Benefits, challenges and proposed future directions for the International Association of School Librarianship annual conference

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Abstract

This research was conducted among participants who attended IASL conferences during the period 1998-2010 to ascertain the benefits participants derive from attending these conferences as well as the challenges that prevent them from attending regularly. It also sought to establish whether or not virtual conferences would be accepted as an alternative to face-to-face conferences. A quantitative approach was used to conduct the research. Four hundred and fifty-five (455) members were randomly selected as the sample. Eighty-eight (88) responded. The findings revealed that participants attended mainly for professional development and only a very small number had attended regularly over the 13 years. The main reason identified for irregular attendance was the geographic location of the conferences. A slight majority mentioned that they would recommend virtual conferences although there were disadvantages in having a virtual, rather than face-to-face, conference.

Keywords: International Association of School Librarianship conference, Library Association Conferences, conference attendance pattern, virtual conference and face-to-face conference.

1. Introduction

Library associations fall into three categories: local, regional and international. Some of these are: the Library and Information Association of Jamaica (LIAJA); the Association of Caribbean University Research and Libraries (ACURIL); the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL); the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA); the American Library Association (ALA) and the Australian School Library Association (ASLA). Some of these associations are connected because they hold memberships with the larger associations. For example, LIAJA holds membership with ACURIL, IASL and IFLA. Thus the international conferences held by the international associations are attended by members of local and regional associations. Regardless of the composition of the membership, the conferences' main objective is professional development.

1.1. Background of IASL

The International Association of School Librarianship began in the Caribbean island of Jamaica in 1972. Its mission is "to provide an international forum for those people interested in promoting effective school library media programs as viable instruments in the educational process. IASL also provides guidance and advice for the development of school library programs and the school library profession." (International Association of School Librarianship [IASL], 2012). Its population is worldwide and comprises school librarians, teachers, library advisers, consultants, educational administrators, and others who are responsible for library and information services in schools. The membership also includes professors and instructors in universities and colleges where there are programs for school librarians, and students who are undertaking such programs (IASL, 2012, para.1). The association is divided into three zones. Countries are placed in a particular zone because of the published gross national product (GNP) indexes for that country. The Zones are: Zone A, Zone B and Zone C (see Appendix on page 25). The membership fee charged is dependent on the zone in which each member resides. This means that members in Zone A pay more than members in Zone B, and members in Zone C pay less than those in Zones A and B.

1.2. Nature of the problem

Despite the benefits that librarians and others in related library activities gained from attending conferences, it was found that most IASL members attend the IASL conference irregularly. This is of concern as the researcher believes that to achieve maximum benefit from these conferences, members need to attend regularly. Furthermore, irregular attendance can affect the future viability of the association, especially in the area of leadership.

1.3. Rationale and significance of the study

The study is important because its findings can be used to make recommendations to IASL and other library associations in the area of strategic decisions related to planning, programming and organizing their future conferences. These recommendations will ensure participants' interest remains vibrant and their attendance constant, and will enable the IASL to attract new attendees.

2. Review of literature
2.1. Factors that motivate participants to attend conferences
2.1.1. Professional development

Vega and Connell (2007) conducted a survey among 794 librarians mainly from academic and public libraries in the United States of America (USA) to determine what motivated these librarians to attend conferences. The findings of this study showed that the main reason respondents attended conferences was to achieve professional rejuvenation (56%). A similar pilot study was conducted among 198 conference attendees of the Fifth Annual Conference of the Asia Pacific Tourism Association by in 1999 to determine conference motivation, facilitators and inhibitors that influence association members' attendance at international conferences (Ngamson & Beck, 2000). The findings support those of Vega and Connell (2007) as Ngamson and Beck (2000, p. 105) also discovered that one of the six factors motivating association members to attend international conferences is professional development.

In 2006, Severt, Wang, Chen and Breiter conducted research to assess the motivation, performance evaluation, and behavioral intentions among 400 attendees at a regional conference hosted by a national trade association (p. 402). The evaluation's mean and standard deviation showed that the two highest performance ratings reported were for educational purposes and educational information at exhibits (p. 404). The findings from Rittichainuwat, Beck and Lalopa's 2001 study, "Understanding Motivations, Inhibitors, and Facilitators of Association Members in Attending International Conferences," was consistent with that of Severt et al. (2006, p. 50) in that they revealed one of the top five motivating factors for attending a conference as gaining more knowledge.

A similar survey conducted by Adomi, Alakpodia and Akporhonorinin (2006), as reported by Eke (2011, pp. 3, 4), showed that most of the information specialist professionals in Nigeria attended conferences in order to keep up-to-date with developments in the profession. Steinhauser (2011) listed professional development as third out of her top five reasons for going to library conferences. She mentioned excellent presentations done by librarians, authors and keynote speakers across the country. Professional development is also one of Alaimo's (2004) top six reasons for attending conferences. She indicated that she selected breakout sessions to expose herself to new technology issues of which she had limited knowledge.

2.1.2. Networking opportunities

Vega and Connell (2007) conducted research which showed that forty percent (40%) of the respondents attended conferences because of networking. Derik (2010), a blogger on *Group Posts,* is motivated by the socializing and networking opportunities. The North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) research result showed a 33.3 rating (rank of 3 out of 14) which indicated that networking was one of the factors that influenced these participants' attendance at conferences (para.1).

2.1.3. Presenting a paper or a poster

Vega and Connell (2007) discovered from their research that poster sessions and roundtables appealed to academic librarians because of the opportunities for presentations and publishing that

they provided. Giving a presentation or doing a poster session was rated at 2.61 (rank of 12 out of 14) in the NASIG 2008 research.

2.1.4. Making acquaintances and new friends

Davis (2010) made acquaintance with creative librarians, met new colleagues and renewed friendships (cited in Group Posts, para. 3). Steinhauser (2011) described her first reason for attending library conferences as "good friends and good fun, along with good ideas" (p. 1). Alaimo (2004) saw this as peer-to-peer learning when she mentioned that "just   listening to her peers helped to generate new ideas and activate [her] sense of what is possible" (p. 1). Badman (2010) mentioned, "I always get excited to see friends again, and I always come back from it with new friends …the real draw is just hanging out with other people in the field (cited in Group Posts, 2010, para. 1). Ellie, another blogger on the same site, was also motivated because she always walked away with new friends and new ideas (cited in Group Posts, 2010, para. 2, 3).

2.1.5. Financial assistance

Davis, in her blog, (cited in Group Posts, 2010, para. 3) added that pre-conferences are costly but the conference she attended offered a healthy set of travel awards and stipends to help offset the cost burden. Support from employer was also rated highly – in second position – in the NASIG 2008 research, as 3.45 of the participants indicated that financial assistance was the factor that influenced their conference attendance (para. 5).

2.1.6. Theme of the conference

The theme of conferences with their related strands was also a push factor. Mardis (2011) confirmed that information skills and literacy were the most frequent research paper topics from 1998 to 2009; this was followed by information technology, reading and reading promotion. Some of the least presented topics were principal support, censorship and national surveys (p. 12). Over these years there were no presentations on scientific and professional communication or information storage and retrieval. To some extent, these findings indicated the interests of participants during those years and the efforts put in by conference organizers to cater to their interests.

2.1.7. Geographic location

Information from the IASL website indicates that of the thirteen conferences held from 1998 to 2010, ten (10) were held in Zone A countries, two (2) in Zone B countries and one (1) in a Zone C country (IASL, 2012). It is expected that every year many participants have to travel great distances to attend these conferences. Davis indicated that geographic location of the conference was a consideration in that her library conference was held at the same venue every year, which made it easy to plan for lodging and dining (cited in Group Posts, 2010, para.4). In the NASIG research, geographic location was also a factor that influenced conference attendance. This ranked 7 out of 14, with a 2.90 rating (2008).

2.2. Challenges that prevented regular attendance at library conferences
2.2.1. Geographic location

Leeder (2010) admitted that his attendance at library conferences became irregular not from a lack of interest but largely because travelling from home to the conference venue is usually time-consuming and expensive (cited in Group Posts, para.1). In the NASIG (2008) research report, geographic location was also cited as a challenge, at a 2.94 rating. This was ranked 4 out of 12, with 1 being the lowest score. Geographic location as a challenge was also identified by Ngamson and Beck (2000) in their research. The participants in this research mentioned that the location of the conference was one of the criteria they used to decide whether or not to participate in an international conference (p. 106).

2.2.2. Lack of funding

Eke (2011) highlighted the 2008 survey conducted by Rotkin on a professional development fund survey. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of those responding said that they had needed to support attendance at professional meetings or other professional development activities out of their pocket. Almost two-thirds (64%) said they had decided not to attend conferences or other job-related professional development opportunities because of the lack of sufficient professional development funding.

2.2.3. Rejection of submitted papers

Eke (2011) pointed out that prospective participants whose papers were rejected might not wish to attend the conference. The NASIG research reported that "un-acceptance of submitted papers" was a reason given by 3.5 of the participants for not attending conferences (2008, p. 8). Some of the other challenges mentioned were: travel (3.12), hotel costs (2.95), conference dates (2.90), personal reasons/conflicts (2.89) and registration fee (2.75).

The findings from Mair and Thompson's (2009) research on The UK Association Conference Attendance Decision-Making Process indicated other challenges such as time and convenience, for 7.89% of respondents. For example, the conference date clashed with family holidays or with other conferences. They also discovered that health and security were concerns for 7.4% of its respondents (n. p.).

2.2.4. Virtual conference option

In the NASIG (2008) survey, one of the objectives was to determine the level of interest in offering some or all conference activities online. It was discovered that 69.2% of the participants were not convinced that an online-only conference was a suitable alternative to an in-person conference. A smaller number (20.2%) indicated that virtual conferences could be considered if travel costs rose significantly, and just 10.6% pointed out that it was a good idea regardless of travel costs.

Participants lamented that the in-person networking which is a benefit derived from the face-to-face conference would be lost in the online environment. However, some expressed the view that an online conference would be better than nothing, but should only be used as a last resort. The

majority of respondents (58.2%) were uncertain as to whether or not they would be willing to participate in an online-only conference. Participants conceded that virtual conferences could be an important benefit for those who are unable to attend face-to-face annual conferences.

3. Research objectives

The research objectives that guided the study therefore are to:

1. Determine the factors which motivated first-time participants to attend IASL conferences;
2. Ascertain why IASL members attended conferences regularly;
3. Identify the challenges that prevented IASL members from attending the IASL conferences regularly; and
4. Find out what new directions members would like the association to pursue in relation to their annual conferences.

4. Methodology

The survey method was employed to gather relevant data. The data collection instrument was a newly developed, pretested questionnaire. The questionnaires were e-mailed to participants using Survey Monkey. A letter guaranteeing confidentiality and advising of the time frame for the completion and submission of the questionnaire accompanied the request for participation. The data collection period was one month.

4.1. Population and sample

The population was two thousand one hundred and twenty (2,120). The sample frame was the conference participants' lists of 1998-2010 except for 1998-2002 and 2009, which were unavailable. Although the e-mail addresses were not on the lists from 1998-2002, participants who attended conferences during this period would have been included because they had attended one or more other IASL conferences after 2000. There was a sample bias towards participants who attended the conference sessions over the last thirteen years and whose e-mail addresses have not changed within the same period. However, the researcher believes that while the sample is small and biased, the research objectives were not compromised as the data analysed remain relevant in relation to the population represented.

The average attendance per year is two hundred (200). Simple random sampling was used to select thirty-five (35) participants from each year, making a total of four hundred and fifty-five (455). Participants from host countries outnumbered other participants; therefore, to ensure that there was a balance in the selection of participants, not all the participants from the host countries were included in the sample frame. All the participants from Zones B and C were selected from the lists because they were small in number. Eighty-eight of the 455 selected responded and 93 e-mails were returned showing that these members' e-mail addresses no longer existed.

4.2. Limitation

The researcher did not explore the option of the geographical proximity of the annual IFLA and IASL conferences and the effect that attendance at IFLA had on the conference attendance pattern of IASL members.

5. Analyses and findings

Figure 1: Number of participants who attended IASL Conferences 1998-2010 by countries
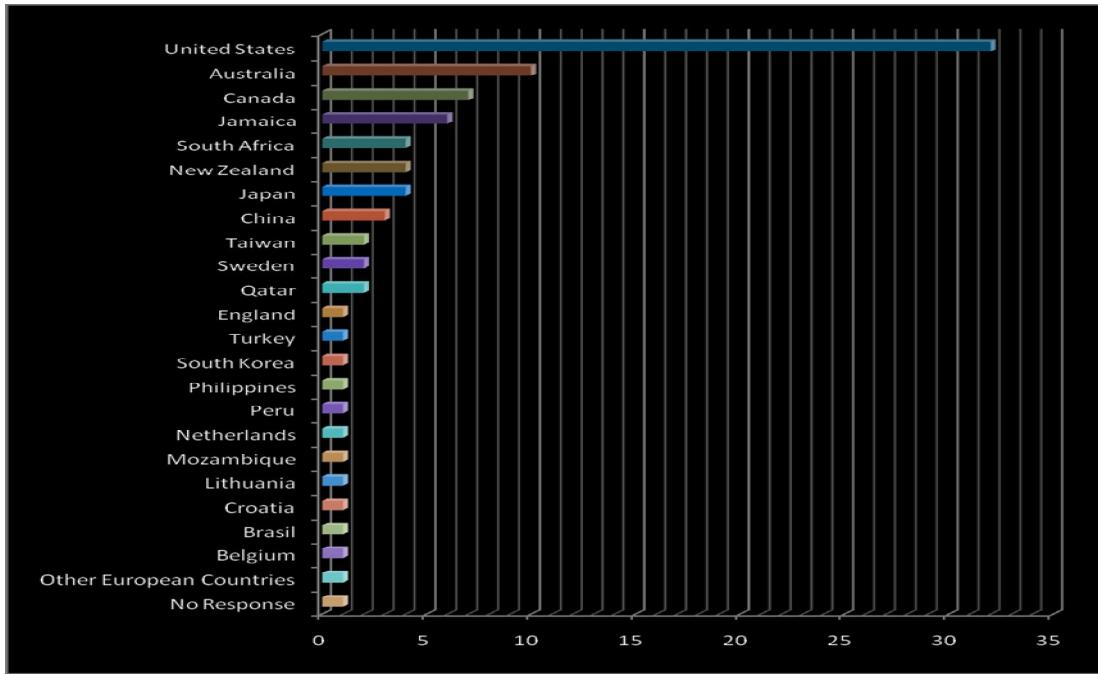

The data indicated that not only were the majority of respondents from the USA, which is classified as Zone A, but the USA also had the highest number of participants. Participants from the USA were followed by participants from Australia, Canada and Jamaica, which always had at least two representatives each at every IASL conference.

Figure 2: Job title of participants during the period 1998-2010
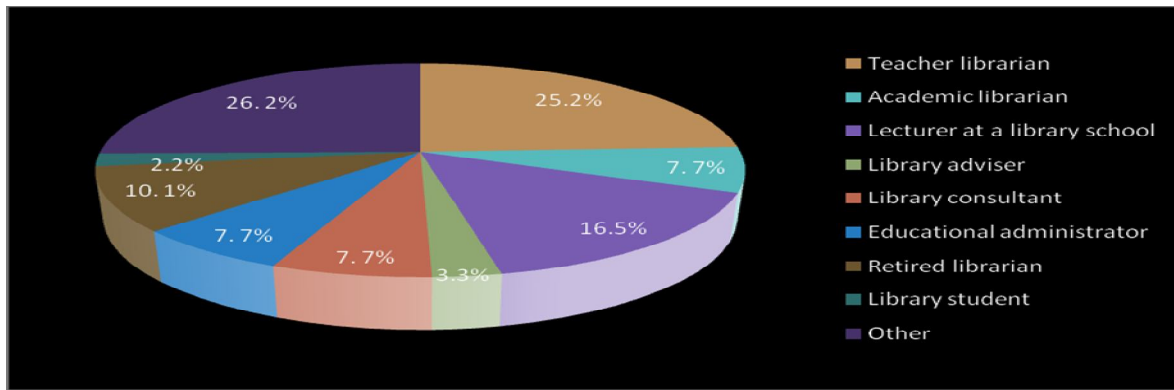
It is not surprising that the majority of participants (61.7%) were school and academic librarians, professors of library schools and retired librarians. Some of these participants were naturally there because they were: members on the various IASL committees; the host country organizing committee or presenters of research and position papers and posters. Others were present because they were recipients of awards such as the Ken Haycock and Jean Lowrie Leadership Development Grants. In some countries the public library is in charge of school libraries and this could be the reason why 2.3% of the attendees were public librarians. Editors of journals were evidently present to identify potential publications. The library software provider was likely to have been one of the vendors of library resources as they also participated in these conferences.

Figure 3: Conference participants' attendance from 1998-2010
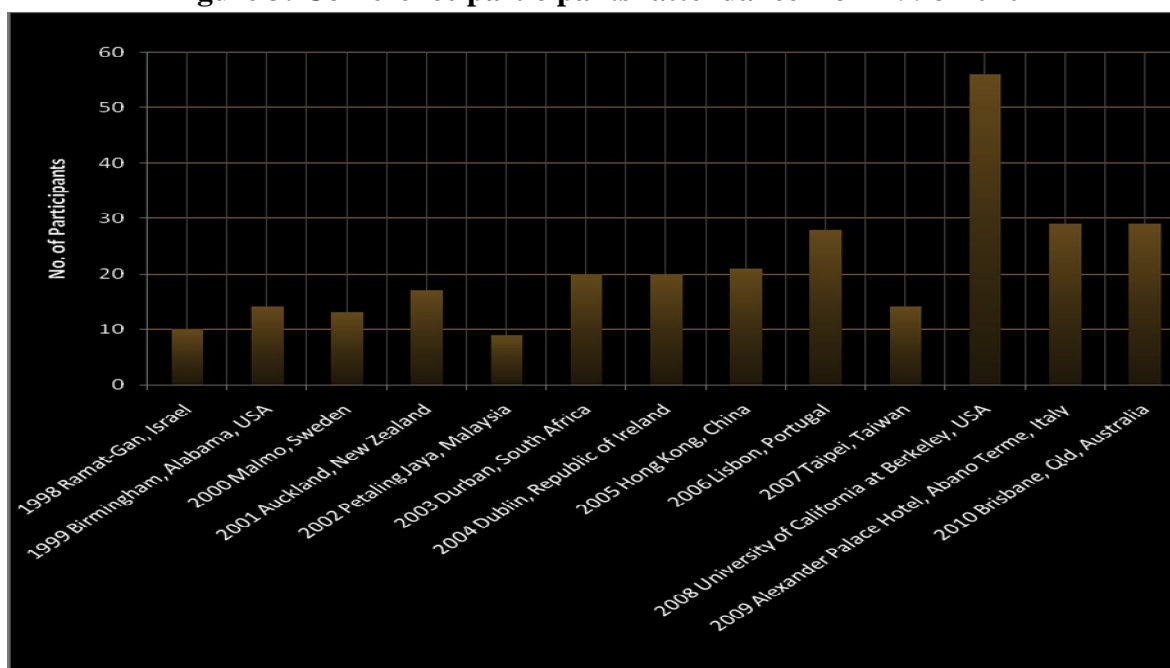
The data in Figure 3 show that the years of highest attendance were 2006 (28 respondents), 2008 (56 respondents), 2009 and 2010, which each accounted for 28 respondents. The data also indicate that the USA attracted the highest number of participants. It is possible that IASL members found it easier to travel to the USA and to countries in Europe. Australia, China and South Africa may also have enjoyed fairly high attendance because these countries tend to pull tourists to their shores for historical or other factors.

Thirteen conferences were held during the research period, and Zone A hosted the highest number of conferences (10). The others were held in Zone B (2) and Zone C (1). It must be noted, however, that the IASL board does not choose the country to host the conference. The host country is decided by a bidding process. Based on the findings it appears that countries in Zone A have been the most successful bidders.

5.1. Participants' attendance profile

Participants were considered to have attended regularly if they had missed only two conferences since their first conference. Those who were categorized as irregular attendees were those who had not attended a conference for at least three to five years in between conferences. Examples of these are shown below.

Table 1: Sample of attendance profile of eight participants

Year	Venue	Partici-pant 1	Partici-pant 3	Partici-pant 9	Partici-pant 16	Partici-pant 11	Partici-pant 34	Partici-pant 38	Partici-pant 65
		Sample of regular attendees				*Sample of irregular attendees*			
1998	Ramat-Gan, Israel	√	√	√	√				√
1999	Alabama, USA			√				√	
2000	Malmo, Sweden	√		√					
2001	Auckland, Australia	√	√	√	√		√		
2002	Petaling Jaya, Malaysia	√	√	√	√			√	
2003	Durban, South Africa			√	√	√			√
2004	Dublin, Republic of Ireland	√	√	√	√	√			
2005	Honk Kong, China		√	√	√				
2006	Lisbon, Portugal	√	√	√	√		√		
2007	Taipei, Taiwan		√	√	√				
2008	Berkeley, USA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
2009	Alban Terme, Italy	√	√	√	√				√
2010	Brisbane, Australia	√	√	√		√			

Table 1 highlights the attendance profile of four (18%) of the thirteen participants whom the researcher considered to have attended regularly, and four (18%) of the forty-five participants who are considered irregular attendees since their first conference. This resulted in a 56% irregular attendance by these respondents. Attendance patterns could not be determined for thirty (30) participants who had not attended a conference since their first one, nineteen (19) of whom attended their first conference in the USA (Berkeley) in 2008.

These findings should be of great interest to the IASL board because having more new participants than regular ones at each conference could threaten the continuity of certain IASL objectives and could lead to members being elected but unable to fulfill their duties adequately due to lack of sufficient knowledge about the Association.

5.2. Reasons for attending first conference
Table 2: Participants' reasons for attending first conference

| Number of participants	Percentage	Reasons for attending first conference
26	27.9%	Geographic location
12	12.5%	Poster or paper presentation was accepted
10	10.4%	Encouraged by someone
7	7.3%	Professional development
6	6.3%	Broader network opportunities
6	6.3%	On the IASL organizing committee
5	5.2%	Date of the conference
5	5.2%	Received funding
4	4.8%	Had friends residing in the area where the conference was held – did not have to pay hotel accommodation
3	3.1%	It was held in Israel – a great way to see the country
2	2.9%	Was impressed by the advertisement
2	2.9%	Affordability
2	2.9%	Interested in IASL
1	1.5%	Was chosen by the institution where I worked to attend
1	1.5%	Had activities to do at the conference
1	1.5%	It's the appropriate group to join
1	1.5%	Long time involvement in IASL
1	1.5%	Wanted to meet researcher
1	1.5%	Wanted to become an active member

The findings show that the geographic location of the conference was a major reason for first time attendees, at 27.9%, or 26 participants, falling into this category. Of significant interest is the fact that the third highest-ranking reason given by 10 (10.4%) of the participants who stated that

they had attended their first IASL conference was because they were encouraged to do so by another IASL member.

Vega and Connell (2007), Davis (cited in Group Posts, 2010), Adomi et. al (2006) indicated that the majority of library association members attended conferences for professional development. However, this finding shows that geographic location was the major reason for first time attendees while professional development was ranked as the fourth reason (7.3%) for participants attending their first conference.

5.3. Motivating factors for attending conferences
Figure 4: Factors that motivate members to attend subsequent conferences
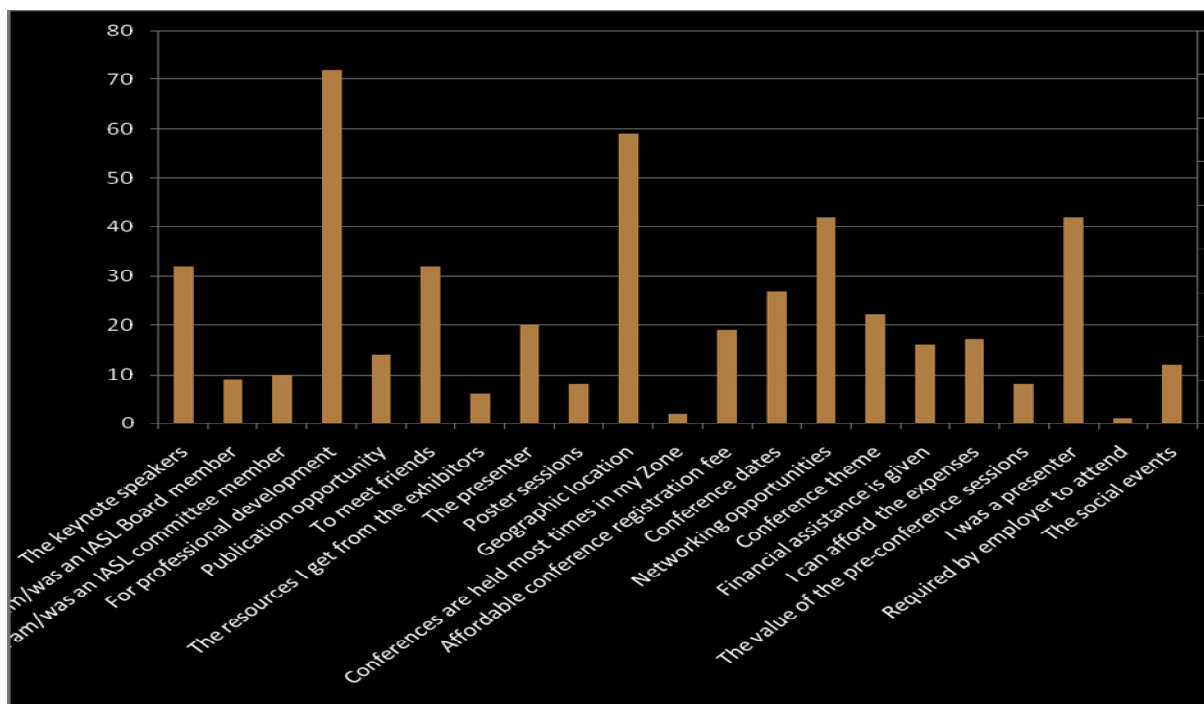
5.3.1. Professional development and networking

While Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents attended their first conference because of the geographic location, the data in Figure 4 show that 81.8% (72) of the participants attended IASL conferences because of professional development. This finding is similar to that of Vega and Connell (2007), Eke (2011), Adomi et. al (2006) and Steinhauser (2011). This is significant in that it emphasizes the fact that the reason for first time attendance can be changed. This finding could be an indication that IASL has been providing good quality professional development for its members on a yearly basis.

Networking was also an important factor as it was considered a reason for attendance by the third highest number of respondents (42). This could be an indication that these participants found networking important because of the professional exchange that they continued to enjoy after the conferences had ended.
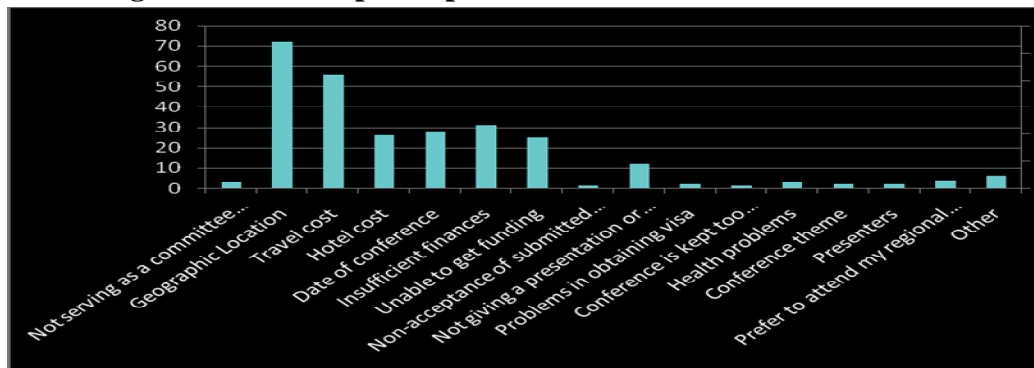
5.3.2. Conference themes

It does appear that conference themes play a significant role in getting members to attend conferences as only 22 respondents mentioned it as a motivating factor for attending conferences. Mardis' (2011) findings on conference themes indicated that in 2009, the theme was: "World Class Learning and Literacy through School Libraries". That year 56% of the participants presented papers on information skills and literacy. This data should alert IASL of the importance of guiding host countries in the selection of conference themes that will be a pull factor to the conferences.

5.3.3. Meeting friends

Meeting friends was selected above items such as 'affordable conference registration fees,' 'presenters,' and 'I am an IASL member.' This is a clear indication to IASL that its conferences provide a venue for collegiality that is cherished greatly by members.

5.4. Reasons participants failed to attend a conference
Figure 5: Reasons participants did not attend all conferences from 1998-2010

5.4.1. Geographic location and cost affiliated with conference

The data in Figure 4 show that participants cited: geographic location – 81.8% (72); travel cost – 70% (56), problems with funding – 70.8 % (56); the dates the conferences are held – 35.4% (28); conference dates – 35.4% (28) and cost of hotel accommodation – 32.9% (26) as reasons for not attending. The reasons given by participants are similar to those mentioned in the literature review (Eke, 2011). Figure 5 gives an overview of these reasons. The geographic location was ranked first as the reason why participants did not attend conferences. It is no wonder that a large percentage identified geographic location, as this affects several of the other factors. A number of cost factors are highlighted in Figure 5, such as travel and accommodation costs and inability to secure funding, or insufficient funds. When the financial issues were combined it showed that 74.5% (56) participants had difficulty attending because of lack of funds. There is no doubt that the cost to attend the international conference was a major challenge for many would-be attendees including retired members who would, of necessity, have to carefully choose the conference they attended since cost would be a significant consideration. These findings should be of great concern to the IASL Board as they might need to initiate some strategies that will make attending the conference more affordable to its members.

5.4.2. Other reasons

The summary of these responses showed that there was also the difficulty of obtaining a leave of absence from their employers to attend. The date of the conference was a concern for 39.2% (28) of the participants. Health problems – 3.8% (3) and problems getting a visa – 1.3% (1) also affected regular attendance at IASL conferences.

The IASL board has no control over many of these challenges. However, it needs to ensure that all measures are put in place to have an attractive and cost effective package that will encourage members to make the IASL conference their first choice. It is evident that IASL occasionally made adjustments to conference dates when the host country was in the summer season and the other countries were not. Regardless, members who are able to attend whenever the conference is held are encouraged to do so as the problem of date will not be easily surmounted. IASL may not be able to assist with visa issues but it should look into the host country's visa requirements and see if they will affect a majority of potential participants. They can then use this information when considering conference hosting bids.

5.4.3. The possibility of virtual conference

Participants were asked if they would recommend that hold virtual conferences. The response to this question was 59.1% (52) positive and 40.9% (36) negative. This is an indication that most of the participants would like to see IASL move in the direction of having virtual conferences. Of those who gave a positive response to having virtual conferences, 50% (27) said that they should be held annually and 50% (27) said bi-annually. The others who did not indicate annually or bi-annually stated that the virtual conferences should be held regularly on a smaller scale.

Those respondents who did not think that IASL should go the direction of virtual conferences as a replacement for face-to-face conferences (95%), were concerned about: the absence of social interaction, stating that "the charm of IASL conferences are the locations," "[it is] much better to deal with live presentations," "you can mingle/socialize before and after at the venue," and a "virtual conference does not afford collegiality that the face-to-face- affords." Participants also felt that a virtual conference would take away the "international flavor and culture" of the host countries. Moreover, one participant expressed that virtual conferences "defeat the purpose of an international association providing opportunities to meet face-to-face, to provide regional IASL conferences, to work together collaboratively for global promotion and issues affecting the school library profession." Another participant remarked that "listening to a presenter and being able to ask questions in the room with the speaker means "one listens, learns, and gets new information from others in the room." In addition, a participant who taught in an online environment stated, "Nothing compares to face-to-face interaction and persons are committed to the time, which is less likely to be the case if you have to log on."

These participants were also of the view that many IASL members do not speak English as their first language, therefore do not speak it fluently enough to participate in a virtual conference. They also believed that the virtual conference would be costly, especially for members who reside in Zone C. Not only was the prohibition of cost considered but also the technological skills of some of the IASL members and the fact that technology could fail in the midst of a virtual conference. Furthermore, it was argued that virtual conferences would not generate funds for IASL. Participants in favour of virtual conferences have justified this direction because of the cost of attending face-to-face conferences.

Participants were asked whether or not they would participate in virtual conferences. Sixty-two (62), or 72.1%, said they would while twenty-four (24), or 27%, said they would not. A summary of participants' comments showed that 30% of the participants said they could participate in the virtual conference depending on the cost and time the sessions would be available in their zone, while 20% responded that they would participate depending on the theme and ease of access to a virtual platform. It would be difficult for IASL to hold virtual conferences for all members simultaneously because of the difference in the time zones. Nonetheless, based on the findings, it is likely that the majority of members would participate although they are not generally in favour of IASL conferences being held in this mode.

6. Conclusion and implications

Participants who attended IASL conferences from 1998-2010 attended mainly for professional development. Participants have placed a premium on the opportunity these conferences offer them to renew their friendships and to socialize. As a result, the majority are not in favor of IASL replacing its face-to-face conferences with virtual ones.   This implies that members value the fulfillment of their social needs almost as highly as they do their need for professional development. Therefore, every effort should be made by IASL to continue to host its annual face-to-

face conferences but measures should be put in place to help to alleviate the challenges being faced by prospective attendees.

Most participants do not attend conferences regularly because of geographic location and, by extension, the travel cost. IASL is an international association; therefore the challenge with geographic location has been constant. It is essential that members who live in the zone where the conference is being held give significant support to the conference for that particular year. The findings imply that IASL needs to ensure that these conferences are kept within its members' financial limits so they can attend regularly.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this survey the following recommendations are put forward.
Presently, the majority of the conferences are held in Zone A. It is therefore recommended that the IASL board consider regrouping the countries into three regions according to geographic location and alternate the conferences according to the regions so the attendance pattern can be more regular as each member would attend at least once every three years.

IASL also needs to actively promote the Adopt-a-Member campaign at each conference. This initiative should enable more members to attend conferences regularly since the Adopt-a-Member campaign could take care of some of their expenses.

The majority of the participants are not in favor of IASL moving in the direction of virtual conference; however, to provide continued professional development, IASL could arrange for the presentation session to be taped and to have members who did not attend register for webinars at a reasonable price.

IASL has a global reach and, like its sister associations, is making an important contribution to the library and information profession. It is therefore necessary that the governing body make every effort to deal with the challenge of irregular attendance at its annual conference, and to institute new programs that will sustain regular attendance.

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Appendix 1

Zone 1	Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, China/Hong Kong, China/Macao, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Kingdom, UK/Bermuda, UK/British Virgin Islands, UK/Cayman, UK/England, UK/Gibraltar, UK/Falkland, UK/North Ireland, UK/Scotland, UK/Wales, United Arab Emirates, USA, USA/Virgin Islands
Zone B	Algeria, Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Cook Islands (New Zealand), Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, France/French Guinea, France/French Polynesia, France/Guadeloupe, France/Martinique, France/New Caledonia, France/Reunion, France/St. Pierre &Miquelon, Gabon, Grenada, Hungary, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (USA), Nauru, Neth. Antilles, Oman, Panama, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Seychelles, Slovakia, South Africa, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Thailand, Trinidad & Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UK/Anguilla, UK/Montserrat, UK/Saint Helena, UK/Turks and Caicos, Uruguay, USA/American Samoa, USA/Guam, USA/Northern Marianas, USA/Palau, USA/Puerto Rico, Venezuela.
Zone 3	Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina., Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Rep, Chad, China, Cocos (Keeling) Islands (Australia), Colombia, Comoros Islands, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dem Rep of Congo, Djibouti, East Timor, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, France/Wallis et Futuna, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lesotho, Liberia, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Myanmar, Marshall Islands (USA), Mauritania, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niue, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome/Principe, Senegal, Serbia/Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, Swaziland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vietnam, West Bank/Gaza Strip, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe