

Academic Library Supporting Research: The Case of Universidade Federal do Paraná Law Library

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how the provision of research support services by the Law Library at Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR) in Brazil contributes to achieve the university research goals. The chapter develops a case study taking a qualitative, exploratory, and descriptive approach. The UFPR Law Library provides research support services such as classes on research support, bibliographic research support, orientation on research tools. Those research support services are not part of a formal and strategic program. It is recognized that the existence of a data repository, the UFPR Scientific Database, is an opportunity to provide scientific research data management support services at UFPR libraries. The chapter concludes that the existing research support services have an impact on research at UFPR Law School. However, there is an opportunity to create other services that will meet the user's expectations, considering the new research trends at the university.

INTRODUCTION

Universities are fundamental institutions that produce new knowledge to be applied for the benefit of society. Research is one of the pillars that sustain Universities. In that context, academic libraries have an important role to play, for example, providing research support services and contributing to achieving university research goals.

Libraries have been supporting the creation of knowledge at universities for a long time since the organization of knowledge in libraries reproduced the university curriculum (Burke, 2003). There is a long history of changes in academic libraries spaces through time: removing book chains and providing public access to stacks; moving from manual check out to robust library management systems; providing coffee, couches, and increased collaborative spaces as study preferences have shifted; and, most recently, implementing maker spaces and innovation labs (Andrews, Downs, Morris-Knowler, Pacion, & Wright, 2017).

Even considering all those changes, the reference service in libraries continues to be the main door that leads the patrons to many services that may help them to find the information they need. Accart (2012, pp. 3-4) explains that reference service embodies many activities and skills to provide services to the public, generally providing answers to their questions. They are research instruments available to the library users.

Over the years, librarians and patrons have become very familiar with services like borrowing library materials, teaching support, interlibrary loan, and the availability of studying and meeting spaces. More recently, other services and products were added to the reference service, such as accessing databases, scanning services, discovery tools, scholarly publication, open access and copyright support, and data management orientation. “These changes underscore the library’s enduring and fundamental value in the research, teaching, and learning landscape on campus” (Andrews, et al., 2017, p. 146).

A good and resourceful library is the key to support research at any University. “Their relevance depends on the provision of a radically expanded suite of research support services” (Tise, Raju, Adam, 2015, p. 1). The law academic library, for example, is considered the laboratory where law students conduct their research. The Law Library from *Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR)* from Brazil started focusing on research support services in 2009, which meant a shift of paradigm to the whole institution.

This chapter examines how the provision of the research support service by the Law Library at *Universidade Federal do Paraná* in Brazil contributes to the university research goals. It also describes the university and the Law Library. It details the provision of classes on research support, bibliographic research support, orientation on the use of research tools as research support services. The chapter also addresses the planning and development of a data repository at UFPR, since many librarians were involved in that project, including librarians from the UFPR Law Library. Moreover, considering that libraries around the world are providing data research support service to their community, the authors believe that UFPR libraries should strategically engage in providing that kind of service, in a partnership with the data repository team from the research group responsible for the implementation. Finally, the case study outlines recommendations and future research direction on the scope of this case study.

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