

A LIBRARY FOR STATISTICIANS

By

ALFREDO V. ANTIPORDA*

The formation of the Philippine Statistical Association over two years ago was inspired by the growing importance of statistics in our daily affairs. To be sure, development in nearly every field of human endeavor has rendered competitive struggle so keen and complex that programs of action founded on well-organized statistical facts and figures are almost indispensable to success.

Whether in agriculture, manufacturing, banking, insurance, marketing or any other types of business or economic undertakings, reliable statistics must be obtained and constantly consulted if the element of speculation must be minimized and the management must be guided which way to steer the business ship in the present rough sea of keen competition. Governments, like business organizations, have likewise found the scientific approach to social and economic problems a virtual condition precedent to success and therefore try to build their policies and programs on solid statistical foundations.

No doubt, there is still a widespread lack of understanding of the importance of statistics in the Philippines. A lot of people continue to base their major decisions on mere hunches, opinions and conjectures and in so doing commit regrettable, avoidable mistakes. Obviously, there is a great deal of need for educating the public on the importance of statistics as an effective instrument for efficient administration, economic advancement and improvement of the people's general welfare.

The Philippine Statistical Association, which aims "to foster in the broadest manner statistics and its applications, promote unity among all concerned with statistical problems, and to increase the contribution of statistics to human welfare," has started to do just that. It has been devoting a major por-

* Chief of Division, Exchange Control Department, Central Bank of the Philippines.

tion of the first years of its existence in the cause of statistical education by conducting meetings and discussions featuring lectures by leading authorities in the science of statistics. It also publishes *The Philippine Statistician*, a quarterly bulletin devoted to articles on theoretical and applied statistics.

To my mind, the next important step which the Association should now take is to establish an effective medium of carrying out its plan "to make available information concerning statistics and its contributions." This is of basic importance because statistics, if they are to be of any lasting worth, must be readily available to those who can use them.

It is true that there are many an excellent method of disseminating statistical data, such as through the press, radio, business reports, trade journals and government reports and publications. Unless immediately required, however, statistics one acquires by means of any of these methods of dissemination may be too soon forgotten or lost among his files of miscellaneous papers. Plainly, there is a need for an organized system by which statistics of any category may be readily available to those requiring them.

A library for statisticians is the logical answer to our problem: A library to which Association members and non-members alike — professionals, businessmen, researchers, students, etc. — may go and obtain the statistical information they need at the minimum of time and effort.

Kind of Materials. Since the library contemplated here is a special one for statisticians, its collection should consist mainly of materials on statistics and related subjects such as mathematics and accounting. It should of course include reference materials in such fields as economics, public administration, business, manufacturing, agriculture, hospital management, and other lines for the furtherance of which accurate and reliable statistics must be compiled and properly used. The reason for the inclusion of such materials in the library is that no one can be expected to perform a satisfactory statistical research in any field he knows nothing or very little about. In the words of Sophya M. Balicka in an address she delivered at the monthly convocation of the University of the East on July 15, 1953,

A LIBRARY FOR STATISTICIANS

“no amount of statistical training will enable you to do a competent job of statistical research in a field with which you are not thoroughly familiar. To do an effective job it is necessary that you know the subject matter of the field in which statistics are to be produced. You must know the sources of data, devices of measurement, and relations of characteristics in the particular field. . .”

The grouping of the materials in the library should be more or less as follows:

1. *Reference Books.* These books are to be referred to for specific information rather than to be read through from cover to cover. They may not therefore be borrowed for home use except by members who may be allowed to take home duplicate copies of reference books for overnight loan, to be returned not later than 10:00 o'clock of the next day.
2. *Periodicals.* Neither the current issues nor the bound volumes of back issues should be allowed to circulate.
3. *Pamphlets* kept in vertical files. Instructions for organizing a pamphlet file and keeping it up-to-date with suggestions for subject headings will be found in *The pamphlet file in school, colleges and public libraries* by Mrs. Norma Olin Ibeland (Foxon, 1937, \$1.50).
4. *Government publications.* This class of publications is known as “serials” and includes such important items as the annual reports and quarterly statistical bulletins of the Central Bank, the Yearbook of Philippine Statistics published by the Bureau of the Census and Statistics, etc.
5. *Mimeographed or typewritten reports and press releases or clippings* regarding statistics of specific categories to be filed in properly labeled individual Manila folders and kept alphabetically in a steel filing cabinet.

The library should have a regulation to insure prompt return of materials borrowed, such as the employment of a charging system which may include a borrower's card, a book pocket with a charging card, and a date due slip. Failure to return a

book at the hour or day for return should bring a fine of say 20 centavos per hour or ₱1.00 per day overdue.

Library privileges should be withheld from any member losing a book until a deposit is made to cover cost of replacing the book (plus one peso for cataloging charge), unless it is replaced with an identical copy.

Classification of statistics. As stated earlier, mimeographed or typewritten reports and press releases (or clippings) regarding statistics of specific categories should be filed in Manila folders properly captioned and placed in the alphabetical order of their classifications in a steel filing cabinet.

For filing purposes, the following classification of statistics is hereby suggested:

1. *Agriculture* — production of crops and poultry; livestock population.
2. *Balance of payments* — payments and receipts for imports and exports; remittances to and from foreign countries; invisibles, such as foreign travel and maintenance, transportation and insurance, payment or receipt of investment income, etc.
3. *Communication* — Number of letters sent or received (by mail); number of telephones in use; number of broadcasting stations, etc.
4. *Construction* — building construction; roads and bridges; etc.
5. *Education, culture* — illiterate population, by age and sex; educational institution; newspaper circulation.
6. *External trade* — value of imports and exports; quantum of imports and exports; unit values of imports and exports.
7. *Finance* — public finance; banking and insurance operations; exchange rates; money supply.
8. *Fishing* — landings in both sea and inland fisheries; relates to the weight of fish landed and recorded.

A LIBRARY FOR STATISTICIANS

9. *Forestry* — production of timber, lumber and other forest products.
10. *Hygiene and sanitation* — Hospitals, dispensaries, puericulture centers, nursing services, etc.
11. *Internal trade* — domestic retail and wholesale trade.
12. *International reserves* — International reserve of the Central Bank; foreign exchange holdings of other banks.
13. *Manufacturing* — volume and cost of production in factory industries, household industries, etc.
14. *Mining* — gold and base metals production.
15. *Population* — area and density for each area; birth rates; death rates; infant mortality rates; marriage rates; expectation of life at specified ages for each sex.
16. *Social* — housing; offenses known to the police; number of persons convicted.
17. *Transportation* — motor vehicles registered; operation of aviation companies; land and water transportation.
18. *Wages and prices* — factory wages; retail price, index numbers; cost of living, index numbers; wholesale prices, index numbers.

Sources of statistics — To obtain statistics of specific categories for our cabinet files, it may be necessary to communicate with various bureaus and offices and private business entities and individuals who may be in a position to supply us with the information we need. For instance, mining statistics may be obtained direct from the Bureau of Mines; agricultural statistics may be supplied us by the Bureau of Agricultural Extension and Division of Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources; and statistics on the manufacture of particular kinds of articles or products may be obtained direct from private compaines engaged in the manufacture of such articles or products.

Of course, the Bureau of the Census and Statistics, as the official "repository of all statistical data of the nation," stands

ready to furnish us with the statistical information needed for our files, aside from the usual handbooks, pamphlets and press releases which the Bureau publishes for ready consumption of government agencies and private organizations requiring them.

For clippings of articles or news items regarding statistics, the librarian should not fail to scan the pages of daily newspapers and weekly and monthly magazines. Such articles and news items are often valuable for their interesting presentation and analysis of significant statistical data.

Published statistical reports and bulletins of various government entities are of course among the best sources of statistical information. Among the government publications which must be made available at our proposed library are:

1. *Yearbook of Philippine Statistics*, published annually by the Bureau of the Census and Statistics.
2. *Journal of Philippine Statistics*, published monthly by the Bureau of the Census Statistics.
3. *Statistical Bulletin*, published quarterly by the Central Bank.
4. *Central Bank Digest*, released weekly by the Department of Economic Research.
5. *Census of the Philippines*, published periodically by the Bureau of the Census and Statistics.
6. *Annual Reports of the Central Bank* and other government agencies and offices.

For a convenient and comprehensive summary of international statistics, I would suggest the *Statistical Yearbook* published annually by the Statistical Office of the United Nations, New York. Prepared "with the generous cooperation of the national statistical offices of many countries and with the assistance from Specialized Agencies of the United Nations and certain other inter-governmental bodies," the *Statistical Yearbook* should prove helpful and interesting to those who want to make a study of statistics regarding other countries and how they compare with those of the Philippines.

A LIBRARY FOR STATISTICIANS

Arrangement of materials. Fundamentally, a library, no matter how well-equipped and supplied with materials, is only as useful as the system under which it operates. A library where one has to waste valuable time before finally locating a book or a periodical he needs is not only a waste of funds but likewise a disgrace to the owners and the persons running it. To be sure, an ideal library for statisticians should not only be well-stocked but the materials therein should be so systematically classified, arranged, filed and cataloged that any of the items that its user needs could be speedily located.

Most American and Filipino libraries are classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification and it is hereby suggested that it be adopted by our proposed library.

According to the D. C., as the Dewey Decimal Classification is called, man's knowledge is divided into ten classes, identified by numbers, as follows:

000 General	500 Science
100 Philosophy	600 Useful Arts
200 Religion	700 Fine Arts
300 Social Science	800 Literature
400 Philolog	900 History

Each of these ten classes is divided into ten divisions, likewise identified by numbers, and subdivided as is necessary for minor subjects. For example, Social Sciences in general is 300; Statistics is 310; Government, 320; Banks and Money, 332; and Education, 370. For a sufficiently detailed treatment on the system, Melvil Dewey's *Abridged edition of the Decimal classification and relative index* (5th ed. rev. H. W. Wilson Co., 1936, \$2.50), should prove very helpful.

Cataloging. Cataloging is a very important library procedure which I believe should be adopted in our proposed library. The catalog, often called a dictionary catalog, is composed of three main types of cards: the *author* cards, the *title* cards and the *subject* cards — in other words, three card catalogs for each book or pamphlet in the library. These cards

are filed in one common alphabetical arrangement, like the words in a dictionary; there need not be a separate file for each type of cards.

With the catalog, one can find ready answers to three questions: (1) Has the library a book by a certain author? (2) Has it a book with a certain title? (3) Has it a book on a certain subject? Properly done, therefore, a catalog can be a very valuable tool to library users, especially in a library with limited funds, as it should be able to act as the user's guide where no personnel is available to give him the answers to these questions.

The librarian. Every library of course needs a competent librarian. For ours to become a dynamic factor and an indispensable agency in our desire "to make statistics of service to other sciences and practical affairs," a well qualified librarian must be selected to carry out whatever library policies we shall adopt. N. E. Beust, an authority in library education sums up in general terms the prerequisites of the successful librarian as follows: "scholarship, professionalism, social consciousness, imagination, sense of humor, and an acceptable personality."

While the matter of academic background and technical training are important in the selection of a librarian, it is likewise important that the personal element be carefully considered. The responsibility of taking charge of the library should be given to an extrovert, creative, energetic, person with a strong sense of public relations — one who has the ability to size up situations and people and get along with others. Such selection will develop friendship and cordial relations for the library among the different people in the local world of statisticians, and bring some satisfying arrangements for wider use of the resources it offers.

Location. Since our library will cater mainly to professionals and businessmen holding office in downtown Manila, it should be located within the business center of the City. To develop prompt and convenient service to non-members alike, a telephone connection for the library will be a great deal of help.

A LIBRARY FOR STATISTICIANS

In deciding on a location, accessibility should be taken into consideration. Since businessmen have not been accustomed to going to the library for needed information, easy accessibility to them will establish contacts of lasting value. The contacts thus developed between the library staff and responsible leaders in business, industry and government, especially if coupled with friendly intelligent service, will make of the library a daily step for many and perhaps, as cordial relations are established, will lead to suggestions for possible additions to its collection or result in voluntary contributions of materials from them.

Problem of financing. The matter of putting up a library that could satisfy the requirements of the group of people it is going to serve is quite a big order for a new, although fast growing, organization like ours. We have to start from scratch, so to speak: we still have to acquire the materials with which to start our library; we shall need a building space to house it; to be equipped with shelves, cases, a filing cabinet, a typewriter, an office desk, study tables, chairs and telephone; and we shall need a paid personnel with sufficient training in library work to carry the burden of arranging, filing, and cataloging the materials and taking charge of the library. These, indeed, are problems of financing. Fortunately, we can pride ourselves with "well-placed" members who may be rated as "tops" in the local statistical world and for this fact alone, the project is fairly assured of much needed moral, if not financial, support. Indications are that it shall be both.

To make a detailed budget demands a careful study of the library's requirements. Roughly, we would need, as a starting proposition, ₱3,500 for the following:

Furniture and equipment	₱2,000.00
Books and subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals	1,000.00
Initial expenses	500.00
T o t a l	<u>₱3,500.00</u>

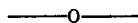
Thereafter, we would need a fixed monthly appropriation of some ₱400.00 per month for rent of space, salary of a libra-

rian, and other necessary expenses. To initiate our plan of putting up a library, members of the Association may be asked to contribute at least one book each for the library collection. Once service to the community shall have been developed, similar gifts and donations from leaders in business, industry and government may be expected.

Perhaps it would be wise to follow the example of certain progressive civic organizations and try to raise funds for our library by holding a literary-musical benefit presentation to be participated in by members of the Association and their wives. This may be quite a big job for the Program Committee for, as a friend of mine who took charge of raising funds for his own association in the same way had found out, people have the usual stock excuses: "I don't know how to sing. I am not simply cut out for dancing. I can't act. I would not have the time. My wife's the jealous kind. I am too old or not handsome enough." But after the curtains have gone up and down and everything would have been over except the memory of that wonderful night, everybody will probably be saying: "I've never dreamed there was so much talent in the Philippine Statistical Association."

This of course is neither here nor there. My task has been to speak on our need for a special library for statisticians. If, in carrying out this task I have succeeded in only one thing: of making you *think* about the need for such a library — the time and efforts spent in the writing of this paper would have been amply rewarded. In closing, therefore, I am borrowing the following lines from A. W. Littlefield:

"No man could hope to memorize our vast store of information. Knowing where to find vital information quickly is as indispensable as knowing how to use it effectively."



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A LIBRARY FOR STATISTICIANS

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