

**University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UK)**  
**University of Parma (I)**

**MA/MSc Information Studies**

**UNIT BP 101: Independent Study Unit for Information Studies 2**  
**DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

**TEENS AND LIBRARY SERVICES:  
EXPERIENCES, EXPECTATIONS, PERSPECTIVES.  
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**

**DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

Tutor: prof. Anna Maria Tammaro

Student: Elena Corradini

## **Assignment brief**

### **UNIT OUTLINE**

#### **Synopsis**

Students will continue research in an appropriate area of interest within the information world and will develop and extend their understanding and expertise in that area. A dissertation proposal will be written by the student; guidance and supervision will be given by the School.

#### **Unit Tutor**

Anna Maria Tammaro

#### **Seminar Tutor (s)**

An appropriate supervisor will be appointed.

#### **Teaching and learning**

Students will learn independently, with supervision from a member of staff and the unit tutor where appropriate.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Students should be able to:

- Further develop their particular area of interest.
- Gain in depth knowledge and expertise in the chosen subject area
- Design a dissertation/research proposal
- Defend and justify that proposal

#### **Assessment**

1. A dissertation/research proposal.

#### **Deadlines**

Proposal to be handed in to Anna Maria Tammaro October 29<sup>th</sup> 2003 (as agreed with tutor)

### **ASSIGNMENT BRIEF**

#### **Assignment**

##### **Task(s)**

Write a dissertation/research proposal, between 6 and 9 pages in length (12 point).

#### **Assessment Criteria**

##### **Proposal**

- Analysis of current state of research in chosen topic area
- Development of personal approach to that topic
- Appropriateness of research design
- Planning of research process.

## **BP101 Independent Studies 2**

### **Notes**

#### **What you need to do**

For this unit, you are asked to write a research proposal, and so you will need to refer back to:

- The materials supporting LI610, Applied Research in Information Studies 1 section one.
- Your assignment for this unit and the assessment feedback.

The topic for your proposal will normally come from the area covered previously in your Literature Review for BP100, but will be far more focussed. Your proposal should give

1. a detailed account in which you will make out a case for the appropriateness of the subject area;
2. identify the research questions;
3. set aims and objectives;
4. undertake a literature survey;
5. propose suitable methodologies,
6. discuss suitable data collection tools,
7. and show that the substance of the Dissertation can be achieved within the required time scale.
8. You will also need to discuss likely data analysis techniques.

#### **The Dissertation**

The context for this proposal is the dissertation itself, and so it will be useful at this stage for you to read the file *Dissertation*.

**TEENS AND LIBRARY SERVICES: EXPERIENCES, EXPECTATIONS,  
PERSPECTIVES – AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**  
**DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

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## **1. Introduction:**

### 1.1. The research problem

The focus of the study is the investigation about young people and their relationship with the local library in the district of Ala (TN), Italy, where library loans show a consistent drop out of this group after compulsory school.

Poor exploitation of the library services and resources by the focus population will be tracked as to verify following hypotheses:

- a) Young people lack awareness of the potential resources and services available to them;
- b) Young people don't regard the library as a place that can make some difference in their lives.

The investigation will provide contextualised information about some aspects regarding young people's use of the local library:

- past and present experience with library services;
- expectations about library services;
- perspectives in the use of the local library.

As such, the study will be carried out mainly in exploratory form, devising – if possible – a strategic level of inquiry to be included in the conclusions and recommendations chapter.

### 1.2. Motivations for the study

The proposal finds its motivations primarily in some of the aspects considered in the following paragraph on Background and Literature survey, namely:

- the interest in the target group shown by governments in the social field, also at local and regional level;<sup>1</sup>
- the necessity of knowing the expressed and hidden information needs of teenagers, in order to implement and / or improve services dedicated to this target group;
- the necessity of knowing the level of satisfaction expressed by teenagers about library services.

The topic should be then of some interest for all librarians working in public library environments that serve young people and would like to see more young people coming into their libraries.

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<sup>1</sup> From the sources gathered, no doubt that adolescence or, the "youth condition" is an ever-present issue in the governments' agendas across Europe, be it in the social or in the educational field. Nonetheless, it is not easy to define what "youth" is, let alone to define [library services for young people](#), which in the professional literature are always linked to children services, without being particularly structured, even in the Anglosaxon context [cfr. Edmonds & Miller 1990].

### 1.3. Background and literature survey

#### a) background

The coordinator of the Italian Libraries Association's National Committee For Children's Libraries, Antonella Agnoli, has recently expressed her opinion about the necessity of a national board co-ordinating all library activities to youth and polemically drew back on the assumption that library work with young people be difficult [Agnoli 2003]. In fact, very few contributions on this field have been published on Italian professional journals in the last 5 years. This fact provides an imperfect image of the activities and services dedicated to this group, which are probably carried out in silence, rather than brought to light and disseminated.

At present, the relationship between young people and libraries is still difficult. According to the sources available, from the one side librarians frequently depict young people as loud, not serious, not interested in the library, and so on. Youth is still considered a difficult public of mostly non-readers and uneasy guests to manage, so that, as reported by some researchers, librarians ask themselves why this group should be worth their efforts [Tassoni 1999, p.10; Patte 2001].

#### b) literature survey

As a conceptual framework for the study, the present literature survey has been conducted with an eye on discussions and issues emerging in the professional body of literature (official periodicals) over the last 5 years – or more, when necessary – at international level. Relevant sources on this topic were primarily searched among the issued professional literature, so that the level of awareness about the importance of the topic could be determined. The aim was to gain evidence about the interest that librarians show on dealing with young people in the public library environment. Findings from other documents will be incorporated during the search process, if relevant for the present study.

The first difficulties in finding relevant literature on the topic came from having to deal with an apparently awkward definition, that of “young people”, “youth” and “youth condition” [cfr. Jones 1992; Marshall, 1975]. As a matter of fact, denominations for this group vary considerably and confronting international experiences also means having familiarity with different cultural and socio-linguistic backgrounds (v. Appendix 1). Agnoli pointed out that additional uncertainties arise from the shifting of the age boundaries for this category [Agnoli 1999a], always under discussion by sociologists and psychologists [Antonelli 1996]. Nonetheless, the existence of this group is firmly stated [Galland 1996].

From the above considerations it follows that for the present study it will be necessary to investigate literature findings in LIS related to both “children” section and “teens” / “young adults” sections, incorporating studies from other disciplines, when advisable in order to interpret data.

As acknowledged by IFLA in the *Guidelines for services for young adults* [IFLA 2001], libraries should be “an important force for the individual in achieving a

successful transition from childhood to adulthood by providing access to the resources together with the environment that will foster intellectual, emotional and social development and offer a positive force for an alternative to societal problems.” Moreover, libraries should meet educational, information, cultural and leisure needs of young people [IFLA 2001]. As Tassoni recalls, the IFLA *Guidelines* urge public libraries to be a provider of transition services from the children’s to the adults’ sections [Tassoni 1999, p.12].

Mainly, in Italy young people have been investigated as a social group to gain information about the lack of interest in reading and libraries [Buzzi 1997, 1998; Sartori 1998]. In spare cases, the need to develop specific and (also ethnic) detailed profiles of young people’s groups of library users is taken into account in order to improve the range of dedicated services – also by directly consulting the end users [Grendele 2000].

At the same time young adults observe that libraries are uninteresting and cold, solemn and rigid, boring and out of time [Agnoli 1999a, p. 34]. When asked, they give as a reason for not frequenting the library its poorly updated collections and the absence of materials on relevant topics regarding the present world [Grinzaneletture 1995, p.111]. The consequence: Many teenagers who are reluctant readers don’t even know how rewarding reading can be. But to find documents they could like, as Mackey suggests, it is necessary to draw upon non-traditional material such as comics and revise selection criteria and strategies for collection development [Mackey 1996]. That is: librarians must do something to help them.

The few contributions divulged on this issue in the last few years in Italy refer, when stated, to different cultural backgrounds, without offering a unique view on proposed models. According to Agnoli, library activities tend to reach young adult groups mainly at school time and provide series of bibliographic information and bulletins, reference services, guided tours, or activities to develop skills in using library resources [Agnoli 1999a, p.67]. However, some examples from Italian and foreign contexts draw a different picture: Ideas are spreading and sometimes go over theoretical hurdles [Grendele 2000, Arellano Yanguas & Gomez Sesma 2001, Schmitt 2000].

In the Italian context only a few of the international works have found a wide echo through the professional journals and periodicals. Among the most investigated models and traditions are those from France, Germany, and the USA [Revelli 1995].

Jones’ aim to establish a connexion between young adults and libraries derived from the observation that libraries possess information and young people the need to access it [Jones 1998]. But, as correctly stressed by Revelli, in order to meet this need, librarians shall forget their prejudices and traditional tasks, and regard tensions as false feelings, emerging from themselves and not from young adults [Revelli 1995, Jones 1992, 1998].

Far from the practical suggestions given by Jones [Jones 1992], theoretical discussions about developing young people's services separately from adults' and children's sections or even in a separate building abound.

Generally, there is agreement on the idea that libraries should provide a recognisable corner to be stuffed with desirable materials and facilities [Agnoli 1999a]. Contrasts arise when deciding for or against a separate section for young people. As for the Italian context, this position has been refused by Agnoli who argued that separate sections could reduce the possibilities of interacting with other library services and maintained that clear references to reading choices and promotion could be more useful [Agnoli 1999a]. Nonetheless, in Orléans, children' and adults' areas are well recognisable by the users and most French libraries provide a separate section for young adults [Agnoli 2001a, 2001b], as recommended by the IFLA *Guidelines* [IFLA 2001]. Moreover, an emerging tendency is exploring the possibility of creating not only real, that is, physical separate sections, but also virtual ones, where young adults can meet anonymously still converging to the library [Grendele, 2000]. Still, the physical factor is considered important if allowing that young adults can have free access to the adult sections with which they tend to identify [Schmitt 2000, p.32].

From most parts it is clear that restructuring services means for the staff showing the ability of developing book knowledge and changing attitudes [Winslade 1981]. During this process, librarians could happen to be faced with a verification and judgement of their own values: something that most of adults would like to avoid [Cavalli 1999, p. 254-255]. Prejudices, stereotypes and barriers existing on both sides have to be abated [Agnoli 1999a p. 35]. Foreign experiences show that significant factors in attracting young people to the libraries are above all media diversification and organisation of specific activities not connected to school environments, provided that place, services and collections available are adequate and visible to this target group [Agnoli 1999a p.35]. In France, many experiences show that young non-users have been attracted by new sections of the libraries: beside the "discothèque", the "mediathèque" and the "logithèque" or "didacthèque", e.g. computer programmes to be used for training [Pissard 1994]. The experiences of Hamburg and Rostock are also illuminating, with books and magazines are considered not more valuable than other media and where document provision is carried out with the direct help of the target group [Schmitt 2000].

Frequently enough, however, librarians forget that the library is a place where people come for every kind of information and the mediating function of the library in the ICT environment is growing [Agnoli 1999a, p.64-65]. The old image of the library as a stock of books shall decay [Agnoli, 1999a, p.33] and librarians must forget just tolerating young adults' presence in libraries [Agnoli, 1999a, p. 31]. The success of the French "mediathèques" is explainable through their advantages: Up-to-date services, abundance of multimedia supports, free access to all rooms, modern and wide spaces – very different from the schools – where socialization can be cultivated [Agnoli, 1999a, p.34].

This is how Agnoli imagines libraries should be [Agnoli 1999a, p. 65], as mediated through other reputed opinions [ Revelli 1995; Jones 1998]:

- places where free and unconditioned reading be developed by means of reading clubs [Arellano Yanguas & Gomez Sesma 2001, p.23]
- observatory places for the reading preferences of young adults
- observatory places, documentation and training centres for educators and parents
- places where resources on reading, young adults literature and editorial market are constantly updated
- places where research and historical memory be fostered

In these places, libraries should promote themselves as dynamic and everchanging places [Schuman 2002, p.36]. As such, libraries should accept also improper use of the library by young people, the unordered troddling among the shelves, allowing that the library becomes a refuge against rain and the hostile world: it is part of its hospitality [Ferrieri 2000, p.173]. Moreover, librarians should never forget that a library is never just like the librarian would like it to be, because users force it to be a place of negotiation between personal needs and public materials, supports and fruition rules [Poulain 2002, p.191].

The vision suggested by Agnoli is far from welcoming an importing flow of foreign models like they would be consume goods, because library history and development goes along with the history of mentalities, cultural traditions, institutions, legislation and regulations [Agnoli 1999a]. As a matter of fact, any library model should be developed in a context bound to its entourage and its target groups. Any project as such is then to be considered as a “work in progress”, since “only from constant self-evaluation and need analysis derives an attractive and effective library service” [Arellano Yanguas & Gomez Sesma 2001, p.23].

But something is everywhere important, users are customers and as such they visit the library for its friendly environment [Agnoli 1999a, p.67]. As Jones reminds, librarians will then be considered not only “the book people”, but will finally give a more active image of themselves [Jones 1992 p. 155; Jones 1998].

A recent article by Virginia A. Walter [Walter 2003] focuses on some research gaps, among which a question: “How and why do young people use public libraries?” Walter urges answers on this topic, fostering the production of critical awareness on the contribution of M.K. Chelton, E. Meyers, P. Jones and D. Taylor. Noting the quasi-absence of illuminating essays on public library reference services to children and young people, the researcher explicits the need of creating a national research body to discuss about dedicated library services to these users’ groups [Walter 2003].

Anyway, it seems that the first and unavoidable co-operation must take place between librarians and young people themselves, as first-hand connoisseurs of their interests [Schmitt 2000, p.34]. The co-operation with other services to youth is also considered as a positive factor in connecting young people with libraries [Grendele, 2000] and, particularly in Germany, the co-operation with schools has been envisaged as particularly apt to avoid the risks that young adults would drop reading [Daume 1999].

To enhance this co-operation, an action plan to know the library's real and potential young people target group is needed, which, at the same time, can provide evidence or dismount the theoretical background provided by the international literature.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

### **2.1. Setting the aims**

From the literature survey, it is apparent that topics on which researchers have mostly investigated are related to young people's reading interests, dedicated library services development in foreign contexts, and staff development. As far as the Italian context is concerned, only one contribution refers about a survey on youth information needs, related to the offering of dedicated services [Grendele 2000].

The importance of knowing the geographic area in which the library operates is essential. Thus, the following study aims to explore the experiences, expectations and perspectives of library services for young people between 11 and 19 years of age in the community of Ala (TN), a town and surroundings of almost 7.700 inhabitants, of which 9% (about 690 individuals) between 6-24 years of age.

The area can be divided into some sub-areas relating to the particular characteristics of each. On one side, the town area, where the library is located in the city centre, in an easily reachable position (0-1,5 km for the inhabitants). On the other side, the 7 surroundings, whose population can reach the library only with public or private transport means (1,5-6 km from the centre).

The selection of the area and time should give answers to following questions relating to young adult experiences, expectations and perspectives about services offered by the local library:

- past library experience
- present library experience
- motivation to library use
- explicit needs to library use
- implicit needs to library use
- satisfaction scale for services offered (real library)
- requirements for services to be offered (ideal library)

The questions to which the study aims to find an answer are subsequently specified as follows. As general questions, the issues will be following:

*Are young people in the area aware of the potential resources and services available to them?*

*Do young people in the area consider the local library an important institution?*

As specific questions, the general question will be "splitted" into the following ones, in order to understand the motivations for the answers:

*Is there any current awareness on the importance of library services among young people in the area?*

*Do they have any experience of the local library?*

*Do they have expectations about dedicated services?*

*Do they dream of an ideal library?*

*Do their points find a confirmation by library usage figures?*

Given the assumed lack of information about specific services and activities which could attract young people into the public libraries [Walter 2003], the main purpose of the study will be to carry out an investigation in order to gain knowledge about these issues. The aims of this study can be described as follows:

- To explore explicit and implicit needs of young people about dedicated library services
- To gather information about young people's experience with the local library from their point of view
- To confront their views with the statistical figures available
- To identify issues requiring further investigation
- To gather information on possible strategies in order to gain their attention and participation in the library's life

## **2.2. Looking for objectives**

The above aims should be achieved through the following objectives:

- Survey on young people's experience of the local library
- Identification of the main explicit and implicit needs for dedicated services
- Survey on the main attitudes of this target group toward library services
- Identification of factors affecting those attitudes
- Confrontation of attitudes with statistical figures available
- Identification of further issues requiring attention in future
- Creation of strategies to gain attention and participation, improving service

## **3. Methodology**

### Overview

The study will be conducted with a mixed-method approach [Preece 1994, Creswell 1994], so that the presence of biases throughout the research should be limited. Since the major focus is in understanding the phenomena under investigation ("why" questions), there will be a prevalence of qualitative inquiry methods, which tend to "understand the individuals' perceptions of the world" as to gain insight into the existence of social facts [Bell 1993].

During the research process, as categories will emerge from data, it will be necessary to consider whether some factors will have to be controlled, ignored or dealt with by randomisation.

### Subjects of the inquiry

Following the considerations on the statistical data on library use exposed in the introduction, the target population under inquiry will be:

- a) students in the age 11-14, to be reached altogether in their classes (Ala)
- b) students in the age 15-19, to be reached in two groups, based on their frequency / non frequency of the library (see Procedures).

### Key informants

Ideally, students will not be the only key informants of the project. For the group a) (students in the age 11-14), teachers could represent an important group to test. For the group b) (students in the age 15-19), the same function could be held by care providers, social workers, or sports coaches, as suggested by Walter [Walter 1994]. These subjects will be contacted for face-to-face interviews or focus groups at a preliminary level and during the study.

### Procedures

#### Ethical concerns.

Since the most part of the subjects under investigation are minors, it will be necessary for the researcher to reach them through their parents or carers, who shall be informed in detail about the study aims and objectives, confidentiality of data gathered and dissemination of the findings. For this purpose, a covering letter will be addressed to the parents and school director, and to the local authorities, along with a copy of the questionnaire to be handed out.

The questionnaire will be piloted with some subjects easily reachable by the researcher. Questions will be gathered from other similar works [e.g. Grendele 2000] or from hypothetical suggestions based on theoretical underpinnings [e.g. Borgman 2003] and adapted to the situation. The questions will be carefully prepared, following the relevant literature on the topic [e.g. Babbie 1991, Oppenheim 1966].

After the pilot phase, subjects will be reached with the final questionnaire administered via personal contact, whenever possible. They will be asked to complete the questionnaire in the time of two weeks.

Students in the age between 11-14 will be reached at school, providing the questionnaire with a covering letter explaining the purpose and aims of the study, stating the confidentiality of data, inviting subjects to ask for a summary of results at the end of the study. This stage will be followed by a single face-to-face interviews phase, with a selected sample of subjects. Since the participants in the study will be free from school and leisure activities at different times of the day, they will be asked to give notice of their time availability (particularly for the students aged 15-19).

At this stage, the questionnaire will help in dividing participant in two groups: users and non-users of the local library.

As far as users of the library in the target group are concerned, data about loans will be gathered from the statistical figures over a period, which are easily available through the county information service.

### Sample

Although it has been acknowledged that there are “no absolute methods for specifying what your sample should be” [Douglas 1985], the study will try to provide a sample frame coherent with the characteristics a sample should contain, that is comprehensiveness, probability of selection, and efficiency, as devised by Fowler [cfr. Fowler 1993]. The sample used for the study will be preferably a multistage stratified one. It will be necessary in fact to identify some features of the population to be studied [Fowler 1993], in order to correlate answers to particular indicators (e.g. age, users vs. non-users of the library, inhabitants of the town centre / of surroundings, etc.), which could bias answers. In particular, information about the subjects’ provenience will be collected at the design stage and checked at the analysis stage, in order to verify any correlation with a direct experience of the library services.

A simple random sampling approach would not grant avoiding misinterpretations of data in this context. At the same time, theorists indicate stratified sampling as a technique that can achieve “a greater degree of representativeness and thus decreasing the probable sampling error” [Babbie 1991].

Since the research problem can be relevant not only to the student, but also to the teacher population, it will be advisable to attempt a parallel sample study about teachers, educators and carers in general. The responses could be compared and give a more round picture of the issues under investigation [cfr. Babbie 1991].

#### **4. Data collection and analysis**

##### **4.1. Data collection tools**

During the study research times and instrumentation will be monitored as to provide that when facilities and subjects are available, the researcher be able to reach them at appropriate time and location. For the development of this study, following data collection tools are felt to be appropriate:

- Preliminary and follow-up focus groups, as to gain feedback prior and post study findings, as an ancillary method of collecting data that can help in interpreting results [Bloor 2001]. A focus group will be created during the pilot phase of the questionnaire, when learning “the vocabulary and discover the thinking pattern of the target audience” [Krueger 1993] will be of great value in order to avoid a confusing sequence of questions. Another or more focus groups will be created after the administration of the questionnaire, in order to better interpret results from the data collected [Krueger 1993]. According to Borgman, “qualitative studies of users in their own environments... will be fruitful” in relationship to visibility issues [Borgman 2003]. The setting of the focus group sessions will be then carefully considered. It might be necessary to elicit the most neutral environment from the answers to the questionnaire. Schedule and chart are under construction;
- Questionnaire designed for the study (under construction), as to match requirements of validity and reliability, avoiding open-ended questions but including categories emerging from the preliminary focus group [Oppenheim 1966, Fowler 1993];
- Face-to-face interviews to be carried out with a schedule / chart (under construction)

- Available computer program to analyse data (Microsoft Excel)
- OPACs and library catalogues / resources from different institutions, available through the Internet and county ILL, including those of the special collections (e.g. University Libraries, research institutions of the area)

Until present no previous studies on this topic have been identified in the literature, which should determine that in choosing a mixed-method approach – with both qualitative and quantitative aspects – a prior dominance to the quantitative aspects should be welcomed [Creswell 1994]. Nonetheless, the “dominant-less dominant” design advocated by Creswell [Creswell 1994] will be considered in the opposite way, as qualitative aspects will be most valuable for this study and quantitative ones will serve as discussion basis for the findings.

Although a literature review on the topic in Italy seems to be scarce, the researcher will try to combine national and international issues with the categories emerging from the data collected, especially for the identification of further issues requiring particular attention in future, as reported in following chart.

**Tab. 1. Research methods and study objectives: a relationship chart**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Literature Review</b>	<b>Questionnaire</b>	<b>In-depth Interviews</b>
Survey on young people’s experience of the local library		✓	✓
Identification of the main explicit and implicit needs for dedicated services		✓	✓
Survey on the main attitudes of this target group toward library services		✓	✓
Identification of factors affecting those attitudes		✓	✓
Confrontation of attitudes with statistical figures available		✓	✓
Identification of further issues requiring attention in future	✓	✓	✓
Creation of strategies to gain attention and participation, improving service	✓	✓	✓

During the sessions elements of creative interviewing [Douglas 1985] will be taken into account. The focus group members in the two phases should be representative of all students. It is still under evaluation if a focus group formed by educators or carers would be of any help in improving triangulation of data.

Not to be underestimated, the first research instrument is the researcher herself, who shall calibrate her strengths and weaknesses in order to achieve the objectives stated.

## **4.2. Data management**

Data will be gathered from different sources and will be treated differently accordingly to their origin (users and non-users).

It will be made clear that data will be treated as strictly confidential and in an anonymous way. The questionnaires and interview charts will be handled by a single researcher over the whole survey and will be constructed accordingly to these principles.

Every use for study reasons of the data collected will be handled with the participants before their agreement to join the survey.

### **4.3. Data analysis techniques**

Data analysis will be carried out in almost two ways, with or without analysis. Since there are no previous studies in this field in the area considered, it will be first of all necessary to present as much as possible a quantity of data organised but not analysed. In this phase, data will be transcribed and reported as they were collected in the most suitable form: tables, charts and diagrams or graphics illustrating the answers administered in the questionnaire; interview or logs transcriptions.

At a second stage, data will be explained and interpreted [Strauss & Corbin 1991] on the basis and in confront with the emerging themes in the literature and / or other similar studies.

At a deeper stage, data could be interpreted to build a theory as to explain the phenomenon under investigation, checking the assumptions by going back to the sample population, to increase validity of the data gathered and come to conclusions.

Although difficult for a novice, great attention will be given in avoiding interpretation errors, on the basis of the critical works against the Benton Report [Allen 1997, Zweizig 1997, Holt 1997, McCook 1997].

## **5. Limitations and delimitations**

### **5.1. Involuntary constraints**

A survey bases its success on a minimum population sample participation. A first possible constraint could be the possibility that the target group would drop the invitation to participate in the survey or that the answers given would be unusable. In this case, it will be necessary to redefine the scope of the research and the sample population.

Another involuntary constraint will be time availability, being the researcher working full time during the survey period, although in hours which should allow to have 3 hours a day available for study.

### **5.2. Voluntary delimitations**

- a. Since teenagers aged 15-19 and living in the surroundings attend secondary schools in another district, direct contact will be limited to a low number of subjects. Time availability constraints from both parts could be disadvantageous in case of reiterated refuses of co-operation.
- b. The survey will be structured over a period of maximum two months, considering the case of delays in receiving questionnaires and organising

interview and focus groups sessions. Accordingly, the design of the survey will be cross-sectional, as defined by Babbie [cfr. Babbie 1991]. The time saved will be used to analyse and present data in the most suitable way.

### **5.3. Time management during the dissertation project**

The ideal timeline for the project starts with the handing in of the dissertation proposal and ends at the middle of January, when all data gathered should have been analysed and discussed.

During the development of the project phases could need more or less time than expected, but anyway are to be carried out with the end date in mind. The following Gantt Chart provides an overview of the project phases, as currently hypothesized.

**Tab. 2: GANNT Chart of the project**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>15-30.10.03</b>	<b>1-15.11.03</b>	<b>16-30.11.03</b>	<b>1-15.12.03</b>	<b>16-30.12.03</b>	<b>1-15.01.04</b>
Questionnaire design	✓					
Pilot questionnaire	✓					
Questionnaires administ.	✓					
Questionnaire return		✓				
Interviews appointments		✓				
Interviews sessions			✓			
Questionnaire analysis		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Interviews transcriptions			✓	✓		
Interviews analysis			✓	✓	✓	
Data presentation				✓	✓	
Researcher's log	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing dissertation				✓	✓	✓
Literature survey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Documentary analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Presenting report						mid Jan. 2004

## **6. Conclusions**

### **6.1. Expected outcomes and benefits**

- Improving the image of the library through the interest shown in knowing the stakeholders better
- Gaining knowledge about young people social dynamics and interests, at a general and local level
- Assessing methods to improve knowledge about an environment, which could be disseminated
- Creating connections with young adults groups in order to make the library more visible and open to this target group

## **6.2. Further investigations and developments**

The study should also allow insights about possible future scenarios and developments in the use of the library. Results from the study will be confronted with theoretical underpinnings currently being held in LIS.

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**Appendix 1:**

**Definitions of “young adults” in the vocabulary of main languages in Europe**

The sources for this Table have been chosen among the most widespread dictionary of european languages

Language	Definitions	Usage	Source
Italian	Adolescenza	“Età della vita tra la fanciullezza e l’età adulta, caratterizzata dalla maturazione sessuale”	1
	Teen-ager	“Ragazzo o ragazza fra i 13 e i 19 anni”	2
	Giovane	“Di persona che è tra l’adolescenza e la maturità” / “Di ciò che è nato o sorto da poco” / “detto di ciò a cui si vuole dare una connotazione allegra, disinvolta, pratica e sim.”	3
	Ragazzo	“giovinetto, fanciullo, adolescente” / “giovannotto”	4
	Gioventù	“età della vita umana che si estende dalla fine dell’adolescenza alle soglie della maturità”	5
French	Jeune	“Peu avancé en âge” “Qui est dans la première partie de la vie” “Personne jeune”	6
	Jeunesse	“Temps de la vie entre l’enfance et la maturité / Adolescence”	7
	Les jeunes	“Les personnes jeunes”	8
German	Jugend	“Wachstums- u. Reifezeit des Menschen”	9
	Jugendliche/r	“junger Mensch vom 14. bis zum 18. Lebensjahr”	10
English	Child	“A young human being below the age of full physical development”	11
	Teen-ager	“A person aged between 13 and 19 years”	12
	Young	“Having lived or existed for only a short time”	13
	Young person	(in the UK) “A person generally between 14 and 17 years of age”	14
	Juvenile	“Of / for / relating to young people”	15
	Youth	“The period between childhood and adult age”	16
Spanish	Joven	“De la juventud o que tiene relación con ella” “Que tiene poca edad” “Que tiene poco tiempo de vida, que está en la primeras etapas de su existencia”	17
	Juvenil	“De la juventud o que tiene relación con ella” “Que corresponde a deportistas de edades comprendidas entre los 15 y los 18 años”	18
	Muchaco / a Chico / a	“Que tiene poca edad”	19
	Juventud	“Periodo de la vida que está entre la niñez y el comienzo de la edad madura”	20

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