State of the art of organization and administration of libraries in Brazil: preliminary results

1. Introduction

This paper presents partial results of the research project in progress called *Organization and Administration of Libraries: state of the art in Brazil*, carried out by professors and students undergoing scientific initiation from the School of Librarianship of the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO).

The research investigates the development and growth of the area of organization and administration of libraries (OAB), a compulsory curricular component of the curricular matrices of the courses of Bachelor in Librarianship and Degree in Librarianship in Brazil.

The questions that guide the research are: what new subjects are being researched, published and cited in the area of organization and administration of libraries and information units in Brazil? What development and growth are evident in the area?

A state of the art can add significantly to the constitution of the theoretical field of an area of knowledge since it seeks to identify the key contributions to the construction of theory and pedagogical practice. It points out constraints in the field in which research occurs, as well as gaps in dissemination; identifies innovative experiences that seek alternative solutions to practical problems; and also recognizes research contributions in the constitution of proposals in the area (Romanowski and Ens 2006).

2. Objective

The current research aims to reveal the development and growth of the area of organization and administration of libraries from the mapping of scientific production in Brazil, published from 2000 to 2017. For this, it intends to analyze the national and foreign bibliography used in the teaching of themes; inventory scientific output published in formal publication channels; identify research groups registered at CNPq (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development) and their academic-scientific productions; and examine recurring and emerging issues during this period.

3. Methodological procedures

This is a qualitative-quantitative research; qualitative, because it subjectively analyzes the relations found in the research; and quantitative, since it statistically considers the published scientific production per year, in different formal channels of communication.

Initially it was necessary to identify all the courses of librarianship in Brazil through
the e-MEC information platform, via its “interactive consultation” tab. This is an official and unique database of information related to higher education institutions and their respective undergraduate courses organized by states of the Brazilian federation (E-Mec 2017). This procedure gave rise to a new search for information on each course in the electronic portal of the higher education institutions in which they are offered. Until now, it has been possible to collect the programs from the corresponding OAB and the nomenclature of their curricular components and, thus, to identify the basic and complementary bibliography indicated in these programs.

4. Preliminary results

Some difficulties have been encountered so far. The majority of these refer to the collection of OAB curricular component programs, since many of them were not available on websites and portals of Brazilian public universities.

It was therefore necessary to complement the research strategy by: sending e-mails to course coordinators, telephoning the secretariat and course coordination authorities, and contacting the Contact Us resource available on institutional websites. In this way, it was possible to retrieve much of the necessary documentation to enable the later stage, characterized by the analysis of the results. This demanded a much longer time than initially expected, causing a delay in the planned schedule of activities.

Preliminary results indicate the existence of 49 undergraduate courses in librarianship and a degree in the area, offered by 48 higher education institutions. Of these, 31 are offered by public universities and 12 by private universities. Five are offered in the distance learning mode. In Brazil, only four out of the 27 states in the federation do not offer such a course, these four being located in the North region: Acre, Amapá, Roraima and Tocantins. UNIRIO is the only university that offers a degree in librarianship in the country.

In the essential and complementary bibliographies outlined in the curricular programs for subjects constituting librarianship courses, the majority refer to works published at the end of the last century. Several of the course programs consulted indicate some titles by Brazilian authors and researchers, a phenomenon that is also repeated for classic international authors of Administration.

The next stage of the research will analyze the scientific production published in formal, printed and electronic communication channels of the Brazilian Congresses of Library Science, Documentation and Information Science (CBBD) since 2000 (nine in total), by thematic areas.

Regarding research in scientific journals, those selected were categorized in the upper stratum by Qualis/CAPES (A1, A2 and B1) in the thematic area of “Communication and Information”, totaling 16 scientific journals published in Brazil, since Brazilian academic journals do not have a significant impact factor. Their journals
are listed following a classification given by a governmental education agency called CAPES. The analysis of published scientific production is in progress, and has not yet presented results that can be methodologically communicated.

5. Partial considerations

One difficulty that can be pointed out is the fact that private higher education institutions are not willing to share information about their courses. The institutions who collaborated, requested confidential treatment of their data, a determining factor for their exclusion in the cross-section of research. On the other hand, the higher education institutions that shared their non-public data show interest in knowing the results of the research.

On completion, the research is intended to reveal the scientific productivity and the state of art of the area of OAB in Brazil, constituting an up-to-date theoretical-conceptual framework that will allow direct application in classroom teaching, as well as serving as a support for political-pedagogy in librarianship courses, among other outcomes envisaged by the researchers.

References


