Werk

Titel: Book and Serial Price Indexes

Ort: Bremen

Jahr: 1990

PURL: https://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?514822910_0036|log21

Kontakt/Contact

Digizeitschriften e.V.
SUB Göttingen
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 1
37073 Göttingen

info@digizeitschriften.de

Book and Serial Price Indexes

Joint seminar of the LIBER Working Group on Library Management and the IFLA Section of Acquisition and Exchange

55th IFLA General Conference at Paris, August 18, 1989

Introduction

THOMAS TOTTIE AND JOACHIM-FELIX LEONHARD
Director, Uppsala universitetsbibliotek; Vice-President of LIBER
Direktor, Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen; Chairman of the IFLA Section of Acquisition and Exchange

Building up and developing its collections is one of the principal tasks of a library. Libraries collect books and journals originating in the literary production process, with the aim of making their contents - the results of study and research - available to teachers, students and researchers as a medium of academic communication. With the passage of time a trend has become evident: the spectrum of acquisition is increasingly widening, not only with respect to the types of publication acquired but also and more importantly with respect to the provenience of the works acquired.

In this connection, libraries are more and more constrained, with respect to their budgetary planning, to orient themselves on accurate analyses not only of price developments but also of developments on the areas of production and marketing. Methodological sensitivity and pragmatic decision-making ability are called for here, if the library is to be able to adapt itself flexibly to the ever-changing factors conditioning its activities. Numerous studies of marketing and price development make clear that purchasing books and periodicals is a matter of acquiring *products*, the price of which is determined by general economic conditions impinging on the literary market. For this reason, the development of price indexes as a measure of general economic conditions becomes increasingly relevant for library acquisition policy.

For some time now, various library working groups and organizations have been striving to develop such price indexes. The Working Group on Library Management of the Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche (LIBER) and the Section of Acquisition and Exchange of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) have sponsored a joint seminar on August 18, 1989, in connection with the 55th General Conference of IFLA. Theme of this meeting was the study of methodological problems related to the development and use of such price indexes.

In order to make the contributions to this seminar on *Book and Serial Price Indexes* available to a larger public, they are published in this number of the *LIBER Bulletin*. To the speakers who through their contributions have done much to advance thinking regarding the development and use of such indexes we extend our thanks.

Trends in the Prices of British Academic Books

PETER H. MANN
Director, Library & Information Statistics Unit, Loughborough University

Introduction

Regular monitoring of the prices of British academic books began at Loughborough University in 1974 when CLAIM (the Centre for Library and Information Management) published its first report on the average prices of British academic books. The data base for this report, which was to continue for the next ten years, was the *British National Bibliography*. Each half-year a senior librarian at Cambridge University (which is a copyright library and therefore receives a free copy of every book published in the U.K.) indicated on the BNB list those books that had been selected for incorporation in the university's academic collection. These selected books totalled about 10,000 titles each year and the half-yearly analyses, with calendar year cumulations, were published regularly by CLAIM.

However, in the early 1980's, although Britain's general inflation rate had hit its peak and was declining, the average rate of increase was still high and academic book pricing became very unstable. It was discovered, in a special analysis made at CLAIM, that many publishers were not including a price for books they were reporting to the BNB and a sample survey found 44 % of items unpriced in the first half of 1984. The January-June 1984 average price, based on uncorrected data, gave an average price of £ 13.21 for all books, which was actually a slight decrease on the previous half-year. When price data were obtained for unpriced books (a very detailed, laborious and expensive operation) the average price went up to £ 16.51, an increase of 25 %. It was, therefore, apparent that CLAIM could not continue to use the BNB data, since tracing the prices of the BNB's unpriced books was wholly uneconomic.

Very fortunately for CLAIM Blackwell's came to the rescue by offering the use of computer generated data from their *British Approval Plan*, primary subject coverage, which, simply explained, is the collection of approximately 10,000 titles per annum that are bought by Blackwell's and offered to their academic library customers. These books are all at the tertiary level, which means that they are at least of undergraduate degree level and many are research monographs of much higher level. The list excludes any books of school level and it is very appropriate for a price index because the books included are British originals and exclude, for example, British copies of books originally published in other countries (of which obviously the USA is a major producer). The collection also uses the prices of

hardback copies (unless only a paperback edition is available) which again is particularly appropriate for a price index used mainly by academic librarians.

It was very quickly appreciated that the Blackwell's data base was highly appropriate for the new CLAIM price index and the fact that every title on the list was priced solved the problem that was insuperable with the BNB. At the time of the change of data bases the opportunity was also grasped to reconsider the subject categories used, which had previously been wholly based on Dewey and contained a few curiosities such as occultism and photography. A sample of academic librarians was consulted about the subject categories they would prefer to have and a new set of over 60 subject categories was devised to meet their wishes. Many of these were similar to the previous Dewey categories, but it was possible with the reorganization to include more categories that related directly to academic departments and degree courses and also to introduce modern subjects such as computing and chemical engineering, as well as to develop subcategories for medicine.

The Present Price Index

The first issue of the new *British academic book price index* was published by CLAIM as *Report no. 50* in 1986 and covered three half-years of July-December 1984 (which became the 100 index base half-year), January-June 1985 and July-December 1986. It was decided that there would be two annual cumulations, one for the calendar year January to December and one for what was called the "academic" year of July to June, so as to offer librarians a choice of annual trends and indexes according to how they budgeted. In March 1987 CLAIM was replaced by LISU (the Library and Information Statistics Unit) and the January to June 1987 issue became *Report no. 1* of a newly numbered series.

It should also be noted that British librarians asked LISU for a parallel index of USA academic books and, once again, Blackwell's generously offered data from their Blackwell's (USA) company. The result was that in 1986 CLAIM was able to issue an initial report covering the four half-years between July 1984 and June 1986 and subsequently LISU has continued this index, beginning with *Report no.* 1 for January-June 1987. The USA books are priced in American dollars without any attempt to convert to sterling and the great advantage for users is that the book categories used in both the British and USA indexes are identical, as well as the half-yearly and the two annual indexes having identical 100 bases for pricing. The LISU index has been given a form of official recognition by the University Grants Committee, which distributes government funds to the UK universities, who now use the LISU index as a guide to the prices of academic books bought by the libraries.

The Current Position of U.K. Libraries

It is important to recognize that book price indexes are needed because book prices are not stable and book funds are a part of library funds which are in turn a part of university funds - and none of these are stable either. It is, therefore, useful to set the scene by looking first at the wider context within which book prices play their part. For this paper the analysis will be restricted to British universities, but the problems of polytechnics and colleges of higher education are very similar.

Table 1 gives full details of major aspects of university and university library expenditure for the five years 1982-83 to 1986-87. It is unfortunate that the official U.G.C. statistics take nearly a year to produce and the 1987-88 figures are not available at the time of writing (July 1989). However, the trends over these recent five years are important and may be summarized as follows. Between 1982-83 and 1986-87 total university expenditure rose by 34.7 % compared to an increase of 29.8 % in spending on university libraries. Library expenditure on salaries, which accounts for more than half the total costs, kept in line with overall library expenditure at a 28.4 % increase. Non-pay expenditure went up by 31.6 % but within the non-pay area spending on periodicals went up by 53.0 %, on "other items" by 41.9 %, on books by 16.6 % and spending on binding went down by 15.1 %. Over the period surveyed the balance of spending on books vis-à-vis periodicals altered from 48.6 : 51.4 in 1982-83 to 41.9 : 58.1 in 1986-87. In spite of this shift in spending towards periodicals the 53.0 % increase in periodicals spending fell well below the 64.7 % increase in prices recorded by the Blackwell's periodicals price index published each May in the *Library Association Record*.

For books the position is even more serious as the books increase of only 16.6 % was far behind the index increase in book prices of 40.1 % recorded by the *LISU British academic book price index*. Even more seriously though the 1986-87 expenditure on books was 3.4 % below the 1985-86 figure, giving an actual decrease in book spending before any allowance is made for inflation. Given this position the price of academic books is clearly a matter of the utmost importance.

Recent Trends in Academic Book Prices

We now have data in the LISU price index for the academic years 1984-85 to 1988-89 and I have compiled tables and drawn graphs to illustrate how prices have risen for all books and for various categories of books over this period.

As the summary Table 2 indicates, the price index for all books rose from 100 in 1984-85 to 141.7 in 1988-89, which is just about 10 per cent per annum. Listing the seven major categories of books we can see Applied Social Sciences had the biggest increase over the period at 152.2 and the Biological Sciences had the

lowest increase at 136.4. But the price increases were from very different original price bases and in 1988-89 books in Technology and in Pure Sciences cost, on average, about twice as much as books in the Humanities. Science and Technology books (including Medicine) are clearly more expensive than books in the Humanities and the Social Sciences. But the inflation column shows the Social Sciences and Applied Social Sciences to be leading the proportionate price increases, whilst the relatively expensive books in the Biological Sciences are at the bottom of the table for inflation in price.

The twin graphs (which I have done separately simply because eight lines on one graph would be unreadable) show how relatively close are the cheaper books of the Social Sciences, Applied Social Sciences and Humanities, whereas the scientific books are more spaced out in their average prices. Prices for Medicine follow the trend for All Books fairly closely but the Biological Sciences had a big increase in 1985-86 (17.2 %) which was alleviated by an actual decline of 3.5 % in 1986-87 to bring the overall trend more into line again. Technology and Pure Science are interesting because they start and finish close together, but diverge quite a lot in the intermediate years. Technology books rose sharply in price in 1985-86 (by 22.5 %) whereas Pure Science went up by only 1.1 %. Since then Technology has flattened out whereas Pure Science rose sharply in 1988-89 (by 19.2 %).

Table 3 gives full details of the prices, index numbers and percentage increases per annum for all the categories. It can be seen that All Books rose by approximately 10 % per annum for the first three years but only the Humanities showed any stability over those years, though Social Sciences could be regarded as fairly stable in their increases at a rate well above the general level. But the other five categories of books show erratic patterns with, for example, Technology increasing by 22.5 % in 1985-86 whereas the Pure Sciences rose by only 1.1 % that year. The Biological Sciences decreased in average price by 3.5 % in 1986-87 when in the same year the Applied Social Sciences went up by 14.1 %. Nevertheless the general overall pattern of prices for all the categories has been upwards in the years under review and, as the graphs show, 1988-89 does seem to indicate a very slight decline in the rate of price increases.

However, it must be recognized that when we are dealing with books we are involved in most cases with unique products. Certainly there are new editions of books published at new prices, but no two scholarly monographs in say, history or surgery, are identical. Monitoring the prices of books is very different from monitoring the prices of cosmetics or groceries. Books are different from many other retail goods and are different from each other in content. But books are also manufactured objects which are costed by printers and binders for production and are eventually priced by publishers on their expectations of sales. Obviously a 500 page book in, say, biology which contains many tables of figures, charts, diagrams and colour photographs will cost much more to produce than,

say, a slim volume of 130 pages of literary criticism with no illustrations at all. But if the biology book is expected to have a wide market whereas the literary book about some obscure author is very specialized indeed then the unit production price of the former may be brought down whereas the latter will go up. Publishers now make no secret of the fact that they price their books at what they consider the market will stand, rather than calculating production costs and applying a multiplier. All this means that the book market, in these inflationary times in the U.K., is not stable and one cannot expect total stability in monitoring average prices. However, given a long enough period of time for monitoring, trends are apparent and one can also gain insight into the general state of prices for sub-groups of books.

Variations in Prices of Specialized Subjects

The LISU British price index monitors approximately 5,000 titles each half-year and is generally accepted to use a sensible data base which reflects those books that academic librarians are likely to buy. Blackwell's offer such a wide range of titles in their primary subject coverage that there is no fear of them *trading down* and avoiding highly priced new books. The overall average prices based on 5,000 titles each half-year, and thus 10,000 each calendar or academic full year, seem to be reasonable calculations.

It has to be recognized though that the overall average price for All Books is the mean of many titles of vastly differing price - as the analysis of the seven major categories has already shown. Put very crudely, *books* in Pure Science and in Technology are more expensive than *books* in the Humanities or the Social Sciences. But also the index shows that books in philosophy tend to be more expensive than books in religion; books in chemistry tend to be more expensive than books in astronomy and books in surgery are more expensive than books in psychiatry. It could well be that chemistry books are usually longer and more copiously illustrated than books in astronomy and perhaps philosophers write at greater length than do theologians and sell to a smaller market. The price data alone are not sufficient to indicate why certain books are relatively expensive or cheap. Also the numbers of actual titles monitored in individual specialist areas can be quite small and a few particularly expensive titles in any half-year can affect the average price considerably.

Book price indexes can never hope to be more than a guide to buyers as to average prices in certain areas and although the smaller the subject area the more interest it may be to the potential buyer, the smaller the numbers involved the more likelihood there is of fluctuations. For this reason the annual cumulations are safer than the half-year figures and longer term trends are safer than annual increases. Perhaps the basic questions that book buyers really want guidance on are just two. How expensive are books in x? How fast are the prices of

books in x rising? The first question is really about comparisons between books (rather like inter-firm comparisons) and the second question is about rates of inflation (which clearly concern librarians with declining book funds).

I have compiled some figures which show how, within the LISU major book categories, individual subject differences can have their effects. I have taken the three pairs of subjects mentioned above and traced their prices and inflation through the five academic years used for the larger category analysis. Table 4 gives the results of this exercise. All of the six subjects except chemistry are single-entry categories in the Blackwell's data, but within chemistry it is possible to distinguish special aspects of the subject and it is interesting to see that for January to June 1989, for example, the 41 new books in chemistry included 15 in organic chemistry which averaged £ 92.79 each.

This more detailed breakdown shows how with very specialized subjects just a few highly-priced titles can affect averages quite considerably over the short term. This is not infrequently so with the two very general categories in the LISU tables entitled "General Works" and "General Science" where the index can fluctuate quite a lot from one half-year to the next.

Weighting of the Index by Subjects

The overall average price of the 10,000 or so books each twelve months is determined by dividing the total cost of all the books by the total number of titles. Taking the academic year of July 1988 to June 1989 as an example it would have cost £ 269,530.58 to buy one copy of each of the 10,303 titles monitored. For the 57 subject categories analysed (excluding the major composite categories) average prices ranged from £ 10.45 for literary texts to £ 74.01 for chemistry, with an overall average price of £ 26.16. As has been noted, the scientific and technical books tend to be more expensive than those in the humanities and the social sciences. It is also important to be aware of the numerical composition of the 10,303 titles. The humanities and social sciences titles predominate and account for 70 % of all titles, leaving science and technology (including medicine) to account for the remaining 30 %. This means that the overall average price of All Books is strongly affected by the larger number of cheaper books. If all academic librarians did actually buy new books in accordance with the numbers of titles published in the various categories then this inbalance would not matter too much, but if, for example, a librarian at a heavily technological university were to use the overall average price as his or her guide to prices and price increases this could be rather misleading. This matter of the weighting of various subjects is important and it is worth noting that the Blackwell's periodicals price index which appears each May in the *Library Association Record* is heavily weighted towards scientific journals. Of the sample of 2,007 titles surveyed 42 % are in the humanities and social sciences and 58 % are in science, technology and medicine.

However, the total cost of the *basket* of 2,007 titles is made up of 17 % humanities and social sciences and 83 % science, technology and medicine, such is the disparity in prices of journals in the two major divisions. Thus any average price of journals is an average which very much reflects the prices of the latter group. However, no academic librarian who buys periodicals can possibly be unaware of the prices charged for certain scientific and technological journals, but for a librarian of a university with an emphasis on the arts and hardly any technology departments the periodicals index overall average price could be less useful.

Conclusions

In this paper I have attempted to explain how the LISU monitor of the average prices of British academic books was created, how it works and what principal results it has produced after five years of publication. The monitor has its limitations, as has any other monitor of prices and inflation. Books are particularly difficult to monitor because each new book is a unique product and publishers are free to price their books at any level they choose. Inflationary trends in various categories of books tend to be erratic, and average prices in categories can be affected by subjects and even specialities within subjects. Users of indexes must exercise caution in their use of specialized subject groups as the numbers of titles each period surveyed may be quite small. Annual cumulations help to smooth out some of the irregularities and are safer for trend analysis. Users of price indexes should think carefully when they make use of price indexes since they can only reflect the past and, in these days of an increasing rate of inflation in the U.K. and of publishers publishing at prices they think they can get from *the market*, the future is very uncertain. One is reminded of the economic adviser to a government agency who said that he felt the current year was an average one. When asked what he meant by that he said that it was a poorer year than last year but was likely to be a better one than next year.

Table 1

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES : GREAT BRITAIN

Table 1 — in £000s

Year	Total University Recurrent Expenditure	Total Library Recurrent Expenditure	Library as % of University Recurrent Expenditure	Library Exp. on Salaries & Wages	Library Total Non-pay Exp.	Exp. on Books	LISU British Academic Book Price Index	Exp. on Periodicals	LAR All Periodicals Index	Exp. on Binding	Other Exp.
1982-83											
Amount	1,847,021	69,175	3.7	38,450	30,725	11,454	16.06	12,099	72.82	2,813	4,359
% + or - on prev. year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Index	100	100	-	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1983-84											
Amount	1,975,957	74,855	3.8	40,979	33,877	12,454	17.49	13,906	84.73	3,015	4,501
% + or - on prev. year	7.0	8.2	-	6.6	10.3	8.7	8.9	14.9	16.4	7.2	3.3
Index	107.0	108.2	-	106.6	110.3	108.7	108.9	114.9	116.4	107.2	103.3
1984-85											
Amount	2,139,721	80,259	3.8	43,729	36,530	13,089	18.45	15,607	100.81	2,405	5,429
% + or - on prev. year	8.3	7.2	-	6.7	7.83	5.1	5.5	12.23	19.0	-20.2	20.6
Index	115.8	116.0	-	113.7	118.9	114.3	114.9	129.0	138.4	85.5	124.5
1985-86											
Amount	2,300,715	85,322	3.7	46,765	38,558	13,824	20.55	16,864	110.18	2,426	5,443
% + or - on prev. year	7.5	6.3	-	6.9	5.6	5.6	11.3	8.1	9.3	0.9	0.3
Index	124.6	123.3	-	121.6	125.5	120.7	128.0	139.4	151.3	86.2	124.9
1986-87											
Amount	2,488,014	89,814	3.6	49,371	40,443	13,355	22.50	18,513	119.94	2,389	6,185
% + or - on prev. year	8.1	5.3	-	5.6	4.9	-3.4	9.5	9.8	8.9	-1.5	13.6
Index	134.7	129.8	-	128.4	131.6	116.6	140.1	153.0	164.7	84.9	141.9

Table 2

Summary of Indexes and Prices

Category	Index in 1988-89	Category	Average Price in 1988-89
Applied Social Sciences	152.2	Technology	44.31
Social Sciences	148.8	Pure Sciences	43.54
Technology	148.1	Biological Sciences	34.63
Pure Sciences	146.5	Medicine	30.01
All Books	141.7	All Books	26.16
Medicine	139.4	Social Sciences	25.82
Humanities	139.2	Applied Social Sciences	24.77
Biological Sciences	136.4	Humanities	22.24

Table 2

Table 3 Academic Years Major Groupings of Subjects

Year	Humanities			Social Sciences			Applied Social Sciences			Biological Sciences		
	£	Index	% +	£	Index	% +	£	Index	% +	£	Index	% +
1984-85	15.98	100	-	17.35	100	-	16.27	100	-	25.38	100	-
1985-86	17.66	110.5	10.5	19.68	113.4	13.4	17.54	107.8	7.8	29.75	117.2	17.2
1986-87	19.58	122.5	10.9	22.02	126.9	11.9	20.02	123.0	14.1	28.71	113.1	-3.5
1987-88	21.22	132.8	8.4	25.05	144.4	13.8	22.99	141.3	14.8	31.41	123.8	9.4
1988-89	22.24	139.2	4.8	25.82	148.8	3.1	24.77	152.2	7.7	34.63	136.4	10.3

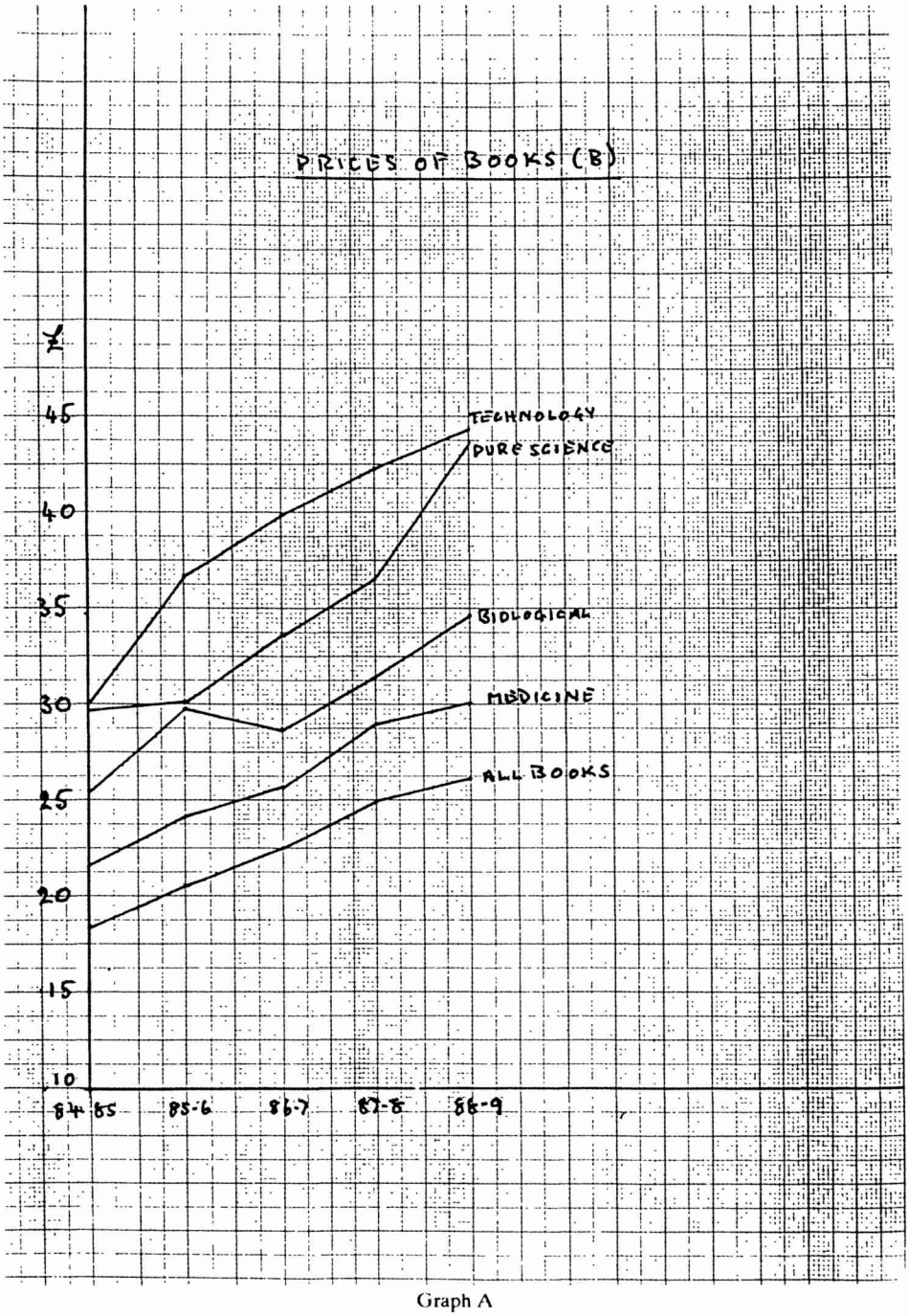
Year	Pure Sciences			Technology			Medicine			All Books		
	£	Index	% +	£	Index	% +	£	Index	% +	£	Index	% +
1984-85	29.73	100	-	29.92	100	-	21.53	100	-	18.46	100	-
1985-86	30.05	101.1	1.1	36.66	122.5	22.5	24.15	112.2	12.2	20.55	111.3	11.3
1986-87	33.61	113.1	11.8	39.79	133.0	8.5	25 70	119.4	6.4	22.50	121.9	9.5
1987-88	36.54	122.9	8.7	42.28	141.3	6.3	28.88	134.1	12.4	24.85	134.6	10.4
1988-89	43.54	146.5	19.2	44.31	148.1	4.8	30.01	139.4	3.9	26.16	141.7	5.3

Table 4

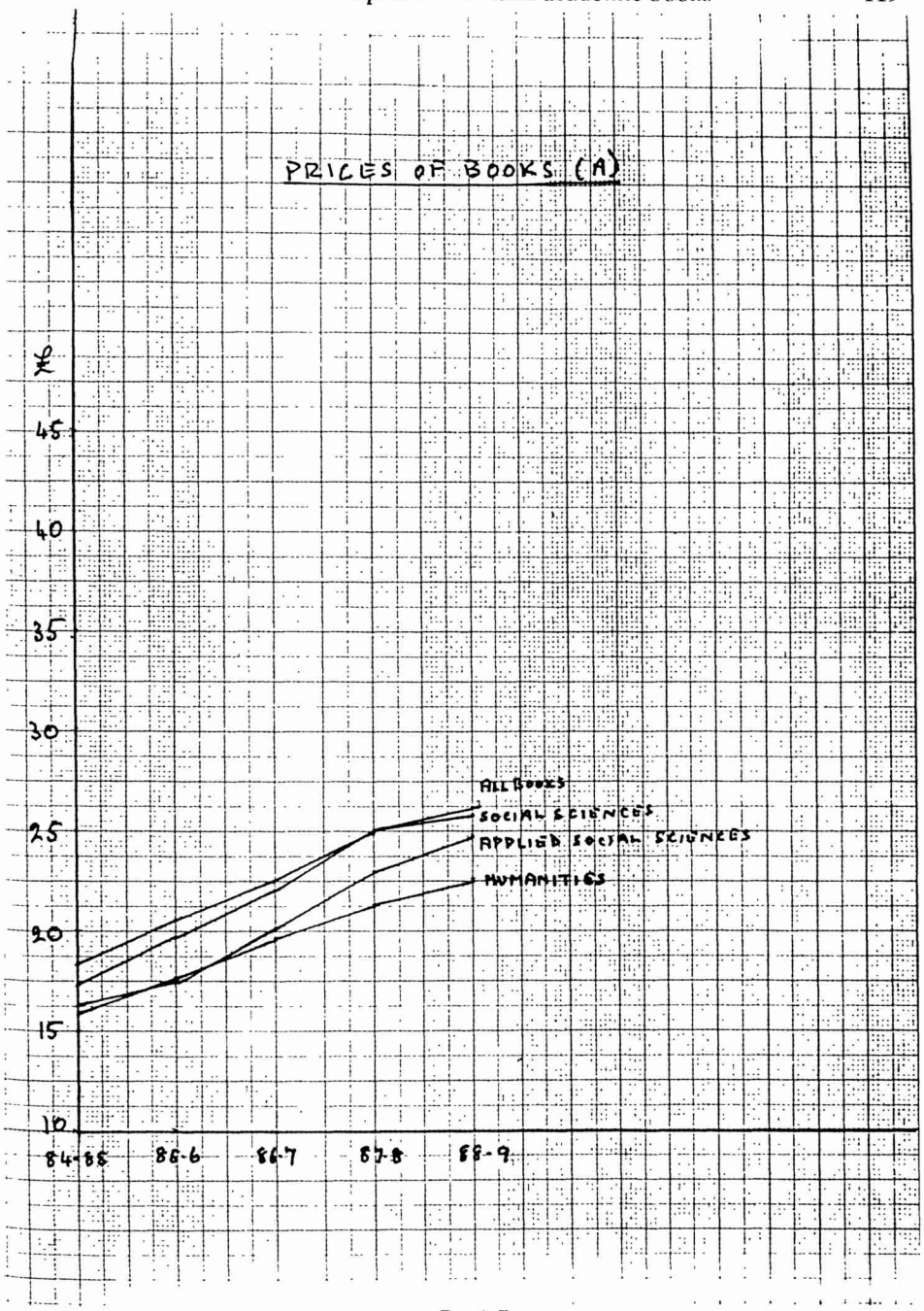
Specialist Subject Areas

	Humanities				Pure Science				Medicine			
	Philosophy		Religion		Chemistry		Astronomy		Surgery		Psychiatry	
	Price	Index	Price	Index	Price	Index	Price	Index	Price	Index	Price	Index
1984-85	16.77	100	10.56	100	46.83	100	22.23	100	22.84	100	15.70	100
1985-86	21.56	128.6	11.22	106.3	45.96	98.1	21.24	95.1	34.43	150.7	17.89	113.9
1986-87	23.36	139.3	11.95	113.2	48.90	104.4	27.27	122.1	33.11	145.0	19.91	126.8
1987-88	24.13	143.9	14.12	133.7	54.03	115.4	26.09	116.8	39.65	173.6	23.16	147.5
1988-89	27.28	162.7	15.59	147.6	74.01	158.0	30.21	135.3	43.40	190.0	25.30	161.1

Table 4


PRICES OF BOOKS (B)
£
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
84-85
85-6
86-7
87-8
88-9
TECHNOLOGY
PURE SCIENCE
BIOLOGICAL
MEDICINE
ALL BOOKS

Graph A


PRICES OF BOOKS (A)
£
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
84-85
85-6
86-7
87-8
88-9
ALL BOOKS
SOCIAL SCIENCES
APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES
HUMANITIES

Graph B

Trends in American Book and Periodical Price Indexes

FREDERICK C. LYNDEN
Assistant University Librarian for Technical Services,
Brown University, Providence, R.I.

Introduction

Recently U.S. librarians have been very concerned about the high costs of obtaining scholarly literature. Many believe that serial price increases are out of control, and consider the current price crisis a threat to the ability of American universities to conduct advanced research. Some effects of extreme prices for serials have been:

- A decline of 15 % in the number of monographs purchased by American research libraries.
- An increase in the percentage of materials funds expended in the United States for serials from 40 % in 1975/76 to 56 % in 1987/88.
- A drop in the percentage of journal literature American Libraries are able to purchase from 30 % of what was published in 1971/72 to only 26 % in 1987/88.
- Major serial cancellation projects in U.S. research libraries such as Stanford, Harvard and Illinois, renowned for their comprehensive collections of journals.
- Decreases in monies in support of library collections due to the inability of American universities to continue to provide double digit increases for library materials budgets.[1]

Some believe that if this price crisis continues, it will threaten the fabric of scholarly communication in the United States and world-wide, causing a cycle of cancellations, increased prices, and further cancellations resulting in the demise of the structure of research literature. A product of this situation has been a large number of cost studies describing the situation in various universities and colleges, focusing on particular publishers and their prices. There is now no question about the need for improved data on materials prices and there has been a call for "development of subject-specific cost indexes for critical serial titles with consideration of measuring the relative value of titles."[2]

What is the role of price indexes in this context? A price index is essentially distinct from a cost index. A price index excludes such factors as shipping

charges, discounts, and service charges. Essentially a price index indicates the list price, i.e. "the price at which the publication is made available to the public"3 (not the price at which an item is sold to a library). Price indexes are needed to show national trends and serve as a consistent measure of what is happening to the prices of publications in a country.

What are the purposes of price indexes?

1. *Price index data should be used in conjunction with local cost studies for comparability.* If a local cost study is showing a very large cost increase for books or journals from a foreign country, then it is important to look at a price index from that country to see if the same trend can be discerned.
2. *Price index data can also provide a model for local cost studies.* Price indexes for U.S. library materials have been in existence since 1955 and U.S. national standard has been in existence since 1974. As Morten Hein has explained, an international standard is now available and it can provide the methodology for describing the data.
3. *If price indexes are produced regularly, they will provide consistent and objective data for historical studies and projections.* Price indexes in the United States are produced annually and their production is monitored for consistency and reliability by the Library Materials Price Index Committee of the Resources and Technical Services Division (now Association for Library Collections and Technical Services) of the American Library Association.
4. *Price indexes are usually produced by national associations, governmental bodies, or a combination of these groups which do not have a special interest in showing increases or decreases.* At least one state university in the United States is required by its legislature to use U.S. national data because the legislative officials believe that local data can be biased. The data for the U.S. book price indexes are obtained from the Library of Congress and *Publishers Weekly*, a national book trade weekly.
5. Finally, *price indexes are constructed to show trends, i.e. they have a base period against which movement is shown.* The data can then be compared with the national consumer price index to see the difference between the level of prices in publishing compared to prices for other domestic products. The Association of Research Libraries has called for annual publishing cost indexes in order to monitor whether or not publishers seem to be charging prices which are too exorbitant in comparison to costs.[4] In summary, there are five advantages to price indexes.
   - First, they offer comparability for local cost studies.
   - Second, they can provide a methodology for local cost studies.

- Third, they are consistent and objective.
- Fourth, they are produced to show national trends.
- Finally, they can be compared with consumer price indexes for other products.

Before describing what price indexes are now available in the United States, it is worth explaining what specific library uses can be made of price indexes. They can be used by librarians:

1. To justify increases in the library's book budget.
2. To allocate the materials budget by subject categories
3. To analyse the cost trends and plan future budgets.
4. To aid librarians in interpreting collection program costs to funding authorities.
5. To determine the impact of materials cost increases on other library programs.

Most modern business establishments track the prices of products and make projections to aid them in estimating budgetary needs. They also do long range planning and many universities are doing the same thing. Sally Williams, Associate Librarian for Financial Affairs at Harvard University, notes that the Library has recently been asked by university officials to construct a five year plan, including information on the future costs of materials. With research librarians spending millions of dollars on materials, it is important for them to be able to do cost projections based upon real market figures. Computers now make it possible for publishers, vendors, and librarians to keep more accurate and complete data on price trends.

Having discussed the purpose of price indexes, the remainder of this paper will include:

1. A history and discussion of American book price indexes.
2. A history and report on American serial price indexes.
3. A history and description of media indexes.
4. An analysis of improvements needed in the current price indexes and,
5. Future developments and a consideration of American needs for foreign price data.

This paper will address the questions about what price indexes are available to American and foreign librarians, issues related to their construction, and future needs.

1. American Book Price Indexes

There has been an American book price index prepared since 1960 by the Library Materials Price Index Committee, RTSD, A.L.A. The original price index was conceived by William Kurth, the late University Librarian of Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, and proposed in an article in *College and Research Libraries,* October 1955. His proposal included several principles for national price indexes which have endured until today:

1. He suggested using national bibliographies as source of data.
2. He defined a book according to UNESCO standards. (Note this definition is changing and the new ISO standard incorporates this change.)
3. He excluded certain categories of materials such as documents, maps and music scores.
4. He calculated the average prices for these titles for various broad subject categories, selected for their easy applicability and usefulness for the maximum number of libraries.
5. He used a base period against which to compare the changes in prices.

The book index first appeared in 1960 in the *Bowker Annual.* As early as 1960 it was sponsored by ALA and derived from data in the *Weekly Record* section of *Publisher's Weekly.* Since 1960 the index for books has been enlarged to include mass market and trade and higher priced paperback books. The book price index appears regularly in the *Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information.* This year's article entitled "Prices of U.S. and Foreign Published Materials" shows U.S. Hardcover Books moving from an average price of $ 19.22 in 1977 to $ 38.39 in 1988 (preliminary figure).[5] The increase over the previous year is 5.8 %. Although this increase is a moderate one the Consumer Price Index showed only a 4.1 % increase.

Since a presentation to the LIBER group at Leiden in 1977 about the "Library Materials Price Situation in the United States,"[6] two more American book price indexes have been added to the existing national hardcover and paperback book price indexes. They are both specialized *academic* book price indexes. One is called "North American Academic Books: Average Prices and Price Indexes" and the other is called "U.S. College Books: Average Prices and Price Indexes."

The College Book Index compiled by Kathryn A. Soupiset, Trinity University (Texas) and a consultant to the Price Index Committee, is based on prices contained in book reviews appearing in *Choice* magazine, a journal devoted to reviews of books of interest to college libraries. This index has been in existence since 1978. The figures for 1988 show an average price of $ 38.14 compared to $ 18.02 in 1978. The increase over the previous year (1987) is 8.8 %.[7]

The North American Academic Book Price Index is produced by Dora Biblarz, Arizona State University and a consultant to the Price Index Committee, from data collected from approval plan statistics supplied by Baker and Taylor, Coutts Library Services, and Blackwell/North America. These are all vendors who have approval plans with academic libraries. Approval plans are plans where vendors automatically supply newly published books to libraries based upon a profile of selection designed by the library. Libraries then *approve* and keep or return selections of the vendor. This index has been in existence since 1979/80 and uses a fiscal year rather than a calendar year. In 1987/88 the average price of an *academic* book is $ 39.14 compared to $ 21.98 in 1979/80. The increase over the previous fiscal year 1986/87 is 6 %. The plan also includes Canadian titles since two of the vendors supply Canadian materials.[8]

There are currently two foreign *academic* book price indexes included in the *Bowker Annual*. A summary of data from the British Academic Book Price Index, already discussed by Peter Mann, is included. A German Academic Book Price Index compiled by Steven E. Thompson (Brown University) is also included. It is derived from approval plan data supplied by Otto Harrassowitz of Wiesbaden, Federal Republic of Germany. Harrassowitz supplies titles from the FRG, the GDR, Austria and Switzerland to approval plan customers, solely academic libraries, in the United States. The overall average price increase from 1987 to 1988 for British books was 6.8 % and for German books was 6.3 %.[9]

The *Bowker Annual* also includes a *cost study* of Latin American books purchased by nine selected U.S. libraries. Compiled by David Block of the Acquisition Committee of the Seminar on the Acquisitions of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM), the study shows one year increase for 25 Central and South American countries.[10]

U.S. and Foreign books are also indexed in the United States by the Higher Education Price Index. Conceived in 1975 by D. Kent Halstead of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) compares price changes in higher education (student tuition prices, room and board charges, equipment, research and development, building construction and books and periodicals) with the Consumer Price Index. The HEPI, formerly published by the U.S. Government, changed in the eighties to publication by a private organization in Washington D.C. called Research Associates of Washington. The Index retains its original character. The index for books and periodicals contains data on:

1. U.S. books - formerly used the *Bowker Annual/Publisher's Weekly* index and has switched to the North American Academic Index.
2. Periodicals - originally used the U.S. periodical index and now uses the Faxon study.
3. Foreign books - uses LC's annual report on the costs of foreign books.

The HEPI also has a combined index of all three components. The HEPI is frequently used as a measure of price changes for foreign books since there is no other comprehensive source. The HEPI has only one problem. It is weighted incorrectly since it gives 52 % weight to books, 34 % to periodicals and 14 % to foreign books. The latest ARL figures would indicate 52 % should be given to serials and 34 % to books.[11]

Users of the foreign indexes are cautioned that they must also include a factor for the change in currency since both the British and German indexes use the local currency. A currency chart in the *Bowker Annual* shows changes over the past two calendar years for seven countries from which American academic libraries buy heavily: Canada, France, the U.K., Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and Spain.

2. American Periodical Price Indexes

Price indexes for American periodicals were first compiled in 1960 about the same time as the book indexes. They were developed by Helen Welch Tuttle (Princeton University) and adopted certain principles from the beginning:

1. The subscription price is defined as that published in the first issue of the year for each title.
2. Prices are arrayed according to subject categories.
3. Certain types of journals are excluded from the index such as house organs, local interest periodicals, pulp magazines, and similar categories of titles.
4. Serial services, i.e. periodical publications that revise, cumulate, abstract or index information in a specific field on a regular basis, constitute a distinct category to be measured separately.
5. A sampling of titles is rejected in favour of trying to be comprehensive.[12]

These principles (with the exception of number 5) are still used in the annual compilation of the Price Index for U.S. Periodicals. The Price Index for 1989 was published in the *Library Journal* (April, 1989). In 1989 the overall average cost of a U.S. periodical was $ 85.37 (not including Soviet translation journals) compared with $ 77.93 (1988) or a 9.5 % increase. When Soviet translation journals are included, the overall average price is $ 114.07 or an 8.2 % increase compared to the $ 105.48 (1988) price from last year.[13] Thus the periodical price increase for 1989 is 2 ¼ times the U.S. CPI increase of 1988.

One of the serious drawbacks of the U.S. Periodical Price Index has been the lack of foreign titles since many American libraries purchase foreign titles, particularly in the sci-tech area. Another has been the lack of any listing of titles. In 1974, the Faxon periodical price study was created by Frank F. Clasquin, an Exe-

cutive Vice-President of the Faxon company who is now retired. The first list contained 11,390 titles grouped by 23 subject indexes. For example, *Chemical Abstracts* was one of the subject indexes. The U.S. periodical index included only 3,200 titles at about the same time. As early as 1976 the Faxon study began including a domestic and foreign price table. The latest Faxon study reports an average domestic price of $ 147.68 for 1989 or an increase of 9.3 % over 1988. The foreign titles one year rate showed only a 3.3 % increase from 1988 to 1989, but had been showing a 17.0 % (1987) and 18.2 %(1988) increase in the two previous years. (The foreign prices reflect currency fluctuations.) The number of titles tracked in the Faxon study for the domestic and foreign one year rate is 39,685 domestic titles and 14,557 foreign titles. These figures compare with the U.S. Periodical Index which covered a total of only 3,942 titles, a selected sample.[14]

The Faxon study has been used for the Higher Education Price Index (previously discussed under foreign book price indexes) since 1974 for its periodical index. The HEPI creates an index from the Faxon study on an annual basis. Many American libraries now use the Faxon study because of its wider coverage and its foreign content. In the 1989 study there is a table which gives a country by country comparison of the titles supplied by Faxon. Below is an excerpt form the table showing the U.S. and the principal European and Asian countries from which academic libraries obtain their journals:[15]

	Number of Titles			Average 1-year Price			%Change	
Country	1987	1988	1989	1987	1988	1989	87/88	88/89
U.S.	30,466	37,919	39,685	$ 120.13	$ 135.08	$ 147.68	12.4 %	9.3 %
Canada	2,465	2,906	3,039	$ 51.18	$ 56.99	$ 64.97	3.7 %	8.3 %
France	1,952	2,317	2,394	$ 108.78	$ 121.94	$ 118.10	12.1 %	-3.1 %
U.K.	6,015	6,917	7,069	$ 196.16	$ 202.21	$ 211.45	3.1 %	4.6 %
Germany	1,791	1,961	2,054	$ 141.53	$ 167.80	$ 190.86	18.5 %	13.7 %
Japan	925	1,239	1,258	$ 160.50	$ 181.94	$ 195.37	13.4 %	7.4 %
Netherlands	1,099	1,244	1,244	$ 295.81	$ 341.56	$ 365.22	15.5 %	6.9 %
Spain	406	468	483	$ 53.92	$ 59.15	$ 67.18	9.7 %	13.6 %

If a library were to receive titles principally from the eight countries above, then the overall increase would be greater than the 3.3 % noted earlier. According to the compiler, Peter R. Young "this 82 % decline in the rate of foreign title prices which increased in one year [from 18.7 % to 3.3 %] would seem to indicate the moderation of a trend of the past three consecutive years where the yearly subscription price increased an average of 19.2 % for foreign titles."[16] It was this latter trend which has worried American librarians so greatly.

Although the periodical price indexes have not been as striking as some of the data from local costs studies, they have provided the framework for the discussions in the United States of the historical double digit inflation which has afflicted libraries over the past ten years. Most studies, including one of the ARL studies (the Okerson report), cite the Library Materials Price Index Report.[17] Any historical treatise on topic must cite the *Library Journal*'s U.S. Periodical Index because there is now almost thirty years of data available due to the work of this ALA committee. Although the Faxon study began as late as 1974, it is now widely cited, especially due to the very strong need for foreign data.

3. Media (or non-book) Indexes

The U.S. has done some pioneering work in the area of non-book indexes. There are three non-book indexes regularly included in the *Bowker Annual*. They are:

1. "Index of U.S. Microfilm Rates." (Microfilm)
2. "U.S. Non-Print Media: Average Prices and Price Indexes." (Non-print Media)
3. "Selected U.S. Daily Newspapers: Average Subscription Rates and Index Values." (Newspaper)

The first index mentioned has been compiled by Robert C. Sullivan, Library of Congress (retired), since 1971 and it shows the rate per exposure for negative and positive microfilm. The average rate on 1959 was .043 for negative microfilm and is currently .16 as of 1988. 1988 changed by only 1.6 % over the previous year.[18] The U.S. non-print media index covering 16 MM films, videocassettes, filmstrips and cassette sound recordings is compiled by David B. Walch (California Polytechnic State University) from selected issues of *Choice, School Library Journal* and *Booklist*. "The average cost of a video in 1988 ($ 262.08) was 9.1 % higher than the average cost ($ 240.16) in 1987. This increase follows a decline in cost over the precious four years."[19] The purchase cost per minute is also used as a measure for films and videos. The U.S. newspaper index compiled by Imry Jarmy (Library of Congress) has been compiled sporadically since the early eighties. It records the average price of 131 daily newspapers published in the continental U.S. and Alaska and Hawaii. The current (1988) price of $ 198.20 showed an increase of 15.7 % over the previous year of 1987. The price has moved from $ 76.44 in 1978 to its current price or an increase of 159 %.[20]

There have been proposals to create an index of commercial microform titles (serials and sets), but no proposal reviewed by the Library Materials Price Index Committee has been accepted. There has also been a proposal recently to consider a price index of CD-ROM databases. Pamela R. Mason (National Agricultural Library), member of the Library Materials Price Index Committee, recently

wrote a report on the possibilities for a CD-ROM Price Index. She asked four questions:

1. Should CD-ROM's be treated as serials, as monographs (which they can also be) or as a mixture?
2. What should be the unit of measure? Should the data be analysed as cost per disk, cost per megabyte, or as a simple dollar total?
3. What range of data should be included? Would data include full set price (archival and current discs with updates) or the current subscription only?
4. An ancillary issue is how to handle multiple options available for some titles.[21]

Although she elaborated on each of these questions or issues, this paper cannot explore the full range of problems associated with tracking the prices of a new format. Suffice it to say that measuring prices of a special format is a complicated business.

4. Improvements Needed in Current Price Indexes

First, *timeliness* is a major factor requiring improvement. None of the price indexes discussed above comes out early enough to aid the user in budget preparation with the exception, perhaps, of the U.S. Periodical Price Index. Most librarians must prepare their budget justifications at least eighteen months in advance. When the *Bowker Annual* arrives in June it carries only preliminary data for U.S. Monographs for the previous year. Firm data is available only for two years earlier. Most institutions do projections based on past trends anyway. Brown uses a ten year average projection for books and journals. The indexes (North American Academic) or studies (Faxon) using a fiscal year are often more helpful.

Timeliness can also be improved through use of computerized databases, that is why vendor data is often very helpful in producing indexes. Second, *comprehensiveness* is another issue of importance. The U.S. Periodical Index is not as representative of prices in numbers as the Faxon study (cf. 3,942 titles - U.S. Periodical Index with 39,685 titles - Faxon study). The Faxon study includes 10 times as many titles as the U.S. Periodical Index. The Price Index Committee is aware of the discrepancy and hopes to persuade Faxon to allow it to use Faxon's database for production of a U.S. Periodical Index. Third, *reliability* is a factor which requires regular monitoring. Examples of this element are the changes made to the German book price index over the past few year. The Library Materials Price Index Committee stopped using *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen* (BUBIZ) as the primary index when the price suddenly dropped because the *Deutsche Bibliographie*, which supplies data for BUBIZ, increased its coverage of titles in 1986.[22] Thus, the change in coverage affected the reliability of the index.

The Price Index Committee decided to switch to the Harrassowitz data not only because BUBIZ was unreliable but also because Harrassowitz's applicability to American academic libraries is greater. In the past year it was necessary to improve upon the Harrassowitz index. It was discovered that elimination of a Harrassowitz miscellaneous category in 1988 had artificially increased the 1988 price figures. Removal of this category which includes textbooks, political pamphlets, ephemeral contributions, agitprop, etc. resulted in more realistic cost figures. Fourth, *meaningful subject categories* are important. Some users have complained the categories for the U.S. Periodical Index are not explicit enough. For example, Chemistry and Physics are lumped together as one subject, and Mathematics, Botany, Geology and General Science are also combined. The latest NISO (National Information Standards Organization) standard for price indexes for library materials (Z39.20-1983) permits any subject classification system, but prefers the "Dewey Decimal System, Library of Congress (LC) or the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) and its twenty-three groups as set forth in the UNESCO recommendations." The ISO standard prefers the 25 group UNESCO classification system. Finally, moving to adopt the *standards recommendations* is important. For example, it might be useful to include some data on price ranges in the book indexes. The NISO standard suggests "it is useful to include price range tables by subject."[23] It has also been suggested that a promising method to more accurately reflect price trends is to record an average price per page. Librarians should be constantly aware of ways to improve upon price data.

5. Future Developments and a Consideration of Needs for Foreign Data

The Library Materials Price Index Committee is moving towards an improved U.S. Periodicals Index through the use of the database at the Faxon company. Before any change in the direction of a more comprehensive database is made, data must be gathered for two or three years in order to provide comparability. At the same time, the committee is looking into expanding its foreign periodical coverage. At the moment, there is only one foreign periodical index and this is the British Periodical Index which annually appears in the *Library Association Record*. It is produced under the auspices of B.H. Blackwell. Letters will be going out to other vendors who currently supply American academic libraries with periodicals and serials to see if they have databases which might be used to create national periodical indexes. Many of the nine to ten principal vendors from Great Britain, Germany, France, and the Netherlands can already supply tailor made cost studies to libraries with whom they deal. The Committee is seeking more comprehensive data, i.e. information on all of the titles supplied to all American academic customers. This data would then be equivalent to an *academic* sub-set of a national periodical index.

There are several advantages to vendor supplied data. First, the data is generally in machine-readable form and, as a result, can be comprehensive while still being reliable.

Second, the price information is usually up-to-date since vendors must keep accurate and up-to-date files on the costs of journals. Third, since academic vendors purchase for their customers a sub-set of overall publishing output, then it is possible to produce price data which is for *scholarly* books and journals. There are naturally some problems associated with using vendor data. First, it is sometimes difficult to find a vendor who covers an entire national output. Second, what should the coverage period be? Should it be imprint year; or calendar year receipts? Third, it is sometimes difficult for a library organization to make changes in a vendor's price study which are required for price data. Finally, does the vendor study meet the criteria proposed by Sally F.Williams for a *useful* study:

1. Timeliness.
2. Consistency over time.
3. Meaningful categories.
4. Compliance with national and international standards.[24]

Vendors can meet these criteria. Examples are the successful co-operation with vendors on the North American Academic Book Price Index, the British Academic Book Price Index, and the German Academic Book Price Index.

What are the needs for the future? *It would be desirable to have more data on the prices of periodicals (and serials) supplied to American academic libraries by publishers from European countries. There is also still a paucity of data available on academic book prices in France, Italy, the Scandinavian countries and Spain.* A lack of such data on English language books produced in the Netherlands has been remedied recently by a new development. The Martinus Nijhoff company is producing an annual index of Dutch English language books based on their monthly report, *Nijhoff Information*. There are now two years of data 1987 and 1988 available. The index uses the UNESCO subject categories and has been converted to an index with the base year of 1987. This new index fills an important need for American research libraries, and provides an example for the type of data other vendors might supply.

Conclusion

In a 1977 *IFLA Journal* article, Alexander Allardyce made an excellent argument for materials price indexes:

> One of the most important practical finding tasks now being carried on systematically in some countries and piece-meal in

> others is on book prices . . . Not only have book prices escalated through inflation but in some countries inflation has been compounded by devaluation. Further in most libraries inflation of salaries and other costs has shrunk the proportion of already restricted budgets available for literature. Lastly, the disproportionate increase in journal costs has tended to push books out. The librarians' presentation to administrative authorities has had to depend more on induction and persuasion than on general information. Modern fiscal management requires a higher ratio of fact to opinion, and so the need for external evidence is great. [25]

IFLA has been urged since 1972 to take steps to develop a system of library materials price indexes. In the last seventeen years, papers recommending action have been given on five occasions: 1972 (Kurth); 1973 (Hickey); 1974 (Kurth); 1977 (Pulis); and 1982 (Lynden). In 1977 at a LIBER meeting, Lynden advocated that an international standard be developed[26] and Morten Hein has reported on its implementation. He also suggested libraries work with national library associations, publisher's associations, and national statistical bureaus in formulating national price indexes. This proposal still needs work. Finally, he recommended that there be academic sub-indexes created. In two countries (Great Britain and the U.S.), this step has been taken, and there is great potential in other European countries for such a development. The developments in United States can serve as a model and a lesson for other countries. The model should be the large number of successful indexes currently in operation in the United States. The lessons which can be learned derive from the areas requiring improvement: timeliness, comprehensiveness, reliability, meaningful subject categories, and use of current standards. In the end, it is important to create not only more tools for measurement or prices, but more sophisticated tools.

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Price and Cost Indexes as Instruments of Budgetary Planning

ROLF GRIEBEL
Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg

1. Introduction

In times where the spending power of academic libraries is continuously sinking and the supply of literature seems increasingly endangered,[1] price and cost indexes are becoming ever more important as bases for assessing budgetary needs and budget extrapolation.

In the following, a few thoughts regarding the problem of price and cost indexes with special reference to the situation of academic libraries in West Germany will be presented.[2] The requirements for price and cost indexes as instruments of budgetary planning are determined on the basis of goals of budgetary planning; we must differentiate between three types of indexes. I want to examine to what extent price indexes of the literature production of the Federal Republic of Germany can be used for budgetary planning by academic libraries here and abroad. Based on the present situation, prospects for future developments of price indexes will be discussed. Finally, the function of cost indexes will be discussed, particularly in view of the context in which price and cost indexes are to be found. These thoughts are all in all aimed at the development of methodical instruments that enable us to find the basis for the budget extrapolation of academic libraries using a broad, well-founded statistical substratum.

2.1 Budgetary planning

It is the first and foremost task of budgetary planning to examine spending and costs on the basis of the statistics available on the acquisitions made by the respective library within a period of several years. The interpretation of such statistics must take into account price increases, expansion of literature production as well as the influence of currency fluctuations. Based on this analysis, a projection of future costs is made by taking into account the total budgetary needs as well as budget extrapolation.

As individual subjects are affected by price increases in varying degrees, budgetary planning is faced with the problem of creating a financial framework for an acquisition policy, which, on the one hand, is committed to maintaining continuity in building up a certain collection and on the other hand is committed to keeping a balance between the different subjects. This problem is particularly aggravated by the fact that budgets have been stagnating. In the context of uni-

versity libraries this always touches on the subject of budget allocation. Allocation is based on traditional quotas which have developed from local allotment practices or on allocation models which are characterized by a large degree of transparency, as they identify parameters and weighting factors. As wide as the range of the parameters may be, particular weight is given to literature production and average prices of subjects - this characterizes the so-called literature-size approach. It is therefore the task of budgetary planning to do justice to changes in the subject-specific average need when updating both of the parameters on the basis of price indexes.

Budgetary planning must furthermore control the relation between fixed costs for periodicals and serials and the possibility of acquiring monographs. In spite of the fact that subject-specific threshold values must be calculated individually, it must be a predominant task of future-oriented acquisition planning to keep fixed cost rates for the individual subject within certain limits to the benefit of monograph acquisition. An analysis of the price development of different forms of publications is imperative.

2.2 National price index

Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen (BUBIZ)

Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen (BUBIZ) - published annually by the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels - covers the development of book production and prices in the Federal Republic of Germany including Berlin (West). Even though BUBIZ does not provide index values but is limited to recording annual data regarding book production and prices, it is, nonetheless, by definition of the Draft International Standard ISO/DIS 9230, the base value for a national price index "that reflects the price development of the production of a specific physical medium in a country".[3] It is the titles listed in the *Wöchentliche Verzeichnis* der *Deutschen Bibliographie* for the corresponding year which serve as a base value, BUBIZ, however, exclusively takes into consideration publications available in the book trade.

Since the annual report of 1982 BUBIZ has been listing title production using the classification system of the *Deutsche Bibliographie*, that is, a 65-step classification system. Thus BUBIZ is able to offer a more differentiated insight into subject-specific title production. Within the individual subject categories first editions and new editions as well as the German *Taschenbücher* are identified separately. Titles with less than 49 pages, which make up about 20 % of total title production, on the other hand, are no longer listed separately.[4]

Based on total production, BUBIZ reflects price developments by identifying average retail prices and average book prices divided by one-sixteenth of the number of pages (Durchschnittsbogenpreis) for each subject. Consequently, average prices refer to the total sum of titles available in the book trade, meaning

scholarly literature and academically irrelevant titles, as well as *Taschenbücher* and titles with less than 49 pages. Moreover, BUBIZ provides information on the price structure for the 65 subject categories by identifying distributional percentages with regard to subject-specific book production with the help of 7 categories ranging between 5,- DM as the lower limit and 100,- DM as the upper limit.[5]

Assessment of BUBIZ

If one assesses BUBIZ by looking at the degree in which the national price index can be used for budgetary planning by academic libraries not only in the FRG, one must first of all state that BUBIZ comprises all of literature production sold by the book trade, but does not take into account publications outside the book trade.

With regard to the base value of BUBIZ it must be said that although it is the national library listings of the *Deutsche Bibliographie* which provide the basis for BUBIZ, one has to reckon with certain statistical distortions. In 1986 - in contrast to former years - the Deutsche Bibliothek was able to list all the titles which were handed in almost completely in the *Wöchentliche Verzeichnisse*, including less important and lower-priced titles to a greater extent. This led to a remarkable decrease of the total average price by 22 % in comparison to the year before.

The analysis of the data material prepared by BUBIZ, which comprises about 15-18 % of the total volume of publications available, offers basic values with regard to the development of West German literature production. When planning the budget and allocating funds - e.g. when changes occur in the subject-specific share of total production - these values, of course, can only be used by academic libraries under the proviso that they include academically irrelevant titles. With regard to the analysis of literature production, BUBIZ proves to be superior to the US-titles statistics in *Bowker Annual* and *Publishers Weekly*[6] because of its subtler differentiation.

Due to the fact that non-scholarly materials are included in the BUBIZ price lists, the value of the average prices becomes relative. In many subjects, particularly in those where the portion of non-academic literature is traditionally high, average prices cannot be used as a tool for budgetary planning. Their value is also reduced by the fact that the average retail price and the average price divided by one-sixteenth of the number of pages are no longer separately indicated for *Taschenbücher* and "Other titles". In this respect BUBIZ does not offer the content of information provided by the US-Price Statistics in *Bowker Annual* and *Publishers Weekly*.[7]

Considering the fact that BUBIZ differentiates between 65 subject categories, it must also be said that in order to be able to determine certain tendencies in price development for individual subjects, a volume of titles is required that is

not strongly affected by random influences. If the total number of titles in one subject is below a certain limit, the publication of a few, high-priced titles may - in certain circumstances - effect an increase in prices, which does not reflect a real tendency and therefore permits no prognosis.

Finally it must be pointed out that BUBIZ - regardless of some basic restrictions - is not very useful when planning the current budget as its publication takes place in autumn of the year following the year under review.

If BUBIZ is compared to the ISO/DIS 9230, certain differences, particularly on two points, become apparent. BUBIZ, on principle, does not take into account publications outside the book trade, according to the ISO/DIS 9230 though, these are not excluded. There is another difference which regards the classification system. The ISO/DIS 9230 is based on the 25-subject classification system of the UNESCO Subject Classification, whereas BUBIZ identifies 65 - albeit to a large extent comparable - categories.

2.3. Price index for academic literature

The problem of defining an outline of academic literature

The possibility of evaluating BUBIZ - or other national price indexes - for the purpose of budgetary planning and budgetary needs assessment in academic libraries is particularly reduced by the fact that not only academic but also non-academic material and therefore price development of overall book production is documented. A price index for academic literature requires a definition of its outline when seen in the context of overall production. This brings up the question of defining the terms *academic literature* or *academically relevant literature* - a question which is not posed by the ISO/DIS 9230. Without being able to discuss the problem of definition in detail here, it can be said that a definition which is oriented toward the idea of what is also termed *funktionaler Wissenschaftsbegriff* (*functional scholarship*) should serve as a basis for this definition. The definition should - in concurrence with Pflug's - provide a concrete outline of the acquisition profile of academic libraries. According to his definition, academic literature is not only the "Produkt wissenschaftlicher Tätigkeit", but everything that "wissenschaftlichen Arbeitsprozeß bedingt, beeinflußt, was von ihm an literarischer Konkretisierung benötigt wird".[8] Although one has to concede that even if precisely defined criteria are used, certain imprecisions in marginal areas are unavoidable, it is nonetheless possible to define literature which is a potential object of acquisition by academic libraries as part of overall production.

Using data material provided by library suppliers: the LISU-Indexes

Although for a long time there has been a demand for the development of price indexes of academic literature for individual places of publication, price

indexes are so far only available for Great Britain and the U.S.; these price indexes record price development of academic monographs.

Since 1974 the Centre for Library and Information Management (CLAIM) at Loughborough University has been publishing an index, which, on the basis of the British National Bibliography, shows price development of academic books in Great Britain. Because of the high portion of titles without listed prices, whose exclusion from the index made average prices appear far lower than they actually were, it was decided to base the index - from the year under review 1985 onward - on the data provided by Blackwell's Oxford, which comprises an annual total of about 10,000 titles. Since 1987 the index, which is compiled by Mann, has been published by the Library and Information Statistics Unit (LISU) at Loughborough University. Parallely to this index, a price index for academic literature of the U.S.A. has been published since 1986. It is based on the data provided by Blackwell North America and comprises an annual total of about 20,000 titles.[9] Both LISU-Indexes reflect - to the exclusion of imported titles - the price development of academic literature production in both places of origin and offer some valuable information for budgetary planning and budgetary needs assessment.

German Academic Book Price Index (GABPI)

In contrast to this, mention must be made of the fact that no statistical data is available concerning the production of academic literature in the FRG which would provide information about the volume and development of titles, about price structure and increase - valid for individual subject areas as well.

After the first attempts during the 1950's and 1960's to determine the share and price level of academic literature, Scheib and Erpf made a comprehensive analysis of literature production at the beginning of the 1970's.[10] According to this study, the share of academic titles, a figure that varies greatly from subject to subject, came to 50 %. Apart from providing necessary information for the purpose of budgetary planning and allocation, the study provided a detailed insight into the structure of academic literature production. Since then, however, the academic book market, particularly in the areas of the humanities and the social sciences, has undergone fundamental structural changes, to which attention was drawn not least thanks to Fabian.[11] It is a change that manifests itself, among others, in the fact that literature production is characterized by an increasing proportion of dissertations that appear in publishing houses. Taking this into consideration, the analysis of academic literature production in the FRG becomes a pressing desideratum at the beginning of the 1990's.

As shown by both LISU-Indexes, the use of data from important library suppliers basically proves a methodically convincing starting-point for a price index which refers to academically relevant literature and which records the price

development in the respective country of origin on the basis of the publishers' original price in original currency. By doing so, it avoids distortions of statistical data caused by the inclusion of imported titles or the effect of currency fluctuation.

Harrassowitz generously supplied the data of their German Approval Plan for the development of a price index for German academic literature.[12] Since 1988 the German Academic Book Price Index (GABPI) for German academic monographs has been available. This index, which was first published in the 1988 *Bowker Annual* for the year under review 1987 and retrospectively for the period until 1984, shows price development based on DM-prices by using the statistical values for an annual amount of about 20,000 titles.[13]

The Index differentiates between 30 subjects according to the LoC-classification and a group of "unclassified material", which basically comprises literature for specific acquisition programmes, whose academic relevance is often limited. In the revised edition of GABPI in the 1989/90 *Bowker Annual*, the category "unclassified materials", which amounts to approx. 25 % of the total amount of titles, is not included. The GABPI subject statistics is not fully compatible with the classification of the ISO/DIS 9230. One has to take into consideration, however, that at Harrassowitz's itself, titles are categorized according to a much subtler subject classification system.

Corresponding to consumer expectations, the German Approval Plan and thus GABPI do not cover the FRG alone as place of publication but cover the entire German-speaking areas and German cultural areas, i.e. the GDR, Austria and the German-speaking region of Switzerland. It thus deviates from the country-of-origin principle. According to a statement made by Harrassowitz, a coding according to the place of publication will take place in the future so as to create the basis for a more complex evaluation.[14]

One criterion for assessing GABPI correctly, is the essential question of whether it comprehensively covers academic literature production. If one examines the GABPI accordingly, one has to start from the definition of the selection level "comprehensive", which, in contrast to the other two levels "selective" and "representative" of the Approval Plan, lays down a comprehensive selection of literature. Nonetheless, even the "comprehensive" level does not include all of the academically relevant literature. Academic introductions and textbooks are at best included on this level in a very selective manner; in many cases they are not taken into account at all. It must also be said that by a number of subject groups, such as medicine, law or engineering/technology the "comprehensive" level is never reached.

The titles on which the GABPI is based, therefore represent, according to each subject area, a more or less comprehensive selection of academic literature, which is oriented toward the demand of North American libraries. It does not,

however, cover the range of academically relevant literature acquired by German academic libraries.

Although the GABPI - in contrast to the LISU-Indexes - is based on data which comprise only one, albeit broad selection of academic literature, the Index nonetheless offers valuable insights into the price structure of academic literature. This is particularly true when considering the fact that statistical data regarding academic literature production in the Federal Republic of Germany is not available. GABPI gives also proof of the limited value of the prices indicated in BUBIZ for budgetary planning and budgetary needs assessment of academic libraries: according to GABPI the average price in 1988 was c. 75.- DM whereas, according to BUBIZ, it was c. 28.50 DM.

If one evaluates GABPI for the given period reported with an eye to the development of literature production and book prices, it soon becomes apparent that one must not necessarily conclude from the changed number of titles listed in the Index that there is a corresponding development in the production of literature. It is rather the case that quantitative changes on the supply side - and this is true for individual subjects as well as for the entire production - reflect a changed demand situation. Thus an interpretation of price development must always take into account that changes of the average prices may be caused or at least influenced by developments in orders booked and thus by the supply structure.

The analysis of the GABPI, which, if one chooses to disregard the studies made during the 1970's, for the first time offers statistical data on the academic literature production of the FRG, shows very clearly that library suppliers' databases may only under certain circumstances be used as a basis for price indexes of academic literature. One of the requirements is a supply of titles independent of fluctuations in demand, a supply which covers academic literature production of a specific place of publication as completely as possible, using constant selection criteria. It can thus record price developments on the basis of factual changes in the production of literature. It becomes evident that an index based on a "card-approval system" (Zetteldienst) will be more likely to meet these requirements than an index based on the data of an approval plan. This is something that should be taken into consideration when further developing GABPI.

Price indexes for academic periodicals

A price index for academic periodicals is available for the U.S.A. The price development of US-periodicals relevant for academic libraries is registered by the US-Periodical-Index (USPI) and the US-Serial-Service-Index (USSSI),[15] which is annually published in the *Library Journal* by the Library Materials Price Index Committee of the Resources and Technical Services Division of the American Library Association. It is based on data provided by Faxon, which has been

publishing its own index since 1972.[16] The USPI shows price development on the basis of c. 3,700 periodicals in different classification systems according to subjects.

While the USPI is exclusively based on US-periodicals, the periodical index by Blackwell's, annually published in the *Library Association Record*[17], is based on a selection of c. 2,000 academically relevant periodicals from different places of publication. The fact that price development is presented on the basis of pound-prices, considerably reduces the value of the index for libraries outside Great Britain. The Index can merely serve the purpose of an analysis of global price development of academic periodicals published in Great Britain.

With the exception of an index for law periodicals,[18] there is no price index for academic periodicals in the FRG. BUBIZ merely presents a compilation of data taken from the press statistics of the Statistische Bundesamt (Federal Bureau of Statistics), which records the number of periodical titles, according to different types of periodicals.[19] Among others, "Fachzeitschriften mit überwiegend wissenschaftlichem Inhalt" (subject-related periodicals of mostly academic content) are recorded, which are divided into 6 subject groups. The information given restricts itself, however, to the respective number of titles, average prices are not listed.

When developing price indexes for periodicals which record price development in the country of origin, based on the publisher's original prices in original currency, it is recommendable to use data material provided by library suppliers - in this case subscription agencies. Another important aspect to be taken into consideration when conceptualizing periodicals indexes is how the importance and circulation of a periodical are weighted.

Prospects for future developments

The demand, already expressed in a 1977 LIBER-Project, for the creation of price indexes of academic literature for different places of publication[20] besides the national indexes, which reflect price development on the basis of overall literature production, has so far only been met in Great Britain and the USA. Statistical data on academic literature production, monographs and periodicals, are not available for other important places of publication.[21] This holds, at least in part, also true for the FRG. GABPI does offer an insight into the price structure of the academic book market, but relevant literature is taken into account only after a process of selection, which, of course, is subject to fluctuations from year to year.

Statistical data on academic literature, which provides information of title volume and prices as well as the developments in literature production and price increases - according to different subject categories - is an essential requirement for budgetary planning and budgetary needs assessment of academic libraries.

The development of price indexes for academic literature of important places of publication is therefore desperately needed. One will have to make greater efforts in the future to gather reliable and valuable data on the production of first and new editions and on the prices of academic literature that can be used as a basis for budgetary planning and budgetary needs assessment. When developing price indexes for academic literature, one will have to strive for a uniform concept in order to be able to ensure the value of such indexes for libraries in other countries. That is why the ISO/DIS 9230 is of such importance when norming and standardizing indexes.

It seems like a methodically convincing approach to base price indexes, which refer exclusively to academically relevant literature and which reflect price development for a country of origin by using the publisher's original prices in corresponding currency, on the data provided by important library suppliers or subscription agencies.[22] As was shown in the analysis of GABPI, the data provided by library suppliers can only be used under certain circumstances as a basis for price indexes of academic literature.

An alternative way of finding bases for a price index of academic literature is the right coding of academic literature during the process of recording it in the different national bibliographical centers. In this way a complete record - according to limits that need to be defined - of academically relevant literature would be ensured and it could, moreover, include publications outside the book trade. On the other hand it must be pointed out that besides the problems arising from a possible lack of price information there is another condition that has to be met: the literature would have to be processed continuously in the national bibliographies without substantial backlogs.

At present it is being considered at the Deutsche Bibliothek, whether and to what extent a definition or clear separation of academically relevant literature from overall title production could be carried out and whether this could serve as a basis of subject-specific price index of academic literature.

2.4. Cost index

2.4.1 Local cost index

Definition and methods

While national indexes and indexes for academic literature always document global trends of literature production and prices in the different places of publication, local indexes record the price development on the basis of individual acquisition profiles of individual libraries and thus record a specific segment of international literature production. Another basic difference between the two types of indexes is the fact that national indexes and indexes of academic literature, which are always based on publishers' original prices in the corresponding

currency, exclusively reflect primary price development. Local cost indexes, on the other hand, which are based on the final invoice totals also reflect, besides primary price increases, secondary price-determining factors such as postal charges, service charges, discounts, value added taxes, but most of all currency fluctuations, which may either compensate for or increase primary price increase rates.

Local indexes must reflect cost development according to subject and form of publication - at least according to monographs and periodicals. The local index can only include subjects which have an acquisition volume that largely excludes the possibility of being strongly influenced by random occurrences. The local index requires for recording modalities of the acquisition statistics to remain unchanged. Besides a constancy of statistical practices there needs to be a certain continuity regarding the premises for acquisition policy.

As soon as these premises undergo great changes and acquisition profiles are modified in content and shape, price development may even possibly turn into the reflex of a changed selection of titles. Thus, drastic budget cuts may bring about a clear increase or decrease of the average price, depending on whether acquisition policy is generally focussed on basic literature or whether the acquisition of high-priced titles is avoided as much as possible.

A change of the average prices of antiquarian acquisition, which is always subject to fluctuations, basically differs from the price development of the acquisition of first and new editions. It is only this that can be reflected by a local index which gives insight into price development tendencies. This means that statistical acquisition data on first and new editions as well as current periodicals has to be recorded separately from that of retrospective supplementing, inasmuch as it comprises a substantial acquisition volume.

Local cost indexes and other types of indexes

Starting point and basis for budgetary planning of any library is the exact analysis of subject-specific spending and cost development, which can be recorded by local indexes. The local cost index, which reflects linear tendencies of primary price development in the area of first and new editions and which reflects the overlying influence of secondary price-determining factors, makes possible a more differentiated interpretation of subject-specific cost development. It makes tendencies visible from which, given the necessary caution, prognoses can be made for the assessment of budgetary needs.

Local indexes, which record cost development on the basis of individual acquisition profiles, taking into account secondary price-determining factors of acquisition, particularly that of currency, and national indexes as well indexes of academic literature, which always refer to the literature production of a specific place of publication and the publishers' original prices in the corresponding currency,

complement each other in the information they provide. National price indexes and indexes of academic literature provide a framework within which local indexes based on the acquisition statistics of individual libraries find different expressions.
Optimal prerequisites for a comparative evaluation are computer statistics or the statistics of an automated acquisition, which enable the libraries to evaluate the data material in the necessary and more subtly differentiated way, particularly when evaluating information in a certain subject area according to different places of publication. The evaluation of price indexes for academic literature thus offers the possibility of using general tendencies observed for a particular place of publication - taking into account currency influences - for the interpretation of subject-specific cost development in a single library. This in turn makes it possible to found conclusions drawn from the acquisition statistics of a single library on a broader data basis or - if necessary - to modify these conclusions.

Local data provided by outside library sources, the Deutsche Bibliotheksstatistik

While the data of price indexes of academic literature proves quite useful for the interpretation and analysis of local cost indexes, it is questionable whether the same holds true for data provided by sources outside the library.
When data of other libraries is used for comparative studies, one has to be particularly careful to take into consideration the character of the acquisition profile of the individual library. The individuality of an acquisition profile, which shows many, often subtle differences regarding content and shape in one subject, is not only reflected in the average price but also in a specific price and cost development. Other important factors, besides acquisition methods in the area of foreign literature, are the different recording methods when creating acquisition statistics, such as the method of counting units of loose-leaf publications, fascicles and, in particular, non-book materials. All of these factors have to be taken into account when comparing average prices and index values. A comparative study must not least take into consideration certain differences regarding the classification of literature into different subjects. If all these aspects are disregarded, the evaluation of externally provided data, e.g. in annual reports, is a likely subject of erroneous interpretation.

Reservations regarding the transfer of average prices and index values of other libraries also apply to the *Deutsche Bibliotheksstatistik*. Average prices or the cost development of monographs and current periodicals in individual libraries may be determined on the basis of the given data by using a subject classification system comprising 41 categories that is compatible with that of the *Deutsche Bibliographie*. As no differentiation is being made between retrospective supplementing and first and new editions in the subject-specific statistical recording of monographs, the data of libraries which attach great importance to retro-

spective supplementing - particularly when building up a core collection - cannot be compared to that of libraries whose acquisition policy concentrates on first and new editions.

2.4.2 National cost index

Libraries base their requests for higher budgets when applying for appropriation on their own statistical acquisition data which documents cost development of literature acquisition for the respective library. The question arises of whether it would be useful to develop a national cost index, which reflects general tendencies of cost development of the acquisition of academically relevant literature while including secondary price-determining factors on a national level. An index, in other words, that would not only register primary price increases but also the influences of currency fluctuations.

The Library Acquisitions Price Index (LAPI), "Average Prices and Indexes for College and University Library Acquitions", the national cost index for the USA is a combined index. It combines the North American Academic Price Index (NAAPI) - based on the Approval-Plan data of Baker & Taylor, Coutts and Blackwell North America[23] -, the US-Periodical-Index (USPI) and an index by the Library of Congress of foreign monograph acquisition and weights the sub-indexes differently.[24] More convincing, however, seems the methodical approach of developing a national cost index on the basis of the statistical acquisition data of selected libraries.

Price indexes for academic literature represent indexes that are not weighted and in which all academically relevant titles of the specific place of publication are given the same weight - independent of actual demand by libraries - when determining average prices. A national cost index, based on the statistical acquisition data of academic libraries, displays, if one likes, a corrective - particularly important with regard to periodicals - as it attributes greater weight to titles that are in higher demand. In order to take this aspect into full consideration, the concept of a national cost index, which cannot be discussed in detail here, should not strive for a data basis that is as comprehensive as possible by basing it, for example, on the statistical acquisition data of libraries with special subject fields (as part of a programme started by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) for its own main subjects. It is rather the selection of libraries that should ensure that the data basis comes as close as possible to the intersection of the purchase acquisition profiles of university libraries.

The local index which has been presented by the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin since the year under review 1980[25] documents the price development of monographs and periodicals according to places of publication and subject statistics of the *Deutsche Bibliotheksstatistik*. It is a local cost index, which, because of its acquisition depth and range in most subjects, lays claim to

representing general tendencies of cost development and index values, so that these may basically be used by other libraries without any problems. An analysis of the index of monographs, however, in which the statistical basis for individual subjects is not indicated, reveals some conspicuous discontinuities on the subject level. These may possibly allow for the conclusion that premises of acquisition policies have changed; in any case, they stand in the way of a comparative evaluation of cost development tendencies. It can therefore be said that these index values cannot be used by libraries in the FRG without problems.

2.5 Conclusion

It must be stated that, with the exception of the indexes in the Anglo-American context, statistical data on the volume and the development of academic literature production, on price structure and price development are not available. In the FRG, as in other countries, we are also faced with the fact that there is no index which, on a national level, documents general tendencies of cost development regarding the acquisition of academic literature while taking into account secondary price-determining factors of acquisition. That is why libraries base requests for higher budgets on their own statistical acquisition data when applying for appropriation, without being able to point out indicators which place the individual libraries' budgetary request in a general frame of reference and thus objectify individual assessement of needs.

It is therefore of great importance to approach the subject of finding bases for assessing budgetary needs of academic libraries from two starting-points: there has to be one focus on the international book and periodicals market and another on purchase acquisition by academic libraries.

Price indexes of academic literature, i.e. monographs and periodicals, have to be developed for the most important places of publication, indexes which document the development of title production and prices. The supply of non-book-materials, which has become more important as part of the acquisition of academic libraries and is very much expanding in the area of publications on machine-readable materials, must not be ignored. Price indexes of academic literature, which register primary price developments in original currency, must be looked at in the context of exchange rate developments. The degree in which primary price increases are influenced by currency gains or losses has to be determined in reference to the corresponding place of publication.

Besides that, a national cost index should be developed, which, on the basis of the statistical acquisition data of selected libraries, documents cost developments regarding acquisition of academic literature. While price indexes of academic literature represent a category of indexes that are not weighted, titles on whose acquisition academic libraries focus, are given greater weight in a national cost index.

When conceptualizing both price indexes for academic literature and a national cost index, the fundamental question of categorizing subjects arises. Subject classification must, on the one hand, be planned in such a way that the index corresponds to subject-specific questions and demands that arise in budgetary planning particularly with regard to budget allocation. Too subtle a differentiation according to subjects, on the other hand, - regardless now of the difficulties that arise from attributing a title to different subjects - creates the problem of the index not reflecting real tendencies but random influences, which affect the subject level if the statistical basis is too narrow.

The indexes, which will have to be developed starting from two points, literature supply and purchase acquisition of libraries, will provide the basis for a differentiated analysis of the budget situation of academic libraries. Focal point of the study will be the development of proposals for budget rates for the ongoing acquisition budget. These will play a key role in the overall budget situation. The analysis is to assess the nominal budget extrapolation rate within the context of global data, of primary price increases, of the effect of currency fluctuations and the development of literature production, and, in the given circumstances, it is to determine shortages.

3. Prospects: price indexes and pricing policy of academic publishers

If price and cost indexes have so far primarily been used as instruments for decision-making in budgetary planning, the 1990's will see them fulfill another function: that of an instrument in the analysis of publishers' pricing policies.

The budgetary situation has worsened to such an extent that it will not suffice for academic libraries anymore to merely undertake greater efforts in fund raising. In the face of an escalating price development which has caused American colleagues to speak of the *information shock* in analogy to the *energy shock*,[26] libraries will have to get in direct contact with academic publishers on a national and international level. This will enable them to explain, in direct dialogue, the profound effects of a pricing policy that is solely geared toward maximization of profits. This dialogue presupposes, if it is not to exhaust itself in a non-committal exchange of commonplaces, some well-founded analyses of the price development of academic literature based on price indexes. Although the complex topic of "price indexes and pricing policy of academic publishers" cannot be discussed in detail here, I would nonetheless like to pose a few final questions.

If the pricing policy of individual publishers becomes the centre of attention, one must, first of all, make a comparative study of the price structure of the production of different publishers in certain subject areas. In doing so, one can no longer use the average price of titles or volumes, but has to introduce another quantitative criterion: the average price of page or book divided by one-sixteenth of the number of pages. This is particularly valid for a comparative analysis of

price development, as over-proportional increase rates for periodicals, for example, are often justified with an increase in volume.

The results from such a comparative study serve as a basis for an assessment of the pricing policies of different publishers, which are sometimes characterized by striking differences concerning average page prices and price increase rates. Particularly in the area of academic periodicals, the question arises of the connection between price increases, which are often much higher than actual production cost increases in academic publishing, and the monopoly of certain publishers in certain subject areas.

Dual pricing policy in all its forms, the fixing of different prices according to the purchaser's status - institutional or private - and the price discrimination according to geographical location of the library, proves a central aspect in the analysis of pricing policies by academic publishers. The policy of dual pricing, which plays an important role in the pricing policy of many publishers, particularly multinational groups, essentially represents a methodical problem for price indexes which are primarily developed in view of budgetary planning. In the area of academic monographs the price index, which refers to a particular place of publication, may be used by foreign libraries, provided that they are able to avoid exorbitant export prices in their acquisition policy. In the case of academic periodicals, however, foreign libraries cannot rely without problems on a corresponding index, as *buying around* depends on certain conditions in this area.

The analysis of the pricing policy of academic publishers would be incomplete if one did not take into consideration the different forms of dual pricing.

Based on well-founded studies of price development, such as the *Serials Prices Project* of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL)[27] - it has to be explained to those publishers whose pricing policy is solely geared toward maximization of profits that their thinking has serious consequences: price development, characterized by over-proportional increase rates, is bringing about a loss of purchasing power on the side of academic libraries, which massively endangers literature supply, the international circulation of research results and thus, finally, the possibility of bringing international research to the public eye. In the face of an increasing number of mergers and international interconnections in academic publishing, it seems imperative for libraries to co-operate to a larger extent on these problems on an international level, in order to be able to effectively oppose publishing groups that work on an international level. Studies of price policies of academic publishers on the basis of price indexes can only be effected on a larger scale if libraries work together on an international level.

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15 At last: P.R. YOUNG, K. HAMMELL CARPENTER: Price index for 1989: US periodicals, *Library Journal*, 15.4.1989, S. 43-49; M.E. CLACK: Price index for 1989: US serial services, *Library Journal*, 15.4.1989, S. 50.

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19 BUBIZ 1988, S. 47-51. BUBIZ 1989 (in: Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels, *Jahrbuch* 89, S. 115 ff.) does not contain these data any longer.

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The Making of ISO 9230

Determination of price indexes for books and serials purchased by libraries

MORTEN HEIN
*Head of Division, Danish National Library Authority, Copenhagen**

0. Introduction

Price indexes are really dull. On the same time they can be of much use. Only very few people pay attention to the possibilities in library management in having the necessary tools.

Therefore I am very happy about the LIBER initiative with interests in management tools like price indexes. We cannot give libraries better resources, but we can create better awareness on the consequences of our own decisions.

Being involved in library planning on a national level and by being responsible for the public library statistics for 12 years, I have learned the importance of costs considerations, also in the media budget. When ISO issued a new work item on price indexes some years ago, I was certain that Denmark should participate actively. In the end I became convener of the working group, that made the standard. I thereby had an opportunity to discuss the issue with collegues in many countries.

Of course we were very happy of being responsible for making the standard. But on the same time sceptical whether we could create anything of general interest. We know of some standards just collecting dust. This could be just one of them, if nobody took the challenge. We are happy with the LIBER initiative.

The paper will have 3 parts:

- The first on standardization in general. Standardization is of such a specialized matter, that people new to it often are puzzled by the mystic and all the codes.
- The second part is the considerations behind ISO 9230. The theme of the day.

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*Morten Hein is Head of Division in the Danish National Library Authority - a merge from Jan 1st 1990 of the Office of the National Librarian and the Directorate for Public Libraries. He has worked with standardization for many years inside ISO TC46. He was member of the Advisory Group 1985-1989 and chairman 1987-1989.

- The third part will deal with the content of the standard. How it is structured.

1. Standardization

We are all making *standards*. Our personal standards are often justs habits. Real standards are made by a group of people who for several reasons try to do a certain thing in the same way.

It is often necessary to have the standard expressed in a written form. It would be even better if somebody took the formal responsibility and perhaps was ready to exercise a certain power.

Many organizations are making standards. Almost every institution has its internal *rules*. You could have discussions on whose standard is more standardized than others.

To overcome all this a number of international organizations have been given the responsibility for standardization. The overall responsibility is in the hands of ISO, the International Standardization Organization. In areas of electricity IEC is responsible. In telecommunication the PTT's has CCITT. ISO is a non-governmental organization. But in most countries national standardization organizations, members of ISO, have a significant position. ISO work combined with the work of IEC and CCITT constitute the real international standardization.

But ISO cannot cover all aspects in life. Further standardization is therefore often undertaken by professional bodies of international nature. In the case of libraries we know of standards from IFLA and UNESCO. Often combinations can be found. An example: ISO 2709 is the standard for the bibliographic exchange format. It is a standard of a very broad nature. The reality has shown us a large number of varieties in the MARC format family. In this area IFLA is working on the format level and on the bibliographic discription level inside 2709.

Standardization can also be found on a regional level. In Europe CEN/CENELEC exists as a combination corresponding to ISO and IEC. CEN/CENELEC is not just an EEC instrument, but covers also the EFTA countries. Regional standards, of course, should not be in contradiction to international standards. The generic material is of international nature, but on a regional level it may be feasible to elaborate more general standards to let them fit closer to a regional situation. This results in - what is called - *functional standards*.

On the national level the national standardization bodies referring to and members of ISO, IEC and CCITT can be found. National legislation often sets *standards* and national professional bodies often issue standard-like rules. ISO is - as mentioned - an international organization established by the standardization bodies in each country. It has its headquarters in Geneva but the work is distributed internationally.

Standardization can take place in many aspects of life. There are standards for kitchen gloves, paper sizes, colour definitions, mechanical components etc etc. According to broad subjects the work is organized in a number of Technical Committees (TC). Each TC has its secretariat with one of the national bodies. Typically one interested in the subject. The work is divided into Subcommittees (SC) and then again into Working Groups (WG) for specific tasks. And all this is numbered. So here the confusion starts. Even steady participants can get lost in all the coding.

Libraries are part of the subject: *Information & Documentation*. This is dealt with in ISO Technical Committee n° 46, spelled: ISO TC46. That committee covers also issues on archives and in publishing, e.g. physical appearence of media. TC46 has relations to other areas in ISO such as paper, micrographics, banking and to the Joint Technical Committee of ISO and IEC on information technology (JTC1). Outside the world of standardization TC46 has relations to UNESCO, CEC, IFLA, FID and ICA.

TC46 has its secretariat at the German institute for standardization (DIN). There is a plenary meeting every second year. In between the secretariat is assisted by an Advisory Group (AG) that has a chairperson. From 1990 that chairperson is chairperson for the whole TC46.

TC46 is divided into a number of Subcommittees:

- SC2: conversion of written languages (transliteration),
- SC3: terminology,
- SC4: data processing,
- SC8: statistics,
- SC9: data elements,
- SC10: physical media.

As an example: The use of OSI (Open Systems Interconnection, i.e. computer to computer communication) is dealt with in Subcommittee 4 and there again in Working Group 4. The notation is: TC46/SC4/WG4.

If someone gets the idea for a new standard, then the idea shall be formulated as a proposal for a new work item. It shall then be accepted by a majority of the actual countries participating as active members of TC46 (P-members). Observers (O-members) do not vote. Then the new work item (NWI) is numbered and allocated to a subcommittee that may set up a new working group for the work item - or use an existing one.

Then the work starts. When the working group believes that a result can be achieved it submits a working paper to the subcommittee. If accepted there it will be sent out as draft proposal (DP) and be given a new number by the central secretariat in Geneva that will follow the DP until one day it is a standard. The

DP goes for a 3 months' ballot among the P-members. It can be approved, approved with comments, disapproved and the members can abstain. If the majority approves then all comments are taken into consideration and the document proceeds as a draft international standard (DIS). The DIS goes for a 6 months' ballot. Inside the 6 months all P-member states are obliged to have an open national 3 months' ballot. This gives all concerned interests a direct influence on the result. If the DIS is approved, comments are taken into consideration and then the result is published as an international standard (IS).

Sometimes people quarrel about the long period of time in making a new standard. But it has to be done carefully with respect to all relevant interests. Standardization takes time.

There is one way of by-passing the procedure: If a recognized body has a ready document of a standards nature the 'fast track procedure' can be used and the document can go directly to draft international standard voting. And a standard will not live for ever. Every 5 years any standard is revised: Does it collect dust? Should it be changed? Is it OK?

In TC46 a number of standards well known to the library community have been produced. The biggest hit is without doubt the international standard book number (ISBN) that now has an almost global coverage. The corresponding for serial publications (ISSN) is well known, too. A newcomer in that family, the international standard recording code (ISRC), may gain in future the same importance in the world of recorded sound.

The standard for the exchange format (ISO2709) has already been mentioned. The transliteration standards can be mentioned, too, as well as the standards for publications concerning indexes, references, title leaves, and spine titles, or the definition in the bibliographic data element directories, in country codes and language codes, etc etc.

2. Making ISO 9230

At the ISO TC46 Plenary Meeting in 1981 a new work item was approved. It was on price indexes for library material. The justification was that although price indexes existed all over the world they were very different and of little use in libraries. Particulary because libraries have a very international approach in spending their media budget.

During the following period the P-members announced their interest in direct participation. Denmark wanted to participate because in that period - as just now - there were many issues in handling price adjustments in media budgets. As it turned out it was some time ago Denmark had taken a lead in a new work item, so I ended up as convener for the working group.

The first meeting was held in Vienna along the plenary meeting there in 1983. The bulk of the work was done in the period up to 1986. There was a changing

number of participants with a core group. Most of the editorial work was done by Tony Evans, University Librarian, Loughborough, UK, Frederick C. Lynden, Assistant University Librarian, Providence, R.I., USA and myself. We started with a very broad scope of indexing everything. But we had to admit, that we could not cope with all issues. Therefore a limitation was made to printed media. We had to separate our work into monographs and serials, due to their very different natures. During a certain period we had consultations with one of the international subscription agencies to learn.

Here we had the biggest problem. Libraries sometimes handle part of the serial publications, e.g. annuals, monographic series and conference proceedings, as if they were monographs. So we had to make options for different point of views. Those options changed for editorial reasons even until after the DIS vote.

We had another duality: There was a need for indexes of a principal nature covering a certain area of publication e.g. a country. On the other hand the process could be seen from the other end: How is the actual development in a library or a group of libraries. In the beginning all was handled in one sequence. Then we had to make it in two tracks. After the DP vote the local indexes were left out in an annex.

We started the work on the ANSI standard but had to make an international approach. This could give many discussions. E.g. the US point of view was that paperbacks should always be given in a seperate index. In the UK there was no particular interest. My continental European approach was against a mandatory subdivision for paperbacks. In the very end the UK switched but paperbacks remained as an option, only.

The international approach is always the difficult part. We all know what we need locally. But a standard must fullfill all local needs. The only way to do so is making the issue simple and principal. In doing so there is a danger of making a standard that simple that it is of no use anywhere.

The document was sent of for DP vote. The results were presented at the 1987 plenary meeting in Moscow. There was a need for editorial work afterwards. It was partly done by the working group, but most of the job was done be the secretariat established for the area (SC8) at British Standards Institute in London.

ISO has its red tape, too. It took a very long time to make the editing and pass the formal procedure with the conversion into a draft international standard. Therefore the DIS voting was only concluded in February 1989, the result being discussed on the Plenary Meeting in Washington in May 1989.

Here again there were some approvals with comments. They were taken into consideration, securing that no substantial changes were made. Afterwards it was passed to BSI to be submitted to ISO Central Secretariat for publication.

3. ISO 9230: Determination of price indexes for books and serials purchased by libraries.

The title of the standard starts: "ISO 9230 Information and documentation - Determination of price indexes . . ." *Information and documentation* refers to the verbal title of ISO TC46. The following are extracts from the standard with comments.

The structure of the document is:

0. Introduction
1. Scope
2. Definitions
3. Price indexes for books
4. Price indexes for serials
5. Overall presentations of price indexes
6. Bibliography

Annex A: UNESCO subject classification

Annex B: Guidelines for local costs indexes

From the *introduction* and *scope* it can be quoted:

> The intention of this International Standard is to provide the international library community with a methodology for establishing national price indexes for the documents they acquire.
>
> A problem well known to libraries is the difficulty of controlling the amount of funding made available annually for acquisitions.
>
> If libraries acquired general documents in one physical medium, solely from national sources, and had stable budgets, the problems of budget control for library documents would be very simple. This is, however, not the situation. Libraries now have to cope with information of a greater variety than before and from international sources. These developments in the information world are accompanied by general economic developments that seem to create reductions and instability in library budgets.
>
> Under such circumstances the demand for effective library management grows, and with it the demand for tools for library management. Use of price indexes is, of course, only one element in library management practice, but one which is nevertheless necessary for relevant budget control.
>
> It is not intended that price indexes constructed according to this methodology should in any way replace general consumer price indexes or specific indexes set up by the trade. However, it can generally be observed that nor-

mally indexes can be regarded as accurate only within a specific environment. The experience that led to the preparation of this standard was the difficulty in applying indexes of non-library origin to library management.

It is easy to understand the difficulties of reporting prices when one takes into consideration the international background of most library and information work, which can involve many countries and currencies.

This International Standard should therefore be an accepted tool for library management.

It has been necessary to apply certain limitations to this standard.

Printed documents, books and serials, still remain the most important items in a library acquisitions programme. The priority between these two groups can differ from library to library, but they are dealt with together in this standard.

It was decided to exclude from this International Standard criteria which could be used for price indexes for other types of physical media. Non-book media come in many forms, each with its own method of distribution which often differs greatly from that of the traditional book trade. This standard does not ignore the need to deal with these other physical media. They have, however, been excluded in order to bring this work to a conclusion.

In the future - when more experience is gained - any revision of, or addition to, this International Standard could include other physical media.

This International Standard specifies a method for the determination of price indexes relating to the prices of books and serials, in printed form, purchased by libraries.

It is intended for use by the library community, primarily for the production of national price indexes.

The standard is a methodology for calculation of an index; many items must be defined. Here are the books to be included:

This method is applicable to books published with a stated price. Both hardcover books and paperbacks (softcover editions) shall be included. Books published in microform shall not be included.

NOTE - In certain cases, according to national requirements, it may be found useful to calculate separate indexes for paperbacks and hardcover books.

The sources for the compilation of prices are:

> The prices shall preferably be taken from national bibliographic sources but may be collected from trade sources or calculated from direct observations (e.g. consumer price index observations).

The general observations for serials are:

> Since serials have a different nature from books (e.g. they are sometimes considered as being more international in character), serial prices will be reported differently from those of books and shall be based upon publishers' price or upon price information from vendors (e.g. subscription agencies).
>
> It is essential that a serials index includes periodicals and newspapers. Other periodical publications (e.g. monographic series, conference proceedings, yearbooks, annuals can be included but can optionally be considered as books. Under these circumstances, either one overall index may be calculated or four separate indexes, one of which shall be an index of periodicals.

Sources for the collection of prices are:

> National agencies shall be sources of national serial price indexes although subscription agencies may offer their services. Country of publication shall be the basic criterion for the origin of the document and the ISSN assigned through the publisher shall be the principal means of establishing its origin. Documents from international organizations and publishers may be included if allocated to a specific country or separate indexes may be complied for them.

For all indexes it is stated that a subject break-down would be a benefit. The earlier ANSI standard recommends a Dewey based break-down. But internationally speaking the working group was not sure whether this was the best solution. UNESCO uses in certain cases a break-down much influenced by the main heading in UDC. As this already existed in an international context this solution was supported.

Overall presentation of price indexes:

> This International Standard includes monographic series, conference proceedings, yearbooks and annuals in the serials price index. However, in establishing price indexes some problems will occur because of differences between official terminology and library practice.
>
> By definition, the above types of periodic publications are considered as serials, but are sometimes dealt with as books in library procedures and identified and separately reported.

To prevent confusions, one of the following overall presentations shall be used. The first presentation is preferred; the other two are given as options. The actual choice shall be stated:

1. preferred presentation:
   - Book index
   - Serial index (including monographic series, conference proceedings, yearbooks and annuals)
2. optional presentation
   - Book index (including monographic series, conference proceedings, yearbooks and annuals)
   - Serial index
3. optional presentation
   - Book index
   - Index of monographic series, conference proceedings, yearbooks and annuals
   - Serials index

In an annex B there are guidelines for local cost indexes:

> The profile of a library's acquisitions usually does not correspond to that of a national bibliography or to that of a trade list owing to the fact that libraries make selections according to their specific local objectives. Therefore, many libraries will wish to use this International Standard as a guideline for calculating local cost indexes. This annex draws a distinction between *prices* reported nationally and *costs* (price less discount, price plus service charge, etc.) reported locally.
>
> The primary purpose of this International Standard is for use in calculating national indexes covering the prices of published documents purchased by libraries. The same methodology can be used for local cost indexes. However, certain variables may be accounted for.

4. Conclusion

It is my hope that better understanding of the mechanisms in standardization will give a better usage of standards. And standards are some of the tools that can help libraries to improve and to co-operate.