

# Measuring the impact of new library services

Dr. Roswitha Poll

Münster

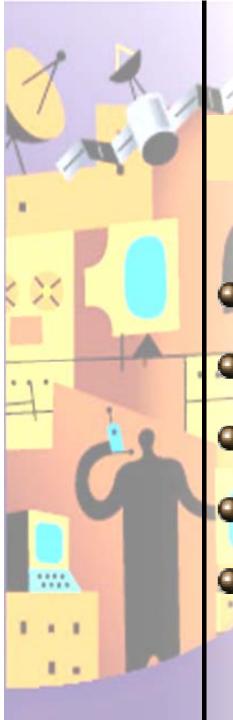


# Impact / outcome

Outcomes are the results of library use as affecting the individual user

• Impact shows not the quality of the service, but the ''quality'' of individuals in consequence of using the service





Impact / outcome of cultural institutions

knowledge

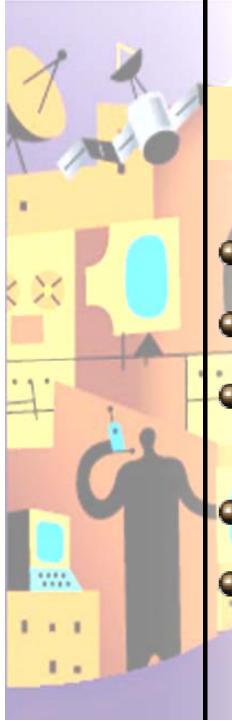
information literacy

academic or professional success

social inclusion

individual well-being





Impact / outcome of library services

changes in skills and competences
changes in attitudes and behaviour

Changes in the structure of the library's clientele

higher social inclusion

higher success in research, study, or profession



# Impact of a library's services on the outcomes of its parent institution

# **Outcomes of universities**

- **recruitment** and retention of students
- recruitment and retention of excelle

# effective teaching

- high graduation rates
- high grades in examinations
- <mark>- h</mark>igh employment rates after exp

# effective research

- high renown and use of research results and publications
- renown of faculties and research groups
- high amount of special grants
- awards, honours



**The library** 

can support

nearly all of

these goals

# Reasons for measuring impact of new services

## accountability

- special funding needed: evidence of positive effects
- results-based budgeting
- justifying investment into change

### management of resources

- rising expenses for new services
- higher workload when introducing new services
- increasing demand for new services
- new allocation of resources necessary

### promotion of the library's role

communication of benefits



# **New services**

(includes services replacing or complementing traditional services)

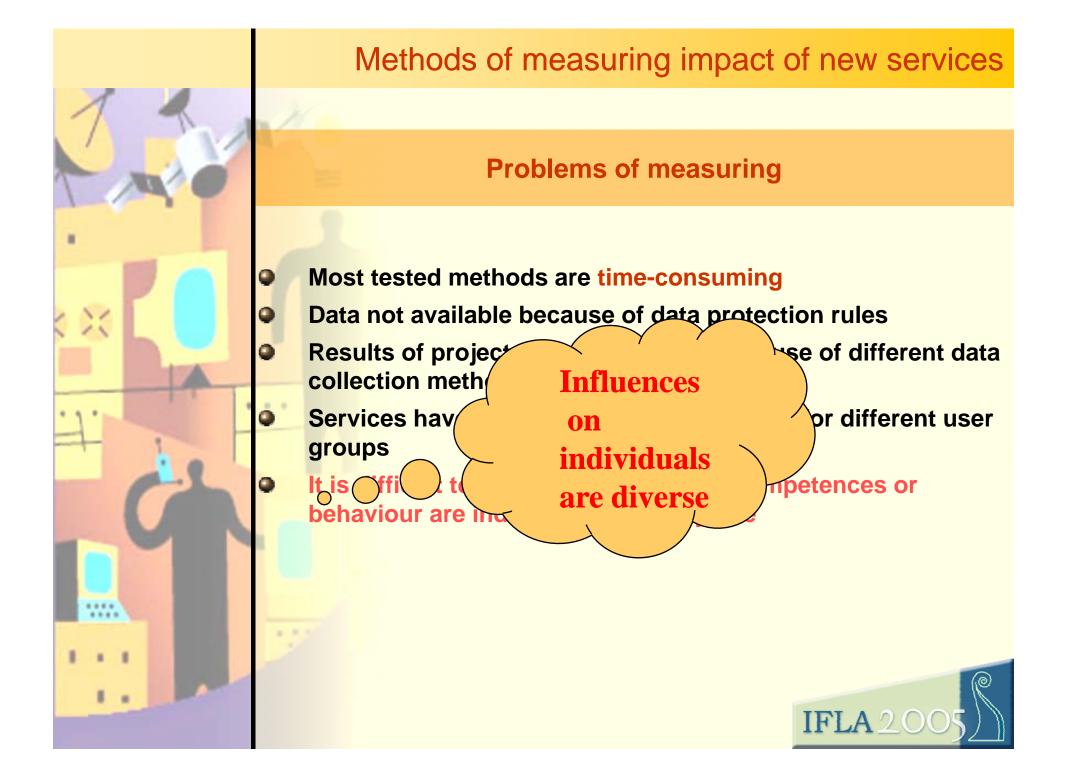
## **Electronic services (examples)**

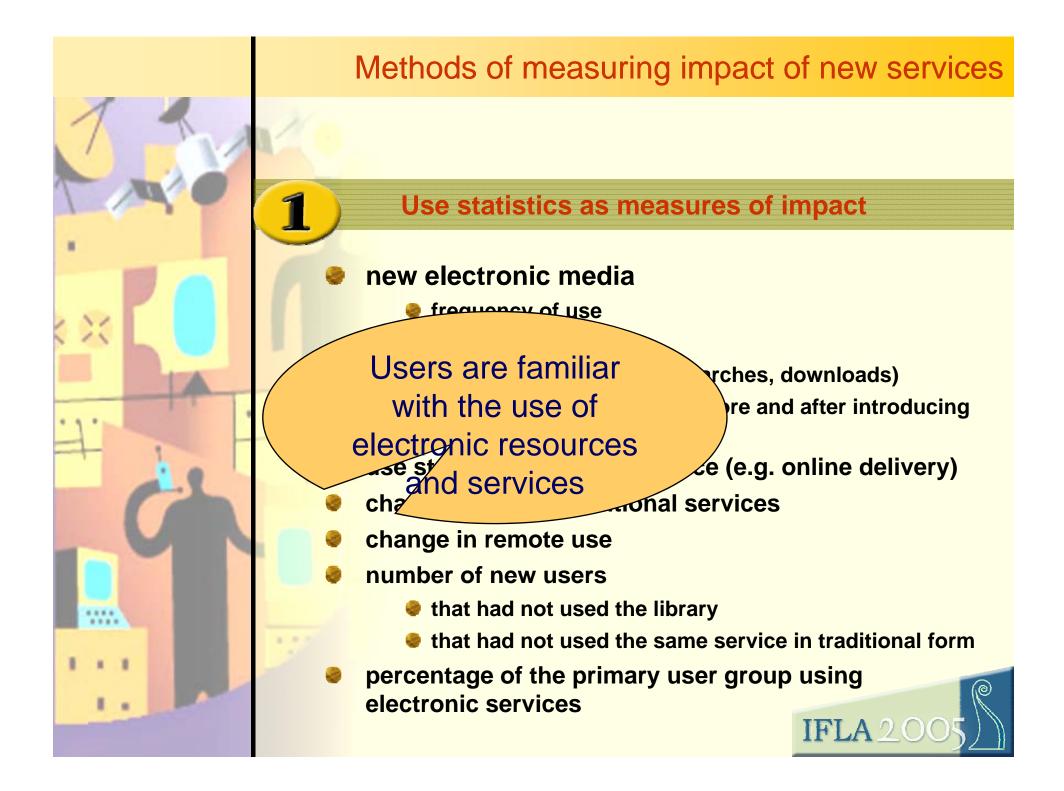
- regional/national catalogue databases
- portals
- online ordering and delivery
- personalized services
- online reference
- digitized collections
- electronic publishing
- online self-paced training
- Internet access via the library

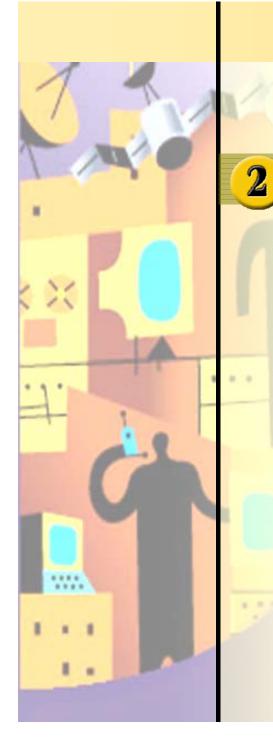
### New non-electronic services (examples)

- group work areas
- study landscapes for problem-based learning









# Methods of measuring impact of new services

### **Qualitative measures**

- Asking users: print or online surveys, focus groups, interviews
  - What knowledge have the Exit surveys e? most useful
  - Use of services (frequencies)
  - Did they find the new service useful?
  - What problems?
  - Did they get training for a new service? useful?
  - Have they improved skills by using a new service?



# Methods of measuring impact of new services

### **Qualitative measures**

### Asking academic teachers

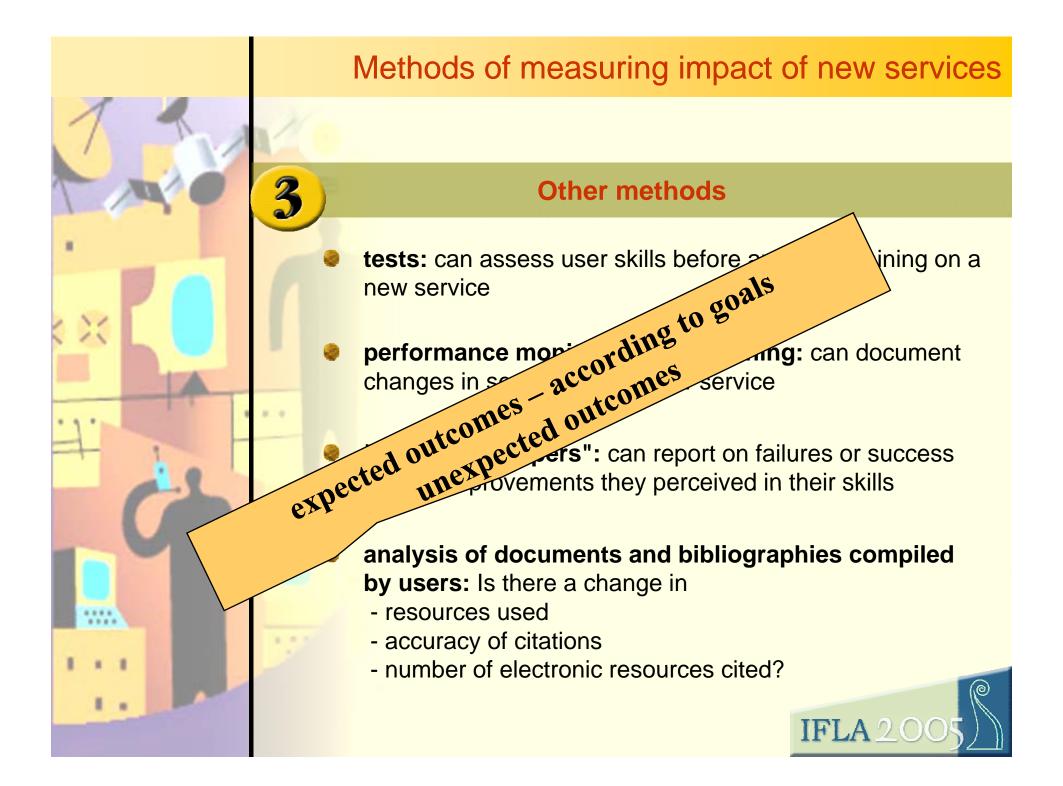
- Do new services support teaching and research?
- Do they encourage students to use new services?
- For what purpose do they use

### Asking library staff

# Anecdotal

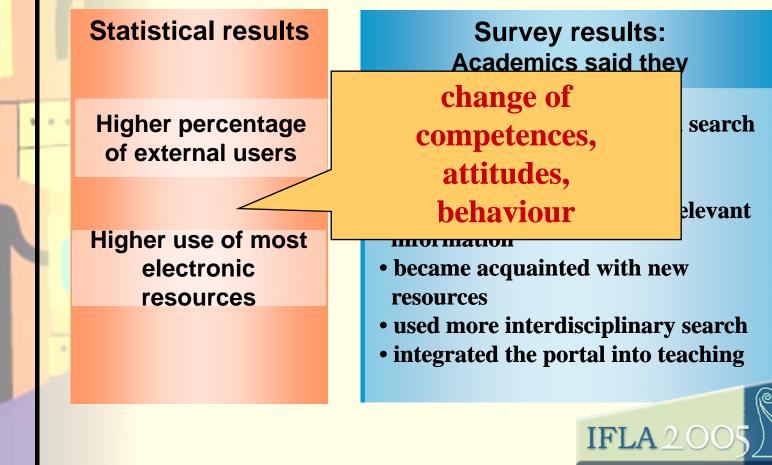
- What help do users need for wheelp do users
- Was there a change of skills after me moouction of a new service?





# Implementing a regional portal for academic libraries

### Methods used: use statistics, surveys of academics



# **Practical examples**



Methods used: use statisti

### **Statistical results**

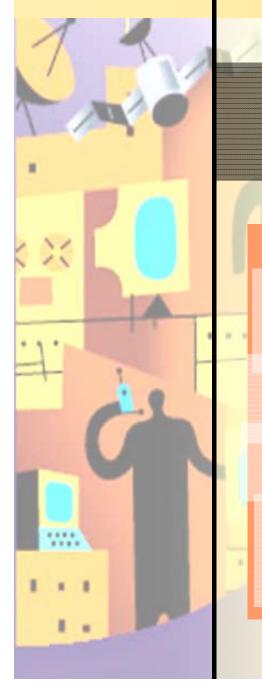
Physical visits to the library have increased change in attitudes, behaviour, personal well-being

- work more frequently in the library
- work more frequently in groups
- learn from group members who attended library training on electronic services
- find working in the library more attractive



# **Practical examples**

ults:



# Changing the journal collection to electronic form

### Methods used: use statistics, survey to faculty

### **Statistical results**

- online versions were accessed
   10 times more
- usage of an online
- article 5.4 times cheaper
- high decline in print usage
  - remote use increased
     physical library visits decreased

change of attitudes and behaviour

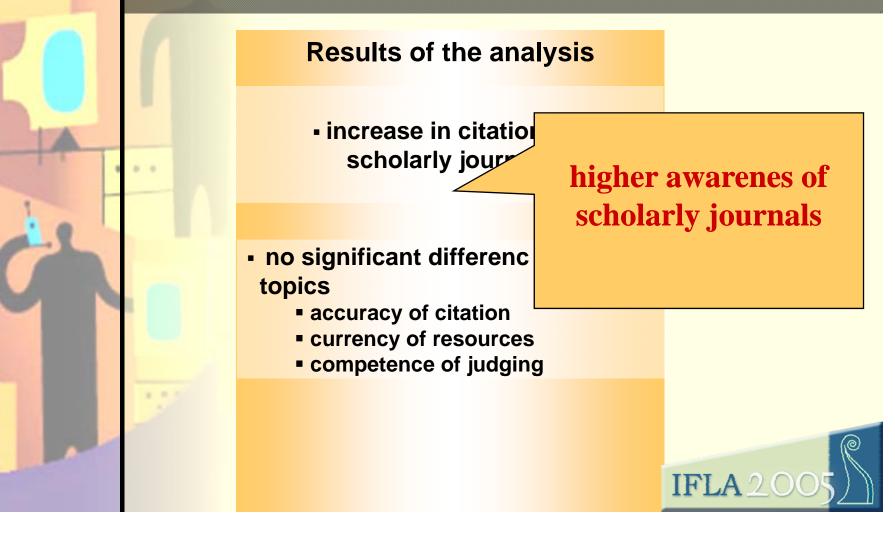
- In 1998 a number of academics were sceptical as to E-journals
- In 2002 it was exceptional for faculty staff not to use the electronic version



# **Practical examples**

# Implementation of an inquiry-based instruction program

Method used: Analysis of bibliographies in students' research papers





# Impact of new services on the library

# Changes in organization and resource allocation

- investment of funds, room, staff time
- staff training
- user training
- change of workflows
- changes in organizational structure

# Replacement of traditional by electronic services: possible improvements in

speed of delivery accuracy of delivery ease of access relevance for users market penetration



# ٠

# Impact of new services on the library

# Impact on costs

Probably transforming a service from traditional to electronic form will not reduce costs But: Higher use will reduce cost-per-use

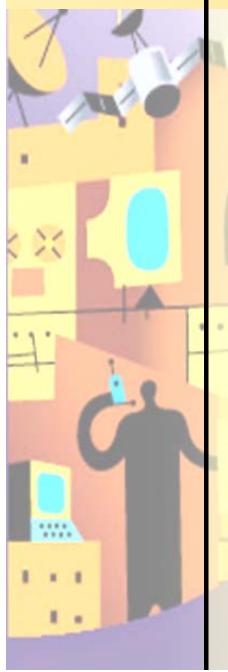
# Impact on traditional services

# possible decrease in

- circulation
- copying
- physical visits
- may be counterbalanced by
  - comfortable surroundings in the library
  - group working areas
  - good in-house IT equipment



# **Outcome projects**



eVALUEd: in "evidence base", University of Central England: Toolkit for evaluating electronic information services http://www.evalued.uce.uk/index.htm

IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services): outcome-based evaluation of projects http://www.imls.gov/index.htm

## **ARL New Measures Initiative:** several projects

- Learning outcomes
- Higher education outcomes research review
- MINES (Measuring the impact of networked electronic services)

http://www.arl.org/stats/newmeas/index.html



# **Outcome projects**



**IBEC:** Information School of the University of Washington and University of Michigan School of Information: Toolkit for assessing the impact of information in communities *http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu/default1024.aspx* 

SCONUL and LIRG (Library and Information Research Group): impact initiative and mailing list http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/archives/lis-impact.html

IFLA Section Statistics and Evaluation: working group on outcome/impact; bibliography of literature and projects worldwide http://www.ulb.uni-muenster.de/outcome.html



Don't throw away the old bucket until you know whether the new one holds water. Swedish Proverb

# A new broom sweeps clean, but an old broom knows the corners.

Virgin Islander Proverb

# Men learn little from success, but much from failure.

Arabian Proverb

# To change and to improve are two different things.

German Proverb

No matter how much the world changes, cats will never lay eggs. Bambara Proverb

