

Do Public Libraries Tickle the Taste Buds of Browsers?

**A study of the relationship between library users
and library services when locating books**

By

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this research paper was to investigate the way in which adult fiction books are made available by the public library as this creates barriers to library users' ability to find fiction books easily. The relationship between library users' and the library services provided including the arrangement of the adult fiction shelves was examined.

Methodology: Qualitative methods were used in this research to interview 12 adult library users' in two rural public libraries. Six library users' were interviewed at the Rangiora library and six at the Amberley library. All of the participants were approached in the fiction shelves of their respective libraries.

Findings: Finding fiction books in the public library is a cross related process where a combination of tools are used. This research has revealed barriers library users' face when searching for fiction books as well as the effectiveness of certain library services such as, the recently returned shelves and display shelves. Browsing was found to be an important book finding tool in the library but improvements could be made to enhance this process such as, organising parts of the adult fiction shelving by genre.

Value: There are few studies completed recently in New Zealand in this area so this research adds to this area of study. It was designed to assist librarians' to discuss options for enhancing user access to the adult fiction collection. It provides recommendations to improve the ease of finding fiction books through enhancing library services. This research ensures the views of library users are included in library service delivery. This is essential with community engagement becoming an important aspect of Council strategies.

Keywords: fiction, public library services, community engagement, shelving arrangements, readers' advisory.

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1. Introduction

The objective of the research was to investigate the problem with the way adult fiction books are made available by the library as this creates barriers to library users' ability to find fiction books easily. This qualitative study was motivated by a desire to investigate the relationship between how adult library users find fiction books and the library services provided, which includes the way books are shelved to find answers to this question. The existence of barriers to finding books for some users was identified as a problem in discussions between library users and librarians. A key element of the research was providing a way for library users' views to be heard thereby informing library shelving organisation and related services in the future. The information gathered and recommendations in this research are designed to assist librarian's to discuss options for improving user access to the adult fiction collection informed by a degree of knowledge provided by the user community. This research surveyed library users in two rural public libraries.

Internationally there have been numerous discussions about the function of a public library recognising that fundamentally the public library allows members of the community to borrow books and enjoy the libraries services. In addition one of the five major roles of the public library is to support the development of all forms of literacy (Public Libraries of New Zealand, 2012). Within this context adult fiction is commonly a popular section. The popularity stems from providing people with a means to enjoy reading. Fiction provides many avenues for enjoyment including experiencing adventures, learning about other people's point of view and escaping reality. However how public libraries arrange their fiction collections often plays a part in determining how easy it is for users to find fiction to

read. This ease of access to locate books in the library is a key factor in ensuring great user experience and enjoyment.

Over the years those in the library field have pondered the question of how the public library should be arranged to best meet the needs of the library users. However there appears to have been a lack of community engagement and thereby a shortage of input from the library users'. With public libraries current focus being on providing the best service to the community it is vital to gather input from the community to ensure the library delivers services that are best meeting the needs of the library users. It is well recognised across the international library sector that "effective engagement with the local community will ensure that the services provided are meeting the needs of local people" (Scottish Library and Information Council, 2015, p. 28). In addition many libraries in New Zealand focus on involving users and the local community in any proposed development of services or changes (Christchurch City Council, 2018). Reflecting the community voice in library developments fits in with the overall Waimakariri District Council strategy of fully engaging the community to make sure local voices are incorporated into service delivery (Waimakariri District Council, 2015). Therefore this research undertook to provide an avenue for the library users' views to be heard.

Notably, to date, there is very little recent research into adult library user's experiences of fiction in public libraries. It is interesting to note that there is some international research from earlier decades about library arrangements but there appears to be little recent reported research around this topic.

Given the focus on community input into service delivery in New Zealand libraries strategic plans it is remarkable that there is very little research reflecting library users' needs. One

New Zealand study took a holistic view of the reader's lives and how this related to the books they choose in the public library (Ooi, 2008) focusing on those in book groups as opposed to the general population of readers.

It was considered important to collect library users' views in an era when Council strategic plans are focusing on community engagement. This is important to avoid library service delivery decisions being made in isolation from the views of the library users'. It is an exciting time to do this research because community input is becoming increasingly necessary to ensure that libraries remain relevant to public need and to provide users with the chance to feel connected to the library (Blackburn, 2014; Goulding, 2009; Rasmussen, 2016) through engagement in the interviews and to inform future library decision making.

2. Literature Review

Public libraries have a major role to play in the fostering and encouraging of reading and supporting the development of literacy in all its forms (Darling, 2003; Nwokeoma and Itsekor, 2017). This is expressed in the *Public Libraries Strategic Framework 2012-2017* as two of the five fundamental roles of the public library. Reading has a crucial role to play in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of social skills and to a larger extent our minds (Nwokeoma and Itsekor, 2017).

2.1 Book Selection

There is a dearth of recent New Zealand related studies focusing specifically on how adult library users find fiction books within the library and whether or not the arrangement of adult fiction hinders or helps user's access the collection.

It is acknowledged that on a wider level that how library users go about finding fiction will be informed by influences external to the library and this research will take this into account. A New Zealand study undertaken by Ooi in 2008 focused on readers in book groups and considered how they selected their fiction books from a public library. Importantly the study took a holistic view of the reader's lives and how this related to the books they choose. This study showed users' choice is determined mostly outside the library and ideas for fiction reading evolved through user's everyday life information seeking and depended on the users' characteristics and daily life style experiences. These findings highlight a topic that has been recognised in the research interview questions and analysis. In addition it provides an early indication that libraries wishing to change the arrangement of fiction to better serve their users will have to be viewed from a holistic users experience framework.

Further research surrounding book selection suggests that readers search for cues in the books themselves to find a good book. Saarinen and Vakkari (2013) found that part of the process of finding a good book was by using cues to identify interest. These cues include the cover, author and back cover text of the book. Saarinen and Vakkari “categorized [readers] into three types according to the expectations toward reading... escapists, esthetes and realists.” (p. 744) The readers were sorted into these categories by “three criteria, the type of novels read, the approach to novels, and the motive to read” (p. 744). Saarinen and Vakkari state that these different reader types “require indexing of differing aspects of novels for matching their literary expectations and attributes they observe when searching and reading fiction” (p. 752). They conclude that while these cues are utilised when searching for books they differ depending on the reader type and thus libraries need to develop tools to suit all reader types.

Earlier research was conducted in Canada by Ross in 2000. Her research undertook a study of 194 committed readers who stated that reading for pleasure was important to them. Her study found that a comprehensive model of finding and selecting books included five related elements that worked together. These were: “the reading experience wanted by the reader; alerting sources the reader uses; elements in a book that the reader takes into account in making book choices; clues on the book itself; and costs to the reader in getting access to a particular book” (p. 6). The research found that ultimately “anyone wanting to promote free voluntary reading can help less practiced readers by making it easier for them to make the complex discoveries, discriminations, and judgments involved in negotiating these five categories” (p. 16). Ross concludes with implications for libraries among which were the fact that finding books to read for pleasure requires a lot of meta knowledge about authors, covers, genres and publishers occasional and less experienced reader’s lack. She states that

“the more information about books is made visible by the arrangement and display of the books themselves, the less information the reader needs to have in his/her head” (p. 20) whether this be in the form of genre labels, if you like that you will like this bookmarks, recommendation lists in print and online, separation of fiction by genre and/or alerting devices such as displays all will be helpful when looking for a “quick identifier” (p. 20) for readers. Both Saarinen and Vakkari and Ross claim that those heavily accustomed with fiction will make the most of cues in books. However both of these studies have been conducted overseas and more than five years ago.

A further aspect is the use of the library catalogue when searching for books. Mikkonen and Vakkari (2016) completed a study of 80 fiction readers and their search tactics in library catalogues. They found that the readers’ use of the catalogue and successful selection of fiction was a “highly context-related” (p. 711) process with many factors including the readers’ capacity to use the catalogue. This research informed the interview questions surrounding catalogue use.

Moyer (2005) refers to a definition of browsing developed by Yu and O’Brien. It states browsing is a “method of book selection which involves looking around, with the reader hoping to encounter desired books by serendipity. It is used as the major method by more than half of readers when they chose books” (p. 222). In addition according to the Pew Research Center, a fact tank that informs the public about issues, 73% of library users in the United States of America during 2013 reported that they visit to browse the shelves for books or media (Pew Research Center, 2013). In addition Robert Kieft (2006) points out that research has shown that many library users “highly value the practice of shelf browsing” and both bookshop and library users “assume that the array of items that might interest them is

present on the shelf and that they can graze around an item they know meets their needs to discover and select related reading. Tales abound from library users about the happy find, the unexpected, almost magical appearance of an item whose existence they had not suspected but that turns out to be exactly the resource they need” (p. 12). On the other hand Baker points out that while “patrons do browse library collections, they do not always find what they are looking for, nor are they completely satisfied with the books they eventually select” (Baker in Moyer, 2005, p. 222). However, Moyer (2005) sights research which shows that “patrons are hesitant to ask for help in fiction selection” (p. 222). On another note library research into reader selection techniques has shown that selecting by author is one of the major approaches used. Further, Mikkonen and Vakkari (2016) conclude that “the most important indicators of good novels were the authors name, back cover text and scanning a particular item” (p. 698). This literature shows that new approaches are needed to deliver satisfactory library services.

2.2 Fiction Arrangement

Another aspect of relevant literature is that of different arrangements of adult fiction collections in public libraries. Though many of the studies of genre shelf arrangement have been conducted many years ago, they are still important as there appears to be a lack of recent studies. An example of the earlier work is Baker in 1988 who conducted a study of three North Carolina public libraries of differing sizes in which books from two genres, Mystery and Romance, were shelved separately from the rest of the collection. She argued that alphabetical arrangement hindered users’ ability to easily access the fiction and contributes to “information overload.” However, Baker’s research only looked at two genres but what about the other popular genres in adult fiction reported by Novelist’s story elements guide (Novelist, 2019). Further Sheppard and Baker (1987) completed a review of fiction

classification schemes and their success finding that librarians need to test which scheme will be the most effective for user accessibility as there is still confusion over which scheme to use; either marking the spines in the interfiled collection or separating classified fiction from general fiction. Sapp (1985) discusses various classification schemes in terms of their accessibility for browsing concluding that improved subject access to fiction would better serve readers interests and allow for new services to be designed. There appears to be a lack of recent studies in New Zealand on this matter so the earlier studies were used to inform the research on genre shelf arrangements and their benefits and/or disadvantages.

In 2006 Huff conducted a user reception study of a Durham County North Carolina public library in which the main library branch arranged the fiction into genres several years earlier. The study revealed that users were satisfied, could easily access the collection and that circulation had increased steadily. Further Boter and Wedel (2005) completed a study of Dutch libraries which found that user perception of genre collections differed from the traditional public library categorisations and that the collections will be more accessible when they match. These studies show that genre arrangements in public libraries have proven to be popular in other parts of the world and that further study is needed to determine how public libraries can further improve their collections accessibility.

Ward and Saarti (2018) point out that there have been a number of different modern approaches to fiction classification. They go on to suggest that Baker and Shepherd find common principles including that fiction should be made easier for readers to find and that a system which guides users to find the book they desire is what should be used. Ward and Saarti's work concludes that systems used should be based on strategies actually employed by readers so as to achieve an outcome that helps readers find the fiction they want. In

particular they refer to a multi-faceted approach which includes book reviews, blogging, publisher's information and a complementary shelf classification to aid the readers to find their book.

Overall there has been an ongoing discussion in public libraries about whether it is best to shelve pleasure reading by genres or alphabetically by author. This discussion is now taking place within a changed context where “public libraries actively court pleasure readers” (Ross, 2009, p. 634) and libraries seek to create ease of access for library users. Consequently libraries have “created popular reading centres, embraced readers’ advisory services and implemented research based recommendations on how to help readers connect with books they enjoy” (Ross, 2009, p. 634). The question arises would it be beneficial to include more genre shelf arrangement as it has been identified to be more user friendly. In addition research has concluded that “if the library’s fiction collection is organised by genres, these genres typically contain entertainment literature like crime, romance, historical novels, science fiction etc. This kind of arrangement supports readers interested in certain genres, but does not help readers interested in complex or prestigious literature for accessing interesting novels” (Vakkari and Saarinen, 2013, p. 741). Further, Ross (2000) found that library users’ that are voracious readers and have genre-specific tastes like having quick identifiers on what to read. Genre shelving can provide this as they can go into a certain genre section and pick out books quickly (p. 14).

On the other hand Trott (2006) states that there are “problems that arise when we try to define genres and place titles accordingly...many authors are writing books that could be feasibly placed in a variety of genres” (p. 34). Librarians would have to make the hard decisions on which genre to place the books but as Novak (2006) points out “they [readers] expect us to

make those kind of judgements calls even if it an imperfect science” (p. 36). Further Trott (2006) writes that “we are trying to create a library that is easy for readers of genre fiction to use. But at the same time, we may also be creating a library in which readers can simply ignore parts of the collection” (p. 34). On the other hand Ross (2009) proposes that libraries need to work proactively with the reader and “embrace a model of the reader as an active meaning-maker who can be trusted to make choices” (p. 654). Further, Ross’s earlier research found that “trying to change readers’ book preferences doesn’t work. Readers know what they want to read and find presumptuous any suggestion that they should be reading different/better/more challenging/or more diverse materials” (2000, p. 20).

Other studies look at bookshops and reader centred arrangement of fiction (Maker, 2005; Hopkins, 2007). A small public library in Melbourne, Australia decided to arrange their adult collection like a bookstore by subject and genre to allow for easier access and discovery of the most popular parts of their collection (Hopkins, 2007). Maker (2005) disagrees and believes that public libraries need to take a user centred arrangement as traditional genres can hinder users’ accessibility. These studies informed the interview questions on alternative shelf arrangements for the adult fiction.

While the above articles have looked at public libraries, school libraries are involved in these discussions. The National library of New Zealand has been supporting arranging fiction into genres in school libraries. Rearranging the fiction can reinvigorate the collection, help with promotion of the library and its collection and help students find a book to read more easily. Many schools are making the change and are finding that borrowing has increased and that the students are reading more widely within their preferred genre and then throughout the fiction collection (National Library, n.d.). Goldblatt (2015) mentions that at the high school

level students are happy to “hang out in their favourite genre” (p.22). Students are benefiting from this change because it fits their needs and that is what the above studies have shown to be the most important aspect of shelf arrangement. Even though this focuses on school libraries the ideas and benefits could fit in with public libraries and adult readers.

2.3 Readers’ Advisory

Trott and Novak (2006) wrote an article presenting the opposing sides of the argument about the best way to present the adult fiction collection to effectively aid the reading needs of the library users. Trott believes that there are many issues with arranging the shelves in genres. What is genre and how is it defined is one issue that goes alongside the fact that many authors write across genres and thus make it difficult to know which genre to shelve them under. Additionally the role of the reader advisor would change under genre arrangement and not necessarily for the better. Trott believes that the readers’ advisors time would be best spent “providing assistance to [users’] through direct service...than by spending time trying to decide where a particular book fits in the collection” (p. 35). as readers’ advisors have to spend time rechecking cataloguing staff’s work. On the other hand Novak believes that the alphabetical arrangement of shelves does not allow for easy access into the collection for users and that they always prefer to browse a small collection, such as the recently returned shelf, rather than wandering the shelves aimlessly trying to find a book from all the neatly arranged book spines. Novak goes on to state that librarians interfile the fiction collection for their convenience and separate genres for the users. Novak also points out that a lot of users value independence and prefer to find books in the collection themselves thus genre arrangement allows for this. If these users want to go outside their preferred genre then they can do so easily on their own (Trott and Novak, 2006). She states that “We need to make it as easy as possible for patrons to remain independent if they prefer it but also as comfortable as

possible to receive assistance when necessary” (Trott and Novak, 2006, p. 37). This article shows that there is varied discussion on this topic with valid points on both sides.

An additional practice explained by Novak (2006) poses the idea that when library users look at the fiction collection they see a brick wall which creates confusion when they do not have an author in mind. She further argues that because they wish to avoid this confusion they, “commonly gravitate towards any smaller chunk of the collection they can find. Many of them never venture past the new book section, because they can browse the whole section in a short time. Others swarm around carts of recently returned books because someone else thought they were good enough to check out” (p. 36). Novak goes on to conclude that library users’ “will always prefer to browse a smaller more manageable set of books rather than wondering the isles aimlessly and pulling out random books. They really just want to find an easier way into the collection” (2006, p. 36).

There appears to be a dearth of recent literature regarding the use of recommendations to locate fiction books. Nonetheless earlier research undertaken by Ross (2000) found that recommendations from family and friends was involved in considering selection of books however it was one part of a variety of tools library users’ apply in book selection. In addition Ross points out that “recommendations are important, but only from a trusted source with tastes known to be compatible, such as certain reviewers, family members and friends that know my taste and librarians, and more recently internet acquaintances (p. 12). Further, Ooi (2008) reported that the participants in her study used recommendations as they were members of book groups who regularly share recommendations. It appears that there is space for further research on the importance of recommendations when finding fiction books in the

library. This may be remedied by undertaking community engagement around this issue which is discussed below.

2.4 Community Engagement

This research fits squarely within the strategic focus on community engagement and specifically the value of library user input to inform service delivery. It is clear that both libraries internationally and in New Zealand, have incorporated community engagement in their strategic plans. Community engagement has been widely defined. Goulding's (2009) definition accepts the following definition within the context of public libraries and citizen involvement. "Community engagement encompasses a variety of approaches whereby public service bodies empower citizens to consider and express their views on how their particular needs are best met. These may range from encouraging people to have a say on setting the priorities for community safety ... to sharing decision-making with them in relation to defined services" (p. 38).

Goulding (2009) points out the motives driving the community engagement, "one is to try to overcome citizens' growing sense of disconnection, cynicism and distrust of government and the other is to encourage community involvement in policy development and service delivery in the anticipation that this will deliver better public services" (p. 38). For example Scotland's National Public Library Strategy 2015-2020 has recommended that libraries "build on current practice to become champions of community engagement" (Scottish Library and Information Council, 2015, p. 28). In New Zealand there is a clear emphasis throughout the libraries strategic plans to undertake many different styles of community engagement. For example the Napier's Library Strategy 2018 outlines a commitment to "listening to the needs of our internal customers and community and delivering excellence in service", and to "engage in a friendly, trustworthy and respectful manner, embracing cultural heritage and diversity with an

open mind” (Napier City Council, 2018). Importantly for this research Napier library reported back to its community that after listening to their most frequent customers the library was told “that you like to browse for your next favourite read by genre and that we are continually updating what’s available with content that’s relevant to you while keeping your old favourites” (p. 12). Clearly the frequent library users’ expression of the desire to browse books by genre shows how important the arrangement of books on library shelves is for some customers.

Given the focus on community input into service delivery in New Zealand libraries strategic plans it is remarkable that there is very little research reflecting library users’ needs. In this era it is important to collect library users’ views about how library services support the users’. This is important to avoid library service delivery decisions being made in isolation from the views of the library users’. It is an exciting time to do this research because community input is becoming increasingly necessary to ensure that libraries remain relevant to public need and to provide users with the chance to feel connected to the library (Blackburn, 2014; Goulding, 2008; Rasmussen, 2016) through engagement in the interviews and to inform future library decision making.

3. Rationale

Given the importance in recent years throughout libraries in New Zealand on community engagement and the Waimakariri strategic focus on community development (Waimakariri District Council, 2015) this research was designed to provide an avenue for library users' voices to be heard on the important topic of the ease of access around finding adult fiction within public libraries. To this end it is possible that public libraries could better serve adult fiction users by gaining insight into how members of such groups search and locate books within the library. This research provides an avenue to inform staff policy and decision making around service delivery in libraries.

4. Research Problem

This research will investigate the problem with the way adult fiction books are made available by the library as this creates barriers to library users' ability to find fiction books easily.

5. Research Questions

The following research questions form the basis of this research:

What are the methods used by adult library users in locating adult fiction books within the public library and what other factors influence these methods?

1. How do library users find adult fiction books in the library?
2. What current library services (catalogue, display shelves, genre spine labels and newsletters) influence library users' actions when locating a fiction book?
3. What other factors within the library influence library users actions when locating fiction books?
4. What part does the shelving arrangement of the adult fiction shelves play in library users' ability to find books?
5. What factors external to the library influence library users' book finding strategies?

6. Research Design

A qualitative research method was undertaken for this research as it provides the tools for evaluating the effectiveness of particular practices and opinions. In particular a qualitative semi-structured interviewing method allowed for the interviewer to be friendly and informal in the interviews. It is noted that this method also allows the researcher to swap between data collection and analysis in order to conduct thorough research. This semi-structured method was chosen for the interviews as it allowed the interviews to be framed by key questions that could be amended and added to at any time. This method provides the possibility that the interviewee will feel comfortable giving their honest opinion about their experience. It also allows for the responses to be easily compared with other interviewees, but still be flexible enough to gain unexpected insights in the users' responses. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015) A small scale qualitative study of adult library users was undertaken in order to discover their opinions about library services including shelf arrangement and how this influenced their book searching habits within the library. For reasons of accessibility two public libraries were chosen Waimakariri District Council Library and Hurunui District Council Library which are both in North Canterbury.

6.1 Ethics

The researcher gained ethics approval from Victoria University's School of Information Management Human Ethics Committee for this research prior to any data collection. Written permission was sought from both participating libraries (see Appendix A). An information sheet was provided to all participants, (see Appendix B) and signed consent forms were gathered from all participants (see Appendix C). Pseudonyms were used for all participants to

ensure anonymity. Participating libraries were sent a summary of the findings at the conclusion of the project.

6.2 Library interviews

6.2.1 Methodology

Turning to consider research methods, using the anthropological method of ethnography has become increasingly popular in library research. Khoo, Rozaklis and Hall (2012) completed a literature review of libraries using these methods in the study of libraries and library users and found that 81 studies predominately used five types of ethnographic methods. Ethnography is “a collection of qualitative methods that focus on the close observation of social practices and interactions” (Asher and Miller, 2011. p. 3). Ethnography is an excellent method for researching user experience of libraries. Through semi-structured interviews it allows the researcher to go beyond understanding how the fiction selection processes work to learn the meaning that users ascribe to the process (Asher and Miller, 2011).

With regard to the development of the interview questions, the research topic was discussed with the researcher’s librarian colleagues. This initial discussion of the research problem was used to formulate the first draft of interview questions. The questions were refined and reviewed by the researcher’s colleagues. This served to validate the questions as a tool to measure the research problem (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). In addition the researcher tested the questions prior to conducting the interview with two library users’ who would not be participants in this research.

Six adult (18 and above) participants were randomly selected at each public library to include adult library users of all ages and genders. The researcher inquired at both libraries as to which were the busiest days in their respective libraries. The researcher went to the libraries on these days to ensure a range of users were available within the fiction section to be interviewed. The researcher also observed the layout and arrangement of the shelves in both libraries to gather an understanding of the participants' responses.

Rangiora

The first library used in this research was Rangiora library the largest branch of the Waimakariri Libraries, which has an adult fiction collection of around 22,000 books for users to access. This collection is arranged alphabetically by author with pictorial genre spine labels for two genres; fantasy/science fiction and westerns as well as a New Zealand fiction spine label for any genre.

This research undertook face to face semi-structured interviews with library users browsing the fiction shelves. Library users were approached while they were in the fiction shelves and asked if they would participate in an interview at a table nearby. When asked how long the interview would take (15 minutes) the first few users declined citing that they did not have enough time. Two participants were willing to sit down and talk but the majority of people approached declined. The researcher realised that the process had to change to allow for more participants. The interviews were being recorded and the researcher was taking notes at the same time, however it became clear that if more participants were to feel comfortable and willing to participate they needed to be interviewed in the shelves where they were approached as this possibly made the idea of being interviewed seem less stressful and less time consuming. Thus the interview process changed to allow for standing interviews beside

a trolley which resulted in more users' being willing to participate. The interviews, while still semi-structured and guided by interview questions, became more conversational and in the process allowed the interviewer to be more actively involved in the interview.

The interviews were recorded with a hand held device to ensure that the participants' responses were correctly recorded. The researcher had to ensure that the responses of the participants were sufficiently recorded when the interviews were conducted standing in the shelves as notes were no longer being taken. Additionally library books were used as props to demonstrate interview questions about genre spine labels (see Appendix D). These books were shown to participants when questions were asked and this enabled participants to fully understand and engage with the questions by pointing to the books while speaking. Two books were used; both had pictorial labels from two different genres. This part of the process was easier when the interviews were to be conducted at a table. To get around this the researcher used a small trolley to carry the books, recording device and interview questions.

Amberley

Amberley is small rural town and has the largest branch of the Hurunui District libraries. The Amberley libraries' adult fiction collection has around 5,000 books for its users to access. The adult fiction collection is arranged alphabetically but has pictorial genre spine labels on the books for seven genres. These genres are gentle mystery, thrillers, historical, science fiction, romance, fantasy, western and a one for New Zealand fiction of any genre. There is also a separate section called 'light romance'.

Amberley library was the second library used in this research. The researcher went to this library and discovered completely different circumstances. All of the participants were happy

to sit down at a table near the shelves and have a conversation and all library users' approached were willing to participate. Books were also shown as at Rangiora library to help demonstrate questions and engage participants in further discussion.

In Amberley library it was interesting to find that the library has many volunteers regularly assist in running the library. This meant that two of the participants were volunteers at the library. This gave them a different perspective on the questions as they had knowledge of how the library works while still being a user.

6.2.2 Analysis

After the interviews the researcher transcribed each interview and read the transcripts twice to get an understanding of the similar themes following Ryan and Bernard's recommendations (Bryman, 2012, p. 580). The transcripts were then analysed using a colour coding system for each theme. The analysis took into account Adam's (2015) advice and "look[ed] for ways to consolidate themes found in multiple answers and supplement them with well-chosen, illustrative quotations" (p. 504). Six themes were found using the above process, these were: browsing; book displays and recently returned shelves; author, front cover, back cover text of book; book recommendations; ask a librarian and different shelf arrangements. The analysis of data and discussion is presented in sections within these themes. Further as part of the analysis similarities and differences between the responses collected in the two libraries were examined.

6.3 Limitations

All research has limitations and this research is no different. In qualitative research it is true that the analysis made in this research is only accurate for the library users' interviewed in this research. It is recognised that this is a small sample of library users' due to the time/resource constraints of this 580 research project. This research is confined to 12 adult library users' and thus does not allow for a large scale generalisation of findings. Further the researcher approached only library users' that were in the library at the time the researcher was there thus limiting the potential research pool to a small time period and group of library users'. In addition because the researcher works in the Reference and Readers' Advisory team at her library she could have had bias towards this topic.

7. Analysis

7.1 Browsing

This section explores research question one: “How do library users’ find adult fiction books in the library?” The participants in this research demonstrated that they all use browsing as one of their main tools to find books this confirms earlier research identified in the literature review. Participants explained their browsing in numerous ways including the following:

“Cannot remember authors so I browse along the lines and sees what I can see and think that looks interesting”. (R3)

“You just stumble across them browsing the shelves.” (R6)

“Walk around the shelves looking for books. What looks a good book I will take it out”
(R 3)

“I just browse the shelves basically” (A5).

The interviews have shown that browsing and selecting books is a critical first step towards user enjoyment and ease of access to finding books in the public library. It appears that sometimes choosing the right book can be a hurdle to get past. For example, one participant who comes to the library every day stated “I know what I want to look for but I seem to always get lost because it is hard to find exactly where the books are. The letters need to be more visible.” (R4)

In addition while the participants enjoyed browsing they also liked being able to view books in a smaller selection grouping.

7.2 Recently Returned Shelves and Book Displays

This section explores research question two: What current library services influence library users' actions when locating a fiction book? In particular this section explores the use of the return shelves and display shelves provided by the library to assist users' to locate books.

In many public libraries, books that are newly returned by library patrons are placed on the returns trolley or recently returned shelves as a browsing tool for prospective readers. Both the libraries in this study follow this practice. This is replicated in this research with most participants stating that when they come into the library and start looking for books the first place they go is to the recently returned shelves. All of the participants stated that they also look at the display shelves to assist with finding books. In addition all participants said they liked these sections. It is interesting to note that one participant who is also a library volunteer at the Amberley library believes that "50% of people go to the recent returns first before they go to the shelves". (A3)

The participants talked of their usual routine in locating books while some commented on how useful the recent returns and book display areas are as follows:

"My usual routine is I return my books and then look at the new ones that you can reserve, then I come around and look at the recent returns and then I go to where the new books are and I find 50% of the books I take out from that area". (A4)

“First thing I do is go to the returns and see what other people have actually been reading and if any of my favourite authors are there ... or if I find a book that sounds interesting...” (R6)

“Yes I got one from there recently. Really like those displays and the one by the checkout it is really good..,” (R2)

“When I first come into the library the first thing I do is go to the recent returns” (R1)

“I find that quite helpful (recent returns) and yes I look at the displays at the end.” (R3)

“I like to look for books on the shelf over there (returns) from other libraries.” (A5)

“I know what authors I like. I try to go for them or the returns or look for what is on display.” (R4)

In addition another library volunteer participant explained that the recent returns is the best place to go, “that is the best place to go to. And a lot of people go there first. They like to see what others have been reading. That is why we leave them on the shelf and try not to put them back on the shelves until the afternoon so that a lot of older people that come in go straight there to find books”. (A 1)

One participant (R 1) stated “I always look at the display shelves and the new book shelves. A bit lazy!” It is interesting to note that this participant felt she may be “a bit lazy” by only looking at the display shelves. Perhaps this reflects her feeling that she should be looking

across the whole collection if she was properly using the library and she is castigating herself for this failure.

One participant who is also a library volunteer worker uses the recent returns and the display sections for personal book selection. She made the following comment from her volunteer experience about the use of the special book display areas.

“Displayed being on a chair, often I see if we have put books there on a stand away from the normal line of books. You often see people pick those up and take them. Sometimes when I volunteer I have to put another book back on there. I try to pick not such a well-known author. Nice cover maybe.” (A1)

This provides an example of how the library team arranges the display services taking into account how the library users’ make book selection. The volunteer is being proactive in meeting the customers search needs.

It is clear that for participants the recently returned and display shelves are valuable tools for users’ to utilise in locating books. The libraries in this research are trying to best service their users’ by providing recently returned shelves and display shelves.

7.3 Author, Title, Front Cover, Back Cover Text and Other Cues

This section continues to explore research question one: “How do library users find adult fiction books in the library?”

While Mikkonen and Vakkari (2016) argue that selecting by author is one of the most common approaches used. Research has also shown that library users use varied techniques to find a book. These include; front cover, back cover text, author and other cues from the book itself. As discussed above most participants browsed to find books and particularly in the designated areas of the recent returns, new books and display areas. This was explained in a number of varied ways in response to the question did they have authors in mind when they started their search including the following;

“I can’t remember the authors” (R1)

“Yes sometimes but I cant remember the authors I used to read. I have pages and pages of them typed up I should go back to it and have a look.” (A2)

“Probably the covers, the author I know of, more of their books” (R6)

“Sometimes I go for them [authors]...I’ve got no favourites it’s what tickles me. What looks a good book? I will take it out.” (R3)

“I know what authors I like. I try to go for them or the returns or look for what is on display.” (R4)

“I just browse the shelves basically... quite often I will have an author in mind.” (A5)

“Sometimes” (R2)

Saarinen and Vakkari (2013) conclude that library users are able to “identify novels by recognising authors when browsing. It is easier for humans to recognise than to recall things” (p. 748). This appears to be the case with the participants in this research because a number of them stated they could not remember author’s names. As discussed above when browsing the recent returns, display sections or the shelves participants said they recognised authors they liked. This may explain in part why participants browse as opposed to going straight for the author on the shelf.

A further tool that participants used is reading the text on the back of the books. This replicated the research undertaken previously by Saararin and Vakkari (2013) who state “text on the back of the book received most mentions as the indicator of a good novel among occasional readers” (p. 748). One participant described this practice in the following manner, “I read the backs and if that sounds all right away I go” (R3).

It is curious to note that in response to questions about how they find books some participants could only describe how they decide with vague feeling towards the book such as it “tickles me” (R3), “what I can see and think that looks interesting” (R1), “What looks a good book I will take it out (R3)”, and “probably the covers” (A2). One participant says “it depends on your mood doesn’t it” (R1). This reference to “mood” has been identified in previous research Ross writes that library users “choose books according to their mood and what else is going on in their lives” (Ross, 2000, p. 13). This demonstrates that locating books is a very personal task and involves cross-related tools.

While knowing the author is not central to book selection for the participants in this study a combination of other search tools enables successful book selection. In addition browsing and

using the special smaller book display areas is important, participants also use other tools such as looking at the cover, reading the back of the book and other cues that might entertain them on that day in their book selection techniques.

7.4 Ask a Librarian

This section considers research question two: What current library services influence library users' actions in locating a fiction book? The section focuses on whether users' ask the library staff for help in finding books. This is an important consideration given the desire of the library to provide services to assist the library users' to locate fiction books. An examination of some participant's comments in this research demonstrated a hesitance to approach library staff for assistance. For example, when asked if they ask librarians for help in locating fiction books three participants made the following comments:

“No. I just look and see what’s there.” (A2)

“Not really. I go to look where it is [on the shelf] but...if it’s not there I think it’s not there [I move on with browsing].” (R2)

“No I can’t remember authors.” (R3)

On the other hand participants who said they did ask staff for help praised and valued staff assistance. In addition two referred to their lack of ability to use the catalogue to look for books due to their lack of technical skills. With regard to providing services that truly support users searching it appears important to consider computer literacy and interface design in designing services and support systems.

Participants made the following comments on these points:

“I usually ask staff. They are much quicker on the computer than I am.” (A4)

“I would go and ask...I know all the librarians.” (R1)

“Yes definitely I’ve done that many a time.” (R5)

“I’m not up to date on computers so I am rarely up to that. If I’m looking for a book I will go up to the girls at the desk and they will look up for me to see if the author has got one in.” (R6)

“Yes and sometimes I think, I don’t think I’ve read that, but I check with them and they can whiz through all the books I’ve read and tell me oh yes you’ve read this so many months ago so I put it back on the shelf.” (R6)

Further, with regard to assistance from librarians it appears that knowing the library staff personally and the closeness of a small community may influence whether or not a user requests assistance.

7.5 Book Recommendations

This section explores research question five: what external factors influence library users’ book finding strategies. All but two of the participants in this research spoke of a range of external recommendations from family and friends including the following:

“Yes if I know someone and they bring a book a back. I say have you enjoyed any of these. Sometimes there is a waiting list for the ones that are most popular.” (A1)

“Yes all the time.” (A5)

“I suppose I get it from friends if they are reading a good book. My sister is a bookaholic like I am, we are normally comparing what each other is reading.” (R6)

“Yes the family do but unless they write it down I don’t retain the author.” (R3)

Another group of participants obtained book recommendations from other sources including newspapers, magazines and word of mouth. Comments included the following:

“[Yes] The Listener, Sunday papers, Australian Women’s Weekly, weekend papers, [other] magazines, word of mouth [like people who say] oh gosh, I've read this you must read it!” (A3)

“Yes I do, from friends. I always read The Press book reviews and I get The Listener, [and I think] that sounds interesting, sometimes it is and sometimes it’s not.” (A4)

Use of online recommendation sources was favoured by two participants demonstrating the growth of these external online tools for book selection. For example:

“Yes. I am on Pinterest and they say 20 books you might like. 20 thrillers like.” (R2)

“I will go and have a look for recommendations. Often I have seen something on line and it is a different website and then someone has suggested a different author.” (R5)

“[Websites] like Bookbub that recommends similar authors and new authors and you sign up for a genre.” (R5)

It is interesting to note that in the Amberley library staff have provided an internal tool in the form of a noticeboard, located next to the recently returned shelves, for library users to pin up book recommendations to share with the library community. One participant described it in this manner:

“Sometimes when people bring books back in they say this is a great read and to put it on the list. And also because most people here do lots of reading and they say this book warrants being put on the recommendations list...” (A3)

This illustrates the potential that library users will accept and use recommendations from fellow library users. It is important to remember this in the context of a small library where everyone in the community knows each other as discussed in one of the participants’ quotes above.

Overall external sources are important to the participants in their book selection strategies whether it be from friends, family, magazines or online. However, further information would be required on how library users apply book recommendations in their book selection

strategies in order for library staff to fully comprehend this issue when designing future services.

7.6 Different Shelf Arrangement

This section will look at research question four: “What part does shelving organisation play in library users’ ability to find adult fiction books?” This section will focus on the shelf arrangement debate between organising the shelves alphabetically by author and separating out genres, such as romance, and shelving them separately from the rest of the adult fiction collection.

Participants when asked about shelving the books in genres were divided in their views. Some considered the current alphabetical arrangements are easy to use while others supported genre shelving potential. One participant expressed the view that it is “better if all fiction is together and you have to hunt a bit” (A4) while another stated the opposite view “no I find that hard [alphabetical]. I still find it hard to find books unfortunately.” (R4) Two further participants suggested that changing to a genre system is not a good idea because most of the library users know how the system works and the second one suggested that “I’m happy with the way it is...I think as you get older you don’t want too many changes and you like it if it makes it easier for you.” (R6) The conclusion could be reached that while the alphabetical arrangement may be satisfactory for experienced library users’ it may not be so acceptable to less experienced library users’.

On the other hand several participants supported the idea of genre shelving commenting, “oh yes that could work” (R6) and “yes it would be helpful.” (R4) While others were more enthusiastic in their support for genre shelving. For example;

“That would be quite good. Then you could see, the different books because I am really bad I just go back to reading the same books I have read so many times before I am really bad at that. If in the same genres it would be so much easier to find the books that I really like. It would be really good.” (R2)

“Yes probably, because some of them not sure if they are good or not if they are among everything [alphabetical] it would be a lot easier.” (R1)

“Yes a good idea. Romance, cowboys...Yes I think it could be helpful and really big especially for the older people because they have their minds set and they still like reading romance books...they would definitely help [my husband].” (A1)

One participant delved more deeply suggesting that genre would not work because there are different opinions on which genres books should go into. “No because someone like Laurel Fay Hamilton [is] definitely science fiction [and] is often in another category at the library never in the science fiction one so I don’t think it’s necessary because [library staff] might put it in the romance [genre] when it is paranormal...Diana Gabaldon has time travel but put in historical [genre].” (R5)

Librarians would have to make the hard decisions on which genre the books were placed. The two libraries in this research already exercise this discretion with regard to installing genre labels on the spines of the books although at Rangiora library only two genre labels are used, fantasy/science fiction and westerns whereas at Amberley library there are seven genres including romance, westerns, fantasy, science fiction, historical, thrillers and detectives.

As mentioned above both public libraries in this research use pictorial genre spine labels on their books within the alphabetical arrangement. Genre spine labels are a readers' advisory tool included in the lists of strategies for librarians to employ to help the lesser experienced reader find a book (Ross, 2000). Some participants from Amberley library, where they use seven genre spine labels, stated that they use these labels to find fiction books and like having them. For example; "Yes I do. I do like seeing the symbol because it does give you a bit of an idea what it could be." (A1) In comparison Rangiora library only uses two genre spine labels and when participants were asked if they use the labels to find fiction books and if there should be more, had this to say:

"Occasionally, sometimes, yeah. I think it would make it easier for people who were looking for a particular book. They could look and see oh that's what that one is all about I might look at that one. It would be nice [if there were more labels]." (R6)

"Yes I do go for that. I like westerns and I look for the little buttons [labels]." (R3)

"Yes. I didn't even know about them. The symbols would be quite good." (R2)

Taking into consideration the aim of the libraries in 2019 to provide user friendly services and the views of participants in this research it would seem reasonable to empower the library users' by reconsidering their library shelving arrangements.

8. Discussion and Recommendations

This section provides a discussion of the findings and includes resultant recommendations for libraries to consider. It considers the themes found in the analysis demonstrating that the findings all need to be considered alongside each other. Reference will also be made to the literature review.

8.1 Browsing

Participants in this research all stated that they use browsing as one of their main tools to find fiction books. While this is only a small sample of library users' opinions this research indicates that browsing is an important tool in locating fiction books. Interestingly one participant even spoke of the seeming magic of browsing to find books which tickle their taste buds. These findings match research identified in the literature review. This finding shows that browsing is important to library users' at both Rangiora and Amberley library. It is therefore important that the libraries give priority to the needs identified by the participants. The following recommendation should be considered:

- Continue to make sure the access to browsing is easily available with a good volume of books available to be browsed.

8.2 Popular Shelves

One of the most significant findings of this research was the level to which the recently returned shelves and other display shelves were valued as tools for finding books by the participants.

The results of this research confirm earlier research findings that the recently returned shelves are a “common place for avid readers to begin their search”. (Saarinen and Vakkari 2013) In addition Ooi (2008) concluded in her research that “most of my participants, then, restricted their browsing activity to specific areas such as the display or returns section”. (p. 80) Significantly this was replicated as all of the participants confirmed that they go to the recently returned shelves and/or the display shelves first when looking for a book. The finding demonstrated the importance of these shelves to library users’. The following recommendation should be considered:

- Continue to have a recently returned shelf and display sections. The library should actively find new areas to display books in order to assist library users’ to locate books of interest to them.

8.3 Shelf arrangement by genre

One thing that participants were divided on in their views was the idea of arranging the adult fiction shelves by genre. The assumption could be made that new shelving arrangements may be difficult for library users’ to appreciate in the abstract. At the same time most participants indicated there were barriers to locating books and therefore arranging the shelves by genre may indeed assist in locating fiction books with more ease. Arranging the shelves in genres would mean that the librarians would have to make hard decisions around book genres and

where to place them but as research by Novak (2006) discussed in the literature review points out that is part of the librarians' job. Both the Rangiora and Amberley libraries make these hard genre decisions on a smaller scale with regards to genre spine labels. However as discussed above Rangiora library only uses two spine labels compared to Amberley library who uses seven. It is interesting to note that some participants at both libraries were unaware of genre spine labels despite being regular fiction readers. The findings demonstrate that while this is a divisive issue genre shelving and spine labels are important tools to assist library users' and should be considered in service delivery. The following recommendations should be considered:

- Continue to utilise pictorial genre spine labels on books. Rangiora library should endeavour to extend their classifications to a wider range of genres.
- Initiate a trial of the adult fiction to be shelved by genre.

8.4 Ask a librarian

With regard to asking the library staff for help in finding books the participants' responses varied between those who were hesitant to ask and those who regularly ask for help. It is interesting to note that those participants that often asked the librarians for help knew the librarians personally in the case of the Amberley library and in the Rangiora library because they are regular library users'. The ability to ask library staff for assistance is an important tool available to the library user in locating fiction books. Therefore it is important that the library service delivery is organised so that staff have sufficient time to make themselves freely available to assist users'. In addition staff time should be available to consider proactive methods of being approachable and to develop additional services which assist to provide ease of access in book location. Consideration needs to be given on how to make the

library users' more aware that they can talk to staff and how staff can assist them. The following recommendation should be considered:

- Recognise that users may be assisted by knowing library staff so appropriate communication with users should be encouraged. The library should consider installing signs stating that library users' can ask staff to assist them in locating suitable books to read.

8.5 Book Recommendations

Most participants obtained recommendations from external sources including from family and friends or media such as magazines and newspapers. However only two participants mentioned using websites, namely Pinterest and Bookbub, which was surprising to the researcher as the assumption was made that if online sources were used they would be the large popular websites such as Goodreads and Amazon. It is interesting that even given the small sample size of this study Amazon and Goodreads were not mentioned as recommendation sources as Goodreads "is the world's largest site for readers and book recommendations" (Goodreads, n.d.) and Amazon is a publishing giant and has personalised book recommendations for its users based on your purchase history. On the other hand it is clear that some library users' are not computer literate given participants responses therefore it is important to provide physical sources of services as well as online services. In parallel it could be a good time for libraries to provide training on how to use the online recommendation services.

On a further note, it is clear from this research that recommendations from other library users' can be useful as well. This is demonstrated in the Amberley library with their notice board for library users' to pin up their reviews. This could be something for Rangiora library

to consider in the future. Therefore it would be important to give consideration to the other online sources revealed in this research as well as sources of physical recommendations in the library. The recommendations should be considered:

- Actively find new ways to recommend books to library users' such as; providing a way for library users' to share their recommendations with other users' within the library. Consideration should be given to physical notice board space instead of just online resources.
- Take into consideration that a number of the participants are not computer literate and should allow for this in future delivery and development of library services.
- Instigate training for library users' about how to use the online services, in particular book recommendation websites.

9. Conclusion

This research revealed the potential of listening to adult library users' experiences in the public library and applying the findings and suggestions to future library service development and delivery. The implications of this research have revealed key knowledge about library users' book searching habits including how important browsing is as a tool. It has become clear from the research that locating fiction books in the public library is a cross related process where a combination of tools are used. The tools include combinations of browsing, author, front cover, back cover text, asking a librarian, recently returned shelves, display shelves, book recommendations from various sources and various other personal cues.

Overall alongside browsing the recently returned shelves were by far the most important tool provided by the library to assist users' in finding fiction books. This was closely followed in importance by the display shelves that are around the fiction area of the library including the themed displays. It was interesting to find that one of the reasons for the popularity of the recently returned shelves was that users' like to see what other users' have been reading. Maybe this is more important in the smaller rural libraries of this research than it would be in a larger city library and perhaps this could be explored in future research around library tools.

While participants preferred to find books by themselves they also use recommendations from family and friends to locate books. Although library staff are important to assist users' in the library some participants preferred not to approach library staff for help. Although it is recognised that this is a small sample of library users' it is disquieting that a number expressed difficulty in finding books. This could indicate a need for libraries to further explore the barriers users' face in locating books to inform the development of future library

services. In addition this highlights the need for public libraries to make sure that their users' views are being heard and listened to.

Finally, while this research provides a small number of perspectives and points of view at the same time it delivers a glimpse of how library users' locate books and points out some of the barriers they face and demonstrates the close relationship with library services. Therefore it is worthwhile for libraries to take this research into consideration when deliberating on future service development and delivery. This would fulfil Council strategic plans to involve the community in planning and service delivery. In this way library users' may feel more connected to both their library and their community.

10. Suggestions for Future Research

- Given the small scale of this study future qualitative research should be undertaken on a larger scale to gain a broader understanding on this topic allowing for increased knowledge for use in informing library service development.
- With the importance of browsing to library users identified in the literature and by the participants in this research it is important that further research explore this tool in more depth. It is suggested that further research be undertaken on browsing skills which could be used to inform librarians of the implications of browsing tools for future library service delivery.
- Given that this research identified that the lack of computer literacy skills is still a barrier for some participants in locating books future research should be undertaken to explore this further to inform library service delivery and development.
- This research pointed to the question of whether or not there is a difference between experienced frequent library users' book location tools and those used by lesser experienced and occasional library users'. Therefore further research should be completed on this topic.

Words: 11,261

Appendix A: Letters of consent from libraries



Dear Participant,

The researcher of this study, Ngaio Hughey-Cockerell, has permission to conduct interviews in the Rangiora library.

The interviews are a component of the research for a Master's thesis completed through Victoria University of Wellington.

If you have any concerns about this process please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Mark O'Connell

Acting Libraries Manger

Waimakariri Libraries

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A service of the Waimakariri District Council

libraries.waimakariri.govt.nz



Dear Participant,

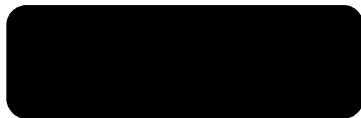
The researcher of this study, Ngaio Hughey-Cockerell, has permission to conduct these interviews in the Amberley library.

These interviews are a component of the research for a Master's thesis completed through Victoria University of Wellington.

If you have any concerns about this process please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Naomi Woodham



Acting Library Manager
Hurunui District Libraries
DDI 03 314 0024 | [Mobile 029 770 9151](tel:0297709151) | [Fax 03 314 9181](tel:033149181)
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Mail PO Box 13, Amberley 7441

Appendix B: Information sheet



Are library users' needs best served in the way the adult fiction shelves are arranged in terms of ease of accessing books?

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

You are invited to take part in this research. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to participate, thank you for considering this request.

Who am I?

My name is Ngaio Hughey-Cockerell and I am a Masters student in Information Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards my thesis.

What is the aim of the project?

This project aims to find out if the way the adult fiction shelves are arranged matches the needs of the library users. Is the current arrangement suitable or should the shelves be arranged differently? Some examples include; arranging the books in genres and changing the physical position of the shelves. This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington School of Information Management Human Ethics Committee #0000027326.

How can you help?

You have been invited to participate because you are browsing the adult fiction shelves. If you agree to take part I will interview you at a table near these shelves or in a private room (if required). I will ask you questions about your experiences searching for and finding books. The interview will take 15-20 minutes. I will audio record the interview with your permission and write it up later.

You can choose to not answer any question or stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason. You can withdraw from the study by contacting me at any time for one week after the interview. If you withdraw, the information you provided will be destroyed.

What will happen to the information you give?

This research is confidential. This means that the researcher named below will be aware of your identity but the research data will be combined and your identity will not be revealed in any reports,

presentations, or public documentation. Only my supervisors and I will read the notes or transcript of the interview. The interview transcripts, summaries and any recordings will be kept securely and destroyed on 1st June 2021.

What will the project produce?

The information from my research will be used in my master’s thesis and possibly a journal article or conference presentation. The thesis will be available in the Victoria University of Wellington Library and Institutional Repository.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You do not have to accept this invitation if you don’t want to. If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- choose not to answer any question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- withdraw from the study for a week after the interview;
- receive a copy of your interview transcript
- I will be contacted after the project is completed and offered a summary of the final report.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact me:

Student

Name: Ngaio Hughey-Cockerell

Email: cockerngai@myvuw.ac.nz

Supervisor

Name: Philip Calvert

Role: Senior Lecturer

School: Information Management

Phone: 04 4636629

Email: philip.calvert@vuw.ac.nz

Human Ethics Committee information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University HEC Convenor: Dr Judith Loveridge. Email hec@vuw.ac.nz or telephone +64-4-463 6028.

Appendix C: Participant consent form



Are library users' needs best served in the way the adult fiction shelves are arranged in terms of ease of accessing books?

CONSENT TO INTERVIEW

This consent form will be held for 2 years.

Researcher: Ngaio Hughey-Cockerell, Information Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.

- I have read the Information Sheet and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- I agree to take part in an audio recorded interview.

I understand that:

- I may withdraw from this study for a week after the interview and any information that I have provided will be returned to me or destroyed.
- The identifiable information I have provided will be destroyed on 30th June 2020.
- Any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor.
- I understand that the results will be used for a master's thesis and be available online on the University Library and Institutional Repository.
- My name will not be used in reports, nor will any information that would identify me.
- I would like a copy of the transcript of my interview. Yes No
- I would like to receive a copy of the final report and have added my email address below. Yes No

Signature of participant: _____

Name of participant: _____

Date: _____

Contact details: _____

Appendix D: Interview Questions

I am doing research on library shelf arrangement especially adult fiction. Would you be interested in answering some questions? I am interested in any thoughts you might have on this topic.

1. Who are you getting books for?
2. How easy is it to find books? Can you talk to me about that?
3. Please describe how you browse the shelves?
4. Do you use the catalogue to find books? Please describe how you use the catalogue.
5. Do you believe the librarians will help if asked? Have you asked one of them for help before? Can you describe one of these experiences?
6. Let's talk about authors. Do you know authors names before coming to the library? If yes - how did you find out about these authors? Was it a recommendation? Book group, friends, newspapers or magazines?
7. Genres are book categories. Are there specific genres you like to read from? E.g. romance, crime, science fiction and fantasy.
8. Further have you used any websites that recommend books? E.g. Goodreads or Novelist.
9. There are displays at the ends of the shelves and around the library. What do you think of these displays? Do you take books from them?
10. Tell me what you think of the recently returned shelves? Do you get books from here?
11. The spines of some books have genre labels on them (show interviewee example). Do you like these? Are they helpful?
12. What do you think of the shelving being arranged in alphabetical order?

13. Have you ever thought that the shelves should be arranged in a different way? Such as; in genres e.g. romance or crime, or having the shelves on angles? What if there was a romance section and a crime section arranged alphabetically?
14. Lastly how often do you come to the library?

Do you have any further thoughts on the arrangement of the shelves here at the library that we haven't covered? Or anything else you would like to tell me? Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.

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