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Doctoral Candidates : Orientation in the Use of Documents and Documentation Service : Report on a Workshop.
(Documentation problems. 14).

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[One of the subjects discussed in the Second Workshop on Economics Research Methodology (Waltair) (1972) was "Use of documentation". Information on the sponsorship, participating candidates, objective, faculty, and programme of work of the Workshop is given. The general coverage and emphasis of the Basic Paper on the Use of Documentation prepared for the one-week Workshop on the subject are indicated. The class discussion and group meeting with Resource Personnel are briefly described. The overall general impression about the Workshop is that it has been valuable to the candidates in several ways. A follow-up study is suggested to examine in greater detail the depth and range of impact of the Workshop. A few suggestions are made regarding the organisation of future Workshops on the subject. It is recommended that one or two library/documentation personnel should form part of the faculty of the summer institutes and Workshops in various subjects organised in the country. The value of this practice is indicated.]

1 Workshop in Economics Research Methodology

11 SPONSORSHIP

The Second Workshop on Economics Research Methodology was held in the Andhra University, Waltair, from 8 May to 11 June 1972. The Workshop was jointly sponsored by the Madras Institute of Development Studies, the Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, and the Department of Economics of the Andhra University.

12 PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES

About thirty candidates, deputed by twelve universities in South India, participated in the Workshop. A participant in the Workshop was expected to have registered for the Ph D degree

in Economics not earlier than one year prior to the dates of the Workshop or after having selected the topic for investigation, was planning to register for the Ph D degree. The participants were selected and recommended by the Heads of the Departments of Economics of the respective universities in South India.

13 OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Workshop was to help each participant in sharpening his knowledge of and ability to use, the methodological tools of economics drawn from other disciplines, such that he can plan his research work more carefully and carry it out more rigorously. It was also expected that the knowledge of the methodological tools will benefit the candidate in his future career as an economist or as a teacher and research worker in the subject.

14 FACULTY

The faculty of the Workshop consisted of senior economists, professors of economics, and statisticians and specialists in operations research, and documentation drawn from various institutions all over India. The Head of the Department of Economics, Andhra University, was the Director of the Workshop and was in charge of the organisation and conduct of the Workshop.

15 PROGRAMME OF WORK

Initially the Workshop had no structured programme of lectures. But the Ph D scholars and Resource Personnel were to decide daily the content of the work to be done and the methods of executing it. The success of the Workshop, therefore, depended, to a large extent, on the prior preparation and active and full involvement during the Workshop of all the participants. The modalities and discussions were fashioned, guided and helped by a dozen basic papers pertaining to different aspects of research in economics, the Director of the Workshop, the two senior Resource Personnel available each week, the course on Statistics, a reference library, and the capacity of the participating Ph D scholars.

151 *Basic Paper*

A basic paper, prepared by a specialist, was made available to each of the participants on the subjects mentioned below, about a month in advance of the commencement of the Workshop.

- 1 Latest development in economic theory.
- 2 Identifying economic research themes.

- 3 Formulation and testing of hypothesis.
- 4 Use of statistics.
- 5 Use of case studies.
- 6 Use of survey method.
- 7 Use of census data.
- 8 Use of national sample survey data.
- 9 *Use of documentation.*
- 10 Forecasting and model building.
- 11 Project evaluation.
- 12 Structure of a Ph D thesis.

152 *Time-Table*

The modalities of the Workshop and the daily programme were kept flexible and modified on the basis of the experience gained during the first two weeks and according to the convenience of the participants. The daily programme in a six-day week was roughly as follows:

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Lectures on statistics .. | 8.00 to 9.30 am |
| 2 | Plenary Session on Economics Research Methodology: Presentation of the salient points in the basic paper, usually by the author of the paper, followed by a general discussion | 9.30 to 11.15 am |
| 3 | Meeting with and discussion individually or in small groups of two or three candidates, the Resource Personnel (two) for the week .. | 11.30 am to 1.00 pm |
| 4 | Further meeting of participants with the Resource Personnel, library work, work on assignment, etc. | 3.00 pm onwards |

16 RESIDENCE OF PARTICIPANTS

The participating research scholars and the Resource Personnel for each week resided on the campus and this facilitated their meeting and discussion for long periods and at mutually convenient timings outside the regular Workshop time-table also. The candidates could also easily get together for discussion among themselves.

17 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORKSHOP

The First Workshop on Economics Research Methodology, held in Madras in 1971, did not include "Use of Documentation" among the subjects for discussion. Perhaps, the Waltair Work-

shop was the first Workshop on Research Methodology for fresh doctoral candidates to include this subject. To that extent, it is significant and indicates the realisation of educators of the value of documentation as an important tool to aid research.

18 MY PARTICIPATION

About the middle of January 1972, I was invited by the Director of the Madras Institute of Development Studies, to prepare a basic paper on the "Use of Documentation" for the Workshop, and to make it available by 20 March 1972. This was done. Subsequently, I served as a Resource Personnel of the Workshop for a week for discussing the subject.

2 Basic Paper on the "Use of Documentation"

The basic paper is an 160-page document in 12 chapters, grouped into 3 parts. Its contents cannot be fully described here. However, the following extract from Chapter A "Conspectus" of the document indicate the general coverage and emphasis of the exposition:

"1 This document deals with the use of documentation by research worker, particularly one specialising in economics. The emphasis is on how to make the documentation service more useful to the research worker and how the research worker may make more productive use of documentation service. In this document, the term 'reader' is used to denote the research worker as a user of library and documentation services.

... ..

"5 While it is the business and within the field of specialisation of the documentalist to design and develop the appropriate kind of tools, techniques, and services, it is necessary, and perhaps inescapable that the consumer of documentation service should be aware of the different variety of services available, their purpose, how they should be used and their limitations. The user of documentation services has to be involved in an increasing measure in the study, design, and development of documentation systems.

"6 There are several points of interaction between the documentalist, the reader, and the documentation system. These junction points can be frustrating experiences to the reader. The junction points also present opportunity for developing.

(a) A better understanding and appreciation of the reader's needs and difficulties, on the part of the documentalist; and

(b) Greater ability to use the documentation system in productive ways, on the part of the reader.

"7 Bearing in mind the factors mentioned above, in this essay on the use of documentation by research worker in economics, in addition to pointing out the need for documentation service and outlining a few varieties of such services, I have selected a few topics to illustrate the points of interaction between the user, the documentalist, and the documentation system. It is hoped that the discussion of these topics will lead to developments such as those mentioned in para 6. Some

special features of research in social sciences, which have a bearing on documentation service to social scientists, have also been considered.

71 Part 1, covering Chapters B to E, deals with the use of information by research worker.

711 Chapter B mentions the different kinds of impact of information on doctoral research.

712 Chapter C discusses factors giving rise to the barriers to the research worker getting all the information relevant to his work if he were to do it all by himself.

713 Chapter D outlines briefly how documentation service can increase productivity in research work, and lead to conservation of research potential.

714 Chapter E enumerates some of the varieties of documentation service likely to be of help to the research worker.

72 Part 2, covering Chapters F to J, deal with some topics involving reader-documentalist interaction, and calling for a mutual understanding of each others' role in the design and use of documentation systems.

721 Chapter F points out that documentation service is a personalised service, bringing into intimate contact the user and the documentalist. The user needs to know about the service, and the documentalist needs to know about the reader.

722 Chapter G considers the reader-documentalist-documentation system interaction in the context of specifying reader's query about a subject. Illustrative case studies are presented.

723 Chapter H enumerates some of the ways in which the documentalist may attempt to learn about the information requirements, and attitudes to and habits of, information usage of the reader. An awareness on the part of the research worker about these observations and studies by the documentalist could lead to a more cooperative and helpful attitude on the part of the research worker. In turn, it would lead to the design of a documentation service better equipped to meet the reader's needs.

724 Chapter J deals with some of the special features of the mode of development of a social science. The implication of these features to documentation service to social scientist, taking 'use of socio-economic data', as illustrative example, is discussed.

73 Part 3 gives a select list of bibliographical tools, a knowledge of which may be helpful to a person just beginning research work in economics. A few other documents of likely interest to a doctoral candidate in the preparation of the thesis are also mentioned."

3 Workshop

31 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

"Use of Documentation" was the penultimate subject of the Workshop, discussed from 5 to 11 June 1972. Each day of the week, the main points dealt with in two or three related chapters of the basic paper, with added illustrative examples, were presented although the participants were expected to have perused the basic papers in advance. The presentation helped to focus attention on specific important points, to guide the discussion, and to get a useful feedback. The presentation for about an hour was followed by a half-hour discussion answering questions and clarifying ideas.

The value of the use of documentation at the different stages in a research project — such as, selection of problem, defining problem, choice of methodology of investigation, collection and analysis of data, formulating inferences, etc — was demonstrated with illustrative examples. The problems of using documents as source of information were discussed, with special reference to the social sciences. The value of documentation services in conserving research potential was emphasised. The scope and structure of different kinds of documentation lists — list without abstract, list with abstracts, — and of digest, state-of-the-art report, trend report, etc, were briefly mentioned. The candidates were requested to examine the different types of documentation lists in the university library. The need for reader-librarian dialogue in the specification of the subject of a reader's query was highlighted with actual case studies given in the basic paper and from personal experience. The scope of each of the specialised variety of documents of value to a research worker in economics was discussed. Such documents, listed in Chapter M of the basic paper, include the following:

- 1 Thesis and dissertation
- 2 Research report
- 3 Working paper and discussion paper
- 4 Report of research in progress
- 5 Institutional publication
- 6 International conference proceedings
- 7 Economics statistics
- 8 Data bank
- 9 Newspaper digest and index
- 10 Catalogue of periodical publications
- 11 Documents on research methodology
- 12 Documents on writing reports and theses.

32 MEETING OF CANDIDATES WITH RESOURCE PERSONNEL

In the group meeting following the presentation, each candidate or a group of two or three of them with a similar subject for research, discussed with me the sources of information on the specific subject of his or their respective theses. The discussion involved delineating each subject in some detail, recognising each of its facets, etc.

321 Example

For example, a candidate had taken up the subject "Economics of the silk industry". In the course of the discussion, it was elicited that his research will be concerned with the study of:

- 1 Production of raw silk, and not silk clothes, in the Mysore State.
- 2 The cultivation of the mulberry plant and the growing of the silkworm.
- 3 The different stages of growth of the silkworm.
- 4 The types and causes of disease and damage to the silkworm in the successive stages of its growth.
- 5 Methods usually adopted for the prevention of the disease, etc., and the development of special varieties of disease resistant worms.
- 6 Different methods of producing silk fibre and filature, and the efficiency and cost of each of the techniques.
- 7 Financial aspects of the industry — government subsidy, private finance, sale proceeds, profit, etc.
- 8 Special considerations given and measures taken by the State and Central government for promoting the industry.
- 9 Management aspects including marketing, distribution, pricing, etc.

10 Factual data, for as many years as possible, on items 6 to 9.

The sources of published information, and the types of institutions — government and private — likely to collect, process, and disseminate information on each of the different aspects of the sericulture industry in Mysore State were enumerated. The candidate was then to check up, if possible, the availability of the publications in the Andhra University Library. Guidance was also given on how to make bibliographical references, abstract, filing of the abstracts, etc. In this way, several of the subjects taken up by the participating candidates for research were examined and sources of information suggested.

33 PROBLEMS VARY

In several cases, the methodology to be adopted in the investigation was important. Sources of information on analogous investigations in other subjects in economics were suggested.

Some candidates were interested to know how to find out whether some other person in India was working on the same or a similar subject as each of them had selected for investigation. The sources of information on research-in-progress and periodical reports of various institutions were suggested for use.

In as many cases as possible, the availability of current information through indexing and abstracting periodicals — local, national, and international — was brought to the notice of the candidate.

In as many cases as possible, the appropriate documents listed in Part 3 of the basic paper was brought to the notice of the candidate.

4 Evaluation Difficult

It is difficult to judge on the basis of one Workshop, the extent of impact of the weeklong exercises of the participants. That would require a thorough follow-up study through questionnaire, personal interview etc of the candidates. The Workshop should be conducted for three or four more batches, improving upon the method of conduct of the Workshop on the basis of the experience gained in the preceding Workshops, and then the follow-up study of the impact.

5 Overall General Impression

However, as a first estimate, based on the reactions of the candidates in the class and outside it, the session appears to have had a good impact:

1 A fair amount of interest and motivation has been aroused in some of the candidates for the use of documentation services.

2 Some candidates have realised that documentation service would be of value to them in saving their research time, in keeping them continuously aware of the current developments in their fields of interest, and in selecting and specifying economics research problems.

3 Some of the candidates were not aware of the kinds of library and documentation services that can be provided by a university library. They would now look for and ask for such services.

4 A few candidates from institutions, which already provided some kind of documentation service or other, began to appreciate the value of such services. This indicated that they did not receive adequate orientation in the use of their respective libraries and the services provided therein.

5 Several candidates reported that the bibliography of selected source documents in economics given in the basic paper would be useful and that they would make an effort to personally examine as many of them as possible in their respective libraries.

6 While explaining the use of classification in libraries in the arrangement of subjects, the use of the Principles of Helpful Sequence (4) in arranging ideas in general was touched upon. As considerable interest was shown in the use of the principles, a couple of hours were spent in explaining the use of the principles in the arrangement of the ideas in the text of a report or a thesis (1). The value of Seminal Mnemonics (2) in structuring the text was demonstrated through a systems approach (3). The interest shown by the participants led to the writing of a paper on the subject for inclusion in the volume of basic papers, at the request of the Director of the Workshop.

7 The Director of the Workshop, and the other Resource Personnel (a professor of economics) for the week, who participated in the plenary sessions throughout the week, were of the opinion that the week's session was valuable and interesting. It was also their opinion that such a session on library and documentation service should have come at the very beginning of the Workshop so that the candidates would have had the immediate benefit of using the university library in a more purposeful way and learn about the different sources of information more effectively.

6 Indicators of Impact

In a follow-up study in the institution to which the candidate returns after the Workshop, the usefulness of the Workshop may be gauged on the basis of whether he is able to

1 Make use of the library resources and documentation services, if any, in his university in the course of his further work in his doctoral programme in a more effective way.

Express the subject of his query more specifically.

The objective of the dialogue with the candidate mentioned in Sec 321 was three-fold:

(a) To facilitate the specification of the subject of interest to the candidate such that the more relevant sources of information could be suggested for consultation during the Workshop;

(b) The candidate may realise the helpfulness of specifying the subject of his interest in order to receive pinpointed information. A couple of case studies are given in the basic paper to illustrate this; and

(c) The candidate may realise the helpfulness of a dialogue with the library staff of his institution when requesting for information.

The first one was the immediate objective; the latter two were long-range objectives.

3 Ask for specific documents in searching for information.

4 Stimulate the starting of some documentation services in his library, if they are not provided.

5 Use the Principles for Helpful Sequence in the presentation of the text of the report, article, thesis etc he may prepare.

7 Suggestions for Future Workshops

On the basis of the experience gained in the Waltair Workshop the following suggestions have been made:

1 The helpfulness of having the Workshop sessions on "Use of Documentation" and "Arrangement of Ideas in a Helpful Sequence" at the very beginning of the Workshop may be actually tried in the next Workshop.

2 Two or three professional staff members of the library of the institution where the Workshop is held should be intimately associated with and involved in the workshop sessions, particularly the one on Documentation.

3 The Resource Personnel in Documentation and the library staff should, in advance, collect together and organise the document sources, such as those listed in Chapter M of my basic paper.

4 The library staff and the Resource Personnel should have sufficient opportunity to help the participants to examine the sources of information and prepare at least a reading list on the specific subject of their respective research during the Workshop session. This will help them understand better the mechanics of preparing bibliographies, learn about the standards on bibliographical citation, and the scope, structure, and limitations of the indexing, abstracting and reviewing periodicals covering their respective subjects.

5 The specific subjects of research of the candidates and of the basic papers should be made known to the library of the institution where the Workshop is conducted about a month in advance. This would facilitate the library selecting, collecting together, and organising as many of the documents as possible for convenient study by the candidates.

8 Recommendation

The helpfulness of the Workshop on the Use of Documentation has been established, although it might be sometime before the depth and range of its impact on each of the candidate can be gauged.

A number of summer institutes and workshops on a variety of subjects are organised in universities and other institutes in the country on an All-India basis or on a regional basis. It is recommended that one or two library/documentation personnel should form part of the faculty of each of these institutes and workshops. They will be of help in at least two important ways:

1 In conducting a session on the use of documentation by students, teachers, research workers, whichever group is participating; and

2 In selecting and assembling the documents — books, articles in periodicals, technical reports etc — relevant to the subjects of discussion in the institute or workshop and helping the participants in using them and preparing bibliographies, reading lists, digest, trend report etc, for further study.

This will be both a demonstration of the techniques of preparation of bibliographies, abstracts, digest etc as well as of immediate use to participants in the discussion in the institute of workshop sessions.

91 Bibliographical References

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