

Table of Content

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Background of library system	3 - 7
Reception and Orientation	7
Duties Performed	8 - 9
Three Specific Aspects that Interest	9 - 10
Problem Area.....	11
Assessment of Value of Placement	
❖ Development of Professional Personality	12 - 13
❖ Correlation between Theory and Practice	13 - 15
❖ Learning Experience Gained	15
❖ Use of Initiative and Experience	16
❖ Practice in Developing Techniques for Good Human Relations	16
Evaluation of Host Librarian.....	17 - 18
Work Cited	19
Appendices	20



MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION'S LIBRARY

Background of the Library System

The Ministry and Economic Growth and Job Creation's Library is a special library that is attached to the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC). The MEGJC's library is one of four unit^s that falls under the purview of the Documentation, Information and Access Services Branch within the ministry. The Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation is a 'super ministry' that is responsible for seven (7) portfolio areas and these are namely: Land, Water, Housing, Climate Change, Environment, Investment and Works. The ministry operates from four (4) locations which includes: Head Office - 25 Dominica Drive, Environment and Risk Management Division – 16a Half Way Tree Road, Meteorological Service - 65 ¾ Half Way Tree Road and National Spatial Data Management Division – 191 Old Hope Road. The mandate of the library is to support all seven (7) portfolios of the ministry. The MEGJC library plays a vital role in helping the Ministry to achieve its goals, this it does through the provision of current and relevant information to meet the needs of its users. There is an offsite library that is attached to the Meteorological Service Division of which the main library have oversight responsibility. The opening hours for the main library are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Mondays to Thursday and 8:30 am to 4:00 pm on Fridays.

The main clientele of the library are members of staff of the Ministry. These members are allowed to borrow books, publications and multimedia equipment as required for allotted periods. The library also accommodates researchers from the public from time to time, however in order for them to utilized the services of the library they have to seek permission from the Librarian or the Director of Documentation, Information and Access Services. The library also partners with other special libraries by being a part of a special libraries network

as well as engaging in interlibrary loans. All materials that are loaned to staff are recorded in a log book with the borrowers' name, date of issue and material loaned. When materials are returned, the librarian or senior library assistant record the time and date in the log book that these material have been returned. While the general public may have access to the library's resources from time to time, the resources may only be consulted in the library during work hours as they are not allowed to borrow library materials for use outside of the library. However, if they are ^{ed}interesting in acquiring hard copy from a material or parts thereof, this may be reproduce at a cost.

Funding

The Documentation, Information and Access Services Branch is provided with an annual budget and this budget supports the operations carried out by its four units. These units are namely; the Library and Reference Services Unit, the Access to Information Unit, the Records Unit and the Mail Management Unit. According to the Director, the budget is a recurrent one, only with exception for the compensation package which may increase from time to time based on incremental incentives or additional staff. Even though the library unit's allocation is limited, it has no choice but to use what is given because it is not allowed to earn additional revenue through its services, grants or sponsorships. It should be noted that the library earns a minimal amount of funds through printing, photocopying, scanning and thermal binding services, however these funds are paid to the Ministry's cashier for receipting then transferred to the consolidated fund at the Ministry of Finance as a miscellaneous revenue.

Services Offered

✓ The library offers a variety of service to both members of staff and researchers from the general public. While members of staff are allowed to access all the services offered, researchers from the general public are allowed to access a few. The services offered to the general public includes: references services, photocopying, referrals, literature searches, internet search and virtual reference services. Along with the services offered to the general public, members of staff are also offered similar services and are allowed additional ones which is inclusive of in-house loans, inter-library loans, laminating and thermal binding. Members of staff are also allowed to borrow informational materials for a two (2) weeks period. While most of the services can be accessed free of cost, there is a fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) per page for black and colour printouts.

Physical Facilities

✓ The MEGJC Library is confined to a single room, hence there is limited amount of space for seating and shelf arrangement. Upon entering the library, there is a circulation desk that is visible. This desk is the first point of contact when a client enters the library. In addition to the circulation desk, the library has three other seating arrangement; one for the Librarian, another for the library clerk and the other is a workstation that is provided for the purpose of research and typing. The Director hopes to find a resolution to the issue of inadequate space in short order. The library staff share restroom and lunchroom with the wider ministry's population. Despite the limited space, the MEGJC library is conducive for research and learning purposes.

Staffing

The MEGJC library unit consists of three members of staff, the librarian, senior library assistant and library clerk. The Librarian is responsible for the daily operations as well as technical processes such as cataloguing and the entering of data into the WINISIS database. The librarian reports to the Director of Documentation, Information and Access Services. The Senior Library Assistant is responsible for covering the circulation desk as well as to perform other clerical day to day activities. The Library Clerk assists the Senior Library Assistant in performing her daily duties as well as to conduct general maintenance of the work spaces. Both the senior library assistant and the library clerk report directly to the Librarian. The librarian also has oversight responsibility for the ministry's offsite library. The offsite library has an Assistant Librarian who reports directly to the Librarian at the main library. The members of staff work assiduously together to achieve the goals of the unit.

Collection

The MEGJC Library houses a monograph of resources and these resources are acquired through purchases, gifts and transfers of publications from various departments. The library collection is divided into open shelf and reference and comprises approximately five thousand (5000) materials and these materials are books, reports, studies, laws and amendments, newspaper clippings (information that relates to the ministry), e-books, periodicals, and CD-ROMs. The library processes, documents and stores published and unpublished information on activities, programmes and projects of the ministry and its agencies. The library also has a vibrant book club which comprises over 800 recreational books. Books in the book club are loaned only to staff members for a period of two (2) weeks, however users are allowed an additional two (2) weeks extension if needed. Even though reference materials are not shelved in a secure location as a result of space constraint,

these reference books are only use^d in-house and are closely monitored by the Senior Library Assistant. The library utilizes the CDS/ISIS Database however, they are currently in the process of purging the data in an effort to convert and transfer them to the newly acquired Mandarin Integrated Library System (ILS). The system of classification used to organize the collection is the Universal Decimal Classification System (UDC).

Reception and Orientation

On Monday October 23, 2017, I commenced fieldwork at the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation's (MEGJC) Library. That morning I arrive at work approximately 8:00 am. The reception comprised a brief meeting with the Director of the Documentation, Information and Access Services who welcomed me to the Library Unit. Shortly after the brief welcome, the Director then asked the Librarian to join the meeting and at this point I was introduced to her. During the meeting the Director informed me about the operations of the Branch and the policies and procedures. After the meeting, I was left in the care of the Librarian who gave me a thorough orientation by conducting all other introduction^s, gave me a tour of the library and provided me with valuable information regarding the history of the library. As part of the orientation process, I was given a six (6) weeks work schedule (see appendix 2), and both the librarian and myself discussed each others' expectations. Overall the reception and orientation process was fair, I was warmly accepted by the staff who were friendly and courteous. I felt very comfortable in the environment which was welcoming and conducive to learning and professional development.

Duties Performed

General Duties

✓ The general duties undertaken during my practicum includes: the indexing and abstracting of library journals; cataloguing, accessioning and, processing of library materials from storage, update database; shelf reading and shelving; indexing of newspaper clippings, filing of WINISIS data sheets and data entry (entering and editing entries in WINISIS Database). In addition to general duties, I also assisted at the circulation desk where I charge and discharge library materials and prepare overdue notices. On a daily basis I assisted the Senior Library Assistant to prepare her Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), this is done by identifying and collating in a word document relevant articles from the daily newspapers (Gleaner and Observer), and forwarded via email to all senior officers within the ministry. I was also engaged in reference services which is inclusive of face to face, telephone and virtual services. I was introduced to the ministry's registry area and assisted with duties such as the creation of files, updating of active files, changing of file covers and the retrieval of files based on incoming request. These activities were guided by the Acting Registrar of the Records Unit. I also assisted in mounting a display for the Annual Civil Service Week and this was showcased at Emancipation Park. I attended one special library meeting with the Librarian and this was held at the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) Library.

Specific Duties

During my internship I undertook two (2) specific duties, these are inventory exercise ✓ and the digitizing ✓ of gazettes. In conducting the inventory exercise, I was given a paper listing with the library's holding, generated from the library's database ✓, to check the shelves

against the listing to make sure that both correspond. I was also given the task to make amendment to the paper listing and the computer listing where gaps exists as well as bring the gaps to the Librarian's attention.

The library houses an enormous amount of gazettes in its collection which is referred to from time to time by users. Due to the vast amount and the limited space to store them, the Librarian informed me that the library started a digitization project during the summer period this year where gazettes are now being digitized and hard copies destroy^{ed} in an effort to free up space. As one of my duty, I was given the task to assist with this digitization project. In conducting this activity, I scanned each gazette, loaded them onto the computer, formatted them then store them to the Library's Database for use.

Three Specific Aspects that Interest me the most, professionally and why

During my tenure I was assigned various tasks some of which I found interesting. Among the numerous tasks were three specific areas that interested me the most in a professional manner and these are namely; virtual reference services, selective dissemination of information (SDI) and the mounting of displays.

Virtual Reference Services is one of the many services offered by the MEGJC's Library. This service allows the librarian and users to communicate with each other in real time through the internet via e-mail, chat or instant message. The virtual service that the MEGJC's library offers only allow users to make their reference query via email. During my tenure at the library, one of my duty was to assist the Senior Library Assistant to action virtual reference queries. This task became of great interest to me as I was able to reach out to the users in the virtual space and satisfy their research needs. It must be noted that I was conducting a task such as this for the first time and the experience was amazing. The task has also assisted me to develop professionally as it encouraged me to treat each users[/] with the

same level of professionalism and satisfy their needs to best of my ability whether they be face-to-face or online.

✓ *The Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)* was another area that sparked my interest. Based on the portfolio areas that the ministry is responsible for, each morning I had to assist the Senior Library Assistant to peruse the daily newspapers and identify articles of interest then collate these articles in a word document and disseminate same via e-mail to senior officers within the ministry by 10:00 am each morning. This was a stimulating experience for me and it assisted me to develop in a professional manner. The experience gained in this area not only taught me time management and how to work under pressure since the information had to be disseminated within a stipulated timeframe, but it also helped me to keep abreast of current affairs and to disseminate timely information to my users.

✓ *Mounting Displays* was another area I was most interest^{ed} in. MEGJC's Library was selected as one of the special library to participate in the annual Civil Service Week celebrations and as part of the week long schedule of activities, a one day exhibition was staged at the Emancipation Park to commemorate such event. I was given the opportunity to assist with the preparation and mounting of the ministry's display, in addition I went with the team to the event to assist with the manning of the booth and dispensation of information to the general public. The preparation stage of this task was time consuming but a rewarding experience. I was pleased with the final product of the display as it gave a sense of accomplishment. This task has further helped in developing my teamwork and communication skills, as I had to dialogue with members of the public for the entire day. It was an amazing feeling to know that I was able to contribute to the task in a meaningful way. This task helped to reinforce the essence of the word "TEAM", "Together Each Achieve More".

Identify one Problem Area

One problem area that was identified within the MEGJC's Library is inadequate accommodation. During the orientation process I was informed by the Librarian that prior to the library being relocated some three years ago, the previous library was spacious and could accommodate adequate circulation area, technical area, shelving and far more space for users at a given time. However, the space issue exist^s based on the additional portfolios that were placed under the ministry in ^{the} subsequent change in political administration, which caused the ministry to retrofit office spaces to accommodate additional staff. As a result the library had to forego its previous space and be relocated to a much smaller area. This drastic change affected both library staff and the collection housed as the confined space has caused the area to look cluttered and unattractive based on the norm according to the librarian. All activities such as cataloging and classification, circulation procedures and the accommodation of users are now undertaken in one location, the area is just one small open room. The limited space has also hindered the library from accommodating a significant number of users at a time. Based on its current physical space, and the existing staff compliment, the library is not able to accommodate no more than four users at a given time, and these users would not all have access to desk space.

According to the librarian, the issue of inadequate space is not an immediate fix, however users on the other hand should not be deprived of the library services whenever they are in need of it. Based on my knowledge of librarianship, it is the responsibility of the librarian to satisfy the needs of the users as best as possible despite the limited accommodation, the library must find innovative ways to alleviate the issues faced. In an effort to satisfy all users' needs, I would encourage the users who are waiting in line to take advantage of the virtual reference services and telephone request services. As long as the reference queries are received through these media I would ensure that they are dealt with

promptly. In addition, I would add materials such as e-books and publications produced by the ministry to the library's online database so that online users can have access to same without visiting the library. In this way, both face to face and online users would appreciate the services of the library.

Assessment of Value of Placement

Development of Professionalism

Being placed in a special library to complete my fieldwork was a very profitable experience. It was my first time working in this type of information unit. I must say that the experience has helped me to develop and grow professionally in many ways and one such way is in the management area. During my tenure, I was given the opportunity to work closely with the librarian who tried to coach me into working in her capacity. I was exposed to the various activities such as the preparation of first draft of monthly reports, attending library meetings, selecting articles from the daily newspaper and disseminate same to senior officers, to name a few. I had to on more than one occasion assist users in locating information in the library. This experience was a very fulfilling one.

The six weeks spent at the MEGJC's Library has helped to better prepare me for a leadership role in the librarian profession. I have encountered and dealt with a number of persons with different personalities which were both pleasant and difficult. However, I was able to hold my own by using prior work experience and by maintaining professionalism in my conduct when dealing with difficult users. The practical experience that I have gained from this placement has made me more confident in doing my job because even though I had my special duties to perform as an intern, I was working as if I ^{were} was employed. This allowed

me to have daily interaction with patrons and as the days went by I became more proficient in addressing their needs. It was an overall good placement, one that I would recommend be kept on the list for future fieldwork students.

Correlation between Theory and Practice

There are several theories that underpin the practices carried out in the library environment, however I will focus on three of them that I have learnt and practiced while on internship. The three (3) theories to which I referred are namely: reference interview theory, customer service theory and library 2.0 theory.

Reference Interview Theory

On a daily basis, reference librarians conduct reference interviews of different magnitude to ascertain users' needs in order to satisfy them as best as possible. Reference interviews as postulated by Brown, is an immediate step between the patrons' question and the ideal resource that can answer the reference question (6). The theory of reference interview is best grounded in one of S. R. Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science theory called "save the time of the reader", (Brown, 7). Based on this theory, there is a resource for every patron and every resource has a patron who needs it. Locating resources/materials in and library collection can become a tedious task for users, especially when the patron is not knowledgeable about the collection, hence the role of the librarian is very important in this process to help save the reader's time. In practice, I conducted reference interviews at the circulation desk and based on my assistance, I was able to save my readers search time. In directing users to relevant resources that could answer their research questions, I was able to satisfy their research needs.

Customer Services Theory

Good customer service practices help to create an environment that is welcoming. Customer service theory can be linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, particularly motivation, whereas when one needs are satisfied they in turn feel motivated to always take advantage of that particular service. The users within the library require a welcoming and helpful experience, whilst having their needs satisfied. Customer service is a critical aspect of the MEGJC's Library, the librarian coaches her staff into practicing good customer services on a daily basis as according to her the library exists to provide quality and efficient service to both their internal and external customers. During my tenure I had to interact with several customers, I had to practice good customer service by listening to their needs, interact with them in a professional and respectful manner and make a concerted effort satisfy their needs as best as possible.

Library 2.0 Theory

Library 2.0 has already been embraced quite rapidly by many library community. According to Maness, it is an application that was adopted from Web 2.0 technologies (4). The term Library 2.0 was first coined by Michael Casey who defines it as being an application of interaction, collaborative and multi-media web-based technologies. The theory of Library 2.0 as explained in Michael Casey's four essential elements, is an application that is user-centered, multimedia-experiences, socially rich and communally innovative. All four elements described encourage the use of social media tools that aids in the interface between the reference librarian and the users. In practice, I had to interface with some of the library's customers via virtual reference services; electronic mail in particular. Although this was done through such a medium, the users were not made to feel any less appreciated as their queries were handled in an efficient manner as would face-to-face users.

Theories are used to explain concepts and occurrences. The theories highlighted above have helped to contextualize the practical experiences that have been gained whilst assigned to the MEGJC's library and reference services unit. What has been practiced during the field work tenure has been further advanced by the underpinning theory, this has helped to gain a better understanding of the relationship that exists between theory and the practical experiences, specifically as it relates to working in the library environment.

Learning Experience Gained

During my tenure at the MEGJC's Library, the learning experiences gained has been beneficial to me in many ways. These experiences helped to improve my customer service and interpersonal skills, in addition it has helped me become a more rounded person. An additional knowledge that I had garnered through cataloguing and classification was the classifying of materials using the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) schedules. It must be noted that I was being exposed to this schedule for the first time even though I heard about it in previous cataloguing and classification courses. After perusing the schedules I recognized that it was similar in nature to the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) schedule. Based on this, I was able to navigate through the schedules and comfortably assigned subject heading and classification numbers to materials after being taught by the librarian how it worked. Another valuable experience gained was that of satisfying users need through virtual reference services. It was the first time that I was conducting reference services in the virtual space. I was able to connect with my users online and satisfy their needs through this medium.

Use of Initiative and Experience

During my tenure, the Senior Library Assistant was absent from work for a period of one week due to illness. Based on my work schedule, I was assigned to assist her at the circulation from time to time so after being informed of her situation I use my initiative to cover her desk each morning for the entire week without being asked by the Librarian. In addition, in knowing the importance of preparing and disseminating the Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) by 10:00 am each morning, (a task assigned by the Senior Library Assistant), I used my initiative to prepare same for the entire week without being asked by the Librarian. After preparing the SDI daily, I would pass the information to the Librarian for her to peruse, approve, and then disseminate same to the relevant officers. This task has helped me to be currently aware. She commended me on using my initiative.

Practice in Developing Techniques for Good Human Relations

During the six (6) weeks period while working at the MEGJC's Library, I was able to utilize my knowledge of library science to develop techniques for good human relations. Whenever patrons visited the library to access materials, I would ensure that I greeted them with a courteous smile and exchange pleasantries. I practiced good customer service by assisting patrons, listen to their needs and fulfil their request as best as possible. When communicating with patrons, I always ensure that this is done in a professional manner. The same level of respect that I extend to them was also extended to me. I was able to get along well with all users as well as the library staff. The environment was welcoming and the cooperation of the staff contributed to a worthwhile experience.

Evaluation of Host Librarian

Not required. It is the Librarian's evaluation that is referred to here!

The initial encounter was a pleasant and courteous one. The Librarian had a professional demeanour and exuded much confidence. Upon further discussions with her I realized that she was fairly new in the organization, however she was not new to the field of librarianship as she had amassed approximately seventeen (17) years in the profession. She has gone through the various professional development from the Library Technical training program at Excelsior Community College to the Bachelors at the University of the West Indies, Mona. She has also done professional development short courses in Delivering Information Literacy Instruction, Customer Service, Library Software training sessions, to name a few. She strongly believes in and embraces the concept of lifelong learning and as such she has also completed Post Graduate programmes.

Her attention to details is very acute and she creates an environment for open suggestions and feedback from the staff in general as well as myself. She valued my opinion and gave me leverage to use my own initiative whilst providing requisite guidance. She is very involved in the day to day operations of the library and ensures customer satisfaction. She appeared to be very facilitative and flexible; based on the literature this is a good quality for transformational leaders to possess. Her knowledge of libraries and library operations seemed on par with the training and years of experience that anyone in this position ought to display.

She was attuned to all aspects of the library and was able to function without her assistant, who was out ill for a period of time. She communicates very well both orally and written and probes/interrogate further when something is not very obvious. For example, when she is responding to users on the Virtual Reference platform, she does not assume what the individual might be asking. She probes and ensures that she understands the query and

she re-states the query for confirmation. She does not seem to interact with the general Documentation Centre staff on a regular basis but for the most part the relationship is kept at a professional standard. Based on my assessment she could have more frequent interactions however, I realised that she was manning the library solely as well as attend function externally.

Overall the librarian was effective in the supervision of the library and efficient in executing her duties. She clearly displays the behaviour that is expected of her position and her knowledge of the profession. I believe this experience will help me in charting my own course as a library manager.

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APPENDICES