:

Bhatti, Rubina and Chohan, Tariq Mahmood. 2012. Assessing the Role of Library Associations in Promoting Research Culture in LIS. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. Paper 839.

Available at bit.ly/1G1svEc

McClure, Charles R, and Bishop, Anne. 1989. The Status of Research in Library/Information Science: Guarded Optimism. *College and Research Libraries*, v 50 no 2 pp 127-143.

Available at: bit.ly/1GFP14M