



The Costs of Public Library Service

HENRY T. DRENNAN

THE COSTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS of operating public libraries have increased greatly in the past two decades. In 1939, local governments expended \$48,832,000 for public library operational purposes.¹ An estimate made for this study, based in part upon state library agency reports, shows an increase in expenditures of 400 per cent from 1939 to 1961. In 1961, 8,250 public library agencies, financed in the main by local governments, are estimated to have expended \$285,567,000.

This increase in the cost of public library service occurred in a period when, from 1939 to 1961, the population of local governments providing these services increased 102 per cent. In 1939, 74 million persons (49 per cent of the total population) resided in areas with local public library service. By 1961, the number of these persons had increased to 89 per cent of the country's total population—an estimated 160 million persons.

In this period of expansion the increased outlay for public library purposes has been accompanied by a steady growth in the average per unit cost of operations. Beginning in 1939, the average operating expenditure per library was \$8,500 annually; by 1950 it had reached \$18,000, and in 1961 the figure was \$42,000.

From 1939 to 1961, the number of agencies reporting expenditures increased by 25 per cent. The relatively slow increase in numbers of administrative units has resulted not only in an increase in unit expenditures, but also in a marked increase in the size of population per unit. For the year 1939, the average population served by each public library was 13,600 persons. This figure had grown to 25,000 persons in 1950 and reached, by 1961, an estimated 27,000 persons. In terms of the profession's interest in larger units of service, this is an

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important trend to note. However, much of the increase seems to have come from the increasing urbanization of our country, for the number of public library administrative units continues to increase. This increase (25 per cent) should be contrasted with a decline (55 per cent) in the number of school districts from 84,000 (1950) to 40,000 (1960).²

While these reports of greatly increased outlays by government for public library service, locally financed, are interesting, they may be understood more readily when compared with other governmental expenditures, viewed in terms of per capita expenditures, analyzed in terms of fiscal capacity, studied by population category and, where possible, related to quality of services.

In 1942 state and local governments expended \$45.5 billion for all outlays. By 1961, that sum had grown to \$165 billion. In a slightly longer span, 1939–1961, the costs of public library operation by both state and local governments grew from \$48.8 million for 1939 (included are about \$270 thousand in state funds for public library purposes) to \$310.7 million in 1961, including \$25.1 million expended by the states for local public library expenditures.

The percentage increase for all local and state governmental operational outlays has grown, then, from 1942 to 1961, by 264 per cent. Public library operational expenditures have, by contrast, increased from 1939 to 1961 by 537 per cent. A related expense to state and local government, expenditures for general education, has increased, from 1942 to 1959, 415 per cent.

When measured in terms of "adjusted" dollars, the per capita costs for all operations of local governments have not expanded as rapidly as would be expected. For example, Los Angeles city tax revenues were per capita \$54.51 in 1921 (in "constant" dollars, 1947 base) and in 1958 were somewhat less, \$51.90. There was a similar decline in the Cleveland metropolitan area where a reduction of approximately 10 per cent in terms of per capita expenditures for all local governments occurred.³ Although revenue and expenditures are not strictly comparable, these examples tend to reflect lesser per capita tax requirements. The per capita costs to local governments for public library operations have increased; yet that increase is not too impressive when measured in terms of the changing value of the dollar. In 1939, local governments expended for public library operations the equivalent of \$1.15 per capita. In 1961, this per capita expenditure had increased 35 per cent to \$1.55 (adjusted); the unadjusted per capita figure for 1939 is 61

cents, and for 1961, it is \$1.78. In the 22-year period since 1939, public libraries have experienced a geometric mean annual increase in per capita operational expenditures of 1.3 per cent.

By analyzing public library operating expenditures in terms of the relation of national capacity to the expenditures themselves, one may obtain some idea of the commitment to public library objectives. Such a perspective is available through the construction of an "Effort Index." Per capita personal income (a crude but useful measurement of financial capacity), when related to public library operational expenditures, can give such a guide to trends nationally and regionally. A caution should accompany any conclusions derived from the index: the index does not measure the excellence of public library service; it does not tell how wisely or how badly public funds are expended for public library purposes; nor does it tell anything of the organization through which these funds are expended. The index is limited to depicting commitment in rough terms of financial outlay as related to capacity to pay.

Public library operating expenditures represent but a tiny percentage of the nation's personal income. In the year 1961, the public library operating expenditures of local governments was .07275 per cent of the national personal income. By treating this percentage as an absolute number, 72.75, and rounding it to 73, one obtains the index number for the national commitment for public library service for that year. Thus, for the nation, the "Effort Index" for local public library expenditures shows this historical trend: for 1939 the score was 62; for 1950 it had dropped to 49; and for 1961 it had recovered to 73. In 1950, public library operating expenditures were lagging behind the nation's ability to finance them. By 1961, the nation was financing public libraries in terms of its capacity to afford them only at a somewhat higher rate than it had 20 years previously in the late years of the depression. Table I below arranges the "Effort Index" for local expenditures by state and region, giving both the score by years and the national ranking by years. There are some surprises in the table when local effort by state is analyzed. The general impression to be drawn from the "Effort Index" is not only that those who have more spend more; it is also that they tend to commit a higher share of their capacity to pay to public library services.

In 1939, the Office of Education reported that \$277,000 was contributed by the states to public libraries as grants-in-aid. In 1956, the states' expenditures for public library purposes were \$12,236,000. Five

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TABLE I

Effort Index Scores and National Ranking of Local Operating Expenditures for Public Libraries by Region and State: 1939, 1950, 1956, and 1961.

<i>Region & State</i>	<i>Scores</i>				<i>Rank¹</i>			
	1939	1950	1956	1961	1939	1950	1956	1961
NORTH ATLANTIC								
Connecticut	88	66	73	84	24	18	24	16
Maine	103	52	77	85	16	34	19	14
Massachusetts	128	105	108	134	7	1	2	1
New Hampshire	116	83	76	93	13	6	21	10
Rhode Island	117	65	69	67	12	19	29	27
Vermont	108	71	74	67	15	13	22	28
Delaware	39	34	44	34	41	44	44	47
District of Columbia	137	92	86	108	4	3	11	4
Maryland	59	59	73	75	34	25	25	23
New Jersey	85	57	70	93	26	27	27	10
New York	69	64	78	94	32	22	17	9
Pennsylvania	62	39	50	47	33	39	38	36
GREAT LAKES & PLAINS								
Illinois	73	57	62	77	30	28	34	22
Indiana	119	82	90	58	11	8	8	32
Michigan	85	71	87	108	25	12	10	5
Ohio	132	89	99	121	5	5	4	3
Wisconsin	126	89	96	102	8	4	5	6
Iowa	126	77	95	129	9	10	6	2
Kansas	110	60	78	79	14	24	16	20
Minnesota	156	99	110	98	2	2	1	8
Missouri	95	64	83	91	19	20	14	12
Nebraska	21	54	84	83	48	31	13	30
North Dakota	146	54	76	73	3	32	20	21
South Dakota	159	82	107	74	1	7	3	25
SOUTHEAST								
Alabama	46	31	34	25	39	47	47	49
Arkansas	31	40	42	50	46	38	45	34
Florida	84	54	67	70	27	33	31	26
Georgia	35	35	51	65	42	42	36	29
Kentucky	72	55	50	41	31	28	37	43
Louisiana	33	51	68	83	44	35	30	17
Mississippi	32	38	46	49	45	40	40	35
North Carolina	27	35	44	43	47	43	42	39
South Carolina	59	37	45	55	35	41	41	33
Tennessee	53	26	34	39	37	49	48	46

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TABLE I—*Continued*

Region & State	Scores				Rank ¹			
	1939	1950	1956	1961	1939	1950	1956	1961
Virginia	34	34	44	42	43	45	43	41
West Virginia	5	30	27	41	49	48	49	44
WEST AND SOUTHWEST								
Alaska ²	—	—	—	24	—	—	—	50
Arizona	50	76	59	27	38	10	35	49
California	95	64	81	82	21	20	14	18
Colorado	88	62	74	61	23	22	23	31
Hawaii ³	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Idaho	125	67	78	85	10	16	18	15
Montana	98	58	71	74	18	25	26	24
Nevada	82	68	49	42	28	15	39	40
New Mexico	40	40	63	42	40	36	33	42
Oklahoma	129	45	63	45	6	35	32	38
Oregon	101	69	85	92	17	13	12	11
Texas	56	33	42	40	36	45	46	45
Utah	96	68	90	46	22	14	9	37
Washington	82	78	91	102	29	8	7	7
Wyoming	95	55	70	86	20	29	28	13

¹ Rank order determined on basis of unrounded figures.

² Figures not available for 1939, 1950, and 1956.

³ Hawaii's scores are included on Table II.

years later, these expenditures had grown to \$18.5 million (a growth of more than 50 per cent).

From 1957 through 1961, annual federal expenditures under the Library Services Act increased from \$2.5 million annually to \$7.5 million annually. In this period, state expenditures for public library purposes were growing at the geometric mean rate of 8.7 per cent a year to an annual outlay of \$18.5 million.

To elucidate this trend, the commitments of state governments to expenditures for public library purposes are ranked below in an "Effort Index." As in the "Effort Index" for local expenditures, the individual scores have been obtained by calculating the percentage of per capita personal income by state that was (in this case) devoted to public library expenditures from state sources. Thus, in 1956 the state of Alabama expended the equivalent of .00162 per cent of its personal income for public library expenditures. This percentage treated as an absolute number, 1.62 (rounded to 1.6), provides Alabama's score for that year.

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TABLE II
*Effort Index Scores and National Ranking of State Expenditures
for Public Libraries, by State: 1956 and 1961*¹

State	Score		Rank	
	1956	1961	1956	1961
Alabama	1.6	3.4	32	30
Arizona	—	2.0	—	42
Arkansas	6.4	8.0	9	12
California	1.7	2.2	31	41
Colorado	1.6	1.7	34	43
Connecticut	2.2	2.8	28	36
Delaware	3.1	5.3	24	18
Florida	.6	.5	43	50
Georgia	17.1	23.6	2	2
Idaho	1.3	5.0	37	20
Illinois	2.1	2.7	30	38
Indiana	3.1	3.2	25	32
Iowa	1.2	1.0	38	48
Kansas	1.1	1.5	39	46
Kentucky	3.8	9.7	21	7
Louisiana	5.5	5.6	11	17
Maine	7.2	8.9	7	8
Maryland	5.7	7.1	10	13
Massachusetts	.9	1.2	41	47
Michigan	3.7	3.9	22	28
Minnesota	.1	2.4	45	39
Mississippi	4.1	3.4	19	31
Missouri	4.8	4.5	15	24
Montana	1.6	3.0	33	34
Nebraska	2.5	2.4	27	40
Nevada	7.0	8.1	8	10
New Hampshire	11.6	13.0	3	4
New Jersey	.8	3.8	42	29
New Mexico	9.4	11.6	4	5
New York	8.3	11.5	6	6
North Carolina	8.4	8.3	5	9
North Dakota	4.4	6.9	18	14
Ohio	.9	1.7	40	44
Oklahoma	1.3	2.7	36	37
Oregon	5.2	8.0	13	11
Pennsylvania	.5	.9	44	49
Rhode Island	4.0	6.7	20	15

¹ The statistical basis for the personal income components of the "Effort Index" for state expenditures is derived from "Personal Income by States, 1929 to 1960" (Table 431), *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1962*; and the expenditure for states for public library purposes was derived from the file of Forms DSR-359 (1961) in the Library Services Branch, U.S. Office of Education.

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TABLE II—Continued

State	Score		Rank	
	1956	1961	1956	1961
South Carolina	3.5	2.9	23	35
South Dakota	4.5	4.3	17	25
Tennessee	4.6	5.2	16	19
Texas	.03	4.2	46	26
Utah ²	—	4.7	—	22
Vermont	22.5	19.9	1	3
Virginia	4.9	5.6	14	16
Washington	3.0	4.7	26	21
West Virginia	2.1	3.0	29	33
Wisconsin	1.6	1.4	35	45
Wyoming	5.3	4.7	12	23
Alaska ²	—	4.0	—	27
Hawaii ³	—	33.0	—	1

² Utah and Alaska state library agency figures not available for 1956.

³ In the state of Hawaii public library expenditures are totally financed from state sources.

Comprehensive information concerning the expenditures of public libraries for all agencies has not been collected since 1956. At present, the Library Services Branch is collecting overall operating data for the year 1962. The most recent selected information for public library expenditures, collected for the year 1960, included only data for public libraries serving populations of 35,000 and above.

Although only some 800 of the nation's 8,250 public libraries are included in that group, they provide the largest share of public library service. Such is the disparity between numbers of agencies and concentration of resources that these 10 per cent provide public library services for 65 per cent of the population with such service and expend an estimated 80–85 per cent of all annual operating expenditures. In 1960, their total annual operating expenditures was \$194 million. To the majority of the nation's public library patrons these 800 agencies are the public library.

If one adopts the figure of \$100,000 as the lower limit per unit for effective public library expenditure in the bracket of libraries serving populations of 35,000–49,999, he finds that this norm (first mentioned in 1950) is more of a goal than a standard. Only 14 per cent of the local governments in this category expended \$100,000 or more for the operations of their public libraries in 1960. Too, in this group of 250 governments there were only 7 per cent that spent more than \$3.00

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per capita. In 1960 the mean per capita operating expenditure for these public libraries was \$1.47.

Seven and one-half per cent of the 318 local governments serving populations of 50,000 to 99,999 expended \$250,000 or more for public library operational purposes. East Orange, New Jersey, in 1960 ranked first with an outlay of \$484,248. In 1955, there were four library systems with annual expenditures above \$250,000; by 1960, there were 20 local governments making such expenditures. In the same group, 28 cities (9 per cent) expended \$3.00 or more per capita in 1960. The mean expenditure in this group of public libraries was \$1.43 per capita for 1960.

Sixty-six of the local governments serving populations of 100,000 or more expended \$500,000 or more in 1960 for public library operational outlays. This was 26 per cent of the 255 agencies reporting. In the same group, 35 governments expended more than a million dollars in operating expenditures. This group had grown from 25 in 1955. The mean per capita operating expenditure for the total group was \$1.92.

Although another article in this publication will consider the cost of library materials, the table below gives data on some selected expenditures:

TABLE III
*Per Capita Expenditures for Books and for Salaries
in Public Libraries of Certain Sizes*

	<i>Books</i>		<i>Professional Salaries</i>		<i>All Salaries</i>	
<i>Population</i>	<i>1955</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1955²</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1955</i>	<i>1960</i>
100,000 or more	\$.21	.25	—	.40	1.27	1.32
50,000 to 99,99922	.21	—	.35	.95	.95
35,000 to 49,99926 ¹	.24	—	.35	1.08 ¹	.85

¹ Figures given are for 1957—not collected in 1955.

² Professional salary data not collected for 1955.

The table above should be read with qualifications. The material for the year 1955 contains statistics from municipal libraries only. It does not contain the reports from county and regional libraries. Consequently, because separate figures for municipal libraries are not readily available for 1960, the per capita figures for 1955 are from a more advantageous base than those for 1960.

Despite these discontinuities in reporting, an important conclusion

based upon the per capita expenditures for books may be drawn: larger public libraries serving populations of 100,000 or more were expending 21 cents per capita in 1955 for the purchase of books. This per capita outlay had advanced to 25 cents in 1960. The index of book prices reports in this period an advance of 18 per cent (1947-1949 base year).⁴ When this increase is applied to the 1960 per capita outlay for books in these public libraries, it becomes clear that the purchasing power of their expenditures has declined slightly. They have dropped from an expenditure of 21 cents per capita in 1955 to 20.6 cents per capita in 1960.

The Women's Bureau has recently issued a study that includes some information on the salaries, as of 1960, of male and female librarians two years after receiving their master's degrees. The median salary for women was \$5,080 and that of men \$5,170.⁵ The average annual salary, derived from reports to the Library Services Branch, for all professional public librarians (irrespective of experience) was \$5,570 for those employed in public libraries serving populations of 100,000 and above; \$5,275 for the population group 50,000-99,999, and \$5,000 in the group serving populations from 35,000-49,999. These are only overall figures; no corroboration and no further details are available. A more thorough study of the status of librarians would provide more meaningful data.

The share of funds (as reported to the Office of Education) devoted to budget categories has continued to shift in favor of expenditures for personal services from 1939 through 1956. This growth in the wage share of the budget has been obtained mainly by a shift from the materials budget, with a lesser inroad in binding and general operating expenditures. However, the shift in the proportion of operating funds devoted to personal expenditures may be slowing. The following table illustrates the trend nationally by type of expenditures:

TABLE IV
*Percentage Distribution of Public Library
Operating Expenditures by Object*

	1939	1950	1956
Salaries	62%	66.5%	67.7%
Library Materials	18	15.9	15.7
Binding	4	2.5	2.1
Other Operating Expenditures	16	15.0	14.5

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The rapid increase in urbanization in the United States, confirmed by the 1960 census, is reflected in the finances of large municipal public libraries (those in the 50 cities of over 250,000 population). Public library service has been an urban phenomenon to a marked degree, and the trends in recent public library finance reflect this orientation. These 50 large libraries offer service to areas with 42 million inhabitants—28 per cent of the total population with public library service available. This concentration of persons is likely to continue.

Twelve years ago, in 1950, the 50 largest cities expended \$2.8 billion for all operations. This sum had increased by the year 1960 to \$4.7 billion. The increase of 65 per cent, while considerable, is much less than the percentage increase in funds devoted to public library operational purposes. In 1950 these 50 cities expended \$50 million for their public libraries' operations. At the beginning of the 1960's, this sum had grown almost 100 per cent to an outlay for public library operations of \$99,820,000.

While the growth in expenditures is important, the most significant trend may be one already contained in the statements above. The public libraries' share of these municipal budgets has been increasing during the last decade. The median share of these budgets devoted to public library departments has been arranged for comparison in Table V.

TABLE V
*Median Budgetary Share of Municipal Expenditures
for Public Library Operation: 1950 and 1960*

<i>Population</i>	<i>Library Share</i>		<i>Range</i>	
	<i>1950</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1950</i>	<i>1960</i>
1,000,000 or more (5)	2.2%	2.6%	1.0 - 2.8%	1.2 - 3.0%
500,000 to 999,999 (16) . . .	1.85	2.6	0.8 - 6.5	1.2 - 7.5
250,000 to 499,999 (28) . . .	2.25	2.7	0.6 - 5.0	0.7 - 6.9

In 1960 the per capita costs of public library operations in the municipalities of 250,000 to 499,999 population had a wide distribution. For the 28 cities, the mean per capita cost for public library purposes was \$2.01, ranging from 69 cents for Tampa, Florida, to \$4.33 for Newark, New Jersey. But neither Tampa nor Newark defined the range of the public library's share of the municipal budget. The least share was 0.7 per cent (Norfolk, Virginia) and the largest was 6.9 per cent (Dayton, Ohio).

The group of cities from 500,000 to 999,999 population had the largest mean per capita operating expenditure in 1960 for public library purposes, \$2.60. Its range of per capita operating expenditures was wide also—from 64 cents (Houston, Texas) to \$5.43 (Cleveland, Ohio). Here, the per capita range coincided with the library's budgetary share of governmental operating expenditures. Washington, D.C.'s public library expenditures represented 1.2 per cent of the total municipal budget, and Cleveland's expenditures were at the top—7.5 per cent.

America's largest municipalities, those with populations exceeding 1,000,000, expended an average per capita sum of \$2.41 for public library purposes in 1960. The range of the per capita expenditure of these five cities was from \$1.92 (Philadelphia) to \$2.78 (New York City). The range of the share of these municipal budgets for public library purposes was from 1.2 per cent (New York City) to 3 per cent (Los Angeles).

Any conclusions based upon the increasing outlays for public library purposes by cities remain irrelevant unless these expenditures are related to the adequacy of the services they obtain. To establish a measure of adequacy the author has constructed an "Adequacy Index" using the operational statistics of 27 metropolitan public libraries for 1960. Constructing an Adequacy Index that will measure a public library's operational adequacy involves a tentative acceptance (perhaps a willing suspension of disbelief) of a set of public library standards. More accurately, it involves a set of statistical norms derived from those standards. In proposing such a set of norms for this paper, the writer is aware that they can only approximate a depiction of adequacy. However, the construction of any satisfactory statistical index is largely a matter of "cut and try" until the resultant device creates a consensus of acceptance on the part of its users.

The creation of an index of adequacy for public libraries is essentially a task of devising a statistical model of an ideal public library. Actual operating statistics are then compared with the model. The resulting comparative measurements provide some measure of relative adequacy. Table VI lists the Adequacy Index scores of 27 libraries.

Three operational norms and one fiscal norm were arbitrarily selected to provide a model of operational minimum adequacy of a public library serving populations of above 500,000 persons: (1) the public library should have one staff member for each 2,500 persons in

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TABLE VI

*Minimum Adequacy Scores for 27 Metropolitan Public Libraries for
Size of Staff, Size of Collection, Acquisitions, Per Capita
Operating Expenditures and Total Score: Fiscal Year 1960¹*

Scores					
<i>Name or Location of Library</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Size of Collection</i>	<i>Acqui- sitions</i>	<i>Per Capita Operating Expenditures</i>	<i>Total Score</i>
Atlanta	16.5	17.7	19.5	11.2	65.0
Baltimore	25.0	25.0	25.0	17.5	92.5
Birmingham	10.0	14.2	13.0	6.7	43.9
Brooklyn	25.0	13.5	25.0	18.0	81.5
Chicago	19.5	11.7	22.0	17.5	70.7
Cleveland	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	100.0
Columbus	20.0	14.5	25.0	13.8	73.3
Dallas	18.5	11.8	20.0	13.8	64.1
Detroit	25.0	18.5	19.2	22.6	85.3
Fort Worth	8.2	11.8	9.7	6.2	35.9
Honolulu	19.4	10.5	19.0	14.3	63.2
Houston	9.5	8.8	6.3	5.2	29.8
Los Angeles	21.2	18.0	24.8	17.3	81.3
Louisville	13.0	17.7	10.0	10.5	51.2
Memphis	14.3	15.2	25.0	8.5	63.0
Milwaukee	25.0	25.0	24.6	20.4	95.0
New Orleans	12.2	14.2	12.5	9.7	48.6
New York	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	100.0
Philadelphia	21.2	16.5	25.0	16.0	78.7
Pittsburgh	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	100.0
Queens	25.0	13.7	23.2	16.8	78.7
Rochester	16.0	16.5	14.3	21.4	68.2
San Antonio	10.5	10.1	11.0	5.5	37.1
San Diego	21.8	16.3	25.0	17.2	80.3
San Francisco	16.7	20.8	24.8	22.4	84.7
St. Louis	25.0	25.0	20.0	19.5	89.5
Seattle	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	100.0

¹ Statistics derived from Frank L. Schick and Doris C. Holladay, *Statistics of Public Library Systems Serving Populations of 100,000 or More, Fiscal Year 1960* (OE-15033). Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1961.

Note: The scores for the Adequacy Index were obtained by first calculating the percentage of attainment that each library achieved in each of the four norms. Then the library is assigned whatever score it obtains for that norm as a percentage of the potential maximum score, 25. Thus, for the Atlanta Public Library, its staff of 157 persons (reported in 1960) is 66 per cent of what minimum adequacy would require with a norm of one staff member for each 2,500 residents. Sixty-six per cent of the potential score of 25 (assigned equally to each norm) is 16.5. A parallel procedure applied to each of the three other norms yielded these scores: 17.7 (Collection Size); 19.5 (Acquisitions); 11.2 (Per Capita Expenditures). When the four scores thus

the area to be served; (2) the library should have one and one-half volumes per capita in its collection; (3) the library should add one-tenth of a volume per capita annually to its collection; and (4) the library should expend at least \$3 per capita annually for operating expenditures.

The above norms are susceptible to alteration and refinement, but their use may serve to give some insight into the adequacy of service of these public libraries. One caution should be made here: the norms are for minimum adequacy. Achieving them means no more than that; the index does not measure optimum adequacy, and the achievement of these standards would imply only the lowest level of acceptable operations. Another word of caution: since no generally accepted scheme is available to measure the relative importance of the four norms (factors) involved, this index is based upon the assumption that each of the four norms carries equal weight. By stimulating discussion of appropriate ways of measuring the adequacy of public library service we will have made the first step in the creation of a more sophisticated formula.

Upon analyzing the scores of the individual libraries of this group, one sees that, of the 27 agencies listed in Table VI, the standard most fully met was that for acquisitions: the high median percentage of attainment, 88 per cent, and the high third quartile percentage of attainment, 100 per cent, make this norm the most fully achieved in the set of four norms. Somewhat more difficult of attainment was the norm for the size of collection. The least attainable norm was that of per capita expenditure. Only four of these libraries attained adequacy of per capita expenditures. Although the small number of cases will not allow one to claim a correlation between expenditure and attainment of standards, these four (and no others of the group) also attained minimum adequacy in the three other norms. A more complete "model" of a public library, in terms of standards compared with a larger number of cases, might provide important insights into expenditures as related to quality of operations.

obtained are added they yield the total score of 65.0. The procedure is expressed mathematically in the following fashion:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Minimum Adequate Size of Staff} &= \frac{\text{Population}}{2,500} \\ \text{Degree of Attainment} &= \frac{\text{Actual Staff Size} \times 100}{\text{Minimum Adequate Size}} \\ \text{Score for Size of Staff} &= \frac{\text{Degree of Attainment}}{4} \end{aligned}$$

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Summary

Although governmental expenditures for public library purposes have increased greatly in the last two decades, the per capita cost of such operations has not increased in the same degree. Despite the increased general outlays for public library purposes, from a study of larger agencies there is reason to believe that public libraries are falling short of "minimum adequacy."

The most encouraging development is the general tendency for metropolitan public libraries to share to a greater degree in municipal operating budgets. Although the libraries' median share of these budgets was small in 1960, the trend toward capturing a larger portion of governmental outlays indicates an effective representation of the public library's needs on the part of boards of trustees and library administrators.

The continuing trend toward urbanization in the United States can lead one to believe that the public library will command larger total outlays from local governments. It will be particularly important to attain sufficient funds to insure adequacy of operation and equalization of opportunity for good public library service. One who reviews public library operational statistics cannot but be struck by the disparate levels of services offered in the same size class of public libraries—this is a national problem.

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