

# THE ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: EXPERIENCE FROM SERBIA ON THE THRESHOLD OF 2020

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**Abstract:** *Library materials on the economic development are available in different forms to potential readers. The scope of this paper is to explain the organization of knowledge on the economic development in Serbian academic librarianship. It is due to this paper that potential library users will receive an insight into the e-resources of professional and scientific information on the economic development which are available in Serbian academic librarianship.*

*Its nature is the international one because it is included into the process of globalization through the creating and promoting its freely available data bases. Except that, it is internationalized long time ago because it contains those library materials which can be borrowed from abroad. In addition, the central university library in Belgrade implements international standards in cataloguing and classification of library materials.*

*This paper concentrates on those academic libraries in Serbia which are included into COBISS (Cooperative On-line Bibliographic System & Services). Many academic libraries in Serbia are included into this system. It is due to this fact that a cumulative e-catalogue exists. All these libraries contribute to its content by their regular work in the domain of acquisition, cataloguing and classification of library materials.*

*The method used in this paper is the empirical one with the statistical access to the indispensable data which are the result of retrieving data bases, having in mind the problems of the economic development. It is on the threshold of the next decade that open repositories become more and more developed. Professional as well as scientific knowledge on the economic development becomes closer and closer to the readers from all the world. The border between a rural environment and the urban zone is surpassed long time ago by those readers who have technical skills for the efficient retrievals of data bases.*

**Keywords:** *economic development, Serbia, academic librarianship, globalization, Information Society.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The expansion of professional and scientific information is among key characteristics of a contemporary society. Human resources make great influence on the quantity and the quality of work. From the historical point of view, the implementation of international standards in work processes contributes very much to the adjustment of enterprises, institutions or simply – organizations to the global information streams.

Classification is an operation that people were realizing since *Ancient Greece* and *Ancient Rome*. There has always been a need to group similar objects and to describe them in the adequate way which would annulate a potential chaos wherever it can be expected. Knowledge is to be organized and memorized in a way which would allow its efficient retrieval and implementation.

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E-catalogues have their evolution. Library users wished them to be more interactive than earlier. The central library of The University of Belgrade e. g. „Svetozar Marković“ University Library [1] had the opportunity to catalogue its materials in the system COBISS (Cooperative On-line Bibliographic System & Services) [2] until 2012. This system became more complex later on. It included more libraries as its members. Furthermore, a cumulative e-catalogue was formed. Many academic libraries of Serbia belong to the system COBISS.SR. It is not obligatory for any Serbian academic library to get included into this system because there are also other information technologies in Serbia. However, when a library entered that system once, it would be difficult to change its strategic orientation because of the technical base of work and the education of librarians who have to stay very familiar with cataloguing and classification of library materials in the framework of a bibliographic system they work in.

If all the academic libraries in Serbia would accept COBISS, there would be a type of monopoly and that wouldn't be desirable under the conditions of a healthy competition. It is not a characteristic of enterprises on contemporary markets only – to face competition within their regular activity - but also of non-profit organizations. The creating of an intellectual capital implies a concentration on professional and scientific resources, faculty plans and programs, students living standard, training courses, etc.

The academic libraries are included into the intellectual core of Serbian society. Many generations of future intellectuals study in their reading rooms every day. Therefore, particular attention should be paid to their technical conditions of work and the acquisition of materials on the economic development and similar professional problems such as: the international economy, technological progress, entrepreneurship, multivariate analyses, international finance etc.

If we would get back to cataloguing as a process, we should have in mind that those librarians who realize *subject cataloguing* meditate on the content of library materials. So, they do not contact often with users. However, they work for the e-catalogue of the library they are employed in. Therefore, these librarians have to neglect sound communication in order to stay concentrated on their own work. They often receive those library materials that nobody had catalogued in COBISS earlier. It means that these librarians have to compose:

- a subject heading or a topic determinant,
- a topic sub determinant,
- a geographic sub determinant,
- a time sub determinant,
- a formal sub determinant.

Librarian describes a logical connection between or among professional terms. He decides whether he would emphasize a word from a title, or from a content after he would see the illustrations, a bibliography of the work, indexes, summaries etc. It is due to his influence on the frequency of words that he directs users' thoughts through scientific streams, stimulating him to connect different disciplines and analyze economic, social and other topics in the context of his profession.

## 2. THE ADVANTAGES AND THE DISADVANTAGES OF E-LEARING

Having in mind the development of technological civilization a group of authors [3] mentions that key components of that development are: management, marketing, innovations, technology and quality. Every *homo sapiens* who enrolls studies nowadays has in mind those professional

divisions which would help him to get a sustainable employment faster and to follow development without problems participating in it from an educational, economic and technical point of view. Contact with computer equipment and actual information resources will help many students to finalize their studies more successfully and to continue their studies on postgraduate level adequately prepared. The students will follow postgraduate studies with equal success if they would retrieve e-catalogues as carefully as earlier. Therefore, it is to be noticed that COBISS.SR offers:

- an access to the e-catalogues of individual academic libraries,
- an access to a cumulative e-catalogue.

Academic libraries deserve particular attention in the framework of each university because they are centers for the dissemination of information which are being visited by users e.g. students, researchers and professors as often. So, the academic libraries are the organizations which contribute regularly to the process of e-learning. This process is one of key processes during higher education nowadays.

The subject cataloguing of articles, books and serials is to be done unavoidably for every bibliographic description. Except that, it contributes to the development of users specialized vocabulary. As it is possible to increase the number of fields 606 in COBISS, it is also possible to determine several or even numerous subject headings (topic determinants) and sub determinants for every library item. It is one of the possible ways to develop scientific thought.

Almost every library user retrieves an e-catalogue typing out a keyword. Professional staff determines subject headings holding library material(s) in hands e. g. „de visu“ (latin expression used often in librarianship. It means: *on the base of materials which are seen*). That staff has convenient qualifications and the level of linguistic culture. Therefore, library staff has also the opportunity to lead a user online towards a higher level of thinking in the domain of his studies and professional orientation.

The advantages of e-learning are:

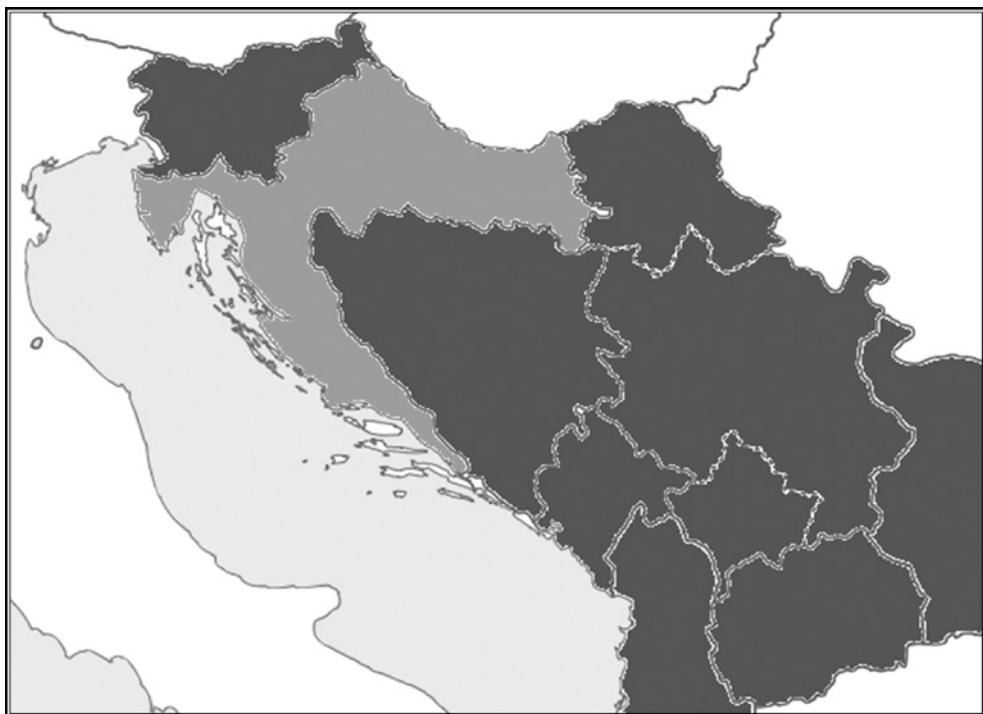
- it is easier to find more comfortable place for studying,
- a person may repeat reading several times over PC,
- there is a possibility of using e-dictionaries and other similar materials,
- the resources of information in foreign languages are also available due to the web,
- interactivity between a reader and a computer is particularly expressed during e-learning.

While Diderot, Rousseau, Goethe, and Schiller were creating their best works, there was no computer. While Mozart and Tchaikovsky were composing there was no PC in households. People were reading even in parks. It is not a case nowadays.

There are also certain disadvantages of e-learning:

- a computer is to be acquired, which is not a small expenditure for a student, particularly if he is unemployed,
- a reader should have software installed and Internet connection activated also,
- person should be familiar with new technologies but some of them are too requiring and still unknown to library users,
- it is not easy to work with the files whose memory is very big particularly if some computer viruses appear often etc.,
- e-learning is oriented much more towards reading inside a building.

This imposes the indispensability to equip the academic libraries better by the computer equipment of contemporary type. The role of librarians is more and more expressed in the process of instructing users. Information literacy is being developed usually from the first steps in the retrieval of Internet and data bases. E-catalogues are very often at the beginning of every serious research. It is not amazing because they illustrate how rich or how poor library collections are in the domain of the economic development.



Map 1. COBISS in South Eastern Europe

Nowadays, university libraries in Serbia have their own printed collections and digital materials which include literature on the economic and social development. These libraries have also an access to the aggregated databases with e-articles in full text. This free access exists for all the academic libraries in Serbia which are included into KoBSON (The Consortium of Serbian Libraries for Coordinated Acquisition) [4]. It receives certain discounts for the subscription to the e-journals. So, the academic libraries in Serbia follow the professional practice of similar libraries in Europe. It is not a dilemma any more: „to have a consortium or not?“ but which electronic journals are to be selected in order to make the work of the academic libraries more efficient for those researchers who go in for the economic development. Librarians do not make such a selection but professional boards on a higher level than a faculty is.

According to Slavoljub Milovanović who was writing on e-learning, the educational institutions which plan the introducing of e-learning should consider not just the advantages but also the disadvantages such as: the absence of personal contact among the participants in the educational process, high price of new technologies, the need for additional knowledge and skills which do not exist in classical education (knowledge on new IT, solving technical problems with equipment, finding feet before a camera etc.) [5].

*The Bibliography of Researchers* in the academic environment of Serbia is being created thanks to the academic librarians who are trained, experienced and organized in such a way to catalogue and classify library materials including articles from monographies such as conference books and

high-quality serials as well. Every researcher has his number within the data base E-CRIS.SR (Electronic Current Research Information System in Serbia) [6]. In this free access data base users may find information on authors' year of birth, the organization he works in, as well as his contact address.

Although it isn't very rich in literature, the central library of the University of Belgrade is a contemporary library with a tradition long enough to meet the expectations of its users in all the scientific fields, particularly in social sciences. Except this, as far as central Serbia is concerned, The University of Niš has its University Library „Nikola Tesla“ [7]. The University of Kragujevac has also a University Library for the needs of its users [8]. These three university libraries are included into COBISS.SR from the very beginning of its establishment. The Matice Srpska Library in Novi Sad is also included into COBISS.SR from the very beginning of the establishment of this bibliographic system [9]. Therefore, the academic librarians of these libraries participate very actively in the cataloguing and classification of literature, particularly monographies and articles.

### 3. MATERIALS ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SERBIAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP

It is for the purposes of classification of library units including those on the economic development that UDC (Universal Decimal Classification) is being used on. All the academic libraries in COBISS.SR use it. Subject headings exist as well as different types of sub determinants. According to the form, a monography can be a master work, doctoral dissertation, conference book, handbook, etc. Cataloguing in COBISS.SR including the classification of library units makes bibliographic descriptions created and professionally finalized in accordance with the international standards for bibliographic description of library materials.

Universal Decimal Classification is a key process in the organization of knowledge for a library whose collection consists of more than a million units. *Subject cataloguing* in an academic library is the result of professional thinking connected to the problems of the economic development in our case. It is due to the fact that library users in economics, philosophy or political sciences, for example, can notice easier what is in the first plan, what in the second and what is in the third plan of a monography whose bibliographic description they noticed on the screen upon the retrieval of an e-catalogue.

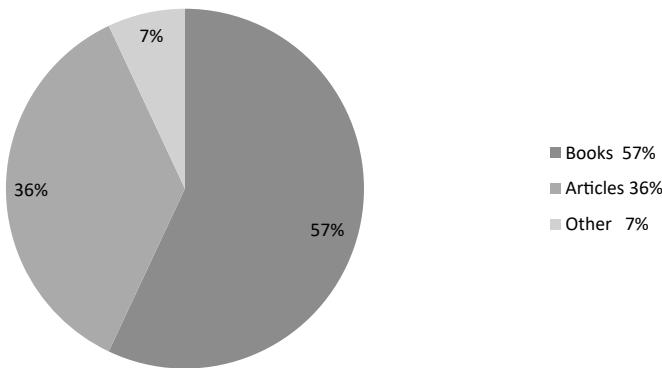


Chart 1. Formal structure of bibliographic descriptions  
for the key term **economic development** in Serbian academic librarianship.

*Source by the author using data from COBIB.SR accessed 14 February 2019.*

Such a retrieval is based usually on keywords, less often on a certain classification number. Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) is an artificial language. It is a numerical language which describes the nature of a work - a monography, an article or any other unit - that a librarian has to catalogue and classify. Except that, UDC is being used to describe the content of every library unit. Library units on the economic development are being catalogued „de visu“, e.g. on the base of a seen material. This refers also to all other materials in Serbian academic libraries. So, if there is a bibliographic description for a library unit in a database, it means that there is a real, acquired unit in that library collection. It would be just indispensable to check up whether it is available or lent and when it would be returned by the previous reader who would make the unit available for the next user that way.

Despite the fact that a university library, generally speaking, is rich in literature, the lack of materials on the economic development is to be compensated for. One of the possible ways is an interlibrary loan service with abroad. It exists in the central library of the University of Belgrade, for example whose range of services is wide. Another possibility is the use of e-resources. Such resources needn't require passwords compulsory. Very often a person may find useful contents in an open access.

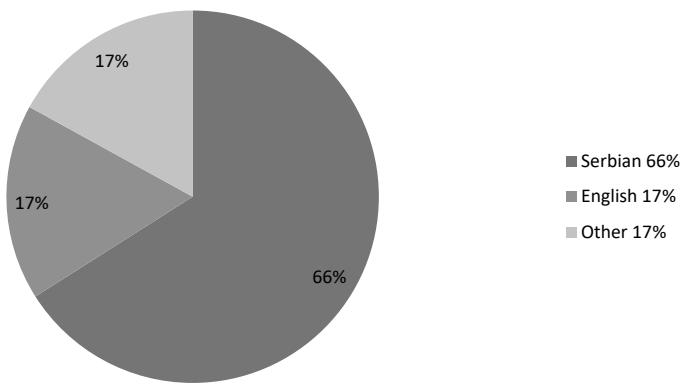


Chart 2. Linguistic structure of bibliographic descriptions for the key term **economic development** in Serbian academic librarianship

Source: By author using data from COBIB.SR accessed 14 February 2019.

The globalization of knowledge is very intensified today. The universities in Serbia rely on Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities [10]. It is signed on 11 November 2011 by the rector of the University of Belgrade, professor Branko Kovačević [11]. It is just one out of several signatures from the universities in Serbia based on such a document as Berlin Declaration is. Such an orientation towards the open access is confirmed in regular activities of the university libraries in Belgrade, Kragujevac, and Niš whose state universities established open repositories. There are three PHAIDRA (Permanent Hosting, Archiving and Indexing of Digital Resources and Assets) repositories in Serbian academic community:

- PHAIDRA which belongs to the University of Belgrade [12],
- PHAIDRA of the University of Kragujevac [13], and
- PHAIDRA of the University of Niš [14].

PHAIDRA is being used to download the full texts of doctoral dissertations which are defended in the academic Serbia. These full texts are freely available. The connection between an e-catalogue of each university library mentioned and the open repository of its university exists. As these e-catalogues are freely available, it is simple to convince every user that he should just

retrieve the e-catalogue in order to find an adequate reference for his work. If that bibliographic description contains a blue link e.g. a permanent link, he may simply activate it in order to open the dissertation in full text. Therefore, it should be said that all doctoral dissertation on the economic development are to be found in the same way except if they had been defended in Serbia before the Berlin Declaration was signed and before a PHAIDRA repository was created.

The European Portal of E-theses DART [15] is a useful resource of doctoral dissertations on the economic development. This paper will illustrate the situation in e-resources today, having in mind their role in the process of knowledge globalization and scientific development. Therefore, this paper gives an insight into the collections of Serbian academic librarianship in the domain of the economic development respecting the European and the international framework Serbian librarianship performs its activity in.

**Table 1. E-theses for a key term *economic development*  
on the Portal of European E-theses DART**

State	No. of e-theses
United Kingdom	5.301
France	3.631
Netherlands	2.470
Spain	1.514
Sweden	1.474
Italy	1.377
Greece	513
Finland	499
Ireland	489
Switzerland	415
Belgium	318
Norway	279
Hungary	218
Serbia	188
Czech Republic	110
Lithuania	105
Germany	88
Denmark	77
Estonia	73
Croatia	61
Portugal	58
Latvia	30
Austria	18
Bulgaria	15
Poland	12
Slovenia	8
Cyprus	3

*Source: By author using [www.dart-europe.eu](http://www.dart-europe.eu) accessed 18 February 2019.*

The works of the experts from state capitalism and other varieties of capitalism were useful enough to make great influence on those economists in Serbia who were ready to express their will for changes and contribute to their efficient realization through their own professional work.

Library resources and materials mentioned in this paper are particularly beneficial for the development of the economic scientific thought in a new technological environment. Therefore, Serbian academic libraries deserve great attention particularly if it is known that every serious economic research begins in some of them and the results are also obtained in their collections or repositories. This paper doesn't comment the problem of the quality of library units.

The creators of macroeconomic policy make influence on the economic development in Serbia and in every other country. Except that, the creators of the development policy of an enterprise make influence through its success on the development of the national economy. Having this in mind, it is through the retrieval of the European Portal of E-theses DART that data presented in the second statistical table are received.

Table 2. E-theses for the inquiry *economic development and economic policy*  
on the European Portal of e-theses DART

State	No. of e-theses
United Kingdom	2.739
France	1.331
Netherlands	926
Spain	591
Italy	583
Sweden	542
Ireland	247
Greece	216
Belgium	167
Finland	156
Switzerland	140
Hungary	109
Norway	107
Serbia	89
Czech Republic	43
Estonia	35
Croatia	33
Lithuania	30
Denmark	25
Portugal	21
Latvia	16
Austria	10
Germany	8
Bulgaria	4
Poland	3
Cyprus	1
Slovenia	1

Source: [www.dart-europe.eu](http://www.dart-europe.eu) (accessed 20 February 2019.)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The collections of Serbian academic librarianship contain literature on the economic development, particularly in Serbian and English. The vast majority of bibliographic descriptions on the economic development, in the cumulative e-catalogue COBIB.SR, refers to monographies.

Smaller number of references on the economic development, in the same electronic catalogue, refers to articles. The lack of literature on the economic development in Serbian academic librarianship is to be compensated for in different ways such as:

- 1) the retrieval of aggregated databases with e-articles,
- 2) the retrieval of those repositories which contain e-books, and / or
- 3) using an interlibrary loan service with abroad.

The nature and spirit of Serbian academic librarianship is the international one. The literature on the economic development is being acquired in Serbian and foreign languages, mostly in English. The aggregated data bases which are being retrieved and can offer materials on the economic development are the international ones. Online resources are widely available to the academic library users in Serbia. Interlibrary loan service with abroad is also available to the users in Serbia.

Except that, the professional and scientific papers on the economic development written by the researchers from Serbia are being published regularly in local, as well as in international periodicals. In addition, the monographies on the economic development written by the authors from Serbia and abroad can also be found in the collections and the repositories of Serbian academic librarianship. Social Sciences Citation Index is being used regularly in order to find suitable materials for the professional needs of library users. In addition, researchers in social sciences need to know whether they are cited in leading professional and scientific journals in the world.

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