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Strategies For Minimizing the Impact of Reductions in Government Funding on the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association

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STRATEGIES FOR MINIMIZING THE IMPACT OF REDUCTIONS IN GOVERNMENT
FUNDING ON THE SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND FREE
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

BY

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CAPSTONE PROJECT

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Executive Summary

The amount of funding that the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association receives from the State of Pennsylvania has declined by 32% since 2009. The 2010 reduction in funding led to an immediate reduction in services and an increased focus on fundraising. This is a significant problem for the Library because the lack of financial stability is affecting their ability to achieve mission-related goals.

To assist the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association with this problem, I distributed a survey to 485 public library directors in Pennsylvania in order to determine what strategies other public library directors are using to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding and ensure long-term financial stability. The survey was completed by 148 individuals.   I also conducted interviews with six public library directors to explore this topic in greater depth. Six main findings emerged from the data. Pennsylvania public library directors: 1) have used revenue, retrenchment, and legitimization strategies to address funding cuts, although not in equal measure, 2) plan to change the short-term revenue strategies they are using, 3) plan to increase their use of long-term revenue strategies, 4) plan to change the retrenchment strategies they are using, 5) plan to continue educating the public about the organization's mission while at the same time increasing their advocacy efforts, and 6) identified revenue, retrenchment, and legitimization strategies as effective.

Based on the above findings, I am making three recommendations to the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association. These recommendations include developing long-term revenue strategies that will supplement the Library's short-term revenue strategies, increasing usage of partnerships and collaborations, and continuing to educate the public about the Library's mission while also increasing advocacy efforts.

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Problem Statement

Public libraries, first established in the nineteenth century, provide free services to the public, with the mission of promoting an educated citizenry (Owens & Sieminski, 2007). The majority of public library funding in the United States is from government sources at various levels, with state governments typically providing between 10% and 13% of a library's funding (Owens & Sieminski, 2007). The amount of money that the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association (hereinafter "Library") has received from the state in recent years has decreased, leading to a reduction in services and impacting its ability to survive. In an effort to provide recommendations to the Library, this Capstone project examines what other public library directors in Pennsylvania are doing to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding on the services they provide, as well as strategies other public library directors are using to ensure long-term financial stability.

The Library is a non-profit organization that serves 42,000 residents of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania over an area of 823 square miles. The main library and historical society are in Montrose, with branch libraries in Hallstead, Susquehanna, and Forest City. Both the Library and the Historical Society have exceeded the capacity of the current building and are in the middle of a capital campaign to construct a new building for the library. Pennsylvania has recently reduced funding for public libraries by 32 percent. As a result of these cuts, the funding the Library receives from the State of Pennsylvania has decreased by $90,000, leading to a reduction in the services the Library provides, along with other cost-cutting measures. The hours the main library is open have been reduced by 18%, from 62 hours a week to 51, and the hours the branch libraries are open have been reduced by 15%, from 39 hours a week to 33. In addition, staff salaries have been reduced by 10% across the board, there have been no raises in

three years, and the staff is now required to pay 25% of their health insurance cost. Outreach services have also been reduced and building maintenance and technology upgrades have been deferred (S. Stone, personal communication, October 23, 2012).

In addition to efforts to reduce expenditures, the Library has tried to manage the funding cuts from the state by increasing its revenue from other sources, especially from fundraising. Fundraising events in 2012 provided about 40% of the total revenue for the organization, compared to 16% in 2009 before the state funding cuts. The Library has increased fundraising revenue by adding several fundraising events each year and soliciting donations from local gas companies. Furthermore, the Library has recently requested from the county commissioners a small increase in county taxes to enable the restoration of salary cuts and hours of service. A request was also made to the county commissioners for $250, 000 from the Pennsylvania Act 13 impact fee to provide for a five-year upgrade in computer facilities and deferred maintenance (L. Anderson, personal communication, October 12, 2012). Both of these requests were denied by the commissioners.

The Library is currently operating in austerity mode and is concerned about its long-term financial survival with reduced state funding. The immediate reduction of services following a loss of funding indicates an organization is financially vulnerable (Tuckman & Chang, 1991). In addition, a considerable amount of time, effort, and resources of the Library's staff, volunteers, and board is being spent on fundraising activities rather than on mission-related activity. The Library's ten-year vision includes increasing public awareness of the importance of the library, constructing a new main library building, and securing an adequate solid source of funding (L. Anderson and S. Stone, personal communication, October 23, 2012). Financial stability is a critical element in achieving the Library's goals.

Achieving mission-related goals while preserving financial stability is a challenge that all nonprofit organizations face (Carroll & Stater, 2009).   In particular, many nonprofit organizations have been reevaluating their funding models and diversifying their revenue streams in the past few years due to decreasing government funding. While the majority of public library funding comes from government sources at various levels, this amount has been decreasing in recent years, and public libraries are competing for scarce resources. Therefore, while the recommendations presented in this Capstone report are targeted to the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association, they are applicable to public libraries throughout Pennsylvania and may also benefit other nonprofit organizations that are struggling with the issue of how best to fund their mission over the long-term.

Research Questions

To assist the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association with the problem of reduced services and staffing due to a decrease in state funding, this study examined what other public library directors are doing to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding on the services they provide, as well as strategies other public library directors are using to ensure long-term financial stability.

1. What strategies are other public library directors using to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding on the services they provide?

2. What strategies are other public library directors using to ensure long-term financial stability?

Literature Review

Nonprofit organizations are an important part of the overall economy (Raymond, 2010; Tuckman & Chang, 1991), and they operate in a complex financial environment of scarcity, uncertainty and competition (Bielefeld, 1992; Burke, 2008; Froelich, 1999; Frumkin & Kim, 2001; Hodge & Piccolo, 2005; Raymond, 2010). This has strategic implications for mission fulfillment and survival (Burke, 2008; McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991), as a financially healthy nonprofit organization is more likely to accomplish its mission (Carroll & Stater, 2009). Since the most important internal factor influencing the dissolution of an organization is financial difficulties (Bielefeld, Galaskiewicz, Hager, & Pins, 1996), this literature review will provide an understanding of the factors involved in nonprofit financial stability as well as strategies for improving financial stability.

Nonprofit Financial Stability

While the financial condition of a nonprofit organization is dependent on many factors (Hager, 2001; Tuckman & Chang, 1991), this literature review focuses specifically on the factors relating to the stability and diversity of revenue. It is difficult to identify the specific factors that influence nonprofit financial stability because of a lack of data and the inability to identify trends (Keating, Fischer, Gordon, & Greenlee, 2005; Kingma, 1993; Tuckman & Chang, 1991), although having an adequate financial cushion, or fund balance, can create greater financial stability (Carroll & Stater, 2009). Sector, size, location, external environment, and the organization's activities all have an effect on revenue stability (Carroll & Stater, 2009; Chang & Tuckman, 1994; Raymond, 2010).

The revenue structure of an organization is an important factor in achieving financial stability because this structure provides the context within which decisions are made (Kingma,

1993; Yan, Denison & Butler, 2009), and decisions about revenue structure have strategic implications for the organization (Froelich, 1999; Hodge & Piccolo, 2005; Hughes & Luksetich, 1999). Resource and program decisions should be integrated, as programming choices can determine income options (Wilsker & Young, 2010; Young, 2007). Nonprofit managers must consider all revenue sources, their levels of variance, co-variance, and expected growth in order to arrive at the optimum revenue structure (Hughes & Luksetich, 1999; Kingma, 1993).

Revenue diversification has been considered one of the essential concepts of financial health for an organization (Carrol & Stater, 2009; Crittenden, 2000; Kingma, 1993; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Wilsker & Young, 2010; Yan, Denison & Butler, 2009). Diversifying the revenue stream is an attempt not only to reduce dependence on one particular revenue source, but also to balance risk and reward (Carrol & Stater, 2009; Yan, Denison & Butler, 2009). Nonprofits are more likely to have a strong financial position and therefore greater organizational longevity if they have multiple revenue sources that do not fluctuate in the same way at the same time (Bielefeld, 1994; Bielefeld, Galaskiewicz, Hager, & Pins, 1996; Carroll & Stater, 2009; Chang & Tuckman, 1991; Chang & Tuckman, 1994; Young, 2007).

There are four main types of revenue that nonprofits depend on: private contributions (individual, corporate, foundation grants), public support (government grants), commercial activity, and investment income (Hodge & Piccolo, 2005; Yan, Denison & Butler, 2009), as well as volunteer labor and in-kind donations (Wilsker & Young, 2010). Each type of funding differs in continuity, predictability and controllability, therefore introducing uncertainty into decision making (Carroll & Stater, 2009; Chang & Tuckman, 1994; Froelich, 1999; Gronbjerg, 1991; Hodge & Piccolo, 2005). The ultimate goal of revenue diversification is to decrease risk and increase continuity, predictability and controllability (Gronbjerg, 1991; Kingma, 1993).

Organizations must continually work on balancing revenue sources as conditions both internally

and externally change (Wilsker & Young, 2010).

Nonprofit Strategies to Improve Financial Stability

Nonprofit organizations responding to an uncertain funding environment use a wide

range of strategies in an effort to improve their financial stability (Bielefeld, 1992; McMurtry,

Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Reiner, 1989; Salamon & O'Sullivan, 2004). These strategies can be

internal or external (Levine, 1978) and typically fall into three main categories: revenue

strategies, legitimization strategies and retrenchment strategies (Bielefeld, 1992; McMurtry,

Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Reiner, 1989).

Revenue strategies have an external focus and usually involve marketing efforts to

generate new sources of revenue from prospective funders (Bielefeld, 1992). Successful

organizations have a high external orientation (marketing and competitor awareness) as well as a

strong financial orientation (Crittenden, 2000). Revenue strategies include: 1) assessing

community needs/carrying out market studies, 2) starting/expanding and/or innovating services

or programs, 3) expanding geographical reach, 4) investigating new funding sources, 5)

conducting special fundraising efforts, 6) increasing board member participation in fundraising,

7) investigating commercial sources of support, and 8) developing long-range funding strategies

(Bielefeld, 1992; McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Salamon & O'Sullivan, 2004).

Legitimization strategies also have an external focus and seek to influence the perception

of funders by enhancing the reputation of the organization (Bielefeld, 1992; Bielefeld, 1994;

Levine, 1978). Legitimization strategies are important, as a positive image and a viable public

mission are critical to an organization's survival (Bielefeld, Galaskiewicz, Hager, & Pins, 1996).

An analysis of whether nonprofits received more contributions by promoting efficiency or

promoting mission found that effective communication of mission had more of an effect on contributions than efficient operations (Frumkin & Kim, 2001). Legitimization strategies include: 1) investing resources in marketing/advertising/public relations, 2) implementing and/or expanding advocacy activities at all levels of government, 3) educating the public about the organization's mission, 4) seeking endorsements and endowments from prominent people, 5) adapting services to funder priorities, and 6) increasing relevancy of services (Bielefeld, 1992; Bielefeld, 1994; Bielefeld, Galaskiewicz, Hager, & Pins, 1996; Levine, 1978; McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991).

Retrenchment strategies have an internal focus and are ordinarily efforts to reduce costs to offset a loss of funding (Bielefeld, 1992; Bielefeld, 1994; Levine, 1978; McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Reiner, 1989). Retrenchment strategies include: 1) increasing productivity, 2) utilizing organizational slack, 3) reducing or eliminating services, 4) deferring maintenance, 5) using reserves or endowment funds, and 6) collaborations and partnerships.

Organizations typically use a variety of these strategies at the same time and evaluate their effectiveness on an ongoing basis (McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Salamon & O'Sullivan, 2004). Research has shown mixed results with regard to effectiveness of strategies to improve financial stability. Some research has indicated that the only effective revenue strategy was investigating commercial sources of income (Salamon & O'Sullivan, 2004), while other research showed the two most effective strategies were cost-cutting measures and increased advocacy (Bielefeld, 1994), and the strategy used more often by non-survivors was retrenchment (Bielefeld, 1994). Different strategies result in different outcomes, and the use of any of the strategies seemed to be less effective in decreasing uncertainty for small nonprofits (Bielefeld, 1992).

Nonprofit organizations must constantly adapt the strategies they use to improve financial stability to the complex and ever-changing external environment (Raymond, 2010). Libraries across the country have been experiencing a reduction in government funding over the past several years, and are competing for scarce resources in order to survive. This study examined what public library directors are doing to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding on the services they provide, as well as strategies public library directors are using to ensure long-term financial stability.

Methodology

In order to examine what public library directors are doing to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding on the services they provide and ensure long-term financial stability, this study used both surveys and interviews. This section describes my data collection methods, strengths and limitations of the methods, and my data analysis methods.

Data Collection

I used surveys and interviews to collect information from Pennsylvania public library directors between March 6, 2013 and March 15, 2013. I used this combination of methods to obtain a more complete picture of what public library directors are doing to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding. The survey provided breadth of coverage, allowing collection of data from a geographically dispersed population, while interviews provided depth. To maximize participation in the study, I guaranteed confidentiality and promised participants I would share my final Capstone paper with them. Binghamton University's Human Subject Research Review Committee approved the research protocol for this project on March 4, 2013 (Appendix A).

There are approximately 9,000 public libraries in the United States, varying in organization type (nonprofit vs. government), population served, and revenue sources (Swan et al., 2013). Obtaining access to all of these libraries was not feasible in the time frame allowed for this study. Because public library funding from government sources varies from state to state, I restricted my sample population to public library directors in Pennsylvania so that the survey and interview questions could be tailored to address the specific type of government funding reduction experienced by all Pennsylvania public libraries in the last several years.

Surveys. I prepared a list of survey participants from a 2012 Directory of Pennsylvania Libraries (Directory of Pennsylvania Libraries, 2012) that contained 705 public libraries. The list provided many library director names and email addresses. I found some missing names and email addresses via library web sites. However, a few small libraries did not have web sites or email addresses that were easily accessible, and I did not include these libraries in the list of participants. I also did not include libraries that were identified as branches, as the survey questions pertained to strategic and financial decisions that are usually made by the director of the central library.

The survey instrument (Appendix B) contained 22 questions which focused on the strategies that public library directors in Pennsylvania have used and plan to use in the future to minimize the impact of state funding reductions. From the literature, I developed a list of 45 strategies that organizations use to improve their financial stability (Bielefeld, 1992; McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Reiner, 1989; Salamon & O'Sullivan, 2004). These strategies then formed the basis of the questions in the survey, and respondents were asked to indicate which of those strategies they had used or planned on using. Participants were also asked which of the strategies used had been most effective. There were also two questions on the survey about

public perception of the library and public awareness of the services provided by the library. Finally, the survey included demographic questions that focused on the type of organization, population served, budget size, and location of the library. Survey participants also had the ability to provide additional comments at the end of the survey. Participation in the survey was strictly voluntary, and participants were assured that their responses were confidential.

I distributed the survey to 485 Pennsylvania public library directors via an email using SurveyMonkey. The survey was available from March 6, 2013, to March 15, 2013. Three e-mails advertising the survey were sent out from the Library Director's e-mail address, one initially advertising the survey (Appendix C) and two reminder e-mails (Appendix D). The survey was completed by 148 individuals, representing a response rate of 31%.

Interviews. Public libraries in Pennsylvania are organized into eight geographic regions by the Pennsylvania Library Association. Because there may be geographical differences, I chose to interview one library director from each region. I used telephone interviews because participants were located at some distance from the area where the study was being conducted. The purpose of the interviews was to get a more detailed understanding of the strategies library directors have used and plan to use to minimize the impact of state funding reductions. I posed nine open-ended questions which followed the sequence of the survey questions, while also allowing for additional input. Participation in the interviews was strictly voluntary, and participants were assured that their responses were confidential. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix E.

The Library Director selected the interview participants based on pre-existing relationships and knowledge, and the Library Director contacted most of these participants prior to me contacting them. I sent an initial email to each prospective interview participant indicating

that their library was chosen for an interview and requesting convenient times for an interview (Appendix F). I also sent a second follow-up email to those who did not respond to the initial email. Interview times were set up with participants via email. Each interview lasted between 10 and 40 minutes. I was able to interview six out of the eight library directors selected, which represents a 75% response rate. Two participants did not respond to my emails.

Strengths and Limitations of Data Collection Methods

Combining interviews with a survey resulted in a more detailed picture of the situation, as both methods collected the same information from the same group of participants (Schutt, 2006). A survey provided the ability to reach a large group of geographically dispersed participants over a short time period. One weakness of surveys is that participant confusion about specific questions cannot be addressed, and participant responses may not match the choices given to them (Schutt, 2006). In fact, one survey participant reported that for a demographic question with mutually exclusive responses, all responses were applicable because they were a central library with branches in different locations. Interviews allowed for flexibility in clarifying and following up on questions and elicited more detail than was possible via the survey. However, the number of interviews was limited because of time constraints. Capstone committee professors and the Capstone supervisor reviewed the design, order and clarity of the survey and interview questions. This ensured that the questions elicited the information needed to answer the research questions (Schutt, 2006). Participation in the survey and interviews was strictly voluntary, and participants were assured that their responses were confidential, which helped to increase the likelihood of honest answers from the participants.

To address the possible limitation of low response rates, which would affect the usefulness of the findings, I sent two follow-up emails to remind participants about the

approaching deadline to complete the survey, and one follow-up email to selected interview participants. The restriction of study participants to public library directors in Pennsylvania made the findings more applicable to the Library, although it may not reflect the full range of strategies available to public libraries experiencing a reduction in government funding, and it also reduced the likelihood that the study findings will be applicable to public libraries outside of Pennsylvania. Although the intention was to contact all public library directors in Pennsylvania to complete the survey, contact information was not readily available for all of the libraries. In particular, some small libraries have no web site and/or no email address for the library director, which did not allow the inclusion of those libraries in the sample population for the survey. The exclusion of small and branch libraries could affect whether the findings are representative of all public libraries in Pennsylvania. It is also possible that the interview responses are not representative of Pennsylvania libraries in general, as it was a convenience sample that was provided by the Library Director.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the survey data with inferential statistics (chi-square), descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies), cross tabulation analysis, and analysis of patterns and themes. The first thing I did was to divide the 45 strategies from the survey into three categories: revenue (16), legitimization (4), and retrenchment (25), as indicated in the literature (Bielefeld, 1992; McMurtry, Netting, & Kettner, 1991; Reiner, 1989; Salamon & O'Sullivan, 2004). I then divided the 16 revenue strategies into eleven short-term and five long-term strategies. Appendix G contains a table showing the breakdown of strategies into these categories. I then performed a chi-square test to determine if the use of strategy categories was significantly different than I would have expected based on the proportional number of strategies in each category. This

means that any difference between observed and expected use of strategy categories is "due to some systematic influence and not due to chance" (Salkind, 2008, p. 156). I assessed significance at a .05 level, which means that there is a less than 5% chance that results are due to chance.

I then used descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies to identify the strategies library directors have used and the strategies they plan to use in the future. A summary of all the descriptive statistics from the survey can be found in Appendix H. I also used cross-tabulation analysis to determine whether the strategies used by Pennsylvania public library directors were associated with particular demographics, as well as to identify if there was any pattern for the use of revenue, legitimization, and retrenchment strategies. For Question #5 on the survey, which was open-ended, I grouped the strategies mentioned as effective by library directors into the three categories mentioned above (Appendix I). I then performed a chi-square test to determine if the identification of effective strategies by category was significantly different than I would have expected based on the proportional number of strategies in each category. I took detailed notes from the telephone interviews and analyzed the responses using thematic analysis based on the strategy categories defined in the literature, particularly noting which types of strategies the participants had used, which strategies had been effective, and which strategies the participants plan to use in the future, as well as information about community perception of the library and awareness of services offered by the libraries.

Findings

Based upon inferential statistics, descriptive statistics and thematic analysis, six main findings emerged from the data. These findings indicate that Pennsylvania public library directors: 1) have used revenue, retrenchment, and legitimization strategies to address funding

cuts, although not in equal measure, 2) plan to change the short-term revenue strategies they are using, 3) plan to increase their use of long-term revenue strategies, 4) plan to change the retrenchment strategies they are using, 5) plan to continue educating the public about the organization's mission while at the same time increasing their advocacy efforts, and 6) identified revenue, retrenchment, and legitimization strategies as effective.

Finding #1: Pennsylvania public library directors have used revenue, retrenchment, and legitimization strategies to address funding cuts, although not in equal measure.

Pennsylvania public library directors have used all three types of strategies to minimize the impact of government funding reductions and improve financial stability. This finding is consistent with McMurtry, Netting, and Kettner (1991) and Salamon and O'Sullivan (2004), who noted that organizations typically use a variety of these strategies at the same time. Of the 144 library directors that used at least one strategy to address funding cuts, by absolute count there were more respondents that used revenue and retrenchment strategies than legitimization strategies, as shown in Table 1. However, there were many more strategies to choose from in the revenue and retrenchment categories. In fact, when analyzed proportionally, legitimization strategies were used significantly more than expected, while retrenchment strategies were used significantly less than expected.

Table 1: Library directors' use of strategies to address funding cuts

Strategy Categories	# of Library Directors That Used at Least One Strategy	Expected # of Library Directors That Used at Least One Strategy
Revenue	137 (38%)	129 (36%)
Retrenchment	136 (37%)	202 (55%)
Legitimization	91 (25%)	32 (9%)

P-value = 3.87328E-29

Finding #2: Pennsylvania public library directors plan to change the short-term revenue strategies they are using.

Of the eleven short-term revenue strategies, there were three short-term strategies that were used by more library directors than the other eight short-term strategies: conduct additional fundraising events (67.4%); expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors (63.9%), and increase board member participation in fundraising (52.1%). On average, the respondents used four of the eleven short-term strategies. The range of revenue strategies used by each library director varied from one to nine strategies. The average number of strategies used by those who rated the severity of the impact of state funding reductions as "severe to extremely severe" (4.2) was higher compared to those who did not (3.1). Directors of libraries with annual revenue over $2,500,000 on average used more short-term revenue strategies (5.8) than those with annual revenue below $2,500,000 (3.8).

A comparison between short-term revenue strategies respondents have used and the strategies they plan to use in the future, as indicated in Table 2, shows that while all library directors indicated they would continue to use some of the short-term revenue strategies they had already been using, increasing board member participation in fundraising was the only one of the top three short-term revenue strategies that more respondents indicated they planned on using more in the future, with a 3.1% increase in the number of library directors planning to use this strategy. On the other hand, survey respondents indicated that the following short-term revenue strategies that to date have not been used as much will be used more in the future: targeting fundraising efforts at foundations, corporations, and both state and local governments, increasing/expanding fee-for-service activities and increasing fees or fee collection efforts.

Table 2: Percentage change in use of short-term revenue strategies

Short-Term Revenue Strategies			
	% of Library Directors That Used Strategy	% of Library Directors That Plan to Use Strategy	% Change
Investigate new funding sources provided by the state government	9.0%	26.9%	198.9%
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations	32.6%	51.5%	58.0%
Investigate new funding sources provided by the local government	21.5%	32.8%	52.6%
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations	36.8%	55.2%	50.0%
Increase/expand fee-for-service activities	22.2%	30.6%	37.8%
Increase fees or fee collection efforts	25.0%	26.9%	7.6%
Increase board member participation in fundraising	52.1%	53.7%	3.1%
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors	63.9%	62.7%	-1.9%
Conduct additional fundraising events	67.4%	56.0%	-16.9%
Increase commercial sources of support	23.6%	18.7%	-20.8%
Start/expand or innovate services or programs	33.3%	23.1%	-30.6%

One library director interviewed indicated that "fundraisers are not that effective-we need new ideas." Interview participants mentioned they had used the following short-term revenue strategies, some of which correspond with strategies mentioned in the survey: increasing collection efforts, creating a nonprofit foundation, instituting new fees for unclaimed holds, generating income from library parking when the library is closed, researching the value of books being donated to get the most money possible for book donations, updating the web site to accept online donations, and accepting debit cards at the library for fees and fines.

Finding #3: Pennsylvania public library directors plan to increase their use of long-term revenue strategies.

A comparison between long-term revenue strategies library directors have used and the strategies they plan to use in the future, as indicated in Table 3, shows that only 46.5% of the respondents were using any of the five long-term revenue strategies, while 66.4% plan to use these strategies in the future, a 42.8% increase. Library directors plan to increase the use of planned-giving vehicles 140.7% more than what they are currently doing. Many libraries already have an endowment, so there is a decrease in those library directors planning to start one, but a 54.1% increase in those who are planning to increase their endowment. Finally, while only 13.9% of respondents indicated that they had developed long-range funding strategies, 33.6% plan on doing this in the future, a 141.7% increase.

One library director interviewed indicated that efforts to deliberately increase their endowment over the last twenty years "have paid off" during the reductions in state funding, and the endowment now provides 5% of the annual income for the library. Another interview participant indicated that they were going to institute a major gift campaign for endowments to provide for a more consistent stream of income. A third library director mentioned that they were having "more regular communication with donors-cultivating relationships."

Table 3: Percentage change in use of long-term revenue strategies

Long-Term Revenue Strategies			
	% of Library Directors That Used Strategy	% of Library Directors That Plan to Use Strategy	% Change
Develop long-range funding strategies	13.9%	33.6%	141.7%
Increase use of planned giving vehicles	11.8%	28.4%	140.7%
Work to increase an endowment	19.4%	29.9%	54.1%
Assess community needs	20.8%	23.9%	14.9%
Start an endowment	8.3%	7.5%	-9.6%
Any of the above	46.5%	66.4%	42.8%

Finding #4: Pennsylvania public library directors plan to change the retrenchment strategies they are using.

There were four retrenchment strategies that were used by more library directors than the other twenty-one strategies: increase staff work load (47.9%), increase use of volunteers (43.1%); reduce library hours (41.7%); and utilization of reserve funds (41.7%). On average, the respondents used 5.5 of the twenty-five strategies listed. The range of strategies used by each library director varied from one to nineteen strategies. The average number of strategies used by those who rated the severity of the impact of state funding reductions as "severe to extremely severe" (6.3) was higher compared to those who did not (2.6). Directors of libraries with annual revenue over $1,000,000 on average used more retrenchment strategies (7.8) than those with annual revenue below $1,000,000 (4.9).

A comparison between retrenchment strategies library directors have used and the strategies they plan to use in the future shows a marked difference. Of the twenty-five retrenchment strategies, respondents plan to use nineteen of them less in the future. Of these nineteen strategies, fourteen of them relate to reducing staff, reducing hours open, reducing programs, deferring maintenance and delaying technology upgrades. All of the library directors interviewed mentioned use of these specific retrenchment strategies. Four of the top six retrenchment strategies that more respondents plan to use in the future are partnerships and collaborations with other businesses, school districts, other libraries, and other nonprofit agencies, as shown in Table 4. Consistent with this, one interview participant mentioned partnerships with other nonprofits and the local community foundation, as well as needing "to build cooperation and collaboration within the county and maybe adjoining counties to save money in purchasing, have uniform policies, and central administration."

Table 4: Percentage change in use of retrenchment strategies

Retrenchment Strategies			
	% of Library Directors That Used Strategy	% of Library Directors That Plan to Use Strategy	% Change
Sell other assets	0.7%	2.2%	199.2%
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other businesses	13.9%	29.1%	109.4%
Develop partnerships or collaborations with school districts	13.2%	23.9%	81.1%
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other libraries	18.8%	31.3%	66.5%
Reduce or eliminate outreach services or programs	10.4%	12.7%	22.1%
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies	24.3%	26.9%	10.7%

As examples of partnerships and collaborations with businesses and other libraries, three survey participants mentioned corporate volunteering and business sponsorship of particular initiatives, and one interview participant mentioned that their library district funds the purchase of eBook licenses for all of their libraries. Another interview participant mentioned seeking partnerships with other nonprofits and the local community foundation.

Finding #5: Pennsylvania public library directors plan to continue educating the public about the organization's mission while at the same time increasing their advocacy efforts.

The most widely used legitimization strategy (55.6%) was educating the public about the organization's mission. On average, the respondents used 1.76 of the four legitimization strategies listed. The range of legitimization strategies used varied from one to four strategies used by each library director. A comparison between legitimization strategies respondents have used and the strategies they plan to use in the future, as indicated in Table 5, shows that library directors plan to increase their advocacy efforts by 28.8% and plan to increase seeking

endorsements from prominent people by 156.7%.   Educating the public about the organization's

mission would still be the most-used legitimization strategy going forward, with 49.3% of

respondents planning to use this strategy.

Table 5: Percentage change in use of legitimization strategies

Legitimization Strategies			
	% of Library Directors That Used Strategy	% of Library Directors That Plan to Use Strategy	% Change
Seek endorsements from prominent people	9.0%	23.1%	156.7%
Implement and/or expand advocacy activities targeted at the public sector	24.3%	31.3%	28.8%
Invest resources in marketing/advertising/public relations	22.2%	21.6%	-2.7%
Educate the public about the organization's mission	55.6%	49.3%	-11.3%

While most survey respondents (91.1%) indicated that the community has a positive

image of their library, there was less agreement (57.9%) about the community's awareness of the

services offered. One interview participant indicated that patron interviews had highlighted the

need for the library to market its services and make people aware of how the library is funded.

Another interview participant said that people think that "things must be okay unless we tell

them and we are not very good at telling them."

Finding #6: Pennsylvania public library directors identified revenue, retrenchment, and

legitimization strategies as effective.

In total, there were 292 effective strategies mentioned by 112 library directors in response

to the open-ended Question #5 in the survey. As Table 6 indicates, revenue and retrenchment

strategies combined comprised 91.1% of the effective strategies mentioned, which is what would

be expected based on the number of strategies in each category. However, there is a significant

difference between the strategies identified as effective for both the revenue and retrenchment

categories. In fact, when analyzed proportionally, revenue strategies were identified as effective significantly more than expected, while retrenchment strategies were identified as effective significantly less than expected.

Table 6: Count of strategies identified as effective

Strategy Categories	# of Strategies Identified As Effective	Expected # of Strategies Identified as Effective
Revenue	151 (52%)	104 (36%)
Retrenchment	115 (39%)	162 (55%)
Legitimization	26 (9%)	26 (9%)

P-value = 2.67136E-08

Table 7 shows the particular strategies that were identified as most effective in each category by the library directors. The first revenue strategy indicated (increased/expanded fundraising in general) was not a particular strategy listed on the survey, but was identified by 31 respondents as being effective.

Table 7: Strategies identified as most effective by strategy category

Strategies	# of Directors Identifying Strategy as Effective
Revenue Strategies	
Increase/expand fundraising (in general)	31
Increase board member participation in fundraising	24
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors	20
Retrenchment Strategies	
Reduce staff	22
Reduce hours library is open	16
Increase use of volunteers	11
Legitimization Strategies	
Educate the public about the organization's mission	11
Implement and/or expand advocacy activities targeted at the public sector	10

Recommendations

This study identified the strategies Pennsylvania public library directors are using to minimize the impact of reductions in government funding on the services they provide and ensure long-term financial stability. Based upon these findings, I advise the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association to focus on three main recommendations. These recommendations include: 1) develop long-term revenue strategies that will supplement the Library's short-term revenue strategies; 2) increase usage of partnerships and collaborations; and 3) continue educating the public about the Library's mission while also increasing the Library's advocacy efforts.

Recommendation #1: Develop long-term revenue strategies that will supplement the Library's short-term revenue strategies.

As indicated in Finding #3, while only 13.9% of library directors indicated that they had developed long-range funding strategies, 33.6% plan on doing this in the future, a 141.7% increase. In addition, while only 46.5% of the respondents were using any of the five long-term revenue strategies, 66.4% plan to use these strategies in the future, a 42.8% increase. The Library has already used many of the short-term revenue strategies mentioned in the survey and used by many of the library directors that responded to the survey, such as adding fundraising events, targeting fundraising efforts at private donors, and increasing board member participation in fundraising. The Library should consider some additional short-term revenue strategies that were mentioned by other library directors but the Library has not used yet, such as updating the web site to accept online donations and researching the value of books being donated to get the most money possible for book donations.

While short-term revenue strategies are necessary to fund daily operations, the development of long-term revenue strategies will allow the Library to plan for the future while also providing current income. The Library should evaluate the entire revenue structure, taking into account expected growth of various types of revenue, levels of variance between revenue sources, and how revenue sources integrate with programs (Hughes & Luksetich, 1999; Kingma, 1993; Wilsker & Young, 2010; Young, 2007). The Library should also make deliberate plans to grow the endowment, including the use of planned giving vehicles. This will help provide an adequate financial cushion, creating greater financial stability (Carroll & Stater, 2009). Plans to grow the endowment by the use of major gifts and planned giving will require more regular communication with donors to cultivate relationships, as mentioned by one of the library directors in Finding #3. The long-term revenue strategies developed by the Library will need to be continually reviewed and updated by the board as conditions both internally and externally change (Wilsker & Young, 2010).

Recommendation #2: Increase usage of partnerships and collaborations.

As indicated in Finding #4, the library directors surveyed indicated that of the twenty-five retrenchment strategies, they would use nineteen of them less in the future. Of these nineteen, 74% relate specifically to reducing staff, reducing hours a library is open, reducing programs, deferring maintenance, and delaying technology upgrades, all strategies that the Library has used in its effort to reduce the impact of funding reductions. Instead, four of the top six retrenchment strategies that library directors plan to increase usage of are partnerships and collaborations with businesses, school districts, other libraries, and other nonprofit agencies. The Library should investigate partnerships with businesses, which could involve corporate volunteering, as well as business sponsorship of particular initiatives, as mentioned by participants in the study. The

Library should also investigate partnerships with other libraries in the state and particularly within the Northeast library district, as this could provide the opportunity to share services and decrease costs, particularly for the purchase of EBook licenses, which the Library has not committed to yet. Finally, the Library should investigate partnerships and collaborations with the school districts in the county and with other nonprofit agencies such as the Susquehanna County Literacy Program, the United Way, the Community Foundation of the Endless Mountains, and the Chamber of Commerce. This would provide the Library with the opportunity to have more of an impact on the community by combining forces related to a particular cause and could lead to greater revenue generation, particularly when seeking funds from foundations, which are increasingly looking for community collaboration.

Recommendation #3: Continue educating the public about the Library's mission while at the same time increase the Library's advocacy efforts.

The Library's ten-year vision includes increasing public awareness of the importance of the library. As indicated in Finding #5, 49.3% of library directors expect to continue educating the public about the organization's mission. In addition, 31.3% of the survey respondents indicated that they plan to engage in advocacy efforts in the future. These were also the two legitimization strategies that library directors most commonly identified as effective, as indicated in Finding #6. Legitimization strategies are important, as a positive image and a viable public mission are critical to an organization's survival (Bielefeld, Galaskiewicz, Hager, & Pins, 1996) and enhancing the reputation of the organization can influence the perception of funders (Bielefeld, 1992; Bielefeld, 1994; Levine, 1978). In addition, Frumkin and Kim (2001) found that effective communication of mission had more of an effect on contributions than efficient

operations. Libraries are competing with many other organizations for scarce resources, and those organizations that are relevant and pro-active will receive the resources.

The Library should continue to take advantage of all opportunities to educate the public about their mission and the services they offer, especially as those services change. In addition, the Library should continue to inform the public about how the library is funded. The Library should also involve the community with advocacy efforts targeted at both the local and state governments. The Library will need to constantly educate and advocate at the same time as they are attempting to increase revenue and cut costs. Combining education and advocacy with partnerships and collaborations, while at the same time developing long-term revenue strategies, can have a significant impact on improving the Library's financial stability.

Conclusion

Financial stability plays a critical role in an organization's mission fulfillment and survival. The state funding reductions experienced by most Pennsylvania public libraries in recent years has been challenging to these organizations. The findings and recommendations that emerged from this study may be used to assist the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association in minimizing the impact of reductions in government funding and ensuring long-term financial stability, as well as other libraries and nonprofit organizations that are attempting to fulfill their mission while maintaining financial stability.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Human Subjects Research Approval

Date: March 4, 2013

To: Brenda Syle, CCPA

From: Anne M. Casella, CIP Administrator
                              Human Subjects Research Review Committee

Subject: Human Subjects Research Approval

Protocol Number: 2223-13

Protocol title: *Ensuring Financial Stability for the Susquehanna County Historical*
                              Society and Free Library Association in an Uncertain Financial
                              Environment

Your project identified above was reviewed by the HSRRC and has received an Exempt approval
pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations, 45 CFR
46.101(b)(2) .

An exempt status signifies that you will not be required to submit a Continuing Review
application as long as your project involving human subjects remains unchanged. If your project
undergoes any changes these changes must be reported to our office prior to implementation.
Please complete the modification form found at the following link:
http://research.binghamton.edu/Compliance/humansubjects/COEUS_Docs.php

Principal Investigators or any individual involved in the research must report any problems
involving the conduct of the study or subject participation. Any problems involving recruitment
and consent processes or any deviations from the approved protocol should be reported in
writing within five (5) business days as outlined in Binghamton University, Human Subjects
Research Review Office, Policy and Procedures IX.F.1 Unanticipated Problems/adverse
events/complaints. We require that the Unanticipated Problems/adverse events/complaints form
be submitted to our office, found at the following link:
http://research.binghamton.edu/Compliance/humansubjects/COEUS_Docs.php

University policy requires you to maintain as a part of your records, any documents pertaining to
the use of human subjects in your research. This includes any information or materials conveyed
to, and received from, the subjects, as well as any executed consent forms, data and analysis
results. These records must be maintained for at least six years after project completion or
termination. If this is a funded project, you should be aware that these records are subject to
inspection and review by authorized representative of the University, State and Federal
governments.

Please notify this office when your project is complete by completing and forwarding to our office the Protocol closure form found at the following link: http://research.binghamton.edu/Compliance/humansubjects/COEUS_Docs.php. Upon notification we will close the above referenced file. Any reactivation of the project will require a new application.

This documentation is being provided to you via email. A hard copy will not be mailed unless you request us to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation, I wish you success in your research, and please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or require further assistance.

cc: file
Kristina Lambright

__Diane Bulizak, Secretary__
Human Subjects Research Review Office
Biotechnology Building, Room 2205
Binghamton University
85 Murray Hill Rd.
Vestal, NY 13850
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Telephone: (607) 777-3818
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Appendix B

Survey Instrument

You are invited to participate in a research study to determine effective strategies for dealing with reductions in government funding and ensuring organizational survival. Your responses will help the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania minimize the impact on their organization of recent reductions in state funding. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you work for a library in Pennsylvania that may have experienced reductions in government funding over the past several years. The survey will take five minutes to complete. Your decision to participate is voluntary and all responses are confidential. You are not required to answer all of the questions and are free to stop at any time. Your decision to participate will not affect your relationship with the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association or Binghamton University.

For questions or concerns please contact Brenda Syle at bsyle1@binghamton.edu. If you would like a copy of the final report please send me an email.

1. **I have read the above and understand that participating in the survey implies my consent.**

_____   Yes

GENERAL INFORMATION

2. **Has state funding been reduced to your library in the last three years (2010-2012)?**
_____   Yes
_____   No

3. **By what percentage?**
_____   0-5%
_____   6-10%
_____   11-15%
_____   16-20%
_____   21-25%
_____   More than 25%

4. **Please check all of the following strategies that your library has used to minimize the impact of state funding reductions.**

_____   Invested resources in marketing/advertising/public relations
_____   Assessed community needs/carried out market studies
_____   Started/expanded or innovated services or programs
_____   Increased/expanded fee-for-service activities
_____   Expanded private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors

_____	Expanded private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations
_____	Expanded private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations
_____	Investigated new funding sources provided by the state government
_____	Investigated new funding sources provided by the local government
_____	Increased use of planned giving vehicles such as bequests
_____	Started an endowment
_____	Worked to increase an endowment
_____	Conducted additional fundraising events
_____	Increased board member participation in fundraising
_____	Increased commercial sources of support such as sale of library-related items
_____	Implemented and/or expanded advocacy activities targeted at the public sector
_____	Educated the public about the organization's mission
_____	Sought endorsements from prominent people
_____	Reduced hours library is open
_____	Increased fees or fee collection efforts
_____	Increased staff work load
_____	Increased use of volunteers
_____	Increased use of part-time staff
_____	Postponed hiring
_____	Reduced staff
_____	Instituted salary freezes
_____	Reduced staff benefits
_____	Reduced staff training
_____	Reduced or eliminated children's services or programs
_____	Reduced or eliminated outreach services or programs
_____	Reduced or eliminated electronic access services or programs
_____	Deferred building maintenance
_____	Delayed technology upgrades for staff
_____	Delayed technology upgrades for patrons
_____	Used reserves
_____	Used endowment funds
_____	Sold real estate
_____	Sold other assets
_____	Borrowed for operations
_____	Borrowed for capital projects
_____	Developed partnerships or collaborations with other libraries
_____	Developed partnerships or collaborations with school districts
_____	Developed partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies
_____	Developed partnerships or collaborations with other businesses
_____	Developed long-range funding strategies

5. Which three strategies indicated above have been most effective?

6. If you have reduced hours worked for paid staff, how much was the reduction?

_____ 0-5%
_____ 6-10%
_____ 11-15%
_____ 16-20%
_____ More than 20%
_____ I have not reduced hours worked for paid staff

7. **Please check all of the following strategies that your library will consider in the future if government funding continues to decrease.**

_____ Invest resources in marketing/advertising/public relations
_____ Assess community needs/carry out market studies
_____ Start/expand or innovated services or programs
_____ Increase/expand fee-for-service activities
_____ Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors
_____ Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations
_____ Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations
_____ Investigate new funding sources provided by the state government
_____ Investigate new funding sources provided by the local government
_____ Increased use of planned giving vehicles such as bequests
_____ Start an endowment
_____ Work to increase an endowment
_____ Conduct additional fundraising events
_____ Increase board member participation in fundraising
_____ Increase commercial sources of support such as sale of library-related items
_____ Implement and/or expand advocacy activities targeted at the public sector
_____ Educate the public about the organization's mission
_____ Seek endorsements from prominent people
_____ Reduce hours library is open
_____ Increase fees or fee collection efforts
_____ Increase staff work load
_____ Increase use of volunteers
_____ Increase use of part-time staff
_____ Postpone hiring
_____ Reduce staff
_____ Institute salary freezes
_____ Reduce staff benefits
_____ Reduce staff training
_____ Reduce or eliminate children's services or programs
_____ Reduce or eliminate outreach services or programs
_____ Reduce or eliminate electronic access services or programs
_____ Defer building maintenance
_____ Delay technology upgrades for staff
_____ Delay technology upgrades for patrons
_____ Use reserves
_____ Use endowment funds
_____ Sell real estate

_____   Sell other assets
_____   Borrow for operations
_____   Borrow for capital projects
_____   Develop partnerships or collaborations with other libraries
_____   Develop partnerships or collaborations with school districts
_____   Develop partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies
_____   Develop partnerships or collaborations with other businesses
_____   Develop long-range funding strategies

8. **How would you rate the severity of the state funding reductions?**

_____   Extremely severe
_____   Somewhat severe
_____   Severe
_____   Not too severe
_____   Not severe

9. **Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

   a. **The community is aware of the services provided by our library.**

   _____   Strongly disagree
   _____   Disagree
   _____   Neither agree nor disagree
   _____   Agree
   _____   Strongly agree
   _____   Don't know

   b. **The community has a positive image of our library.**

   _____   Strongly disagree
   _____   Disagree
   _____   Neither agree nor disagree
   _____   Agree
   _____   Strongly agree
   _____   Don't know

   c. **Our library has been successful in making up for lost state funding by increasing the amount of local funding.**

   _____   Strongly disagree
   _____   Disagree
   _____   Neither agree nor disagree
   _____   Agree
   _____   Strongly agree
   _____   Don't know

DEMOGRAPHICS

10. How long have you worked for your library?

_____   1-5 years
_____   6-10 years
_____   11-15 years
_____   16-20 years
_____   Over 20 years

11. What is your position?

_____   Librarian
_____   Board member
_____   Staff person
_____   Other, please specify: _____

12. What type of organization are you?
_____   Non-profit
_____   Government
_____   Other, please specify: _____

13. What type of library are you?

_____   Central library
_____   Branch
_____   Other, please specify: _____

14. Which chapter of the Pennsylvania Library Association does your library belong to?

_____   Southwest
_____   Northwest
_____   West Branch
_____   Juniata/Conemaugh
_____   South Central
_____   Southeast
_____   Lehigh Valley
_____   Northeast
_____   If you are unsure, enter County: _____

15. Where is your library located?
_____   City
_____   Suburb
_____   Town
_____   Rural

16. What is the population that your library serves?

_____   Fewer than 10,000 residents
_____   Between 10,000 and 49,999 residents
_____   Between 50,000 and 99,999 residents
_____   Between 100,000 and 499,999 residents
_____   More than 500,000 residents

17. How many hours per week are you open?

_____   Less than 5
_____   5-15 hours
_____   16-25 hours
_____   26-35 hours
_____   36-45 hours
_____   More than 45 hours

18. How many branches does your library have?

_____   0-2
_____   3-5
_____   6-10
_____   More than 10

19. What is your collection size?

_____   0-10,000
_____   10,001-25,000
_____   25,001-50,000
_____   50,001-100,000
_____   Over 100,000

20. What is your annual revenue?

_____   Less than $100,000
_____ $101,000 to $500,000
_____ $501,000 to $1,000,000
_____ $1,000,001 to $2,500,000
_____ $2,500,001 to $5,000,000
_____ $5,000,001 to $10,000,000
_____   Over $10,000,000

21. What services does your library offer? (Check all that apply)

_____   Circulation of books, audio books & other media
_____   E-books

_____	Access to public computers and internet
_____	Educational programs for children
_____	Educational programs for teenagers/young adults
_____	Educational programs for adults
_____	Educational programs for seniors
_____	Reference services
_____	Literacy tutoring
_____	Community room(s)
_____	Other, please specify _____

22. Thank you for your participation! If you have any additional comments, please enter them here. If you would like a copy of the final report, please send me an email at bsyle1@binghamton.edu.

Appendix C

First E-Mail to Research Participants

To: [Email]
From: "dirsusqcolib@stny.rr.com via surveymonkey.com"
Subject: Library Survey
Body: Dear [FirstName],

We are trying to determine the effective strategies that public libraries in Pennsylvania are using to deal with reductions in government funding, and we hope that you'll take a moment to click through to our survey at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx.

This study is being conducted for the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania as a graduate capstone project at Binghamton University. Your responses will help us minimize the impact on our organization of recent reductions in state funding.

The study is completely voluntary and consists of two parts, a 5-minute survey (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx) for public library directors in Pennsylvania, and 20-minute telephone interviews with eight selected public library directors in Pennsylvania. Both aspects will be conducted by Brenda Syle. I will not see your responses, only general themes, so I hope you will be candid and honest. This study is for our purposes only, although a report will be made available to those who request it.

The survey is available at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx until Friday, March 15th, and I hope that you will take five minutes to quickly fill it out. If you have questions about or problems with the survey, you can contact Brenda at bsyle1@binghamton.edu or 570-396-1733.

Thank you, and please feel free to contact myself or Brenda if you have specific questions.

Sincerely,

Susan Stone
Director
Susquehanna County Free Library Association
18 Monument Street
Montrose, PA 18801
(570)278-1881
dirsusqcolibrary@stny.rr.com
www.susqcolibrary.org

Appendix D

Second and Third E-mail to Research Participants

To: [Email]
From: "dirsusqcolib@stny.rr.com via surveymonkey.com"
Subject: Library Survey Reminder
Body: Dear [FirstName],

This is just a reminder that our survey on effective strategies that public libraries in Pennsylvania are using to deal with reductions in government funding will close this Friday, March 15th. If it is still on your to-do list, please take a moment to visit http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx and share your opinions.

Again, if you have any trouble with the survey, please contact Brenda at bsyle1@binghamton.edu or 570-396-1733.

Sincerely,

Susan Stone
Director
Susquehanna County Free Library Association
18 Monument Street
Montrose, PA 18801
(570)278-1881
dirsusqcolibrary@stny.rr.com
www.susqcolibrary.org

To remove yourself from further survey notices click
http://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx.

Appendix E

Interview Protocol

Good Morning/Afternoon. I am Brenda Syle and I am a student in the Masters in Public Administration program at Binghamton University. I am talking to library directors in Pennsylvania about effective strategies for dealing with reductions in government funding and ensuring organizational survival. The goal of this research is to help the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania minimize the impact on their organization of recent reductions in state funding.

You have been asked to participate in this interview because you work for a library in Pennsylvania that may have experienced reductions in government funding over the past several years. The interview should last approximately 20 minutes.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You are not obligated to answer all questions and may stop at any time. Your responses will remain confidential. A final report will be made available to participants.

Do you have any questions about the research project?

May I continue with the first question?

1. What impact have the recent reductions in state funding had on your library?

2. What is your library doing to minimize the impact of state funding reductions?

3. Which of these strategies have been most effective? Why?

4. What strategies will your library consider using in the future if government funding continues to decrease? Why?

5. To what extent is your community aware of the funding reductions to the library?

6. Describe how the community views your library.

7. To what extent have you been successful with replacing state funding with local funding? Why or why not?

8. What other challenges, if any, is your library facing right now?

9. What services do you see your library providing in the future?

Thank you for your time and have a good day.

Appendix F

Interview Request E-mail

To: [Email]
From: Brenda Syle [bsyle1@binghamton.edu]
Sent: [Date]
Subject: Library Research – Interview Request

[FirstName],

This is Brenda Syle. I'm conducting a research project for my Master's Degree in Public Administration on effective strategies that public libraries in Pennsylvania are using to deal with reductions in government funding.

You should have received a Library Survey invitation yesterday. Your organization was chosen to participate in the interview portion of the research, and I am hoping to schedule a 20-minute phone conversation with you.

I will ask you some questions about the impact that the recent state funding reductions have had on your library, and the strategies you have been using to minimize the impact on your library. Your responses will remain confidential. These will be slightly different questions than the survey, so I hope that you will fill out the survey as well. Participation is completely voluntary, you are not obligated to answer all of the questions, and you may stop at any time. I hope that you will be willing to participate, as this study will help the Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association minimize the impact on their organization of recent reductions in state funding.

Please let me know when you would be available to participate in the telephone interview between Friday, March 8th and Friday, March 15th by either return email or calling my cell phone at (570)396-1733. I appreciate you taking the time to speak with me, and I will work around your schedule.

Thanks in advance,

Brenda Syle
Graduate Student
Binghamton University
State University of New York
4400 Vestal Parkway East
Binghamton, NY 13902

 (570)396-1733
bsyle1@binghamton.edu

Appendix G

List of Categorized Strategies

Strategies
Revenue Strategies
Short-term
Start/expand or innovate services or programs
Increase fees or fee collection efforts
Increase/expand fee-for-service activities
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations
Investigate new funding sources provided by the state government
Investigate new funding sources provided by the local government
Conduct additional fundraising events
Increase board member participation in fundraising
Increase commercial sources of support such as sale of library-related items
Long-Term
Assess community needs/carry out market studies
Start an endowment
Work to increase an endowment
Increase use of planned giving vehicles such as bequests
Develop long-range funding strategies
Legitimization Strategies
Invest resources in marketing/advertising/public relations
Implement and/or expand advocacy activities targeted at the public sector
Educate the public about the organization's mission
Seek endorsements from prominent people

Strategies
Retrenchment Strategies
Reduce hours library is open
Increase staff work load
Increase use of volunteers
Increase use of part-time staff
Postpone hiring
Reduce staff
Institute salary freezes
Reduce staff benefits
Reduce staff training
Reduce or eliminate children's services or programs
Reduce or eliminate outreach services or programs
Reduce or eliminate electronic access services or programs
Defer building maintenance
Delay technology upgrades for equipment used by staff
Delay technology upgrades for equipment used by patrons
Use reserves
Use endowment funds
Sell real estate
Sell other assets
Borrow for operations
Borrow for capital projects
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other libraries
Develop partnerships or collaborations with school districts
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other businesses

Appendix H

Survey Response Tables

Q2: Has state funding been reduced to your library in the last three years (2010-2012)?	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	93.8%	137
No	6.2%	9
	100.0%	146

Q3: By what percentage?	Response Percent	Response Count
0-5%	33.6%	44
6-10%	13.7%	18
11-15%	12.2%	16
16-20%	5.3%	7
21-25%	6.9%	9
More than 25%	28.2%	37
	100.00%	131

Q6. If you have reduced hours worked for paid staff, how much was the reduction?	Response Percent	Response Count
0-5%	13.3%	17
6-10%	20.3%	26
11-15%	5.5%	7
16-20%	3.1%	4
More than 20%	4.7%	6
I have not reduced hours worked for paid staff	53.1%	68
	100.0%	128

Q8. How would you rate the severity of the impact of state funding reductions on your library?	Response Percent	Response Count
Extremely severe	21.7%	31
Somewhat severe	26.6%	38
Severe	29.4%	42
Not too severe	18.2%	26
Not severe	4.2%	6
	100.0%	143

Q9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:		
The community is aware of the services provided by our library.	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Strongly Agree	1.3%	1
Agree	56.0%	42
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	26.7%	20
Disagree	14.7%	11
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Do not know	1.3%	1
	100.0%	75
Agreement Rating	3.4	
Key: 5 - Strong Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 - Disagree, 1 - Strong Disagree, 0 - Don't know		
The community has a positive image of our library.	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Strongly Agree	37.4%	46
Agree	54.5%	67
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	6.5%	8
Disagree	0.8%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.8%	1
Do not know	0.0%	0
	100.0%	123
Agreement Rating	4.3	
Key: 5 - Strong Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 - Disagree, 1 - Strong Disagree, 0 - Don't know		
Our library has been successful in making up for lost state funding by increasing the amount of local funding.	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Strongly Agree	8.9%	12
Agree	14.1%	19
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	28.1%	38
Disagree	29.6%	40
Strongly Disagree	18.5%	25
Do not know	0.7%	1
	100.0%	135
Agreement Rating	2.6	
Key: 5 - Strong Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 - Disagree, 1 - Strong Disagree, 0 - Don't know		

Q10. How long have you worked for your library?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
1-5 years	31.3%	45
6-10 years	20.8%	30
11-15 years	14.6%	21
16-20 years	10.4%	15
Over 20 years	22.9%	33
	100.0%	144

Q11. What is your position?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Librarian	84.4%	130
Board member	0.0%	0
Staff person	1.3%	2
Library Director	12.3%	19
Executive Director	1.3%	2
Library Manager	0.6%	1
	100.0%	154

Q12. What type of organization are you?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Non-Profit	90.2%	129
Government	9.8%	14
Other (please specify)	0	0
	100.0%	143

Q13. What type of library are you?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Central library	72.8%	107
Branch library	6.8%	10
Other (please specify)		
District Center Library	1.4%	2
System Library or member of System	12.2%	18
Independent Library	5.4%	8
Municipal System	0.7%	1
Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	0.7%	1
	100.0%	147

Q14. Which chapter of the Pennsylvania Library Association does your library belong to?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Southwest	23.3%	34
South Central	15.1%	22
Southeast	15.1%	22
Northeast	13.7%	20
Northwest	10.3%	15
Lehigh Valley	8.9%	13
West Branch	6.2%	9
Juniata/Conemaugh	3.4%	5
Unidentified	4.1%	6
	100.0%	146

Q15. Where is your library located?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Town	34.3%	49
Rural	25.2%	36
Suburb	22.4%	32
City	17.5%	25
All of the above	0.7%	1
	100.0%	143

Q16. What is the population that your library serves?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Fewer than 10,000 residents	36.4%	52
Between 10,000 and 49,999 residents	45.4%	65
Between 50,000 and 99,999 residents	8.4%	12
Between 100,000 and 499,999 residents	7.7%	11
More than 500,000 residents	2.1%	3
	100.0%	143

Q17. How many hours per week are you open?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5	0.0%	0
5-15 hours	0.0%	0
16-25 hours	1.4%	2
26-35 hours	14.0%	20
36-45 hours	23.1%	33
More than 45 hours	61.5%	88
	100.0%	143

Q18. How many branches does your library have?

	Response Percent	Response Count
0-2	87.7%	121
3-5	5.8%	8
6-10	4.3%	6
More than 10	2.2%	3
	100.0%	138

Q19. What is your collection size?

	Response Percent	Response Count
0-10,000	4.9%	7
10,001-25,000	24.3%	35
25,001-50,000	28.5%	41
50,001-100,000	18.7%	27
Over 100,000	23.6%	34
	100.0%	144

Q20. What is your annual revenue?		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Less than $100,000	24.8%	35
$101,000 to $500,000	45.4%	64
$501,000 to $1,000,000	9.2%	13
$1,000,001 to $2,500,000	12.1%	17
$2,500,001 to $5,000,000	2.8%	4
$5,000,001 to $10,000,000	4.3%	6
Over $10,000,000	1.4%	2
	100.0%	141

Q21. What services does your library offer? (Check all that apply) 144 Total Responses		
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
Circulation of books, audio books & other media	99.3%	143
Access to public computers and internet	99.3%	143
Educational programs for children	99.3%	143
E-books	90.3%	130
Reference services	90.3%	130
Educational programs for adults	86.8%	125
Community room(s)	74.3%	107
Educational programs for teenagers/young adults	72.2%	104
Educational programs for seniors	63.2%	91
Literacy tutoring	26.4%	38
Other (please specify)		
Fax and copy services	0.7%	1
Library tours and community service hours	0.7%	1
Wireless	0.7%	1
Workforce development	0.7%	1
Grandparent family center	0.7%	1
Citizenship training, business center, autism info center, art gallery	0.7%	1
Open floor plan used by parents, tutors, TSS persons, children, students, tutors, other visitors to read, do homework, use wireless, conduct small personal meetings, & read magazines/newspapers. There are 2 book clubs that each meet one evening a month during closed hours.	0.7%	1

Q4. Please check all of the following strategies that your library has used to minimize the impact of state funding reductions.	144 Total Responses	
	Response Percent	Response Count
Conducted additional fundraising events	67.4%	97
Expanded private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors	63.9%	92
Educated the public about the organization's mission	55.6%	80
Increased board member participation in fundraising	52.1%	75
Increased staff work load	47.9%	69
Increased use of volunteers	43.1%	62
Reduced hours library is open	41.7%	60
Used reserves	41.7%	60
Expanded private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations	36.8%	53
Started/expanded or innovated services or programs	33.3%	48
Expanded private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations	32.6%	47
Reduced staff	32.6%	47
Delayed technology upgrades for equipment used by patrons	32.6%	47
Instituted salary freezes	30.6%	44
Delayed technology upgrades for equipment used by staff	30.6%	44
Postponed hiring	29.9%	43
Increased fees or fee collection efforts	25.0%	36
Deferred building maintenance	25.0%	36
Implemented and/or expanded advocacy activities targeted at the public sector	24.3%	35
Developed partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies	24.3%	35
Increased commercial sources of support such as sale of library-related items	23.6%	34
Increased use of part-time staff	23.6%	34
Invested resources in marketing/advertising/public relations	22.2%	32
Increased/expanded fee-for-service activities	22.2%	32
Investigated new funding sources provided by the local government	21.5%	31
Assessed community needs/carried out market studies	20.8%	30
Worked to increase an endowment	19.4%	28
Developed partnerships or collaborations with other libraries	18.8%	27
Reduced staff benefits	16.0%	23
Used endowment funds	14.6%	21
Developed partnerships or collaborations with other businesses	13.9%	20
Developed long-range funding strategies	13.9%	20
Developed partnerships or collaborations with school districts	13.2%	19
Increased use of planned giving vehicles such as bequests	11.8%	17
Reduced or eliminated outreach services or programs	10.4%	15
Investigated new funding sources provided by the state government	9.0%	13
Sought endorsements from prominent people	9.0%	13
Reduced staff training	9.0%	13
Reduced or eliminated electronic access services or programs	9.0%	13
Started an endowment	8.3%	12
Reduced or eliminated children's services or programs	8.3%	12
Borrowed for capital projects	2.8%	4
Borrowed for operations	1.4%	2
Sold real estate	0.7%	1
Sold other assets	0.7%	1

Q7. Please check all of the following strategies that your library will consider in the future if government funding continues to decrease.	134 Total Responses	
	Response Percent	Response Count
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors	62.7%	84
Conduct additional fundraising events	56.0%	75
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations	55.2%	74
Increase board member participation in fundraising	53.7%	72
Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations	51.5%	69
Educate the public about the organization's mission	49.3%	66
Reduce hours library is open	33.6%	45
Develop long-range funding strategies	33.6%	45
Investigate new funding sources provided by the local government	32.8%	44
Implement and/or expand advocacy activities targeted at the public sector	31.3%	42
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other libraries	31.3%	42
Increase/expand fee-for-service activities	30.6%	41
Work to increase an endowment	29.9%	40
Use reserves	29.9%	40
Increase use of volunteers	29.1%	39
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other businesses	29.1%	39
Increased use of planned giving vehicles such as bequests	28.4%	38
Investigate new funding sources provided by the state government	26.9%	36
Increase fees or fee collection efforts	26.9%	36
Develop partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies	26.9%	36
Assess community needs/carry out market studies	23.9%	32
Develop partnerships or collaborations with school districts	23.9%	32
Start/expand or innovated services or programs	23.1%	31
Seek endorsements from prominent people	23.1%	31
Reduce staff	22.4%	30
Invest resources in marketing/advertising/public relations	21.6%	29
Postpone hiring	21.6%	29
Institute salary freezes	19.4%	26
Increase commercial sources of support such as sale of library-related items	18.7%	25
Defer building maintenance	17.9%	24
Delay technology upgrades for equipment used by staff	16.4%	22
Increase staff work load	14.9%	20
Delay technology upgrades for equipment used by patrons	14.9%	20
Use endowment funds	13.4%	18
Reduce staff benefits	12.7%	17
Reduce or eliminate outreach services or programs	12.7%	17
Increase use of part-time staff	10.4%	14
Reduce or eliminate electronic access services or programs	8.2%	11
Start an endowment	7.5%	10
Reduce staff training	6.0%	8
Reduce or eliminate children's services or programs	6.0%	8
Sell other assets	2.2%	3
Borrow for capital projects	2.2%	3
Borrow for operations	0.7%	1
Sell real estate	0.0%	0

Appendix I

List of Effective Strategies by Category

Strategy # on Survey	Revenue Strategies	# of Library Directors That Identified Strategy as Effective
N/A	Increase/expand fundraising	31
15	Increase board member participation in fundraising	24
5	Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at private donors	20
10	Investigate new funding sources provided by the local government	15
14	Conduct additional fundraising events	14
21	Increase fees or fee collection efforts	10
6	Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at foundations	8
7	Expand private fundraising efforts targeted at corporations	6
3	Start/expand or innovate services or programs	5
46	Develop long-range funding strategies	5
16	Increase commercial sources of support such as sale of library-related items	4
4	Increase/expand fee-for-service activities	4
2	Assess community needs/carried out market studies	1
13	Work to increase an endowment	1
11	Increase use of planned giving vehicles such as bequests	1
9	Investigate new funding sources provided by the state government	1
12	Start an endowment	1
	Total	151

	Legitimization Strategies	
18	Educate the public about the organization's mission	11
17	Implement and/or expand advocacy activities targeted at the public sector	10
1	Invest resources in marketing/advertising/public relations	4
19	Seek endorsements from prominent people	1
	Total	26

Strategy # on Survey	Retrenchment Strategies	# of Library Directors That Identified Strategy as Effective
26	Reduce staff	22
20	Reduce hours library is open	16
23	Increase use of volunteers	11
25	Postpone hiring	7
42	Develop partnerships or collaborations with other libraries	7
37	Use endowment funds	6
27	Institute salary freezes	5
36	Use reserves	5
44	Develop partnerships or collaborations with other nonprofit agencies	5
22	Increase staff work load	4
43	Develop partnerships or collaborations with school districts	4
28	Reduce staff benefits	3
34	Delay technology upgrades for equipment used by staff	3
35	Delay technology upgrades for equipment used by patrons	3
24	Increase use of part-time staff	2
33	Defer building maintenance	2
N/A	Develop partnerships	2
N/A	Reduce collection expenditures	2
31	Reduce or eliminate outreach services or programs	1
41	Borrow for capital projects	1
45	Develop partnerships or collaborations with other businesses	1
N/A	Delay technology upgrades	1
N/A	Receive used computer donations for patrons	1
N/A	Change from in house custodial services to service contract.	1
29	Reduce staff training	0
30	Reduce or eliminate children's services or programs	0
32	Reduce or eliminate electronic access services or programs	0
38	Sell real estate	0
39	Sell other assets	0
40	Borrow for operations	0
	Total	115