Libraries in the Majority World: A Collaborative Survey Sponsored by Atla and TBN (Theological Book Network)

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Atla
Agenda

- Background & Goals
- Methodology & Demographics
- Example Institutions
- High Level Results
- Next steps

Atla & Theological Book Network (TBN) have a long history of collaboration.

Shared interest in supporting access to high-quality theological resources at under-resourced theological schools in Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East

Goal: Identify trends & common needs at the libraries associated with these schools
Methodology

Context for the answers

Methodology

- English-language survey Feb 5th – May 7th 2018

- Distribution
  - Associations such as Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA)
  - TBN partner schools
  - Listservs / “word of mouth” options
- 60 questions: holdings, technology, staffing, education programs, & accreditation levels
Demographics

- 228 Institutions
- 47 Countries
- Wide range of Christian denominations

Graduates: Employment

Areas in which Graduates are Employed (N=197)

- Clergy/Pastors: 57%
- Other church-related ministry: 26%
- Primary/Secondary education: 13%
- Higher education: 10%
- Agriculture/Farming: 8%
- Business: 10%
- Non-governmental organization (NGO): 8%
- Other: 12%
Few more points to provide context

- **Collections**
  - 75%: < 20k print books (26% have < 5k)
  - 78%: < 500 e-books (38% have zero)
  - 73%: between 0-10 print journal subscriptions (32% have zero)

- **Staff**
  - 40%: hold title librarian in whole or part
  - 40 responding libraries have no FT staff
  - 46% head librarian has formal training (degree)

- **Supporting**
  - 71%: 1-20 faculty (41% < 10)
  - 49%: 0 - 50 FT Theology students (9% have no FT students)
  - 31%: > 100 FT students (most are concentrated in the 101 – 200)

Example Institutions
Nepal Bible Baptist College

- Founded 1998
- 31 students in the Bachelor of Theology
- Also offer an M.Div

NBBC – Library Page

- Mina Rai (Librarian)
- Associate / Certificate
- No PT library staff
Nepal Evangelical Holiness Theological Seminary

- Offer – Bachelor of Theology.
- 57 FT Students (114 graduates)
- 14 Faculty

NEHTS Academic Dean
Netra Lal Tamrakar

- No one who works in the library has formal training
- Cost of internet affects their ability to support students
- Offline Catalogue
Bangkok Bible Seminary

- Ms. Sommart Sathian (Librarian - Master's)
- Hosted a Library Training Seminar
- ~ 35 faculty
- 688 FT / 100 PT students
- Bachelor of Theology, Master of Biblical Studies, Master of Ministry, Master of Divinity

Wolaita Evangelical Seminary (Ethiopia)

- More than 5k books
- 220 FT / 100 PT students
- 7 FT / 33 PT Faculty
- Print Catalogue
- Bachelor level
Morija Theological Seminary, Lesotho

- Herman Dieterlen (Sehoapa) Library
- More than 5k books
- No FT library staff
- 50 FT students
- 10 Faculty
- Bachelors level program
- Print Catalogue

Protestant Institute of Arts & Social Sciences, Rwanda

- New Library Building
- Rev. Damien Nzeyimana (Dir)
- Masters in Library Science (Moi University, Kenya)
PIASS Library - OPAC

- Use PMB (3 respondents use this)
- Did not list “Collection Development / cataloguing” as a top need
- Did list: Reference / Research, Archives, Instruction & Outreach

High level Results
Education Level

Less than half of the respondents state the head librarian has a degree in LS.

Support & Training

Areas where External Support is needed to fulfill Mission & Goals of the Library (N=202)

- Collection development and cataloguing: 77.72%
- Reference and research: 67.33%
- Instruction and outreach: 47.03%
- Archives and preservation: 47.03%
- Website and social media strategy: 50.00%
- Publishing assistance for authors: 32.16%
- Technology and connectivity upgrades: 69.31%
Responses ...

- *Publishing in high impact journals, automated referencing & plagiarism detection* … (Librarian in Kenya)

- *Teach students research skills and how to access electronic information* … (mentioned in one way or another by many)

- *Very, very much so, skills in digital research, ways of encouraging academic staff to integrate the library into course work* … (Librarian in Malawi)

### Technology

![Bar chart showing technology initiatives planned for next 1-24 months (N=199)]

- Increasing support for mobile devices: 37.19%
- Increasing access to more electronic information resources: 63.64%
- Improving connectivity: 54.27%
- Improving computer security: 39.70%
- Implementing or upgrading a library automation system (ILS): 53.27%
- Digitization of local resources: 48.74%
- Adding and upgrading computers: 69.85%
Technology

STUDENT / FACULTY / STAFF WILL RETRIEVE CONTENT IN 5 YEARS (N=203)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virtual/internet access to resources from an international network of libraries and theological schools</td>
<td>65.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widespread use of mobile devices</td>
<td>42.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased electronic access to resources</td>
<td>79.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much the same as today</td>
<td>15.76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Publishing / Research

Does your institution publish scholarly content such as academic journals and books in religion and theology?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>38.04%</td>
<td>59.39%</td>
<td>4.57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, what types:

- Journals
- Books, Reference Books, Almanacs, Proceedings
- Multiple Publication Types
- Undetermined Types of Publications
Summary of Top Challenges

- Content:
  - Academic Resources
  - Theological Resources
  - Books
  - E-Resources
  - Up-to-date Materials
  - Access

- Staffing / Staff skills:
  - More librarians
  - Digital Library Management
  - Library Instruction
  - Professional Development
  - Career potential

We’re really not all that different

Verbatim comments from a question regarding cultural challenges faced by the library:

- Encourage the love & respect for printed resources
- Students not reading or they just read what the course required
- To encourage students and teachers to read more
- Poor library usage
- Many users do not understand the importance of the library
Resulting Actions

Institutions in Eligible Developing Countries

As a not-for-profit association of theological libraries and librarians, Atla understands the importance of supporting theological education throughout the world and has worked to make its products affordable for theological seminaries and schools in eligible developing countries. Atla works with EBSCO to offer institutions in countries designated developing by the World Bank, along with other related criteria, a generous discount on all Atla products and partner products.
Atla Press: Open Access eBook

- Updated Edition of *A Broadening Conversation*

- Key areas
  - the character of theological librarianship
  - theological librarians at work,
  - the theological librarian as educator,
  - each section is introduced by a present-day theological librarian.

International Theological Librarianship Education Task Force (ITLE Task Force)

- To strengthen and connect theological and religious studies librarians worldwide by identifying resources, creating educational opportunities, and developing skill enhancement materials through collaborative efforts.

- Task Force Members: Kelly Campbell (Columbia Theological Seminary, U.S.) Yasmine Abou-el-Kheir (Chicago Theological Seminary, U.S.) Sandy Ayer (Ambrose University, Canada), Carisse Berryhill (Abilene Christian University, U.S.) Kerrie Burn (Catholic Theological College, Australia) Matina Čurić (Germany) Seoyoun Kim (World Mission University, U.S.) Griselda Lartey (Columbia Theological Seminary, U.S.) Ephraim Muldave (Africa International University, Kenya) Cynthia Pelena (Central Philippine University, Philippines) Álvaro Pérez (Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana, Costa Rica) Yesan Sellan (SAIACS, India) Brenda Bailey-Hainer, Staff Liaison
ITLE Task Force

- Sponsored the 2019 Atla International Theological Librarian Leadership Institute. A ten-day meeting that provided a rich learning experience for international theological librarians. A classroom setting with a cohort (June 10–11), attended the Atla Annual Conference (June 12–15), and visited local libraries (June 16–19).

- The International Theological Librarianship Education Task Force (ITLE Task Force) will be publishing a series of 7 handbooks on theological librarianship as open access monographs. The first volume, which is expected to be published by the end of calendar 2019, is an overview of theological librarianship around the world. Other volumes will cover specific areas of theological librarianship and will be published over the next several years.