2023

Decision-Making by and for Academic Libraries during Covid-19

Sarah Rose Fitzgerald
University of Massachusetts Amherst, sfitzgerald@umass.edu

Sarah Hutton

Rebecca Reznik-Zellen
University of Massachusetts Amherst, rreznikz@library.umass.edu

Charlie Barlow
Boston Library Consortium

Will Oldham

Decision-Making by and for Academic Libraries during Covid-19

Sarah R. Fitzgerald, Sarah Hutton, Rebecca Reznik-Zellen, Charlie Barlow, and Will Oldham

abstract: Academic libraries are fundamental in promoting equitable access to education but are often overlooked and underfunded. The COVID-19 pandemic amplified these inequities. This study investigates how 39 library deans and directors perceived decision-making by university administration during COVID-19's onset. Open-ended survey questions were sent to deans and directors asking them to describe their experiences working with university administration to adjust library services during the crisis. Some library leaders reported that working closely with other departments strengthened their campus connections. Others commented that disagreement between library personnel and university administration caused discord. Some deans and directors were forced to cut staff funding or felt pressured to reopen, while others were trusted to choose their budget and service priorities. The authors recommend that library leaders be more consistently relied upon for their expertise during university decision-making.

Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, libraries faced dynamic and challenging situations throughout their building closure and reopening. A large factor in the difficulty of deciding whether to close was the integral role that libraries play in their communities. Sadia Ishtiaq, Naveed Sehar, and Attya Shahid found that higher education institutions and the communities that surround them rely heavily on libraries for information dissemination during crises. Funding and emergency planning protocols often posed barriers to fulfilling this integral role, however.[1]

Decisions about changes to library services were not uniformly made by library leadership. According to a survey conducted by Ithaka S+R, nearly half of library directors

decided to close and reopen their libraries independently, with the advice of university

leaders. This situation was particularly common at doctoral institutions as opposed to

baccalaureate and master's institutions. Twenty percent of respondents reported that another

individual in the institution made the decision, and about 15 percent stated that the

determination came from outside the library.[2] While some directors determined the timing

and extent of space reopening, others were directed to keep their spaces in operation and

were left to figure out how.[3]

Library budget cuts from the pandemic came on top of a long-standing trend in higher
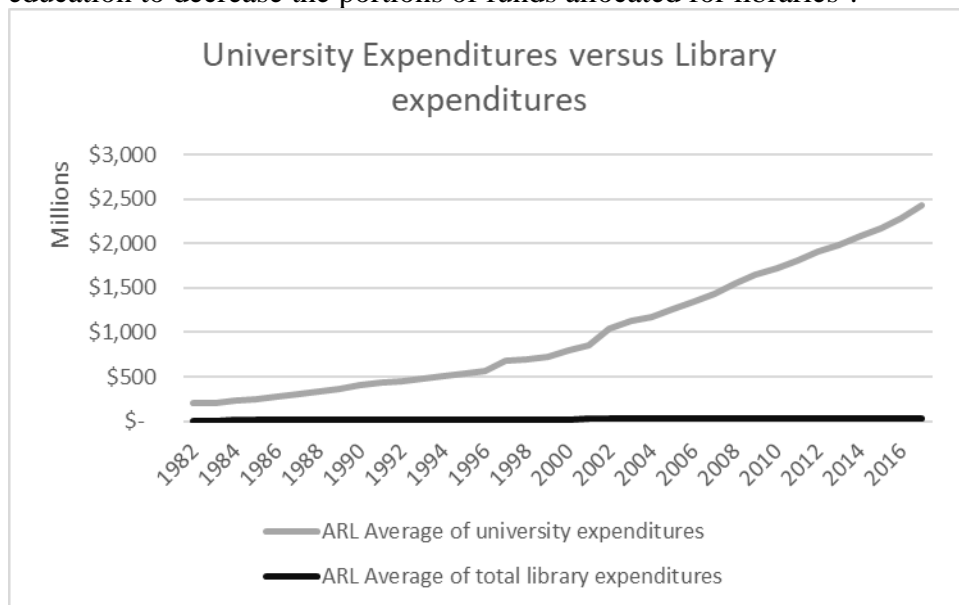education to decrease the portions of funds allocated for libraries[4].

Figure 1. Change over time in university expenditures compared with library expenditures.
Data from Association of Research Libraries.
Library expenditure reductions over at least the last decade tended to involve cutting
personnel, not collections. This downsizing came during a time when library work required
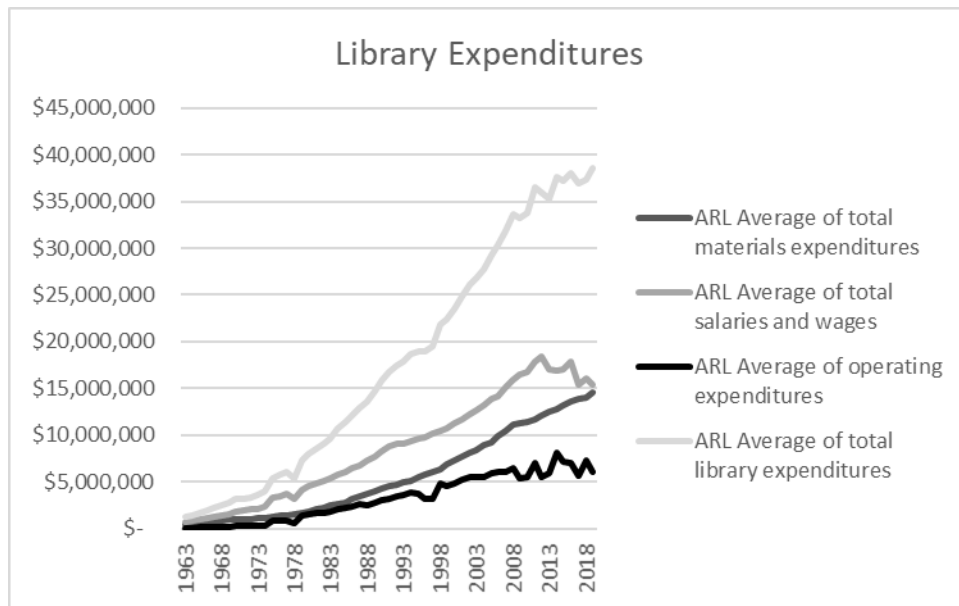increasing technical expertise.

Figure 2. Change over time in library expenditure categories. Data from Association of Research Libraries.

According to a survey by Ithaka S+R, decisions about collection budget cuts were largely made by deans or directors, while choices about personnel reductions more likely came from an external group.[5]

The COVID-19 pandemic amplified preexisting issues of digital equity, making access to information more essential than ever.[6] Increasing emphasis was placed on digital content, as well as physical spaces for library patrons requiring in-person technology and materials access. These focuses added to the workload of library staff, as well as increasing their risk for disease.

The extended nature of the COVID-19 pandemic amplified systemic inequities. Many case studies focus on the implementation of on-site services by frontline service staff, who have borne the brunt of potential health risk, job insecurity, and emotional trauma.[7]

This article uses the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study of library relationships with university administration for the purposes of decision-making. After decades of underfunding for libraries and library staffing, the authors wanted a better understanding of what power libraries had to make decisions about their staffing and services

after the pandemic's arrival. The research question was, "What relationships did library leaders experience with their university administrations during the COVID-19 onset?"

Literature Review

To contextualize COVID-19 responses from academic libraries, this review of the literature is organized into two sections. The first section offers an overview of academic library operations during the onset and early period of the pandemic. The second section reviews the dynamics of decision-making and how libraries' institutional power affects those decisions.

Shifts in Library Operations

Crisis management and emergency preparedness have long been important parts of higher education administration. The pandemic crisis presented new challenges, however. Anna Walek explored these demands in the context of academic libraries in Poland. The most immediate challenges were a lack of relevant benchmarks for providing services and the absence of universal guidelines for safety and COVID-19 procedures. Despite these issues, the libraries Walek observed did their best to adapt and move forward because of their civic responsibility to provide services to the public. They generally adjusted well, with positive outcomes for employees' sense of safety and work comfort.[8]

Many adaptations were already underway for libraries. These included such changes as digitizing collections, increasing to the accessibility of online resources for patrons with assistive needs, and expanding the infrastructure to host digitized collections. The pandemic and the shift to remote services accelerated those developments and highlighted a need for further investment into them. For many libraries, the ability to fulfill their obligations as information centers hinged on how quickly those adaptations were carried out.[9]

The pandemic affected academic library spaces, collections, and staffing. Academic libraries never stopped providing services to campus and community members, however.

Physical Library Spaces

In March 2020, academic libraries across the United States and Canada closed their doors to patrons and sent their staff home. Within two weeks of the first closures, most academic libraries had moved to a remote model.[10] The few libraries that remained open through the first stages of the pandemic did so based either on an administrative dictate or a compromise. The decision to keep library buildings open was based not just on libraries' role in providing access to education and research resources, but also on the necessity of meeting student needs, providing quiet study environments, and delivering the digital infrastructure to access online content.[11]

Library buildings are central fixtures on university and college campuses. Some library professionals felt concern that the sudden shift away from these physical spaces would impact the perception of libraries as campus institutions, especially after the yearslong trend of reducing physical collections to free up more areas for patrons.[12]

To open safely during COVID-19, physical library spaces needed to accommodate not only capacity limits and other federal and state regulations and guidance[13] but also university-level protocols for safety.[14] In grappling with these constraints, library teams had to balance often conflicting sets of expectations. Andrew See declared, "Being an essential service necessitated a scalable compromise between maintaining operations and providing a safe working and learning environment for staff and end-users alike."[15]

Libraries made more space in patron and staff areas to accommodate capacity limits and social distancing, which required flexibility in the placement of furniture and technology and reorientation of physical spaces.[16] Libraries ordered and installed personal protective equipment and updated their disinfection routines and ventilation systems. They also implemented processes for reserving spaces and seats, triggering new concerns and rules to protect patron privacy.[17] Efforts like the REALM (Reopening Archives, Libraries, and

Museums) project helped libraries understand the behavior of the virus on physical materials. Such knowledge enabled them to make operational and workflow decisions, including whether and how long to quarantine materials, whether to allow patrons access to stacks, how to sanitize workspaces and printers, and how to design workflows for curbside pickup of materials.[18] Safety protocols and staff availability determined on-site service hours.[19] New signage and communication reflecting the safety rules and service changes were created and disseminated. Much of this work was done under short notice, and campus operational statuses sometimes changed suddenly.[20]

Services

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, academic libraries provided varying levels of research, interlibrary loan, and technology assistance.[21] Digital support services increased dramatically for many libraries, especially in the provision of interlibrary loan materials.[22] The digitization and processing of books and other items for delivery required staff to work on-site, and copyright review for the fair use of materials increased the workload of interlibrary loan staff.[23] In addition to the burden placed on interlibrary loan workers to meet home campus needs, meeting the demands from other campuses increasingly became a challenge.[24]

Though many spaces on campuses remained closed over the course of the pandemic, remote learning for students continued, requiring libraries to collaborate more closely with academic programs.[25] Many libraries worked with online campus programs to focus on issues that impacted international students, especially regarding digital content access. Immigration and Customs Enforcement increased restrictions on international students, causing many to experience deportation scares, housing insecurity, increased mental duress, and limited access to technology across multiple time zones.[26] Many domestic students required additional technology support to access their course materials online, which brought

a spike in laptop lending in many libraries.[27] Distribution of laptops funded by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 helped some college campuses, but the digital divide continued to grow as many lending programs remained underfunded.[28]

Shifting to the support of online learning brought emphasis not only to lending physical equipment, but also to bolstering programs and infrastructure in support of digital education.[29] Instruction that was previously conducted face-to-face shifted modality, requiring liaison and instruction librarians to develop new synchronous and asynchronous content for their sessions, as well as coordinate with instructors on access to digital resources.[30] The tempo of online reference and chat services also increased,[31] and one case study at a large academic university found a statistically significant rise in perceived difficulty for patron interactions online.[32] Greater demand for digital resources placed additional burdens on staff to find, purchase, and deliver content online.[33] With the boom in online instruction and publications, scholarly communications staff faced increased need for institutional repository, copyright, and hosting support.[34] This shift highlighted preexisting issues of inadequate infrastructure to support online learning, including insufficient bandwidth for streaming content[35] and for virtual private networks (VPNs).[36]

Librarians utilized information-gathering skills and channels to make COVID-19 information easily available. In one notable case, the National and University Library of Iceland in Reykjavik helped curb unemployment by hiring students to manage backlogged special projects and initiatives in the library.[37] In addition to recommending resources, services, and programs, librarians helped to mitigate patron stress and provided emotional support.[38]

Digital-first collection development, expanded online access, digital catalogs, online reference, and increased support for online instruction are all important directions for future

library service.[39] The drive to expand digitized collections, including access to locally held, rare, and archival materials, continues.[40] While the necessity of online resources is apparent, so is the digital divide. For example, Muhammad Rafiq, Syeda Hina Batool, Amna Farzand Ali, and Midrar Ullah found that lower-income and rural students in Pakistan lack the necessary level of technology access.[41]

Staffing

The success of libraries in providing services both online and on-site throughout the pandemic would have been impossible without the involvement and responsiveness of library personnel at all levels. Libraries that reopened often put the safety of their staff and students at the forefront of their internal decision-making.[42] According to Liladhar Pendse, "Of the many strategies reported, three priorities were unmistakable when it came to dealing with corona: the safety of staff and users, the security of library materials, and the security of jobs while keeping employee morale up."[43]

While library directors were permitted varying levels of input by university administration on high-level planning,[44] libraries accomplished the day-to-day decision-making by establishing teams and task forces to coordinate and manage their switch to remote work and to reimagine on-site services.[45] Staff made strategic decisions, solved problems, reconfigured workflows, and demonstrated adaptability and flexibility in finding solutions and meeting the needs of their larger organizations.[46] For some, empowerment in decision-making built organizational trust and engendered resiliency and confidence under difficult circumstances.[47] For others, balancing workloads among on-site and remote staff members required creative thinking to redefine what could be effective.[48]

On-site staff deemed essential handled the work of low- or no-contact pickup, processing materials backlogs, and preparing print content for digital distribution. Common approaches for bringing staff on-site safely include reducing library hours and implementing

staggered schedules.[49] Changes to staffing and logistics were implemented with the primary goal of managing exposure risk and COVID-19 safety.[50] While these on-site staff reconfigured workflows to enable continuity for necessary on-site services and facilitated digital access to resources for instruction and research, remote staff delivered online reference, instruction, and digital content services under increased demand.

For remote and hybrid staff, access to technology was critical. Library managers needed to ensure that their people had the correct equipment and necessary software for remote work. Some staff used personal devices, and others borrowed library laptops.[51] The challenges of supplying adequate equipment, handling unpredictable connectivity, and establishing remote resource authentication complicated the process of providing remote services. Dipti Mehta and Xiaocan Wang summarized the difficulties and said, "All these challenges directly or indirectly affect the ability of library staff to explore the right tools and provide digital library services efficiently, confidently, and comfortably during the pandemic period."[52]

Without clear guidelines about working from home, many staff felt overburdened by pressure to remain connected 24 hours per day, seven days a week.[53] The pressure was exacerbated by poor Internet connectivity outside campus and by the need to manage client stress about the same access issues.[54]

The increase in provision of digital services highlighted skills gaps and the necessity of training staff for the rapid pivot to online service. Preparing digital content for distribution, pausing nonemergency digitization projects, and adding familiarity with open resources were all needed to bring staff skills, time, and training into alignment with patron demand.[55]

The shift to remote service increased the need for librarians to support and expand online services and programming, especially around online learning and scholarly communication.[56] The difficulty of providing successful, engaging synchronous instruction

created additional burdens for librarians charged with teaching.[57] Librarians with clearly defined roles prior to the pandemic adopted new responsibilities outside their domains and expanded their roles. The pandemic made delineations between positions fuzzier while highlighting some preexisting overlap between positions. Librarians were required to provide support to one another across departments, roles, and positions.[58]

Although many academic libraries entered the pandemic well-positioned to support off-site work, the abrupt transition to remote services increased librarian workloads. These heavier burdens, compounded with challenges in relying upon and expanding technological infrastructure, left many librarians feeling overwhelmed.[59] Constant connectivity with little guidance or policy on setting professional boundaries in a work-from-home context contributed to their sense of overwork.[60]

In addition to increased workloads and technical challenges, furloughs and layoffs created ongoing stress and uncertainty for staff.[61] Staff anxieties increased when decisions about personnel cuts were made by an external group rather than by library deans or directors.[62] Layoffs and furloughs were far more common in public libraries than in academic ones.[63] In academic libraries, hiring and salary freezes and elimination of currently vacant positions were the most common reductions that impacted staff, particularly in larger, doctoral-granting universities. Jennifer Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg found that institutions where librarians have faculty status were less likely to freeze salaries and retirement contributions than institutions where librarians were not considered faculty, and those with union representation offered their members some protections against these reductions. Salary freezes were the most common strategy, but furloughs and cuts of existing employees frequently affected staff in access services and student workers because these personnel perform on-site duties which were paused.[64] Staff that were lost to furloughs or layoffs added to feelings of overwork for others.[65]

On-site staff bore the highest risk of disease and the highest risk of furlough and layoffs. The stress and uncertainty of the employees responsible for reopening physical library spaces, working with materials, and interacting with patrons contributed to nationwide conversations about the invisibility of library work. Experts spoke of "vocational awe," the idea that librarianship is so innately virtuous that it is beyond criticism and the danger that it is seen as charitable sacrifice rather than work worthy of funding. Projects tracking furloughs, social media campaigns, and petitions called attention to the dangerous conditions and economic impacts on library workers under COVID-19.[66] Essential work went unseen and undervalued, and library staff morale suffered because of ongoing stress and uncertainty.[67]

The changes to spaces, services, and workforces were shaped by libraries' missions, workflows, and staff and budget capacity. Decisions about these changes in response to the crisis could better reflect library and patron values and needs if made by experts in library operations. Therefore, this study investigates what contributions libraries made to those decisions.

The Academic Library's Role in Decision-Making

Academic Libraries in Their Institutions

The mission of an educational institution can affect its relationship to its library. For instance, at research-intensive universities, there is strong demand for journal access to facilitate empirical research and the pursuit of grant funding. These resources are often accessible online through search engines via library authentication, whichcan lead to the impression that they are free without library funding.[68] At liberal arts institutions, monographs prized by humanist scholars remain in high demand. These resources are more obviously tied to the library, which can lead to a high valuation of its role. Institutions with a strong teaching mission may have fewer demands for the newest research and greater demand for support for

affordable undergraduate learning.

Fragmentation and cohesion also play a role in institutional decision-making.[69] A university's overall culture is made up of a collection of subcultures at the college and department level. This concept is sometimes referred to as "loose-coupling," a relationship in which components are so weakly associated that changes in one have little effect on the others.[70] An institution with a focused mission, such as a medical school, may have more cohesive needs from its library and so more consistency in the faculty's valuation of the library than an institution with more varied missions. Institutional culture is further complicated by the fact that institutions with multiple campuses may share common administrators and yet have differing missions and cultures.

Academic library decision-making depends on the relationships between library leadership and university administration. Library deans or directors often report to the university provost and must have good connections with the provost and president.[71] Library decision-making also depends on the relationship between library faculty and teaching faculty.

Libraries and library personnel have inconsistent status in universities. At some, librarians have faculty status and representation on the faculty senate; at others, they do not. If they are represented on the faculty senate, they may have a tenure system or a tenure-like arrangement. These variables affect their power to influence decision-making at their institutions. Library staff may hold seats on an institution's staff council and may be represented by one or several unions. Student government bodies can also be important in getting support for library decisions. This is particularly important for libraries as opposed to other departments on campus because, although the library serves all students, university administration may see student success as the achievement of the department in which they are enrolled rather than of the library.

Funding and power in universities are distributed between units according to their relative productivity and political prestige.[72] Although libraries impact student success, they do not directly enroll or retain students, which might lead university administration to pay less attention to their input. Similarly, although libraries have impact on research across all departments, research outputs in library science tend to be less frequent and attract less grant funding than those of departments in the hard sciences, which can lead to less prestige for the library. In addition, librarianship is dominated by women, and professions seen as women's work tend to be dismissed as less valuable.[73] Although libraries have long been central to the mission of higher education and employ large numbers of personnel, they have limited ability to attract resources from outside the institution. As Judith Hackman discovered in 1985, university units with large support staffs (such as libraries) tend to have less prestige in the eyes of university resource allocators than units made up primarily of faculty.[74]

Higher Education Institutions in Their Communities

Institutional decision-making can be influenced by an institution's relationship with its community.[75] For instance, a college or university where many of the faculty and students live in the nearby area may have greater trust within its community than one where faculty and students come from great distances. The institution may be the largest employer in the area, creating an economic benefit for its community. An institution that is funded autonomously may have a different relationship with its environment than one that is state-funded. The religious affiliation of a college or university may guide its values and decision-making.[76] Robert Birnbaum points out that the amount and flexibility of resources an institution has can determine university decision-making.[77]

Because of the history of budget cuts to academic libraries and their struggle to have their voices recognized on campus, it is important to investigate the decision-making

experiences library leaders encountered during the pandemic. This exploration is particularly important considering the many decisions made about services and budgets during this time.

Theoretical Framework

This research used William Bergquist's institutional culture framework to examine the management decision-making that library leaders experienced during the pandemic. This approach may shed light on the standing of academic libraries on campus and how the expertise and needs of library faculty are valued. Bergquist outlined four types of institutional cultures:

1. Collegial culture, which prioritizes faculty and values evidence-based decision-making and shared governance;

2. Managerial culture, which prioritizes the institution and values efficiency, hierarchical structures, and fiscal goals;

3. Developmental culture, which is collaborative, prioritizes personnel, values personal and professional growth of all members of the institution, and tends to have a strong teaching focus; and

4. Negotiating culture, which values equity, egalitarianism, confrontation, interest groups, mediation, and power.[78]

Bergquist pointed out that institutional type is related to adoption of these cultures. Over the last decade, higher education in the United States generally has moved toward the managerial culture, away from the collegial culture, but institutions differ in where they fall on the spectrum. Conversely, in the last decade, libraries have moved from a managerial culture to a more collegial one.[79]

Bergquist's classification of governance cultures, which he first proposed in 1992, is now several decades old, but it remains a guidepost in higher education literature. For instance, Adrianna Kezar and Peter Eckel applied the framework to their investigation of

change strategies in institutions with differing governance cultures.[80] Darlene Zellers, Valerie Howard, and Maureen Barcic used Bergquist's classification to frame the study of faculty mentoring in different institutional cultures.[81] Jaime Lester tested the role of Bergquist's classifications in cultural change.[82] Monica Mollo employed Bergquist's categories to describe academic cultures in Italy.[83] Bergquist and Kenneth Pawlak's 2008 update to include virtual and tangible culture does not pertain as much to relationships between university stakeholders as to another set of campus cultures,[84] which function simultaneously in higher education, so the authors have not employed those additions in their analysis.

Methods

The authors used a qualitative approach for data collection because they wanted to better understand how relationships between university administration and library leadership affected the changes institutions made in response to the pandemic and associated budget issues. The qualitative approach helped the researchers determine how library leaders perceived issues of power in university governance and library affairs.

The researchers distributed open-ended surveys to library deans and directors in the United States and Canada through a variety of e-mail lists. The surveys asked them to describe how their relationship with their institution affected their decisions during the pandemic, how input from library personnel impacted decisions, and what their priorities were when altering services and budgets. Since the survey was distributed through e-mail lists not managed by the researchers, it is not possible to say how many deans and directors received the call for participants. The authors' goal was not statistical analysis but to understand the different levels of autonomy experienced by library leadership.

The researchers coded the responses and narratives according to their relationship with the governance cultures described in Bergquist's theoretical framework. Reaching agreements between the researchers regarding the data analysis helped bolster the validity of

the study.[85]

Results

The survey received responses from 39 institutions representing 20 states. The sample was comprised of 20 private nonprofit institutions and 19 public ones. Librarians at 49 percent of the institutions had faculty status. The library leaders who responded represented 5 associate's colleges, 7 baccalaureate colleges, 12 master's institutions, and 15 doctoral universities.

	Public	Private	Total
Associate's	5		5
Baccalaureate		7	7
Master's	6	6	12
Doctoral	8	7	15
Total	19	20	39

To get a sense of the proportion of library deans and directors who felt their university administration respected their expertise, the authors coded the responses according to which leaders felt autonomy in their decision-making and which did not. Of 39 responses, 16 indicated a degree of autonomy in decision-making in their libraries' response to the pandemic. On the other hand, 15 deans or directors conveyed a lack of self-determination and discomfort with their institutional administration's decisions regarding the library. Eight conveyed a neutral sentiment toward their administration's rulings. Those attitudes were distributed across all institution types.
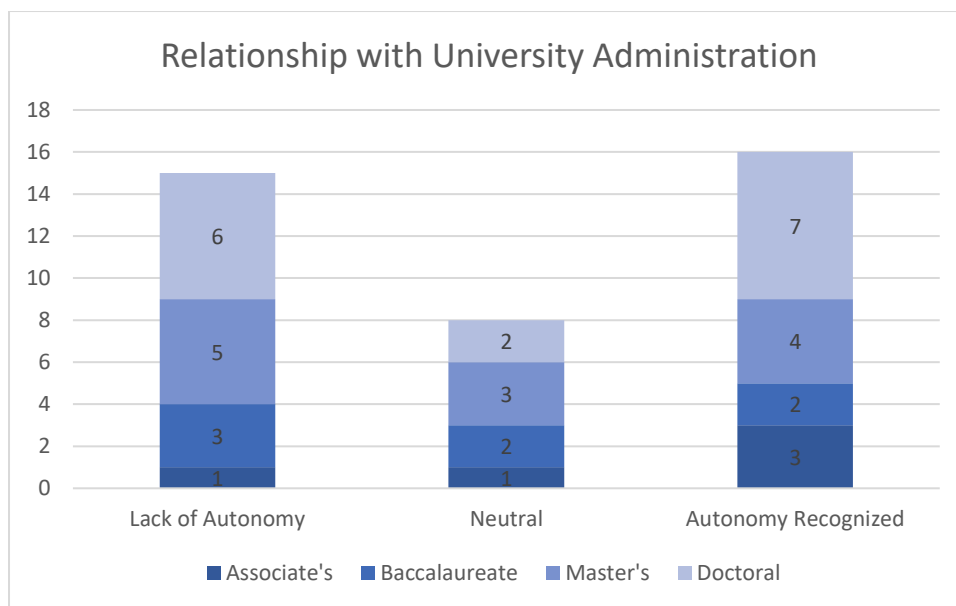
Figure 3. Library administrators reporting inclusion in decision making from their institutional leadership, by institution type.

Lack of Input

Many of the library leaders who participated in the study reported disagreeing with university administration about when the library should open. For instance, some were asked to open during times when data showed little patron use of the physical space. Reduced staffing due to budget cuts was another reason libraries struggled to meet administration's expectations for their hours of operation. Other libraries fought to find sufficient staff because personnel felt unsafe serving patrons in person.

Some deans and directors reported that personnel in their library lost trust in the administration. Several libraries crafted thoughtful plans and had to make quick changes when they were suddenly overruled by their university administration. One library leader from a doctoral institution told us, "We felt peripheral to the campus planning process though expected to be core to reopening plans. More than a few times, we had to scramble when none of our contingency plans aligned with pivots made by the university administration." One respondent said he was threatened with budget and personnel cuts if he did not open the library to patrons. Library leaders reported that librarians on their campuses did extensive

research about health precautions and recommendations, but their knowledge was ignored. Some pushed back against unsafe practices, such as opening virtual reality rooms to patrons during the pandemic.

Some respondents felt that university administration was opposed the proposals of the library because of a lack of understanding of what a modern library does. Others felt university administration simply forgot library leadership existed. One respondent from New England said,

> It was a struggle to get the administration to understand what we do, why we do what we do, and to listen/agree to the many ways we can maintain service and operations during this pandemic. The library had a plan in place to maintain service before the university did, which was ignored or dismissed.

One library leader saw an upside in being left out of decision-making, since at least he could not be blamed for the choice that was made.

Increased Visibility

While 38 percent of participants described being at odds with university administration over decisions regarding the library, 41 percent of library leaders reported that their input was valued and supported by the administration. Participants expressed satisfaction that the pandemic made the library visible to the administration. In at least one case, this visibility was somewhat pragmatic:

> The library has become more visible to administration during the pandemic due to the need for executive-level decisions about on-campus staffing, access to building approvals during relative lockdown, campus-level approvals for new services (e.g., curbside delivery), etc.

Another participant from a master's institution noted the broader impact the library had on the institution:

> Without access to the library resources, and our general expertise, there is no "teaching and learning." The pandemic, plus recent network issues, have highlighted that when the community cannot access the online resources, they can't complete assignments, or prepare or

deliver instruction. The university has added the library director to critical planning and operations tables to make sure there is academic continuity, as that is a top priority.

Three library leaders from the sample of 39 reported that their budget was not cut due to the pandemic because the university placed a high value on the library. Two of the three responded negatively and one positively regarding their relationship with university administration.

Tension Within

Several library deans or directors felt the events surrounding the pandemic damaged their relationship with their staff. One said, "Some library staff opposed the university's decision, and expressed it in unhelpful ways. This damaged the reputation of the library, as well as some relationships within the library." The majority of library leaders spoke on behalf of their staff, but a few empowered their people to make the call themselves about whether they would work remotely or in person.

Inequities in how university administration dealt with various campus units created resentment. One library leader told us, "We have been constantly asked to do more . . . when faculty have been able to largely teach from home."

Within libraries, the staff experienced inequities in terms of who was required to work on-site and who could do their job remotely, creating additional tensions. One respondent noted, "I . . . had to encourage our library staff to acknowledge the importance of being open while also addressing safety concerns and the inequities of having some in the library and some working from home."

Discussion

Each of the organizational cultures described by Bergquist has strengths and weaknesses for different organizational goals. This section explores the use of and value for each culture in libraries.

Collegial and Negotiating Cultures

Study participants and the literature made clear that the mission of libraries is to serve their community, and the pandemic further amplified libraries as community spaces and services that remained in operation when many other public commons had closed.[86] This mission lends itself best to the collegial and negotiating cultures described by Bergquist.[87] The consideration of interest groups and equity that characterize the negotiating culture lends itself to serving the community. The data-driven decision-making that typifies the collegial culture also helps to meet community needs.

An example of collegial data-driven decision-making came from one participant at a master's institution, who described his team's work in this way:

> When the pandemic began, our librarians began researching and looking for best recommendations from the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] and library associations. We wanted to be extremely careful (especially in the early days where the virus was thought to linger on surfaces).

Libraries can apply evidence-based, equitable decision-making for the future by conducting research on library use during the crisis and by incorporating that evidence into their plans and processes. Jennifer Dixon described library leaders dealing with shifting targets due to unanticipated surges in the pandemic.[88] These changes necessitated contingency planning, a strategy which will be carried into future emergency and disaster preparedness. Jennifer Joe asserts that libraries need to do more internal research and report out so they can collectively plan better for the future by drawing on the experiences of their peers.[89] Universities can support libraries in this work by incorporating the expertise of library professionals in the decision-making process.

Managerial Culture

The managerial culture Bergquist identified, which prioritizes hierarchical structures and organizational finances, was favored by many universities in the sample and in the literature

review. Many libraries in these institutions remained subject to the decision-making of their administration regarding when they would open despite safety concerns from library personnel. The administration pressed libraries to support student learning and use of technology for their courses by increasing access to physical resources and spaces.[90]

This tension was exemplified by one library leader's experience:

We had some difficulty with the administration requiring us to keep the library open on days that have nearly no foot traffic. They have accepted us working from home (at least during the pandemic), but their sense of if the campus is open, the library must be open has not always fit with use patterns.

Another respondent at a public, doctoral-granting university noted:

The tension between concerned library faculty/staff and our campus administration was palpable when we were first reopening in the early fall of 2020. Campus administration viewed the library as essential for students and strongly encouraged us to have longer hours, more open spaces, and more access than many of our librarians and library staff were comfortable with.

This strategy hampered libraries in their mission to serve their communities.

In addition to opening and closing decisions that conflicted with library recommendations, university administrations also made budget cutbacks that contrasted with library data regarding patron needs. Although the managerial approach is meant to protect university finances, it can instead have a detrimental impact. When research and learning materials are not available through the library due to budget limitations, scholars and students forgo that information or purchase it themselves, leading to either diminished student and faculty success or decreased affordability of higher education and lower faculty job satisfaction. Affordability is a key issue in student retention.[91]

Developmental Culture

The developmental culture identified by Bergquist prioritizes personnel input and growth. An example of this developmental culture was one private academic library in New England,

whose leader told us, "Library personnel were allowed to decide if they wanted to work in person or not, which factored into what services could be in person and what couldn't." Although this culture was exhibited by several libraries in the literature review and some in the sample, few of them had developmental support from their organizations over the course of the pandemic. Library faculty and staff frequently were referred to as "essential" while simultaneously experiencing furloughs, uncertainty, increased workloads, and significant COVID-19 fatigue over the course of the pandemic.[92] After years of understaffing and underfunding, these contradictions exacerbated the libraries' challenge to provide remote services in high demand by patrons, which were made even more vital by the pandemic.

By overlooking or ignoring the input and concerns of staff, institutions lost the confidence of their workforce. A library leader from a public, doctoral-granting institution commented:

> I believe that the library is still viewed positively on campus by our administrators, but many of our library folks have lost trust—and this is not just with our campus or our library. Public messaging throughout the pandemic has seeded distrust of most public institutions and the media. I can imagine that many of our librarians and library staff will harbor some resentments toward those in positions of power for years.

The work of libraries in meeting student, faculty, and community needs cannot be done without sufficient staff who feel safe, valued, and secure. Universities can support libraries in their mission to provide research and learning resources by taking the needs of library personnel into consideration.

Conclusions

The positive sentiments from library leaders in this study aligned with decisions made under what Bergquist classified as collegial, negotiating, and developmental cultures. The negative sentiments from respondents in this study aligned with decisions made under a managerial culture, which prioritizes the institution and fiscal goals rather than using evidence-based

decisions, shared governance, or negotiation. While this managerial style provides for quick decision-making, it conflicts with the stated values of academia and may not be the best approach for serving faculty and student needs. The findings of this study confirm what Sadia Ishtiaq, Naveed Sehar, and Attya Shahid pointed out: funding increases are necessary to sustain library services and to provide staff training for a future pivot to meet changing patron demands.[93] This study showed strong alignment between library personnel recommendations and data from patrons regarding their needs. This correspondence is likely due to the familiarity with users' needs that librarians gain from working with patrons regularly. If universities value affordable education, student retention, and high-quality research, many of them have work to do in refunding their libraries and giving a voice to the experts who run them. Future research might investigate how the erosion of shared governance affects other units on campuses.

Sarah R. Fitzgerald is the assessment and planning librarian at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; she may be reached by e-mail at: sfitzgerald@umass.edu.

Sarah Hutton is the interim dean of libraries at the University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries; she may be reached by e-mail at: shutton@umass.edu.

Rebecca Reznik-Zellen is the head of the Science and Engineering Library at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; she may be reached by e-mail at rreznikz@library.umass.edu.

Charlie Barlow is executive director of the Boston Library Consortium; he may be reached by e-mail at: cbarlow@blc.org.

Will Oldham is Senior Program Administrator at Associated Colleges of the Midwest; he may be reached by e-mail at: wdoldham@gmail.com

Notes

1. Sadia Ishtiaq, Naveed Sehar, and Attya Shahid, "Information Dissemination during Covid-19 and Lockdown: The Role of University Libraries of Sindh, Pakistan," DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2020, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/4280.

2. Jennifer K. Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting during the COVID-19 Pandemic," Ithaka S+R, December 9, 2020, https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.314507.

3. Jennifer A. Dixon, "In Second Pandemic Wave, College Libraries Again Adjust to Shutdowns," *Library Journal*, December 1, 2020, https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=In-Second-Pandemic-Wave-College-Libraries-Again-Adjust-to-Shutdowns.

4. Association of Research Libraries. (2021). "ARL Statistics." https://www.arlstatistics.org/data/main

5. Frederick and Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting during the COVID-19 Pandemic."

6. Urban Libraries Council, "Leadership Brief: Digital Equity in the Age of COVID-19," 2021, https://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/Leadership-Brief_Digital-Equity.pdf.

7. Jessica C. Garner and Natalie K. Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream: A Case Study on Living and Managing Access Services during a Global Pandemic," *Journal of Access Services* 17, 4 (2020): 176–98, https://doi.org/10.1080/15367967.2020.1818570; Jennifer Joe, "Optimizing Library Services: Academic Library Response to Covid-19," *Against the Grain*, July 15, 2020, https://www.charleston-hub.com/2020/07/v323-

optimizing-library-services-academic-library-response-to-covid-19/; Meg E. Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again," *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice* 8, 2 (2020): 100–102, https://doi.org/10.5195/palrap.2020.239; Mark Mattson, Emily Reed, and Victoria Raish, "International Students and COVID-19: The Initial Response from the Penn State Libraries," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 21, 1 (2021): 37–46, https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2021.0008; Dipti Mehta and Xiaocan Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services—A Case Study of a University Library," *Digital Library Perspectives* 36, 4 (2020): 351–63, https://doi.org/10.1108/dlp-05-2020-0030; Jane Stimpson, "Teaching in a Pandemic: Academic Librarians Shift Instruction Online," *Texas Library Journal* 96, 3 (2020): 166–68, https://txla.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TLJ-Fall-2020_Final.pdf; Benjamin Walsh and Harjinder Rana, "Continuity of Academic Library Services during the Pandemic: The University of Toronto Libraries' Response," *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 51, 4 (2020): 237–45, https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp.51.4.04.

8. Anna Walek, "Polish Academic Libraries in the Face of the Covid-19 Pandemic: Crisis Management and Communication within the Organisation," *Przegląd Biblioteczny* (Library review), 2020, 94–121, https://doi.org/10.36702/pb.782.

9. Arda Putri Winata, Raisa Fadelina, and Sulistyo Basuki, "New Normal and Library Services in Indonesia: A Case Study of University Libraries," *Digital Library Perspectives* 37, 1 (2021): 77–84, https://doi.org/10.1108/dlp-07-2020-0059.

10. Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "First This, Now That: A Look at 10-Day Trends in Academic Library Response to COVID19," Ithaka S+R, March 24, 2020, https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/first-this-now-that-a-look-at-10-day-trends-in-academic-library-response-to-covid19/.

11. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream"; Mehta and Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services"; Stimpson, "Teaching in a Pandemic."

12. Scott Warren, "Community-Building without a Building: Can Libraries Resume Their Place as the Academic Hearts of Their Campuses?" *Bibliothek Forschung und Praxis* (Library research and practice) 44, 2 (2020): 183–86, https://doi.org/10.1515/bfp-2020-2093.

13. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

14. Dixon, "In Second Pandemic Wave, College Libraries Again Adjust to Shutdowns."

15. Andrew See, "Weathering the Storm: Continuing Essential Services at an Academic Library during a Global Pandemic," *Against the Grain*, September 30, 2020, https://www.charleston-hub.com/2020/09/v324-weathering-the-storm-continuing-essential-services-at-an-academic-library-during-a-global-pandemic/.

16. Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again."

17. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

18. OCLC, "REALM Project: Reopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums," September 28, 2021, https://www.oclc.org/realm/home.html.

19. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream"; Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again"; Mehta and Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services"; See, "Weathering the Storm."

20. Jennifer A. Dixon, "Reopening Libraries: Campus Concerns," *Library Journal*, June 25, 2020, https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=reopening-libraries-campus-concerns-covid-19; Colleen Flaherty, "Shutdown, Repeat," *Inside Higher Ed*, August 18, 2020, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/08/18/unc-chapel-hill-sends-students-home-and-turns-remote-instruction.

21. Raeda Anderson, Katherine Fisher, and Jeremy Walker, "Library Consultations and a Global Pandemic: An Analysis of Consultation Difficulty during COVID-19 across Multiple Factors," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 47, 1 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2020.102273; Joe, "Optimizing Library Services."

22. Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again."

23. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

24. Emy Nelson Decker, "Reaching Academic Library Users during the COVID-19 Pandemic: New and Adapted Approaches in Access Services," *Journal of Access Services* 18, 2 (2021): 77–90, https://doi.org/10.1080/15367967.2021.1900740.

25. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream"; Mattson, Reed, and Raish, "International Students and COVID-19."

26. Mattson, Reed, and Raish, "International Students and COVID-19."

27. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

28. Decker, "Reaching Academic Library Users during the COVID-19 Pandemic."

29. Stimpson, "Teaching in a Pandemic."

30. Karen F. Kaufmann and Claire A. Miller, "Seamless Virtual Service: An Academic Library Response to COVID-19," *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries*, September 24, 2020, http://qqml-journal.net/index.php/qqml/article/view/623; Stimpson, "Teaching in a Pandemic."

31. Walsh and Rana, "Continuity of Academic Library Services during the Pandemic."

32. Anderson, Fisher, and Walker, "Library Consultations and a Global Pandemic."

33. Walsh and Rana, "Continuity of Academic Library Services during the Pandemic."

34. Joe, "Optimizing Library Services."

35. Muhammad Rafiq, Syeda Hina Batool, Amna Farzand Ali, and Midrar Ullah, "University Libraries Response to COVID-19 Pandemic: A Developing Country Perspective,"

Journal of Academic Librarianship 47, 1 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2020.102280.

36. Mehta and Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services"; Jarmo Saarti, "Information Management during a Crisis—Providing an Open and Reliable Information Infrastructure for a Sustainable World," *Library Management* 42, 4–5 (2020): 287–90, https://doi.org/10.1108/lm-10-2020-0151.

37. Ingibjörg Steinunn Sverrisdóttir, "National and University Library of Iceland: Covid-19—Challenges and Solutions," *Alexandria: The Journal of National and International Library and Information Issues* 30, 2–3 (2020): 122–25, https://doi.org/10.1177/0955749020980287.

38. Rafiq, Batool, Ali, and Ullah, "University Libraries Response to COVID-19 Pandemic."

39. Walsh and Rana, "Continuity of Academic Library Services during the Pandemic."

40. Warren, "Community-Building without a Building."

41. Rafiq, Batool, Ali, and Ullah, "University Libraries Response to COVID-19 Pandemic."

42. Dixon, "In Second Pandemic Wave, College Libraries Again Adjust to Shutdowns."

43. Liladhar R. Pendse, "Academic Libraries and Research in Flux: Global Conversations in Times of COVID-19," *College & Research Libraries News* 82, 1 (2021): 36, 40, https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.82.1.36.

44. Frederick and Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting during the COVID-19 Pandemic."

45. Mattson, Reed, and Raish, "International Students and COVID-19"; Sverrisdóttir, "National and University Library of Iceland."

46. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream"; Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again."

47. Kaufmann and Miller, "Seamless Virtual Service."

48. Dixon, "In Second Pandemic Wave, College Libraries Again Adjust to Shutdowns."

49. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream"; Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again"; Mehta and Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services"; See, "Weathering the Storm."

50. Dixon, "Reopening Libraries."

51. Joe, "Optimizing Library Services"; Kaufmann and Miller, "Seamless Virtual Service"; Massey, "Lessons Learned in Leaving the Library and Coming Back Again."

52. Mehta and Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services," 354.

53. Rafiq, Batool, Ali, and Ullah, "University Libraries Response to COVID-19 Pandemic."

54. Rafiq, Batool, Ali, and Ullah, "University Libraries Response to COVID-19 Pandemic"; Winata, Fadelina, and Basuki, "New Normal and Library Services in Indonesia"; Joseph Kehinde Fasae, Clement Ola Adekoya, and Idowu Adegbilero-Iwari, "Academic Libraries' Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria," *Library Hi Tech* 39, 3 (2020): 696–710, https://doi.org/10.1108/lht-07-2020-0166.

55. Stimpson, "Teaching in a Pandemic"; Walsh and Rana, "Continuity of Academic Library Services during the Pandemic"; Mehta and Wang, "COVID-19 and Digital Library Services."

56. Joe, "Optimizing Library Services."

57. Stimpson, "Teaching in a Pandemic."

58. Joe, "Optimizing Library Services."

59. Dixon, "Reopening Libraries."

60. Rafiq, Batool, Ali, and Ullah, "University Libraries Response to COVID-19 Pandemic."

61. Dixon, "Reopening Libraries."

62. Frederick and Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting during the COVID-19 Pandemic."

63. Lisa Peet, "Pandemic-Caused Austerity Drives Widespread Furloughs, Layoffs of Library Workers," *Library Journal*, May 21, 2020, https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Pandemic-Caused-Austerity-Drives-Widespread-Furloughs-Layoffs-of-Library-Workers.

64. Frederick and Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting during the COVID-19 Pandemic."

65. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

66. Callan Bignoli, "Don't Leave Workers Out of the Library Narrative," *Library Journal,* May 19, 2020, https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Dont-Leave-Workers-Out-of-the-Library-Narrative-Opinion; #PROTECTLIBRARYWORKERS, "Protect Library Workers," http://libraryworkers.net/.

67. Maura Seale and Rafia Mirza, "The Coin of Love and Virtue: Academic Libraries and Value in a Global Pandemic," *Canadian Journal of Academic Librarianship* 6 (2020): 1–30, https://doi.org/10.33137/cjal-rcbu.v6.34457.

68. Deanna B. Marcum, "Historical Context and Contemporary Challenges," chap. 1 in *Academic Librarianship Today*, ed. Todd Gilman (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 7–16.

69. Adrianna Kezar and Peter D. Eckel, "The Effect of Institutional Culture on Change Strategies in Higher Education," *Journal of Higher Education* 73, 4 (2002): 435–60, https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2002.11777159.

70. Karl E. Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, 1 (1976): 1, https://doi.org/10.2307/2391875.

71. Barbara I. Dewey, "College and University Governance: The Role of the Academic Library," chap. 2 in Gilman, *Academic Librarianship Today*, 17–28.

72. Cindy S. Volk, Sheila Slaughter, and Scott L. Thomas, "Models of Institutional Resource Allocation: Mission, Market, and Gender," *Journal of Higher Education* 72, 4 (2001): 387, https://doi.org/10.2307/2672889.

73. Seale and Mirza, "The Coin of Love and Virtue."

74. Judith Dozier Hackman, "Power and Centrality in the Allocation of Resources in Colleges and Universities," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30, 1 (1985): 61, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2392812?origin=crossref.

75. William G. Tierney, "Organizational Culture in Higher Education: Defining the Essentials," *Journal of Higher Education* 59, 1 (1988): 2, https://doi.org/10.2307/1981868.

76. John M. Budd, *The Changing Academic Library: Operations, Culture, Environments*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2018).

77. Robert Birnbaum, "Problems of Governance, Management, and Leadership in Academic Institutions," chap. 16 in *Introduction to American Higher Education*, Shaun R. Harper and Jerlando F. L. Jackson, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 298–314.

78. William H. Bergquist, *The Four Cultures of the Academy: Insights and Strategies for Improving Leadership in Collegiate Organizations* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1992).

79. Starr Hoffman, "Organization, Administration, Management, and Planning," chap. 3 in Gilman, *Academic Librarianship Today*, 29–46.

80. Kezar and Eckel, "The Effect of Institutional Culture on Change Strategies in Higher Education."

81. Darlene F. Zellers, Valerie M. Howard, and Maureen A. Barcic, "Faculty Mentoring Programs: Reenvisioning Rather Than Reinventing the Wheel," *Review of Educational Research* 78, 3 (2008): 552–88, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40071137.

82. Jaime Lester, "Work-Life Balance and Cultural Change: A Narrative of Eligibility," *Review of Higher Education* 36, 4 (2013): 463–88, https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2013.0037.

83. Monica Mollo, "Academic Cultures: Psychology of Education Perspective," *Human Arenas* (2021), https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-021-00238-7.

84. William H. Bergquist and Kenneth Pawlak, *Engaging the Six Cultures of the Academy*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008).

85. John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014).

86. American Library Association, "State of America's Libraries Report 2021," https://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2021.

87. Bergquist, *The Four Cultures of the Academy.*

88. Dixon, "Reopening Libraries."

89. Joe, "Optimizing Library Services."

90. Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

91. Jessica Howell, Mike Hurwitz, Jennifer Ma, Matea Pender, Greg Perfetto, Jeffrey Wyatt, and Linda Young, "College Enrollment and Retention in the Era of Covid," CollegeBoard, 2021, https://research.collegeboard.org/pdf/enrollment-retention-covid2020.pdf.

92. Anderson, Fisher, and Walker, "Library Consultations and a Global Pandemic"; Dixon, "Reopening Libraries"; Garner and Logue, "Navigating the COVID-19 Slipstream."

93. Ishtiaq, Sehar, and Shahid, "Information Dissemination during Covid-19 and Lockdown."