Factors Influencing Funding Decisions by Elected Politicians at the State/Provincial Level: A Case Study of Public Libraries in Canada

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine factors (internal and external) that influenced Canadian provincial (state) politicians when making funding decisions about public libraries. Using the case study methodology, Canadian provincial/state level funding for public libraries in the 2009-10 fiscal year was examined. After reviewing funding levels across the country, three jurisdictions were chosen for the case: British Columbia's budget revealed dramatically decreased funding, Alberta's budget showed dramatically increased funding, and Ontario's budget was unchanged from the previous year. The primary source of data for the case was a series of semi-structured interviews with elected officials and senior bureaucrats from the three jurisdictions. An examination of primary and secondary documents was also undertaken to help set the political and economic context as well as to provide triangulation for the case interviews. The data were analysed to determine whether Cialdini's theory of influence (2001) and specifically any of the six tactics of influence (i.e, commitment and consistency, authority, liking, social proof, scarcity and reciprocity) were instrumental in these budget processes. Findings show the principles of “authority”, “consistency and commitment” and “liking” were relevant, and that “liking” were especially important to these decisions. When these decision makers were considering funding for public libraries, they most often used three distinct lenses: the consistency lens (what are my values? what would my party do?), the authority lens (is someone with hierarchical power telling me to do this? are the requests legitimate?), and most importantly, the liking lens (how much do I like and know about the requester?). These findings are consistent with Cialdini's theory, which suggests the quality of some relationships is one of six factors that can most influence a decision maker.

The small number of prior research studies exploring the reasons for increases or decreases in public library funding allocation decisions have given little insight into the factors that motivate those politicians involved in the process and the variables that contribute to these decisions. No prior studies have examined the construct of influence in decision making about funding for Canadian public libraries at any level of
government. Additionally, no prior studies have examined the construct of influence in decision making within the context of Canadian provincial politics.

While many public libraries are facing difficult decisions in the face of uncertain funding futures, the ability of the sector to obtain favourable responses to requests for increases may require a less simplistic approach than previously thought. The ability to create meaningful connections with individuals in many communities and across all levels of government should be emphasised as a key factor in influencing funding decisions.

**Keywords**

advocacy, decision making, case study methodology, Canada, Cialdini, funding, influence, politics, provincial government, public libraries
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List of Abbreviations

ADM – Assistant Deputy Minister
ALTA – Alberta Library Trustees Association
BC – British Columbia
BCLTA – British Columbia Library Trustees Association
DM – Deputy Minister
EA – Executive Assistant
MA – Ministerial Assistant
MLA – Member of the Legislative Assembly
MPP – Member of the Provincial Parliament (a term used only in the Province of Ontario; all other provinces refer to elected officials as 'MLA')
MP – Member of Parliament of Canada
OLS-N – Ontario Library Service North
PA – Parliamentary Assistant
PEI – Prince Edward Island
SOLS – Southern Ontario Library Service
TAL – The Alberta Library
Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: QUT Verified Signature

Date: May 11, 2012
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I'd also like to acknowledge my program colleagues, particularly Diana Wakimoto, Mary Jo Romanuik and Maria Otero-Boisvert, for patiently listening and helping me through some important pieces of my research.

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Cheryl Stenström
Chemainus, Canada
March 2012
CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine factors (internal and external) that influence Canadian provincial politicians when making funding decisions about public libraries. Using the case study methodology, data were collected from interviews and primary and secondary documentation and analysed to determine whether any of the six tactics of influence as identified by Cialdini (2001) (i.e., commitment and consistency, authority, liking, social proof, scarcity and reciprocity) were instrumental in these budget processes.

1.1 Problem statement

Reports of decreases to public library funding appear frequently in the professional literature of librarianship, especially in the past few years. The recently released Library Journal (Kelley, 2011) annual budget survey says:

[T]he overall trend in FY10 was a brutal grasping by money-starved government officials for the low-hanging fruit of library budgets: 72 percent of survey respondents said their budget had been cut, and 43 percent had staff cuts.

In the UK, more than 400 libraries are under threat – early last year, concerned stakeholders held a “Save Our Libraries” day of action there (Page, 2011). And most recently, quite serious cuts to the budget of the Toronto Public Library were considered by that city council (P. White, 2011).

The small number of research studies exploring the reasons for increases or decreases in public library funding allocation decisions (Allen, 2003; Bailey, 2007; Blake, 1988; Estabrook & Lanker, 1995; Hubbard, 1996; Robbins-Carter, 1984; Varheim et al., 2008) have given little insight into the factors that motivate those politicians involved in the process and the variables that contribute to these decisions. There appears to be no correlation between public demand for library services and increased funding (Allen, 2003; Estabrook & Lanker, 1995). Highly intrinsic factors like the
actions and preferences of individual decision makers can control the outcome of the funding process (Bailey, 2007), yet external factors like local socio-economic and educational levels of the community can also have a correlation to higher levels of funding (Blake, 1988). The key issue explored in this study was whether specific factors influenced elected officials in their decision-making processes.

1.2 Research question

Using the case study methodology, the researcher explored the study question in a Canadian context. Her professional background is in Canadian public libraries and includes substantial interaction with state/provincial level agencies responsible for transferring provincial funding to public libraries. More detail about this structure is found in the sections following in this introductory chapter. Because of this background, the main question for this study is as follows.

*What factors influence decision making priorities during the budget process in Canadian provincial governments?*

1.2.1 Secondary questions

1. What (internal and external) factors led Canadian provincial elected members responsible for public libraries to recommend increased, decreased or neutral funding allocations in the 2009-10 budget year?
2. Which, if any, of the six tactics of interpersonal influence as identified in the Cialdini framework were employed in these budget processes and if so, by whom?

1.2.2 Objectives

1. To describe political decision making at the provincial level as it affects funding for public libraries in Canada.
2. To investigate whether there are any salient factors of influence in decisions regarding funding for public libraries at the provincial level.

**1.3 Research study**

Using the case study methodology and working from a pragmatic point of view, the study gathered and analysed data from interviews with elected officials and senior bureaucrats in three Canadian provinces (Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario), and primary and secondary documents to determine what influenced decision makers when recommending provincial budget allocations for public libraries. Using Cialdini’s theoretical framework of influence (2001, 2004), the study determined whether one or more of the six universal tactics of influence (i.e., consistency and commitment, scarcity, reciprocity, liking, authority and social proof) affected the outcome of this process.

**1.4 Background and context**

*This is a particularly important time for libraries. Public libraries have never been busier, and demands on them have never been higher. Yet funding continues to be an issue (Pana, 2008).*

The above quote represents a view held by many public librarians, library trustees, and others concerned about public libraries across Canada. The decisions leading to annual funding allotments for libraries can be complicated, with many factors influencing the final outcome. The research on influence and decision making show that creating an impact on a decision maker's perspective, intentions, beliefs and attitudes is multi-faceted and depends on a complex set of variables produced over time, rather than a few specific actions taken in response to isolated choices (Jensen, 2007; Tversky & Kahneman, 1982). While unchangeable past experiences of decision makers and other heuristics help inform current beliefs and attitudes, several interpersonal tactics of influence may be effective in creating opportunities to shape decision outcomes (Jensen, 2007; Cialdini, 2001). Particularly in a political decision-making environment, tactics of
influence and the decision-making behaviours of small groups may be especially relevant (Farnham, 1990; Jensen, 2007; Shultz-Hardt et al, 2000). Despite this importance, and the relative magnitude of the outcomes of political decisions, few studies have explored the effect of interpersonal influence in the political budget process (Jensen, 2007).

For many public library directors, this uncertainty about the outcomes of the financial decisions of elected officials creates an additional burden in their local planning processes, and diminishes scarce time and resources. Indeed, over the past several decades, many senior library managers in Canada and the United States have devoted time and financial resources in pursuing advocacy campaigns in an effort to stave off budget cuts.

Many of these “advocacy” campaigns appear reactionary and are executed in response to the threat of a budget cut. In Canada, examples of this cover a range of years and a broad geographical sample, from the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library in province of Nova Scotia (2008), to the Burnaby Public Library in the province of British Columbia (Steffenhagen, 2009), and more recently, the Toronto Public Library in the province of Ontario (White, 2011). This listing shows a few examples covered extensively in the popular press. These grassroots campaigns are often suggested by library professionals as a preferred method of opening discussions with politicians about public library budgets. Yet, according to Pross (1992):

[case studies [of pressure groups] teach us ... that the policy process is highly bureaucratic and the most successful groups are those that know whom to talk to – and when – and are able to communicate in a bureaucratic fashion, with briefs, working papers, and professional consultations, rather than with placards and demonstrations (p. 15).

Political context, timing, the economic climate, and the individuals involved are just some of the uncertainties in play during each budget cycle.

This uncertainty, underscored by current global economic difficulties, has boosted senior library managers' and other library stakeholders' interest in formalised advocacy training. With the goal of influencing politicians to increase their support of
the public library, both local and provincial/state governments have been the target of these campaigns, yet little formal analysis has been carried out on their efficacy. While an increasing number of reports of these advocacy efforts carried out by librarians and other library stakeholders appear regularly in the professional literature of librarianship (see Table 3 and, for example, Brey-Casiano, 2006; Chamberlain, 2009; Gibbons, 2009; McClure, Feldman & Ryan, 2007; Maxwell, 2008; Moorman, 2009; Richards, 2009; and Storey, 2010), they rarely give more than a sense of scratching the surface of the intricacies of the political decision-making realm, with none touching on the specifics of the factors that may be effective in influencing decision makers.

**Political context** - In Canada, three distinct governmental jurisdictions exist, namely municipal, provincial and federal. Municipal-level units can include cities, towns, regional districts, rural municipalities, and metropolitan areas. These governments have local power and control, though only to the extent granted them through their corresponding provincial legislation. Ten provinces make up the state-level, from Ontario – the largest by population at roughly 13.2 million people and home to Canada's largest city, Toronto – to Prince Edward Island, the smallest by population, with approximately 143,000 inhabitants. Three federally-governed territories are situated in the far north: Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. At the national level, the federal government is comprised of elected Members of Parliament, representing 308 constituencies across the country (at the time of writing). Since 1867, legislation in Canada has granted power to both the provincial and federal governments. For example, the federal government has jurisdiction over criminal law, citizenship and immigration, defence and external affairs; whereas provincial governments have authority in the areas of health, education and natural resources. Both provincial-level and federal governments are comprised of a head of state officially representing the Queen of Canada (the Lieutenant Governor and Governor General, respectively) and a Cabinet of elected politicians, appointed and led by the head of the ruling political party (the Premier and Prime Minister, respectively). The interplay between a wide variety of sources informing decisions and the relatively stable political and budget structure at the provincial level of government create an appealing environment for the study of these
decisions and hence, they are the focus of this study.

**Library context** - In Canada, the federal level of government does not have responsibility for public libraries nor does it provide them with stable ongoing funding. Rather, national support institutions like the national library and the national archives (Libraries and Archives Canada) receive federal funding. In addition, large agencies such Industry Canada, whose “mission is to foster a growing, competitive, knowledge-based Canadian economy” (Canada. Industry, 2010) makes available competitive grants for special projects such as Internet connectivity and infrastructure. Funding for public libraries rests primarily with provincial and municipal governments, with different weighting of funding responsibility across the country as outlined below. In addition, local boards of directors or trustees are typically appointed by a municipal government to hire a director or chief executive officer to oversee or manage municipal libraries. These boards and local libraries may raise additional amounts of money.

While legislative responsibility for public libraries falls to the provinces, prescribed funding formulae are not regulated. Three smaller provinces fully and directly fund library services to the public (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick); others provide only a small percentage of overall funding support through grants and coordinating staff, such as British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. In those jurisdictions where direct funding is available, library staff members are employees of the provincial government and purchases would generally be carried out through the provincial government procurement process. In just over half the provinces in Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Québec), the majority of the funding is provided by local municipal units rather than provincial governments. In turn, most appoint an independent board of citizens to manage all funds allocated for library services, as well as employ library staff to carry out day-to-day operations. While this board may consult and work closely with other stakeholder parties, such as funding municipal units (e.g., a city or town), it generally has direct control over the majority of library expenditures. Libraries in Nova Scotia, the tenth province, receive more equal funding from both provincial and municipal sources. Table 1 summarises these funding scenarios.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Primarily provincial funding</th>
<th>Primarily municipal funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Québec</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1: Main sources of funding for public libraries

According to the annual budget estimates for each provincial government in the 2009-10 fiscal year, amounts provided to public libraries by the provinces ranged from approximately $2.23 (all figures in Canadian dollars, near par with the US and Australian dollar at the time of writing) per capita in the province of Ontario, to $20.96 in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Again, for those provinces at the bottom end of the range, such as Ontario, direct services are funded primarily by local municipal units. At the top end of the range, e.g., Newfoundland and Labrador, services are fully funded at the provincial level. Each province's budget estimates also reveal a general year-over-year increase of dollars allocated to provincial agencies that coordinate library services in many provinces, though paradoxically, many have been receiving a steadily decreasing percentage of overall departmental budget allocations in recent years. Table 2 lists per capita budget allocations by province for the 2009-10 fiscal year (Alberta Finance and Enterprise, 2009; British Columbia, Finance, 2009; Manitoba Finance, 2009; New Brunswick Finance, 2009; Nova Scotia Finance, 2009; Ontario Finance, 2009; Prince Edward Island Provincial Treasury, 2009; Saskatchewan Finance, 2009).
An examination of the budgets of each department in which provincial library agencies are situated (e.g. Department of Education, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, etc.) for the last nine years across Canada shows a pattern of relatively stable funding for public libraries year over year, yet also yields some notable exceptions. The first is in the province of Alberta. In the 2009-10 fiscal year, this province budgeted the largest single-year increase of any provincial grant in the past nine years – approximately 40% in additional funding over the previous fiscal year was directed to public library services. These extra dollars also represented a growth of more than 100% in terms of the percentage of allocation from the department in which the provincial library agency is located (i.e., Ministry of Municipal Affairs). This decision seems particularly counter-intuitive in a time of global economic recession and exceptional provincial deficits (Lamphier, 2009). As a comparison, those in British Columbia received a decrease of approximately 16% in their 2009-10 provincial budget allocation, the largest single-year decrease in any province in the past nine years. Finally, public libraries in the province of Ontario have received neither an increase nor a decrease for the past several years, and indeed, exactly the same amount was budgeted in fiscal years 2008-09 and 2009-10.

As mentioned above, funding allocations at the provincial level are not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Per capita provincial funding allocation as stated in 2009-10 budget estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>$2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>$8.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>$11.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>$5.91</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ontario</td>
<td>$2.23</td>
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<td>Québec</td>
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<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>$18.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>$14.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>$19.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>$20.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Per capita allocations for public libraries by province (2009-10)*
prescribed by legislation, so it is unclear how these decisions were made, and further, what internal and external factors fit into the pattern of determining levels of funding.

1.5 Delimitations

This study focused on describing those factors that most appeared to have influenced provincial budget allocations for public libraries in three Canadian provinces during recent fiscal years. These three jurisdictions were chosen because of the differences in their funding outcomes, and because their legislative and funding contexts are relatively similar. It excluded those provinces in which the majority of funding is obtained through their respective provincial budgets, and instead focused on those where the provincial allocation is secondary to the municipal contribution. It should also be noted that the Province of Québec was intentionally excluded from all aspects of this study, due to its unique government structures, particularly in its system of law (Simeon & Elkins, 1974; Waddams & Brierley, 2009), its lack of explicit provincial legislation governing public libraries (Picco, 2008) and its integrated municipal structure for libraries (i.e., generally public libraries in Québec are not represented by independent community or political boards, rather, they form a department or unit within existing municipal systems (Mittermeyer, 1990)).

It also focused on contemporary budget years, that is the past ten years, rather than taking a longer longitudinal approach. There is little doubt that the historical development of public libraries has had an impact on the perception of libraries and the methods employed in allocating funds. Garceau (1949) and Shavit (1985, 1986) both provide good overviews of how the development of public libraries in North America has been shaped by early private philanthropy and their subsequent introduction into the public funding sphere.

Finally, while the results of the investigations may also infer that the changing perception of the role of public libraries in communities is an important factor generally in the consideration of budget allocations, this study did not explicitly analyse the broad concept of perception of public libraries. There are a number of studies that encompass
and focus on this concept, both in Canada (see for example, Dorner, 2002; Gazo, 2011; and Mittermeyer, 1999) and internationally (Audunson, 2005; Kann-Christensen & Pors, 2004; and Varheim, Steinmo & Ide, 2008).

1.6 **Significance of the study**

The literature on Canadian Cabinet decision-making processes is characterised by a lack of synthesis, relying more on reactionary deconstruction than theory application (Lindquist, 1990). Exploration of influence and decision theory has helped describe the political funding process at the provincial level. This study may add to the research in public administration, librarianship and budget theory by examining the politics of funding public libraries. With a gap in the understanding of influence in decision making in Canadian provincial politics, it also informs the process in the context of both budget theory and public administration, with public library funding as the case.

The uncertainty among different public library stakeholder groups on the efficacy of the various methods used to influence decision making at the provincial level resonates within other sectors as well. A number of unpredictable variables contribute to funding decisions that result in inconsistent outcomes from one province to another in the health care sector (Chappell, 2005) and within a single province, as in sport policy, “where the whims of the governing party...have...control over the policy process” (Church, 2008, p. iii). This study should be of interest to these related not-for-profit sectors, and contributes to understanding in the areas of decision making, public administration and influence, where influence in decision making has been little studied in general.

**Research significance** - Few studies have been conducted on libraries in the political arena, in spite of a large number of descriptive articles on “successful” lobbying campaigns, generally without stated metrics. This study begins to address the gap between the perceptions of library leaders on effective influence tactics and those
which can be verified with their elected targets and opens the question of evaluating advocacy campaigns empirically. This study may also add to the research on decision making and budget processes in the political context in Canada. By examining key actors at an individual level, the construct of influence may be added to the study of public finance and budget theory generally.

**Methodological significance** - In a provincial context, this study makes scholarly contribution to the research in library and information science while also informing other public service areas and professional decisions. While the case study has been used in previous library research, a framework for analysis as it applies to the provincial decision-making context has been developed, and may be useful for further research in additional settings. This framework also provides a model for analysis of influence in public settings generally.

**Professional significance** - By closely examining the applicability of an empirically tested set of principles on influence in the context of provincial funding of public libraries, senior library leaders, public library board members, and those active in library associations can gain insight into the budget request process. In addition, findings from this study may provide insight into effective communication processes between stakeholders and provincially elected politicians, and indeed, may be of use for leaders in other not-for-profit agencies working within the framework of provincial funding.

### 1.7 Conclusion and dissertation structure

This chapter provided the context to the study by describing the problem, the questions the study sought to answer, and briefly outlining the methods that were used to complete the study. With many public librarians, library trustees, and other library supporters concerned about public library funding across Canada, the main question explored in this study was what factors influenced the funding decisions made at the provincial/state level in Canada. While reports appear frequently in the professional
literature of librarianship of advocacy campaigns carried out with the goal of affecting decisions about funding, few studies have sought to measure the impact of these campaigns. Additionally, the factors of influence have been little studied in the context of the political decision-making environment in Canada, nor have they been explored in the context of Canadian public library funding.

In Canada, funding for public libraries comes from three main sources: municipalities, provinces and board-generated funds. The relative stability of provincial budgets combined with a wide variety of sources of information available to decision makers, as well as the researcher's own background made the provincial/state-level sources of funding made this an appealing focus for the study. After examining provincial budgets in Canada for the past decade, it was noted that a large increase in funding was allocated to public libraries in the province of Alberta in 2009-10; in the same year, a decrease in funding for public libraries was seen in British Columbia and no change in funding was forthcoming to public libraries in Ontario. These three provinces represent three variations of the budget decision in 2009-10 fiscal year and were the focus of the study. As funding levels are not prescribed by legislation, it was unclear how these decisions were made.

As noted earlier in the introductory sections, little research has been carried out on influence in the provincial political sphere in Canada; this study may contribute to the literature of Canadian public policy. It also contributes to the literature of librarianship by empirically examining these funding decisions and extending the reports made of reactions to increases or decreases in this area. It is also the first study to use the Cialdini framework of influence to describe and examine a library-related issue.

This introductory chapter discusses the problem statement, background and context, and the significance of the study. The second chapter reviews the literature of libraries and their political funding context as well as major works in the fields of influence, decision and budget theory. The third chapter describes the methodology of the study and the case study design (the presentation of pilot study findings are in Appendix B). The fourth chapter discusses the findings from the cases, as well as a brief
analysis of each; while the fifth covers the discussion of the three instances together as considered against Cialdini's framework of influence. The final chapter outlines the study limitations and conclusions and notes areas for further investigation.
CHAPTER 2: Literature review

There are few studies focusing on public libraries in the political sphere, and even fewer that touch specifically on budgets, both at the municipal and provincial/state levels (see Table 3). Some studies have been carried out in the United States, and a small number have focused on the Canadian scene. Outside North America, there has been some interest in the comparison of elected officials' perceptions of public libraries to those of librarians and other library stakeholders. Recent searches in several literature databases show the dearth of research in this area.

The relevant studies reported here include scholarly studies only and exclude opinion pieces and editorials, as well as reports of non-funding policy advancement, such as copyright legislation, media policy or intellectual freedom. Table 3 also shows that there is only a very small number of studies about public libraries published in the literature of other fields, such as political science and business. The process used to complete the literature searches reported below used terms selected from each databases' distinct controlled vocabularies as well as through broader keyword searches. No temporal limits were set.

This literature review discusses the findings of the relevant studies noted in Table 3. In order to outline the theoretical framework for the study analysis, it also covers major works in the fields of influence, decision and budget theory.
Table 3: Literature database search results for public libraries and political activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Search parameters</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Hits</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
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<td>Library Literature and Information Science Full Text</td>
<td>Subject (peer reviewed)</td>
<td>public libraries and relations with local government; library legislation and political support; pressure groups and public and library; librarians and political activities; public libraries and (keyword) influence; public libraries and (keyword) advocacy</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library, Information Science &amp; Technology Abstracts Full Text</td>
<td>Subject (peer reviewed)</td>
<td>public libraries and political aspects; libraries &amp; state and public; public libraries and (keyword) influence; public libraries and politic*; public libraries and (keyword) advocacy;</td>
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<td>Political Science Complete</td>
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<td>Proquest Dissertations and Theses</td>
<td>Citation and abstract</td>
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To ensure clarity throughout this work, it is necessary to define several key library and non-library terms. They are presented in Appendix A in three groups: terms from the political sphere, terms describing key concepts from libraries, and terms from the theories of influence and decision making. The full list of definitions includes terms from the political sphere (elected members, pressure groups, lobbying, and advocacy); libraries (board, director/manager, patron, programs and services, stakeholders, and trustees); and theories of influence (power, influence, social influence, and persuasion).

2.1 Public library context

This section outlines pertinent literature describing public libraries and the various activities undertaken by stakeholders to exert influence in the political realm,
and questions of public libraries and funding decisions. None of these studies specifically explores the construct of influence in decision making about funding; they do, however, consider the perceptions of public libraries by various decision-making groups and explore the effectiveness of various facets (patrons, library board, and non-library/external factors) on these perceptions.

**Influence of patrons** – At the highest level, the question of how public libraries can increase funding has been asked in multiple ways. The theory of public choice, which suggests demand (high use) results in increased funding, has been considered (Allen, 2003). This economic theory has not been useful when looking at public libraries; increased use does not correlate to increased funding. Related to the concept of public demand, a state-wide survey of elected municipal officials and staff as well as library stakeholders found patrons as a group are able to exercise almost no influence in the local annual budget process with municipal councils. While the library board and director may be able to engage in positive relationships with those setting funding levels, the municipal administrative staff and council members remain the most prominent players in the process, and therefore, the most influential in funding and budget decisions (Estabrook & Lanker, 1995).

**Influence of the board** – A meta-analysis of studies between the 1930s and 1970s confirms the role library board members, and by extension, the director, play in the local political process and resulting budget deliberations is minimal, and further, has changed little over time (Robbins-Carter, 1984). Generally library trustees have been inactive politically, but increasing activity in the local political process has not correlated to increased funding.

**External (non-library) influences** – External competing pressures, such as partisan initiatives and caucus colleagues, have been more powerful influences on decision makers during the budget process rather than the effectiveness of library programs or pressure from library stakeholders. In the specific case of the Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania (USA) library, it was concluded the political and historical contexts play an important role in governmental decision making at the local level (Hubbard, 1996). Correspondingly, additional external factors like local socio-economic and educational levels of the community had more of a correlation to higher levels of funding than any political pressure exerted by library trustees or staff (Blake, 1988). It has been suggested that senior library managers could benefit from learning from the literature on influence (Gwyer, 2009), though much of what has been published considers the use of downward influence (i.e., in subordinate organisational relationships).

Two additional studies from the United States examine the role of external pressures and funding issues for public libraries. One questioned whether private competition (in this case, from large book stores) increased the cost efficiency of library operations, as it had with other public sector services. This competition had no effect, and it was found libraries were operating at a 44% level of inefficiency, a figure similar to other public sector services (Hemmeter, 2006). Also, a positive correlation was found between increased state aid and local expenditures, but not a direct relationship. In other words, the state aid replaced some local funding (Stine, 2006).

The culture of the country has also been considered when looking at library funding. In OECD countries ranking high in generalised trust (i.e., “trust towards diverse others, people of different age, class, gender, race and ethnicity,” Varheim, Steinmo & Ide, 2008, p. 878), libraries' budgets fared better than those at the bottom of the scale. Through the creation of welcoming spaces for diverse groups, libraries contribute to community building, a key factor in the development of generalised trust (Varheim et al., 2008).

**Summary** – Taken together, these studies create a demonstration of a continuum of influence, from patrons and library boards, through to elected officials and a country's culture, with the library patron creating no impact on the budget process. The national culture may indeed be the most stable source for prediction of general funding levels.
2.1.1 Within government

Expanding the scope of how libraries are perceived by decision makers, following is a description of the literature on public libraries in the political sphere, as it applies beyond the question of funding. Notably, many studies have focused on the perception policy makers have of the public library as an institution.

2.1.1.1 Internationally

In the United States and beyond North America, the literature on public libraries in the political sphere has focused on the image, credibility and perception of libraries by decision makers. The issue of credibility is key in the decision-making process (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982).

Significant studies in this area have been undertaken in Scandinavia (Audunson, 2005; Kann-Christensen & Pors, 2004; and Koren, 2009), the United Kingdom (Usherwood, 1994) and Australia (Smith & Usherwood, 2003 and 2004). Key findings include the gap in the perception of libraries between librarians and politicians. In one case (Kann-Christensen & Pors, 2004), the inability of librarians to adapt library programs and services to meet the demands of changing government mandates resulted in decreased credibility.

The question of credibility is also reflected in several American studies. A comprehensive review of studies on public library funding concludes an individual's personality can have an effect on those making funding decisions. Those library stakeholders holding favour with elected officials were indeed those who had the greatest impact on those decisions (Shavit, 1985). Complementing this assertion, the personal values of the decision maker were the most salient factor in determining school library funding in a recent case in Maryland (Bailey, 2007). Additionally, the image of local librarians building a positive relationship with their state library counterparts was an essential factor in building and maintaining the credibility of those library stakeholders forwarding requests to the legislature – when these two groups disagreed, their requests were more readily dismissed (Ward, 2004). While at a distance from public libraries, the role of social networks in decisions on funding for education at the
state level in Oklahoma (USA) has been explored (Winton-Glisson, 2006). In that case, the perception of the school lobbyists had a detrimental effect in positively forwarding requests for increased school funding.

### 2.1.1.2 Canada

Within the Canadian context, Mittermeyer (1990, 1994, 1999) has written most extensively on the role of libraries in the political context. Her work has centred on the interplay between public library stakeholders (in both integrated municipal and board-type settings) and elected municipal officials (e.g., council members and mayors). In a particularly relevant study, the public library board as a body was examined in terms of its influence on elected municipal officials. It was noted that the existence of the library board provided some benefits to the organisation, such as raising the profile of the library with the public; however, persuading city administration in budget matters was not one of these benefits. Concurring with other Canadian and international research (Aunduson, 1995; Gazo, 2011; Hubbard, 1996; Kann-Christensen & Pors, 2004; Shavit, 1985; Smith, 2004), Mittermeyer found a gap in the perception of the most important roles and services offered by the public library as seen by elected leaders and professional librarians.

### 2.1.2 Advocacy

Turning to the actions library stakeholders have taken to insert themselves in the political sphere, a short discussion about the role advocacy campaigns have played in the influence process of public libraries is presented here.

According to Nicholson-Crotty (2005), “...advocacy can include public education, public relations, research, mobilisation efforts, agenda setting, lobbying, monitoring legislative or bureaucratic activity....” (p. 114). In Canada over the past decade, library stakeholders have had a growing interest in formalised advocacy training. Indeed, many have participated in a program called Library Advocacy Now! (Canadian Association of Public Libraries, 2001). A recent example of a comprehensive
campaign of messages being conveyed by library stakeholder groups to a provincial
government took place in British Columbia in 2009 (Colpitts, 2009; Kravac, 2009;
Kurucz, 2009; Mostat, 2009; and Sinoski, 2009). Other examples of highly visible
campaigns in Canada cover a range of years and a broad geographical sample from the
Palliser Regional Library in the province of Saskatchewan (2003), to the Pictou
Antigonish Regional Library in province of Nova Scotia (2008) and more recently the
Burnaby Public Library in the province of British Columbia (Steffenhagen, 2009).

There are also copious reports of actions taken by library stakeholders in other
countries – it would be difficult to create an exhaustive list. In the grassroots category,
many declare that the survival of the public library as an institution depends on library
staff members informing the public about library services (Chamberlain, 2009; Maxwell,
2008; Moorman, 2009; Richards, 2009). In Kentucky, this was accomplished by a wide-
scale campaign using billboards and other forms of advertising (Gibbons, 2009).
Interestingly, though this campaign was labelled “successful”, state and federal funding
for public libraries there has been decreasing over the past several years (Kentucky,
2009). Others suggest that direct lobbying, particularly through the development of
strong relationships with decision makers, can be effective in influencing funding
decisions (Brey-Casiano, 2006; Chamberlain, 2009; Moorman, 2009; Storey, 2010).
Advocacy campaigns (based largely on a definition rooted in promotion of services)
carried out by libraries independent of the development of strong relationships with local
politicians have little effect (McClure, Feldman, and Ryan, 2007).

The preceding sections explored the literature if public libraries as it intersects in
three key areas related to the study question: funding, perceptions If the credibility and
the role of the public library by decision makers, and the efficacy of actions taken by
library stakeholders to insert themselves in the political sphere. While each of these
studies contributes to the discussion on decisions about funding for public libraries, none
have focused on the construct of influence through the decision makers' lens.
2.2 Theoretical considerations

The literature on influence and decision making in the disciplines of psychology, sociology and management is rich and varied. The facets of the construct of influence include, but are not limited to, the agent, the target, power, context, tactics and effects. Tactics can fall into several categories and include techniques encompassing upward, downward and lateral appeals, as well as passive approaches such as image management, increasing availability and internal motivation. This section presents the literature supporting the theoretical construct of influence tactics, followed by a discussion of the dominant theories of decision making, and concludes with an overview of budget theory.

2.2.1 Influence

The framework of influence chosen for analysis in this study (see Chapter 3) comes from Cialdini (2001; 2004). The Cialdini framework is suitable for this study primarily because it considers both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in its description of characteristics. Additionally, upward, downward and lateral appeal are all encompassed, allowing for the most complete analysis of the tactics of influence at the provincial political level. It includes six features: consistency and commitment, reciprocity, social proof, liking, scarcity, and authority. Each of these concepts is described below.

While many studies have explored a single aspect of Cialdini's work, three other studies have used the full framework of six tactics for analysis (London & Cadman, 2009; Min, 2009; Patouillet, 2000). In all three studies, “reciprocity” was found to be a dominant tactic employed by agents with varying degrees of effectiveness. In each case, the targets of these tactics suggested “reciprocity” had a lesser effect without the presence of additional tactics, specifically “liking” (Min, 2009), “authority” (London & Cadman, 2009) and “commitment and consistency” (Patouillet, 2000).

Consistency and commitment relate to a target's need to carry through on either previous statements/promises, or actions that appear consistent with their values, statements, public beliefs, etc. In this study, an example
of a public belief may be a party-wide campaign promise on which individual ministers act.

- **Reciprocity** reflects exchange theory and supports the notion that targets are more willing to comply with requests if the agent has had a prior exchange with the target. This can include examples such as favours, gifts, advice-giving, etc. Surprisingly, Cialdini asserts that an agent may be more successful in influencing a target even if the favour was received by the agent, rather than given by him or her.

- **Social proof** is the reflection of a decision maker to act in accordance with peers or otherwise accordingly in situations where one option is clearly more socially acceptable than others.

- **Liking** reflects both the popular definition of the term – a mutual affinity between the target and agent – but may also encompass aspects of the mere exposure theory. In other words, a target may be more likely to feel positively toward an agent upon multiple introductions and interactions. The mere exposure theory further supports the notion that one may find an object or person more attractive as they become more familiar it. Both of these attributes can have a positive effect on influencing the target.

- **Scarcity** refers to the possible lack of availability of an object or service. An everyday example could include the retail sales pitch cliché of “Buy now! They won't last at this price!” In the context of this study, services that may be seen as valuable and hard to obtain are seen to be scarce, and therefore, may be “sold” to funders on that basis.

- **Authority** can refer both to legitimate authority, that is, when an agent has hierarchical or organisational power over a target; or authority of expertise. When making an appeal, those who are perceived to have genuine knowledge, or the reputation as having genuine knowledge, may be able to make more persuasive arguments (Benoit, 2008). The concept of reputation is discussed in more detail below.
When considering a shift in attitude, it is worth noting that peripheral cues, such as credibility or physical attractiveness, have a greater impact when motivation and/or ability to scrutinise the central merits of a product or idea are low or when attitudes cannot be based on central merit. Creating an interesting paradox, when messages presented to shift an attitude come from a liked or trusted source, the message itself is scrutinised less, unless the message is ambiguous. Further, prior knowledge of an issue or object reduces a decision maker's need for additional information (Petty et al., 1997). In the context of the budget process, this may mean objective information about past budgets and current forecasts may influence the decision making process, but not to an extent that is fully rational (Bretschneider et al., 1988).

**Reputation** - In a meta-analysis of literature on influence, it was concluded “unambiguously that a favourable organisational reputation is associated with economic benefits....” (Rindova et al., 2005, p. 1033). An organisation's reputation can be affected from both the perception of external observers on its ability to deliver value or quality goods and services, and from the opinions of other high-profile stakeholders who themselves influence the observer. These opinions form the basis of the organisation's prominence (Rindova et al., 2005). An example of prominence as it is related to influence can be found in an analysis of the methods Canada's federal government used to seek input while developing its “information highway” strategy in the mid-1990s. In that case, prominence was a key factor in ranking organisations on their ability to influence policy and, notably, library-related organisations did not rank highly nor were they prominent in the process (Dorner, 2002).

**Interpersonal influence** - Raven (1990) developed the power/interaction model of interpersonal influence and social power. He noted that if a target is extremely committed to a position, has deeply ingrained values that oppose a new proposition, or cannot understand or accept an argument, rational persuasion will be ineffective (p. 497). The effectiveness of each tactic depends on a complex set of factors and is context
dependent (Raven, 1990; Koslowsky & Schwarzwald, 1993).

Yukl, Chavez and Seifert (2005) empirically tested eleven tactics of influence using the Influence Behavior Questionnaire (IBQ): rational persuasion, exchange, ingratiation, coalition, pressure, consultation, personal appeals, inspirational appeals, legitimating, collaboration, and apprising. Like Raven, they concluded the effectiveness of each tactic was complex and context dependent, even noting the sequence of their implementation is significant. Their results are particularly relevant in the context of downward and lateral influence.

**Small group decision making and influence** – The most studied and evidence-based finding in group influence is that “majority rules” – agreeing with a group is very common (Nemeth & Goncalo, 2005). A minority dissent can have two effects: others may begin to disagree (not necessarily agreeing with the dissenting voice) and they can induce “conversion” in a private setting, in other words, those who were in agreement with the majority may admit they were not in agreement when asked privately. The minority dissent can stimulate original thinking; however, the risk of dissent can be high (i.e., being ostracised from the group). The strength of the group leader is correlated to the willingness to search for alternative information. The other reliable finding of group influence is polarisation: if someone holds an opinion, then discusses it with a like-minded group, their belief in the original opinion will become stronger. There is no relationship between type of information (opinions vs. arguments) in types of networks (homogeneous vs. heterogeneous) and its effect on attitude strength: those who share opinions have stronger attitudes (homogeneous) than dissenting, regardless of whether the differing attitudes are presented as opinions or arguments (Anderson, 2008). The tendency of groups is to prefer seeking information that supports their decisions, rather than refuting information. This is especially true if a group has already achieved a strong consensus (Schulz-Hardt et al., 2000).

Within a political context, Jensen (2007) has shown a gap in the literature of public administration and the study of influence, particularly as he posits that most political decisions are made in small-group settings. Using a seven-tactic framework for
analysis in a natural experiment setting to look at lateral coequal relationships, he described the most popular techniques employed (rational persuasion and inspirational appeals) and the most effective techniques (inspirational appeals); however, differences were noted in effectiveness depending on the kind of decision being made. In this instance, policy debates about current issues and visioning exercises were tested and rational persuasion, inspirational appeals and consultation were most effective; in the visioning work, inspirational appeals and coalition tactics were most effective.

2.2.2 Decision making

For the past half-century, scholars have considered decision theory fundamental to multiple interpretations of political analysis. The theory has its origins in the notion that decisions are separate from actions and equally as important. Facts are also clearly delineated from values and preferences (both personal and collective) and decision-making logic is based on a hierarchy of “means-ends” decisions leading to objectives and goals, i.e., a rational decision is based on selecting the most appropriate means (based on facts and values) to an end, which in itself is a part of reaching an objective (Simon, 1955).

The limits of this model are largely described in the concept of bounded rationality. Briefly, the concept is described as rational actors choosing the best of all possible alternatives in a decision (e.g. in economics, the choice that yields the highest profit) but recognising that knowing all alternatives and their consequences is impossible. Therefore, decision makers look for simplified models of alternatives, using their imaginations to fill in some of the gaps of the unknown. Another factor limiting rational choice includes the notion of personal preferences and values differing from those of a collective or organisation, forcing some alternatives to be evaluated on different sets of priorities at an individual level. Finally, decision makers often select the best, first alternative made available to them (a concept Simon called “satisficing”), rather than seeking most efficient alternatives with the most advantageous outcomes (Frederickson & Smith, 2003).
Using the model of bounded rationality, decision theorists assert that organisations tend to make decisions that support institutional stability. Risks associated with this reasoning are minimised, as are the shared values of the decision makers and their commitment to organisational purpose (Frederickson & Smith, 2003).

There is a need to distinguish political decision making from merely social contexts. The central roles of power and accountability alter the processes normally attributed to other decision-making situations (Farnham, 1990). Historically, attempts have been made to define a model, with early theorists focused entirely on the bureaucratic model. Later, theorists removed the context and considered only the individual decision. Most recently, questions have arisen about the validity of the rational/behavioural economics model. A decision maker might use several classical political strategies in developing policy alternatives, such as incrementalism, transcendent solutions (embodying both acceptability and utility), compromise, delay and minimal decisions. Further supporting the difference between political decision-making and social contexts, the political decision maker will use extra cognitive effort to find acceptable solutions, going against the notion of satisficing (Farnham, 1990).

Heuristics used in decision making – There is additional risk in assuming rational choice in decisions (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982):

...[P]eople rely on a limited number of heuristic principles which reduce the complex tasks of assessing probabilities and predicting values to simpler judgmental operations. In general, these heuristics are quite useful, but sometimes they lead to severe and systematic errors (p. 3).

Decision makers rely on three heuristics: representativeness, availability, and anchoring. In the first instance, decision makers incorporate previous knowledge and experience to create a more complete profile of situations lacking in sufficient detail. In other words, they may use stereotypes of people or situations to fill in gaps in information (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982).

The reliance on representativeness can be exacerbated when information
provided fails to fill the gap or is extraneous to the needs of the decision maker in judging a situation. In this case, no information prompts the decision maker to rely more on rational choice (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982, p. 5). Further, providing information that runs counter to a decision maker's beliefs and attitudes or subjective norms can border on useless. Representativeness can also be demonstrated when decision makers make predictions about performance; current performance influences the decision maker's view of future performance, regardless of the likelihood of new factors being introduced.

The second heuristic, and the one most pertinent to this study, is that of availability. This heuristic builds on representativeness, personal knowledge and experience by allowing a decision maker to recall or have an impression of possible options. The more familiar the decision maker is with the characteristics in a given situation, the easier he or she will find it to be feasible and rational (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982). Decision makers can assess options, but must rely on a personal set of beliefs and experiences in absence of complete information about each option.

**Intrinsic motivations in decision making** – A classic model of decision making created by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) describes a complex interplay between a full set of beliefs, an attitude toward the object in question, and the decision maker's intention leading to behaviours. In other words, even a person's intended decision may not reflect the actual behavioural outcome. It is at this point one can see decisions may or may not be grounded in rational choice. In questioning the difference between intention and action at the individual level, they developed the theory of planned behaviour. Briefly, the relatively linear model posits that individuals use their existing knowledge combined with attitude (which can be informed by subjective norms and perceived or actual control of the individual) to inform their intentions. From this, they carry out a specific pattern of behaviour related to the intention.

Put into perspective in the context of supporting libraries, the prior experience of a decision maker (e.g., personal background, knowledge of libraries and possible use, perception of librarians, etc.) combined with his or her attitude about supporting
libraries, which could include societal and organisational influences as well as his or her image of the library and his or her confidence that the a certain alternative will be implemented, leads to decision about whether or not to support libraries and eventually a decision to implement the actual demonstration of support.

The area of perceived and actual control is complex and draws heavily on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy. The conviction of a person that a task can be accomplished is not only influenced by internal, social and contextual factors, it is also a strong determinant of the motivation to act (Bandura, 2006).

The notion of anticipated regret as an internal motivator may be relevant here. Anticipated regret can have an effect on decision making, leading to risk-adverse or risk-seeking options depending on which on minimises regret (often based on whether or not the decision made will result in feedback on the decision and the rejected alternatives). It is important to note that the expectation of feedback is key – if there is little expectation of feedback, there is little anticipation of regret (Zeelenburg, 1999). In the case of decisions about library budget requests, the expectation of feedback from the public would impact the anticipation of regret; if there is little expectation of feedback, the corresponding anticipation of regret in making a negative decision would be minimal.

### 2.2.3 Budget theory

Long-standing theories of incrementalism and institutionalism are insufficient to explain the complexity of actual budget practise (Rubin, 1990). Several public administration scholars have attempted to close the gap between these overly simplified descriptive theories and normative discussions based on practice. A further debate in this area of scholarship places centres of power alternately on elected officials, senior bureaucrats, pressure groups and the external environment. It is thus that a more complex theory is sought in this area.

Elected officials have agency in the annual budget process, and have indeed been the driving force behind internal process changes (Whicker, 1992). A more moderate view of this force posits that the most influential actors on state budget requests are the
triumvirate of senior bureaucrats, elected officials and interest groups, creating a pluralist equilibrium over time. In areas of higher professionalism of legislatures and legislators, requests from senior bureaucrats are more conservative due to increased monitoring, though more aggressive requests correlate to greater increases in departmental funding over the long term (Ryu et al., 2007). The effect of monitoring is also noted at the county level, where elected members often agree with budgets put forth by city managers, yet remain reasonably involved in the process. Individual characteristics of the manager and elected members may influence the amount of involvement by elected members (e.g. length of time on the job, age of elected member, etc.) as does the size of the budget (Modlin, 2008).

External factors selectively influence budgets, though not to the extent of internal budget actors (Ryu et al., 2008). As an example, the external “boom and bust” financial environment created in a volatile resource-based energy economy played a significant role in Wyoming (USA) during the 1980s and 1990s. This also shows that incrementalism is inadequate to describe the complexities of the budget process, and yet continues to carry some explanatory power over the long term (Clark et al., 1994).

2.3 Summary

The preceding literature review has covered several areas related to this study. First, a comprehensive review of literature as it relates to public libraries in the political arena, with a particular emphasis on funding, was presented. Following this, the theoretical concepts of influence and decision making were deconstructed and prevailing principles were presented. The review concluded with an overview of dominant themes in the literature of public finance and budget processes.

The concept of tactics of interpersonal influence is absent in the literature of librarianship. Further, this concept has rarely been linked to the processes of public administration, particularly in the area of decision making about budgets. Finally, the literature on budget theory typically ignores interpersonal interactions in the budget process, where influence may play a significant role. The review shows the gap in the
intersection between the use of tactics of influence and decision making in Canadian provincial politics. It also demonstrates how this study exploring whether or not the use of tactics of influence are present during the decision making process about public library funding will contribute to the literature in public administration and librarianship.
CHAPTER 3: Methodology

This chapter begins with a description of the researcher's philosophical approach and arguments for the choice of case study as the method as well as the theoretical framework selected for analysis. Following a brief description of the study to set the context to the rest of the chapter, it then describes the study design, including selection of the jurisdictions in the case, data collection and the methods used for analysis. The chapter then moves to a discussion on ethical considerations for the study. The pilot study with concluding notes on modifications for the main study is presented in Appendix B.

The main question this study explored was: What are the factors influencing decision making priorities during the budget process in Canadian provincial governments? To provide context, and as a basis for selection of the case and the framework for analysis, the secondary questions were as follows:

- What (internal and external) factors led Canadian provincial elected members responsible for public libraries to recommend increased, decreased or neutral funding allocations in the 2009-10 budget year?
- Were any of the six tactics of interpersonal influence as identified in the Cialdini framework employed in these budget processes and if so, by whom?

To answer these questions, a case study was designed to describe three examples of budget decisions (increased, decreased, no change) made at the provincial level. These decisions focused on public libraries. The analysis was designed to determine whether there were any salient factors of influence in decisions regarding funding for public libraries at the provincial level, and whether they were in alignment with Cialdini's six tactics of influence.

### 3.1 Research philosophy and approach

This study was conducted from a pragmatic point of view. The pragmatist first
looks at the research question itself and considers the possible methodological approaches, selecting that which will most effectively generate the parameters for concluding the study (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Drawing on the terminology of Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's framework (2003), this study focused on the exploratory aspects of the phenomenon in question, while anticipating future research may seek to employ confirmatory analysis. Thus, the case study method was particularly suited to this study (Yin, 2003) and it is this conviction that the choice of method is central to the study that underlies the pragmatic approach.

Primarily a discussion among American researchers, the pragmatic approach is particularly suited to those using mixed methods in their research. The underlying question the pragmatic researcher poses in designing a study is simply “What works?” The belief that qualitative and quantitative analyses can not only coexist and expand the possibilities for analysis, study design and conclusion, but can further provide opportunities for complementary analysis of the data collected in a given study, is central. Drawing on Dewey's early works, this notion is grounded in its philosophical underpinnings: “[pragmatism refers to] an experiential world with different elements or layers, some objective, some subjective, and some a mixture of the two,” (Feilzer, 2009, p. 8). While the analysis in this study is wholly qualitative, an example of objective/subjective duality can be seen in the choice of framework for analysis which has been tested and presented in a post-positivist tradition, and the actual analysis which is thoroughly grounded in the qualitative tradition, recognising the plural nature of interpreting complex phenomena like decision making and influence. At its root, the pragmatic approach directs the researcher to consider these practical considerations as supreme to other philosophical considerations.

As mentioned above, qualitative analysis was the only method used in interpreting the data. Further studies may provide an opportunity to note emergent patterns. Additional and complementary studies suited to quantitative analysis could add to this body of literature; for example, one could work with a sample group of library stakeholders to employ tactics of influence in lateral and upward directions in a controlled setting.
This incongruity in philosophical stance and possible research approaches represents an example of the ongoing debate about “paradigm wars” taking place in the literature of social science methodology (Denzin, 2010). Since the 1990s, a third perspective has been offered: the mixed method design (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). It is worth noting consideration was given to analysis in this study from the positivist or post-positivist point of view; however, both pose some difficulty. Although large-scale studies measuring attitude have taken place, little has been undertaken specifically of the topic of influence within the political sphere (Jensen, 2007). There is an absence of a multitude of validated instruments available for use with a large sample size and the existing data samples are too small for meaningful statistical analysis at this point. Further, the study of attitude, belief, influence and decision making lends itself readily to multiple interpretations; indeed, the units of the analysis (the decisions) in their natural settings provide an infinite set of inputs and outputs. The allure of carrying out qualitative analysis and working solely from a interpretivist viewpoint in this area was great, but the researcher found it difficult to ignore the possibility of further study in this area leading to generalisable truths and emergent patterns, though that is not to say that the interpretivist point of view need necessarily be abandoned (Denzin, 2010).

3.2 Theoretical framework

As noted in the literature review and introduction to this work, many advocacy campaigns appear to rely on reactionary measures to proposed budget decreases. Oftentimes, the campaigns include the use of tactics such as threats of service reductions and comparisons to external jurisdictions. In addition, it is the perception of the researcher that the heuristics of availability and representativeness are significant factors in decision making about the library sector. The nature of the interpersonal relationships of the actors in the role of decision making provides a base for both of these factors, and it this three-sided foundation of tactics, heuristics and relationships that led to the choice of a universal model of influence as a theoretical framework for analysis in this study.

As noted in the Table 4, several models of influence and power were considered, with the Cialdini framework providing the most appealing characteristics.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Author/model</th>
<th>Salient features</th>
<th>Direction of appeal</th>
<th>Useful for analysis</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Kingdon's multiple streams model</td>
<td>Considers three streams: problem, policy and political</td>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>Possibly, greater focus on policy process than interpersonal influence</td>
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<td>Mazzoni's arena model of power/influence</td>
<td>Focus on sub-arena including top bureaucrats, established interest groups; and the macro-arena including public, media and politicians; commission arena and leadership arena</td>
<td>Lateral, upward</td>
<td>Framework for analysis is too broad, interpersonal factors may be difficult to integrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cialdini's six 'weapons' of influence</td>
<td>Refines several tactics into six universal principles: liking/attractiveness, consistency and commitment, reciprocity, social proof, authority/expertise and scarcity</td>
<td>Lateral, upward, downward</td>
<td>Universal nature of the principles and direct relationship to interpersonal/intrapersonal analysis favours this model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoy and Smith's tactics of influence</td>
<td>Focus on colleagueship, commitment, trust, fairness, self-efficacy, optimism</td>
<td>Lateral, upward, downward</td>
<td>Builds on Cialdini’s tactics, though places an emphasis on downward appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukl and Chavez’s Influence Behaviour inventory</td>
<td>Includes: pressure, upward appeals, exchange, coalition, ingratiation, rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, consultation, legitimating, collaboration, apprising</td>
<td>Lateral, downward</td>
<td>These tactics are of primary interest in peer and subordinate relationships. The measurement tool has not been tested in upward relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortensen’s 12 principles of persuasion</td>
<td>Lists dissonance, obligation, connectivity, social validation, scarcity, verbal packaging, contrast, expectations, involvement, esteem, association, balance</td>
<td>Downward</td>
<td>Several of the tactics rely on internal motivation rather than a agent-target relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raven’s power/interaction model</td>
<td>Describes six bases of power (similar to tactics) including: reward, coercion, legitimacy (i.e., hierarchical power), expertise (i.e., faith that the agent knows best), reference (i.e., relying on a sense of community with the target), and information (rational persuasion).</td>
<td>Downward</td>
<td>Some analysis has been done using the model in political crises; originally developed for supervisory relationships in intra-organisational settings and considers both target and agent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: Features of power and influence models*
First, the Cialdini framework considers both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in its description of characteristics. Second, each characteristic is clearly defined and distinct, with little chance for overlap when considering each tactic in an analysis – this attribute contributes to its universal applicability. Finally, upward, downward and lateral appeal are all encompassed, allowing for the most complete analysis of the tactics of influence at the provincial political level. A potential weakness of this framework may be that it lacks the granularity needed to describe the complexities of some of the features (e.g. consistency and commitment).

In this case, the study looked specifically at the point of view of the decision maker so both upward and lateral appeal were of consideration. The policy process itself was of secondary interest, but the focus was on the interpersonal tactics and personal influence and whether they were applicable in the decision-making process.

3.3 Brief study description

Following the completion of a pilot study in late 2010 (see Appendix B), the data for the main case study were collected between January and December 2011. They were collected through interviews with study participants and through the examination of primary and secondary documents. The analyses were carried out on the interview transcripts; documentation provided context and triangulation for the interview data. A description of the process for analysis is below. This brief study description is provided here to create context for the full methodological description; sections 3.4 through 3.8 provide extensive background information about each component of the study design.

3.3.1 Participants

Based on the review of decision making and political structures in each of the three jurisdictions of the case (described in section 3.5.3.1 below) as well as additional contacts identified by participants, a total of 31 actors were contacted to participate; 18
agreed to be interviewed. The breakdown of these actors is below.

Key actors:

- current and former ministers in Alberta (four contacted, one participated), British Columbia (three contacted, one participated) and Ontario (two contacted, none participated).
- current and former deputy ministers in Alberta (two contacted, none participated), British Columbia (five contacted, four participated), and Ontario (two contacted, none participated).
- senior bureaucrats in affiliated departments, including assistant deputy ministers and directors of public library services branches in Alberta (four contacted, four participated), British Columbia (six contacted, five participated), and Ontario (one contacted, one participated).

Observers:

- former provincial library association executive directors (two contacted, two participated)

3.3.2 Instruments

After reviewing key information about the study and consenting to participate and be recorded, 15 interview participants were interviewed in a face-to-face setting and, for convenience, three were interviewed by telephone. Interviews were 45-120 minutes in duration, with most running about one hour. A semi-structured interview schedule was followed. Based on techniques explored for effective interviews and through the pilot interview, most interviews opened with 'grand tour' questions. As the interview progressed, areas of interest to the study were approached in multiple instances to allow the participants to describe different examples of these areas. Clarification from participants was sought as appropriate.

Documents collected for examination included:

- notes made by interview participants,
- government press releases,
- hansard (official proceedings of legislative business),
3.3.3 Analysis

Each interview recording was transcribed by the researcher and sent to the participant for review. After changes requested by the participants were made, any personal identifying details were removed from the transcripts. Content analysis of the interviews with two cycles of coding with two rounds each was undertaken (Saldaña, 2009). Primary and secondary documentation were examined to triangulate the findings and to validate the interview data.

While the total elimination of bias in an exploratory case study is unlikely, measures were undertaken to ensure systematic analysis in the coding of the study data. Using NVivo content analysis software and a well established framework for analysis each provided clarity in the analysis. While the iterative coding process began to reveal emerging themes, the second cycle of coding brought transparency to the analysis and confirmed there was little possibility of overlap in definition of the each of the six tactics of influence. The list of provisional codes developed is included in chapter 5. Finally, a careful review of primary and secondary documentation was completed to substantiate both the data gathered in the interviews as well as the subsequent analysis.

3.4 Research design: Case study

The case study methodology was appropriate in this context for two reasons. The first is that a thick description of an event focusing on the “how” rather than the “why”
of a question readily suits the case method (Stake, 2000). With so little existing research in this area, the results of an exploration of the three jurisdictions could form the basis for further study as well as hypothesis testing. The intrinsic case study does not generate “universal truths” and large-scale generalisations. Analysis reveals similarities to other events or situations, and indeed, has generated local themes, but the purpose is to gain a deep understanding of a single event. Readers of the study and its findings may take away meanings and comparisons to other situations based on their own frames of reference.

The second level concerns itself with logistics. The case in this study was “bounded” (Creswell, 1998, p. 37) by both time and a specific unit of analysis (the decisions made about public library funding). Creating a complete description, including an emphasis on setting and context such as is done in the case study method, is well suited to events about which little was previously known (Yin, 2003). It is also a common method to provide insight in political settings, which often have distinct contextual circumstances (Yin, 2003).

In this study, the events and environment leading to specific decisions were explored, rather than the actual outcomes of the decisions. There may be an unlimited set of variables, and the events happened in an uncontrolled environment. Again, each of these reasons favoured the case study method over other methods such as an historical analysis or quantitative methods generally (e.g. survey, experiment).

The main limitation of the case study methodology is its narrow focus on a single setting. A single case study will not demonstrate the replication of broad, generalisable themes in multiple settings, as each case and its respective context is inherently distinct. However, validity of the data presented in a case can be assured by triangulating the sources of information gathered. Also, as mentioned above, little previous work has been done in this area, and the method chosen was well suited to exploration of the topic.

Bias has also been cited as a criticism of the case study method (Yin, 2003). Neither the case study method nor the pragmatist approach are excuses for a lack of rigour in study design and analysis. Adhering to established protocol and agreed-upon data collection methods as well as sound analysis are important, including triangulation
of data. In light of these considerations, it is worth noting that the pragmatist viewpoint recognises the utility of viewing both the research questions and data analyses from multiple points of view, giving further opportunities to reduce researcher bias (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

Consideration is also given to the limitations of interview technique. Issues arising around the data collected during an interview can include comprehension of the questions and recall of the participants of events in question (Willis, 2005). Crutcher (1994) reiterates these points and adds a note about the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee:

Traditionally, the most important issues concerning verbal data have been (a) whether the information in the verbal reports reflects thinking accurately - the validity issue; (b) whether asking subjects to report on their own thoughts changes and alters the course of thought - the reactive effects issue; and (c) whether verbal report data can be treated as effectively as other behavioral data (p. 241).

In the case of this study, recall could have been a concern given that the specific events in question took place at least 18 months prior to the interviews; however, the broad nature of the answers provided by participants left little doubt about their recollection of events, though questions about some of the irrelevant details taking place during those events presented themselves. Other possible approaches considered for this study included ethnographic or phenomenological descriptions of the event. Indeed, the specific methods used in these approaches overlap with those of the case study. However, both approaches lean toward the application or creation of generalisable “truths” and prescribe an undue importance to the subject of the study and its findings. The phenomenological approach focuses on the experience of the individuals involved – the aim of this study was to create a holistic view of the event including a description of actors, context and environment. In addition, the ethnographic approach is less suitable for the review of a specific event.
3.4.1 Selection of the jurisdictions for the case

In the scholarly realm of political science, the study of the policy creation process is well established. Howlett and Ramesh (1995) posit that there are five stages in the policy cycle: agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. The focus of this study was the third stage: decision making, and whether the outcomes of a decision show support or a lack of support for public libraries.

Defining “support” in the context of provincial governments and public libraries is slippery at best. One could say friendly exchanges with politicians are a show of support, or regular attendance at special library events, or even regular visits to the library to use its services are all signs of support. Here, financial support is used as a measurement of “increased”, “decreased” or “neutral” support.

In reviewing annual budget estimates for each of the provinces in Canada, a wide range of budget allocations for public libraries was seen over the past nine years. One reason for this is that the formulae for and sources of funding for public libraries differ from province to province, and include a mix of provincial, municipal and board-generated funds. Additionally, the government agencies responsible for public libraries within each province vary: some fall with the department of education, others fall into cultural affairs, and others municipal affairs. The budget estimates also revealed incremental increases in dollars budgeted for provincial agencies that coordinate library services in many provinces over this time period.

Exceptions to this general trend occurred in the 2009-10 fiscal year. The Province of Alberta budgeted the largest single-year increase of any Canadian provincial grant in the past nine years – approximately 40% in additional funding over the previous fiscal year was directed to public library services. As a comparison, the Province of British Columbia decreased the funding directed to public libraries by approximately 16%. This represents the largest single-year decrease in any province in the past nine years. Finally, the Province of Ontario has budgeted neither an increase nor a decrease year over year for the past several years. Indeed, very close to the same amount was presented in the budgets for the 2005-06 through 2009-10 fiscal years. The budgeted
amount for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 fiscal years was matched to the dollar.

The decisions leading to these funding allocations represented somewhat parallel processes in terms of temporal boundary (i.e., 2009-10 fiscal year) and political jurisdiction (Canadian provincial governments). They differed in their geographies, and therefore in their respective contexts, including political ideologies. However, these decisions can be said to constitute three instances in one case (public libraries funding decisions for 2009-10). The differences in measurement (increase, decrease, neutral) illustrate variations in this decision.

3.5 Data collection

As mentioned above, case study data are normally collected by various means. This can lead to replication of data and the ability to verify claims and statements – both important aspects when considering reliability. Data were collected covering the following themes in each of the three geographic locations:

- political environment;
- description of the public library context;
- the actual outcomes of the decisions.

According to Yin (2003), six of the most important ways to collect data for a case study are through: documentary records, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts. For this study, emphasis was placed on collecting data in three ways: documentary data, secondary source documentation and interviews. Early in the study, consideration was also given to the administration of Yukl's Influence Behaviour Questionnaire (IBQ-G) as a survey with senior officials; however, for several reasons, this tool was deemed inappropriate for data collection in this context. While the questionnaire does measure the proactive use of tactics by an agent on a target, it has only been verified as valid on subordinate or peer and in dyadic relationships. In this case, it is upward influence that is of interest, as are multiple agents. In addition, its use has been intended for those working in organisational teams rather than multiple and external settings, as would be the case in subordinates seeking to influence those in political power (Chavez, Yukl & Seifert, 2008).
3.5.1 Primary documentary data

A detailed description of the political and funding landscapes during the time of the decisions in question for public libraries in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario was created through the gathering of primary documentation, such as legislation, budget estimates, and provincial press releases. Documentary sources were generally publicly available as government documentation is subject to provincial freedom of information legislation in Canada. In addition, many documents were available electronically from government-sponsored websites; others were available in print at depository libraries.

3.5.2 Secondary documentary data

Secondary documents such as articles in the popular media, press releases from libraries, and reports from stakeholder associations were also examined to round out the description of each of three settings. Consideration of the authority of documents was given by verifying authorship, intended audience and purpose. Secondary documentary sources were also readily available. Press releases and reports from library stakeholders groups are generally posted on each organisations' websites. News stories are archived with popular electronic publishing aggregators. The documents examined (both primary and secondary) are listed in Appendix C.

3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews provided the richest sources of data for the cases. The ability to focus directly on the study topic and to gather nuanced data are advantages of this technique over many others (Yin, 2003). While common difficulties with the interview include bias (interviewer and interviewee), reflexivity and recall problems, speaking directly to those actors responsible for decisions about libraries cannot be substituted with any other method. Gathering personal insights of the decision maker directly through interview was the most desirable way to learn about specific sources of influence.
Interviews with elected and senior government officials take the form of “elite interviews”. The interview format was semi-structured. This was primarily to ensure particular topics of interest were covered rather than to provide uniformity among each interview.

Specific techniques for the elite interview are outlined in a process by Leech (2002) and include establishing rapport, expressing an attitude that the interviewer is participating so that he or she may impart his or her knowledge with the interviewee, beginning with simple or “grand tour” questions (e.g. “describe a typical day in your office”) and working toward more difficult or sensitive questions, using probes that de-emphasise a lack of comprehension (e.g. “when would you do that?” in lieu of “what do you mean by that?”), asking questions that frame sensitive issues in an objective way (e.g. “In what ways do you and your colleagues work with each other or assist one another in the legislative process?” in lieu of “Are you asked to do favours for your fellow elected members?”). It is worth noting the pilot study confirmed the notion of employing questions in a certain sequence can elicit richer information from the interviewee.

Non-standardised reactive probing techniques based on the subjects' behaviour were also employed, i.e., creating the probes throughout the interviews based on subjects' responses. Confirmatory (e.g. paraphrasing) and expansive (e.g. “tell me more...”) probes rounded out the interview techniques.

A sample of the unstructured interview schedule is included below. Questions were formed by the researcher to address several issues, and revised subsequent to the pilot study. The interviews typically opened with introductory comments intended to create an open atmosphere of communication between the researcher and the participant. Questions were then drawn from each section of the schedule, in an order determined in advance of each interview. Minor modifications were made depending on the role the interviewee held within government, e.g., titles were changed as appropriate. The pilot study confirmed that the participants may be more open to providing additional information later in the interview, therefore at least two questions from each section were covered. The questions were tumbled, focussing on each of the tactics repeatedly.
When appropriate, questions were asked to specifically elicit information about the decisions made during the 2009-10 budget process. It was not the researcher's intention to cover all the questions in the schedule in each interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Consistency and commitment</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What impact do letters from concerned stakeholder groups have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you had any challenges about libraries in recent years?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What about the impact of questions from the opposition?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you balance competing demands for dollars within the department?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do past interactions and perceptions impact on your future decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you balance community pressures, partisan priorities and requests from the public?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do government-wide initiatives play out when you are considering funding requests?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Liking</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are reasons for requests for funding for libraries clear to you? From whom do you normally receive this kind of request?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you receive mixed messages about libraries, either generally or in terms of budget information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you have prior relationships (e.g. friendships, working relationships, relatives, etc.) with anyone directly working in the library community prior to being appointed Minister?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of image do visits to special library events create for you? Do they help inform you of the issues faced by libraries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about your own library experiences. Were you a library user as a child?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do any interactions with library board members particularly stand out in your mind?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Reciprocity</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you work with any of your Cabinet colleagues to increase support for an increase in a service area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do visits to special events such as grand openings, association receptions, etc. increase your understanding of services in your portfolio? Is it important that you be recognised? In what ways?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe what happens when a Cabinet colleague approaches you about a topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the role your team in the Ministry plays, for example, the Deputy, senior managers, etc. Would you look to other Cabinet colleagues, and look to share information sort of horizontally, rather than vertically?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scarcity
- Have you been aware of any campaigns promoting public libraries?
- Describe the impact visits from board members have during the funding request period.
- What impact does the letter-writing public have?

Authority
- What role does information in the media play in your decision-making process?
- When making decisions about other programs within your portfolio, how does the process for libraries compare?
- Describe the role of the bureaucracy in your decision-making process.
- When there's change within the department, how does that impact the process (e.g. a new deputy)?
- Tell me about meetings with board members. How do you gather information from interest groups?
- Whom would you consider to be an authority on library information?
- Do you consult with librarians?
- Are there other people that you would turn to if you're looking for information about libraries?

Social proof
- Do you consider what's going on in [the next province over], or in similar countries like Australia, or conversely, what's going at the municipal level? Is that a factor?
- What role do other levels of government play in your decision-making process?
- Particularly in the States right now, the municipal governments are saying they're relying a lot more on performance measurement to make financial decisions. Is that a factor at all?
- What about the role of research reports?

General solicitations
- Was there any one or were there any two/three key people on whom you relied for information to help inform your decisions?
- What would influence you to make a decision regarding budget increases in one area of your portfolio over another in upcoming years?
- Would you say there's much variation in the budget process from year to year?
3.5.3.1 Sample selection

Little detailed information is available about the day-to-day workings of the provincial governments in Canada, including their methods of policy analysis and related actors. Despite this, the formal decision-making settings in each of the three jurisdictions of the study are all characterised by various combinations of central and decentralised processes coming into play. Since the introduction of the professional public service and its related policy analysis role in the mid-20th century, attempts have been made to balance both bureaucratic and political processes and analyses. In all jurisdictions, appointing a deputy to the premier is a key feature of the leadership in decision making, as well as the submission and review of annual performance and accountability reports from each ministry (MacArthur, 2009).

In British Columbia, both the Executive Council and the Treasury Board prepare and frame policy issues for presentation to the Cabinet. A formal committee structure rounds out this hierarchy. At all levels, both elected and appointed members of these groups occupy significant positions in the decision-making routines (Canada. Privy Council Office, 1998b). Alberta's formal structure rests more heavily on the committee process (led by elected officials), and indeed relies on five issues-based policy committees, including Community Services, which would have a primary interest in library-related policy matters. Despite this more robust committee structure, the Treasury Department also plays an important central role in the budget process, making recommendations to Cabinet for final decision (Canada. Privy Council Office, 1998a). Executive Council plays the most central role Ontario's decision-making process, but also relies heavily on the government caucus (elected members of the ruling party). Both the Ministry of Finance (with responsibility for the Treasury Board) and the Management Board Secretariat prepare budgetary policy for Cabinet decisions (Canada. Privy Council Office, 1998c).

Typically, those concerned with public libraries in each of the three provinces in question fall in a hierarchy as described in the chart below. Each deputy minister may have up to five assistant deputies reporting to him or her, each with various programmatic or objectives-based responsibilities. One of those responsibilities may be
the branch or department of public libraries, along with several others. Figure 1 is an example only, and is intended to illustrate the hierarchical structure within which public libraries departments operate. A similar chart for each of the three provinces in the study would reveal minor variations in titles, programmatic responsibilities and numbers.

Figure 1: Typical provincial structure for public libraries

In consideration of these political and bureaucratic structures, interviews for this study began with the identification of the most central actor in the decision event (i.e., the Ministers of Municipal Affairs [Alberta], Education [British Columbia] or Tourism and Culture [Ontario]). In this exploratory case study, few participants can provide the depth and richness of information needed to fully examine the unit of analysis in question, that is, the decision about the recommendations regarding public library funding. As mentioned above, the elected official, plus his or her deputy could provide the most direct and personal data about sources of influence in the decision making process. The director of the department or branch responsible for public libraries was also included in the sample. The importance of the inclusion of the deputy and director in the interview process, separately, was confirmed during the pilot study. This model of key decision makers in the budget process has also been frequently observed in studies of state budget requests in the United States (Ryu et al., 2008). A limitation of the study
was the lack of availability of study participants in Ontario, generating just three interviews in that jurisdiction. This low number of participants was likely the result of two factors: the researcher's own network of contacts in the province is weaker than in the other two jurisdictions as the bureaucratic structure has shifted over the past decade to include very few bureaucrats dedicated to supporting public libraries, and an election took place during the latter half of the study period. Consequently, most participants contacted were recent designates in their positions and felt their lack of experience in these new roles make them unqualified to speak on the topic. Because of the lower number of interview participants in Ontario, extra attention was given to primary and secondary documentation in that province.

Additional participants were also selected during the study where cases of phenomenal variation occur. During the interviews, participants themselves identified additional participants. In other words, if the participants listed above identified other actors they thought were important to the study, those actors were contacted. Combining the data known about each of the cases' political structures and the data from the sample budget years created a complete representative sample for the case (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). The sample of participants is below.

**Key actors:** Those elected officials responsible for library decisions during the study period were asked to participate in semi-structured interviews, including:

- current and former ministers (elected officials representing libraries in Cabinet) of Municipal Affairs (Alberta), Education (British Columbia) and Tourism and Culture (Ontario)
- current and former deputy ministers (appointed officials reporting to their respective ministers) of Municipal Affairs (Alberta), Education (British Columbia) and Tourism and Culture (Ontario)
- senior bureaucrats in affiliated departments, including directors of public library services branches

**Observers:**

- former provincial library association executive director (acting in this capacity during the period in question)
3.6 Data analysis

Each interview in the study was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The transcriptions and identified documents were be coded for thematic identification using content analysis. NVivo software was used for coding. The coding process described and classified the data. At the final stage, interpretation of the case and related analytic memos allowed patterns and themes to emerge. Discussion of outstanding themes formed the conclusions of the study. Each set of data was coded in two ways; both employing first and second cycle methods. The first cycle of analysis used provisional coding (developing codes iteratively) and hypothesis testing. Provisional codes were developed from results of the case study, and provided the basis for the initial stages of both interview and document analysis. Care was taken to ensure new codes were employed as appropriate (Saldaña, 2009). The second round of first cycle coding used a hypothesis testing method, incorporating Cialdini's framework of six tactics of influence and its related assumptions. In these two stages of first cycle coding, the presence or absence of each of these principles of influence were noted as was the decision makers' availability of alternatives (including reference to the representations used) in making the decision.

Because the study compared three settings to an existing framework, the second cycle of coding used elaborative coding (first round: developing themes and a synthesis of events; second round: how the six factors of influence were used and to what effect) (Saldaña, 2009). An attempt was made to investigate other decisions and influences within government (which may or may not be controlled by the decision makers) that affected the central decision in question and whether or not stakeholder requests were in alignment with the decision makers' institutional goals and values. The presence or absence of principles of influence was noted. The representations of libraries and the factors involved in the decision were considered as well as the perception of the information provided (i.e., was it confusing, ambiguous or incomplete, etc.) Finally, consideration was given to whether the decisions were aligned with actual demonstrations of support (or lack of support).
3.7 Reliability and validity

The related issues of reliability, rigour and validity are frequently debated in the contexts of qualitative, and more specifically, case study research (Denzin, 2010). Particularly when using qualitative analysis, the possibility of finding the one correct way to interpret data, ensure rigour and test validity is remote. Positivist notions of statistical validity, causal strength and objective analysis would not only be difficult to achieve in qualitative analysis, they would be inappropriate. The case study methodology aligns itself well in the qualitative tradition, taking into account both the context of the case and the background and biases of the researcher as variables in the analysis. Furthermore, the strength of the exploratory case study lies in the deep description of these.

In a literature review on triangulation, Jonsen and Jehn (2009) suggest that the concept of triangulation of data not only adds to the richness but also to the confidence in data. Flick (1992) furthers the notion of depth adding confidence when he asserts that “...we have to ask, how to proceed in order to gain a really many-sided kaleidoscope and a picture of the subject under study, that is really including different perspectives,” (p. 180). It is thus that triangulation reinforces the data in a way that reduces investigator bias (Denzin, 2010).

Lincoln (1995) also suggests the researcher include the details of her own background and context to add to the positionality of the work. This background is included in the data presented in the final chapter of the study, both to include a level of transparency for the reader and to mitigate the areas in which there may be researcher bias. Further transparency is assured through availability of data sets and rigorous coding methods and recording. Finally, Darke (1998) suggests the use of a well-established framework for analysis can add to the validity. He posits that this provides the opportunity for further replication of similar studies. With these considerations, the design of this study demonstrated reliability and validity in a number of ways, and included measures to reduce bias.
**Concern** | **Measures to address**
---|---
*Reliability* | - interviewees reviewed transcripts  
- documents were reviewed for authorship, purpose, audience, date, completeness, noted bias (e.g. produced for organisational rather than scientific purpose)  
- full transparency in data collection and coding is available

*Reducing bias* | - interviews were of sufficient length that interviewees moved past 'stock' responses  
- data are were gathered from multiple perspectives and sources

*Validity* | - three contexts in which the decision outcome was different were studied  
- triangulation was achieved through the examination of three sources of data: semi-structured interviews, primary documents and secondary documents  
- analysis was conducted against a well-established framework

Table 5: Measures to address research concerns in the study design

While this study used an established framework as part of its analysis, each case study is at its core inherently original. The likelihood of repeating the exploration of the case of influence in decision making about public library funding through gathering interview data from senior bureaucrats and elected officials at the provincial government level in Canada is not only small, it would be undesirable as further requests for interviews of the small number of actors most able to provide reliable information about funding decisions could become exasperating. Accessing participants and documents for a second research project would be difficult at best, as the patience of those involved would be strained. However, the possibility of executing a study with similar methods and models of analysis in other sectors, or within other levels of government not only exists, but is desirable.

### 3.8 Ethics

The “Application for review of low risk research involving human participants,” the “Coversheet for research involving human participants” and the “Participant Information for QUT Research Projects” forms were submitted and approved by the QUT Human Research Ethics Committee. This study posed very low risk to the participants, other than a potential for discomfort experienced in everyday settings. To minimise any excessive potential discomfort, participants received full documentation about the purpose of the study. Transcripts of the interviews remained anonymous and participants had opportunities to view the transcript of their interviews.
CHAPTER 4: The case

This chapter presents the data collected in each of the three provincial jurisdictions of the main study. The data were gathered from interviews with senior bureaucrats and elected officials in each jurisdiction, and primary and secondary source documents.

The chapter opens with a discussion about the general context in all three provinces, outlining information such as their respective demographic distribution, their predominant economic drivers and brief political histories. Subsequently, an introduction to the legislative contexts for public libraries in each province is presented. These two discussions are presented cross-jurisdictionally so similarities and differences can be readily noted.

Following these context-setting discussions, the story of provincial funding for public libraries in each province is described, as drawn from the data gathered through the sources mentioned above. These descriptions are presented in a roughly chronological format. For each jurisdiction, a brief analysis is presented, though the full discussion of the analysis using Cialdini's framework of six tactics of influence, including a review of the framework itself, is presented in Chapter 5. The format of this chapter proceeds as such:

4.1 Context of the three jurisdictions
   4.1.1 Demographics
   4.1.2 Predominant economic drivers
   4.1.3 Brief political histories
   4.1.4 Summary

4.2 Legislative context for public libraries
   4.2.1 Structural settings
   4.2.2 Local governance models and their implications
   4.2.3 Funding opportunities
   4.2.4 Summary

4.3 Public library funding in each jurisdiction


4.1 Context of the three jurisdictions

The focus of this study is on how decisions about the funding of programs are made at the provincial level in Canada, with the public library as a setting to examine this question. Three provinces have been chosen to highlight the decisions – the full methodological rationale for this choice is explained in Chapter 3, but at a broad level it suffices here to say that these provinces are similar in that they share equal political status and yet present some notable contrasts as well. These contrasts provide strength to the study conclusions by showing some elements of these decisions were present despite distinct contexts.

4.1.1 Demographics

Since the turn of the previous century, Canada's population has grown significantly and relies on strong immigration rates to contribute to its population base. Many immigrants have settled in its three largest metropolitan areas of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, though other regions offering sufficient employment opportunities also have notable multicultural communities.

During this period, Alberta has seen the greatest increase in population of any province. Like most regions of Canada, the ethnic background of those living in the province is varied, with the majority of settlers arriving from Great Britain, the
United States, and continental Europe after 1896. Since the 1970s, many immigrants from Asia have called Alberta home as well. Despite these numbers, more than 80% of Albertans speak English as a first language (Stamp, 2010), perhaps contributing to a perception that the province is less culturally diverse than others.

A rate of dramatic population growth has also taken place in British Columbia, Canada's most westerly province. Since the British established a colony in the region in 1858, populations from Europe, Asia and other parts of North America have resided in the area, with large waves of immigration from various regions taking place in the early part of the 20th century as well as the post-world-war-II era. The province's diverse landscape and economic activities have been a draw for those seeking a new life in Canada (Robinson, 2010). While most citizens reside in the urban south west corner of the province, industry and population in rural and northern areas still have a relatively strong impact in the political arena. In addition, the Aboriginal population also continues to have a presence both in urban and rural areas, and an important political voice.

Ontario has long enjoyed the status of Canada's largest province by population. It is home to Toronto, Canada's largest city and Ottawa, the nation's capital; and nearly one in four Canadian residents (Statistics Canada, 2010b). Most residents live in an urban setting, particularly in the area around the western end of Lake Ontario known as the “Golden Horseshoe”. Immigration since the mid-19th century reflects nearly every corner of the world, with more than 140 languages being spoken in the province today. While English is the official language in this province, French is used primarily in workplaces and homes in large geographic areas in the north. The numbers of Aboriginal peoples living in Ontario are large (approximately a quarter of a million), though represent about only two percent of the total population.

On a national scale, each of these three provinces are important population centres though Ontario's numbers are far greater than other provinces, including Alberta and British Columbia. These population numbers contribute to relatively high revenues in all three provinces, though many additional factors are important to each of their economies as well. Both the shift from a rural to urban population and the explosion of multicultural influences have begun to impact the policies and politics of government
over the past 100 years, with predictions that these two trends will increase in coming decades.

4.1.2 Predominant economic drivers

The largest player in the oil industry, Alberta has attracted Canadians from across the country for the past several decades with the lure of high wages, a competitive job market and a chance to live the “good life”. Since the discovery of several sources of oil, the flourishing population has also been subject to great highs and lows of economic cycles, bearing recessionary periods with greater effect than other regions of the vast country. For example, between 1982 and 1983, unemployment rates rose from 4% to 10% (Stamp, 2010). Despite the high stakes of the oil industry, the agricultural foundation upon which the province and the base of its economy were founded remains strong. Both cereal crops and animal husbandry contribute to this industry, with approximately $5 billion in output annually. Today, one in 20 Albertans is directly linked to the agricultural sector (Statistics Canada, 2010). Both of these economic sectors are considered in policy making at the provincial level.

In British Columbia, a modern snapshot of the province sees more than 70% of the population residing within 100 kilometres of the province's largest and capital cities – Vancouver and Victoria respectively – primarily due to a shift from a resource-dependent economy (forestry, agriculture, fishing, mining and energy) to a strong service economy. Nonetheless, natural resource revenue continues to comprise a significant portion of the province's income through royalties, taxation and special agreements (British Columbia. Finance, no date(a)). Like Alberta, global market conditions such as demand and international resolutions can affect these resource revenue sources.

Ontario's economy is as diverse as its population, with the automotive industry, mining, farming, manufacturing, hydro-electric power generation, and service sector jobs all ranking highly in importance (Bothwell & Hillmer, 2010). The difficulties experienced by the auto industry in recent years impacted this province more than most others, with “The Big Three” company (General Motors, Ford and Chrysler) job cuts cascading out through their pool of supplier plants across the southern part of the
province.

With one of the largest and most active trading partnerships in the world, each region in Canada is also sensitive to the economic fluctuations of the United States. Tighter governmental regulation in the financial sector and the continued reliance on a balance of service and resource incomes have buffered Canada from the full weight of the late-2000s global economic shift in North America, but the hardship of the impacted trade relationship has been notable in all parts of the country.

4.1.3 Brief political histories

The political backdrop in each Canadian province is as varied as each of its economies. While liberal economic thought has been the dominant force in Canada for much of the last century (Howlett, 1999), each province has displayed its own strong character in both voting trends and partisan politics. Some provinces are characterised by a long history of patronage appointments, others by single-party politics and others by changes in party based on reactionary voting (Brownsey & Howlett, 2001).

Alberta's political history is largely characterised by long, unbroken stretches of conservative rule. With some minor philosophical differences between the Conservative and Social Credit parties, the right-of-centre ideology has dominated this province since 1935. In most cases, these two parties have held large majorities in the legislature (Smith, 2001; Stamp, 2010).

In contrast to the stability of Alberta's political climate, British Columbia has been characterised by sweeping majorities on one side of the political spectrum, often followed by a pendulous swing of votes to the opposite end (Howlett & Brownsey, 2001). The 2001 provincial election exemplifies this, with the left-of-centre New Democratic Party losing all but two of their 39 legislative seats. The victorious Liberal party increased its share from 33 to 77. This is in contrast to the 1991 election that brought the New Democratic Party to power, when the then-ruling right-of-centre Social Credit party lost 85% of their seats to come in with just seven (Lunman, 2001). Defined by nearly-theatrical elections for the past several decades, the past ten years in British Columbia have seen a stable government with vigorous leadership, skilled at responding
to extreme external pressures and transforming the operational style of the bureaucracy.

Ontario's political climate reflected the stability of Alberta's in the post-world-war-II years, with more than four decades of conservative rule. Since 1985, the outcomes of elections have been anything but stable, with three different parties winning majorities in succession, a return to the Conservatives for two terms, and finally a two-term win for the Liberals (MacDermid & Albo, 2001).

For those working on governmental program implementation and service delivery in all three provinces the dominant approach to “information packaging” over the past decade or so has needed to reflect a fiscally conservative outcome, as well as respecting the financial pressures facing all Canadian economies of the time: concerns about economic globalisation and costs for the country's universal health care program will only escalate in the coming years.

4.1.4 Summary

Together, these three provinces stand out as strong economic players in the Canadian landscape. Opportunities for financial success have driven high numbers of residents to all three areas, both from other provinces as well as through international immigration. Unlike some of the more rural areas of the country, population growth is expected to continue in the coming decades. Larger populations will highlight each province's shift to a highly urbanised population, and like most western nations, the service sector is expected to play in an increasingly important role in local economic circumstances. Over time, these provinces will continue to stand out as the most prosperous in the country.

The political arena marks significant differences in the three provinces. While voters in both Alberta and Ontario have historically shown an affinity for fiscally conservative and right-of-centre governments, it is difficult to characterise British Columbia's favoured parties as voting has historically been erratic, leaning strongly toward one party followed by majorities for opposition parties. Recent years have seen similar tendencies in Ontario as well, with three different major political parties enjoying majority governments in recent decades. While the strong economic footing of each
province may provide some expected similarities in fiscal attitudes in decision making, varying political biases would suggest differences.

4.2 Legislative context for public libraries

With the exception of Québec, public libraries in Canada are legislated at the provincial level through explicit statutory direction. Legislation normally describes acceptable models of incorporation, the powers and duties of the local governing board and the relationship of the institution to the local municipal jurisdiction, if applicable. The statutes and associated regulations for public libraries across the country are typically brief and have remained nearly static for the past decade. Apart from these high levels of prescribed incorporation, the legislation allows for substantial interpretation of local operations.

4.2.1 Structural settings

The legislation of each province also assigns responsibility for public libraries to both an elected official and an appointed bureaucrat. The appointed bureaucrat is often a professional librarian, though only the British Columbian legislation specifies that this person shall be “qualified”. No definition of these qualifications is supplied; most other statutes describe a relationship between an office responsible for public libraries, the right of the responsible minister to appoint a bureaucrat to direct this office, and its ability to enhance public library services in the province (Library Act, 1996; Libraries Act, 2000; Public Libraries Act, 1996; Public Libraries Act, 2006; Public Libraries Act [Ontario], 1990; New Brunswick Public Libraries Act, 2011; Libraries Act, 1989; Public Libraries Act, 2010; Public Libraries Act, 1990 [Newfoundland & Labrador]).

Typically, enhancing services includes administrative duties associated with the distribution of any provincial grant monies and the subsequent collection of annual accounting reports that include details on the disposition of provincial grants. Often the director of this office and its staff members will also be called upon for advice, facilitation and assistance with resource sharing and collaboration. In some provinces,
this senior bureaucrat also has direct supervisory responsibility for public library employees as these provinces administer all public libraries centrally, though these cases are beyond the scope of the study.

In Alberta, the office responsible for public libraries currently sits with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. It includes a Public Library Services Branch that carries out the quotidian functions of grant administration as well as interpretation of the Libraries Act. It facilitates with the drafting of policy in areas of concern to the Province, such as resource sharing among all libraries. Many of the staff-intensive, detailed programs that may assist libraries with resource sharing are delegated to a program called The Alberta Library, which receives partial funding through the Province as well. The difference in these mandates can be seen in the example of resource sharing of books (interlibrary loans), where the Provincial office would set the overarching policy and The Alberta Library would implement the software-based resource-sharing program that allows library staff to request and ship items from other libraries on a day-to-day basis (Alberta. Municipal Affairs, 2010).

British Columbia's Ministry of Education currently holds the office responsible for public libraries, which at the time of writing is being renamed the Libraries and Literacy Branch (previously the Public Library Services Branch). A combination of administrative and policy tasks as well as support programs are carried out, though increasingly the detailed, staff-intensive work of programs is being delegated to the BC Libraries Cooperative. Like The Alberta Library, the BC Libraries Cooperative receives partial funding through the Province (British Columbia. Education, no date).

Ontario's Ministry of Tourism and Culture no longer houses an office dedicated solely to public libraries. Through its Culture Division, the Director of the Culture and Strategic Policy Branch has broad responsibilities for issues arising related to public libraries. Detailed administration of grants is carried out by program officers in its Programs and Services Branch and Culture Policy Unit. The detailed work of routine support services is delegated to the Southern Ontario Library Service and the Ontario Library Service -North. The majority of the funding for these agencies is granted through the Province (Ontario. Tourism, Culture and Sport, 2012).
Broadly, the offices responsible for public libraries in each of the provinces have similar roles and responsibilities. All have evolved from service providers to primarily administrative policy units, with a continuum represented in this area where the government staff in British Columbia continue to maintain a small number of direct programs, through to Ontario where staff members are entirely focused on policy and grant administration. Legislation allows for some accountability measures between the local library boards and the release of provincial grant monies, though in practice there is no means of hierarchical authority between the provinces and the local public library boards.

4.2.2 Local governance models and their implications

The legislation in each of these provinces also provides for the development of public libraries under several models; sample names of these include the public library association, the community library, the regional library, the municipal library, the union public library, the inter-municipal library, the federated library, etc. With the exception of the public library association (British Columbia) and the community library (Alberta), all models are linked legislatively to a local municipal jurisdiction. In other words, the library act in each province specifies the relationship libraries must have with corresponding municipalities. Some types of libraries (e.g., federations) act as umbrella organisations to many of each province's libraries and facilitate shared services such as materials cataloguing, consortial purchasing and staff training.

The type of library is relevant in the discussion of library board composition. With the exception of two libraries in British Columbia that function without a board and report directly through their respective municipal staff hierarchies, all other libraries in each of the three provinces are governed by a local board of trustees. As a general rule, libraries must include appointed council members among its board of trustees. The numbers of these appointments can range from one member per board to 100% of members being elected council members. This inclusion suggests the ability of each type of library to be connected directly to elected officials, though no types of library boards include representation from the provincial government. The implication of the role an
independent governing board of trustees plays within a municipal structure is beyond the scope of this study.

4.2.3 Funding opportunities

Specific amounts and sources of funding are generally not prescribed legislatively, though in most provinces, provincial and other jurisdictional funding sources are acknowledged. The director of each province's office responsible for public libraries may distribute funds earmarked for library services by the legislature, though the legislature is not required to allocate funds each year. At this time, the majority of funds distributed are typically spent at the discretion of the local chief librarian, with the exception of special project funding made available on an irregular basis. The ongoing relationship specified for all types of libraries relies heavily on each library providing an annual financial report to its associated Ministry staff, and by extension the Minister. As the funding remains a grant-style scenario rather than prescribed funding, this low level of scrutiny and accountability is common in most areas of the country.

In each of the three provinces in the study, the funding provided by the Province ordinarily comprises a low percentage of the overall operations budget for libraries at the local level, often no more than 10%. Exceptions may be libraries serving very small populations, but with the bulk of local library funding being supplied by corresponding municipalities, the Provinces' funding is supplemental and generally places them in a supporting role, rather than equal partner to the municipalities. In addition, it is common for municipalities to carry the full financial weight of maintaining and operating physical library locations, including the acquisition of new buildings when appropriate. Library boards may also choose to raise additional funds at the local level through fines for overdue materials, fees, donations, and application for private and irregular federal grants (Alberta. Municipal Affairs, 2010; British Columbia. Education, no date; Ontario. Tourism, Culture and Sport, 2012).
4.2.4 Summary

All provinces in Canada with the exception of Québec have explicit legislation concerning public libraries. The statutes are broad and allow for a high degree of interpretation for service at the local level. A formal relationship with the Minister responsible for public libraries in each province is maintained through government staff. In Alberta and British Columbia, a full office assists with this relationship; Ontario has designated officers within larger units for this purpose. All three provinces have also created strong arms-length institutions to carry out intensive support programs for libraries. Normal practice does not result in an authoritative link between the Minister and local libraries and their boards.

With a few exceptions, public libraries are governed by a local board of trustees. Municipal representation on these boards is common, and indeed, may be legislated depending the model of incorporation of the library. Even for those libraries whose incorporation does not legislatively include a formal link with its corresponding municipal unit, municipal representation on the library board is an option frequently chosen by trustees.

For those provinces included in the study, the most significant amount of funding for public libraries is supplied by corresponding municipal units. Statutory wording about specific funding avenues for libraries tends to be vague, and absent in most cases. Despite the lack of legislated direction about funding, all provinces allocate some funding amounts to public libraries. While there are exceptions, particularly where populations are very low, the provincial grant typically comprises 7-15% of each library's total budget.

4.3 Public library funding in each jurisdiction

4.3.1 Alberta

Data for this jurisdiction were collected between September and November 2011. Primary and secondary documents are included in the main reference list. Interviews
were conducted with five participants, four of whom were senior bureaucrats and one who was an elected official.

**Description** – The past decade in Alberta has been a period of relatively stable political leadership, though a mid-decade change in leadership ushered in new style of government. Parallel to these bureaucratic changes are the economic circumstances of this province, which are perhaps more relevant to the political environment than any other province since its governmental revenues are more closely tied to volatility in the global energy sector than any other area of the country. Noted for its marked cycles of boom and bust, Alberta's governmental spending can swing from measures of austerity to extravagance in a matter of months. Following is an outline of the major political and economic conditions in Alberta for the past decade. This context sets the stage for the description of those developments that most closely affected decisions about provincial funding of public libraries and a subsequent analysis of those events. While economic conditions are notable, provincial funding allocations for public libraries in Alberta have largely depended on the skilful negotiations of a small number of actors who have built up a flattering reputation of Alberta's public library services over a number of years.

**Political and economic context in the 2001-10 period** – More than any other province in Canada, Alberta is characterised by both stability in its political choices as well as a high reliance on resources, particularly oil, for its governmental revenues. The most recent ten years have not been an exception to this stereotype; the current ruling, right-of-centre Conservative party has held its position for the past 40 years and oil and gas account for approximately 35% of the government's revenues (Alberta, 2011b).

Early in the 1990s, many provinces as well as the federal government were concerned with eliminating budgetary deficits and the newly elected Premier's main focus was to reach this goal. By the end of his 14-year tenure, he not only realised his goal, but also managed to pay down a portion of the provincial debt. These strong financial outcomes were a result of unflagging commitment to bold cuts in public services, including health care spending and public staff salaries.
In 2006, when this cost-cutting Premier stepped down, the new party leader came into a government that was flush with cash but had suffered in many areas as a result of the previous spending cuts. His approach was more focused on the details of running government and introduced a series of “mandate letters” - specific direction given to each Cabinet minister to guide them in the accomplishment of overall governmental goals. At this same time, financial expertise emerged as a key skill over program expertise in the bureaucracy as well. This shift to a more business-driven approach may have been a reflection of similar trends in other provincial governments at the time, or perhaps an effort to balance the image of the previous Premier's more sweeping approach. “Towards the end of [that Premier's] time, messages started to get controlled. [He] was all over the place so they were trying to control. Communications people had a lot more power – everything had to go through them. Everything had to be messaged the way they wanted it. They also started to centralise decision making. So their middle managers and even senior managers had no power. The power rested with the ADM and the Deputy and in many cases just with the Deputy.” [E11-25-1000].

The shift in approach was accompanied by a general attitude of recovery and rebuilding of infrastructure that had been overlooked during the earlier budget cuts:

[The previous Premier] came in in a different time. He came in when there was a big deficit that had to be slain. So his whole focus was he was the Man of the People and he was coming in to address a budget deficit. All of the decisions being made were around cutting the deficit. Once the deficit was slain, I'm not sure the focus was there afterwards, because that was the big thing. The thing that drove everything. He tried to do other stuff but ... it was really once that deficit was slain, that's when the public sentiment started, 'OK, you've slain the government deficit but at the expense of what? Now we've got this infrastructure deficit because grant programs were cut, or this or this..' Or government didn't invest in infrastructure or whatever. Those pieces you might have not directed your resources to because your whole focus was on the deficit. Once that was cut, there was pushback saying, 'Now what?' [E11-29-300].
The first two years of the new Premier's mandate were marked by this cautious approach to spending. With crude oil prices soaring, plans for disbursing some of the additional revenues across governmental programs were implemented. In 2007, an unprecedented $11.3 billion was allocated to a new multi-year Municipal Sustainability Initiative fund targeting big-ticket items like public transit, recreation and sports facilities, sewer infrastructure, and roadways (Alberta, 2011c).

Within a six-month period in the following year, crude oil prices plummeted along with other global investments; however, the government's commitment to this measured approach to investing in key infrastructure projects was maintained:

Like the rest of Canada, Alberta was unable to escape the ravages of the global slowdown, suffering its first recession in more than 20 years in 2009, when GDP declined by 5.1% and unemployment rose from 3.6% to 6.6%....Over that period, Alberta remained committed to a relatively heavy infrastructure investment programme. This is because a region that was very sparsely populated before the discovery of oil soon after the Second World War is now seeing a huge influx of new residents, with the population having grown by 25% in the last decade alone. That is one reason why Alberta is committed to channelling much of its oil wealth into key public services. As [a major investment firm] comments in a recent update on the province, 'the projected infrastructure investment of $20.1bn over the next three years is almost twice the per capita outlay of the other provinces' (Alberta: prudent investment of an embarrassment of riches, 2010).

This cautious approach was also reflected in the bureaucracy. Once funding commitments were made, those in senior levels made efforts to ensure financial plans were not derailed. One senior bureaucrat reflected:

...our current minister now, he did meet with one of the stakeholders recently but we are trying to put a stop to that because it's my sense that some of these stakeholders are really playing the politics.... instead of it's really just who you know and if you know the right minister you can get some extra funding. No, that's not what we're supporting. [E11-29-300].

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Though dramatic, the effects of the recession in Alberta were short lived. “In 2010, the Alberta economy recovered from the global recession and expanded by an estimated 3.8%. Alberta leads all provinces in economic growth during the past 20 years, with an average annual GDP growth of 3.2% per year, between 1990 and 2010” (Alberta, 2011a).

This review of the political context of Alberta during 2001-10 shows a government that came through a period highly focused on deficit and debt reduction, only to cautiously reverse its spending patterns in the mid-2000s. Despite global financial concerns, the province's financial reserves had been bolstered by the previous years' exceptionally high resource revenues, and the timing for requests for funding increases was exceedingly positive during the last part of this decade.

**Specific context for public library funding** – In the half decade preceding the year 2000, the Public Library Services Branch enjoyed a period of stability with its elected minister. At the same time as this minister's appointment in the mid-1990s, a newly appointed Director of Public Library Services was coming on board in the Branch. Both of these actors had extensive experience in their respective governmental areas; the elected official had been in office for a decade and the Director had worked as a senior bureaucrat with this government for more than two decades. However, neither had a background in the library sector other than their personal background knowledge as library users, so there was a need for both to quickly learn about the main issues facing the public library sector at the time. As the Director at the time recalled, “I didn’t know my ass from page 8 about this stuff” ([E11-25-1000](#)). The two made a very rapid assessment of the main issues in the sector and decided to put forward a plan for a request to increase funding.

The request was for $1.93 million and specifically addressed the issue of Internet connectivity. It was presented by the Minister and unanimously accepted by the Standing Committee responsible for this decision and later endorsed by Cabinet in late 1996. Shortly after, the Minister was able to reallocate a further $4.8 million to public libraries for connectivity expenses. The Province had recently created an agency called The
Alberta Library to manage and implement these kinds of special projects like the connectivity program – combined with grants available from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as well as those from a program of irregular funding for the same purpose from Canada's federal government – it secured more than $12 million on behalf of Alberta's public libraries in a period of approximately three years.

Up to the mid-2000s, little activity took place in terms of formal funding requests – these years marked the end of the deficit and debt reduction program so vigorously pursued throughout the 1990s and early part of this century. However, during this time, the Minister previously responsible for libraries in the mid-1990s become the head of the Treasury Board and Deputy Premier. Very late in the 2006-07 fiscal year, a $20 million overall government surplus was revealed and offered to the Public Libraries Services Branch. Like all provincial funding offered at the end of a fiscal year, the offer came with the condition of its disbursement in a very short period of time (i.e., by the end of the fiscal year). Because The Alberta Library had been created earlier to deal with connectivity funding, this disbursement became a simple matter. Some of the funds were directed for immediate unconditional grants for public libraries, some was deferred for the same purpose for the coming fiscal year, and a third amount was set aside for new and innovative library projects.

Also in that time, provincial responsibility for public libraries was shifted from the Ministry of Community Development to Municipal Affairs. While the move meant the Public Library Services Branch was now part of a large ministry from a fiscal perspective, the number of programs in the new ministry is low. Over 90% of the multi-billion dollar budget in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs is allocated to grants-to-municipalities programs, covering areas like policing and infrastructure. With this move to a new ministry came a new Minister responsible for public libraries. Known for his down-to-earth approach with his constituents, he also had little background knowledge of libraries; however, his personal connections with public library services were numerous and profound. Combined with his experience as a library user from a young age and the advice given to him from mentor politicians, this Minister was also keen to create an opportunity to forward the public libraries' cause. His method included creating
an MLA committee to investigate the current state of libraries through public and stakeholder consultations as well as the arrangement of on-site library tours for the committee members and other MLA colleagues.

The report from this MLA committee was quickly prepared during 2008. Even before it was finalised, senior financial bureaucrats at the time sensed the political favour it would garner during budget deliberations and flagged the likely need that it would result in a request for additional funding. Internal finance groups began to talk about a price tag of $27 million during the early 2009-10 budget deliberations in the autumn of 2008. Support at all levels of these finance committees for the report recommendations and its accompanying funding request was high.

With dramatic news of the stock market crash in mid-October 2008, all provincial budgets requests were altered. The request for public libraries was revised to $9.3 million and unanimously accepted the following spring with the tabling of the 2009-10 budget.

**Summary of the public library funding context in Alberta** – The case for substantially increased provincial funding for Alberta in the 2009-10 fiscal year began more than a decade before. A highly sympathetic and politically astute Minister was able to deftly secure sizeable amounts of additional funds for specific purposes throughout her tenure as the minister responsible for public libraries. In the mid-2000s, when this Minister was Chair of the Treasury Board, she was also able to direct an exceptionally large quantity of one-time funding to public libraries when a year-end surplus was discovered.

Also around that time, when the Public Library Services Branch was moved to a new ministry, another sympathetic Minister inherited the libraries file. He created a formal process of review of public libraries, led by three MLA colleagues. This process revealed a need for an additional $27 million dollars in funding public libraries – an amount that would have more than doubled the existing provincial budget for this area. Despite the blow of the stock market crash and subsequent financial constraints for the Alberta government in late 2008, $9.3 million in additional funding for public libraries
was endorsed by Cabinet in the 2009-10 budget.

**Analysis** – Realising a 40% increase in provincial funding for public libraries in the 2009-10 fiscal year in Alberta was likely due to several factors, including multiple efforts on different fronts over many years. The personal commitment of those involved in moving forward the cause of public libraries in this province, coupled with the ability to recognise and act on opportunities as well as build on successes over many years has allowed the sector to enjoy frequent funding increases that are not only substantial, but higher than any other provincial increases in the country in the past decade. The effects of personal commitment, taking advantage of opportunities, and creating a foundation of successes on which to build are explored in further detail below.

1. **Personal priority of specific elected officials** – The first plan for requesting increased funding for public libraries in the mid-1990s was based largely on the experiences of the elected Minister at the time and her ability to manoeuvre within the political environment to gain support for her request. “The key was that she understood the process and she understood her colleagues and she understood what their push buttons were. She knew what was happening in terms of the presentation [to request the funds]...” [E11-25-1000]. With a simple message and careful attention to timing, she was able to gain unanimous support for the request for an additional $1.93 million for public library funding in the 1996-97 fiscal year from the Standing Committee responsible for these decisions. The following year, her concern for public libraries further motivated her to secure an additional $4.8 million. By 2004, in addition to holding the post of Deputy Premier, she had also been appointed Chair of the Treasury Board. When constituents from her riding suggested an increase in funding for public libraries would be appropriate, her role within the government allowed her to act favourably when a large year-end surplus was presented.

The Minister's own background favouring the development of public libraries in Alberta should not be downplayed:

She was very interested in libraries; she had come from a rural background and
had been involved in literacy at the local level. Growing up as a kid, there were things in Southern Alberta called ‘restrooms’ - these were library reading rooms in her area. … So she knew and understood the importance of libraries and she knew and understood how important they were to her constituents. She always was in touch with her constituents. So when she came on as Minister, she knew that we needed money [E11-25-1000].

In turn, library stakeholders in the province continued to maintain their relationship with her over the long term, and indeed, libraries were financially rewarded through her efforts on several occasions.

When the Public Library Services Branch was moved from the Ministry of Community Development to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, an opportunity was provided for the new Minister to explore the possibility of further strengthening the public library system in Alberta. His desire to strike an exploratory committee was motivated by his own positive experiences with the public library system as a child:

He came in one day to talk to the library systems – he’s this huge man – he walks in, sits down, he’s got his farm clothes on, sits at the head of the table and takes off his boots. Makes himself at home. He said, ‘I guess you want to know why I’m so interested in libraries. Boy who don’t speak English, sits in a corner, nobody cares. Except the librarian.’ So the public librarian and the school librarian, between the two of them, they taught him how to speak English [E11-25-1000].

Other actors within the bureaucracy who facilitated this process were committed to public libraries as well – either through prior positive experiences or personal drive to succeed. One long-standing Deputy had worked at the library while attending Yale University and had married a government librarian. The Director of the Public Library Services Branch for more than a decade at this time was not a professional librarian, nor did he have exceptional childhood experiences using the public library as a child; however, his skill in navigating the bureaucracy was notable. He enjoyed a reputation as effective and strategic among his colleagues across the country as well as within his own
province:

When I went into government, I was never intimidated by deputy ministers or politicians. I said to somebody a few weeks ago I was spoiled in my career. I always had access – I had it or I got it. I made sure that I knew the EA [executive assistant], got to be best buddies with the EAs wherever they were – with the Minister or the Deputy, and I always made sure they never got into trouble. If there were issues, I was the one who would take heat for the issues [E11-25-1000].

2. Recognising the political context – The political expertise of the actors mentioned above added substance to their favourable attitudes. Each understood the power of timing, effective messages, and applicable processes. As mentioned, the Director of the Public Library Services Branch at the time was adept at creating positive relationships with those in government at all levels, as well as with those in the library stakeholder community. “The thing was understanding the environment, making sure no one got burnt, and meeting their needs. We made them look good” [E11-25-1000].

Proficiency in the political arena was even more evident in actions of the Ministers responsible for public libraries. In the years before the granting of additional provincial funding for public libraries became a reasonably regular occurrence, the first successful case made was based on simple messages and strategic timing, even at the most basic level:

The Minister said, ‘We really do have to find some money to put in here. There’s only one thing we can do. We have to create a crisis.’ So from a political point of view, she understood the environment. She had just come from being the Health Minister so she understood the environment, she understood her colleagues, she knew how things worked. So we had to create a crisis around finances. So she appointed an MLA to form a committee to do a study. She said to spend three or four months, and told him what the result would be. So at the end, the result was that we had to have money. At the end, she phoned me and said, ‘We’re having a meeting tonight of the Standing Policy Committee. This is what I want you to do.
Write these things down on flip chart paper. I want you to find the oldest flip chart you can find, and I want you to find old newsprint paper to put on the flip chart. The guys that are in front of us are going to be using technology and they’re going to run late. You be right outside the door when they’re finished. As soon as that door opens, you shoot in to where I’m standing and put that flip chart up. Then you just stand out of the way.’ So when those guys were leaving, all the MLAs started to mill around the food. So then [the Minister] says, ‘Madame Chairman, Madame Chairman, I’m sorry but I have to leave soon so I need to get this done.’ And she went through the points and flipped to the last page to the amount of money, $1.93 million. So she whips through this, and she kept saying, ‘And you all understand this. You all know about your libraries. Madame Chairman, I need your endorsement.’ When it was called, ‘All those in favour,’ they all put their hands, they’ve all got cake in their hands, and they all said 'yes'. And all that was was a trigger to get to the next step. And we got the $1.93 million [E11-25-1000].

Continuing to take advantage of opportunities both large and small became part of the regular routine for government staff and library stakeholders. Once funding was forthcoming and a provincial coordinating agency (The Alberta Library) was created, positive messages were built around those programs:

The sell on that was you may only have 3,000 resources in your library but you have 235 million across the province. That was also seen by MLAs – libraries are collaborating and sharing. We kept beating that drum. And our Deputy, we had to keep our deputies in the loop and give them credit for this stuff. They were the ones who came up with this idea – what a brilliant guy [E11-25-1000].

Further connections for additional funding for public and academic libraries in Alberta were made through a long-standing friendship between the former President of the Alberta Library Trustees Association and the former Lieutenant Governor of the Province.
3. Cumulative efforts and compelling images – Early in his tenure with the Public Library Services Branch, the Director of the day began to work with public libraries across the province to explicitly talk about how they could create links between their services and government priorities:

One of the things when I first came on was that it didn’t take me long to figure out that the library people weren’t telling their story. They were whiners; they were always crying and bitching.... We got everyone talking about the same three issues, funding was one of them. So the MLAs would come to caucus and start a discussion and one of them would say something and another would say, ‘Well that’s what I heard.’ ...And we tried to make it so every success we had with libraries, the Minister got credit for it. The Minister always got credit [E11-25-1000].

When library board chairs met with the minister, these same issues were raised, and then repeated again during consultations.

Also during this time, public libraries in Canada were largely beginning to get connected to the Internet and starting to create both an online presence as well as move from stand-alone digital information products to web-accessible databases. For a province like Alberta with vast rural areas, the need to access digital information sources was great. Simple and repeated messaging around this need made it easy for both the politicians of the day and the public to grasp what this meant. “‘When connected, all libraries are the same size.’ That phrase – we beat that to death” [E11-25-1000]. While this may seem like an obvious need for libraries now, even today some areas of this province remain connected only by telephone infrastructure. At the time, the situation was more extreme for these small organisations, “We had libraries that didn’t have phones. The story we used was that their connectivity was a roll of quarters and a payphone down the street” [E11-25-1000].

When the Minister responsible for public libraries in the late 2000s struck an MLA committee to explore the needs of public libraries, a series of tours was arranged for both the committee members as well as other MLA colleagues. The tours were
thoroughly planned and showed both the sophisticated nature of the library services offered as well as how libraries could meet the needs of a diverse population:

An author in Edmonton spoke with them. She was set up at a little table in the main branch and she would talk about the relationship between the library and writers. As she talked, she would reach down and bring out a book and say, 'I wrote this book over there,' or 'I did research for this book over there.' By the time she was done, she had five books on the table and said, 'This was the impact of this library. It helped me produce these five books.' They did stuff on persons with disabilities demonstrating how to use this piece of equipment they had. They showed them the databases. They said, 'Mr. Minister, we heard you're a motorcycle person. What kind of motorcycle do you have? We hear you do a lot of repairs?' … So they found information for him [in the auto repair databases]. They had answers for everything. They went to the reference desk and at that time, they had 13 languages spoken. And they asked what people were doing on the computers and the library staff said they were looking for jobs, updating resumes. It just went on and on [E11-25-1000].

When annual meetings with the minister were coordinated, library stakeholders were consistently reminded to speak about issues relevant to provincial concern:

[We'd meet stakeholders prior to the meeting to say,] 'We need to put forward provincial issues or issues directly related to the MLA report because that's what guides our strategic work at the moment.' For the most part it's fine, but you always of course have your very gung-ho trustee of a regional library system saying [something inappropriate like] 'We need a building' [E11-24-1000].

In addition to spreading positive messages about libraries on a personal level, The Alberta Library embarked on a multi-year awareness and promotional campaign, in some cases with national exposure. “The campaign took off and every year for quite a few years, they did commercials, so there was always a theme. Some years there were billboards, but what it did was make libraries more visible. MLAs became more aware”
Perhaps this campaign was effective with the public as well; “Right now, the poll [carried out by another ministry showed] 67% of Albertans have used their public library in the last year” [E11-24-1000].

**Analysis summary** – The three factors discussed above: personal commitment of elected officials, taking advantage of political opportunities and creating cumulative and compelling images of the library, are interconnected to a high degree. Along with positive personal experiences with public libraries, expertise in the political process allowed the main actors involved in forwarding the case for increased provincial funding for public libraries to be successful. Close coordination with the library stakeholder community facilitated the reinforcement of consistent messages and positive, compelling images of a modern library sector that was able to become even more effective with additional funding. Despite the effects of the global financial crisis in late 2008, the Cabinet decision makers in Alberta were compelled to authorise an increase in funding to public libraries in the 2009-10 fiscal year totalling nearly 40% above the previous years' allocation. While this was a reduced amount from the original request, the Cabinet and individual ministers had approved additional funds for public libraries on a fairly consistent basis over the previous decade. Their awareness of public libraries as a modern, diverse service for all citizens was great, fuelled by both collegial challenges to visit their local branches as well as a professional multi-year promotional campaign. The behind-the-scenes work to ensure consistent images and messages was ongoing, and was undertaken at personal and province-wide levels.

### 4.3.2 British Columbia

Data for this jurisdiction were collected between February and June 2011. Primary and secondary documents are included in the main reference list. Interviews were conducted with ten participants and included one elected official and nine senior bureaucrats, three of whom are also professional librarians.
**Description** – Funding for public libraries in British Columbia has varied more than other provinces over the past ten years, with a dramatic increase followed by a significant cut. While these two contrasting decisions make for an especially interesting case, the decision to cut the funding levels in the 2009-10 fiscal year is of primary interest in this study. However, the description covers the events of the full decade as the immediate history prior to the cut is relevant to the factors that influenced the decision to decrease the funding in later years. The following description covers the events having an impact on decisions in the wider context of government, taking note of major political and economic events where relevant. The context is followed by a description of the circumstances most deeply affecting the public library community in the provincial government environment. It shows that the larger political and economic environment did indeed intersect the context in which decisions about funding for public libraries were made, but that the factors influencing the decisions about an individual program such as public library funding were more complex than this general context.

**Political and economic context in the 2001-10 period** – The 2001 transition from a left-of-centre government to the fiscally conservative party currently in power in British Columbia merits consideration in this case as these most recent ten years are being examined. Both the change in values from a left-of-centre party to a right-of-centre philosophical approach as well as the evolution of the role of the public service became significant around this time. Prior to 2001, the public service had been available to politicians as “service experts”. Decisions about programs were informed by advice provided by departmental subject specialists through the Deputy Minister in each ministry. The transition that took place during the 2001-2010 period saw a shift from reliance on this advice as definitive “background research” to a combination of elected officials and their political assistants seeking their own background information through Internet searches, and Ministry staff advice being increasingly filtered through Deputies more skilled in political analysis and generalised leadership than a subject speciality. This evolution may be the local reflection of the bureaucracy continuing to professionalise or it could be through the direct influence of the party's leader, but is
most characterised by a shift from a bureaucratically-driven agenda to a strong centralised Cabinet mandate.

While this shift in power had already began in earlier years, the 2001 election was a turning point. The incoming party's platform materials were dominated by declarations specifically designed to distinguish itself from the previous government in presentation, philosophical approach and implementation style. A notable characteristic of this campaign was its promise of 21 changes that would be implemented in the first 90 days of its mandate. Indeed, most changes were carried out in that short period of time (BC Liberals, 2001).

This rigorous proposed agenda created a need for the bureaucracy to focus highly on little more than core activities and campaign priorities, both in attention and financially. A retired deputy minister recalls:

When the government came in, it had a conceptual screen that all government programs had to fall through. It had a very fine grain for programs – I didn't think I had 50 programs but according to their definition I did. Every one of those had to fall through the screen; you had to answer very specific questions about them. It was sort of an MBA analysis. A lot of them had to do with 'What is government doing, should government be doing this program or should it be delivered some other way' was really the foundational question [VI04-19-1030].

A close colleague to this retired deputy recalls the process with less fondness: Around the same time, what the government was doing was hacking everything to bits.... They had a core review process going on at the time, which meant every program was on the chopping block. They regarded it as being a review but really the whole exercise was to reduce the number of resources going into all the programs [VI04-26-1].

Even at the elected level, this period of transition was described as a time of great pressure:

And we were also expected to be in 2001, the kind of, and only half cynically...the Incredible Shrinking Ministry. We were supposed to make some of
this stuff disappear. It's difficult – a lot of things sound like they may be ephemeral or unnecessary but they're really not; they're all important things to somebody [VI06-02-430].

Along with the exercise of reviewing and reducing expenditures and support for non-priority programs, the means of honing this focus became much more obvious as well. Previous years had allowed for a dialogue between the senior bureaucracy and their elected counterparts. A retired deputy minister recalls that “there was a lot of weight placed on the Ministries to develop priorities and to bring those forward ... to the minister and to discuss what the nature of the priorities was.” He described the shift to the Cabinet-driven agenda as a “difficult transition:”

In the Liberal administration, especially the first Liberal administration, the government came in with a very specific agenda, a very clear sense of things they were going to do. Some of those were publicly articulated in their election platform and the following documents, but some were articulated in subsequent documents by the Premier to the ministers in terms of what he expected them to do in their portfolios. So every minister had a 'to do' list that they were expected absolutely to deliver on within that mandate. And that was kept very distinctly in front of Cabinet, in terms of things they had to do, commitments they had to keep, and they kept very close records of what their commitments were. Other things were added to that, while they maintained a rolling of list what those things were. And we all knew what was on that rolling list and what we had to do and that became very much our agenda [VI04-19-1030].

The “rolling list” was mainly articulated through a number of formal correspondences called “Premier's Service Letters” - giving quite specific and literal direction to the bureaucracy.

A second majority mandate was given to this government four years later, again defeating the opposition left-of-centre party. The campaign leading up to the victory reflected the optimism of a strong economy and a productive first term, dubbed “A
Proven Plan for a Golden Decade” (BC Liberals, 2004). A delivery on “Five Great Goals” (BC Liberals, 2005) promised the jurisdiction would become “The Best Place on Earth” (BC Liberals, 2005). The election results were less dramatic than in 2001: 46 seats were retained with the opposition recapturing 31 seats, for a total of 33.

In spite of, or perhaps because of widespread discontent with the leader of the party, even being described as “dour, uncharismatic and unpopular” in one popular media source (“A rebuff for Mr Campbell”, 2005), this strong election endorsement seemed to heighten the emerging power shift that existed between the senior bureaucracy, their elected counterparts, and the party leader. One interview participant described this renewed confidence of the leadership in stark terms:

It was very much unique to him and decision making has changed dramatically since he's been gone. Dramatically. You know, he ran things much the way a king would run a monarchy. Cabinet meetings had a certain approach, all decision making had a certain approach. What you saw was a usurping of authority from line ministers and brought authority into the west wing of the rock pile. It was very different. Very very different in British Columbia [VI06-23-3].

The fiscally conservative philosophical approach also dominated the bureaucratic climate at this time. Those bringing forward business cases would be certain to talk about initiatives in terms of the return on investment it would bring the government. Proposals were reviewed with the unspoken question of “how will this proposal save money for the government down the road?” [VI06-23-3]. For those outside partners seeking financial support, this meant a major shift in the way submissions were presented. The previous left-of-centre government strongly aligned itself with the labour movement, lending itself to an activist approach. After 2001, one deputy minister declared, “My experience, in the past ten years with this government, is efforts to lobby ministers for expenditures have been mostly unsuccessful. They had more success with the previous administration, but in the last ten years, you've seen very little of that” [VI06-23-3]. This shift is depicted well by another interview participant:

...you know there's going to be a Ministry of Health, a Ministry of Education and
a Ministry of Social Services in one form or another. The stuff that governments
do is the stuff that governments do. And so I don't mean to diminish the
importance of the political direction, but whether you've got an NDP Minister of
Education, or a Liberal Minister of Education, you're still going to be delivering
education to 600,000 kids. You're going to brand it differently, you're going to
have a different emphasis, … Under a NDP government, [a program] would be
positioned as a social justice, equity, kind of thing. Under a Liberal government,
that is positioned as enabling children to reach their full potential as individuals
[VI04-19-4].

British Columbia did not escape hurdles brought on by the global economic
downturn in 2008. Quoting economist Robert Kavcic, a local reporter highlighted the
multiple difficulties facing the province, “British Columbia has been among the hardest-
hit provinces during this recession, as what started out as forestry-specific downturn
eventually spread to the construction, energy and consumer sectors” (Anderson, 2009).
The provincial revenue hit was two-fold: like other western economies, general taxation
revenue was in a slump; a decline in natural resource revenues compounded the financial
misery. Internally, the demand for increased health care budgets continued to grow at a
notable rate, forcing financial planners to allocate a larger percentage of the overall
revenues to these expenditures. Several interview participants underscored this
important issue, with comments such as: “if you don't understand the public health
expenditure in Canada, you won't understand decision making. It's the predominant
expenditure. When I started in government it was 23%, now it's just about 50” [VI06-23-
3] and “Because health budgets in Canada have increased, the proportion of the public
financing pie for non-health services has gone down” [VI04-19-1030].

After a brief period of prosperity between the 2002-03 and 2008-09 fiscal years,
those in government charged with preparing the 2009-10 budget were assigned the task
of scrutinising and indeed, were encouraged to cut, every program in government that
fell into the “discretionary” category, i.e., “grant payments at the discretion of
government to individuals, businesses, or other outside entities for specified purposes,
for which government does not receive direct goods or services, where there are no ongoing contractual requirements, and government does not control or participate in ongoing activities of the grant recipients” (British Columbia. Finance, no date(b)).

This review of discretionary programs proved to be more challenging than the 2001 program audit. Because a substantial sum needed to be pulled from across all governmental departments in time to prepare the 2009-10 budget, decisions were made quickly and without a lot of information. Senior staff charged with assembling informational packages were directed to describe each program in about 150 words or less. A committee ultimately responsible for the final cuts was led directly by the Premier. A member recalls, “There I think we were making some decisions without often having the depth of understanding of programs we should have had, but that was a very atypical situation” [VI06-02-430]. One senior staff member continued, “And anything that was labelled a grant – you're done. You're done” [VI04-19-4]. More dramatically, another interviewee recalls the process as “soul sucking:”

[It was a line-by-line cut list. I mean you want to talk about death by a thousand cuts – that's how they literally did it at the time. It was, in my time in government, the poorest-informed decision making in government that I've ever witnessed. [A Minister] described it to me as soul sucking – it was just soul sucking to watch. They were making decisions on too little information with little or no understanding of the consequence [VI06-23-3].

This review of the political context in British Columbia shows several factors contributed to the decision-making climate at the broadest levels. It describes events, attitudes and the context that informed decisions at the macro-level following a rough chronological timeline, ending with the events leading up to the 2009-10 budget process.

Specific context for public library funding – This political backdrop certainly informed the context for public libraries, but it is inaccurate to say the austerity measures and scrutiny resulted in a parallel set of cuts to library grants. The library story begins with a strong connection with public libraries in the pivotal 2001 election. The new party
leader had been the mayor of British Columbia's largest city, Vancouver, and primarily responsible for the earlier initiation of the building plan for a landmark central library. “He was the Mayor who picked up the phone and [said to the city librarian at the time] said 'Don't you think it's time we got a new library for this city?’” [VI04-13-3]. Eventually opening in 1995 with a price tag of $100 million, it was one of the largest civic projects undertaken by the city to date and remains an icon in the city's composition.

The government-wide program audit that started in 2001 left the Province's support for public libraries largely untouched, save its Talking Book (audiobooks for those with visual impairments) production program. A short-lived media campaign driven by narrators contracted to read the Talking Books around its closure drew the process out longer than both politicians and bureaucrats involved would have preferred, but the initial proposal of the reassignment of these funds was successfully completed by the end of the 2001-02 fiscal year. Despite relatively minor service repercussions, the opposition to its closure remains a prominent moment for the Minister of the day some 10 years later. “I've certainly been on the receiving end of the criticism generally disseminated through the media or by the media around the reduction in program expenditures. The Talking Books program back in the early 2000s was an example of that” [VI06-02-430]. Other smaller media incidents typically outlining positive stories have not stuck with this Minister; however this one negative incident a decade ago is still felt quite strongly. The ability for elected politicians to quickly overcome the ill will caused by these kinds of negative incidents seems to be small, with the potential for difficult relationships over a long period of time.

Also at this time in the early 2000s, Ministry staff began receiving the first of the Premier's Service Letters. These were missives meant to quite clearly direct and outline priority work for staff, based on both campaign promises and a mandate fitting with the party's philosophical approach. The emphasis the library-friendly Premier was placing on public libraries came early in his mandate. It was in the 2001-02 Service Letter that a request to explore the feasibility of a province-wide strategic plan for public libraries was first outlined (British Columbia. Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services,
2002). Other priorities within the ministry took precedence during first part of that
government mandate, so work on fleshing out the broad strokes of what that plan could
encompass began quietly at the level of ministry staff:

We began to have some discussions about what that could look like, began to
work up some ideas about what that might be and began to float some of those
up. Not immediately, but we gently sent them up … we knew what we had to do,
but we weren't really running up a Cabinet submission on what that strategic plan
was going to look like, that Cabinet agenda was way too jammed in those times.
…. So it's more, we ran some stuff up to the Minister, the Minister asked some of
his colleagues about this, we got some feelers going on, we were kind of on the
right track and then we formalised it [V104-19-1030].

Despite the party leader's support for this initiative, it was clear in the early days of this
planning phase that the outcome was unknown with the director of the Public Library
Services Branch being told, “This is an exercise in containment. We want you to contain
the expectations of the community. We do not want any expectations for money out there
at all” [H05-26-2].

From the 2001-02 through the 2005-06 fiscal years, allocations to public libraries
remained relatively stable. By the time the 2005 election materials were developed,
background work was sufficiently completed on what a province-wide strategic plan for
public libraries would entail and how much it would cost. Not only was one of the pillars
of the election to “Make B.C. the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the
continent” (BC Liberals, 2005) but an increase in library support was specifically
mentioned in the platform book, A Proven Plan for a Golden Decade, pledging to
“Provide $12 million over three years in new funding to strengthen B.C.’s libraries” (p.
6).

The aim of the resulting strategic plan, Libraries Without Walls: A World Within
Your Reach, was to elicit a sense of excitement about the modern and evolving image of
libraries and their services. “We actually wanted a plan that made sense, wasn't just an
argument for not being killed, but was an argument for making the system more
relevant, given the changes in technology and all that” [VI04-26-1]. In the subsequent three years, the additional $12 million was directed to specific initiatives in libraries across the province, as well as smaller, yet substantial pockets of year-end funding, sometimes running as high as $2 million. For a program that had previously operated in the $12- to $13-million range annually, these sums were substantial gains.

Shortly after the release of the strategic plan, the responsibility for public libraries was shuffled to the Ministry of Education. Like most jurisdictions, this Ministry is primarily responsible for ensuring the provision of primary and secondary school education, serving children between the ages of approximately five and 17. Within this Ministry, around 98% of its $5 billion budget is fixed for this core service. More than two dozen small programs, including public libraries, receive a portion of the remaining two percent. Upon transfer to this new Ministry, the commitment for the additional $12 million in funding over three years had already been made, and the strategic plan for public libraries had been released with wide support both from the library stakeholder community and from the Premier.

By 2009, most Western governments were starting to prepare for the effects of the global economic recession. During the budget process, informal reports of the class of budgetary restraints being discussed were developing, again within government circles and for those partners dependent on the government for at least a portion of their operating funds. Library stakeholders were no exception and began to discuss the ways they could communicate with the provincial government about the difficulty a budget cut would pose to their local operations. One leader in the local library community was quick to react:

I got word that there was going to be a cut, that the Ministry was getting out of the library business. So I phoned [a close colleague], I put together this table of people with a number of folks and said, 'We've got to do something.' We talked about several things and there were several ideas at play and the one that caught was … putting together [an informational] website [H05-26-2].

A request for a meeting with the Minister responsible was also made and granted shortly after the media brought attention to the matter. One of those present remembers, “It was
a bad meeting. ... A lot of things didn't land well, and it made a lot of things tougher down the road” [VA05-09-1030]. Elements informing the minister at the time included reports in the media, letters from library board members, and at least one angry member in the meeting delegation.

An election in May 2009 once again gave the ruling Liberal party a majority mandate. Their September release of the 2009-10 provincial budget showed a decrease in the grants to public libraries by approximately 16% (down from about $15.6 million to $13.1 million). Since that time, library stakeholders from across the province have made efforts to meet with either the Minister or Deputy Minister responsible for public libraries to update them, ([VA05-09-1030]; British Columbia Library Association, 2011) and one major debate about the government's commitment to funding public libraries was tabled by the opposition party in the Legislative Assembly (Les, 2009).

**Summary of the public library funding context in British Columbia** – A process for moving the public library agenda forward at the provincial level began in 2001 at the request of the Premier. By 2005, a commitment for an additional $12 million in provincial funding over three years had been secured. When the 2009-10 budget was released, less than 84% of the previous year's funding amount was made available to public libraries. Some efforts were made on the part of the public library stakeholder community to draw attention to this cut; provincial funding remained stable for the 2010-11 budget.

**Analysis** – This jurisdictional review outlines the events that took place around the issue of financial support for public libraries in British Columbia in recent years, noting the 2001 change in government and subsequent shift in working style of the bureaucracy, a transfer of responsibility for public libraries from one Ministry to another in 2005, and the drop in funding that took place in the 2009-10 fiscal year.

Through analysis of documents and interviews with many of those closely involved in the decisions affecting provincial funding for public libraries, several conclusions about the reasons behind funding increases and decreases can be drawn.
Though the smaller details of the progression of events expectedly differ somewhat from source to source, the analysis reveals a consistent enough description of these events and impressions to be notable.

1. Personal priority of the Premier – As the preceding sections note, the Premier at the time specifically called for an investigation into how the province could enhance the role of public libraries in 2001, both as a personal priority and as a way to partially fulfil a campaign promise of working toward making the jurisdiction the “most literate” in the North America. With this clear mandate in hand, those in senior levels of the bureaucracy set about gathering information from the library stakeholder community, but more importantly, ensured resources were available within government to allow for discussion and promotion of the role of the modern public library among other senior bureaucrats and elected officials. By the time a strategic plan for public libraries was presented at the Cabinet table for discussion in 2005, many senior politicians had heard about its contents, its favour with the Premier, and its potential to partially fulfil a major party platform initiative and the related positive stories it could generate among constituents. This was particularly noteworthy in an election year. From 2005 through 2008, public libraries enjoyed increased funding to support activities that strengthened their ability to coordinate services on a province-wide basis. New activities were designed to act as a layer of coordination at the provincial level; for example, a card allowing people to borrow items at any library in the province and return them to any other, regardless of their local tax affiliation and residence, was well promoted by the province's Public Affairs Bureau.

2. The effects of a global economic recession – When discussions of cuts to many government-supported programs including public libraries began in 2008 and 2009, library stakeholders were quick to react, both through the media and in discussions with locally- and provincially-elected politicians. An informational campaign that prompted stakeholders to send letters to the minister responsible for public libraries as well as to local newspapers was launched (Stop BC Library Cuts, no date), immediately
followed by a difficult meeting with the minister responsible.

Many additional programs across government were also at risk of receiving decreased funding, with some completely at stake. For example, being nearly dependent on discretionary spending to outside groups to carry out its mandate, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts lost more than two-thirds of its overall funding. The Ministry of Education was focused on maintaining as much funding as possible for its core business – the delivery of primary and secondary educational services – and made efforts to trim expenditures in all other programs in its portfolio.

Once a schedule of proposed cuts was prepared by the senior bureaucracy across government, a review was carried out by a committee comprised of the most senior level of elected politicians; indeed, many suggest the Premier personally spoke against cutting the full grant to public libraries and instead reducing it to pre-2007 levels. The resulting post-2009 election budget presented widespread cuts to programs in ministries across government.

3. Recognising the political context – The circumstances surrounding any decision are as individual as the decisions themselves and include an unlimited number of variables. While these conditions are beyond the control of any one actor involved in a decision, it is worth noting several participants commented explicitly on the favourable political conditions of this case in the early years and how this affected its outcome. The sentiment was repeated in the discussion of other major events as well.

Recognising an opening to present an issue was key for many senior bureaucrats. The consideration of appropriate timing was used with various motivations. In one case, a former Deputy mentioned wanting to be the first jurisdiction to conclude an understanding with the federal government that would later be negotiated with all provinces:

We wanted to be first...because if you're making the deal first then you get a lot more flexibility because you get a deal that you want, no one's trying to fit you into a deal that someone else has already....when the federal government made the deal with us, that were no obstacles being artificially created in that side of
the arrangement [VI04-26-1].

In other cases, the description of context emphasised a sense that issues each had their “turn” at becoming a priority – whether in the short term: “That doesn't mean it goes away. It stays there but this year we're profiling it. It's brand new and shiny” [VI04-19-4] or over a longer view:

I gotta be fair, that's my perspective – the guys who are doing the rec centres haven't had any funding for 20 years, so they have a decent argument about that sort of stuff being in disrepair. ...So it won the day, it won the day after 20 years of losing the day so you can't really fault them [VI04-19-1030].

Others considered their work as fitting into an “election-cycle formula:”

And all of who've worked in government know that government has a rhythm. The year one mandate is smash and burn, you rip down what the other guys did. Year two is building your thing, year three is patch and fill and year four is grease the squeaky wheel and go to an election. It doesn't matter where you are as a western democracy, that is the pattern and we all know, you don't, as a bureaucrat, take forward a transformation agenda in year three [VI06-23-3].

For those on the receiving end of positive decisions, reflections tended to be less formulaic and highlight luck. Successful budget requests in their view depended on the economic climate, the personal values of the politicians in charge (both at the Ministerial and Premier's level), ruling party values, and chance opportunities. Reflecting on her budget wins and losses through three distinct governments, one senior bureaucrat said:

It is a giant roulette wheel. Now some of it could be attributed to me because it's like any gamble. You gotta have everything lined up in case your number comes up. You could everything lined up and your number may never come up. But you've done everything you could and now all you can do is wait. And hope that as that wheel spins around, it'll hit the sweet spot. And every once in a while it does. Which keeps you hanging on. What are the factors? Most often with
politicians, personal. So, what's their own experience been? Who are their friends? Who's their family? A constituent? Then that gets reinforced by a briefing note, a meeting with a bureaucrat, a community meeting, a photo op, who knows [VI04-13-3]. Another's assessment was more pithy: “Right place, right time, right idea....And blind luck. Just flippin' blind luck” [H05-26-2].

Analysis summary – Preceding sections outline the political context and the environment in which public libraries in British Columbia operate. The decision to reduce provincial funding for public libraries is then described in two ways: the events leading up to the release of the budget are recounted, and the impressions of those responsible for informing decisions about provincial funding for public libraries during the period in question are used to illustrate alternative observations of these events.

This description outlines the reasons behind the decisions to increase or decrease provincial funding for public libraries in the province, with several prominent factors merging in this instance. The individual influence of the Premier at the time was unquestionable. His personal values and experiences were highly visible in forming the basis of his party's platforms in each of the three successful election campaigns he led. While these initiatives also reflected the values of the party and therefore had broad alignment with work being carried out across government, the case of libraries and literacy were undoubtedly two of his great “passions”. Despite the exceedingly favourable political circumstances the public library community enjoyed in the early 2000s, shifts in these circumstances and bad economic times took their toll on provincial funding for public libraries in the 2009-10 budget.

4.3.3 Ontario

Data for this jurisdiction were collected between January and November 2011. Primary and secondary documents are included in the main reference list. Interviews were conducted with three participants and included one senior bureaucrat and two
professional librarians from a library association who regularly interface with this provincial government.

**Description** – Provincial funding for public libraries has been frozen for several years in Ontario, after having been cut by approximately 40% in the mid-1990s (Ontario Legislative Assembly, 2011). The annually proffered operating grant is calculated on a per capita basis and remains one of the lowest in the country. Like other parts of the country, dominant political ideologies have changed during the past decades; and this province has not been immune to global economic variance.

**Political and economic context in the 2001-10 period** – Like Alberta, Ontario's political scene was stable for many years, with the right-of-centre Conservative Party ruling for four decades in the early to mid-20th century. In the 1980s, a period of political change began that continues to this day. In 20 years, citizens in this province have seen three different political parties ruling as well as a coalition government.

During the early 1990s, the provincial deficit grew to an unprecedented size; a recessionary economy was a major challenge for the government at the time. One approach the left-of-centre ruling New Democratic Party took to try to control costs in 1993 was to use the collective bargaining process with its public service to initiate expenditure controls through early retirement options, reduced work weeks, job sharing and other flexible labour arrangements. The bargaining process proved to be difficult, ultimately resulting in a legislated agreement called the New Social Contract. While the process left those in the public service dissatisfied with the performance of the New Democratic Party, cost savings were realised with the shrinking of the government's payroll (Hebdon & Warren, 1999).

In 1995, the New Democratic Party was defeated and the Conservatives returned to power with a dramatic campaign called the “Common Sense Revolution” (Harris, 1995). The main goals behind the campaign were to continue to cut government spending and to bring the large deficit to a balanced budget. Unlike the New Democratic Party's approach, the Conservative Party's tactics of expenditure reduction encompassed
practical measures as well as a new underlying ideology. The framework of practical measures introduced in the first few months of their mandate was clear on this shift:

This report presents a new framework for better use of resources throughout the public sector. It will move government from its current process orientation to a performance orientation....It reflects a belief that the Legislature is the proper forum for public accountability. The Commission urges the Minister of Finance and his colleagues in government to act immediately, both to introduce legislative measures where necessary and to start the process of cultural change throughout the public sector....Government and all of its ministries and agencies [will] be required by legislation to prepare annual business plans that: outline goals and priorities; explain targets for assessing effective and efficient performance and outline how progress towards them will be measured; report on progress toward established goals and explain the reasons for any changes in the plan; and cover the upcoming fiscal year and following two years (Ontario. Finance, 1995).

Between these two approaches, the period between 1990 and 2000 brought dramatic changes to the internal structure of the provincial government. Those in external agencies who had previously enjoyed strong working relationships with government departments viewed these cost-cutting exercises with a more cynical view:

When the NDP came in, everything started to fall apart – they didn't trust the bureaucracy. It was a conscious thing they did. Most [senior bureaucrats] were replaced.... It was an intentional dismantling of these strong departments. From that point, it became more of a trend to cut down the bureaucracy and to attempt to control it. And one of the ways was make it general [T11-18-100].

Coupled with the reduction of staff members in the public service was a move to elevate and reward managers focused on financial accountability; having expertise in specific program areas was no longer a priority (Ontario. Finance, 1995). Again, for those outside agencies reliant on clear communication with senior bureaucrats as a
conduit to government grants and programs, the removal of program expertise became an increasing frustration:

[Messages] then passed into the filter of this handful of people who were left and they imposed a completely different filter on it, then that was filtered by the politicians. The context of the content in many cases was lost. The politicians have their people analysing the information coming into them and it just kept being diluted. [T11-18-100].

During this time, any expenditure incurred within the government structure or those slated as recipients of governmental spending had to be clearly and directly focused on the priorities set out by the Conservative Party. As a result, many provincial governmental programs were targeted for frozen budgets in 1996 or indeed, like the public libraries grant at the time, were reduced. The impact of these reductions was widespread and could be observed across many sectors. One of the most high profile incidents linked to these spending declines was the case of insufficient scrutiny of the public water supply in a rural town in the south western part of the province that led to the deaths of seven residents and illness for a further 2,300 people (O'Connor, 2002).

By the 2003 election, the provincial Liberal Party had gained sufficient popularity to defeat the Conservatives by a wide margin. The Liberal Party platform focused on restoring expenditures in “the basics”: health care and education (Ontario Liberal Party, 2003). With tax levels to be maintained, little additional revenue was predicted for this government – shifting the balance of expenditure in these key areas was a priority. The Liberal Party continues to govern in the province of Ontario, winning its latest election in October 2011 one seat short of a majority government.

The global financial crisis that hit in late 2008 was noteworthy for two reasons. Not only was Ontario's economy affected because of heavy commodity dependence, but its manufacturing sector is largely reliant on jobs in the auto making industry. With the collapse of the traditional stronghold by North America's auto makers in that sector, the majority of jobs lost in the recessionary period beginning in 2008 in Canada were in this province. The second turn of events resulting from the crisis was the shift for Ontario to
a more federally-dependent jurisdiction:

Ontario's economy is still the biggest in Canada. But it is no longer the richest. Indeed Ontario is now classified as a have-not province, making it eligible for handouts from a federal fund to equalise public spending across the country. It has even been granted its own federally funded economic development agency (The humbling of Detroit North, 2009).

Measures taken by the reigning Liberal Party to mitigate the effects of the loss in revenue are rooted in the fiscal culture that was created throughout the Conservative 1990s. Public sector wage freezes and other financial restraint measures continue to dominate the Ontario government's approach to balanced spending (Evans, 2011).

This review of the political and environmental context in Ontario has shown some similarities and differences to the other two jurisdictions under consideration in this study. The dominant political ideologies in Ontario have generally leaned toward fiscal conservatism, despite the recent ideological variation in its ruling parties. However, like Alberta and British Columbia, the past ten years in Ontario's provincial political setting has also been highly characterised by an increasing shift toward fiscal accountability, with this those skilled in financially-based decision making being rewarded with offers of employment in the most senior positions in the bureaucracy. Local and global events dictated the availability funds in this province, and a growing appetite for financial return on investments have created a complex environment in which outside agencies compete for scarce funds.

**Specific context for public library funding** – Formal requests to the Ontario government for increases to provincial operating grants have been made by members of the public library stakeholder community on multiple occasions in the past decade. Since the public library operating grants program was substantially reduced in 1996 (libraries received approximately 60% of the previous years' total grant amounts in that fiscal year) coalitions of public library stakeholders, most often led by the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, have focused on recouping the losses to these grants. In the
most recent fiscal years, particularly since 2005, these requests have become quite sophisticated, resulting in invitations to the Province's pre-budget hearings in 2008 and 2011 (Ontario. Legislative Assembly, 2008 & 2011). The freezing of this $18.7 million grant for more than ten years is the key focus of these requests.

In late 2006, a one-time grant of $15 million was made available from the Province to public libraries in addition to the annual allotment of operating grants. The specific disbursement methods of this grant were mandated by the provincial government. Rural and First Nations Libraries received small grants directly (approximately $10,000 each) and three province-wide coordinating agencies received bulk amounts to support public libraries in delivering digital services.

In 2007, a smaller one-time grant was made available again to those rural and First Nations Libraries, specifically those serving populations of 10,000 people or less. The total grant in 2007 was $5 million.

By 2008, once more a one-time grant of $15 million was given to two province-wide coordinating agencies, the Southern Ontario Library Services and the Ontario Library Services North, to support public libraries in delivering digital services. This included funds available to support staff training and equitable access to digital collections. The request for an increase to the annual operating grant allotment has not been met.

Summary of the public library funding context in Ontario – Despite the difficulty in receiving a positive response to repeated requests for increases to the public library operating grants, the public libraries of Ontario and their respective support agencies have benefited from unstable, yet substantial, conditional grant funds since 2006 that have been released as funding in addition to the annual operating grants.

Analysis – This case review outlines the events that took place around the issue of financial support for public libraries in Ontario in recent years. While the interview data comprising the personal accounts of this jurisdiction are not as comprehensive as the other jurisdictions in this study, when considered with the documentary analysis the
data provide a sufficient view of the events leading to the present funding environment
to draw two main conclusions from the case.

1. **Failure to create a compelling case for decision makers** – Within
government, moving proposals forward to decision makers from start to finish is
commonly referred to as “animating a file”. In the case of the proposal to increase
annual operating grant funding in Ontario, it is clear library stakeholders have “failed to
animate the library file”. For the past several years, requests for funding and actions
supporting these requests have been carried out in multiple ways. Despite this activity, a
review of Ontario’s *Hansard* (the official record of the debates in the legislative
assembly) for the past three years shows the primary concern with respect to public
libraries has been whether or not Internet filters should be mandatory in schools and
public libraries rather than the funding concerns expressed by library stakeholders. It is
worth noting one letter and a single discussion were cited as prompting the introduction
of the filtering debate – the discussion was between an MPP and a retired police officer
from his constituency (Martinuiik, 2009). This indicates this topic was compelling
enough that a small number of incidents were sufficient enough to prompt extended
debate in the Legislative Assembly, in contrast to the repeated attempts by library
stakeholders to draw attention to their funding concerns which have not yielded
substantial discussion in the Assembly.

The primary interactions described in the data set for this jurisdiction are
between public library boards and senior government officials. The communication
between these two groups may be frequent but could not be described as effective. One
senior bureaucrat noted:

> So I would describe them, and again this is very broad strokes, as passive
aggressive. Not necessarily a good communication technique. They're either
passive, or until they're ticked off, and then it becomes aggressive. The best
communication technique is assertive. That's what they need to be taught. So,
you're either silently, busily doing good works out there, what I describe as the
motherhood work, or they just get royally ticked off, and then go way over here,
which is the aggression....So that is a good thing but they usually don't speak up until the library's about to close down and then it's the waah, waah.... So you just want good consistent communication and you want champions. Consistent champions of your cause [T02-04-830].

Though their messages were heard during “tough economic times”, the inability to provoke sympathy for them is likely caused by inconsistent communication leading to a lack of credibility.

The difficulty in finding stakeholders who could communicate their message effectively was echoed by a senior member of the library community. The sense that those most skilled in forwarding credible messages were often engaged with larger libraries was expressed, and yet these stakeholders were often absent from the funding request process:

This is a question of the nature of the field, and how people think – especially in smaller communities. Easily 80-85% of people who go to libraries are in cities. But we have about 300 boards; just 6 or 7 are urban. With this disparity the large boards had no interest in being connected to libraries in small, northern communities even though they might benefit from these links. There was nothing to compel them to do so. Toronto ended up being just one voice of 300, so if they were doing great things, this could get lost in reporting. The structure for how libraries were (are) set was up across the province was wrong....I needed that to build cases to go to government but their experiences weren't always appropriate [T11-18-100].

Many times, issues of specifically local importance took precedence over the broad requests that needed to be aligned with provincial government concerns.

2. Recognising the political context – A second related factor compounded the difficulty this library stakeholder community has had in receiving a positive response to its request for increased funding for provincial annual operating grants. With the evolving structure of the bureaucracy resulting in a lack of program expertise, continuous requests for funding reduced by a prior government, and an inability to focus
requests on specific party priorities, this case is characterised by a failure to recognise the political context on three levels.

When funds were distributed as part of the one-time grants made available, some of these smaller, non-urban boards “struggled with how to spend it” [T02-04-830]. This impression is a good example of these stakeholders’ inability to be responsive to government needs even when funds were available. The senior bureaucracy has been clear on this need for the library community to respond to governmental goals in specific ways – both in implementing provincially-sponsored programs and in reporting back with messages that support the original intent of the grants.

And we, with every government, we deliver key messages to help them understand what do we want to achieve with that local service. Because it's an opportunity for us, I think we describe them as 1,100 service points, and for us it means it's a network that we can take, pardon my crass language, that we can take advantage of. ... [W]e said you... need to focus your letters, and what we need to know, is that your grant will go from this to this, we need to know the increase, say it's $50,000, and what you will use that $50,000 for [T02-04-830].

Later, the bureaucrats’ need for public libraries to spend provincial government dollars in a particular way resulted in the imposition of concrete conditions on funds – “We focused their work on supporting public libraries to bridge the digital divide and to provide all Ontarians with equitable access to digital information, community collections and services. That was the over-arching goal” [T02-04-830].

The greater control on the disposition of provincial government funds imposed by the bureaucracy directly corresponds to the evolving structure of that level of government. With the general value shift from program expertise to financial accountability, public library stakeholders were challenged to be sensitive to the formal structures now characteristic of this process. One community leader approached a senior government official with the expectation of the development of a collegial relationship:

He thought we were working as a team. I said it doesn't work that way, I'm sorry to tell you. He wanted me to tell him more about my work, and I told him I was
sorry it doesn't work that way. Which is not to say you're not helping us with our thoughts. Our Parliamentary Assistant asked you lots of questions. We asked you questions, so we continue to think behind the scenes, but it was naive [of him to ask] [T02-04-830].

The response indicates the level of formality required in this situation was out of synch with his expectations.

At the political level, responses could also be difficult for library stakeholders to accept. A senior member of the library community who had been a member of annual ministerial delegations recalled:

You had good years and bad years – sometimes it was the minister and how open they were as politicians. [One member] as an MPP – he was horrendous. He didn't believe in libraries; we had several meetings with him as Minister of Finance. He believed no new buildings should be built in Ontario even though his own community got a new library. His mind was blocking it before he ever started [T11-18-100].

Finally, three identical requests have been made to budget committees to restore funding to the annual operating grants (Ontario, Legislative Assembly, 2008 & 2011). These requests have been met with disinterest from the current ruling party:

[T]hey are asking for more money, it was an interesting conversation, because they were talking about wanting the 40% that a former government took away back, and that's a non-starter. So, when the response from the Minister's office was ‘we don't care about that.’ It's political, right, ‘we didn't do that.’ Bye-bye! [T02-04-830].

Even to those in the field, it was apparent that this continued focus on this area was not meeting with success. “The libraries were focused on the grants. The government had no interest in regrowing those grants so whatever we did had to be fresh. I don't think we succeeded in getting the field to think about that in that way” [T11-18-100].

**Analysis summary** – As the working environment in the senior levels of the
bureaucracy in Ontario has evolved, those stakeholders representing public libraries have found it difficult to present a compelling case for increased funding for the annual provincial public library operating grants. Senior bureaucrats have presented clear messages to this community about the need to align messages, goals and requests very specifically with the current government's priorities, yet the consistent message presented by library stakeholders remains focused on the decrease to annual operating grants made by a previous ruling party, rather than proposals designed to advance the current party's goals. Despite the failure to align this request with these priorities, the current government's ideological underpinnings have permitted the release of substantial conditional funds for public libraries in several recent fiscal years.

4.4 Chapter summary

Libraries in Canada are legislatively linked to their respective provinces. In the three jurisdictions in this study, the primary responsibility for public library funding lies with the municipal level of government. Most commonly, public libraries are governed by a library board made up of citizen and municipal appointees. While funding comes from various sources, little accountability exists between those funding sources and the library board. Provinces typically do not prescribe funding for public libraries, though all provincial governments in Canada currently grant some funding to public libraries. In the jurisdictions in this study, the provincial allocation is typically less than 10% of a library's overall revenue.

Each of the provinces in the study, Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario, have distinct political histories and voting tendencies. All three are considered strong economic drivers in the country and each is seeing a move from a rural population to urban. Coupled with continued high levels of immigration from all parts of the world, these trends are affecting governmental policy making, though many areas of the country are resource-dependent because of the reliance on those revenues. Despite the varying effects of the 2008 international financial crisis in each province, continued globalisation combined with escalating costs for Canada's universal health care program
are common and significant factors in each of the three jurisdictions' economic environments.

Alberta's political and economic climate in the past decade was marked by budgetary highs and lows, but nonetheless maintained a strong financial foundation. Public libraries have been the recipients of this monetary fortune on numerous occasions, with additional provincial funding being granted more often than not in the decade and a half preceding the 2009-10 budget. Targeted promotional campaigns over many years created a positive image and raised awareness of public library services with elected officials. At the same time, skilled politicians and bureaucrats committed to enhancing the sector were able to seize the financial opportunities presented during these favourable economic times.

Despite a marginally smaller impact from the global recession, British Columbia was not able weather these financial difficulties as well as Alberta. The strong political leadership of the previous decade characteristically responded to these challenges with deep cuts and spending freezes in the 2009-10 budget year. Public libraries were no exception. In many ways, provincial funding allocations in this province mimic its political and economic history – a roller coaster ride would not be an unfair metaphor. A substantial increase in provincial funding for public libraries was enjoyed in the 2005-06 fiscal year, followed by an unprecedented decrease in the 2009-10 budget. A move to centralise decision making and tightly control the bureaucracy made it difficult for library stakeholders to effectively forward their case for increased funding, though the personal commitment to public libraries of the Premier may have tempered the final budget outcomes at this time.

More than the other two jurisdictions in this study, those requesting increased provincial funding for public libraries in Ontario have had difficulty in advancing their messages about the need for increased funding to decision makers. The bureaucratic structure in this province has been highly focused on centralised decision making with little availability of program experts for many years. Despite the difficulty in forwarding their message through bureaucratic channels, some traction has been found with elected officials, resulting in irregular conditional grants being offered in the past several fiscal
years. However, the case being made by library stakeholders in Ontario has not been compelling enough to secure an increase to regular funding. For these stakeholders, a belief that regular operating grants should be returned to mid-1990s levels has been met with political resistance, based on the fact that those decreases were part of a previous government's plan. A positive image of the sector has not been created in previous years and stakeholders continue to be challenged on this front. While Ontario's public libraries have seen some additional provincial funding in recent years, the government's need to control how these funds are used is growing each year.

While this chapter presented the case data collected and described the events and context that shaped the 2009-10 funding decisions for public libraries, the following chapter examines the case data specifically in conjunction with each of the facets of influence as outlined in the Cialdini framework.
CHAPTER 5: Application of the Theoretical Framework

The previous chapter presented contextual and case data collected in three Canadian provincial jurisdictions. The discussion of how decisions about provincial funding for public libraries were made was presented, including a brief analysis of each. This chapter focuses specifically on the role of interpersonal influence and answers the final study question in detail:

Were any of the six tactics of interpersonal influence as identified in the Cialdini framework employed in these budget processes and if so, by whom?

The chapter opens with a short discussion about the framework itself then briefly reviews the methods used to analyse the cases. A full description of the methodology is included in Chapter 3. A description of the use of each of the six tactics across all three jurisdictions is then presented, followed by a chapter summary. Conclusions about the tactics in terms of their efficacy or possible generalisations about their utility are presented in Chapter 6. Thus, Chapter 5 is presented as follows:

5.1 Review of Cialdini's framework of interpersonal influence
5.2 Brief review of study methods
5.3 The six tactics
   5.3.1. Authority
   5.3.2. Consistency and commitment
   5.3.3. Liking
   5.3.4. Reciprocity
   5.3.5. Scarcity
   5.3.6. Social proof
5.4 Chapter summary

5.1 Review of Cialdini’s framework of interpersonal influence

The full review of Cialdini's framework of six tactics of influence is outlined in Chapters 2 and 3; however, a brief review is presented here. This framework is appealing as its small set of tactics allows for universal analysis of influence,
considering both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in its description as well as suitability for analysis in cases encompassing elements of upward, downward and lateral appeal.

The six tactics are:

1. authority,
2. consistency and commitment,
3. liking,
4. reciprocity,
5. scarcity, and
6. social proof.

The nature of the interpersonal relationships of the actors in this study has led to the choice of theoretical framework. It specifically considers the point of view of the decision maker so both upward and lateral appeal are present. The table below reviews the definitions used for each of the six tactics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>Brief definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>refers both to legitimate authority, that is, when an agent has hierarchical or organisational power over a target; or authority of expertise. A strong reputation may allow a person or group to be seen as authoritative in a particular area, regardless of their actual domain knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency and commitment</td>
<td>relate to a target's need to carry through on either previous statements/promises, or actions that appear consistent with their values, statements, public beliefs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>is the development of a mutual affinity between the target and agent – may also encompass the mere exposure theory (a target may feel more fond of an agent upon multiple introductions and interactions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>reflects exchange theory and supports the notion that targets are more willing to comply with requests if the agent has had a prior exchange with the target, such as favours, gifts, advice-giving, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarcity</td>
<td>refers to the possible lack of availability of an object or service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social proof</td>
<td>is the reflection of a decision maker to act in accordance with peers, or in line with the perceived values of those peers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Cialdini’s six tactics of influence with brief definitions
5.2 Brief review of study methods

The jurisdictional descriptions of the case were generated by triangulation of data from multiple primary documentary sources, such as provincial budget estimates, election campaign materials, governmental working papers and provincial press releases; secondary documentary sources provided through the popular media; and a series of 18 interviews with senior bureaucrats and elected officials. Analysis of these data was done using NVivo software and focused on two types of coding. First, the data were coded using provisional coding to uncover emergent patterns of themes. The interview sample provided adequate data to reach saturation of themes. The second review of the data in this case were coded against Cialdini's framework of six tactics of influence. Using the provisional codes from the analysis as a base, 15 sub-categories were created that were then further grouped into the six tactics (Table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cialdini's Tactics</th>
<th>Related codes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>-Expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Hierarchical power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Bureaucratic sub-arena controlling information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency and commitment</td>
<td>-Appearing competent and knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Internal pressures</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-External pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>-Impressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Prior experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Relationship building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>-Collegial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Looking for recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarcity</td>
<td>-Possible closure or discontinuation of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Libraries lack prominence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social proof</td>
<td>-Comparison to other areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Cialdini's tactics and related analytic codes

The initial set of provisional codes created in analysing the pilot data as well as the first several interviews were very broad. As the coding of the interviews was iterative, the process revealed these 15 related to codes to be sufficient in the analysis of all pertinent data.
5.3 The six tactics

As this discussion is not based on a quantitative analysis, it is important to note that the presence or absence of small numbers of codes is secondary to the trends the analysis brings to light. Thus, by way of introduction, the concept of “liking” was unquestionably the most present tactic for all those participating in the interview portion of the study, appearing nearly twice as often as the next leading tactic, “consistency and commitment”. Each tactic is presented below (alphabetically) in the context of how it appeared across all three jurisdictions. Examples of how each tactic was present are noted.

5.3.1 Authority

More than any other jurisdiction, the personal commitment of the former Premier of British Columbia to supporting public libraries created a somewhat unique situation in which both personal values and a reflection of party goals were factors in creating favourable conditions for public libraries, but this person's style of leadership allowed the concept of “authority” to bring a distinctive edge to the commitment.

Throughout the 2000-2010 period that was being examined, most interview participants in this jurisdiction indicated the decisions about provincial funding for public libraries that saw increases on one hand and that saved the grants from massive cuts during the time of decrease were influenced by the Premier at the time, and indicated he was personally committed to a government that supported public libraries. A retired deputy notes this individual influence was felt throughout Ministry operations. He described the last administration for which he worked as very tightly scripting the work of the public service:

...[T]he government came in with a very specific agenda, a very clear sense of things they were going to do. Some of those were publicly articulated in their election platform and the following documents, but some were articulated in subsequent documents by the Premier to the ministers in terms of what he expected them to do in their portfolios [VI04-19-1030].

The power of the endorsement of public libraries at the highest levels of leadership was
repeated by most who were interviewed, and the examples below show the importance each placed on this authority. Even his party colleagues accepted his strong style, with an elected official recalling that “the Premier had many ambitious stated goals around being the most literate jurisdiction and all of those things and I don't doubt for a moment that he meant it” [VI06-02-430].

A retired senior official noted:

[T]he context is really important, and there's an element of the Premier's increasing interest in literacy. If the Premier is making a lot of public noise about setting targets for improving the literacy of the province, it becomes very difficult to do anything negative to libraries.... [L]iteracy was a Premier's initiative, which is actually quite distinct from a government initiative [VI04-26-1].

Another considered the political ramifications of the Premier's authority and said “We may have worked for the chief of staff but the Premier was focused on literacy so we were focused on literacy” [VA05-06-4].

A senior bureaucrat was more direct in her description, but also noted how the Premier's goals were also the ruling party's goals, which intersects with the tactic of consistency and commitment: “...having the Premier's message right up in front, it was a big friggin' deal, Libraries without Walls...I can't stress that political will, right there up front, from the Premier, I mean, you don't mess with that. It fit so well with the great goals” [VI04-19-4]. This intersection authority and consistency was noted by a retired staff member:

I knew the only person that really mattered at Cabinet was not our minister at that time, was the Premier. I knew that somehow we had to align our strategy with his strategy, his five great goals, and all his other passions.... Everything we did from that point on, we were making conscious efforts to connect what libraries were doing with what the Premier's Office was saying was important...we actually had the thing approved by the Premier's Office before the document went to the Treasury Board staff [VI04-13-9].
Fitting in with the earlier analysis that careful observation can lead to political opportunities, two former senior bureaucrats most closely aligned with the libraries file noted, “What was true with [the Premier] was that he had infatuations. He would go crazy on a subject. And when it was your subject, it was very intense. He decided that literacy was one of his great goals and a lot of people scrambled” [VI04-13-3] and “I think for libraries at that point, the other person that was the ace in the hole that nobody would acknowledge was the ace in the hole, was the Premier himself....They were told to give us the money by the Premier” [H05-26-2].

Having such strong support for a program proposal from the highest levels of leadership came with benefits and drawbacks, particularly over the long term:

Now that's the good side. The downside is that there was no commitment from the bureaucracy. By the time we'd moved ministries probably there wouldn't have been any anyway. But even if we'd stayed in, that's where slogging it through is really a good thing. People get into it, they care about it, and they're funding it because they care about it. They believe on a policy level that this is the right thing to do. The Premier got it and so that's why it was vulnerable and that's why he was the only who could save it [H05-26-2].

Another candid example of this generalisation is below:

I would say that most deputies who enjoy success, I'm saying deputies now more than ministers, because ministers are a bit more come-and-go, deputies may move from ministry to ministry, if they don't have the absolute authority from the Premier's Office to make things happen, do have to establish allies and develop that sense of trust and collegiality with folks. And to the extent that their staff are doing the same thing, which makes it even more powerful. Quite candidly I can think of a couple of deputies who've done that 'I'm here on behalf of the Premier' and I'm not sure that in the medium to long term that actually works to their advantage. They're burning bridges. Next time, people will either implicitly or explicitly stifle them. I've certainly sat around the Cabinet table, when I was in Cabinet operations, and when I've been on the executive of various ministries, I had watched that happen [VI04-13-9].
Though not at the level of the Premier, the concept of authority was also clearly present in other jurisdictions as well. For senior financial officers, the presence of a much-talked about report authored by a group of MLAs in Alberta was enough to signal its probable acceptance:

So at some point earlier on in that process, we would have flagged that the MLA committee report was being worked on, and that we anticipate government will accept it, and that there will be a price tag associated with it and that we don't have the ability to find that funding within our budget. So we are flagging a cost pressure associated with implementing a report that hasn't been reviewed or accepted by government yet....The likelihood of getting it funded depends a lot on the fiscal situation of government – that's probably the biggest factor – as well as the political will behind it, these are two big things impacting it [E11-29-300].

A request presented to Cabinet from the MLA level rather than the staff level seemed to indicate a greater likelihood of acceptance at the Cabinet table.

The reverse effect of this political authority was felt as well. As governments across the country continue to professionalise, the shift in power has moved closer to elected actors and indeed, the uppermost echelons of the executive. One retired observer reflected on previous years' processes:

The people I was talking to in government were clear about their priorities. I think what was different than the approach in the 80s was that government wanted to lead. If you wanted to do this, the money was there. Once we came through those political changes, it changed the process in diluting how decisions were made. When those in the bureaucracy could no longer lead – they tried to see where politicians were going and follow that. And libraries were not that big a deal so it was hard to find your spot. It became clear what they were interested in or not but [their interests] seemed arbitrary [T11-18-100].

5.3.2 Consistency and commitment

Personal and party values were of prime importance in each jurisdiction, reflecting the significance of the tactic of “consistency and commitment”. Indeed, in the
case description, the personal history with libraries of the Premier in one province and Ministers in another is clearly shown. In talking about these cases, both a highly-ranking deputy and elected official noted, “It often comes down to the passion of a minister when it comes down to public libraries” [VI16-23-300] and “I think everyone knows the [former] Premier is a great fan of reading, great personal fan of reading, a great fan of literacy, setting up the Book Awards, all these kinds of things. He's got lots of history here. I don't think I have to explain all that” [VI04-19-1030].

Others were more specific about decision makers' backgrounds and personal commitment to public libraries, noting a former Minister “was very interested in libraries. She had come from a rural background. She had been involved in literacy at the local level...so she knew and understood the importance of libraries and she knew and understood how important they were to her constituents” or:

He said, ‘I guess you want to know why I’m so interested in libraries. Boy who don’t speak English, sits in a corner, nobody cares. Except the librarian.’ So the public librarian and the school librarian, between the two of them, they taught him how to speak English [E11-25-1000].

Both of these decision makers had been profoundly affected by their own experiences in public libraries.

This tactic is not necessarily tied to a personal experience or commitment, but also reflects both the values of an individual, possibly as a member of a wider organisation, or the image a person wants to project that shows their alignment with those values. More than one interview participant noted all political campaigns place a general emphasis on health and education as priorities; the non-core margins in those departments as well as smaller ministries are the spaces in which specific party values, goals and campaign promises are reflected. For outside groups seeking sustained or increased funding, aligning themselves with the language, values and personal commitments of the elected officials in power is a necessity.

At the time of writing, new party leaders had just taken the seat of Premier in two provinces, and senior bureaucrats noted, “Everybody's scrambling to align themselves with the [new] platform. To figure out what the new language is” [VA05-09-1030].
Advancing a message that resonates with the reigning political party values has always been important and this message has been reinforced with library stakeholders:

As I learned more about libraries and as they were coming along, to try to get them to link up what they’re doing to government priorities – so what are you doing to support literacy? What are you doing to support leisure? We had charts set up so they understood there were all these government departments and these were the key phrases in these departments. If your MLA was minister of this, or leaning in that direction, here’s what you say. Go and talk about these things. They gradually got into that [E11-25-1000].

For those with broad experience in the government sector, learning the language of different parties and their respective leaders is a usual part of their day-to-day work:

There's a different emphasis on the syllable, but there's not that many new ideas out. Government does what government does. So yes of course you'll position it differently, you'll brand it differently, you'll create something a little bit different around it, but in the end, I don't care what political stripe you are.

This interview participant went on to talk about her experience with success and failure with aligning her work with new governments:

We try to make the best policy-based decisions we can, but then of course, I don't mean to be at all disrespectful here, because that political lens is equally important, but we're not in a position to apply that way that elected officials can. So when it gets back to them and they say, 'Are you guys on crack? We're not making this cut, this a priority of government. Go back and do it again.' There was quite a bit of that – it was very difficult at every level – to make those decisions about what's the right balance given the priorities of government, given what the money's actually going to, how do we get there [V104-19-300].

To their detriment, library stakeholders also found it difficult to articulate the right messages, “They were talking about wanting the 40% that a former government took away back, and that's a non-starter” [T02-4-830].

Over the past several years, public libraries in each of the jurisdictions studied
have received small pockets of funding, whether through the regular budget process or as special “one-time” grants. As noted, numerous interview participants made the point that decisions about very small percentages of overall funding are the margins in which the party values and priority programs are highlighted. Strong alignment with a campaign promise could make this desirable.

### 5.3.3 Liking

While the provisional codes grouped together to form the sub-category “impressions” were often present, as were those in the sub-category “prior experiences (with libraries)”, the appearance of the codes forming the sub-category of “relationship building” far exceeded any other. Seeking opportunities both in circumstances and through people was an oft-mentioned theme for many interview participants. “[Y]ou've got to do your political homework and have your material ready and...because to me, that's how you do it” [HA05-26-2]. These opportunities are both at the level of the elected official as well as within the bureaucracy.

Long-term senior bureaucrats knew their information gathering extended significantly to the informal and formal networks of colleagues developed through the various positions they held over the course of their careers:

That was all based on building personal relationships with people....When I first came to [this province] I went and talked to all the support people, all the budget people. I had a relationship with those people for 20+ years, they had my back. When I shifted into Libraries, it was no problem. They would see opportunities before I would in terms of the money and give me a heads up” [E11-25-1000].

Others reflected on previous successes and how the loss of strong relationships led to difficulty in later negotiations. “Before that, I had very strong relationships there. We went through a process where [he] was feeding me legislation under the table at breakfast – that was the closest I ever got” [T11-18-100].

The importance both senior bureaucrats and elected officials placed on having a strong network both for decision making and for the accomplishment of tasks, such as
receiving wide-spread approval for a proposal, was often mentioned outside the library sector as well. A former deputy minister felt the importance of strong relationships was reflected both at the staff and peer levels, and he used both levels to ensure success, though was somewhat uncomfortable with this blunt description of the exercise:

When I talk about a network, I'm talking about people that I met during the course of work, formed views about, and therefore had occasion to continue to deal with, but networking these days is a much more structured, formal and cold-blooded exercise. I don't think that's a particular problem because the people who were not in my direct line of authority, that were from outside, other parts of government, were people that I knew well, that I had experience with and that I trusted....If you're an ADM, you talk to the relevant ADM and if you're a deputy, you talk to the relevant deputy and say, 'Look, here's what I'm thinking about doing and here are the reasons, and here are the options I've looked at, what do you think? Can you live with this? Is there a better way of doing it?' You do that as informally as possible. Governments, once they get into second term or so they always try to formalise this kind of stuff. They don't even know it's happening. So they say well, in the real world it should be happening, so let's write it down, and let's make committees, which doesn't work nearly as well....But most people who are successful in any large organisation, doesn't just happen in government, understand that you don't get anywhere by surprising people, you don't get anywhere by adversely affecting them just because you haven't thought to touch base with them and found that there's a little tweak that could have actually made everybody happy [VI04-26-I].

Another noted, “In those cases, it was building the relationship, deep relationships with those client ministries that was the key to being effective” [VI04-19-1030]. He described the process of moving a piece of complex legislation through to Cabinet:

[W]e ran that on two tracks, three tracks really. We ran it on a ministry-local government track to design something that was going to be acceptable to the local government community, which meant it was complicated, very sort of
collegial and complicated. We ran it on a political track, which means we had a chatty minister who liked to chat with a lot of mayors. She did a lot of that really remarkably well, so that build up good solid political alliances, so those were two tracks. And the third track was within government – we had to sort of negotiate was the deal was within ministries, and a lot of small-time adjustments to the deal, without affecting the local government piece, that addressed ministry interests. So when we had those three things lined up, we had no ministry that was speaking against what we were doing....We had largely consensus within the political world and a lot of alliances set up with people the minister saw as being important to that alliance [V104-19-1030].

In planning funding requests for public libraries, relationships were orchestrated between the directors of library branches and senior officials experienced at working this way. When one senior official joined the effort to move a library initiative forward, he felt he had developed a significant network that would be useful to the project:

I knew a lot of people in the system, there were very few offices that I couldn't simply pick up the phone and call somebody, and say 'Gee, what's going on?'...I didn't need to know much about libraries. I needed to be empathetic, I needed to hear and listen, but there were a bunch of librarians there, so why did I need to know about libraries. I did need to know about the inner workings of government, and how decisions would be made and how we capture people's attention....I was busily picking up the phone, calling my contacts in Education, in Health, in MCFD, in Aboriginal Relations, in Economic Development, in all those places, talking about the importance of libraries to each of their files [V104-13-9].

This sense of maintaining a strong network extended through to the elected level as well. For those officials, the process of working with colleagues and those with whom they had prior relationships was prominent both in terms of “selling” ideas and in terms of reputation. Like others, they worked to build trust through collegial relationships:
[A local union official] came to see me...about a potential partnership between our ministry and [the union] on Books for Babies and so, you know, I kind of like that. He and I are old friends from a different battle, and again, I'm inclined to do the partnership through them [VI06-02-430].

For those within the bureaucracy, especially those with long service, the importance of strong networks and the ability to work among colleagues were not only necessary for gaining acceptance of program proposals, they were an essential part of their professional behaviour. In some instances in the study, it was clearly stated that library stakeholders were not well connected and indeed, misunderstood the effectiveness of this element in successful governmental work:

The key is not to give up on developing personal relationships. For people coming in, I think the key message is about developing those relationships and not to silo yourself. We see that so often, libraries that haven't asked for an increase in ten years, they become invisible to the community government. But then if you're seen only as a yapping dog and haven't told your story and built the relationship so the decision makers are somehow attached to your library, you could be telling your story but it could be falling on deaf ears [E11-25-1000].

Success in navigating the bureaucratic process is also dependent on a strong network across the various ministries. Funding recommendations at the “line item” level are often made within the bureaucracy; senior staff members feel working in isolation can be detrimental to success. Often these networks are used to share information with the aim of creating enough understanding that proposals are supported across multiple ministries.

The jurisdictions described in this study cite numerous examples of participants asserting that the use of an intra-government network was not only desirable, but expected. When describing a multi-year project, a former deputy recalls:

We spent a lot of time with [colleagues in other ministries] explaining exactly what we were doing....There was nobody but [a few ministers], the key there was that there was nobody but them speaking against it. We had such a level of
consensus that it was going to be very hard for three or four ministers who looked at it and said, 'Boy that's complicated,' to carry out the argument [VI04-19-1030].

This approach was successful for bureaucrats regularly working across sectors:
One of the things I've learned is that you need to influence your champions within government and within your own Ministry. If you can't even get your leaders to drink your Kool-Aid, so my ADM, my Deputy Minister, my Minister, they have bigger louder voices, and they are at every inter-ministerial table....A second key step [was to] invite other ADMs to participate in decision making around our little fund. It was a little gesture, but they then paid attention to the impact of our fund on the economy. They were very engaged in that decision-making process, so just these little baby steps made that unit pay attention to how we could work differently. It's just little things to get staff to see things in a different way. So it's kind of marketing and communication 101 [T02-04-830].

A full set of examples of this tactic is too large to present here. This information specifically represents those comments most closely reflecting the “relationship building” aspect of the “liking” tactic.

5.3.4 Reciprocity

The “reciprocity” tactic encompassed several codes; the chance for politicians to see and speak about the positive benefits of a program was most often mentioned as motivation around this tactic. In other words, successful programs allowed politicians to share stories about the positive outcomes of the work of their party. While most senior bureaucrats felt it was important for election officials to be thanked personally for their contributions to a program, it did not appear that this action was influential on future decisions, rather, it was seen as merely courteous, though still desirable, behaviour:

We'd look for opportunities to profile the ministry and the minister but we wouldn't normally be looking for them to say thank you directly. If a group proposed a strong pilot in an area, the minister would be interested. It would give
them the opportunity to showcase the pilot [VA05-06-400].

The issues facing public libraries generally lacked prominence in provincial circles, though certainly public library trustees and senior librarians have previously set the stage and most often continued to enjoy a general reputation of “polite partner”. Cases of noteworthy examples of appreciation – giving of generous gifts, for example – often helped to build relationships more than provide an opportunity for true reciprocity. Again, the most basic level of exchange and recognition could not be ignored: The more thoughtful lobby groups, interest groups, would always have a few things to thank the Minister for when they walk in the Minister's office, whether they were recent or they had to reach into the distant past, they'd find something to get onto the right tone for the meeting and then they would turn to whatever their current problem was [V104-26-100].

When requests for funding were successful, being a “polite partner” continued in the library sector as well:

I think [the] trustees are very genuine and savvy at the same time, so you know, they're very good at making sure the Minister knows that they appreciate the support from the province, sending letters and invitations to events, when we have these round table meetings they all say the funding made such a difference, and this is what another increase could do. That's the kind of approach. They are savvy [E11-24-1000]

or “The [library] was a way for the government to achieve the things they wanted to achieve and get the most bang for their buck. It worked well for everyone....I don't think anyone ever thought we weren't doing it for both of us” [T11-18-100].

Overlooking opportunities to provide benefit back to those funding governments can prove detrimental, both in the sense that these missteps were noted and in the erosion of a long-term relationship building and potential for positive images of the library sector. A senior bureaucrat commented that these small gestures and their absence gets noticed at government tables:

It sure does. And right now there are no strings attached [to the money], all they
have to do is provide us with an annual survey and a financial statement. many of them, it shocked me, don't even honour a deadline. We have to chase them for the survey. There was a sense of entitlement for that money. No other sector that I've worked with... for 2%, 4%, 50% would be right there with that deadline, even if it was for $5,000. The Library sector shocked me, that we had to chase them [T02-04-830].

Others were less polite about expressing the same sentiment:

One of the first responses of a couple of the trustees [to rumours of a decrease] was to immediately start, what I would call a 'complaint campaign'. 'You can't do this to us, this is not right,' which in my estimation makes a difficult decision on the part of government a whole lot easier. 'Bunch of goddamn whiners, we've giving them more money than they ever got from us, and this is what they do, they don't bother coming to talk to us...' [V104-13-1000].

The chance for ministries to work together is perhaps a more salient issue. While the buzz word in all governments observed is collaboration, working together most often comes with a price tag. If collaborating ministries are unable to contribute financially to projects, their prominence at the project level is lowered; undeniably these differences in commitment can jeopardise a project's bottom line. One example has seen a ministry scale back their financial support of a cross-ministry library project to such a point that only a sliver of its original goals can be met:

Because we had invested over the years in [the project], which of course supports academic libraries, school libraries, and public libraries, the other ministries never stepped up – and all told, there are 6,500 libraries, we're the only one, the only Ministry that provides support directly to public libraries. The other Ministries support school boards, universities... in a different model. So, for whatever reason, [the project] wasn't getting funding from other Ministries or schools or universities. So as a little Ministry in tough economic times, we had to revisit it – and it's not our job, to get funding from other Ministries. That's their job [T02-04-830].
Finally, the last example of the presence of “reciprocity” in the case specifically intersects with the tactic of “consistency and commitment”. In describing a situation particular to the library sector, a former deputy noted, “We were looking for things we could go back to government and say, 'Look, for your commitment to libraries, this is what you're going to get.' So things like OneCard gave us universal access at a very low price” [VI04-19-100].

The tactic of “reciprocity” is broad and encompasses elements of exchange theory at many levels. At a minimal level, thanking funders is expected as a completion of an exchange – not doing so can damage a relationship over the long term. At the inter-ministerial level, a competitive environment often trumps the value of collaboration, with committed funding giving external ministries a voice on issues of importance. The ultimate expression of reciprocity may be the ability for stakeholders, regardless of their sector affiliation, to assist with government's goals, particularly as they apply to earlier campaign promises and broad party values.

5.3.5 Scarcity

An explanatory comment on the concept of “scarcity” must be made. While this tactic describes the high value of items, services, organisations, etc. that are not readily available, the concept was only noted in the study in the negative or as a null tactic. In other words, no decisions makers discussed or gave the impression they felt library services were unavailable or at risk of becoming unavailable. When coding the data, the notion that libraries are marginal, lack prominence, or are not highly valued was used as the basis to examine this tactic. The comments that most objectively indicate the lack of urgency to increase funding allocations alluded to the local nature of the service, that over 90% of the funding responsibility lay with local municipalities. This tactic would warrant alternative analysis in a local jurisdictional setting.

Perceptions of the efforts made by public library trustees and senior staff to move forward a case for sustained increased funding in the years immediately preceding 2009-10 were not compelling in two of the three jurisdictions and lacked the ability to create a significant impact on governmental priorities. Furthermore, despite shows of support
during part of the past decade in each jurisdiction, library stakeholders largely appear to struggle in getting their message across. Even those decision makers with personal relationships with professional librarians and other library stakeholders that have created a base for a positive attitude toward the sector have solid opinions about librarians' inability to effectively promote their profession. Senior bureaucrats assigned to assist with moving the cause of libraries through government felt their own stereotypes about library services allowed them to act as a “translator” of the library story between stakeholders and senior levels of government. For one senior official, this use of broad generalisations and the focus on the goal of creating a modern, positive image of libraries for decision makers were keys to accomplishments – these sweeping images and the promotion of a general vision far superseded the importance of detailed plans and descriptions or statistical information:

[T]here's the content and how it's delivered. I don't think you could really, I mean you could have great content and crappy delivery, you could have great delivery and not very good content; well that would probably actually work better than great content and crappy delivery [VI04-13-9].

It is unclear whether this “translation” could have been effective if handled solely by the librarians working in government. He continued:

I think librarians, probably by the type of personality that's attracted to the profession, and by the nature of the training of the profession, tend to be folks who conscientiously go about doing what needs to be done and they don't tend to talk about it. They don't go around blowing their own horn, they don't sort of go 'Damn, that worked!' and I think it's one of the things about librarians as a profession and library organisations as a sector, not in a boastful prideful manner, need to do.

The ability to create compelling case was likely hampered by stereotypes about public library trustees and senior library staff and their manner of communicating – with the British Columbia government, the word “advocacy” is a hot button to be avoided. This point was stated repeatedly across several interviews:
The fascinating thing about it was that this person used to be a long-time public servant in a remote part of the province. And he took his role as Chair as, 'I need to be a heavy duty advocate.' And candidly, I think the association lost a lot of ground with that approach [VI04-13-9].

The same sentiment was expressed by a senior official:

But the perspective and the culture of the library community is about advocacy. Advocacy is viewed as a positive thing. As a core piece of what the library sector do, they advocate. Again, with respect to the culture here … the word 'advocacy' is a bad word. And certainly it's a loaded word, it's a very very loaded word and so many people have different perspectives of what they mean by advocacy. And I gotta tell you that from where I sit, my red flags go up. If somebody describes themselves as an advocate, I heard special interest group, lobbyist, you know somebody coming with cap in hand to try to embarrass the Minister. That's what I hear. ...So that doesn't, in my perspective and my opinion, doesn't do the community any favours by labelling themselves as advocates or by taking on the mantle of advocacy [VI04-19-4].

A senior bureaucrat mentioned this approach as counter to the current government's values:

My experience, in the past ten years with this government, is efforts to lobby ministers for expenditures have been mostly unsuccessful. They had more success with the previous administration, but in the last ten years, you've seen very little of that [VI06-23-3].

Stereotypes of library stakeholders communicating with elected officials only during times of need as well as the stereotype of libraries being quiet, dusty places filled with books that few read are held by decision makers. This speaks to a notion that certain images and perceptions of libraries, the services they offer and those who support them may not be congruent with the same images and impressions library stakeholders believe they are projecting.
For other senior officials, elected and from the bureaucracy, libraries were portrayed as a very small concern in the scheme of their portfolios. Some examples of this were merely descriptive; the marginal nature of libraries was stressed in other instances. “Most [ministers] have at least two assistants, and the question is are libraries important enough to get the good one? Generally not” \[H05-26-2\] or:

For a somewhat on-the-edge kind of service provider, comparing to something like schools, hospitals, those top of mind, libraries are not top of mind in the political equation. They have to work at making themselves top of mind in the political equation, for the most part the community has done that. They've done a good job of keeping themselves if not top of mind, but keeping themselves on the edges. OK, it's not big but it's something we should keep doing. That's probably the best place they can be \[VI04-19-1030\].

This last sentiment may prove to be the observation that comes closest to advice or counsel for library stakeholders. Several interview participants were blunt in their description of how they perceived efforts library stakeholders to gain attention from decision makers. Comments ranged from “They were whiners; they were always crying and bitching....You’re not doing yourself any favours because you’re not telling your story. You’re just whining and sniveling” \[E11-25-1000\] to “I don't have to bear the brunt of the bitch sessions. And I'm not saying that just about libraries, all interest groups, all, stakeholder groups have these issues. I get that” \[VI04-13-400\] and finally, “I said, so what you need to do, you need to write letters, not the whiny ones you usually do” \[T02-04-830\].

5.3.6 Social proof

“Social proof” arose a number of times as a way to support business cases primarily through gathering data about programs in comparator provinces. This was clearly distinguished from scenarios in which a province might note that it is “falling behind” in a certain area and then look for ways to “catch up”. When comparisons were seen as less than favourable, or if efforts were made to “shame” a government on their
performance, simple answers of unequal comparisons are most often offered, i.e., the comparison from one jurisdiction to another was “apples to oranges”.

Particularly in British Columbia and Alberta, there was a lot of “looking over the fences and the bureaucrats are always good about doing that” [VI06-23-300]. For Ontario, “the [information] is pretty Ontario-centric” [T02-04-830]. For this province, the “apples to oranges” stance is most justified; its population and political position within the country set it apart from nearly every other jurisdiction.

Sweeping comparisons were noted in many sectors, and environmental scans are increasingly being carried out at the senior bureaucratic level to help build their own confidence in forwarding business cases to the ministerial level. However in no instances were specific detailed statistics used to build a case. In multiple observations, highly detailed statistical information forwarded by library stakeholders was clearly misinterpreted.

Consideration was most often given to the role the provinces played in the library landscape with respect to local government. In some instances, library policy was approached a certain way because previous decisions about municipalities would determine an outcome, for example, “they're not going to ask municipalities to amalgamate, it isn't politically acceptable to ask libraries to amalgamate” [E11-25-1000]. This came as a benefit to libraries in one instance, “We tried to treat libraries in the same way that we treated municipalities and regional districts, which was that we weren't going to deal with our deficit issues by cutting our grants to local governments” [VI06-02-430].

Most often, the comparison or measurement of the provinces' role in library funding resulted in a lack of urgency to maintain significant responsibility in this area: [F]rom the perspective of decision makers beyond my level, it can be pretty easy to say 'Well, we only give them 7% anyway, it's like 92% or whatever a municipal issue, how important can it be?' It's really easy to cut, it's a municipal issue anyway. So when those discussions, when you're in a time of restraint, believe me, those are the discussions [VI04-19-4].
Like the tactic of “scarcity”, remaining on the edges of the provincial radar may emerge as the “safest” place for libraries when receiving provincial dollars:

And here's the thing about public libraries and this sort cuts to the chase. ...They're not seen as being our core business. They're a core business of municipalities. So from that perspective, we hold them to a different standard. ...We hold them to a much lower standard than we would hold anyone of the major programs....One of the things that I always found fascinating about libraries, not only in this jurisdiction but other jurisdictions as well, is libraries often tends to be an add-on to another ministry. And it's always about the things you'd like to do, versus the things you can afford to do. What happens is that you all go back to core ...and if it's not core, it's gone. The point being, in that context, and when public libraries sits in Municipal Affairs, it's sat in a bunch of different places, it's a difficult thing to protect public libraries [VI06-23-3].

5.4 Chapter summary

In Chapter 4, data specific to the three jurisdictions in the study was presented, and a brief analysis of the context and events surrounding the decisions about provincial funding for public libraries was discussed. In this chapter, the six tactics of interpersonal influence were specifically examined across all data. Each tactic was presented in sequence, drawing on examples from interview data to illustrate the presence of each tactic.

Beginning with authority, it was noted that this was a particularly important tactic in British Columbia. The personal experiences and wishes of the Premier during the 2001-10 period were often used to guide the work of those in the bureaucracy and the subsequent business cases prepared for budget submission. In the case of public libraries, this authority was key to the success of a mid-decade multi-year request for increased funding; arguably it was also his intervention that prevented additional decreases in the 2009-10 budget approved by Cabinet. In other provinces, the question
of authority was less prominent for the public library sector but no less present in those interview participants' assessments of its importance in garnering support around the Cabinet table for specific projects.

Tapping into either personal or organisational values proved to be very important for library stakeholders' in advancing their cause. Again in British Columbia, the personal values of the Premier himself were aligned with the work libraries were prepared to carry out – aligning with the values of such high-level actors made earlier requests for increased funding an “easy sell”. In Alberta, the importance of ensuring elected officials understood the congruency between their party's campaign goals and the work of the library was stressed repeatedly by senior government officials. Their fortunes were augmented when more than one sympathetic Minister was given responsibility for public libraries – in two cases, their personal experiences were central to their understanding of the role of the public library and how it could forward their governmental agenda. In Ontario, the repeated reference by library stakeholders to a previous government's action have not assisted them in gaining support.

More than any other theme, “relationship building” and its related tactic, “liking” presented themselves as central to the work of those in the bureaucracy, elected officials and senior observer actors, whether for information gathering, dissemination or general networking. The ability to comfortably work with colleagues across ministries or in different sectors over many years facilitated both the discovery of opportunities and the development of business cases. “Talking up” proposals informally increased their chances of being accepted in all instances. Effectively networking and collaborating was not only a successful work habit, it was expected of senior officials. Though the concept of “liking” may also include facets of image management and a person's prior history with an issue or sector, the presence of this tactic was so great in the study that examples in this chapter were limited primarily to the “relationship building” aspect of the tactic.

“Reciprocity” is a complex tactic that encompassed both commonplace activities like ensuring Ministers were thanked for their work, as well as larger displays of exchange. This included giving elected officials the opportunity to be publicly recognised for their work or more intangibly ensuring assistance was offered in helping
others meet stated goals. In some instances, the lack of willingness to reciprocate on projects was from other ministries and seemingly out of the control of library stakeholders. At the lowest levels, thanking officials is expected, though is most noteworthy when the opportunity for recognition is missed. Neglecting to recognise government funding can erode previous relationship-building efforts.

In no instance was the concept of “scarcity” used effectively to convince a decision maker to increase provincial funding for public libraries. Interview participants did not have the impression public library services were threatened to the point of closure, nor did they express that any decreases would result in the removal of indispensable services. In the instances where library stakeholders were unsuccessful in receiving increased funding, business cases appeared to be unconvincing and lacked the originality decision makers were seeking. Several interview participants felt library stakeholders had difficulty communicating about their “story”.

Broad comparisons with other jurisdictions were made by senior bureaucrats when creating business cases, though most often the detail in these comparisons was minimal. Nonetheless, the tactic of “social proof” was indeed present in the data. Most notably, bureaucrats British Columbia and Alberta may consider each others' experiences when preparing background information; Ontario less so. In each of the three jurisdictions, a comparison or measurement was made of the provincial role in overall public library funding with respect to their municipal counterparts. With the bulk of the funding responsibility falling to local government, the provinces recognised their funding and policy impact was secondary.

This chapter showed all of the tactics in Cialdini's framework of influence were at play in each of the three jurisdictions studied. The tactics of “liking” and “consistency and commitment” were most cited as the tactics used to advance a cause within provincial governments, whether in the library sector or beyond. The tactic of “scarcity” was present but was shown to be ineffective. A full discussion about these conclusions follows in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6: Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

Pleas from the library community to stop cutting funding to public libraries have been common in the popular media in the past few years. Examples of budget difficulties have come from many corners of the world and include the US, the UK and most recently, Canada, where a 10% cut to the budget of the Toronto Public Library was considered by that city council (White, 2011).

Despite these reports, very few research studies have looked at public library funding, and none have explored what influences those who decide to increase or decrease these budgets. Looking at other bodies of literature, it is evident that the question of how influence is used in budgetary decision making is also absent.

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that influence decision making priorities during the budget process in Canadian provincial governments. In addition, it considered whether the factors of influence as described in Cialdini’s framework of influence affected funding decisions in political settings. The specific context for the study was provincial/state level funding for public libraries in Canada.

6.2 Review of the study

The research question this study sought to answer was:

- What factors influence decision making priorities during the budget process in Canadian provincial governments?

This question led to two more specific secondary questions:

- What (internal and external) factors led Canadian provincial elected members responsible for public libraries to recommend increased, decreased or neutral funding allocations in the 2009-10 budget year?
Which, if any, of the six tactics of interpersonal influence as identified in the Cialdini framework were employed in these budget processes and if so, by whom?

A review of literatures from the disciplines of librarianship as well as public administration, political science and to lesser extent, psychology was undertaken:

- to explore previous research in the areas of funding for public libraries as well as any studies exploring public libraries in the political context;
- to explore the extent to which decision making and specifically interpersonal influence in decision making in a political context has been studied in Canada and beyond; and
- to establish a foundation for the study in the concepts of decision making, influence and budget-setting as it applies to the political setting.

The literature review revealed a small number of studies have examined public libraries in a political setting, and have focused primarily on the perception elected politicians hold of the role of the public library as compared to the perceptions held by professional librarians. Seven research studies have examined factors influencing funding for libraries. These studies were broad in scope and considered the role the public library director, the library board, and library patrons can have on the budget process, as well as external factors like the socio-economic basis of a community or country (Allen, 2003; Blake, 1988; Estabrook & Lanker, 1995; Hubbard, 1996; Robbins-Carter, 1984; Stine, 2006; and Varheim et al., 2008). No prior studies have been undertaken that have specifically examined the construct of influence in decision making about funding for Canadian public libraries at any level of government. Additionally, no prior studies have been undertaken that examine the construct of influence in decision making within the context of Canadian provincial politics.

Because little research had been completed in this area, and because of the political setting for the study, the case study method was chosen to explore the questions in the study. The specific context of provincial/state level funding as well as the decisions for the 2009-10 fiscal year were chosen in order to constrain the case
After a review of provincial funding for public libraries over the past ten years was completed, three jurisdictions were chosen for the case. In each of these three jurisdictions, the primary source of funding for public libraries comes from local municipal governments. They differ in their political histories and the outcomes of the 2009-10 funding decisions – British Columbia's budget revealed decreased funding, Alberta's budget showed increased funding, and Ontario's budget was unchanged from the previous year.

The case was studied through examination of primary and secondary documents that helped set the political and economic context of the three jurisdictions as well as to provide triangulation for the case interviews. The primary source of data for the case was a series of 18 interviews carried out between January and November 2011. (A pilot study was conducted during the summer of 2010 in a jurisdiction external to these three.) Using NVivo software, two cycles of coding of the interviews were undertaken. The first was to note emerging themes and the second was to determine whether the six tactics of influence as described by Cialdini were present.

In Chapter 4, the data collected for the three jurisdictions were presented. The format included an introduction to the political and economic landscape of the three jurisdictions and well as the legislative and funding context for public libraries in Canada. This was followed by a detailed discussion of the political and economic setting for approximately the past decade as well as those events specifically affecting public libraries in each of the three jurisdictions. In order to synthesise the events affecting library funding, a brief analysis was included in each description.

The full discussion of how each of the six tactics of influence as described by Cialdini was presented in Chapter 5. A brief review of the framework was provided followed by an extended presentation of each tactic in sequence. A synthesis of these findings follows and serves as a concise response to the main study question.
6.3 Review of the findings

Using the case study methodology, the researcher explored the study question in a Canadian context. There was one primary research question and two secondary questions. The findings for each are reported below.

What factors influence decision making priorities during the budget process in Canadian provincial governments?

The decisions for public library funding in each of the jurisdictions in the study were grounded in both political and economic contexts. In all three instances, the role of individual political actors sympathetic to the cause of public libraries was key – in one instance, this resulted in a successful outcome. The lack of a sympathetic actor has played a significant role in less successful outcomes in the other two jurisdictions. Without question, the stronger economic footing in the province of Alberta, despite the economic downturn, allowed requests for increased funding to be considered and granted in the 2009-10 fiscal year; however additional funds would not have been forthcoming without a network of key actors in place to support the request, regardless of the financial circumstances. With less room for financial manoeuvring, the timing for requests of increases in British Columbia and Ontario was inappropriate in the 2009-10 fiscal year. While arguments for increases in each of these two provinces have been equally vigorous as those in Alberta, the targets of the requests found the arguments to be unpersuasive. Without a “champion” of the cause to forward the requests both within government and externally, public library stakeholders in these jurisdictions have failed to gain traction with decision makers.

The findings of this study lead to the conclusion that the factors influencing decision making priorities during the budget process in Canadian provincial governments arise from two primary concerns: the political context and the impact of key individuals' interests. The political context refers to the ability of those actors involved in decision making to recognise opportunities suitable for promoting their cause in terms of financial affordability, the election cycle, the availability of key actors willing to advance the issue, and the balance of power among reigning political parties.
The impact of key individuals responsible for decisions, namely elected politicians, intersects with the political context. It is of utmost importance to secure the attention of the elected official responsible for the portfolio related to the issue of concern. This may be accomplished in several ways, and this study reveals three of them are through a direct or peripheral relationship with the decision maker or those in his or her professional and personal networks; through the directing of their attention to a specific matter by a superior; or through their own desire to “champion the cause”. For favourable responses to be granted to these individuals, informal support for the cause must be sought through bureaucratic and elected networks of individuals; these networks are most effectively exploited when developed over time. Thus, appropriate attention and support to an issue combined with suitable political circumstances are key factors to influencing decision making priorities in Canadian provincial governments.

What (internal and external) factors led Canadian provincial elected members responsible for public libraries to recommend increased, decreased or neutral funding allocations in the 2009-10 budget year?

The three jurisdictions in the study presented similarities and differences. Briefly, the impact of the 2008 global economic crisis was noted in each jurisdiction. Additionally, the notion that individual actors in each setting were able or unable to recognise important political opportunities was a dominant theme across all three settings. In Alberta, two ministers sympathetic to the library cause were instrumental in advancing cases for increased funding with their Cabinet colleagues. Other political figures were also able to secure increased provincial funding – these successes were built over time. In addition, strong cooperation between experienced bureaucrats and the library stakeholder community assisted with the development of a positive image of the sector broadly and with those closest to the decision process during budget proceedings. In British Columbia, prompting from the Premier to explore the state of public libraries led to a substantial increase in funding in the years prior to 2009-10. Arguably, his influence also helped conserve a portion of the annual allotment in that budget year after rumours of a 100% decrease circulated among those in the library stakeholder
community. Finally, public library stakeholders in Ontario have enjoyed increased “special” funding from the Province for the past several years; however they have failed to realise their goal of an increase to the annual budgeted provincial operating grants. Their requests have focused primarily on a significant decrease carried out by a previous administration, despite repeated feedback that this argument is ineffective.

Which, if any, of the six tactics of interpersonal influence as identified in the Cialdini framework were employed in these budget processes and if so, by whom?

Upon closer examination, this abbreviated review revealed both the influence tactics of “authority” and “consistency and commitment” were readily apparent in the case. A more thorough analysis exposes the processes that were successful were also highly dependent on the tactic of “liking”. More than any other tactic, interview participants acknowledged the concept of “relationship building” was present in their work to advance requests within government, whether pertaining to library funding or other non-library related issues. Stable personal networks were used to ensure proposals were both thorough (i.e., critical information was gathered through these networks) and well positioned for acceptance (i.e., informal support was often sought in advance of formal voting processes). These networks were most often created over lengthy periods of time.

Of lesser importance yet still present were the tactics of “reciprocity” and “social proof”. At a practical level, activities undertaken related to these tactics were important insofar as they provided support to the more dominant tactics. For example, other jurisdictions were considered in the process of developing background information for senior bureaucrats yet rarely referenced at the political level. Similarly, most interview participants noted the importance of recognising governments for their funding support but felt these activities were only significant in their absence. In other words, a lack of recognition could erode previously strong relationships.

A discussion of the final tactic of “scarcity” stands in contrast to the previous five. While the concept of something being more valued if there is a threat of its disappearance was intentionally covered in the interviews and clearly understood by the
participants, none felt this was a factor of influence in the decision making process for public library budgets. In more than one instance, the idea that libraries remain on the fringe of the political radar was mentioned; indeed it was suggested this may be a strategic locus from which to operate within this realm. The implication of this conclusion is that further study be undertaken to more fully understand how this tactic functions in a public library context is discussed below.

Further complexity exists in this analysis of the six tactics. While the analysis has allowed for the possibility of ranking the tactics in terms of their use, such a ranking may not reflect overall effectiveness. Influence theory recognises the effectiveness of specific tactics is context dependent (Cialdini, 2001; Koslowsky & Schwarzwald, 1993; Raven, 1990; Yukl, Chavez and Seifert, 2005). Additionally, in this case, the six tactics could not be analysed in a completely discreet way. In other words, the effectiveness of a tactic may depend on its intersection with another. Thus, two possible models of influence for public library funding decisions at the provincial/state level are portrayed below.

![Figure 2: Three-sided hierarchical model of influence for public libraries](image-url)
Figure 2 portrays the potential importance of the “liking” concept while recognising the context may elevate the importance of the tactics of “consistency and commitment” as well as “authority”. Figure 3 highlights the potential impact the tactics of “authority” and “reciprocity” on the importance of “consistency and commitment” and the impact “reciprocity” can have on “liking”. Figure 3 again accentuates the importance of “liking” above all other tactics and incorporates the context. Both models exclude the use of “scarcity” as a tactic and note the presence of “social proof” as a lower level tactic.

6.4 Significance of the research

The originality of this study lies at the junction of three elements: tactics of influence in decision making, Canadian provincial politics, and public library funding. No previous studies have considered these elements jointly. Further, no research has been carried out in the area of public library funding and influence in decision making, nor in the area of Canadian provincial politics and influence in decision making. Previous studies exploring funding decisions in the Canadian non-profit setting have found the political context (Chappell, 2005; Church, 2008) to be a significant factor in
determining outcomes as well. By examining the construct of influence, additional focus has been brought to the many variables in the political setting.

**Theoretical significance** – Cialdini's framework describing the six universal tactics has been empirically tested in a variety of settings. In addition to Cialdini's extensive work, three additional studies have considered the full set of six tactics in various settings. Other studies employing the use of Cialdini's full framework for analysis have been completed in other sectors, namely in the building development process (London & Cadman, 2009), in professional sport reporting (Min, 2009) and the fundraising and donor arena (Patouillet, 2000). Findings from these studies also demonstrated the interdependence of the six tactics and noted the particular reliance on the tactic of “reciprocity” and its intersection with “liking” (Min, 2009), “authority” (London & Cadman, 2009) and “commitment and consistency” (Patouillet, 2000). This study contributes an additional analysis that highlights the dominance of "liking", and thus, further extends the Cialdini framework.

This study is the first to consider the tactics in a political setting, strengthening the applicability of this framework. In addition, the study is the first in the disciplines of librarianship and public administration to empirically test any framework of influence. Thus the construct of influence may be added to both librarianship and public administration in a Canadian setting.

**Research significance** – Reports of funding decreases for public libraries appear in the professional literature of librarianship regularly, yet few research studies have examined the potential causes for decreased, or indeed, increased funding. Previous studies have considered the impact patrons, library boards, library directors, and even library services can have on funding, generally concluding these actors as a group have little impact on the process (Allen, 2003; Audunson, 2005; Blake, 1988; Estabrook & Lanker, 1995; Hubbard, 1996; Kann-Christensen & Pors, 2004; Koren, 2009; Mittermeyer, 1990, 1994, 1999; Robbins-Carter, 1984; Smith, 2004; Smith & Usherwood, 2003, 2004; Shavit, 1985; Stine, 2006; Usherwood, 1994; Varheim et al., 2008; Ward, 2004). This study focused on the targets of funding requests in order to ask the question about effective techniques at the individual level. In directing data
collection efforts at the targets rather than the agents in the funding request process, this study began to consider the question of empirical measurement of the effectiveness of funding request techniques made by library stakeholders.

**Methodological significance** – This study is the first to use Cialdini’s framework to analyse decisions made in Canadian provincial politics. Thus, it may add to the literature of public administration by contributing a viable framework of analysis for the construct of influence in this area. Correspondingly, analysis using the Cialdini framework may be replicated in other studies focused on decisions affecting public libraries or libraries generally, whether funding or another measurement is of interest. Other non-profit sectors such as sport and health care may also consider use of this framework.

**Professional significance** – This study may be of interest to library stakeholders (i.e., senior library professionals, library trustees, interested community members and allied professionals) when considering their communication techniques with decision makers at individual and organisational levels. Stakeholders may be advised to direct fewer resources toward techniques designed to employ the influence tactic of “scarcity” and additional efforts may be focused on relationship building in various areas, and over the long term. Indeed, this study showed the use of some advocacy techniques associated with grassroots and lobbying efforts when used in isolation may be viewed negatively by some decision makers and impede the creation of favourable budgetary circumstances. These stakeholders may also wish to direct further efforts in investigating the values, commitments and priorities of individual decision makers at each level of government.

### 6.5 Delimitations and limitations

This study was bounded geographically, politically and temporally. It was limited to three provinces in Canada and had a contemporary focus on approximately the past ten years, culminating with the decisions made about public library funding in the 2009-10 fiscal year. It excluded libraries in other sectors, as well as decisions about library funding in provinces where the province rather than municipalities is the primary
provider of funding. It also excluded the province of Québec in all respects.

Several further delimitations are noted. At the broadest level, passive techniques of influence such as image management and reputation were not explicitly recognised. These techniques speak directly to the notion that stereotypes may have an impact on a decision maker. While decision makers' prior experiences with libraries were explored and incorporated into the data and subsequent analyses, the role the heuristics of “representativeness” and “availability” (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982) play in the tactics of influence was left unexplored.

Limitations were present in the study at the methodological level. The interview participant sample was at best unbalanced: ten interviews were conducted with participants in British Columbia, five interviews were conducted in Alberta, and just three in Ontario. Further, the researcher failed to secure interview appointments with more than one senior official in Ontario, and no elected officials. An election in this province in the latter half of the study period was one factor impacting this weakness. Several participants contacted felt their input would be irrelevant given their short tenure in their positions; previous deputy ministers and ministers were equally unwilling to visit past roles. Despite these obstacles, the researcher's conclusion is that the final sample provided sufficient data to reach saturation of themes as revealed through both cycles of analysis. Additional interest was given to the examination of primary and secondary documents to ensure validity of the interview data. In addition, the inclusion of this jurisdiction extends the case overall in its consideration of funding from both “successful” and “unsuccessful” points of view. While the interview data in this jurisdiction were somewhat abbreviated, the analysis accentuated the themes generated from the other two jurisdictions.

The researcher's own professional background and its potential impact for a biased analysis must be disclosed. While the researcher's worldview is pragmatic and incorporates the notion that personal interpretation of qualitative data in case studies similar to this one is not only unavoidable but desirable, the transparency of the study is heightened through the disclosure of her background. The researcher was an employee of the Province of British Columbia in the Public Library Services Branch during the
periods of 1999-2001 and 2004-2006. These periods overlap with the years leading up to the funding decisions made in the 2009-10 budget, and are covered in this study. However, the researcher was not in a position that was included in the interview sample. The researcher also performed work under contract for the Province of Ontario in its Libraries Unit in 2002. Again, the contract work was not performed at the level with which this study was concerned. In both settings, these prior experiences facilitated access to interview participants. Her relationships with interview participants included three prior close working relationships and four prior professional relationships (i.e., the researcher had met but not worked directly with these participants); access to the further 11 participants was facilitated through referrals from the researcher's professional network. It is highly plausible these prior relationships and referrals encouraged greater disclosure of both the incidents leading to and the subtleties of the decisions in question.

6.6 Recommendations for future research

The case study method is challenging in that large amounts of data must be collected in order to create a thick description of the case. Hence, case studies are generally designed with specific limits in mind. In this study, moving beyond a specific jurisdictional level and temporal limit would be inappropriate for a single study conducted to fulfil the requirements in a doctoral programme. Because of these limits and the exploratory nature of the case study method, multiple avenues for additional study exist. The list below may not be exhaustive.

1. Additional case studies exploring decisions about public library funding using the Cialdini framework for analysis could be replicated with distinct limits, for example, examining the decisions from other funding years or jurisdictions (i.e., additional state/provincial level jurisdictions in Canada and beyond). Replication of results has the potential to lead to the development of theory specific to librarianship.

2. Similarly, case studies exploring additional political settings (e.g., municipal, federal) or alternative library sectors such as school and academic settings, again
using the Cialdini framework for analysis would also be desirable additions to
the literature and practise of librarianship. Related exploration of special libraries
poses some difficulty in that most are uniquely situated and may be too context
dependent to effectively explore the construct of influence.

In addition to the potential for study that arises from the limits placed here, new
questions arose during the course of collecting the data. These are listed below.
1. Because of tactic of “scarcity” has been empirically tested as an effective
element in the influence process in other settings, it may be desirable to conduct
further analysis in a context that isolates this tactic specifically in the library
setting. From one case, it is difficult to understand if this is an “invalid” tactic, or
if it is simply “less effective”.
2. Additional analysis could be undertaken to explore the tactic of “liking” and its
various facets, particularly emphasising the heuristics of “representativeness”
and “availability”, both of which would require detailed consideration of the
passive influence technique of image management and the concept of reputation.
Detailed analysis of this one tactic is beyond scope of this study.
3. Additional study of the tactic of “liking” specifically juxtaposed against the
concept of “generational work habits” may be warranted. In this study,
“relationship building” was a key concept mentioned by all interview
participants, but special emphasis was placed on it by those who had a minimum
of 25 years of experience in their respective workplaces. In Canada, the
demographic distribution of workers is such that a pronounced wave of
retirements will take place in the public service over the next ten to fifteen years.
With younger workers typically serving in multiple organisations over the course
of their careers, the ability to created stable personal networks may be
diminished.
6.7 Conclusion

This purpose of this study was to explore the factors that influence decisions about funding for public libraries at the state/provincial level. Using the context of three Canadian provinces, data were gathered so the events leading to specific funding decisions could be explored as well as analysed to note whether the tactics of influence as described by Cialdini were effectively employed in successful requests. The findings proved the Cialdini framework was useful in enhancing the researcher's understanding of the case and of decision making in Canadian provincial governments generally.

When decision makers considered funding for public libraries, this study showed they most often used three distinct lenses: the consistency lens (what are my values? what would my party do?), the authority lens (is someone with hierarchical power telling me to do this?) and most importantly, the liking lens (how much do I like and know about libraries and the requester?). While many public libraries are facing difficult decisions themselves in the face of uncertain funding futures, the ability of the sector to obtain favourable responses to requests for increases may require a less simplistic approach than previously thought. The emphasis on effective communication and strategic relationship building may need to be strengthened in specific management courses in the curricula of many MLIS programs, and the dominant approaches of library associations that promote advocacy as a key part of their missions should be reexamined. As the environment in which public libraries operate continues to evolve, the ability to create meaningful connections with individuals in many communities and across all levels of government may need to be emphasised as a key professional competency. As Cialdini himself declared when discussing the most effective tactics for influence, “the relationship is the message” (Cialdini, 2004).
Appendix A

7.1 Definitions

To ensure clarity throughout the work, it is necessary to define several key library and non-library terms. They are presented here in three groups: terms from the political sphere, terms describing key concepts from libraries, and terms from the theories of influence and decision making.

7.1.1 Political sphere

elected members: In Canada as elsewhere, there are three formalised levels of government: federal, provincial (or state) and municipal. Elected members at the federal level are Members of Parliament (MP) and sit in the House of Commons. Members of the second federal chamber, the Senate, are appointed. While considerable power has been constitutionally granted to the Senate, it rarely exercises it to its fullest extent. Typically, the Cabinet, led by the Prime Minister, is comprised of elected members from the House of Commons, though there have been rare exceptions. Members of the Cabinet are given the title of Minister.

Provincial governments differ somewhat in their nomenclature. Most provinces refer to elected members as Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), the notable exception being Ontario, where the term Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) is used. Like the federal government, the executive of each provincial government is comprised of a Cabinet, appointed and led by the Premier, and made up of Ministers each holding a portfolio of responsibilities.

The municipal level of government is less consistent in its form and naming conventions. With some 2,000 municipal units represented across the country, leading elected officials may be given such titles as mayor, reeve, or warden and members of respective supporting councils are granted titles such as councillor or alderman. The unit itself may be incorporated as a city, town, village, hamlet, regional district, county,
rural municipality, municipality, etc. Most municipalities delegate oversight of the library to a library board, i.e., unlike parks, recreation, community services, etc., the library is usually not a municipal department per se reporting to a Municipal Manager (or Chief Administrative Officer) but to an appointed library board.

**pressure groups:** “Pressure groups” is a comprehensive term and refers to “organizations whose members act together to influence public policy in order to promote their common interests” (Pross, 1975, p. 122). Pressure groups can vary in their organisation, with the most formal being highly institutionalised. A high degree of formality distinguishes the term “pressure group” from “interest group”, which is any number of individuals coming together to explore one or more issues of common concern, or even having the potential to form such a group (Pross, 1992).

**lobbying:** Generally, “lobbying” describes activities undertaken with the intent of influencing government. Lobbying efforts fall into three categories and are hierarchical in their level of aggressiveness. The first set of tactics involves collaborating with another group sharing similar concerns and interests. The second is engaging in grassroots lobbying and can include the dissemination of information about the policies in question, rallies and demonstrations. Grassroots techniques are designed to inform and influence members of the public. The most aggressive set of techniques fall into the category of direct lobbying, such a financially supporting a campaign or meeting directly with elected officials to discuss specific issues (Nicholson-Crotty, 2005).

**advocacy:** A widely accepted definition of advocacy is broad in nature and focuses on the public expression of interests and concerns in an effort to change policy (Nicholson-Crotty, 2005). Within the North American library community, many librarians and board members have accepted the following definition in their work: “Advocacy is planned, deliberate, sustained effort to develop understanding and support incrementally over time” (Haycock, 2006).
7.1.2 Libraries

**board:** In Canada as elsewhere, public libraries are typically governed by a local library board. The composition and role of the library board in Canada is as nearly as diverse as the municipal landscape. Typically, a library board is appointed to manage funds; review and approve policy; participate and lead long-range planning activities; and hire a director, who manages day-to-day operations. With the exception of Québec, they are granted power through specific library legislation and are recognised as a legal body. The library board has a number of responsibilities as outlined in their respective provincial legislative frameworks; a sample of responsibilities typically includes appointing a director of operations, filing an annual statement of expenses and other relevant activities, and approving local library budgets and operations policy. Other than these few provincial requirements, the board is not subject to regular oversight as it does not report to its respective local municipal council. In addition to its internal policy role, it acts as a non-political body when representing the library at public functions, with other local organisations and as a delegation to local councils and other elected officials.

Members may be appointed in a variety of ways, including formal recommendation by the mayor or other leading elected official, by vote of the board itself through recommendation by the chair, or through position in an affiliated organisation. In some cases, members are elected councillors from their respective municipalities, others may be citizen appointees of various governments, and others are citizens at large. The secretary to the board is the Chief Executive Officer, most often a professional librarian. With the exception of Québec, the majority of Canadian public libraries function with an appointed board-staff structure. Members of these boards are also sometimes referred to as “trustees”.

**director, manager:** The library board most often hires a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to oversee day-to-day operations of the public library, including supervision and management of all other staff members, to implement the annually approved budget, to alert the board of any relevant issues, and to provide expert advice and policy changes when appropriate. The CEO is also secretary to the board. In normal operations, the
CEO may be referred to as the “chief librarian”, as well as “director”, “library director”, or “director of library operations”. Other senior professional positions may also carry the title of “director” or “manager”, e.g., “Director of Public Services” or “Manager, Main Branch.” The terms “director” and “manager” in this study imply those holding senior professional librarian positions in public libraries.

**patron:** “Patron” refers to a member of a public library, that is, somebody holding a library card, entering the library building for the purpose of utilising library programs, services and facilities, or using the services and resources offered through the library's website. Other commons terms used to refer to library “patrons” in Canadian public libraries include “customer”, “user”, “borrower”, and “member”.

**programs and services:** In this study, programs and services in the library context are those activities carried out by library staff to fulfil the public library's mandate. Examples of typical programs and services include acquiring and lending books, videos and other materials (physical and virtual); opening and staffing a facility housing resources for public enjoyment; providing storytimes for young children; making available spaces for group use, with or without a financial charge; providing public Internet access and public computers; answering informational (reference) questions and other questions about the library; and hosting related classes and sessions of interest to library patrons. As the majority of funding for public libraries in Canada is tax supported, nominal or no fees are passed along to individual patrons for use of most library programs and services.

**stakeholders:** The term “stakeholder” is used frequently in this study and refers to professional librarians (at all ranks), special interest groups commonly known as Friends of Libraries, members appointed to library governing boards, library staff members, library associations, library patrons, etc. The terms is meant encompass any person who has an active interest in supporting the public library.
trustees: Library board members are often referred to as “trustees” in Canada. The term is also commonly associated with those elected to local school district boards or other boards overseeing regional services, but in this study, the term refers specifically to those holding a position on a public library board.

7.1.3 Theories of influence

power: Power is a complex construct crossing several disciplines, including psychology, sociology and political science. For the purposes of this study, the definition supported by Jensen will be used: “It is the ability of individuals to influence others to do something that they would not otherwise have done (it is defined similarly in political science...)” (2007, p. 217).

influence: Jensen continues: “At times, a distinction is made between power and influence, where power entails the potential to have influence and influence is the actual change outcome of power” (2007, p. 217).

social influence: It is also worth mentioning here a slight distinction in the term “social influence”, where the definition from Raven will be used: “change in the belief, attitude, or behaviour of a person (the target of influence) which results from the action, or presence of another person (the influencing agent)” (1990, p. 495). This highlights the potential for internal and external motivations in attitude change.

persuasion: Persuasion is a process, beginning with a person with a goal. A message is delivered to a target audience, and the process is completed when the target complies, commits or rejects the message (Benoit, 2008).
Appendix B: Pilot study

An interview with a current elected Minister responsible for libraries (public, school and academic) in a province located outside the parameters of this study was held in August, 2010. The purpose of this interview was three-fold: to test the conceptual clarity of the semi-structured interview questions, to gather more information on those events and people constituting the greatest sources of influence on her decisions about public library funding, and to develop a set of provisional codes for analysis. Because a semi-structured interview was used, the precise wording of the questions remained secondary to the concepts covered during the interview as a whole. A review and approval of the transcript was made by the participants. No changes or deletions were made. It is worth noting that a full documentary analysis was not carried out in this geographic area. More complete data collection may yield substantial enough data to note patterns of influence.

7.2.1 Pilot Study Participants

The Minister responsible for public libraries in one of the most easterly provinces in Canada was interviewed, along with the Provincial Librarian, a position similar to State Librarian and the most senior bureaucrat responsible for public libraries. Positions situated between these two actors include the assistant deputy minister (ADM) responsible for several files within the education portfolio (one of approximately five such positions in the ministry) and the deputy minister.

Despite several exchanges with the Provincial Librarian about the nature of the pilot study and its focus on the elected official's decision-making process, the Provincial Librarian was present at the time of the interview. It is clear this presence may have had an effect on remarks made by the minister during the pilot interview, making the content gathered from this participant unsuitable for conclusions informing the final study. During the interview, it was evident the elected official spoke freely about her experiences in making decisions about her other areas of responsibility such as public education and her official duties as an elected figure; these remarks allowed the
researcher to reflect on the implications of the concepts of “consistency and commitment” and “liking” as well as providing a suitable means for contextualising the additional six tactics of influence in one setting. While this weakness of the pilot study did not allow for inclusion of a fourth jurisdiction the analysis of the findings in the final study conclusions, the objectives of this phase of the study were nonetheless satisfied (i.e., determining clarity of the interview questions and gathering information about key actors).

### 7.2.2 Study Instruments

Because of the exhaustive nature of the case study method, a full pilot using primary and secondary documentary analysis plus a full set of interviews was not undertaken. The main source of data for the pilot analysis was the interview carried out with the elected official responsible for public libraries. However, a small number of documents were reviewed and several key features about the political and contextual environment were noted. The sources included a recent report about public library funding in the province, a campaign document outlining the then incoming government's priorities and main agenda items, and the provincial strategic plan for public libraries, which included a full series of public consultations. The documents are noted in Appendix C.

All areas of concern from the interview schedule were covered within the allotted time. Some questions were specifically included to probe for sources of information in classical rational decision making in addition to the influence process. The purpose was to investigate whether further consideration should be given to employing a framework of rational decision making to the data analysis.

### 7.2.3 Preliminary Findings

Along with an evaluation of new insights gained from the interview, the transcript was re-worked several times. Approximately 45 codes were initially assigned to the transcript, which were reduced to 13 categories. These 13 categories were then aligned with Cialdini's six tactics of influence. These analyses were considered in
conjunction with the brief documentary analysis.

The first analysis of the interview data revealed several key findings; notably those areas that formed the bases for information gathering for the decision maker, particularly when considered against those which were distinctively noted as ineffective sources. Examples of ineffective sources included information provided by library stakeholders directly, such as evidence-based data, a detailed funding request submitted by a task force devoted to this issue, and pre-election public appeals. This was clear in statements such as “...factors like equity and fairness are probably driving [funding decisions] more than performance” and “I don't remember campaigning at a house in [my community] that had [an informational sign about the importance of public libraries] on it.” This documentation was thoroughly examined in the brief documentary analysis as well. It was difficult to judge whether this was due to a lack of awareness by the decision maker or if the messages conveyed by the library stakeholders were confusing and lacked credibility. In the case of evidence-based data, an additional contributing factor is the general value of equity playing a more significant role for the reigning political party than punishment based on a lack of performance or lower population base.

As a general theme, and consistent with theories of both decision making and influence, the decision maker's personal experience with libraries, library stakeholders, and professional library contacts played a role in her attitude. This theme may have emerged more strongly due to biased responses, as the Provincial Librarian was present during the interview. One of the strongest statements she made in reference to her prior relationships was, “I also can't emphasise enough how knowing [the Provincial Librarian] raised her credibility immediately when I came to the department.” In addition, the consideration of collegial support (“...I have to be honest, there's more of an impact if it comes from one of your own caucus colleagues....”) and the general political context had a substantial impact on her deliberations of the budgetary issue (“...you're also balancing that with the values and priorities of your political party, of your caucus colleagues, your own personal experience and values, and government priorities...”). Again, this is consistent with theories of political decision making (Farnham, 1990).
The second review of data using Cialdini's framework of the six tactics of influence shows that the concept of consistency played the greatest role in the decision-making process for this subject. When the transcript was reworked using the framework, this tactic was noted 43 times. Multiple statements were coded as being in line with her party's platform and values as outlined in the documentary review.

The next most common tactic was “liking”, appearing 22 times. Several themes may be most appropriately described through the concepts of representativeness and availability, two heuristics used in decision making. These themes correspond with impression management techniques, or rather, activities carried out over a period that assist with the formation of images and perception for the decision maker. In line with the exposure effect, these impressions can create not just familiarity with a person or object, but can result in positive impressions as well.

The third most frequent tactic was “reciprocity”, noted just eight times. The influence concept of scarcity played the smallest role for this decision maker, particularly as it applies to libraries. The lack of urgency or sense of crisis may correlate to a lesser impact of this concept, particularly as supported by documents describing earlier consultation.

### 7.2.4 Summary

The brief documentary analysis and interview analysis demonstrated the utility of employing Cialdini's framework of the six tactics of influence for the main study. The six groupings of concepts in the form of tactics had enough breadth to effectively characterise the pilot case and showed they would provide a useful base for the main study. In addition, the pilot study effectively showed the case study methodology had the potential to fully describe examples of decision making at the provincial level, within the context of public library funding.

### 7.2.5 Modifications for Main Study

The most outstanding modification that needed to made for the main study was in the invitation to participate in interviews. Wording needed to be sufficiently strong
enough to provide clarity about the topic under investigation (i.e., decision making) rather than solely a single funding incident or the image of library services generally. While such comments may be of use when considering image-management techniques employed by library stakeholders, generalities about successful programs or services as described in press releases are less useful.

Based on the pilot study, the interview schedule was modified in two key ways. First, a number of questions were added based on pertinent unsolicited information provided by the participant and the conversational nature of interview. Examples include questions about the role municipal governments play when considering funding, as well as the role of statistical data provided by the libraries. The second change was that extra questions were included so that a concept could be approached two or three times during the interview. During the pilot, it was noted that the participant was more open and thoughtful as the interview progressed. Therefore, opportunities were provided to answer similar questions during a later portion of the interview, without repeating earlier questions verbatim. One additional consideration given to the interview schedule included the use of categorising according to Cialdini's six tactics of influence. This was for the researcher's reference only, and was completed to ensure information was solicited in all six areas.

In addition, specific participants were invited to participate if they were known to have had recent interaction with the library community, but whose roles may have changed. For example, the recently retired Deputy Minister was mentioned in several instances during the pilot study. In the main study, these actors were contacted directly.

Finally, care was taken to gather documentary and interview data supporting the concepts of influence over several budget years. While a single budget year useful for the purposes of sample selection, a longer-range view provided additional data useful for the final analysis of the study.
Appendix C: Case Documents


Anderson, F. (2009, June 27). B.C. among provinces hardest hit by recession; Forestry slump spreads to construction, energy and consumer sectors. The Vancouver Sun, G.3


British Columbia Library Association. (2011, September 29). *Notes from a meeting between BCLTA, BCLA, ABCPLD and the Minister of Education*.


Stop BC Library Cuts. (no date). *Don't pull the plug on libraries.* Retrieved from http://www.stopbclibrarycuts.ca/


References


Anderson, F. (2009, June 27). B.C. among provinces hardest hit by recession; Forestry slump spreads to construction, energy and consumer sectors. The Vancouver Sun, G.3


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British Columbia Library Association. (2011, September 29). Notes from a meeting between BCLTA, BCLA, ABCPLD and the Minister of Education.


Chamberlain, J. (2009). Trustees and administrators: These are days for advocacy. 


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