COOPERATION, SHARING AND COLLABORATION: THE CASE OF THE NETWORK OF LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS ON ART IN THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO – REDARTE/RJ

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to identify and analyze the actions in the Network of Libraries and Information Centers on Art in the State of Rio de Janeiro (*Rede de Bibliotecas e Centros de Informação em Arte no Estado do Rio de Janeiro* – REDARTE/RJ), in order to promote the production of new knowledge and implementation of new ideas, minimizing the difficulties met by information professionals who work in institutions which integrate the Network, so that to optimize the users services and the enrichment in the thematic field of Information on art. It investigates if the organizational and informational culture of REDARTE/RJ supports cooperation, collaborative work, information and experience sharing and the use of information and communication technology. It analyses the process of cooperation, sharing and collaboration among the participants of REDARTE/RJ, aiming to verify if the Network might be considered a social knowledge network. It seeks to understand the way that REDARTE/RJ has used and taken advantage of the interaction and collaboration as means to the accomplishment of the purposes determined in its bylaws. It comes to the conclusion that REDARTE/RJ has had a relevant role in Information on art, and has been useful to its users and to the professionals and institutions which are part of it, but in order to become a social knowledge network, there are still some aspects to be improved.

Keywords: Information on Art; Networks; Informational Culture; Cooperation; Sharing; Collaboration; Information Management; Knowledge Management.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Information on art is a field of extreme informational richness for covering "[…] the art itself (the artwork, the objects, the art demonstration), the documentation of art and the documentation about art" (ALMEIDA, 1998, p.5), that is,

"[…] the discourses of art and about art" (LIMA, 2003, p.19) which therefore requires the attention of Information Science for its necessary analysis, handling, dissemination, preservation and expansion as an information field.

According to Pinheiro (2008, p.90), the origin of Information on art in Brazil dates back to the 1980s and is presented in two axes: on the one side, an operational axis, originated in technology, focused in the automation of museological collections; on the other side, a theoretical axis established from studies on the representation of these collections and the organization of information.

Despite being potential suppliers of specialized information, art museums, libraries, archives and documentation centers, which deal with the field of Art and Culture, face several problems in fulfilling their duties. Among them: the lack of adequate policies, such as collection development, which results in outdated, incomplete, scattered collections; lack of specialized human resources, required in great part of the art collections; difficulties inherent to the technical processing, with prominence of the shortage of specialized indexing languages; inadequate facilities, which result in the precarious storage and conservation of certain documents.

Another barrier, regarding the maintenance and availability of information on art sources, is the publishing market itself, which makes little space available to the thematic area of Art and Culture. Furthermore, the publishing and specially the distribution of art publications is very restrict, which makes difficult the acquisition of certain books or the continuity of a collection in particular.

Thus, reflections, preoccupations, difficulties and solutions found by professionals working in this field shall be brought up and discussed, besides raising multidisciplinary groups in an attempt to collaboratively solve the problem.

In this context, in the year of 1995 the Network of Libraries and Information Centers on Art in the State of Rio de Janeiro (*Rede de Bibliotecas e Centros de Informação em Arte no Estado do Rio de Janeiro* – REDARTE/RJ) emerged. This network was born in the manner of a traditional libraries network, concerning the cooperative work among information professionals from institutions that had significant holdings in the thematic field of Arts and Culture.

However, we know that although beginning with the cooperation and sharing of resources, through networks and library systems, the network transcended the material side, nowadays, it is possible the collaboration along with the exchange of experience, the collaborative problem-solving and the joint elaboration of service and procedures extensively, through institutions and professionals which choose to work in such system, this kind of network can be called a social knowledge network.

Set by professional of several institutions and education background, the information flow circulating throughout REDARTE/RJ is intense, bulky and rich. Furthermore, for its pioneering role and significance in a field so in need, the professional should seek after constant update, making use of available resources, such managerial and technological ones, in order to better fulfill the purposes set by REDARTE/RJ's bylaws.

Given this scenario, the following questions motivated the research: Do the interactions originated from REDARTE/RJ activities stimulate the production of new knowledge to the information professionals? Does this knowledge contribute to new ideas and accomplishments of the participant libraries and information centers, optimizing these professionals' work and consequently contributing to the field of Information on art? How has REDARTE/RJ been performing in order to accomplish the mission to promote access to informational items available in their organizations and fulfill the purposes held in their bylaws?

The study has been held with the general objective of identifying and analyzing REDARTE/RJ's actions to promote the production of new knowledge and the implementation of new ideas, to minimize the difficulties found by information professionals working on the institutions which are part of the Network, and also to optimize the user services and the enrichment of the field of Information on art.

As specific objectives, it aimed to: investigate if the organizational and informational culture of REDARTE/RJ supports cooperation, collaborative work, information and experience sharing and the use of information and communication technology; analyze the process of cooperation, sharing and collaboration among the participants of REDARTE/RJ, verifying if this Network might be considered as a social knowledge network; identify the way that REDARTE/RJ has taken advantage

of the interaction and collaboration as means to the accomplishment of the purposes determined in its bylaws.

2 NETWORKS: CONECTION AND INTERACTION

Despite not being created for such purpose, the Internet is used to bring people closer and promote the information and knowledge sharing. The connections it offers make it possible better location and access to information, documents, organizations and individuals, without considering aspects such as distance or time zone among them.

In addition, such relation takes place without being necessary the centralization of the communication by an individual or an institution, as it may occur simultaneously, from many places in the network. According to Castells (2003, p.8): "The Internet is a means of communication which allows, for the first time, the communication of many with many, in a chosen moment, at global scale".

In the bibliography there is mention to several categories of networks, referring to people and organizations. Common to each one of them is the sense of connections, ties, linkages and webs, once the word 'net', in etymology, originates from the latin '*retis',* which means "[…] interlaced threads, wires, ropes, strings, etc., as regular openings, tied by meshes, forming a kind of tissue" (CUNHA, 1998, p.669)

According to Marteleto (2001, p.72), in the academic field, the networks were first studied in the field of international relations, beginning with the end of World War II and continued until the end of the Cold War, when there was a redefinition of the actors involved in the international relations.

Currently, networks and their flows are objects of study from different fields. Luna and Velasco (2006, p.15) claim that, besides the different focuses, notions and approaches regarding networks, they might be conceived as a learning environment, as a communication system or a means for integration.

The several network categories identified in this research, which are presented by different actors, such as Inojosa (1999) and Luna and Velasco (2006), often are overlapping; they are views originated from distinct criteria, and there is not

in the related bibliography a consensus regarding those terms. For instance, many authors do not give a clear differentiation between knowledge network and information network. Therefore, this subject deserves – as suggestion for future study – the elaboration of some taxonomy, as a deeper reflection regarding the classified structure for different kinds of network and its concepts.

Taking into account their objects of sharing, and/or product(s) originated from the established relations, networks can be categorized as:

- Libraries network – it consists of a set of libraries or library systems which, despite being connected, keep their *administrative autonomy;* the *cooperation among the institutions* is the foundation to the network (VALERA OROL; GARCIA MELERO; GONZALEZ GUITIAN, 1998, p.218).

- Information networks – they aim at the reunion of persons or organizations for *information sharing,* collaborating with the *organization of products and service availability, which would be made impossible if there was not the effective participation of the parts involved* (TOMAÉL, 2005b).

- Knowledge networks – they also value for interaction, but the object of sharing is mainly information and knowledge. It is through these networks that *knowledge, experience and individual learning are shared,* aiming at reciprocal benefits (TOMAÉL, 2008). *They comprise the development of new ideas, knowledge and processes,* originated from the interaction among the actors involved, strengthening individual and general storage regarding an object in particular (TOMAÉL, 2005a).

Despite they differ in relation to the purpose of the interaction, the three kinds of networks listed above can be considered social networks, once they consist of a set of autonomous beings which gather ideas and resources around objectives and interests in common (MARTELETO, 2001, p.72).

As confirmed by Castells (2009) and Tomaél (2008), the networking shall be based on a collaborative sense, converging into common goals. To the first one, "[…] networks are structures capable of unlimited expansion, integrating new ties once

they are able to communicate within the network, that is, once they share the same codes" (CASTELLS, 2009, p.566); to the second one, "When the subject 'network' is approached, comes with it the conception of cooperation, once the networks are responsible for articulations among different actors who interact [...] and strengthen all the group […]" (TOMAÉL, 2008, p.1).

Another fact which should be mentioned here is that, nowadays, when one speaks of network, they tend to associate its activities to the computer network. However, the network activity has existed for many years: Barabási (c2002) and Watts (1999) claim that the 'net' metaphor was used for the first time in 1736 by the mathematician Leonard Euler; in scientific communication, the net organization has been common for many years – as example, there are the invisible colleges (cf. MEADOWS, 1999); Ribas and Ziviani (2008) affirmed that texts on Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology have mentioned the term 'social networks', as currently understood, since 1930.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that information and communication technology has expanded and, in a way, improved this phenomenon, as claimed by Castells (2009, p.565): "Although the form of social organization in networks has existed in other places and times, the new paradigm of Information Technology provides the material basis for their deep expansion in the whole of the social structure".

Not only these tools are able to intensify the interaction among the network ties, once they allow the communication from 'many to many', but also make the interactional process more democratic by disregarding the time and space factor.

The networks can be seen as vehicles thrusters of innovation, that trigger transformations of personal, professional, organizational, economic and social, thus strengthening areas of knowledge and optimizing working processes.

For better comprehension of the several possibilities of network activity, we highlighted processes of cooperation, collaboration and sharing, which tend to pervade networking work.

In the related bibliography, sometimes the terms cooperation, collaboration and sharing appear as synonyms. According to Michaelis Dictionary (WEISZFLOG,

[200-]), collaboration means the act of collaborate, cooperate, help. Thus, some authors deal with collaboration as a synonym for cooperation. However, these terms hold distinct meanings, as stated by Dillenbourg (1999, p.8): "In cooperation, partners divide work, solve sub-tasks individually and then gather the partial results into a final result. In collaboration, partners do the work 'altogether'".

It is also important to bear in mind that the terms collaboration and sharing are related to the exchange, although in different ways: sharing has relation with the will or motto of giving, sharing, helping and assisting; collaboration, in turn, may be seen as a joint act, aiming common goals (ALVES; BARBOSA, 2010).

Cooperation, collaboration and sharing have always been present among informational professionals; be it consisting in options to minimize gaps arisen from the lack of resources for their duties' performance; be it due to the aim to provide better service to users.

Nowadays, networks, mainly the knowledge ones consist in a favorable environment to the development of new ideas, products, services and the redesigning of work processes resulted from the strengthening of individual and general storage of knowledge, favored by information and experience sharing. After all, the fact of information and knowledge sharing, as in the networks, shall be linked to the learning purpose: "[…] the information and knowledge sharing will only be effective if it is implied with a learning process, for the access only, without this process, does not change reality, therefore loses its purpose" (TOMAÉL, ALCARÁ; DI CHIARA, 2005, p.95).

The participation of information professional in networks provides creation of new knowledge, leading to innovations in libraries and information centers, related mainly to creation and/or reformulation of products and services.

3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The research method used was case study, in order to understand a complex social phenomenon: the role of informational and organizational culture, of

cooperation, sharing and collaboration in a network with propelling elements for creation of new knowledge and innovations.

The research began with bibliographic review on the core aspects of the subject, aiming at enlarging the theoretical basis on information on art, networks, cooperative work, collaborative work, information and knowledge sharing. There have also been studies on topics such as Knowledge Management and its application in libraries and information centers information and communication technology as tools for remote communication, for information sharing and collaboration and the role of organizational and informational culture in this context.

The empirical approach has been performed by means of three data collection instruments: a) interview with REDARTE/RJ creators; b) interview with the chairwomen after REDARTE/RJ was made official; c) questionnaire e-mailed to the representatives of each library or information center and to REDARTE/RJ's Collaborating Partners.

The methodological triangulation, typical in case studies (YIN, 2010, p.40), has been made possible through the documentary analysis of the three first years' minutes (1996, 1997 and 1998), besides the first group meeting (December 1995) and of the last three years (2009, 2010 and 2011) of REDARTE/RJ's activities.

The data collected through the interview with REDARTE/RJ'S creators, along with the minute's analysis from the Network's first years allowed us to arrange REDARTE/RJ's history background.

Then, the data collected through interviews with the managers and the questionnaire have been confronted with the minutes analysis of the Network's last years' activities, linked and presented according to the following categorization, similar to the questionnaire structure:

- Informational and Organizational Culture – pervades the processes occurred in a network structure;
- Cooperation – characterize the libraries networks;
- Sharing – characterize the information and knowledge networks;
- Collaboration – characterize the knowledge networks, considering if they foster learning and produce innovation;

- Purposes of REDARTE/RJ – verify the effectiveness of the Network's actions in performing their purposes.

For the collection, tabulation and data analysis of most part of the questions have been used the Likert Scale (KIDDER, 1987) as reference, and for the other ones, where no degree of agreement in responses had been established for the replies given by the respondents, the frequency ratings have been used.

The data have been presented in graphics and charts followed by descriptive synthesis, on a qualitative basis. Content Analysis of open-ended responses has been used obtain an objective, systematic, quantitative and qualitative description of information.

4 THE CASE OF REDARTE/RJ

The idea of forming a network of information professionals emerged from an experience of Solange Zuñiga, who, during her undergraduate course, made intense use of the Collective Catalogue, at the time maintained by the Brazilian Institute of Bibliography and Documentation (*Instituto Brasileiro de Bibliografia e Documentação – IBBD*), now known as Brazilian Institute of Information on Science and Technology (*Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia – IBICT*), which gathered information on collections of a few Brazilian libraries. Through telephone contact with the service, she and her colleagues were able to find out where to locate the document they needed for a particular research.

When she joined the Department of Research and Documentation of National Art Foundation (*Departamento de Pesquisa e Documentação da Fundação Nacional de Arte – FUNARTE*), the budget for purchasing documents was scarce. However, even aware of the possibility of borrowing the required material in neighbor institutions, the fact of not knowing the other collections made difficult the location of books and documents.

Recalling her experience in Collective Catalogue, Solange foresaw a network of librarians, where it would be possible for the professionals working on Art and

Culture to hold knowledge about collections and enlarging the access of researchers to this knowledge area.

Then, during a conversation with Helena Ferrez, who was working at the same Department, they decided to give shape to this idea. The project, at first, consisted in creating a network on a national basis. However, they could see from the beginning that this network would need to be more matured to take larger proportions. The approach was done informally, seeking to verify the interest from information professionals who worked directly with the users in taking part at a network; the plan was to get the staff, not the managers. The idea was to form a network of individuals/professionals, enlarging knowledge and the collections within these institutions, allowing librarians to lead the user towards a collection which could serve them better if their libraries' collection was not able to do so, optimizing the work of information professionals seeking to give users greater access to information on art.

The REDARTE/RJ began its activities in the end of 1995, with 11 (eleven) libraries and information centers taking part of it. Currently it holds 34 (thirty four) libraries and information centers, coming from the public, private sphere and of mixed economy in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Niteroi, besides the Collaborating Partners.

This last category of participants includes professionals who have already taken part ~~as~~ in the Network as associates, but even though they are not currently linked to the organizations specialized in the areas of thematic range contemplated by REDARTE/RJ they are interested in collaborating with the group. Although most participants have a degree in Librarianship, there are also archivists, museologists and historians.

REDARTE/RJ became official in 2005 as a culture-based, non-profitable civil association, having as objective "[…] to foster the informational resources of its participants" (REDARTE, 2011), and as purposes:

> a) to promote the access to the interested public to informational items, in any existing extension or electronic means in REDARTE/RJ's integrating organizations, showing respect to each one's availability;

b) to make public, along with the users, the existence of the units of information pertained by REDARTE/RJ;

c) to make other art-related institutions and information networks public;

d) to offer service and products related to information on art;

e) to foster permanent professional experience exchange among the integrating organizations (REDARTE, 2011).

It is a striking feature of librarianship the fact that these information organizations work in isolation, ignoring each other. So, one of the main jobs of REDARTE/RJ is to enhance contact among information professionals and bringing closer together institutions that have relevant collections on Art and Culture. The instruments for such actions are: workgroups, directors meetings and general meetings (on a monthly basis).

Moreover, there is the promotion of interaction and training through events, lectures and courses for professionals and information users of institutions within and outside the network.

As vehicles of dissemination, communication and presential or not presential interaction, the REDARTE/RJ has developed a website www.redarte.org.br, and a blog, www.redarterj.wordpress.com, which are little by little being incorporated by the new website, http://www.redarterj.com/, besides a virtual library containing rare books which are part of the collection of some of the libraries and information centers integrating the Network - http://www.docpro.com.br/redarte/. There is also participation in social networks, such as Facebook, http://www.facebook.com/REDARTERJ.REDEDEBIBLIOTECAS, Orkut www.orkut.com/redarterj, Picasa www.picasaweb.google.com/redarterj and Twitter www.twitter.com/redarterj.

5 RESULTS

The most significant results of the research are pointed out as follows:

5.1 Organizational and Informational Culture at REDARTE/RJ

This study considers organizational culture as the set of principles which determine attitudes and behavior within an organization and which embraces informational culture. It is related to the way people deal with (evaluate, organize, process and disseminates)   information and knowledge in an organization (company, network, etc.), taking into account the use of Information and Knowledge Technologies and factors such as principles, values, beliefs, rites and organizational behavior.

We identified values and culture that promote information and experience exchange in REDARTE/RJ. The members have initiative of information sharing decentralization of communication and a high level of credibility on information disseminated.

According to the answers, one can say that although there is a board of directors, elected by vote, they do not guide communication, allowing free participation and integration among the Network members.

In this aspect, what needs to be worked out by REDARTE is the creation of spaces for sharing failures and shortcomings, because these experiences should also be shared. The so-called 'knowledge base' would have great applicability in this case, and repositories for 'best practices', for 'storytelling', for 'success stories', for 'problems found' would allow successful or unsuccessful experiences to be taken as examples and good practices could be replicated in different institutions that take part of the Network, turning information sharing, which is the core of an information network, into learning, new knowledge and innovation, which are features of a knowledge network.

Another factor that should receive attention is the development of standards to facilitate communication among members of REDARTE/RJ, since one of the principles for sustainable development of a network is the use of a common language by its members.

A concerning fact is that it seems to exist little encouragement to record the information and know-how that flows through REDARTE/RJ. Although there is recognition of its importance and that there is need for handling this information and experiences, there are no policies or procedures developed to stimulate their reuse

Therefore, it is necessary that the REDARTE/RJ adopts information and knowledge management strategies and turns them in formal policies, allowing the management, retrieval and dissemination of information and experiences.

The process of recording what is necessary for later retrieval and use, to be structured, has in its favor the requirements pointed out by several researchers in the area as fruitful to knowledge management: its members are already in the network, facilitating contact among its nodes; there is an atmosphere of trust and sharing, there are spaces for knowledge generation (*ba* or enabling context) as the monthly meetings - which, however, need to be expanded and created new opportunities for sharing, collaboration and knowledge production. Although REDARTE/RJ fosters some encouragement to their members regarding communication and virtual sharing for information and experiences, this aspect must be strengthened by the group, once it is noticeable that there is a misuse of the tools available on the Network.

E-mailing, for instance, which is a typical Web 1.0 resource, was appointed as the most used tool for information exchange among members which leads us to infer that the REDARTE/RJ participants are not taking too advantage of the collaboration features of the social web (Web 2.0), in which the technology resources, with the possibility of participation and effective collaboration and sharing of experiences, opinions and ideas are the main feature.

The social networks potential – which are a highly used social web resource throughout libraries in the whole world – is also little explored by the Network. Facebook, for instance, is used only to make information public.

In general, the web resources are not very much used, and systemic use of chats, video conferencing and instant messaging to offer services to users more efficiently was not seen. A specialized library network, as it is the case of REDARTE/RJ, could seek to offer collaborative services, including online user service.

Thus, we notice the need for greater stimuli in using web tools, in special the social web (Web 2.0), by REDARTE/RJ's participants, and for aiming at more familiarity with information and communication technology, be it for performing its traditional roles, be it for learning and exchanging experience. This attitude would

optimize the interaction among members of the Network, and foster closer relations with users of information on art and with information professionals that currently are not part of that group.

Although some of REDARTE/RJ's integrating libraries and information centers do not have technological infrastructure, and that the value given to face-to-face meetings is made so evidently relevant, it is necessary to put efforts in new approaches, ideas and values, in order to stimulate a more intense and comprehensive use of communication and collaboration tools by the Network's participants.

Great part of the group has shown openness to this effort made by REDARTE/RJ, even though some resistance it is still noticeable. It is important to deepen the analysis of cultural barriers regarding the use of these technologies to improve communication and collaboration. As well as seeking to overcome resistance to the expansion of interaction with other professionals and users so the group moves towards greater integration. It is noticeable that this Network should develop and enhance the several resources already available, as indicated by a member. And participants should insist on ways to increase information and experience sharing and collaborative work, making their activities public and raising the number of adhesions and support, adding value to remote information sharing. There lies an opportunity of proximity and interaction with professionals not participating and with users of information on art, pointed out as the primary target public of REDARTE/RJ nowadays.

5.2 Cooperation at REDARTE/RJ

A cooperative process, as understood in this study, is that which occurs when partners split the work, through previously established agreements among the parties, aiming mainly at the rationing of resources (human, technological and material).

It can be said that the elements that have traditionally shape cooperation in libraries, are present in REDARTE/RJ, since most members strongly agree that their

participation in the Network brings greater possibilities of borrowing documents and receiving donations and facilitates obtaining copies of parts of documents, in addition to optimizing the process of collection development.

However, these actions can be better arranged. Through the disclosure of this intent on the part of the board of REDARTE/RJ, and formalizing, in some way, these actions at the Network, the participants could better understand the process, and knowing their role, could get involved. In addition to being a form of institutional managers also is able to view these products as an additional benefit in participating in the Network.

The need to look more carefully at this issue, in order to better understand the cooperation process at REDART/RJ has become clear by the discrepancy among the responses provided by managers in interviews, and those provided by the respondents of the questionnaire, in relation to participation in cooperative work among members of REDARTE/RJ.

Many respondents diverged about the existence of cooperation among the organizations. However it is made present in the manager's discourse, as well as in the minutes, since they show positive examples of cooperative work, such as the Digital Library, and the development of bibliographies and the Working Groups.

It is evident the need for for strengthening and stimulating the accomplishment of more cooperative work among REDARTE/RJ's participants, highlighting that nowadays the cooperation among libraries is not restricted to the traditional activities concerning the collection development.

5.3 Information Sharing at REDARTE/RJ

Sharing concerns the determination or will for helping another individual, apportioning something one belongs, such as information and experience. It has a more spontaneous character than cooperation, by not having implied division of tasks.

In relation to information sharing at REDARTE/RJ, it is relevant to register that the group does not perceive resistance to sharing new ideas and projects at the Network.

In spite of this, the matter of non-active involvement coming from some institutions should be brought up, and a greater incentive from the Network administration is needed, since among the principles of networking there are participation, colaboration and solidarity.

Since the lack of human resources in the institutions has been pointed out as a cause to little or no participation of a few institutions, it is worth mentioning that the use of tools that enable the long-distance meetings (videoconference or chat conference) would increase the regularity and intensity of participation, increasing sharing and optimizing information flow. The matter of lack of human and also technological resources in institutions could be overcome by REDARTE/RJ by opening the Network to the participation of professionals, who are not part in the Network today, specially the ones from other locations; participation of users, who may add value and contribute with network's activities; further, facilitating a more active participation of some members, promoting, among other things , the expansion of the activities of REDARTE/RJ Working Groups and the accomplishment of projects.

It was considered by respondents that sharing in REDARTE/RJ, provides: increased access to information on art; updating members about the field of information on art; professional updating; and allows forwarding the user to the institution best suited to completion of customer service.

However, since the user of information on art is considered the main focus REDARTE/RJ, nowadays, the information shared should be useful for the improvement of their care in each library or information center. That has not been verified, which requires the procedures be which requires the procedures be reviewed by the organizations, so that the users will be more directly affected by the Network's activities. Therefore, we emphasize the need to carry out an users study.

The poor contribution given by the information shared at REDARTE/RJ towards the decision-making at the institutions also calls attention. The achievement

of treatment of the information provided in this network, aiming at its subsequent retrieval may be seen as a resource to strengthen this aspect.

5.4 Collaboration at REDARTE/RJ

When there is collaboration, the work is carried out together in order to achieve common goals, aiming at the sum of individual knowledge and skills for producing something new or reformulating something which already exists.

We believe this should be a major focus of a network like the REDARTE/RJ: everyone working towards a common goal whether it is the joint problem-solving or the innovation in services and products.

Concerning the collaborative aspects of such as group aid in solving professional issues and problems in their daily tasks are made present at REDARTE/RJ, which justifies its existence and confirms the importance of such a network for information professionals.

In this case, once again the Network could better explore some of the practices and tools of Knowledge Management, as repositories of cases of success or failure fed by the Network's participants, and also, as repositories of suppliers, in which participants themselves would point out the best and worst (giving marks, for example), in a way of helping everyone and strengthening collaboration among the Network's members.

Collaboration at REDARTE/RJ has been considered positive by respondents, considering their contribution for the work as information professionals and for the collaborative work stimuli in the Network's integrating units.

However, it is noticeable that even though participants feel encouraged to exchanging ideas with other units, this takes place almost exclusively during REDARTE/RJ's reunions – the monthly meetings – not being a close relation among the library and information centers. Thus, such attitude should be incited by REDARTE/RJ, aiming at better integration among the participants, with possibility of joint creation of products and services. After all, sharing and collaboration within a

specialized network such as REDARTE/RJ should have the knowledge production as main objective.

5.5 Fulfillment of REDARTE/RJ's purposes

In its bylaws, REDARTE/RJ takes over the following purposes: a) to foster access to the informational items to the public interested in Arts, in any support or electronic means present in each Integrating Unit of RREDARTE/RJ, considering each one's availability; b) to permanently promote together with the users the existence of the other information units part of REDARTE/RJ; c) to promote other institutions and information networks working in the field of Art; d) to offer services and products on information on Art and e) to promote the permanent exchange of professional experiences among the Integrating organizations.

REDARTE/RJ's activities for their purposes' fulfillment have been considered effective by the respondents; although we believe that the approximation with users would allow the support of decisions and better guidance to the group's activities, better serving their needs and demands. Again, here, we highlight the importance of carrying out a study about the users, which could be a subject to future research.

6 FINAL REMARKS

Taking into account the relations established among its members, and based on the definitions of Valera Orol, Garcia Melero and Gonzalez Guitian (1988) and Tomaél (2005b), we can state that, even though keeping the original features of a library network, since there is administrative autonomy, with strong elements that characterize the cooperative work, the REDARTE/RJ is an information network, since it aims at meeting persons or organizations for the information sharing, contributing to products organization and services availability.

We highlight as REDARTE/RJ strengths: trusting environment; sharing initiative, open communication, non-resistance to new ideas and projects, optimization of collection development; aid in solving professional issues;

encouraging participation in external events; openness to participation of external members at meetings; contribution given to professional development regarding the field of information on art; contribution given to development and access to the field of information on art; its importance for improving the performance of information professionals.

We point out some issues to be improved at the Network: promoting spaces for sharing faults and failures; establishing standards, aiming at better communication among the integrating organizations; making practices official and showing policies, such as those referring to cooperation activities, which would allow better integration and involvement of the Network's members; treatment of information, allowing their subsequent retrieval and use; more balance in the involvement of the integrating organizations; minimization of barriers in relation with the use of technology and social web tools; team-working with other professionals, institutions and other information on art networks (external ones); review of activities for the user of information on art to be more directly targeted; strengthening of collaboration and experience exchange among the integrating organizations. Promoting learning and innovation, enabling the provision of new information product and services.

In order to effectively become a social network of knowledge, as defined by Tomaél (2005a, 2008), REDARTE/RJ should work out the aspects mentioned throughout this study regarding informational and organizational culture, gathering strengths, especially in terms of sharing experiences and information, as well as collaboration, including remotely, in a better integration among REDARTE/RJ's participants. There should also be more space for interaction among information professionals external to it and to its users

After all, as verified in this study, REDARTE/RJ performs an important role to the field of information on art, for its users and professionals, as well as its libraries and information centers. This has been taken by the librarian Isabel Ariño Grau as: "My professional life is divided in prior-REDARTE/RJ and after-REDARTE/RJ".

We hope that organizations like this could be multiplied, be improved, and that we see someday the so dreamed and necessary REDARTE nationwide.

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