INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 16439

First edition
2014-04-15

Information and documentation — Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries

Information et documentation — Méthodes et procédures pour évaluer l'impact des bibliothèques

Reference number
ISO 16439:2014(E)

© ISO 2014



COPYRIGHT PROTECTED DOCUMENT

© ISO 2014

All rights reserved. Unless otherwise specified, no part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized otherwise in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or posting on the internet or an intranet, without prior written permission. Permission can be requested from either ISO at the address below or ISO's member body in the country of the requester.

ISO copyright office
Case postale 56 • CH-1211 Geneva 20
Tel. + 41 22 749 01 11
Fax + 41 22 749 09 47
E-mail copyright@iso.org
Web www.iso.org

Published in Switzerland

Contents

Page

Foreword ..... **v**

Introduction ..... **vi**

1 Scope **1**

2 Normative references **1**

3 Terms and definitions **1**

4 Definition and description of library impact **13**
4.1 General 13
4.2 Definition of library impact 13
4.3 Aspects of library impact 13
4.4 Effects of library impact 14
4.5 Impact planning 17
4.6 Challenges in assessing impact 18
4.7 Implementation of impact assessment projects 19
4.8 Use of impact assessment results 20

5 Methods for assessing library impact **21**
5.1 General 21
5.2 Inferred evidence 21
5.3 Solicited evidence 21
5.4 Observed evidence 22
5.5 Combined methods 22
5.6 Quantitative and qualitative data 23

6 Inferred evidence **24**
6.1 General 24
6.2 Statistics 24
6.3 Library performance indicators 25
6.4 Data from user satisfaction surveys 27

7 Solicited evidence **28**
7.1 General 28
7.2 Impact surveys 28
7.3 Interviews and focus groups 37
7.4 Self-assessment of users 42
7.5 Collecting anecdotal evidence 44

8 Observed evidence **46**
8.1 General 46
8.2 Observation 47
8.3 Log analysis 48
8.4 Self-recording 48
8.5 Citation analysis 49
8.6 Testing the impact on knowledge and skills 49

9 Combining methods for assessing library impact **53**
9.1 Combining qualitative and quantitative data 53
9.2 Examples of combining methods to show library impact 54
9.3 Advantages and disadvantages of combining methods for impact assessment 57

10 Assessing the economic value of libraries **57**
10.1 General 57
10.2 Calculating the value of library benefits to users 58
10.3 Cost-benefit analysis 62
10.4 Economic impact analysis 63

Annex A (informative) **Examples of impact surveys** **65**

© ISO 2014 – All rights reserved

Annex B (informative) **Choosing a method** **71**

Annex C (informative) **Library impact assessment within broader institutional and organisational assessment** **75**

Bibliography **80**

 © ISO 2014 – All rights reserved

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: Foreword - Supplementary information

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 8, *Quality — Statistics and performance evaluation*.

© ISO 2014 – All rights reserved

Introduction

This International Standard provides guidance to the library community on methods for assessing the impact and value of libraries. It was developed in response to worldwide demand for specifications of library impact assessment.

The methods described in this International Standard do not reflect all possible methods or evaluation techniques, but are those seen to be most heavily used and that have proved most effective for assessing library impact. This International Standard is not intended to exclude the use of assessment methods not specified in it.

There are many different types of libraries, with different tasks and populations, having a range of unique characteristics (structure, funding, governance, etc.), and affected by a number of situational factors. Since there is such a wide variation around the world, it is important to understand that not all methods described in this International Standard are useful to all libraries.

Annex A of this International Standard gives examples of impact surveys. Annex B recommends a choice of methods for different purposes. Annex C describes the case that library impact is assessed within broader institutional and organisational assessment.

© ISO 2014 – All rights reserved

Information and documentation — Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries

1 Scope

This International Standard defines terms for impact assessment of libraries and specifies methods for such assessment

— for the purpose of strategic planning and internal quality management of libraries;

— to facilitate comparison of library impact over time and between libraries of similar type and mission;

— to promote the libraries' role and value for learning and research, education and culture, social and economic life;

— to support political decisions on levels of service and strategic goals for libraries.

This International Standard considers the impact of libraries on individuals, institutions and society. It is applicable to all types of libraries in all countries. However, not all methods described in this International Standard apply to all libraries. Limitations on the applicability of individual methods are specified in the descriptions.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 2789:2013, *Information and documentation — International library statistics*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1
academic library
library whose primary function is to cover the information needs of learning and research

Note 1 to entry: This includes libraries of institutions of higher education and general research libraries.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, definition 2.1.1]

3.2
access
ability of reaching and using a service or facility

3.3
accessibility
ease of reaching and using a service or facility

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:—, definition 3.2]

© ISO 2014 – All rights reserved