Keeping the score: outreach services and collaboration for academic music libraries in financially straitened times

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to study the role of academic music libraries in financially straitened times. The academic music library aims to cover the information needs of the academic community; yet the unique nature of music information also allows academic libraries to develop services for a broad spectrum of different user groups.

Design/methodology/approach: The theoretical analysis is supported by empirical evidence from a nationwide survey in Greece. The survey was carried out from July to September 2013 and presents results from interviews with the directors of all academic music libraries in Greece.

Findings: The results suggest that the period of economic crisis is also a period of challenges and innovation for music libraries which calls them to redefine policies and priorities, and further consider the needs and expectations of wider audiences, i.e. musicians outside the academic community. The financial downturn can be seen as an opportunity for restructuring

the academic music libraries and for the development of a wider framework of operation which calls for an outreach strategy and cooperation with external music associations and organizations.

Originality/value: It is one of the very few studies providing theoretical and empirical evidence linking academic music libraries to musicians and the significance of collaborative partnerships.

Keywords: Music information, academic music libraries, collaborative partnerships, survey, interviews, Greece.

Paper type: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Music libraries are special libraries with the purpose to collect, maintain, preserve, organize, promote and give access to musical material to musicians of all levels as well to non musicians (Bryant, 1985; Mount and Massoud, 1999; Lee and Downie, 2004; Inskip *et al.*, 2008; Madden, 2010). In the early twentieth century the continuous increase in the number of music libraries and the need to develop a framework for the organization of their material, led to the creation of the association of music libraries (Music Library Association, MLA). MLA was founded in 1931 in the United States aiming to promote the creation, development and use of that kind of libraries, encouraging the collection of specific bibliography, further developing services and promoting music librarianship (Oates, 2004; Sullivan, 1976). In 1951 the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML) was also founded with the aim to further promote the activities and cooperation between music libraries, archives and documentation centers in order to support and facilitate the implementation of projects related to music bibliography, documentation and information at national and international level (Baldwin, 1997).

Music libraries can be categorized as (Bradley and Coover, 2000): a) independent music libraries which operate as a separate organization dedicated to the collection, management, enhancement, promotion and delivery of the music material to all users, b) departmental music libraries that are designed to support wider organizations, orchestras, universities etc. and c) music archives within larger libraries that may also contain collections of music material. The academic music library is a type of music library (Walker, 2003) which aims to collect, manage and disseminate music information by emphasizing the coverage of the information needs of the academic community (Gracy & Zeng, 2013). However, the unique nature of music information also allows academic libraries to develop services for a broad spectrum of different user groups, such as musicians and music creators, who may be internal or external to the academic community.

This paper discusses the role of the academic music libraries in a period of economic and fiscal crisis. To this end this paper is organized as follows: The next section (section 2)

provides a selected review of the literature concerning the role of academic music libraries for supporting musical creativity in financially straitened times. Section 3 provides the results of a survey that was conducted in 2013 including top management of all academic music libraries in Greece. Greece is severely suffering from the economic crisis since 2008-2009 and therefore can serve as a case study. In section 4, the paper discusses the survey results and thus puts forward indicative suggestions for the development of strategies for bridging academic music libraries and specific professional groups such as music composers.

2. A selected review of collaboration initiatives for academic music libraries

Academic music libraries support teaching and researching by satisfying the information needs of music students and scholars within the academic community (Christensen *et al*., 2001; Furie and Dowell, 2002; Hunter, 2006; Morris, 2008; Lupton and Bruce, 2010). Apart from scholarly music material (books, encyclopedias, journals, musical printed pieces available for performance) and grey literature (graduate theses, diploma dissertations, etc.), academic music libraries include full orchestral and small concentrated scores along with the organic parts of each work (Luttmann, 2004). Furthermore, they also include other material such as audio-visual (any material in auditory and visual impressions, etc.), digitized works (music scores, books, etc.), material prerecorded in analog (magnetic tape, vinyl) and in digital form, originals or copies and music files recorded on computers in any form in accordance with the evolution of technology (Bradley and Coover, 2000).

The rapid development of information technologies and the internet has popularized music and music material (Marley, 2002). The Internet is employed by a growing number of musicians and music scholars, both academic and non-academic, and is considered to be the most important information resource. Indeed, digital and digitized music material are circulated through the internet and there is a growing number of academic music libraries that provide access rights to their digital collections to all those interested outside the academic community (Dunn et al., 2006). The internet allows music libraries to reach out beyond their

existing networks and partnership and collaboration on a European or even global scale offers additional opportunities for creating music collections aimed at different audiences.

However, music libraries face unique challenges in responding effectively to music information needs. The world of music information is available in a wide variety of formats (e.g. collections of written music such as full, vocal or choral scores, sound recordings, licensed music, videos, film, television and radio productions and scholarly resources about music, antiquarian music material). In addition music information may be utilized for different purposes (e.g. for study and research, in the production of music or in support of live performance which requires not only prompt and easy access to information but also speedy delivery).

Music collections are held in diverse physical locations, are maintained by a variety of different organisations and can hold different music materials. For example, they can be supported by a university or college department as part of its larger collection, with music presented as one of many academic subjects. Academic music collections may include, among others, books and reference materials, serials, music scores, sound recordings, and licensed electronic resources. Music collections can also be maintained by a school of music or a conservatory (see for example the Birmingham Conservatoire, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance or the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in the U.K); they can be housed within a public library or an independent research library/archive that supports a music organisation, a historical society, a museum, individual collector/composer of music or a charity; For instance, the Music Preserved charity, housed at the University of York, collects rare live performances of historical importance and re-masters them digitally for preservation purposes. It is housed in a specialist temperature controlled environment and owns a vast archive of unique and significant music historic performances[1].

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[1] http://www.musicpreserved.org.uk/

Many music libraries hold not only local but also foreign music material and collections. For example, the music collection of the British Library holds among others, recordings of music, including commercial discs, tapes of BBC and other radio broadcasts, and rare or unpublished recordings which are donated by composers and private collectors. The library also holds commercial recordings of classical music and most UK record companies donate copies of their new releases but also foreign labels which are bought selectively[2]. The Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford, except for British musical collections, is also a major holder of American song material (e.g. including The Immense Harding Collection, received from Chicago in 1975). Furthermore, many libraries, archives, and museums undertake extensive music digitization and digital preservation projects. Digital collections of music are subject to a complex process of digitization and preservation that requires significant resources and creates unique challenges on the basis of ensuring accessibility, security and copyright as well as overcoming digital information migration issues. With the complexity of music information and its increasing availability online, collaboration and partnership efforts between different music libraries, associations, individual composers/musicians and other organisations interested in music information, lie at the heart of developing and sustaining comprehensive musical information collections.

The challenges of creating, organising, sustaining and enlarging music collections with impact, can be often more easily dealt and overcome, when the resources, cost and expertise required for these collections are shared around the membership of collaborative partnerships. In addition, the process of creating music information collections involves contact, negotiations and an ongoing relationship with publishers and other external agencies that specialise on music materials which are often constrained by available library/organisational budgets and funding. Cultivating a culture of advocating local and international sharing of music information intellectual capital can lead to the leveraging of collaborative networks that can enhance music education, scholarship and research as well as the protection and preservation of musical heritage.

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[2] http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/sound/classmusic/classical.html

The following demonstrate selective examples of partnerships which have been underpinned by a successful collaboration model involving a number of different institutions. They offer evidence of how collaborative partnerships, guided by commonly shared values and principles, innovate, enhance communication and interaction and create a common ground for mutual inspiration and research. They also demonstrate ways in which collaborative projects offer added value and visibility to music information collections as well as improved end-users' experiences for music information retrieval and discovery.

Collaborative partnerships in the domain of music information are not new. For example, a recent announcement by IAML/IMS for their joint symposium to be held in New York, 21–26 June 2015, calls for papers that focus on "Music Research in the Digital Age". The Congress places emphasis on connectivity and digitized resources, highlighting specifically the value of cooperation by evoking "a long tradition of cooperation between the International Musicological Society and the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centers". It also stresses the "diversity of conceptual frameworks that inform the practice of musicology in the intercultural age"[3] as the result of access to online international music collections and in that way also leverages the significance of international collaborations and the importance of an intercontinental/global exchange of music information.

As early as 1952, The International Inventory of Musical Sources (RISM), an international non-profit collaborative partnership of 36 countries founded in 1952 by the International Musicological Society (IMS) and the International Association of Music Libraries (IAML) met with the purpose of creating a comprehensive index of extant musical sources across different parts of the world. These include music writing and manuscripts, printed music, and libretti stored in different locations, libraries, schools, archives and monasteries. Musical sources are available free of charge as open access and currently over 850,000 records can be searched online, the majority of which are music manuscripts dating from before 1800: The catalogue is a key tool for music scholars seeking primary music information resources and

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[3] http://www.ims-online.ch/

provides value-added information critical to the identification of manuscripts that cannot be derived from simply looking at the item.

In 1999, as part of the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) Electronic Libraries Programme, a consortium of nine music conservatoire libraries was awarded a grant to develop the Music Libraries Online project, which focused on creating a virtual union catalogue for music on the world wide web, enabling access to music information holdings of all the libraries in the consortium, with a single search. The combined set of holdings enabled the provision of online enhanced access to music records on a scale that the libraries were unable to maintain on an individual level, opening to collection to a world wide audience. For this project, secondary partners were also drawn from public libraries, university music libraries, national libraries and composer archives. More recently, The Music Research Consortium (which was launched on 25th October, 2013) in the UK (MRC-UK) represents UK professional organizations promoting research in music and aims to support music study and musical activity via collaboration between its eighteen participating organizations and the wider national and international community. The aim is to promote musical research on an international level, encouraging cross-disciplinary discussion and developing links with practitioners and professional bodies[4]. Examples of participating parties among others include the British Forum for Ethnomusicology (BFE), the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), the Galpin Society, the Institute of Acoustics (IoA), and the Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale (RILM UK).

Another example of a smaller scale collaboration but with a direct impact on the local community, includes the Westminster Music Library, which, since October 2013 has been working in partnership with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) to deliver Behind the Lines – The music and composers of the First World War. As part of that project, music workshops were organised for Surestart families, children from primary and secondary schools across Westminster and RBKC, and local com-munity groups and organisations such as Open Age and Streetwise Opera.

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[4] (http://www.music-research.ac.uk).

In the U.S. the Library of Congress Music Treasures Consortium (MTC) is a collaborative project with other institutions housing significant music manuscript collections. According to the founders of MTC, it provides online access, metadata and digital images of the world's most valued music manuscripts and print materials held at the most renowned music archives, in order to further research and scholarship. The founding institutions of MTC are the Library of Congress, Juilliard School, Morgan Library and Museum, Harvard University, New York Public Library, and the British Library. Digital music manuscripts from MTC link their images to and from the RISM database. The ViFaMusik portal, available online at www.vifamusik.de, was funded by the German Research Foundation to provide sources and materials for music and musicology. It is Jointly hosted by the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung (GfM), the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SIM), and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB), and supported by funds from the Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (DFG), the Virtuelle Fachbibliothek Musikwissenschaft (ViFaMusik). The portal allow access to music bibliographical data, full text data, and information about experts in musicology. ViFaMusik is "work in progress" and is continuously being extended. A review of the portal can be found in Hope (2014). Other examples of open access music information include the Mutopia project, a library of public domain sheet music, The International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP) offering access to all public domain musical scores, as well as scores from composers. This has created a number of other innovative follow up projects such WindsMusic which re-scores original edition of musical work originally scored for piano or violin for other instruments and makes them available to the public in MIDI and mp3 file formats.

This discussion demonstrated that collaborative partnerships empower the mission of music libraries by enabling them to more effectively develop, conserve and improve the discoverability of music collections of unique and significant value and highly specialized material that can be available to diverse audiences with interest in music information in a way that demonstrates commitment to the democratization of music information realized via a number of innovative and sustainable digitization initiatives across the globe. Furthermore, music libraries should create open access collection development policies in collaboration

with other libraries, associations, organizations and key individuals in the music sector with the purpose of extending their services to a wider clientele. Academic music libraries' policies are developed in conjunction with the information needs of the specific types of users they serve, academic patrons, such as academic music scholars and researchers and music students who primary focus on the utilisation of music information for academic research and teaching purposes. However, academic music libraries, in the same way as other types of libraries, should consider the needs and expectations of wider audiences outside the academic community. For instance, composers and performers have sophisticated music information needs. Recording artists may have an interest in the study of recordings, in earlier performance practices, in collaborative musical creation. Thus, approaches that has concentrated on academic music information user groups have built strong collections but have ignored the existence of other user groups who could equally benefit by access to music information.

In addition, music is by default a complex discipline that involves a number of different interdisciplinary interests. An earlier study by Brown (2002) found that the materials that music scholars require and the sources they use are often interdisciplinary in nature and this may signal a need for expanding collections to other disciplines (Brown 2002) and therefore also expanding collaborative partnerships to other areas of interest. For example, Rebman (1993) has demonstrated how music scholarship falls within a number of diverse areas/specializations, examples of which include historical musicology; acoustics, the psychology of music, ethnomusicology electronic music (e.g. study of composition, electronic and computer techniques, music cognition, acoustics, and instrument construction). Within a time where libraries experience increasingly economic difficulties and constraints, widening access to music material and improved outreach to new potential audiences may create additional opportunities for sustainable services and for promoting the value and impact of library music information services to the wider community.

Ayris (2012) identifies a number of methodologies and opportunities that are open to libraries in an era of European economic crisis and discusses ways in which libraries can address the threats but also embrace opportunities within the current financial crisis. University funding

has been influenced by the economic situation in Europe, as university libraries are experiencing recurrent cuts in public funding. Ayris proposes the solution of a "joint procurement" for the development of content in the setting of a consortium, where significant savings could incur as a result of collaborative purchasing of materials. If we extend this paradigm to the music information realm, expanding collaboration to embrace this as a model of business activity can be presented as an avenue that is open to libraries and can lead to cost-effective solutions that would not be available otherwise. According to the European Commission, joint procurement (JP) means "combining the procurement actions of two or more contracting authorities. The key defining characteristic is that there should be only one tender published on behalf of all participating authorities". This can have many benefits for music libraries such as reduced prices of activities and more attractive offers from suppliers; administrative cost savings cutting down the amount of work required and sharing and further developing existing Skills and expertise in a combined skillset that can be more powerful and effective for the task at hand. Thus collaboration and shared services present multiple ways in which libraries can innovate savings by sharing the costs of activities around the partnership but also existing resources and creating sustained relationships with other partners and vendors. It can also become a vehicle for sharing and exchanging tacit knowledge and expertise on the basis of music information intellectual capital.

Academic music libraries are the treasuries of music knowledge satisfying a wide diversity of music information needs (Stebbins, 2013). The acquisition of music itself and the acquisition of information about music can be quite costly for individual users (Laplante & Downie, 2011). These costs seem to be the main barriers musicians face when seeking music information. Moreover, the very nature of music information which makes it interacts with music, irrespectively of the level and purpose of this interaction. Although academic music libraries are mainly relate to the academic community (students, researchers, educators, administrative staff, composers, etc.) they are also include external users (Sugimoto, 2008).

3. The academic music libraries during the economic crisis in Greece

Over the last five years, the Greek economy is experiencing a period of deep recession. The pressure for spending cuts in the budgets of the state is continuous and its treatment requires lengthy and strenuous efforts at political and social level (Kostagiolas et al., 2013). The impact of this financial crisis is sensed on each side of the public and private life of the country. This crisis leads to a reduction in the standard of living for most of the citizens and enhances their feeling of uncertainty about the future. It is in general expected that cuts in public spending directly affect the operation of certain music organizations and institutions (Fallon and Lucas, 2002), the funding of which is state depended. Bellow some information for the consequences of the economic crisis on academic music libraries in Greece is provided, together with the presentation of a nationwide survey which includes the directors of all academic music libraries in Greece.

3.1 Survey profile and methodology

Academic music libraries in Greece include the ones in National "Kapodistrian" University of Athens, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Ionian University in Corfu and the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki and three at higher technological institutions. The above mentioned academic libraries do not follow a unique policy regarding the management of their music collections. Nevertheless, all academic music libraries in Greece have been equipped prior to 2009 with modern equipment and their collections include specialized areas such as history of music, musicology, music education, ethnomusicology, music technology and other related disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, aesthetics, linguistics, etc. They also include a significant number of Greek and foreign music books, journals, articles, dictionaries, encyclopedias, as well as scores, special collections (graduate, diploma and doctoral theses), collections of the Greek composers' works, as well as audio-visual material. The academic music libraries offer to all members of the academic community (students, researchers, educators, administrative staff, etc.) the possibility of online access to abstracts and full text articles of international scientific electronic journals, to databases, scores etc., (Hellenic Academic Libraries Link, 2013).

The aim of the survey conducted is two-folded: a. to study the impact of economic crisis on academic music libraries and b. to explore top management perceptions for the role of academic music libraries during the times of economic crisis. The survey included interviews with the directors of all music academic libraries in Greece and was carried out from July to September 2013. For that, a specially designed structured interview form was developed and sent to the directors of the academic music libraries in Greece. The first section of the survey concerns the impact of the economic crisis on the academic music libraries and includes four open-ended questions, as follows:

Q.A.1: Does the number of active users have been differentiated due to the economic crisis?

Q.A.2: Has the library staff been reduced due to the economic crisis?

Q.A.3: Comment on the library budget sufficiency.

Q.A.4: Comment on the impact of the economic crisis to the library services.

The second section of the survey consists of four open-ended questions for the perceptions of the directors or their representatives of the academic music libraries in regard to cooperation with external music associations and organizations:

Q.B.1: Do you believe that academic music libraries in Greece would benefit if they develop a specialized library network?

Q.B.2: Do you believe that the academic music libraries should support musical creativity by providing information services to external music associations and musicians?

Q.B.3: Comment on a potential cooperation of the academic music libraries with the Hellenic Association of Musicians.

Q.B.4: Do you believe that a cooperation of the academic music libraries with other non academic music libraries would be mutually beneficial?

For the analysis of the survey data qualitative content analysis methods have been employed (Allen and Reser, 1990; Schamber, 2000). The library directors were first approached through appointments and the survey aims were explained. Thereafter, the structured interview form

was send to the directors and their detailed responses were received through email or by fax. The responses of the library directors were collected and prepared for the analysis. Our main goal was to overall identify three response categories for each answer, i.e. a positive, neutral or a negative perceptions towards each of the suggested outreach strategies included in the above mentioned open-ended research questions. Therefore, their responses were categorized in order to identify direct or indirect comments and /or keywords that hinted towards a positive, neutral or a negative direction. Moreover, through the analysis we further identified and record statements reflecting the socioeconomic reality that led to a particular response (positive, neutral or negative). The results of the survey are presented in the section below.

3.2. Survey Results

The perceptions of the directors or their representatives of the academic music libraries in Greece in relation to the above two survey aims are summarized below. The results for the perceived impact of the economic crisis on the academic music libraries of the library directors are summarized in Table 1. The academic library directors from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Ionian University and the University of Macedonia stated that *"the number of students using and/or visiting the libraries is about the same or has been increased"*. However, the director of the University of Athens academic music library stated that in absolute numbers there *"has been significant reduction in the total number of registered users over the past two academic periods (2011-13)"*. Most of the directors actually agreed that, due to the economic crisis, the percentage of the active academic community utilizing the library services has overall increased.

Table 1. Synopsis of the perceptions of the directors in relation to the impact of the economic crisis on academic music libraries in Greece

Survey questions	Consensus statement	Positive	Neutral	Negative

Q.A.1: Has the number of active users been differentiated due to the economic crisis?	The percentage of the academic community utilizing the library services is about the sane or has been increased	87.5%	0%	12.5%
Q.A.2: Has the library staff been reduced due to the economic crisis?	Academic music libraries in Greece are understaffed / operate with minimum personnel	87.5%	12.5%	0%
Q.A.3: Comment on the library budget sufficiency.	The libraries' budgets are marginally sufficient for their daily operation	100%	0%	0%
Q.A.4: Comment on the impact of the economic crisis to the library services	The impact of the economic crisis on the library services affects the operation of academic music libraries in Greece	100%	0%	0%

Most of the library directors indicated that the library staff was reduced to almost half (Athens University, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Ionian University) and this, in turn, reduced the number of hours that the library is available in a weekly basis. Most of the academic music libraries in Greece are understaffed with less than five librarians. In fact, the majority of the academic music libraries currently operate with two or even one librarian (four academic music libraries occupy only one librarian); whereas just before the economic crisis the same libraries were operating with four or five librarians. Specifically, the academic music library directors at the University of Athens and at the Ionian University emphasized that the reduction of staff has dramatically affected the daily operation of the libraries. Indeed, it is reported that these libraries have significantly reduced their weekly opening hours over the last two years. Thereby, the possibility of physical access of the students using these libraries has been largely reduced. On the other hand, the director of the academic music library at the

University of Macedonia stated that *"there has been no change in the library's weekly operation over the last years"* and that the staff is adequate.

All the library directors took part in the survey stated that their library's budget is marginally sufficient for daily operation and certainly the economic situation does not allow any new acquisitions, subscription renewals, equipment maintenance, etc. The director of the academic music library at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki characteristically stated that *"there is no sufficient funding for heating during the winter months!"*. For example, the budget of the academic music library at the Ionian University has reduced to almost one fourth in 2013 when compared to 2010. The director of the library interestingly stated that *"the amount of the total funding in 2010 was approximately 25.600 Euro while in 2012 the funding was 5.600 Euro"*! The same was reported for the case of the academic music library funding at the University of Macedonia for the same period. Finally, according to the representative of the academic music library at the University of Athens *"the amount of the total funding of the last three years does not exceeding 1.000 euro"*. All the directors stated that the acquisition of new titles and audiovisual material has been reduced to the minimum. Indicatively, in the case of the academic music library at the Ionian University, the number of entering monographs during the last three years has sharply declined *"from 888 monographs in 2010, to just 181 monographs in 2012"*. All libraries have suffered a partial discontinuation of the access to electronic information resources; while the number of electronic subscriptions has been significantly reduced.

Table 2 summarizes the survey results of the perceptions of the library directors in regard to cooperation and services' provision to users outside the academic community. All library directors stated that cooperation among the academic music libraries would be rather useful and might be the only way forward considering that *"such a partnership only positive results can have regardless of how much or a little sustainable it is" (Director of the academic music library at University of Athens)*. In that framework the academic music library directors in our survey suggested that endorsement of a cooperation-partnership culture between academic music libraries can assist libraries to cope with difficulties and enhance at the same time their educational, scientific, intellectual, cultural and particularly their social role. In has been

noted by the director of the academic music library at Ionian university that *"such a library consortium is under development"*.

Table 2. Synopsis of the perceptions of the directors of the academic music libraries in regard to cooperation with external music associations

Survey questions	Consensus statement	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Q.B.1: Do you believe that academic music libraries in Greece would benefit if they develop a specialized library network?	A cooperation culture between academic music libraries can assist them to cope with difficulties and enhance their educational, scientific, intellectual, cultural and social role	100%	0%	0%
Q.B.2: Do you believe that the academic music libraries should support musical creativity by providing information services to external music associations and musicians?	In the context of enhancing their social role and on the necessity of support the wider music communities, academic music libraries should be open to the public	100%	0%	0%
Q.B.3: Comment on a potential cooperation of the academic music libraries with the Hellenic Association of Musicians.	The cooperation with the "Hellenic Association of Musicians" provides a constructive strategy for developing relations with wider music communities	75%	25%	0%
Q.B.4: Do you believe that a cooperation of the academic music libraries with other non academic music libraries would be mutually beneficial?	Such collaborations will help academic music libraries go through the economic crisis	87.5%	12.5%	0%

The directors further stated that the academic music libraries should strengthen their social presence and be open to the public. The director of the academic music library of National "Kapodistrian" University of Athens characteristically stated that *"an academic music library should provide support to all those having a particular interest in music including of course musicians of all levels; and that the provision and dissemination of music information is actually its responsibility"*. The responders all agreed that an academic music library can provide support to all those interested in music information inside or outside the university borders. Therefore, according to their viewpoints the academic music libraries could support musicians of all levels and/or other professional groups. Most of the directors considered that co-operation with the "Hellenic Association of Musicians" can provide a constructive strategy for developing relations with wider music communities in Greece. Furthermore, they are also positive in forming co-operations with other non-academic music institutions and libraries such as the Greek Composers Union, the Institute for Research Music and Acoustics, the Music Library of Greece 'Lilian Voudouris', etc. The directors stated that such collaborations will help academic music libraries to go through the economic crisis. The director of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki characteristically stated that *"such co-operations constitute probably the only way of reaction to continuous cuts in both human and material resources because of the financial crisis"*. The directors were all positive for developing collections reflecting the need of the wider music communities outside the academia and building a wider and innovative agenda with novel operations and services in the benefit of society. Most directors actually suggested that collaboration between academic music libraries and other music organizations the Greek Composers Union and stated that during this period of financial downturn the collaboration opportunities between institutions are necessary and can actually benefit all those involved.

4. Discussion

During the last five years, the Greek economy is experiencing a period of economic and fiscal crisis with continuous and fierce pressures for budget reductions of all public bodies. The impact of economic crisis on all types of libraries in Greece is more than obvious with extensive reductions made to their budgets and personnel (Kostagiolas *et al*., 2013). As our study suggests, academic music libraries in Greece are understaffed with less than five librarians, with the four of them having only one. This is below the minimum standards for the proper functioning of a departmental library as noted by McCleskey (2003). Furthermore, during the last four years the continuous cuts in their budget affects negatively their operations and services. For example, in the library of the Department of Music Studies of Ionian University the funding in 2013 was reduced to approximately one third of that of 2010. Budget reduction leads *de facto* to cuts in their operating expenses and worsens existing weaknesses and services such as preservation of music material, equipment maintenance, collection development, etc. (Guarria and Wang, 2011).

Any musical activity can certainly be benefited by the availability of music information. For example, students use the academic library resources in an increasingly sophisticated way including playing games, socializing (e.g. Facebook), communicating (e.g. Skype), listening to music and not solely for scholarly work (Harper and Corrall, 2011). This phenomenon intensifies with the economic crisis. The new information technologies as well as social media can encourage building communities of users – readers – musicians with very hardly any economic resources. Academic music libraries could act as agents of socialization especially during the period of economic crisis. Indeed, as it is reported by Laplante & Downie (2011) "music knowledge appears to act as a socializing agent." As agents of music socialization may affect individual musicians, and thus the community of musicians as a whole. Academic music libraries may have an influence to the musicians' tastes, thoughts, views, knowledge, creativity etc. Apart from the music information provision, the library directors also encourage external collaborations, and the development of wider users' communities (Barrett, 2006). Certainly, the period of economic crisis is providing an opportunity for innovation (Kostagiolas *et al*., 2013). Indeed, the directors of the academic music libraries seem to agree on the opportunities to tie with the wider music communities outside the academia and build a

wider and innovative agenda with novel operations and services towards the society. Furthermore, such actions can include the creation of institutional repositories (Katsirikou, 2004) and the provision of music information services within their academic communities, taking advantage of new information technologies (Maskell, 2009). In the context of strengthening that role, academic music libraries can develop collaborations with music organizations, research institutions, libraries with music collections, music unions and ensembles in order to create a wider network to support music information.

An efficient strategy which will help the academic music libraries to deal with the consequences related to the economic crisis is the proper management of opportunities and active participation in the socioeconomic scene. This could be achieved with the promotion of innovation which seems to be a strategy that may help libraries to develop cooperation and to cope with the difficulties of the present economic downturn. Music libraries cooperating with association of musicians may encourage innovation, playing an active role in creating and promoting innovative ideas. Also, academic music libraries could operate as music information disseminators providing high value information resources and tools to their users.

The survey, in line with other similar surveys in Greece and abroad (Kostagiolas, et al. 2011; Kostagiolas et al, 2013) suggests that the economic pressures made academic music library directors realize that keeping a "low profile" within the academic community is not the best possible strategy. On the other hand, a strategy of communication with the community of musicians, collaborating with music institutions, unions and association, and at the same time advocating the value of the academic library could be more effective. Academic music libraries can utilize intellectual capital resources in order to reach users beyond the host institution and strive for synergies and alliances (Kostagiolas, 2012), for example with the Hellenic Association of Musicians or the Greek Composers Union. It seems that library directors maintain a positive attitude throughout this entire process and a consensus has been developed for an active library participation culture. This is certainly a first step towards collaborations and actions that combine skills and experiences of all those work in academic music libraries in Greece. "Opening the libraries to all" is viewed by the directors as a

response to the economic crisis and a necessary adjustment to the new social and financial needs of the community of musicians in Greece.

The above framework requires a reorganization of academic music libraries through the provision of specialized user centered information services so as to support the needs of both music communities within the academic communities and music communities in society. Academic music libraries in Greece in order to overcome the severe consequences of the economic crisis have to seek alternative financing strategies. Finding alternative economic resources requires well designed self-financing practices and information services. For Greek academic music libraries finding additional sources of financing is essentially an issue of developing cooperation with other organizations outside the academic institution and implementing subsidized programs which may bring additional funds through activities beyond the university. An alternative funding strategy for the academic music libraries may comprise a large spectrum of collaborative actions such as taking part in digitization programs, subsidies from private or public programs, seeking sponsors, creating friends groups, providing consulting services, awards, donations or legacies. In fact, library management literature provides a wide array of self-financing examples, public private partnerships or partnerships with the social sector and non for-profit organizations. The academic music libraries can operate as music information centers for non-academic users. Indeed, the needs of specific groups of musicians may be a source of inspiration and innovation for generating novel information services. An interesting concept would be the development of "Music Information Communities" for specific user groups with similar musical interests and common information needs. These groups could provide volunteer work in the library and actively participate in daily work. Innovation is encouraged within a cooperative environment witch will include all those motivated to collaborate for developing value creation ideas and projects. Thereafter, seeking alternative sources of financing especially in the form of subsidies and donations is mainly related to the ability of an organization to convince third parties on its value and to develop some form of cooperative relationship with them.

5. Conclusion

In Greece as well as in all other countries, especially in southern Europe, music and performing arts organizations are severely affected by the economic crisis. Libraries are less exposed to sponsorship and donations, public budget are severely reduced, public entities are closing or merged, and by and large the number of music and theater festivals are reduced (Inkei, 2010). The directors took part in the survey report the severe impact of the economic crisis on the academic music libraries' operation. On the other hand, the financial downturn can be seen as an opportunity for restructuring the academic music libraries and for the development of a wider framework of operation while assisting the society to cope with the effects of the economic crisis. As our survey suggested, the library directors recognize the need for an outreach strategy and cooperation with external music associations and organizations. It seems that such a turn towards developing alliances and strategies has matured for the academic music libraries in Greece. For this reason it is considered necessary on their part to support the development of actions that support certain professional and music non-academic communities. Thus, academic music libraries will use more efficiently their already reduced funding (Rowse, 2003). The socioeconomic role of music communities (composers, music performers, amateur and professional musicians, etc.) gives rise to specialized music information needs.

On the other hand, the period of economic crisis for libraries is also a period of challenges and opportunities for innovation as they can continue to aid and support the education system, the society and the economy, promoting in this way their value (Kostagiolas et al., 2011). In the case of music academic libraries music information is relevant not only to academics but also to the wide audience and therefore, they need to affirm their role as social agents and music information providers. If adverse conditions are viewed as opportunities, libraries can encourage creativity and innovation; develop new services, synergies, and alliances, while enriching the old through the use of new information technologies. This is certainly true for the academic music libraries due to the very nature of music information. For example, the

academic music library directors in Greece seem to agree on working collaboratively in support of linking music material collections, music digitization projects and the development of "open to all" Music Information Centers. As a next step, further research would be deemed necessary in order to reveal the real value of the music academic library services to the musical community and the society in Greece. This "value" estimate would not be expressed in monetary terms but it could actually include a study of potential contributions to musical creativity and the benefits from an accessible, unified music information space to the national culture and society as a whole.

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