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LI811XA: Assessing Information Needs and Evaluating Information Services

Assignment 2: Eudora Public Library Assessment

12-14-2009

Abstract

This study seeks to characterize the Eudora, Kansas community and learn how users utilize the library's resources. To assess the information needs of this community, a survey was issued to Eudora Public Library users and a series of observations was performed during November 2008. Survey results establish a profile of library users, and these results demonstrate that users emphasize the role of the collection. The most significant finding from the observations concerns the role of the staff and the main desk. The implications of these findings are discussed and specific recommendations are made.

Eudora Public Library Assessment

The Eudora Public Library is a small community library in the rural town of Eudora, Kansas. After more than thirty years in their current 2,500 square foot facility, the library is struggling to meet the needs of its growing community (State Library of Kansas, 2007f, p. 6). Currently, the library does not have room to expand its collection or add additional computers, and meeting space has already been repurposed to make room for a growing children's collection (Oaks, 2008). A recent article in *The Eudora News* put the library's space challenges into perspective:"According to Kansas Public Library statistics from 2007, there are 46 libraries in northeast Kansas. Eudora serves the 12th largest population, but the size of the library puts it ahead of just 11 other communities"(Oaks, 2008). Despite these limitations, the library does not currently have the resources or support to move into a larger facility (M. Evinger, personal communication, November 17, 2008). In addition, the library has a very limited and outdated web presence. Currently, their web presence consists of a few brief pages of content that were last updated in 2005. To remedy this, the library is in the process of developing a new site. The challenges described above make this an ideal time to evaluate this community. In light of these challenges, this study seeks to better understand the information needs of Eudora Public Library users. To this end, this study analyzes community, input, and output statistics to create a profile of the community and the library. This is followed by analysis of survey and observation methods used to assess the information needs of this community. Finally, the library's role in the community is discussed and recommendations for improving service are made.

Community profile

In 2007, the total population of Eudora was 7,419, up from 4,307 at the time of the 2000 U.S. Census (State Library of Kansas, 2007a, p. 289; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The population of the state of Kansas is expected to continue to rise, and the U.S. Census Bureau projects an increase of 76,693 residents over eight years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). It is very likely that the city of Eudora will continue to feel the effects of this burgeoning population.

Overall, statistics suggest that Eudora is a relatively homogeneous community. On the last census, an overwhelming 75.1% of residents reported their race as "white" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Only 1.8% of residents speak a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), and the majority of residents live in traditional households headed by a married couple. Of the 1,607 households in Eudora, 40.2% include a child under the age of 18. 53.8% of households are headed by married couples, and 12.6% are headed by female householders (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The average household size was 2.63 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Despite the seeming lack of diversity, Eudora does possess other unique and notable characteristics.

Relative to the rest of the United States, Eudora is a young community. The median age of Eudora residents is 31; whereas, the median age of United States residents is 35 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). 69.3% of residents are over the age of 18, and 10.5% of residents are over the age of 65. Both statistics are slightly below the national averages, suggesting that Eudora has a relatively large youth population and a relatively small senior population.

The city's affluence is increasing, as the median household income seems to be climbing. The estimated median household income for Eudora, Kansas grew from 41,713 in 2000 to $52,100 in 2006. The median household income in the state of Kansas was only $45,478 in 2006

(Onboard Informatics, 2008, para. 3), placing Eudora significantly above the average. Furthermore, in 2000, only 4.3% of families and 6.4% of individuals in Eudora fell below the poverty level, which was nearly half the national average that same year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). While residents' affluence may be increasing, census statistics suggest that residents' income may be derived from industry outside of the community. The mean travel time to work is 22.8 minutes (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Given Eudora's side proximity to Lawrence and the Kansas City metro area, this suggests that many residents are employed outside of Eudora and commute to work. Interestingly, the community's educational attainment is relatively low. Only 16.2% have earned a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Again, this is a relatively low percentage compared to the national average. While this suggests a thriving blue collar industry, the three major industries in Eudora are retail, finance, and information (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Community lifestyle

Clustering systems of targeted marketing analysis "[identify] community lifestyle characteristics for extremely finite segments of the population" and can be a valuable community assessment tool for public libraries (Davis, 1993, p. 324). Claritas Inc.'s (2007) You Are Where You Live website provides searchable Potential Rating Index for Zip Markets (PRIZM) market segmentation research on consumer lifestyles. According to Nielson Claritas (2008), "PRIZM segments are memorable and summarize complex consumer profiles in a way that is intuitive and easy to communicate" (para. 3). The majority of the lifestyle segments in Eudora fall into PRIZM's "Country Comfort" cluster, which broadly consists of predominantly white, middle-class, married, homeowners with comfortable to upscale lifestyles (Claritas, 2007). Country Comfort clusters tend to enjoy family and home-based activities more than other clusters. You Are Where

You Live (2007) reveals the five predominant PRIZM NE lifestyle segments in the 66025 zip

code: Big Sky Families, Country Casuals, Fast-Track Families, Mayberry-ville, and New

Homesteaders.

Big Sky Families are characterized as being middle to upper class, rural, young families

(Weiss, 2000, p. 13; Claritas, 2007). Big Sky Families are typically employed in blue collar or

service jobs, and usually have some college education (Claritas, 2007). Country Casuals are

characterized as dual-earning Baby Boomer empty nesters (Claritas, 2007). Unlike Eudora's other

lifestyle clusters, Fast-Track Families generally possess "upscale incomes, numerous children,

and spacious homes" (Claritas, 2007). They enjoy a blend of the latest technology and their "rustic

locales" (Claritas, 2007). The Mayberry-ville cluster possesses the following traits: rural location,

upper-middle class, over 55 years of age, homeowners, blue collar and service jobs, high school

graduates, and mostly white (Claritas, 2007). The New Homesteaders are "Young, upper-middle-

class families seeking to escape suburban sprawl" (Claritas, 2007), which is appropriate given

Eudora's proximity to Kansas City. Certainly not all residents fit into these categories; however,

these clusters are a memorable and useful way of considering the dominant lifestyles in the

community.

Community resources

Because Eudora is a small, rural community, residents must rely heavily on resources in

surrounding communities, particularly Lawrence and the Kansas City metro area. As stated

above, statistics show that Eudora residents commute an average of 22.8 minutes to work (U.S.

Census Bureau, 2000), and based on the resources available in the community, it is very likely

that they commute for other community resources as well, perhaps even for its library resources.

The following statistics reveal areas in which this community relies on the resources of other communities, especially Lawrence.

There is one local newspaper in Eudora, *The Eudora News*. There are not any local radio or television stations; though, there are 13 radio stations in nearby Lawrence and Baldwin City, and there are approximately 9 television stations in Overland Park and Shawnee Mission. Eudora does not have any local book, video, or music stores. There are, however, ten bookstores, eight video stores, and eight music stores in Lawrence.

There are four local government offices in Eudora: the City of Eudora, United States Postal Service, Eudora City Police Department, and the Eudora Township Fire Department. However, the number of medical care organizations in Eudora is relatively limited. A search of http://www.superpages.com/ reveals four medical care establishments in Eudora: Rock Family Chiropractic, Mateo Chiropractic, Eudora Family Care LMH, and Eudora Nursing Center. The nearest hospital is located in Lawrence.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that there are four public schools in Eudora, Kansas: Nottingham School (kindergarten-grade 2), Eudora West Elementary School (grade 3-grade 5), Eudora Middle School (grade 6-grade 8), and Eudora High School (grade 9-grade 12) (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). The Eudora Public Library is the only library in the city. The next closest public library is the Lawrence Public Library, and the closest academic library is at the University of Kansas.

Library history

The first efforts to start a library in Eudora, Kansas began as early as the 1920s, when volunteers staffed the school's library to lend books to local residents during the summer break. In 1945, volunteers acquired the library's first independent facility only to see it closed five years

later due to "insufficient space for books" (Eudora Public Library, 2005, para. 1). The library was housed in a mobile facility near the school as fundraising and volunteer efforts to support the fledgling library continued. When sufficient funds were raised in 1967, the library moved into a permanent facility, hired its first librarian, and joined the Northeast Kansas Library System. In 1976, the library moved to its current site adjacent to downtown. Today, the library employs a director, a children's librarian, two circulation clerks, and a library aide. The library is governed by a township board, which is comprised of five community leaders that convene monthly in a public forum.

Mission and service

The Public Library association has identified eight roles for public libraries, which function as easily understood descriptions of how libraries can concentrate their resources and services to serve their patrons (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 4). To identify the roles the library fulfils, it is necessary to consider the Eudora Public Library's mission, hours, and services. The library's stated mission stresses broad educational and recreational goals. The mission statement reads, "The mission of the Eudora Public Library, a tax-supported community resource, is to provide informational, educational, and recreational services, materials, and programs to patrons of all ages." This statement and provides a clear indication of the library's intent to focus on meeting the information needs of patrons of all ages. The library offers books, large print books, audio books, magazines, videos, DVDs, federal and state tax forms, and computer and internet access. They allow books and audio materials to be checked out for two weeks at a time, magazines may be checked out for one week at a time, and videos and DVDs are loaned for three days at a time. This policy suggests that videos and DVDs are in higher demand.

The library holds a preschool story time every Wednesday morning, which is directed at pre-school children between the ages of three and five. The annual attendance at these children's programs is 1,210 (State Library of Kansas, 2007g, p. 306). The library also hosts annual summer reading programs for preschoolers through young adults. In 2008, this program attracted approximately 300 participants (Oaks, 2008). A look at the library's inputs and outputs illustrates several trends that are indicative of how users interact with the library and are also telling of the library's actual role within the community.

Input analysis

The most traditional approach to evaluating information agencies is input analysis (Powell, 2006, p. 105), and the most popular and useful input measurements are the library's expenditures and the size of its collection. In 2007, the total operating expenditure of the Eudora Public Library was $111,148 (State Library of Kansas, 2007d, p. 238). Given the town's population of 7,419, the total expenditures per capita was $14.98. This means that the library annually invests in $14.98 of materials and services for each person in the community.

As of December 31, 2001, Eudora Public Library's collection totaled 12,242 bound volumes. Their audio collection consisted of 210 items, their video collection totaled 685 items, and the library subscribed to 65 periodicals (State Library of Kansas, 2007b, p. 255). Comparing these numbers to the number of persons the library serves shows the library held 1.65 items for each resident in the community. That same year, the library provided 8.76 periodical subscriptions per 1,000 residents in the community.

Output analysis

It is important to consider what the Eudora Public Library is able to achieve with these resources. According to Lancaster (1993), input data "can only be evaluated in terms of the role

that [it] plays in achieving desired outputs" (p. 3). Outputs such as number of library visits, total circulation of materials, number of interlibrary loans, collection turn over, reference transactions, and computer and internet availability will give a clearer picture of the library.

Despite its small size and limited resources, the Eudora Public Library is open a surprising 68 hours per week, with an annual total of 2,704 hours. In a typical week in 2007, the library received approximately 400 visits, totaling 20,800 visits for the entire year (State Library of Kansas, 2007g, p. 306). The library visits per capita that year was 2.8. This statistic relates the number of annual visits the library receives to the total service population (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 6). Putting this into perspective, Eudora's library visits per capita is low when compared to statewide visits per capita during the same year; during 2007, the average library visits per capita for the state of Kansas was 6.3 (State Library of Kansas, 2008, para. 1). This might easily explained by the city's small population.

As with visits per capita, the circulation per capita rate is low in comparison to the statewide average. In 2007, the average number of items loaned to the population of Eudora was only 3.32 items per person compared to an astounding 11 items per person for the state of Kansas (State Library of Kansas, 2008, para. 2). This low number may be similarly justified by the city's small population. The collection turnover rate was 2.01 in 2007, which shows that the collection is used frequently. The turnover rate "indicates how often each item in the collection was loaned, assuming that the circulation was evenly distributed among the library's holdings" (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 6). Furthermore, the number of circulations per visit, was 1.18 in 2007. This figure emphasizes the importance of the collection to the library. Eudora Public Library patrons are not limited to the facility's holdings, as the library has an interlibrary loan agreement, which provides patrons with access to holdings at other libraries. In 2007, they

loaned 341 items to other libraries, and they received 397 items via interlibrary loan (State

Library of Kansas, 2007a, p. 289). Relative to other rural Kansas libraries, this number appears

to be low.

In a typical week, there are 50 reference transactions, with an annual total of 2,600 (State

Library of Kansas, 2007g, p. 306). The reference transactions per capita was .35 in 2007. There

are several factors that can influence this figure, for example: autonomous library users, the

quality of the card catalog, staff's approachability, and the "perception of whether the patron thinks

the library will have the answer" (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 6).

The Eudora Public Library has a total of nine computer terminals. Of the nine terminals,

four provide internet access to the public, but only two, which are located at the main desk,

function as online public access catalogs (OPACs) (State Library of Kansas, 2007c, p. 272). The

library's online public access is supported by Follett (State Library of Kansas, 2007f, p. 6).

Needs Assessment

The focus of this assessment was the community's information needs; consequently, no

attempts were made to evaluate satisfaction with existing facilities and services as part of this

assessment. This study seeks to answer two core research questions related to the challenges the

library is currently facing: How does the community of Eudora use the public library? What role

do other information sources, such as other libraries and the internet, serve for this community?

Survey and observation were the primary evaluation methods used for studying this community.

When developing the survey instrument (Appendix A), the questions focused on users'

interactions with the library and their information seeking behavior. To encourage participation

and increase feedback, the survey was limited to one page front and back, and questions were

numbered 1 through 17 and were arranged into two columns on each page. The design of the

questions was based on specific types recommended by Baxter, Hughes, & Tight (2006).

Category, list or multiple choice, and open-ended were the primary question types utilized. The

one ranking question utilized proved problematic, as will be discussed in the results. The surveys

were kept at the main service desk and distributed to patrons by the library staff during

November 2008. A large box was conveniently placed near one of the exits for patrons to submit

their completed surveys.

In addition, each researcher visited the site for one-hour observations. The director of the

library, Marlene Evinger, indicated that Mondays are the busiest day of the week. Consequently,

one observation was conducted on a Monday afternoon after school, and the other observation

was conducted on a Monday evening shortly before closing. Detailed notes (Appendix B and C)

were recorded of both interior and exterior environment, a precise timeline of activity, and a

summary of key observations. The observation findings revealed some inadequacies of the

survey questions that may impact the results of this assessment.

Results

A total of twenty completed surveys were collected and analyzed. Demographic

questions regarding household income proved problematic as five respondents elected not to

answer this question. Additionally, the only question in the survey which asked respondents to

rank their choices was answered inconsistently. This question was answered as a list rather than a

ranking by 8 of the 20 respondents. One respondent ranked only three options, seven others

selected multiple options in no particular order, and one did not complete the question at all. For

the respondents who ranked their answers, these results were grouped into two categories: the

highest ranked choice and the choices that represented the top-3 ranked choices. Figure 1 shows

these results and indicates that the internet is a primary source of information seeking.
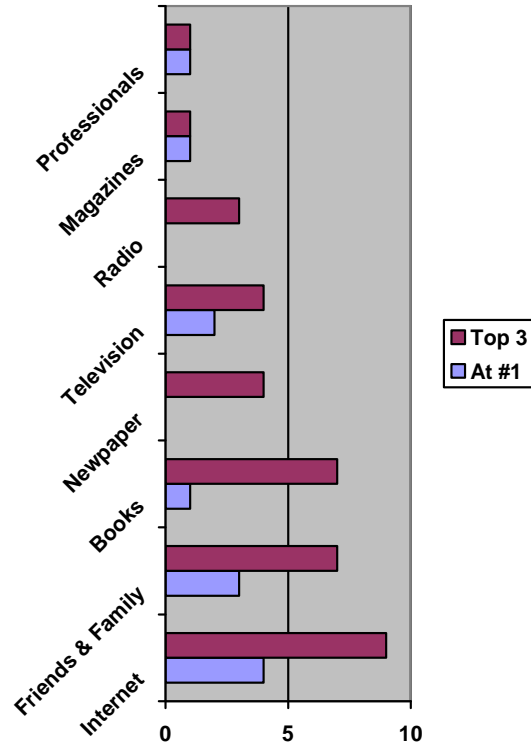
Figure 1 - Primary ranked sources of information

Next in an even match among the top-3 information sources were family and friends and books. While books may be surprising choice for many libraries who provide many of their resources online, for this community, whose OPAC is only available to library staff, that result it not surprising. The remaining survey responses support this finding as well, and it speaks to the unique role this library plays within the community.

The demographic data revealed the respondents to this survey were primarily married females with children under the age of 18 living in the home. There was a widely variable age range among respondents. Figure 2 shows a significant number of respondents were under 18 years of age. However, the largest representation consisted of respondents between the ages of 30 and 50. The results also indicate that users are predominately college graduates and maintain a household income over $40,000.
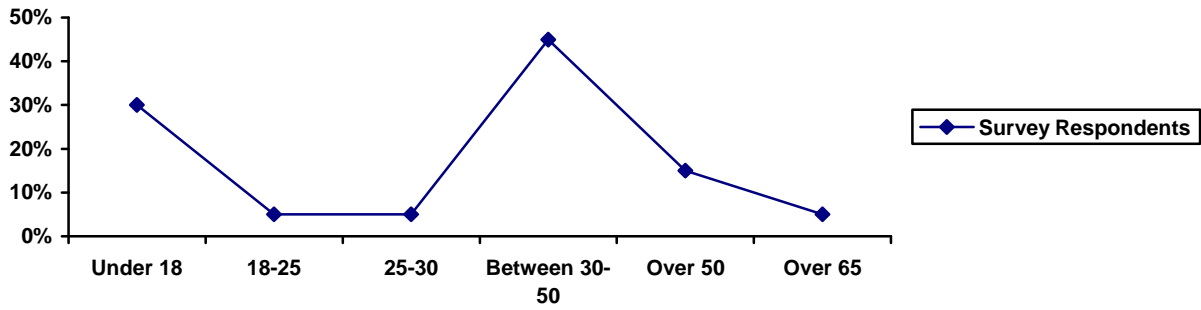
Figure 2 - Age distribution

Furthermore, respondents of this survey are frequent library users. They all possess a library card, and most indicated visiting the library *a few times a week*. Figure 3 further illustrates the various choices these library users make with regard to accessing information. These results indicate a significant use of the library's physical space and collections as opposed to its web site, which some respondents did not even know existed.
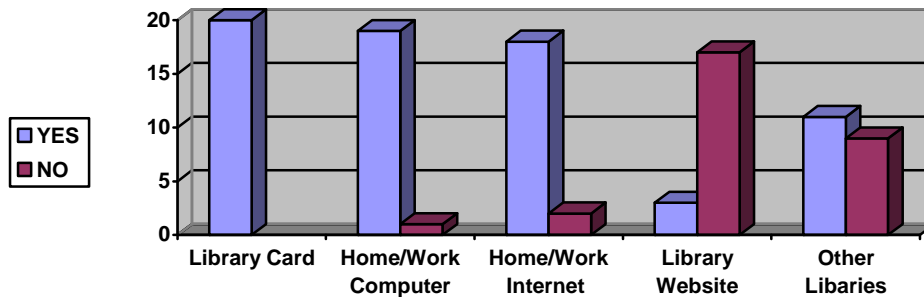

Figure 3 - Access to information

The community's information needs as it relates to their use of libraries can be seen in the results of the four questions outlined in Table 1. Responses are further categorized into four groups representing the primary reasons for visiting the library as well as the other library services the respondents utilized. These four groups were *books, computer use, movies*, and *social.* Reasons for visiting other libraries and suggestions for improved services included some additional groupings as shown. A summary of actual responses is also included for each. Interlibrary loans and local collection circulation was grouped together in the *books* category.

Social category describes both programs provided by the library as well as the aspects of the library as an enjoyable place to visit. For example, one respondent's primary reason for visiting the library was to do homework. The response did not specify if use of library reference was involved, and so it was interpreted as a socially motivated reason, perhaps because it was a quiet place to study.

A total of 65% of respondents cited books as the main reason for visiting the Eudora Public Library. Surprisingly, no responses indicated computer use as a primary reason for visiting the library, and only 35% of respondents cited computers as another regularly utilized library service. Slightly more than half of the survey respondents indicated that they visited other libraries on a regular basis (Figure 3). Among these responses, Lawrence Public Library was the only other library cited. Table 1 further shows books at the top of the list of reasons respondents visited this other library and only one respondent listed computers as a reason. The fact that the majority of respondents have access to a computer and the internet at home or at work (Figure 3) may also help explain these results. Other reasons respondents gave for visiting other libraries were for matters of convenience and to access and check out music recordings. The latter was also among the services listed that the Eudora Public Library could provide or improve.

1. Primary reason for visiting the Eudora Public Library

No. of responses	Category	Summary of responses
13	Books	Pick up interlibrary book, book checkout
3	Movies	return a movie
1	Computer	print information
5	Social	homework, pick Elf's official name, story time

2. Other library services used on a regular basis

No. of responses	Category	Summary of responses
6	Books	Paperback checkout - neat idea!,

3	Movies	DVDs, videos
7	Computer	I use the computer, printer for computer
3	Social	Coming to see a friend, story time
7	No response	

3. Reasons for visiting other libraries

No. of responses	Category	Summary of responses
9	Books (Selection)	interesting books, book not here, larger choices
1	Movies	
1	Computer	
1	Social	larger facility
1	Music	teenager likes CD checkout
3	Convenience	Happen to be close by, we're in Lawrence a lot

4. Services Eudora Public Library could provide or improve

No. of responses	Category	Summary of responses
6	Books (Selection)	More books, more kids books, larger book selection!
8	Social (Space)	Evening story time - maybe monthly, more space, larger building - meeting rooms, larger story time room
1	Music	Music to check out
1	Computer	Website (online catalog)
6	No response	
3	Explicit none	I think its fine now, nothing, none.

Table 1 – Summary of survey responses

The survey responses support the issue addressed in *The Eudora News* article (Oaks, 2008) regarding the space constraints facing this library. In four of the six user suggestions for greater selection of books, the issue of space was simultaneously addressed. Similar calls were paired with suggestions for more social activities and the need for meeting spaces. Uniquely, almost half of the survey respondents did not indicate a need for any improvements to the library. This was indicated either by not answering the question or, in some cases, by explicitly stating that no improvements were needed. This is evidence of a very loyal customer base evidenced also in the observation sessions.

The observation of the exterior and interior of the library visibly reinforces the issues of space that have been raised. At first appearance, it is hard to imagine that this small building

could house an entire community library. The building has some spatial challenges, not only in

its size, but in its location. The library signage and front door (Figure 4) are the only façade on

this adjacent downtown street. The opposite side of the street is the back parking lot of a large

community building. The library is in the middle of the street set between a building facing the

Main Street on the East and residential housing to the West. Parking for the library is located in

the rear of its building (Figure 5) where no signage is present. The interior of the building reveals

a well ordered but cramped arrangement. The stacks are quite full, overflowing to the tops of

shelves in places. The children's area (Figure 6 and 7) is also neat and orderly with low-level

books shelves, but there is little room for group seating. The high level of traffic witnessed in the

library on Monday afternoon confirmed the space challenges as well.

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

The most significant finding from observing library users concerns the role of the staff and the main circulation/reference desk. Patrons have a high level of familiarity with the library facilities, policy, and staff. In both observation sessions, each patron was seen first approaching to the desk and speaking with the library staff before proceeding with their business within the library. The interaction between the library staff and the patrons was familiar and informal while addressing their specific information need; simultaneously, the interaction is also very formalized, since patrons do not seek information on their own and are primarily dependent upon the library staff. This observation and one survey respondent's answer regarding their primary information source helped point to an oversight in our survey instrument. When asking *what primary sources of information do you use?,* there was not an option of librarian or library staff listed. One respondent made use of the option to write in *professionals* and ranked it as his first choice. This matches behavior observed of patrons first seeking information directly from the library professionals. Observation 1 (Appendix B) noted that computer use appeared to be a primary reason for visiting the library, which contradicts the survey results indicating books as the primary motivation. This could be explained as a flaw in the execution of the survey. Those who worked on the computer were perhaps less likely than those circulating materials to go to the desk for a long enough period of time to be presented with the survey. It is likely that the population represented in the survey is significantly skewed towards circulating patrons.

Role within community

Much of the data gleaned from the observation and analysis of the survey results support the impression that this library's role is primarily a Preschoolers' Door to Learning (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 4). Libraries that function in the Preschoolers' Door to Learning role work to foster an interest in reading in young children and encourage parents to read with their

children (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 6). The library's children's collection and story time programming indicates that it is working towards this goal. Furthermore, the primary survey respondents were mothers of children and many of the responses indicated their primary reasons were books for their kids or story time programs offered at the library.

There is some evidence to suggest other roles for this library as well. Other commonly circulated items were videos and popular adult fiction indicating a potential role of Popular Materials Library. Survey responses and observations such as the display cabinet which housed materials on the local 4-H program or the man whose primary reason was coming in from the cold indicate a possible Community Center role for this library. However, it is clear from observation that the library is not in a position to support either these roles effectively due to space constraints. Several of the library outputs presented in this study such as low visits per capita, substantial participation in children's programming, high collection use, and low utilization of reference services are particularly telling in this regard.

The low number of reference transactions shows that the library is not currently perceived as an information agency by the community (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 6), which suggests that the Eudora Public Library does not fulfill the role or Reference Library or Research Center. The library's high collection use suggests that it serves as a Community Information Library or Popular Materials Library; however, due to space constraints, the library is simply not able to foster the higher visits per capita rate that is characteristic of libraries fulfilling these roles. Community Information Libraries typically experience high visits per capita as the library functions as a community center, and Popular Materials libraries typically experience a high visits per capita rate due to frequent library use (Consulting Librarians Group, Chapter 6). Likely, with additional space, the library would grow more fully into these roles.

The community profile described thus far gives the impression that this community relies on many Lawrence community resources. Survey responses and observations support this finding to some degree. It is therefore likely that Lawrence community fills the gap in the roles of Community Information Center and Popular Fiction Library that Eudora is unable to provide.

Recommendations

The city of Eudora can be characterized as small, rural Midwestern town made up of conventional family households with traditional Midwestern values; however, this characterization would miss half of the picture. Statistics reveals that Eudora is a growing, young, and increasingly affluent city. Targeted marketing research on lifestyle clusters in Eudora reveals that residents prefer family and home-based activities. Comparing these characteristics against the current user profile is important for tailoring services and marketing the library within the community. It is unfortunate that this growing, increasingly affluent community can not presently afford to support the expansion of its library. The limitation of the scope of this study only gives a small picture of the community's information needs and the library's role within the community. To prepare for an expansion of the facilities would require further and more detailed assessment of the Eudora community, particularly of those residents that do not regularly visit the local library. For now, it would seem prudent for the library to embrace the role in which it is currently most successful and look for creative ways to serve the rest of the community.

In addition to, or perhaps in lieu of, expanded physical space, there is great potential for Eudora to grow the Community Information Library role though the web. Toward this goal, recommendations for its forthcoming website include links to community resources, advertising of community events, and more aggressive marketing of its own library resources. Enhancement of the website to include an online public access catalog and online interlibrary loan request

might be a worthy long-term goal. A more explicit collaborative relationship with Lawrence Public Library might also be explored since many Eudora residents spend large portions of their week in Lawrence.

Conclusion

The role of traditional libraries is certainly transitioning. Many libraries, public libraries especially, are concerned that traditional library services and materials will have to be sacrificed to accommodate technology in the 21st C library. However, it is technology that allows collaborative work to thrive. Perhaps libraries could use technology to embrace collaboration with each other more intentionally. In this way, libraries would rely on each others' shared strengths to meet the growing diversity of needs of their communities.

In this increasingly complex environment, it is encouraging to find that libraries are still lending books, still interacting face-to-face with patrons, still providing excellent community service. Eudora Public Library is such a library. While it cannot be all things to all people, it is clearly a valuable resource for this community. The personal interaction among staff and users, and a history of volunteerism that make Eudora Public Library so unique are also what would serve as an asset for transforming itself into a collaborative 21st C traditional library.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument
Community Needs Survey for Eudora, Kansas

The following survey is part of an assignment for *LI811: Assessing Information Needs and Evaluating Information Services*, a graduate course at Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Science. All responses will be kept confidential. For more information about this study, please contact Emily Huckabay at ecapps@emporia.edu. Thank you for your feedback.

1. Do you have a library card?

☐ Yes
☐ No

2. How often do you visit the library?

☐ Everyday
☐ A few times a week
☐ A few times a month
☐ A few time a year
☐ Other (*Please specify*):

_____
___

3. What's your primary reason for visiting the library today?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. What other library services do you use on a regular basis?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Do you use libraries in other communities?

☐ Yes
☐ No

a. If *yes*, please specify which libraries:

_____
_____
_____
_____

b. If *yes*, what is your primary reason for visiting libraries in other communities?

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. Where do you get your news? (*Please select all that apply.*)

☐ Radio
☐ Television
☐ Newspaper
☐ Internet
☐ Other (*Please specify*):

_____
___

7. When looking for information, what types of sources do you depend on most often? (*Please rank the choices below from #1-8, with 1 being the source you depend on most.*)

☐ Books
☐ Friends and/or Family
☐ Internet
☐ Magazines or periodicals
☐ Newspaper
☐ Radio
☐ Television
☐ Other (*Please specify*):

_____

___

8. Do you have access to a computer at home or work?

☐ Yes
☐ No

9. Do you have internet access at home or work?

☐ Yes
☐ No

10. Have you visited the Eudora Public Library's website?

☐ Yes
☐ No

a. If *yes*, for what purpose?
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. What services would you like the Eudora Public Library to provide or improve?
_____
_____
_____

12. What is your gender?

☐ Male
☐ Female

13. What is your age?

☐ Under 18
☐ 18-25
☐ 25-30
☐ 30-40
☐ 40-50
☐ 50-65
☐ Over 65

14. What is your marital status?

☐ Married
☐ Single
☐ Widowed
☐ Divorced
☐ Separated

15. How many children under the age of 18 currently live in your home?

☐ 0
☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5 or more

16. What is the highest level of school you completed?

☐ Grade school or less
☐ Some high school
☐ High school graduate
☐ Some college
☐ College graduate or higher

17. What category best describes your total household income?

☐ Under $20,000
☐ $20,000 to $40,000
☐ $40,000 to $60,000
☐ $60,000 to $80,000
☐ More than $80,000

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B: Observation 1 Notes

Observation details
Observer: Emily Huckabay
Date: Monday, November 17, 2008
Time: 4:00 p.m.–5:15 p.m.

Exterior description
   The building is a short, square brick building. There are four cars parked in the small parking lot south of the library. There are places for approximately ten cars in this lot, so there is ample parking available.

Interior description
   There is ample seating and ample natural light in the library. There are only three computers available to the public. I did not immediately locate the restrooms or copy machines, which are located behind the main desk.
   There are two staff members stationed at the main desk. The desk, which is not labeled, appears to meet serve as both a circulation and reference desk. When they're not assisting patrons, the two on-duty staff members appear to be preparing new acquisitions.
   The display cabinet is currently filled with a 4-H exhibit. There is a large bulletin board located near the north entrance. The board displays a map of Douglas County, Kansas and various flyers and pamphlets.

Key observations
   Seventeen patrons entered the library over the hour and fifteen minute observation period. The staff warmly greeted each person that enters the library, and they were familiar with the majority of the patrons that visited the library. Further, the patrons exhibited a high level of familiarity with the library and its policies. This observation reveals that many of the patrons utilize the library for computer or internet access. Most of the materials checked out or returned during this observation were popular fiction, children's books, and videos.

Activity observed

4:00 p.m.	When I enter the library, there are three patrons in the room housing the main collection. Two of the patrons—a teenage tutor and a younger student—are seated at a round table near the desk. The student is approximately 9 years old, and I would estimate that she is in the fourth or fifth grade. They are alternately working on homework and studying division flashcards. There's also an older man sitting quietly across from the circulation/reference desk. He is just sitting and does not appear to be engaged in any activity.
4:09 p.m.	The phone rings, and one of the staff members answers it. The phone call is resolved quickly with a brief "We do."
4:10 p.m.	The older man gets up to leave. The staff at the desk inquires, "Did you get warm enough?" This suggests that he came in to the library solely to escape the cold weather. The man's use of the library as a place to warm up from the cold suggests that the library may fulfill the role of community center.

4:20 p.m.	A high-school aged youth wearing a 'Eudora Baseball' t-shirt and a middle-age woman, presumably his mother, enter the library and approach the desk. The staff greets them warmly by name. The woman asks after a specific book titled *Sir Thursday,* and the woman and staff member consult a paper waiting list on an adjacent shelf. The patrons exhibited familiarity with the library and procedures. The staff member commented, "I figured you'd get it yourself faster than you would here."
4:23 p.m.	A middle-aged woman enters the library and approaches the desk. She has books to check-in, and she inquires after her overdue fines, which she then pays. The staff member asks her, "How old are your girls now?" They engage in a brief, but very friendly, conversation. Despite the familiarity, the transaction is resolved quickly, and the patron was in the library no more than five minutes.
4:25 p.m.	A young woman carrying a toddler enters the library. They approach the desk and greet the on-duty staff, and then they head to the children's room. They spend approximately five minutes in the children's section. The child selects two videos. When they approach the desk to check out, the mother asks if the library has a copy of *New Moon.* The staff looked it up on the computer; however, it is unavailable at the time. The staff and the mother discuss the children videos, and the mother remarks, "I'm glad he likes Thomas more than Sponge Bob—I'm worried about when he no longer likes Thomas." This comment is revealing about the community's family values.
4:35 p.m.	A young boy with a Spiderman backpack enters the library through the north entrance. The staff greets him by name and tells him to let them know if he needs help finding anything. He heads for the children's collection.
4:40 p.m.	An older man enters the library, approaches the desk, and asks, "Do you have a computer that I can use to print? I just need to print one page." The internet is down that day, so the staff member explains that she can log him onto a computer. The staff remarks, "Marlene [the director] just left." Her use of the director's first name indicates that she is familiar with this patron that he is likely familiar with the other staff members. He asks if the cable is down, and the staff member explains that it's not as the television still works. They discuss that it might be the server, and he remarks, "Let me just check the [server] connection." The man walks behind the desk and disappears into a back office. From the next room, he tells her that the server is off, but he'll go ahead and turn it back on.
4:50 p.m.	A woman walks in looking for *A Man Called Dave* saying, "Someone was supposed to set it aside for me." The book was behind the desk, so the woman proceeded to check out and quickly exits the library.
4:55 p.m.	A mother with two children, approximately 4-5 years old, enters the library. The staff at the desk greets her warmly and asks, "How's the bank?" To which the woman replies that all is well and asks, "How's the library?" Meanwhile, the children select DVDs, and the mother wanders over to investigate the adult fiction section.
4:58 p.m.	An older man, approximately sixty-five years old, enters the library and asks the staff at the desk, "Is the internet back up?" The staff explains that it's not, and he leaves.

5:05 p.m.   The man who was trying to print reemerges from the back office. He stands near the circulation desk, focusing on a digital camera for several minutes, and then leaves.

5:08 p.m.   The child with the Spiderman backpack reemerges from the children's room with a book. He checked it out and exits the library alone.

5:10 p.m.   A young woman enters the library, returns three items at the desk, pays a small late fine, and exits the library.

5:12 p.m.   Two teens—approximately 13-14 years old—enter the library and ask to use the computers. When they are informed that the internet isn't working, they exit the library.

Appendix C: Observation 2 Notes

Observation details
Observer: Angela Rathmel
Date: Monday, November 24, 2008
Time: 6:45 p.m.–7:45 p.m.

Exterior description

The library signage and the main entrance face 9th Street, and there is one car parked on the street. Two additional cars are parked in the lot behind the building where there is another entrance. This rear doorway is the most frequently used entrance and exit. There is a book drop outside this rear entrance.

Interior description

Only one of the three computers available is in use. One staff member, the library director Marlene Evinger, is stationed at the main service desk. The surveys are located at the service desk. The box for surveys is located near the rear exit. There is a vacant sitting area consisting of two couches and a low table on which local newspapers from the week are stacked neatly. Next to this seating is an empty display cabinet.

Key observations

The library served a total of seven people in the course of this one hour and five minute observation. The staff warmly greeted each person that enters the library, and they were familiar with the majority of the patrons that visited the library. For the most part patrons exhibited a high level of familiarity with the library and its policies. One young girl who knew neither the policy about placing a hold on a book, nor the policy regarding the child library card was not inhibited and was assisted with accurate information and friendly manner by staff and other library patrons. Regardless with the level of familiarity, each patron's first and last point of information seeking process was via interaction with the staff at the front desk.

Activity observed

6:45 p.m.   When I enter the library, there are four patrons in the room housing the main collection. Two of the patrons a mother and her young son are at the service desk checking out videos and books. Another patron is a teenage boy listening to headphones while working on the computer. I did not observe his computer activity in detail. A middle-aged woman was in the stacks and was engaged in conversation with the desk staff between interactions with other patrons. She talks about getting ready to leave in order to get ready for Thanksgiving, but this sparks new conversation that keeps her a bit longer.

7:05 p.m.   A young woman enters from the rear entrance and goes directly to the service desk where she is immediately greeted warmly. The patron asks for a book which Mrs. Evinger knows without looking (but looks anyway) is not in the library and possible already on hold for another patron. She looks the record up to confirm and communicate the status and the process for placing a hold. She ends up placing the book on hold for the patron. The patron asks if she needs a new card "now that she is not a child anymore"

7:10 p.m.	An older gentleman enters from the rear entrance. I am trying to determine if he is with the young woman. The conversation between Mrs. Evinger and the young woman continues with clarifying her age–she is 15. There is banter between the older gentleman and the young woman indicating a father-daughter relationship about how she "just a baby". It turns out, per library policy, that she will get a new card when she is 18.
7:15 p.m.	A young (twenty something) man enters and waits for Mrs. Evinger to finish the current transaction. Mrs. Evinger continues to assist and converse with the father and daughter while she goes to the computer closest to me and turns it on. The young man joins the conversation between the three of them for a moment, then sits down to the computer that has been turned on for him and thanks Mrs. Evinger. She continues to place the hold. Part of determining the status of her eligibility for a new card has involved updating her address. Patron gave address as "We live at" rather than just providing the street and house numbers. Father and daughter exit rear doors.
7:20 p.m.	The middle aged woman continues her conversation with Mrs. Evinger about their respective holiday plans. She exits via the main front entrance. It remains quiet for the next 20 minutes. Mrs. Evinger continues with some work on the computer at the main service desk and shelves books from a truck.
7:40 p.m.	Mrs. Evinger gets her coat and a key and exits the rear entrance to retrieve books from the book drop. She then processes the returns at the front desk.
7:45 p.m.	I gather my belongings and go to the desk to greet Mrs. Evinger and ask if I can check the box for surveys. We discuss the distribution method a little as well as my course work at Emporia State University and she inquires about people from Eudora that we both might know.
7:50 p.m.	Young (twenty-something) gentleman approaches the desk and Mrs. Evinger moves a sign in/out sheet toward him while continuing our conversation. He logs the time he stopped using the computer. She asks him how he's doing. He confesses as he walks out the rear exit that his grandfather just past away. Both she and I express our condolences.
7:55 p.m.	I leave through the rear exit and at this point the teenage boy at the computer is still in the same place. No announcement about the library closing has been made. I assume he was there until close at 8 p.m.