



# Researchers and their library

## - Parties apart or invisible colleagues

Presentation at the EAHIL workshop. Dublin June 2009

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Biomedical Library



## The Biomedical Library primarily serves 2 faculties:

### Sahlgrenska Academy

- Includes Medicine, Odontology, Pharmacology, Health and Care Sciences. Public Health and Community Science
- offers students 19 different study programmes.
  - about 6500 undergraduate students and 900 postgraduates
  - some 1500 people work at the Sahlgrenska Academy. Approximately 850 are of them are academic staff

### Faculty of Science

includes all the major subject areas in the fields of Mathematics and Natural sciences.

- 6500 students and 300 postgraduates
- 800 employees incl. 233 teachers
- other Research staff 171

# Researchers as a user group:

- What do they want from us?
- What library services do they use?
- Are they satisfied with the services supplied by their library?
- Are they familiar with the services supplied?
- Do they desire other things than the services we supply?





# Literature studies - What can we learn from our colleagues?

Researchers and librarians – Work apart? James Brown CILIP 2007

Researchers' use of Academic Libraries and their Services RIN/CURL 2007

Information behaviour of the researcher of the future . Rowlands & Fieldhouse. 2007  
Brit.Lib & JISC

- Information-seeking behaviour and use of information resources by coordinators Wessel et al, J Med Libr Assoc. 2006

# **We decided to do a web survey – but...**

- **Do the researchers use our web page?**
- **If not - how do we find addresses for this specific group?**
- **Who are they – teachers. researchers. postgraduates...?**
- **How many questions can we include – will they accept?**
- **Are there any automated survey system available at the University?**
- **Can we ask the information departments for assistance?**



# The Biomedical Library needs your assistance!

- A personal letter was mailed to 2598 respondents
  - A reminder was mailed two weeks later to those who had not yet responded
  - 18 questions but also open answers
- ...then we had 896 responders!

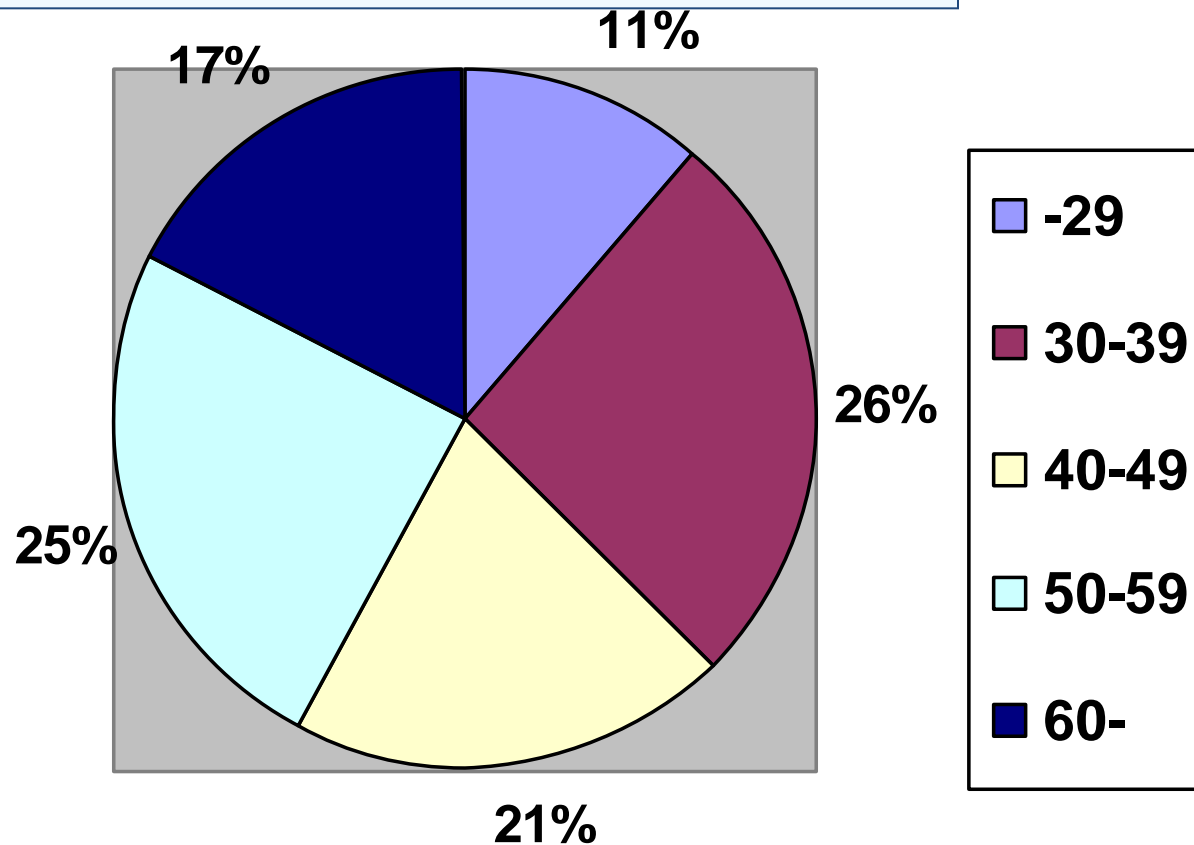


# Are 896 respondents a sufficient number?

- The preliminary response rate was 34.6%
- How many of the original 2598 addresses were relevant?
  - some addresses (420) clearly were not!
- Final response rate then improved to 41.7 %

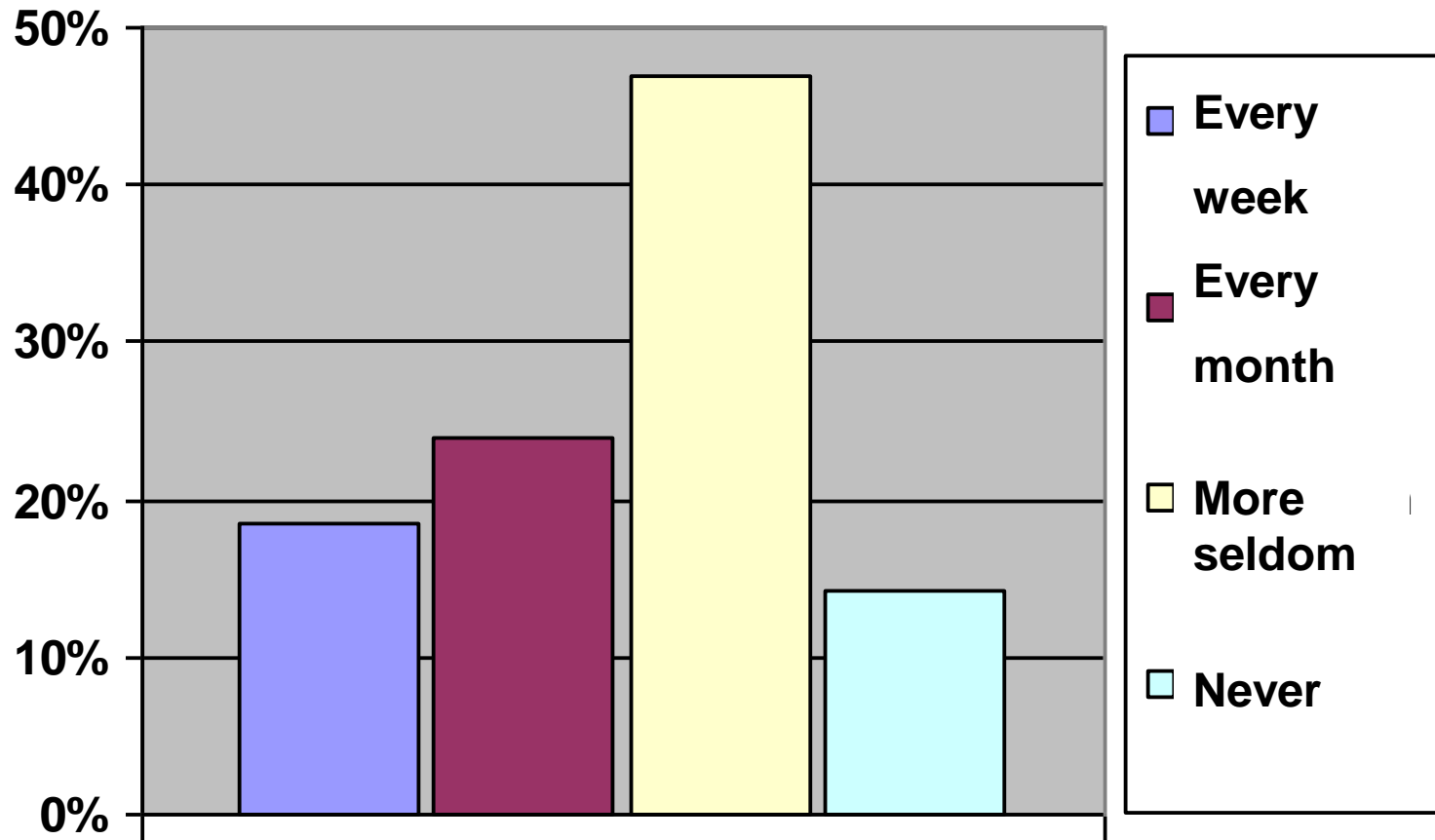
## Respondents' age and gender distribution:

**56.8 % women - 43.2 % men**

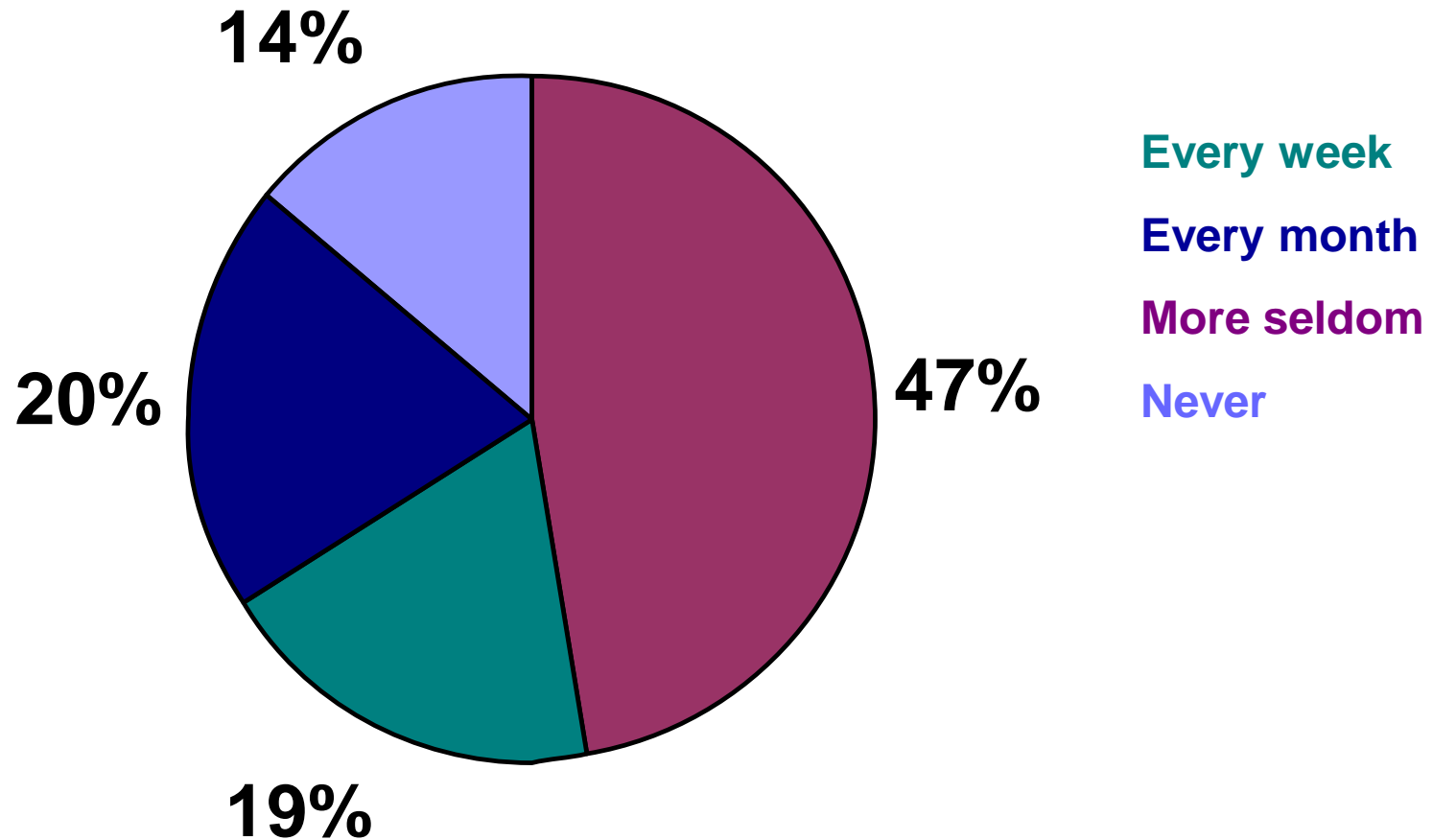




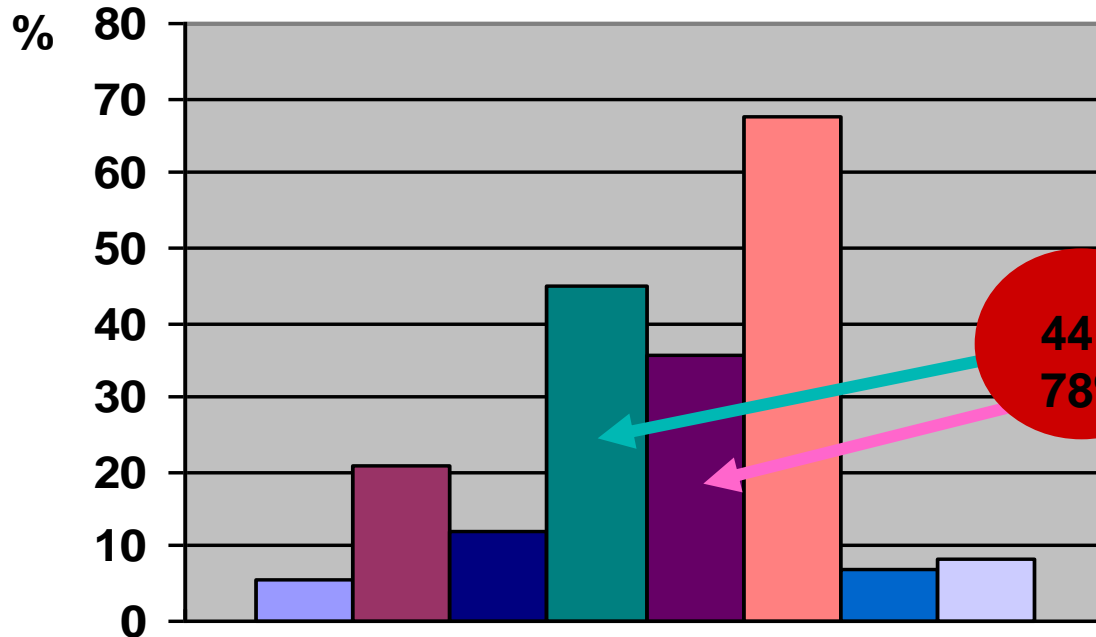
## Most respondents seldom or almost never visit the Library



## How often do researchers contact the Biomedical Library in any other way (via web, phone, e-mail etc.)?



# Reasons for contacting the Library:



For what purpose do you contact the Library?

- To place purchase requests
- For assistance with search support
- Support with programs (EN)
- Access problems
- Renewal of Library Card
- Literature requests / Order copies
- To book user education
- Other

44 -  
78%?

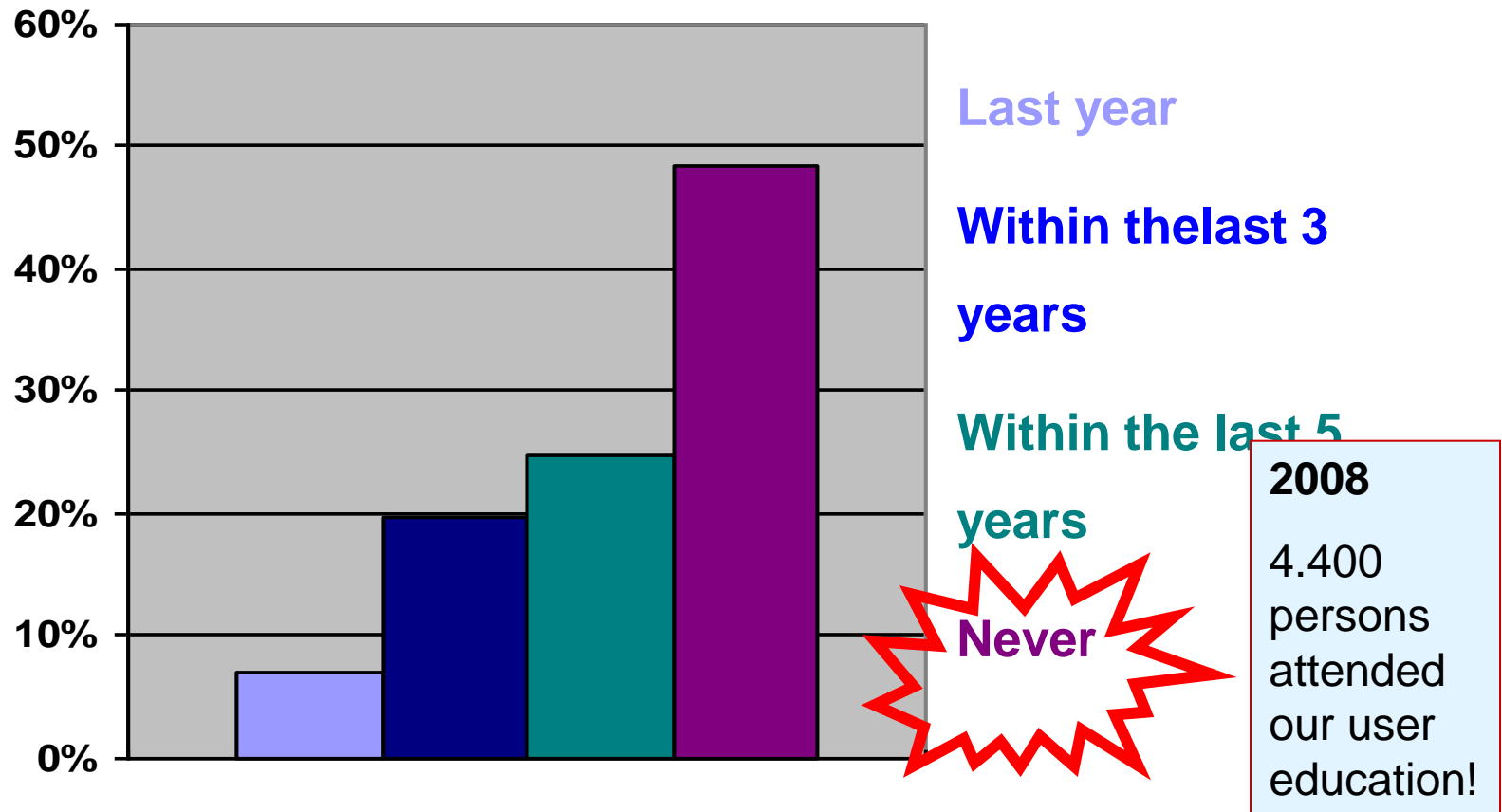
# Who are using the printed books?

**- large differences between researchers at different institutions**

- **76% of the respondents at the Institute for Health and Care Sciences states that they use printed books**  
**compared to:**
- **33% of the respondents at the Institute for Biomedicine**



# Have researchers participated in user education?





## When you search for new information -what sources are used?

1 = first choice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 =last choice
Journals – 831 responded	40.4% 336	31.3% 260	10.6% 88	8.4% 70	3.5% 29	3% 25	2.8% 23
E-books – 692	4.2% 29	6.9% 48	10.3% 71	15% 104	20.5% 142	18.6% 129	24.4% 169
Databases: PubMed, Cochrane, Web of Science 840	80.7% 678	7.7% 65	3.3% 28	1.5% 13	0.5% 4	1.4% 12	4.8% 40
Ask a Librarian 674	3.1% 21	4.6% 31	7.9% 53	11.9% 80	18% 121	24% 162	30.6% 206
Professor/colleague/ tutor 784	7.5% 59	15.7% 123	33.7% 264	21.4% 168	13.1% 103	4.2% 33	4.3% 34
Google - 792	12% 95	24% 190	20.8% 165	19.1% 151	10.5% 83	7.4% 59	6.2% 49
Google Scholar - 659	7.3% 48	11.8% 78	9% 59	9.6% 63	11.4% 75	11.1% 73	39.9% 263
Other- 170	8.2% 14	2.9% 5	8.2% 14	4.1% 7	1.2% 2	2.4% 4	72.9% 124

# A checkpoint - In depth interviews

- More than 100 of our responders volunteered to be interviewed
- 7 initial interviews were performed with researchers from the Sahlgrenska Academy: 3 men and 4 women representing different age and academic foci





## Some conclusions

- Most respondents were satisfied with the services supplied by the library
  - *but some of them really complained about the lack of journals in their own field!*
- Almost 70% of the respondents spent 3 or more hours per week searching for new literature
  - *and more than 35% wanted more education in how to use PubMed or WoS and 65% wanted to learn more about reference programs*





## Some comments on the Library services

- “The most important issue for the future Library is probably to be involved in the scientific discussion but I feel that you are no longer capable to be a part of it.”
- “It's always annoying when you find a good article in Medline but then the journal is not available in the library.”
- “The library is great and I think that the hospitality and service is always good!  
You are already sovereign good. it's hard to do better!”



# Improvements desired by researchers

- **More journals and backfiles**
- **More secured access**
- **More teaching sessions**
- **Personalized information through e-mail**
- **Support with Reference and Statistical programs**
- **Patent databases – and support!**



## Ideas for the future – more of everything?

- Image databases – free images
- More personal support and services
- More collaboration Library/Information departments
- Compilation support – subject librarians?
- "Home calls" at their institutions – more outreach
- Updates in various sources – more user education
- Poster production
- The possibility of giving lectures in the library - teachers like to be close to the literature
- "Keep the Library as a nice and cosy place to study in - it is important to us researchers!"



## Our conclusions

- **Most users are very satisfied with the supplied services**
- **Librarians are highly regarded (more than we anticipated)**
- **Our study indicates that researchers as a group seems to be aware of the fact that it is the library that supplies e-resources and that these are not available "free on the internet"**



## Our conclusions (ctd)...

- We found an openness towards more e-books
- All interviewed persons were suspicious of services like RSS-feeds. Alerts etc! – They wish to control the information flow
- **Most do NOT start their searches in Google**

## Our conclusions (ctd)...

- **Performing a survey is an interesting learning process**
- **Researchers are positive to collaboration**
- **We made contact with a large number of researchers at the two faculties**
- **Focus groups could be the next step**



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