



PAARL

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2015 PAARL Executive Board



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PAARL is an association of librarians working in academic and research libraries that supports scholarly research and formal education in the tertiary level, and upholds the profession of librarianship in the country. Its principal mission is to articulate the concerns of academic and research librarians and their institutions, and to influence information policy development affecting the future of academic and research libraries.

Editor's Introduction



FE ANGELA M. VERZOSA

Editor

16 January 2016, Manila

This second issue of PAARL Research Journal, a new open access online professional journal in the discipline of library and information science launched last year, is focused on research studies that take into account the extent of their usefulness and relevance in the promotion of librarianship as a profession. In addition to standard research criteria, such as extensiveness of literature review and references, appropriateness of research data/methods, adequacy of data analysis and presentation of findings, and consistency of research findings/conclusions, articles selected for this issue are judged on the basis of innovation and originality, showing high levels of creativity, fresh thinking and innovation in approach. Although not all articles submitted are entirely original research and published for the first time, they all deal with problems facing the profession, locally or worldwide, and create impact, both actual and potential. Surprisingly, many submissions are collaborative research undertakings, which augur well for the research climate in the country, and hopefully, will serve to inspire an increase in research outputs.

For the 2015 issue, our call for submissions yielded ten papers, namely (alphabetically ordered by title):

1. Advancing Library Profession through Regional Cooperation: Opportunities and Challenges for Academic Libraries in the 2015 ASEAN Integration by Sharon Maria S. Esposito-Betan, Jonathan F. Santos, and Audrey G. Anday (UP College of Engineering Libraries, Diliman, Quezon City)

2. Awareness, Acceptance, and Utilization of Benguet State University Open Access Digital Repository by Lauren P. Kipaan (Benguet State University)

3. Effectiveness of Current Awareness Services of the University of the Cordilleras Libraries by Yvonne Canol-Guzman, Beverly B. Chapichap, Ronda P. Bastian, Rodora D. Las Marias, Helen M. Somerbang, Lucyliza T. Umaking, Gloria D. Pacio, Joven D. Dongga-as, Raymond A. Diamnuan, and Judith Sabiano-Allan (University of the Cordilleras, Baguio City)

4. *Embedding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Activities in an Academic Library: Highlights on the Social Aspects of the Human Library* by Joseph M. Yap and Donna Lyn G. Labangon (De La Salle University, Manila)
5. *Getting Ready for RDA: Librarians Attitude, Knowledge and Preparedness* by Nerissa E. Alcarde (University of San Agustin) and Reysa C. Alenzuela, Ph.D. (Iloilo Doctors' College/ Central Philippine University)
6. *In Pursuit of Excellence: A Phenomenological Study on Library Engagement of Senior Dean's Honor List at De La Salle University-Dasmariñas* by Mary Ann Jimenez-Salvador (Aklatang Emilio Aguinaldo-Information Resource Center, De La Salle University – Dasmariñas)
7. *A Phenomenology of Information Technology : Its Demands and Challenges in Managing Academic Libraries* by Ma. Ligaya F. Nera (Assumption College, San Lorenzo Village, Makati City)
8. *The Readiness of South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC) Librarians in the Adoption of the RDA Standards* by Marita G. Valerio (De La Salle University, Manila)
9. *Reference and Information Services in Selected Philippine Academic Libraries: Trends and Future Prospects* by Ana Maria B. Fresnido (De La Salle University, Manila)
10. *Using Delphi Technique in Developing Library Collections, Personnel, Services and Facilities* by Armila Serrato (University of Antique) and Reysa Alenzuela, Ph.D. (Iloilo Doctors' College/ Central Philippine University)

The same team of evaluators who composed the 2014 Committee for the Best Research Award, led by Prof. Corazon M. Nera, former Chair of the Board for Librarians, assisted by Ms. Susan O. Pador and Ruben P. Marasigan, thoroughly reviewed the ten papers, and selected the top five. From the choice list, the top three will vie for the Best Research Award, which shall be announced during the Association's General Assembly in January 2016. This year, authors of the best three winning papers shall receive cash incentives, ranging from P 5,000 to P10,000, and plaques of recognition.

Again alphabetically ordered by title, the top five vying for the 2015 Best Research Award, and included in this second edition of the journal are:

1. *Advancing Library Profession through Regional Cooperation: Opportunities and Challenges for Academic Libraries in the 2015 ASEAN Integration*
2. *Embedding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Activities in an Academic Library: Highlights on the Social Aspects of the Human Library*
3. *In Pursuit of Excellence: A Phenomenological Study on Library Engagement of Senior Dean's Honor List at De La Salle University-Dasmariñas*

4. *The Readiness of South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC) Librarians in the Adoption of the RDA Standards*
5. *Reference and Information Services in Selected Philippine Academic Libraries: Trends and Future Prospects*

Two papers vying for this award, namely *Advancing Library Profession through Regional Cooperation: Opportunities and Challenges for Academic Libraries in the 2015 ASEAN Integration* by Sharon Maria S. Esposito-Betan *et al*, and *Embedding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Activities in an Academic Library: Highlights on the Social Aspects of the Human Library* by Joseph M. Yap and Donna Lyn G. Labangon, were earlier presented at the Congress for Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL XVI), which was held in Bangkok, Thailand last June 10-13, 2015.

PAARL's immediate past President, Sharon Maria S. Esposito-Betan, collaborated with her two colleagues, Jonathan F. Santos and Audrey G. Anday (affiliated with the UP College of Engineering Libraries in Diliman, Quezon City) on this study, which aimed "to provide the librarians' point-of-view on how the ASEAN Economic Community may affect the practice of librarianship in the Philippines."

Joseph M. Yap and Donna Lyn G. Labangon, of De La Salle University-Manila, shared the experiences of the DLSU-Manila Library's program based on the innovative concept adopted worldwide as the "human library", which is "to recruit human books that are sources of real and unfiltered experiences." As a library project launched in 2014, this study aimed to underscore the underlying social aspect and impact of the Human Library, "a new yet very humane model of breaking barriers and promoting understanding between people." The paper shows cases both the experiences and views of human books and their readers as they participate in the event.

Two other research submissions vying for the same award came from De La Salle University-Manila, namely, *The Readiness of South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC) Librarians in the Adoption of the RDA Standards* by Marita G. Valerio, and *Reference and Information Services in Selected Philippine Academic Libraries: Trends and Future Prospects* by Ana B. Fresnido, their current Library Director. The first study examines the readiness of the librarians of the South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC), (which is considered as the oldest academic consortium in the Philippines), in adopting Resource Description and Access (RDA), a new cataloging standard designed for the digital world. The second study yields the result of a survey "to gather information on the current trends and future directions of reference and information services in Philippine academic libraries," in particular, the libraries of the top universities in the country included in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asian University Rankings.

Last but not least, *In Pursuit of Excellence: A Phenomenological Study on Library Engagement of Senior Dean's Honor List at De La Salle University-Dasmariñas* by Mary Ann Jimenez-Salvador of Aklatang Emilio Aguinaldo-Information Resource Center, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, aimed to understand this library engagement as well as the extent of the influence of its services and programs on three senior students from the DLSU-Dasmariñas'

College of Education – Bachelor of Secondary Education program who are vying for academic honors.

However, in departure from the original intention of the inaugural issue, only the best three of the top five research studies were presented at the *5th Marina G. Dayrit Lecture Series* last 23 November 2015, with the overall theme, "Librarians as Researchers: Recognizing Best Researches~ A Colloquium on Philippine Libraries and Librarianship." These were the submissions of Sharon Maria S. Esposito-Betan *et al*, Ana B. Fresno, and Marita G. Valerio.

As we welcome the top five researches selected by the Research Award Committee for the second edition of our professional journal, we are grateful to the authors of the other five for their submission. Their papers will appear in full text in our PAARLWiki, an online open access tool established and maintained by the undersigned as an excellent resource to enable our library community to share resources.

All content posted in the journal will be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial license. Copyright, however, shall remain with the authors, and any material that will appear in the journal may be reused by the authors in any form.

For working with me on this issue, I wish to **thank** my editorial team led by Ms. Angela Maria S. Llantino of Lyceum of the Philippines University Library, for an excellent job of gathering the research submissions, distributing them to the Research Award Committee, and overseeing the production, design, and online publication of the journal.

On behalf of the 2015 Board of Directors of PAARL, led by President Maribel A. Estepa, Director of Libraries of the Technological Institute of the Philippines, I am pleased to submit this second edition of PAARL Research Journal to its growing professional audience of librarians here and abroad. Thank you for giving us another opportunity to provide a welcome medium to promote the research outputs of our colleagues in the field to a wider audience.

Message from the Chair



CORAZON M. NERA
Chair
Best Research Committee
16 January 2016, Manila

A research journal containing articles on Philippine librarianship may be existing in a different name or title, but my idea is one that PAARL will carry on for many years, as likewise shared with Prof. Sharon Maria S. Esposito-Betan, the 2014 PAARL President. That, through her leadership and one of the research advocates in the field of librarianship, and with the expertise of Mrs. Fe Angela M. Verzosa as the appointed Editor-in-Chief, it kick-off successfully in 2014, benefitting its members and all librarians.

With the number of researches the Committee had to review, it can only be interpreted that many information professionals are interested to have their papers published in the research journal, both individually and collaboratively authored. This project is indeed an avenue to inspire librarians in the country and to motivate one's self to create and recreate research ideas and put it into writing, especially now that the Call for Submissions was made open to all library practitioners. At this point, we can say that librarians have initially developed the culture of research, a recognition of the importance of the activity to improve the profession.

To my Best Research Committee members, Prof. Susan O. Pador and Prof. Ruben P. Marasigan, my profound thanks for accepting this challenging task of reviewing and evaluating the submitted papers and selecting the Top 3 Best Researches, for two years.

To the 2015 PAARL Executive Board led by Ms. Maribel Estepa, my sincerest appreciation for supporting and continuing this project. It is my hope that the future set of the Executive Board officers sustains this endeavor for the advancement of academic and research librarianship.

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ADVANCING LIBRARY PROFESSION THROUGH REGIONAL COOPERATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN THE 2015 ASEAN INTEGRATION

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ABSTRACT

Being one of the three key pillars of the ASEAN Integration, the ASEAN Economic Community aims to have a region with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labor, and freer flow of capital by the end of December 2015. Among its eight areas of cooperation, two are likely to affect the practice of librarianship in the region: first, human resource development and capacity building; and second, recognition of professional qualifications. The Philippine government has instituted some changes in the educational landscape in order to adapt to the Integration although many things are still needed to be done. This study aims to provide the librarians' point-of-view on how the ASEAN Economic Community may affect the practice of librarianship in the Philippines. Target population was pre-selected, having considered factors such as experience in regional library cooperation and exposure to the issue at hand. Majority of the survey questions inquire about the respondent's understanding and views regarding certain topics and issues about the ASEAN Integration. Through this, various prospects and opportunities for Filipino librarians were determined, together with the respondent's perceived fears and concerns. Prospects and opportunities identified include resource sharing through regional library networks, improvements in library and information science education and training, research collaboration, development of competencies, and mobility of Filipino librarians. On the other hand, respondents' perceived fears and challenges include rigid competition and job security, shortage of librarians and mutual recognition agreements, cross border mobility and legal provisions on reciprocity, and serious lack of information. Two important factors that Filipino librarians must pursue in line with regional cooperation are the advancement of research in the field of library and information science, as well as the development of librarians' professional competencies.

Keywords: 2015 ASEAN Integration, regional cooperation, academic libraries, Filipino Librarians, librarianship, library competencies

1. INTRODUCTION

2015 ASEAN Integration – this is the current buzzword in the Southeast Asian region. What started as a shared vision among the leaders of the ten nations of the ASEAN is now taking shape. The seed of regional cooperation that was sowed in the past is now taking root, and nobody can stop its growth nor prevent it from happening.

1.1 ASEAN Economic Community

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed in August 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – the five founders. Since then, it has expanded to include Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, making up the current ten Member States of ASEAN (Teh Cheng Guan, 2004; Kurlantzick, 2012). In 1997, during its 30th anniversary, the ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Vision 2020, aiming to transform ASEAN into “a stable, prosperous, and highly competitive region with equitable economic development, and reduced poverty and socio-economic disparities” (ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, 2008). This has become the precursor to the 2003 decision of establishing the ASEAN Community by 2020. And when the Leaders gathered in 2007 for the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu, Philippines, they have decided to accelerate the regional integration by 2015 (ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, 2008).

The stability of the ASEAN Community lies on its three pillars. The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) is committed in building a peaceful, democratic and harmonious ASEAN Community. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) aims to have a region with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labor, and freer flow of capital. And lastly, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community's (ASCC) goal is creating an ASEAN that is people-oriented and socially responsible (Amador & Teodoro, 2014).

The AEC Blueprint (2008) points that by the end of December 2015, the ASEAN economy should have four key characteristics: (1) a single market and production base, which basically means combining the production bases of the ASEAN nations in order to form a single market with no restrictions or additional taxes (Kimura, 2013); (2) a highly competitive economic region, or in other words, an economy that fosters a culture of fair competition; (3) a region of equitable or impartial economic development which is important, given the different levels of development among ASEAN Member Countries; and (4) a region fully integrated into the global economy, making ASEAN a more dynamic and stronger piece of the global supply chain while remaining attractive for foreign investment. It also defined eight specific areas where cooperation should happen. As for librarians, the focus lies on the first two areas: (1) human resource development and capacity building, which is about the education and training of librarians; and (2) recognition of professional qualifications, since the qualifications to practice librarianship in the Philippines is completely different from those in Singapore, Thailand and other ASEAN nations.

The Philippine government has already instituted some changes in the educational landscape in order to adapt to the Integration. Before, six years were usually spent for primary education and four years for secondary, for a total of ten years which is two years lesser than other countries. The change to K-12 curriculum was a necessary move, although it was done relatively late since it was only launched on June 2012 and based on the government's plan, the first batch of K-12 students will be able to finish their undergraduate degree by year 2022 only. That means, there will be a shortage of library school graduates for two years as a result of the K-12 adaptation, and they will not have a level playing field with other ASEAN counterparts for seven years following the 2015 Integration (Abad, 2014). Aside from the K-12, there are also several colleges and universities that have shifted their academic calendar to be parallel with other international schools which will make academic exchanges with foreign educational institutions more feasible. This shift in academic calendar was basically aimed for the 2015 Integration to allow cross-border mobility among people from the academe.

1.2 The Philippine Librarianship Scenario

In order to practice librarianship in the Philippines, one can take Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) as an undergraduate degree and Masters of Library and Information Science (MLIS) as a graduate degree. There is also a Diploma in Librarianship for specialized training. However, having an LIS education is not enough for one to be able to practice the profession. Republic Act No. 9246 or The Philippine Librarianship Act of 2003 requires LIS degree holders to pass the national board examinations for librarians in order to acquire a professional license. In short, one needs to have an LIS degree, pass the exam, and receive license in order to be considered as a professional librarian. Still, even having a professional license to practice the profession is not acknowledged as substitute to the two-year shortage in basic education.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

With the approaching implementation of the ASEAN Integration, this study generally aims to provide a librarian's perspective on the readiness of the libraries of selected major institutions in the country. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

How do librarians view the ASEAN Integration?

What is their level of awareness and readiness regarding the 2015 ASEAN Integration?

What are the possible prospects and opportunities the 2015 ASEAN Integration may bring to Philippine libraries, as perceived by the librarians themselves?

What are the perceived fears of librarians with the implementation of the ASEAN Integration?

What research areas are needed to be strengthened in order to further advance the librarianship profession in the country?

What core competencies are necessary for a 21st century information professional to possess?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the pragmatic approach to research wherein it utilized various methods. A literature review was performed first in order to describe the extent of the materials available on the subject matter.

The target population of the research were pre-determined and were limited to pre-identified libraries with the inclusion of prominent pillars of librarianship who may be, in one way or the other, involved in the ASEAN integration, i.e. library directors, head librarians, former and present members of the PRC Board for Librarians, as well as deans and professors of library and information science in the Philippines.

The instrument used to gather data was an online survey questionnaire comprised of items that would yield both quantitative and qualitative data. Link to the online survey was sent to the target respondents via e-mail. The results are expected to present an overview of what the research hopes to achieve – a more cohesive view of the ASEAN Integration, based on various perspectives of librarians.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Respondents' Profile, Level of Awareness, and Readiness for the Integration

Online survey was sent to thirty target respondents and seventeen (or 60%) accomplished it. Respondents are composed of an active member of the Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians (PRBFL), the Director of the National Library of the Philippines, 4 library directors, 3 university librarians, 1 head librarian, 1 retired librarian (former member of PRBFL), and 6 library science professors (4 of which has served as dean). When asked about their level of awareness regarding the ASEAN Integration, 65% of the respondents answered that they are very much aware, while 23% said that they are quite aware, having some substantial knowledge, and 12% answered that they are aware, having done a little reading (Figure 1). Nobody answered that they are not aware of the topic. Regarding the method on how they found out about the ASEAN Integration, 76% of the respondents learned about it through conferences, seminars and forums, while 71% heard about it from their own colleagues. 47% chose the Internet and 41% chose newspapers (Figure 2). This data show that all the respondents have a certain level of awareness on the issue at hand, as originally intended when they were chosen to answer the survey.

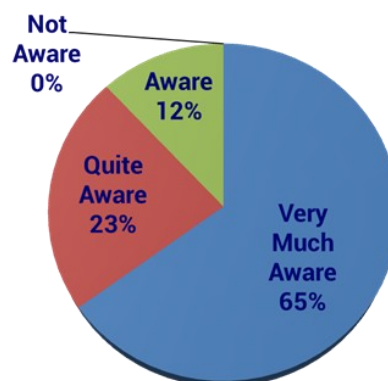


Figure 1: Respondents' Level of Awareness

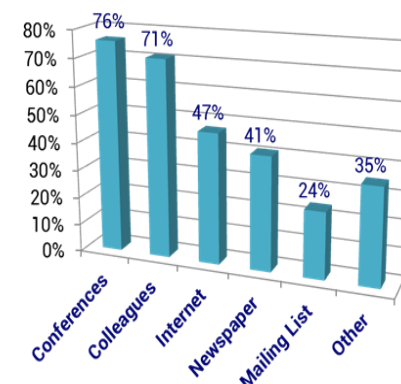


Figure 2: Respondents' Methods in Learning about ASEAN Integration 2015

On the question “Is your library/university open to participate in the ASEAN Integration, such as library cooperation?” almost all of them (83%) answered ‘yes’, 11% answered ‘maybe’, and only 6% answered ‘no’ (Figure 3). However, on the question “Do you think the Philippine libraries are ready for the ASEAN Integration?” the responses are quite divided. 35% answered ‘yes’, 35% answered ‘no’, and 30% answered ‘maybe’ (Figure 4). Based on the answers, it was clearly evident that respondents are very open to participate even though there is doubt whether they are ready or not. This proves that the respondents are aware of the many opportunities ASEAN Integration can bring to the librarians, but at the same time, mindful that there are many things needed to be done in order to gain from those opportunities.

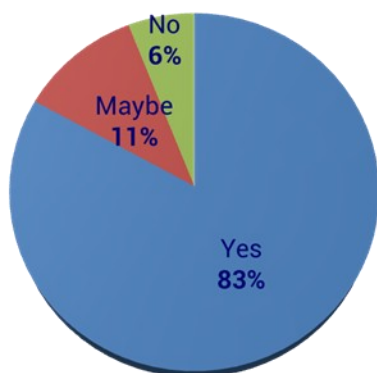


Figure 3: Is your library/university open to participate in the ASEAN Integration, such as library cooperation?

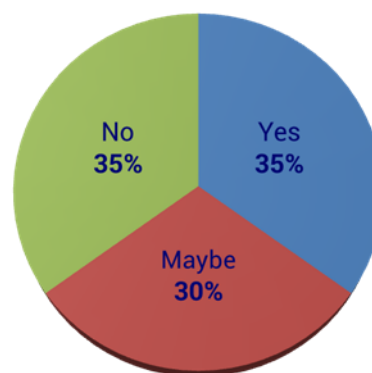


Figure 4: Do you think the Philippine libraries are ready for the ASEAN Integration?

4.2 Perceived Prospects and Opportunities

Regional integration is being conducted because of the many advantages it brings to the member countries. Having a single market requires the removal of taxes and other fiscal barriers, making it ideal for foreign investment by allowing even international companies to operate regionally at ease. Knowing the prospects and opportunities 2015 ASEAN Integration brings to libraries in the Philippines is truly important in order to take advantage of all the benefits that are to come.

4.2.1 Resource Sharing Through Regional Library Networks

The greatest asset of any library lies on the quality of its collection. However, we also know that no library is complete on its own, or there is no library that is self-sufficient. A certain library may be strong in engineering resources. However, it will be difficult if a researcher is comparing the engineering practices in the Philippines from that of Singapore, Malaysia or Thailand, for example. Library cooperation and resource sharing has been the librarians' solution to such problem. In this area, the 2015 Integration opens great opportunity for ASEAN libraries to cooperate and benefit.

Library cooperation and resource sharing is actually not something new for the ASEAN region. In fact, the ASEAN University Network Inter-Library Online (AUNIL) was established since 2002 and currently has twenty-three university library members,

three of which are from the Philippines. It aims to enhance information networking through the sharing of digital scholarly resources and develop an ASEAN virtual university (About AUNILo, 2013). AUNILo is just one of the many networks Philippine libraries are currently engaged in. With the ASEAN Integration to take place by the end of 2015, it is expected that such library linkages and resource sharing programs among various libraries in the ASEAN will greatly increase and improve.

4.2.2 Improvements in LIS Education and Training

Library and Information Science (LIS) professors also saw great opportunities in the field of LIS education and training once the Integration takes place. Many believe that it will empower LIS schools to be globally competitive. One professor mentioned that up to now, the target of the institution has been to produce graduates that are practically prepared to join the profession – meaning, graduates that will pass the licensure exam and are proficient to do the tasks required for a librarian. This is good, but since the target is to hone the skills, the development of theoretical foundations of LIS, which is equally important, is somehow being neglected. In order to become globally competitive, the academe needs to produce more research papers, which will be challenging, but at the same time, beneficial to everyone. With the ASEAN Integration at hand, they are now discussing about ways to solve the issue. This is just the start but it is expected that in the long run, necessary improvements will be done in the curriculum in order to produce graduates that are equipped to practice librarianship not just locally but regionally or even globally.

Another important issue is the shortage of Ph.D. graduates of LIS in the country. Since universities can only offer up to MLIS education, graduate students need to go to other nations in Europe or in the United States if they wish to continue with their education. And since only few can do that, universities could not offer doctorate degrees even if they want to, because of the shortage of faculty members with Ph.D. who are available to teach. This is another issue that can possibly be addressed through the Integration. Once the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for library services was set between the Philippines and other ASEAN countries, it would be possible for the academe to invite Ph.D. graduates in the region to teach in the Philippines and also produce Ph.D. graduates locally.

4.2.3 Research Collaboration

Research collaboration is another field that is expected to have great improvements once the Integration takes place. By shifting the academic calendars of the major universities in the Philippines to be parallel with those of international schools, it shall make faculty exchanges and research collaboration more feasible. Expert archivists from Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore, for example, can easily collaborate and make a research about the restoration of records destroyed by Typhoon Haiyan. They can go to Central Philippines to gather materials, use laboratory facilities in Singapore, and just write their paper by collaborating online. LIS students can also do their practicum and training in Thailand, or universities can even have student exchanges for a semester without delaying the student's program of studies.

4.2.4 Development of Competencies

Making ASEAN a highly competitive region is one of the major goals of the AEC.

And when there is competition, there is also a need to develop competencies or qualifications. In order for competition to run to one's advantage, one should be well equipped and competent. It is the qualifications that give value to professionals and not nationality, religion, social class, educational origins, or 'connections' (Manzala, 2013). The two-year shortage in basic education, requirement of passing the licensure exam, diversity of ASEAN culture and language – all of these can be viewed both positively and negatively. However, in a highly competitive region, one word is weightier than any of these issues, and that is 'competency'. The more skilled a person is, the more advantageous his position will be.

Foreseeing the possible problems the two-year shortage in basic education may bring, the Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians (PRBFL) is already developing alternative ways to catch up. Having an MLIS degree should be viewed not as an advantage now but more as a requirement. In addition, a system for Continuous Professional Development programs was created in order to promote lifelong learning and further develop the skills of practicing librarians. Having a professional license may not add anything to one's competencies, but it should boost one's confidence and image, having passed a rigorous examination. Another huge advantage Filipinos have is the familiarity in speaking and writing in English, which has long been embedded in the education system.

4.2.5 Mobility of Filipino Librarians

Many librarians fear that they will be placed in the disadvantage when reciprocity takes effect. However, upon closer analysis of the qualifications for librarians among other ASEAN countries, we can say that Filipino librarians can actually compete.

In Singapore, minimum qualifications include any undergraduate degree plus an MLS, any undergraduate degree plus a postgraduate diploma in librarianship, or a BLS degree; in addition to the mandatory apprenticeship or training period. This is pretty much similar with the entry level requirements in the Philippines, plus the professional license. For Thailand, these are the requirements for head librarians in government organizations: an MLIS degree and minimum of five years library experience; a BLIS degree and ten-year experience; or any bachelor degree, course training in LIS, and ten-year experience. This is also almost similar to head librarians in the Philippines. For Cambodia, formal library education is not being offered yet. So, few receive their degree in other countries, some attend local workshops or short courses in nearby countries, but most librarians learn 'on the job' (as cited in Labayani, 2014). This proves that Filipino librarians will not really lag behind if ever the Integration takes place now. Instead, it provides them opportunities to work in other ASEAN countries, giving them a wider horizon to practice their skills and further their experience.

4.3 Perceived Fears and Challenges

Many have already predicted that the ASEAN Economic Community will struggle to become a reality and would not be launched by the end of 2015 deadline (Xianbai, 2014). Indeed, there are issues still. And these issues will cause fear unless they get solved.

4.3.1 Rigid Competition and Job Security

The late implementation of the K-12 program resulting to the two-year shortage in basic

education is already a big blow for the Philippines. Having a single market will surely result to rigid competition, and in order to become globally competitive, graduates should be equipped with professional skills and competencies responsive to labor market needs (Abad, 2014). However, for seven years, Filipinos will be competing in an uneven field. By having a workforce that is considered sub-standard and not globally competent, there is fear that joining such level of competition will probably be detrimental. The only way to level the playing field is to catch up – study more, train more, participate more, practice more. However, competition is also good since it brings out the best in people.

4.3.2 The Shortage of Librarians and Mutual Recognition Agreements

The Philippine government released the Skilled Occupational Shortage List (SOSL) on January 2014 which includes occupations experiencing a shortage of skills and could be opened potentially to foreign skilled workers (ABS-CBNnews.com, 2014). Many cried foul since the country is already suffering from a high unemployment rate. Included in the list are licensed librarians. Is there really a shortage of librarians in the country?

There are more or less 188 colleges and universities throughout the country which are known to be offering LIS education. However, only 76 are actively producing graduates from 2009 to 2013 (David, 2014). Based on the licensure exam results from the past three years, there are only 303 passers per year on average, which is only 42% of the total number of people who take the exam. This results to a huge demand for licensed librarians. Philippines have 2,299 colleges and universities; 12,878 secondary schools; 46,404 primary schools; 1,119 public libraries; and an unknown number of special libraries. However, there are only 7,169 librarians who received license. Clearly, there is a shortage of ‘*licensed*’ librarians in the country since there are many graduates who have LIS degrees but could not be considered as professionals because they do not have license. And considering that other ASEAN countries do not require license to practice librarianship, there are people who claim that local librarians are on the disadvantage. The PRBFL maintained that they will still have the upper hand on the entry of foreign professionals in the country. The recognition of professional qualifications is dependent on mutual recognition agreements (MRA) between the Philippines and other ASEAN countries. However, there is no final MRA on library services yet, and until it is established, fear will always present.

4.3.3 Cross Border Mobility and Legal Provisions on Reciprocity

There are actually a number of restrictions in the Philippine Legal Framework regarding the entry and employment of foreign professionals. These provisions are placed in order to safeguard the rights of a Filipino to work on his own country. Article 4 Section 28 of The Philippine Librarianship Act of 2003 is about foreign reciprocity which provides the necessary requirements for foreign nationals to be able to take the licensure exam. Allowing cross border mobility would require repealing or revising such laws. There is also fear that cross border mobility will encourage highly competent Filipino librarians to find greener pastures abroad, which will eventually result to brain drain. Nonetheless, these are only wild assumptions and may not actually happen in reality.

4.3.4 Serious Lack of Information

Another concern is the serious lack of information and media coverage about the Integration. Philippines should actually be well informed since the 2007 ASEAN Summit when the leaders decided to accelerate the integration by 2015 was held in the country. However, both the 2007 Summit, as well as the 2015 Integration suffered minimal newspaper and media coverage, resulting to many Filipinos being uninformed about it. Even the government is rushing and cramming the reforms necessary for the Integration (Geronimo, 2014). The public needs to know and the issues need to be openly addressed in order for any form of fear to die out.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Entering the field of librarianship is a rewarding one, particularly for those who love knowledge, learning, and reading. However, while several personal traits and skills will help one to be better suited overall for a position in the field, there are also numerous skills and competencies that must be studied and advanced in order to succeed in this field. It takes much more to thrive as a librarian than many people realize, and in the light of the ASEAN Integration and other regional cooperation waiting to be unfolded, this study should help give an idea of just what it takes to succeed in this important and constantly evolving field.

Two important areas that Filipino librarians must pursue in line with regional cooperation during the 2015 ASEAN Integration are the advancement of research in the field of library and information science, as well as the development of librarians' professional competencies. Respondents were also asked regarding research areas that should be undertaken in relation to the Integration. 82% of the respondents selected information and communications technology (ICT), while 76% selected library leadership and management, and 71% selected information literacy (Figure 5). More than half of the respondents also selected user services and collection development. It is for the benefit of the profession that the roles librarians play are currently being redefined to not simply focus on the practice of

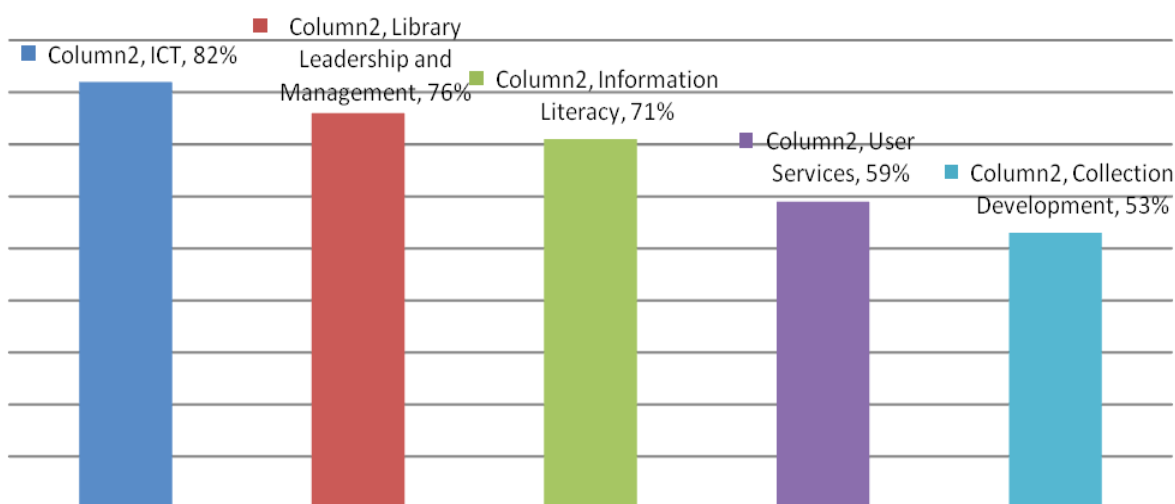


Figure 5: Research areas needed to be undertaken

organizing library resources but also to conduct research in the field of library and information science. Given the many responsibilities a typical librarian already has, imparting a new role as researchers will surely require immense promotion and motivation. Library organizations holding projects and activities to encourage librarians to conduct research studies, such as the Philippine Association of Academic/Research Librarians, Inc. (PAARL) Research Journal, is a big step towards this endeavor.

Also, since professionals were being defined by their competencies, the development of librarians' skills and abilities is a very important factor in the ASEAN Integration. Among the list of competencies of 21st century information specialists provided in the survey, 82% of the respondents have chosen customer service, as well as ethics and values, which are the highest. 76% chose communication, lifelong learning and personal growth, and managing information organizations which are the second highest. Also, 70% chose leadership, managing information services, and managing information tools and services which are the third highest (Table 1).

Table 1: Core competencies necessary for a 21st century information professional

| Competencies | SD | D | N | A | SA | Rank |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|-----------------|
| Customer Service | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 1 st |
| Ethics and values | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 1 st |
| Communication | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 13 | 2 nd |
| Lifelong learning and personal growth | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 2 nd |
| Managing information organizations | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 2 nd |
| Leadership | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 12 | 3 rd |
| Managing information services | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 12 | 3 rd |
| Managing information tools and technologies | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 12 | 3 rd |

On June 26, 2015, the Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians has released Resolution No. 03 Series of 2015 entitled "Prescription, Adoption and Promulgation of a National Competency-based Standards for Filipino Librarians". It lists down all key competencies a librarian should develop and is deemed to be an integral part or component of the Continuing Professional Development of all registered and licensed librarians. But still, it is not everything. Various library organizations around the country have to conduct trainings and seminars that shall hone the competencies of Filipino librarians based on these standards. Also, the librarians, themselves, need to have the initiative to undergo further training in order to improve their qualifications and take advantage of the prospects and opportunities the 2015 ASEAN Integration may bring to Philippine academic libraries.

Despite all the problems and issues that may hound the Philippines in participating in the 2015 ASEAN Integration, Filipino librarians actually have the necessary skills and weapons to overcome the problems and be able to contribute great things to this regional cooperation. Even though there is lacking in terms of preparation, Filipinos will be more than willing to take that rough road and do their best to participate.

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EMBEDDING CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) ACTIVITIES IN AN ACADEMIC LIBRARY: HIGHLIGHTS ON THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE HUMAN LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

One dimension of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the social responsibility. At De La Salle University (DLSU), the Libraries conduct outreach programs that may be considered CSR activities. For instance, the library donates books to the less privileged schools and offers training programs that can be of use to such libraries and its personnel. Recently, the libraries launched its program called the Human Library. The human library provides an innovative way to experience a different kind of reading which encourages understanding by engaging the community to participate and to interact with the "human book." The human library transforms its readers to be sensitive to any form of prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination or bias. Designed to have real humans as "books" to interact with the readers in promoting tolerant individuals, the human library aims to lessen prejudice and to live in a harmonious environment. The human library tries to be socially relevant and adapts a culture of acceptance and tolerance. To ensure that social responsibility is achieved, this event is free for all readers from all walks of life. The main objective of this paper is to share the experiences of the human books as well as the readers of the human library.

Keywords: human library, corporate social responsibility, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are now consciously creating and fulfilling their strategic place in our society by form of extending viable programs to the community. Aside from taking into consideration and exclusively providing the prevailing needs of the academic community they serve, undertaking socially responsible initiatives for the society has been innovatively maximized.

Social responsibility is a dimension of corporate social responsibility (Uddin, 2008). This paper will then highlight the social facet of the recently introduced concept in the Philippine

libraries - the Human Library. Deeply anchored in humanity and respect for individual uniqueness, the Human Library event is seen to bring people together and to enable them to unreservedly communicate and share their views.

Unlike a typical library with books and audiovisual materials to search for, a human library event presents its own set of “human” books that a reader can personally interact with. A human book is a person that is recruited to be a public representative of a particular group who is prepared to share his/her story based on a certain stereotype and/or prejudice.

With the gaining worldwide regard and outstanding recognition of this concept, the said project was pioneered in the Philippines by the De La Salle University. The planning stage commenced from February 2014 to July 2014 - a total of six months. A committee of librarians was formed to set things in motion for this noteworthy endeavor. The first key challenge for the team was the identification of the set of prejudices that is most prevalent to the community. The group surveyed students and faculty members which yielded the top prejudices and bias. The results became the basis for searching the suitable human books for the first session.

After six months of detailed planning - from forming the event committee, drafting guidelines and scouting for human books, the first session of the Human Library was introduced on August 2014. Following its success, the second session was soon held on November 2014.

Being a conscious member of the society, the De La Salle University Libraries have conspicuously recognized the fundamental civic value of libraries as a shared safe place. The value propelled this significant project in the Philippine libraries. Furthermore, as guided by the Lasallian competencies set forth by the institution through “*[forming] critical and creative thinkers, effective communicators, reflective lifelong learners and service driven citizens who are catalysts for social transformation*”, we have capitalized on the rawness of the 'living books' personal experiences which ultimately provided a venue for truthful conversation pieces— making the library an indispensable learning opportunity for everyone.

OBJECTIVES

As a project recently launched in the country, this paper will underscore the underlying social aspect and impact of the Human Library. Highlighting on the main purpose of this program, which is to recruit human books that are sources of real and unfiltered experiences, the paper will try to delve in the societal effects marked by the introduction of a new yet very humane model of breaking barriers and promoting understanding between people.

The paper will showcase both the experiences and views of our human books and readers as they participate in the event. We believe that these real and unfiltered experiences contain prejudices that ordinary readers face every day. As an institution determined to cultivate an image of a sensible and sensitive community of Lasallians towards social issues, the primary information to be shared by these human books to our readers reflects their daily encounter with their self and the society which will help our readers to be open-minded and mindful of the laws of humanity with no pre-judgment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's setting, issues related to social responsibility and sustainability are gaining increased importance, even in the case of academic libraries. The institution's aspiration is now getting more inseparable within the community they operate. Hence, creating a set of programming that highlight their commitment to general issues in the society is now favorably utilized.

As defined by Murillo & Martinek (2009), “corporate social responsibility is a doctrine that promotes expanded social stewardship by businesses and organizations”. It suggests that institutions must increase their sphere of reach to its surrounding neighbourhood. Consequently, it asks the inclusion of stakeholders – from employees to clients and even to the community at large.

An enhanced public image is seen when firms devote themselves to sustainable, societal projects. CSR initiatives may affect the image that the institution is trying to achieve. Forte (2013), attests that “corporate social responsibility provides a crucial element in a corporation’s image and livelihood”. A carefully mapped out CSR plan that genuinely consider its impact in the society can accomplish this goal.

The Business Reference and Services Section (BRASS) Program Planning Committee (2010), also noted that “CSR views the business landscape through a lens that focuses less on profitability and more on the greater good.” Further stressing that, “corporate giving is one of the philanthropic opportunities that a corporation can engage in to promote their social responsibility program”. Doing goodwill for both ends’ progress sake is ideally a brand of responsible commitment to the society that is usually focused on considering the concerns of the community.

Nonetheless, embedding this brand of social responsibility in academic libraries has been in place for quite some time. Evidently, as pointed out by Yap, Dar Juan & Perez (2013), a variety of activities ranging from conducting outreach programs, charity work and community extension sessions were readily provided by some academic institutions in the country. As elaborated by the Business Reference and Services Section (BRASS) Program Planning Committee (2010), “corporate giving, charitable contributions, philanthropic giving, and corporate altruism are just a few of the terms that describe a company financially contributing to an issue or cause expecting nothing, or little, in return”. Utilizing the institution’s resources for these programs is realized to promote and to encourage positive social and environmental change - an initiative that has been going on in the country either as a short term activity or as a long term partnership with the target recipients.

However, the continued accomplishment of CSR initiatives can be attributed to thinking and introducing new ways to the people. Forte (2013) asserted that, for CSR initiatives to thrive, we must fuel it with innovation and creativity.

THE HUMAN LIBRARY

Libraries around the world introduced human library to create a venue where users can find diverse forms of information. The human library serves as a place where ideas can be explored through an open dialogue. Public and academic libraries offer this kind of program to promote the library space and to create an identity that libraries can be a safe place for human interaction and lifelong learning.

The librarians act as the organizers of the event. All kinds of librarians and library personnel are welcome to join and to organize such event.

This is not limited to a specific type of librarian (e.g. reference, cataloger, systems, special collections, etc.).

There is no exact number of human library events being conducted worldwide. The map above captures the places where the human library can be found.

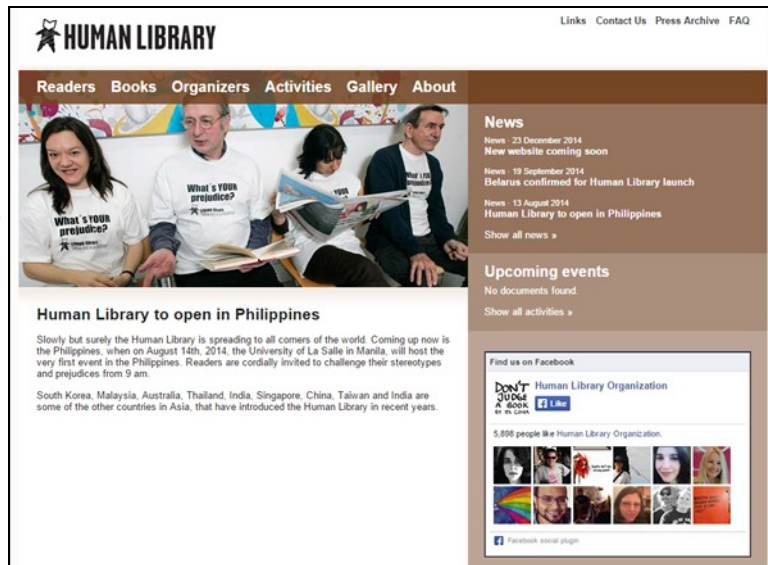


Fig. 1 DLSU hosts the first human library event in the Philippines

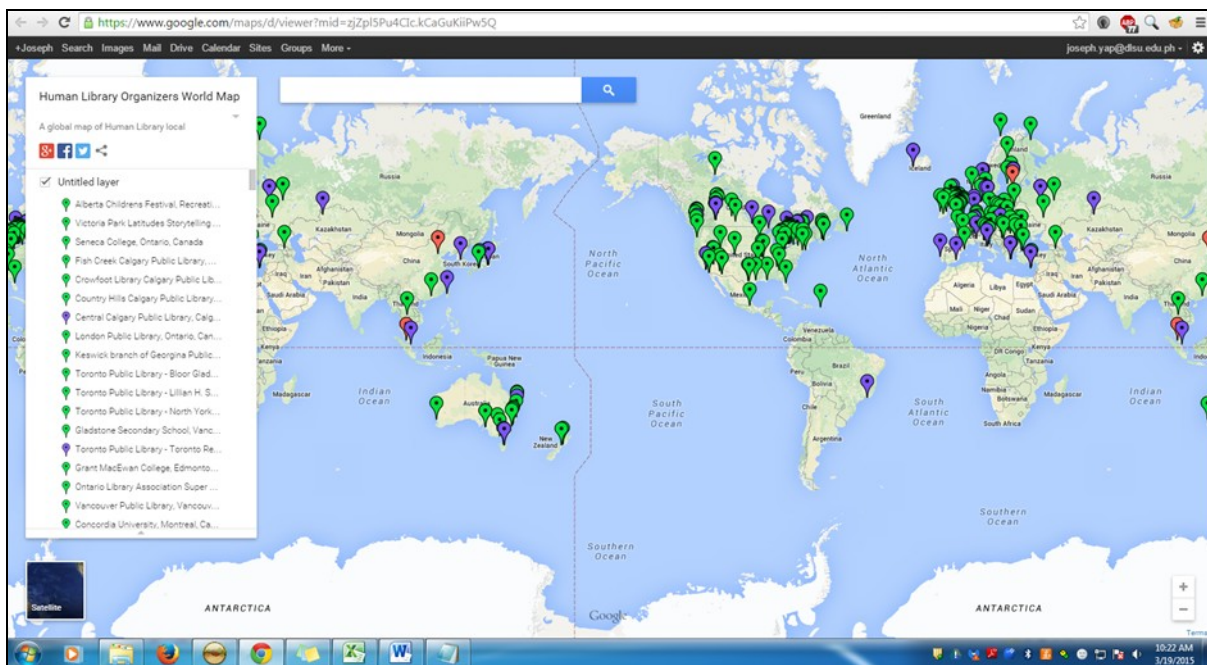


Fig. 2. Human libraries around the world

In the Philippines, the Human Library is a new concept introduced by the De La Salle University. It is an alternative way of learning – a liberating moment for both the reader and the human book. As Watson (2015) described, “the Human Library method [is] a process that aims to rupture and discontinue the construction of distorted understandings of what it means to be human”. Those distorted perceived notions towards other people are the key element in this method. To rid the society of prejudices is a common goal of all human library events.

The Human Library can be traced back when a group of youth from Copenhagen, Denmark decided to initiate a non-government youth movement called “Stop The Violence”. After a friend was brutally stabbed in 1993, the group of Dany Abergel, Asma Mouna, Christoffer Erichsen, Thomas Bertelsen and Ronni Abergel realized the need to raise awareness against violence, particularly with Danish youth. Mr. Leif Skov then encouraged “Stop for Violence” movement to put up activities that would give emphasis against anti-violence during the Roskilde Festival in 2000. Activities were centered on encouraging dialogues and building relations among the visitors of the festival through which the idea of first “Human Library” among Northern Europe’s biggest summer music festival was born (Human Library, 2012).

Today, the Human Library is now held in countries around the world. With its capability to transcend social barriers of discrimination and inequity, it has been progressively being adopted globally. Watson (2015) has further noted that, “the Human Library regards its anti-prejudice method as its means of contributing to the promotion of social cohesion especially in societies that are becoming increasingly pluralistic and are seeking ways of responding to the challenges associated with this phenomenon”. It empowers people to gain understanding and acceptance towards our differences which, if successful, is seen to encourage them towards achieving a common goal in unity.

Operating in the context of academic libraries, no printed books or e-books are used during the event. Instead, a set of interesting human books are introduced. Human books are people that are subjected to stereotyping and prejudices who will present themselves to challenge the bias of other people. However, selecting human books is proven to be somewhat tricky. As reiterated by Watson (2015), those who accept as a Human Book volunteer must be selected carefully to justifiably signify the group they are representing. They should also be properly oriented to prepare themselves in maintaining such intriguing yet sometimes challenging dialogues.

During the session, readers are able to personally ask questions and learn from a different perspective. The dialogue has no structure, making each loan period a unique one. It is important, however, that the readers are appropriately briefed about the activity so as to enable them to find a common ground during the interaction. Garbutt (2008) noted that, “just as living books are courageous in making themselves available to repeated conversations with strangers, readers in living libraries [should] participate with courageous listening that is open to changing one’s opinion.” As a reader of a human library event, one must accept that some views might be hard to acknowledge. A reader should have conditioned oneself that his/her perceptions may perhaps be the exact opposite from the others. Therefore, one must genuinely listen with an open mind.

Having an open mind when participating on such events permits readers to empathize with the person and will require less effort in trying to understand some unfavourable beliefs.

Celebrating diversity is a key aspect of every Human Library. As Kudo et.al(2011) indicated, “the Human Library [acts] as a bridge between people of different backgrounds”. No matter what they believe in, it enables people to freely express their thoughts and experiences; thus, it creates a powerful instrument that cultivates our capability to act on differences.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study involves the human library experience of De La Salle University (DLSU). Since DLSU is the first institution to establish a human library event in the country and there is no other known institution conducting the same concept, it will be difficult for the researchers to conduct a local comparison of libraries doing the same program. Moreover, the identification and comparison of international libraries, wherein the main implementers of the program are reference librarians, are challenging for the researchers. Ample time is required to conduct such research.

METHODOLOGY

This paper will describe the experiences of the human books and readers. Two sessions of the human library were conducted in 2014. The first one occurred in August 14 and followed by a second one in November 18.

A print evaluation form is given to the human books and readers at the end of every session. A total of 18 human books, 10 during the first session and eight (8) during the second session, served as volunteers eagerly supported this activity. A total of 59 readers from all walks of life were present during the two sessions. The sessions are open and free for everyone. There were 11 questions prepared for the human books and 14 questions for the readers. Preliminary questions do not count from the total number of questions and some questions are open-ended to elicit true and honest responses. Answers were transferred into an online survey using Google Forms to organize the data. The online survey forms serve as the warehouse of responses.



Figure.3. Human Library session 1 (August 14, 2014)



Figure 4. Human Library session 2 (Nov. 18, 2014)

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Experiences from the Human Books

Inviting human books to participate in this endeavour takes a lot of time. Organizers have to carefully select them based on scouting or referral. A waiver form with Filipino translation was prepared for them to understand, accept and sign. They were made aware that this activity is for free and there will be no monetary gain. However, a modest transportation allowance shall be given to augment their travel cost. The waiver form specifies the agreement of both parties to conduct the session. It also includes a volunteer agreement where several statements have to be read and understood before the human book takes part in the event.

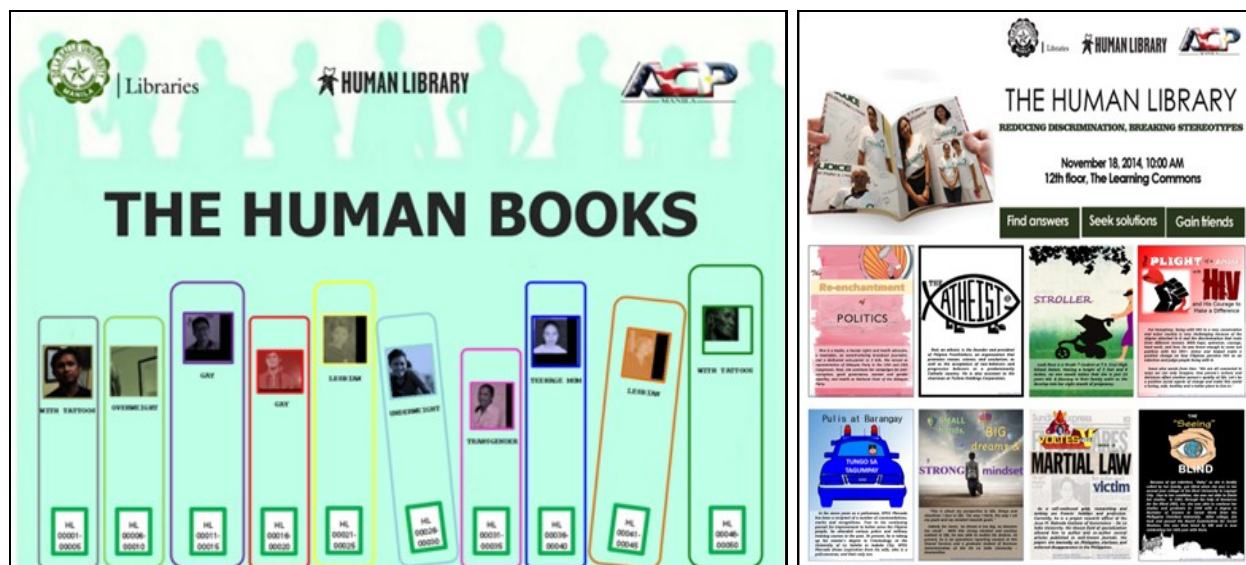


Figure 5. Teasers of the Human Library 1 and 2

A book can accommodate multiple readers at a time. The least number of readers present in one reading were two and the most were nine. Most of the books said that their experience was very

good (72%) and the remainder said it was good (28%). They believed that most of the readers were very keen and interested to learn more about them. Descriptions about the books were published in advance so that readers can take a glimpse of them. 72% said that their descriptions were sufficient while the rest said it was somehow sufficient. All of them agreed (100%) that the support given by the library organizers was fantastic. When it comes to the duration of the working hours (reading moments), 61% said it was very appropriate. Others thought that we need to increase some reading time. Overall, our invited human books would love to join us again in our next human library sessions.

Experiences from the Readers

A reader has to pre-register before the session to reserve a human book. Just like a physical or digital library, human books may be searched using the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). However, the organizers also decided to open the session for walk-in participants. Readers are briefed first before they can interact with human book. One organizer is assigned to provide a short introduction of the event and of the human books.

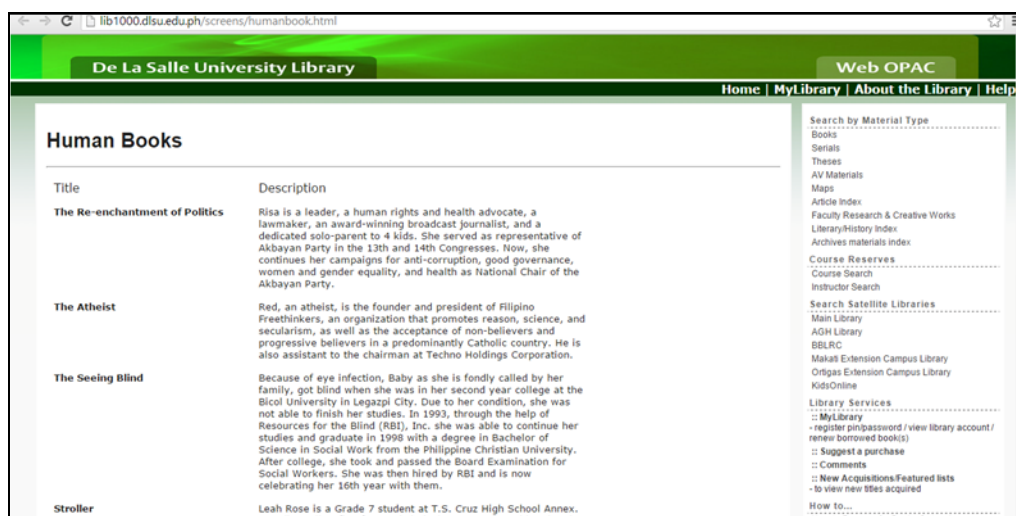


Figure 6. Human Books in the OPAC of De La Salle University

Our sessions were advertised in various forms of media. We coordinated with a radio station, newspaper publishers, and utilized the social media. Posters were circulated within the campus and electronic bulletin boards were also displayed. 54% of the readers learned about the event through their friends while 34% attended because they saw the advertisement via the web, social media or blog. 24% attended because they read the announcement from the HelpDesk of De La Salle University. 20% of the readers saw the posters, 5% glanced it from the newspapers and 2% heard it from the radio.

Since two sessions were already conducted, 10% of them attended both sessions. 90% of them were first-timers. The readers thought that the human library is an excellent (71%) opportunity for them to learn about prejudice and discrimination. 68% agreed that the selection of human books and stereotypes are very sufficient. To date, the 18 human books represent the following stereotypes: With Tattoos (2), Gay (2), Lesbian (2), Transgender, Overweight, Underweight,

Teenage Mother, Politician, Atheist, Blind, Pregnant Teen, Policeman, Person Living with HIV, Midget and Geek.

71% of the readers approved that the duration and appropriateness of reading hours is very appropriate while 25% said that it is somehow appropriate. They were given 45 minutes to have a discussion with their chosen human book.

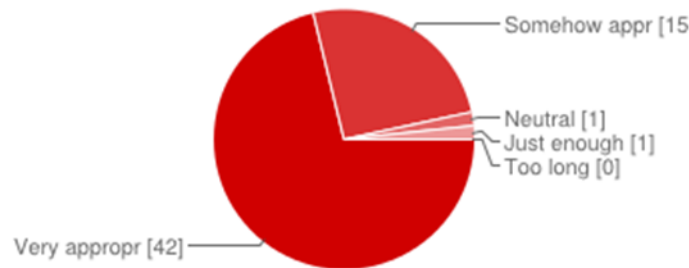


Figure 7. Appropriateness of Reading Hours

Readers were asked about their most important experience while reading books and the following are some excerpts from their responses:

“I was able to learn something from the human book that can’t be found on any other printed [material] in the bookstore and [in] the library.”
“That understanding is [the] key to learning.”
“My prejudice towards the subject decreased because I learned the broad cause and effects...”

Finally, the readers were asked if they will recommend this activity. Surprisingly, 88% were happy about the event and they would love to participate again. Some 12% did not like the idea and would never participate again.

CONCLUSION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be understood as activities that proactively seek to deliver socially-desirable results. This is what the human library is all about. The human library provides an innovative way to experience a different kind of reading which encourages understanding by engaging the community to participate and to interact with the "human book." The human library transforms its readers to be sensitive to any form of prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination or bias.

Albeit the program has just been recently introduced in the country and was conducted inside the academe, it has to be noted that a large number of people are still oblivious to the importance of this event. Given that fact, organizers might consider taking the event to the peripheries. Consequently, living up to the CSRs stretched out goal by extending to a larger community of people.

As an institution promoting lifelong learning, it is an affirmation on our goals when the readers of the human library thought that it is an excellent opportunity for them to learn about prejudice and discrimination.

Aside from getting an interested group of readers on each event, an intriguing set of human books significantly marks the success of each session. This then confronts the committee by ensuring that each prejudice are well represented. With a large pool of people to scout and match, organizers could consider doing this exploration pace with a larger team. Partnership with other academic institutions, local government units and private groups can be explored.

Thus, expanding their network that fosters collaborative efforts in the society. It is good to know, despite the challenge faced, many agreed that the selection of human books and stereotypes are very sufficient for all the sessions held.

Likewise, telling experiences were difficult for some of the human books, but they are willing to share them. Conveying and relieving their often bitter and cruel memories was considered a burden. Nevertheless, it is with their courageous and willing spirit that enables people to identify with their experiences. Human books believed that this is a great academic experience and educational opportunity for the readers to learn about the uniqueness and differences of everyone and to eventually accept each other in order to reduce prejudice and discrimination.

In a world where bigotry and injustice runs rampant, ingenious CSR activities like these are quite indispensable. After all, as Forte (2013) positively stated, socially responsible initiatives fundamentally contribute in attaining an environment with an improved quality of life where people exist harmoniously - a common goal for all CSR plans.

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IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON LIBRARY ENGAGEMENT OF SENIOR DEAN'S HONOR LIST AT DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY-DASMARIÑAS

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study aims to understand the library engagement and to discover the extent of the long influence of services and programs of the Aklatang Emilio Aguinaldo – Information Resource Center, De La Salle University – Dasmariñas on the three senior students from the College of Education – Bachelor of Secondary Education program who are vying for academic honors. Focusing on the students' experiences of using the library, the study utilized qualitative research method and interpretative phenomenological analysis thru the lens of Galing Pinoy/Filipino Excellence model in digging and digesting the rich descriptions taken from unstructured interviews of the three research participants. Four themes emerged from the study including valuing library engagement as a process, valuing library engagement as a collaborative endeavor, valuing library engagement as integral to college life and valuing library engagement as empowerment. As a process, library engagement has to be nurtured thru exposure to books, reading, physical and virtual libraries. As a collaborative endeavor, the library engagement is a product of innate characteristic of a person as a social being who loves to belong and be with others. As integral to college life, the library is likewise seen as important partner in the educative process of teaching and learning. As empowerment, library engagement becomes a means of making meaning out of library experiences by engaging in the Lasallian advocacy of teaching minds, touching hearts, and transforming lives.

Keywords – excellence, library engagement, phenomenology, dean's honor list, academic libraries

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Vince Lombardi (in Browne and Keeley, 2001, p. 4) once said that “the quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to his or her commitment to excellence, regardless of the chosen field of endeavor.” Achieving excellence particularly in higher education makes one “more educated, knowledgeable and persuasive human being”. Brown and Keeley (2001) underscored that almost any college student could be an excellent learner provided he or she have the right attitude and training. Help thru tangible and intangible means are available to motivate and guide him or her toward the goal of becoming not just a complete learner but to become an academic achiever as well.

At De La Salle University –Dasmariñas, every Lasallian graduate is expected to be a passionate about excellence, patriotic and God loving. This means that a Lasallian does not only

possess knowledge and job skills but must exhibit the Lasallian virtues of faith, zeal for work and communion in mission and a strong conviction to share God-given talent for the betterment of the community/world where he or she lives. This Expected Lasallian Graduates Attributes (ELGAs) have been implemented for four years now. Every course syllabus is design toward the attainment of the desired learning goals. The library should likewise be part of this university endeavor.

The library is one of the academic support services available to every college student in a higher education institution. The academic library has a strong impact on the students' learning engagement as noted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER 2009, cited in Weaver, 2013). According to ACER "there's very strong evidence to suggest that students tend to be more engaged with learning, if they engage with library resources, interact with library staff, and spend time using libraries (p. 115)." This observation of ACER is corroborated by other studies on library and information studies correlating the vital role that the academic library plays in the student retention and academic success in colleges and universities (Soria et al, 2013, Weaver, 2013).

Soria, et al. (2013) ascertained that those students who frequently use the library obtained higher grade point average than those non-library user. Also first-year students who used the library at least once during their first semester had higher retention rate. The library workstations (indicating physical presence in the libraries), online databases, electronic resources and books' circulation were identified as among those library resources and services that greatly influenced students' academic achievement.

Similarly, Weaver (2013) reviewed existing literatures on academic library contributions to student transition and success in college. She discovered latest innovations and notable examples of projects, services, and approaches taking place in academic libraries, nationally and internationally. Her study also underscored the library's new role as collaborator with and accountable for student journey lifecycle. Likewise, she identified areas with dearth of resources and those that needed further investigation.

The role of academic library in the experience of students should neither be underestimated nor questioned. As noted by Kuh and Gonyea (2003, p. 256), "the library is the physical manifestation of the core values and activities of academic life."

If the school wants to give a quality service, one indicator would be to provide an effective and efficient library services. And to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of a library, an assessment would be very helpful. Library assessment provides tangible evidence to all library stakeholders about their "real value to the overall educational endeavor" (Pritchard, 1996, p.591). One of the best methods of identifying the benefits of academic libraries in their campuses, as suggested by Soria et al. is to conduct qualitative research which for them "reveals much deeper insights into the meaningfulness of libraries in student's learning and development" (p.162). Thus, this study was born.

This study sought to fill-in the gap as well as to contribute to the existing studies and literatures that document and articulate the value of libraries in academic community. Moreover, in the University's 28 years of existence as Lasallian School, no study has been conducted with regard to student library engagement specifically, those students seeking for academic honors. These students who are included dean's honor list are frequent users of library resources as documented in their library borrowing history. The library has the responsibility, among other school stakeholders, to guide these students in their academic journey and in the achievement of their dreams.

As for my analytical lens, I utilized the "Galing Pinoy or Filipino Excellence" model which is rooted from highest Filipino-Christian value of *pakikipagkapwa*. *Pakikipagkapwa* implies mutual trust, signifying self-giving and commitment. Coined by Joel Maribao, SVD, this framework has reference from his previous works that follow basic human values from basic survival values to more advanced ones. The "four levels of human values include *pagkamakasarili* (physical in nature: to live, *pakikisama* (social in nature: to love, to belong), *pagsasarili* (mental in nature: to learn, to be true to oneself) and *pakikipagkapwa* (spiritual in nature: to leave a legacy, link up globally, to network, to promote and foster communion)" (p.vii). The aim must be the synergism of these four values "to achieve true inner balance of human growth and maturity" (Covey, cited in Maribao, 1997, p. vii). I chose this theory because it complements the DLSU-D's ELGAs and the basic guiding principle of Lasallian Christian education of teaching minds, touching hearts and transforming lives.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to understand the library engagement of the College of Education - Bachelor of Education honor students and to discover the extent of the long-influence of services and programs of the Aklatang Emilio Aguinaldo – Information Resource Center, De La Salle University – Dasmariñas (DLSU-D) with them. It is guided by the question:

1. What is the essence of library experiences to the DLSU-D's senior students who are included in the dean's honor list?, specifically
 - 1.1. What is the image or meaning of the library to these type of learners?
 - 1.2 What are the influences of library to their academic success?
 - 1.3 How do they value the library?

METHODOLOGY

This phenomenological study utilized a qualitative research methodology to investigate the library engagement of DLSU-D's senior students who are included in the dean's honor list. The phenomenological tradition focuses on conscious experience of the person which he or she use to understand the world he or she lives in. This method of inquiry helps uncover the truth behind the library experiences through the consciousness of the experiencer (participants), thus rich descriptions and deeper meaning are drawn to come up with themes on valuing library

engagement.

Using convenient sampling, three fourth year students from the college of education who have been in the dean's honor list were chosen as participants for this study. The list was taken from the Registrar's Office online post. The participants were chosen based on the following: 1) length of stay in campus and considering that by this time they already familiar with the library services and programs; 2) dean's honor list were considered to be part of the study because they have richer library experiences and have already been established library engagement as evident from their borrowing history and library usage.

Consent letters were provided to ensure that the participants knew the aims and purpose of the study as well as the details when and where to conduct the interview. All the interviews were done using two digital recorders, one as original source and the other one as backup copy. The borrowing history of the participants in Destiny Library Manager were checked prior to the interview. The information found served as preliminary topic for discussion in the interview process. The interviews were done for two separate days which lasted for about 30 minutes for each participant. Though guide questions were prepared for first interviewee, the exchange eventually developed into an unstructured interview.

In transcribing the data, assistance were sought. The recordings were reviewed/listened several times to validate and guarantee accuracy of the typewritten transcriptions. Member-checking of the transcription was conducted as well as the constructed data. The transcribing of data lasted for several days but proved to have contained rich details that would give weight to the research. The transcribed materials were kept in a personal netbook for safekeeping.

For the qualitative analytic method, the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was followed. This data coding method was developed by British health psychologist Jonathan Smith and colleagues in the 90s. It comprises eight stage of coding and analysis. These are (Braun and Clarke, 2013, pp. 202-203):

1. Data preparation
2. Reading and familiarization; taking note of items with potential interest.
3. Coding – complete (termed initial noting); focusing on one data item.
4. Developing emergent themes (within the data item).
5. Searching for connections across emergent themes (within the data item) and generating superordinate themes (with emergent themes nested within them). Producing a figurative or tabular representation of analysis.
6. Stages 3-5 repeated with other data items.
7. Identifying themes and superordinate themes across dataset; producing a figurative or tabular representation of analysis.
8. Writing up – finalizing analysis.

Below is the sample coding and analysis:

| Original Data | Exploratory Comments | Emergent Themes |
|--|--|--|
| D.2: ...sa araw-araw po naming lesson o pagkikita, habang bata pa kayo kailangan ma expose kayo sa mga iba't-ibang reading materials hindi lamang dahil gagaling kayo magsalita nang English kung hindi makakatulong din ito sa paglago nyo bilang isang tao..hindi lang naman po sapat yung meron kang experiences, sapat ding yung meron kang kongkretong basehan para may proof ka, may evidences ka, dapat based on facts, knowledge pa din, maam, hindi laging instinct lang, may dahilan, hindi laging opinionated lang. Tapos habang bata sila ma'am ipractice nila yung pagbabasa ... sa mga library. Ang hirap pong i-form... pagmatanda ka na na gustuhin yung isang bagay...tulad namin ma'am maging isang dean's lister ma'am di naman po biro yung pagkamit o pagkuha nun. Malaking tulong yung palabasa ma'am. | <p>Descriptive comments: Library experience could be shared to future students thru the lesson or by exposing them to reading materials. By teaching students to read while they are still young will not only help improve their communication skills but more importantly improve their lives as a person.</p> <p>Linguistic comments: D.2 becomes emotional as she narrates the importance of reading books and other library materials to young people. She also emphasizes the need to have points of references and not always rely on our own understanding.</p> <p>Conceptual comments: Being a good reader could be a means to achieve your goal of becoming successful academically and for you to grow as a person. Again, D.2 highlighted the importance of developing good reading habits at an early age.</p> | <p>Library resources as source of inspiration to daily living.</p> <p>Library as life enhancer or transformer of one's life or life changer</p> <p>Valuing the art of reading as vital ingredient to academic success.</p> |

The first column contains verbatim transcription of the interview. The second column comprises brief comments of the researcher based on the original data. It is divided into three categories: 1) descriptive comments which talk about the lived experiences of the participants; 2) linguistic comments highlight the language utilized by the participant and how he or she use it to communicate his or her experience; and the 3) conceptual comments are the interpretation of the researcher of the participant's experience. The last column covers emergent themes developed from the original data and exploratory comments.

Limitations

The limitations of the study include time, sample size, the number of college involved and my personal biases.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Four themes emerged from the study. These four themes are 1) valuing library engagement as a process, 2) valuing library engagement as a collaborative endeavor, 3) valuing library engagement as integral to college life, and 5) valuing library engagement as empowerment. These themes enrich understanding of the library engagement of DLSU-D's senior students who are included in the dean's honor list. Likewise, they gave the researcher a clear picture on how these type of learners view, give meaning and value the library.

The three participants for this study are given codes to protect their identity as the rule of thumb for qualitative type of research. All of them are senior graduating students from the College of Education under the Bachelor of Secondary Education program.

First participant is D.1, BSE, major in English has a record of 704 books borrowed for the last four years, 142 last year and 47 in the current year. The next participant is D.2, BSE major in Social Science, borrowed a total of 241 books for the last four years, 165 last year and 38 this year. The third and last participant is D.3, BSE major in Mathematics with a total loan of 412 books for the last four years, 160 last year and 146 in the present year. D.2 and D.3 belong to the same block (4-2) while D.1 belong to section 4-1. Both D.1 and D.2 served as library student assistants as SPREAD scholars. As block mates, D.2 and D.3 are also friends and accompany each other in the library more often.

The abovementioned data manifest that indeed the three participants have significant exposure to the library for the past four years of their college life.

Valuing library engagement as a process

Pagkamakasari is the first level of human values which reflected in such Filipino values as “ability to survive”. It is concerned primarily with “physical satisfaction or basic needs” (Maribao, 1997, p.1). In valuing library engagement as a process, *pagkamakasari* means establishing building blocks so that one could survive and flourish in the knowledge society. To survive and flourish in the knowledge society one has to start early in life and continuously nurture it through time. This is the principle behind the library engagement as a process.

Library engagement is shaped by time and most likely influenced by various phenomena. The home environment is considered the most influential. According to Yiping (2011) exposure to books and reading materials at home has an affirmative impact on children’s school experience. D.3’s family including his relatives inspired him to become a library oriented person. Their love for keeping books and reading materials motivates him to become wide reader as well, the same with D.1. All my three participants agree that exposure to library materials and reading have positive effects on their learning and outlook in life. This belief is supported by the study of Michele Lonsdale (2003, p.1) who disclosed that “a print-rich environment leads to more reading, and free voluntary reading is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary growth, spelling and grammatical ability, and writing style.”

Other than the having library materials at home, exposure to physical library at a young age is likewise important in establishing library engagement. This study found out that a person with strong library engagement could have a better chance to be good at his or her study. The positive correlation between school libraries and student achievement has proven to be true as what discovered by ACER (Lonsdale, 2003) from its review of literature on the subject. It was also revealed in the research findings that indeed libraries can bring difference to student academic life such as strong “self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regard to their own learning” (p.1).

When love for library is properly nurtured from elementary to high school, this will become a habit in higher education. This is exactly what happened to D.3 on his first day in the university. It's so natural for him to find the library as his nest where he could stay and study which soon he identified as his second home. D.3 associated library with nest and home. A nest as defined by is temporary shelter for young animals where they were born and nurture by their parents to prepare them for the larger world. The same with D.3 who is about to explore his academic world. He chose the library to be his temporary shelter while learning the rigorous of academic life to prepare him for the world of work. At the same time he found the library as his second home where he felt secured, comfortable and at home, similar with being part of a family.

Another influential element to library engagement is the library assistantship program. It is advantageous because it helps the student assistant to be familiar with the organization and location of library resources, facilities and rules and regulations. Also, instant access and first-hand knowledge with regard to new collections are provided. These they could share with their friends and professors as experienced by D.1 and D.2.

Though exposure to different types of libraries could be a building block to library engagement, proper orientation is likewise necessary to avoid developing library phobia. In sharing of her library experience in the grade school, D.2 said that she was too afraid to go to the library because she can't recognized the place as a library since it is also doubled as the guidance office, she says,

“library ...parang nakakatakot puntahan nung time na yun, bata pa kami wala pa kaming proper orientation kung ano ba talaga yung pupuntahan mo dun, mukha talaga syang hindi library, pang-guidance office sya, kakabit nung guidance office.”

Therefore, any new library user as early as grade school must be given proper library orientation not only to make him or her knowledgeable about the library collection, services and facilities but to make the library experience more meaningful.

Valuing library engagement as a collaborative endeavor

According to the famous philosopher Aristotle, human beings are “social animals” who by nature loves to be with others. This is the essence of *pakikisama*. This human desire for companionship aims “to build and maintain an intimate or close social relationship” (Cohen, 2010, p. 1), for “convenience” (Baruch Spinoza, as cited by Cohen, p.1.)The same principle applies to library engagement as a collaborative endeavor. The library is more than just a physical space to store information but it is about “people and learning” (Demas, 2005as cited by Turner, Welch and Reynolds, 2013, p. 228). The concept of the library as learning space is the subject of the study of Turner, Welch and Reynolds who associate the new image of the library as “makerspaces”. As “makerspaces,” the library becomes “collaborative learning environments where people come together to share materials and learn new skills. Makerspaces are not defined by a specific set of materials or spaces, but rather a mindset of community partnerships, collaboration, and creation” (Turner, Welch and Reynolds, 2013, p.226).

As a human space, the library is composed of teachers, librarians, students and other people. These thespians of the library are working, communicating and collaborating together to have a meaningful learning experiences (Juceviciene & Tautkeviciene, 2002). Students value their library experiences thru engaging positively with library personnel. Personnel who are good at *pakikisama*, one who provides efficient library services, those who are courteous, approachable, accommodating and willing to extend his or her time, the one who builds relationship and ties friendship, are being appreciated and respected by library clientele such as those students who are part of this study. This result is supported by previous research that shows that friendliness and openness of library personnel can result in increased user satisfaction (Zhong and Alexander, 2007). This premise is likewise supported by the “academic and social integration theory” (Tinto, as cited by Zhong and Alexander, p. 146). But more than this, library personnel could also be a role model to observant library users like D.2.

As a social space, the library is seen as conducive place and a friendship nook where students can build and strengthen camaraderie, while studying and learning at the same time as shared by the participants of this paper. The notion of the library as social space is supported by the social constructivist learning theories which pronounce that “the most significant learning takes place when individuals participate in social learning activities” (Matthews, Andrews, and Adamsas cited by Turner, Welch and Reynolds, p12). Also, the library as a place for socialization was formed by Ingua (2013) from her qualitative study entitled “What is Library?: a meaning constructed by UPLB science major students.”

Valuing library engagement as integral to college life

Pagsasarili or independence/self-actualization, is relative to Filipino values of “*kasarinlan*, *lakas-loob*, hard work and industry, and *pagkabayani*...this opens up the individual to engage truly in a dialogue of life”(Maribao, 1997, p.33-34). *Pagsasarili* is about “taking initiative and responsibility for one’s decisions and actions” (p.33). At this level, one realizes and appreciates the vital role that the library plays in academic life. Zhong and Alexander (2007) corroborated this responsibility of the library as “to facilitate students’ education, providing services, programs, and resources by assisting them to become more effective and efficient in their academic career—to succeed academically” (p.141).

This study opened the many facets that the library could bring in the student’s life. Participants see the value of the library as a credible source of information, both print and online, as comfortable and conducive space for learning and recreation, enriches vocabulary, improves learning strategies, as a cultural space, abode for the creative soul, incubator of knowledge, and complimentary to classroom instruction, among others. It helps them become critical thinker and independent learner as well. Also, this study affirmed that indeed library is influential on the student’s college success especially those who are pursuing for academic excellence. In fact, the participants to this research are all thankful for making the library part of their lives. They admitted that without it they would not be part of the Dean’s Honor list. D.2 proudly expressed her gratitude for the big contribution of the library in her academic success. According to D.1 whether they like it or not they will most likely use the library to fulfill their college research requirements. D.3 sees the library as his ally in learning, his “nest” and “home” as they are being honed for the world of professional work. Many studies validated the result of

the findings that truly academic library has direct and positive impact to academic success (Zhong and Alexander, 2007; Wong and Webb, 2010; Weaver, 2013). Becoming successful academically may also be attributed to a student capability to develop independent learning, hard work, industry and perseverance. Libraries effect to strengthen student self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in their own learning is affirmed by Lonsdale (2003).

Valuing library engagement as empowerment

Pakikipagkapwa, “in Christian sense refers to dialogue of life and is therefore mission” (Maribao, 2007, p. 65). It “means to care for, compassion and solidarity with the poor (p. 66).” It is about empowering an individual “to exert control and influence over decisions that affect one’s life by valuing goals, aims and strategies for implementing change” (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43). As mentioned earlier, one of the aims of academic library thru its information literacy (IL) program is the development of lifelong learner who embodies self-confidence, with sense of teamwork, innovative and creative and with strong communication skills. This empowered individual is well prepared when he finally immerse to the world of work. In this study, it was found out the library engagement can be a sourced of empowerment. The library engagement as empowerment has three subthemes: valuing library as source of enlightenment/wisdom, as life changer, and as a source of inspiration.

The library is more than a source of information but a source of wisdom. Knowledge gained from library resources could be applied to personal life as shared by all the participants. After reading researches on Dasmariñas City, D.1 had a better understanding of the place he lives in while D.2 searches for insights that she could apply or reflect in her life for every fiction book that she reads.

To enlighten their future students about the importance of the library, all of the participants, as future educators express their desire to become inspiration to their students by sharing their library experiences and how the library engagement becomes a life changer. Valuing books and reading as a source of empowerment should be shared to as young as elementary pupil. This is the mission that D.2 wants to fulfill as future educator. More than strengthening communication skills in English language, she wants her students to enlighten how reading can contribute to one’s growth and as secret recipe for success. On the other hand, D.1 undertaking is to explain to his students the difference between having immersion with physical library versus the World Wide Web. More than getting credible information but how it “upgrade” his life as a person.

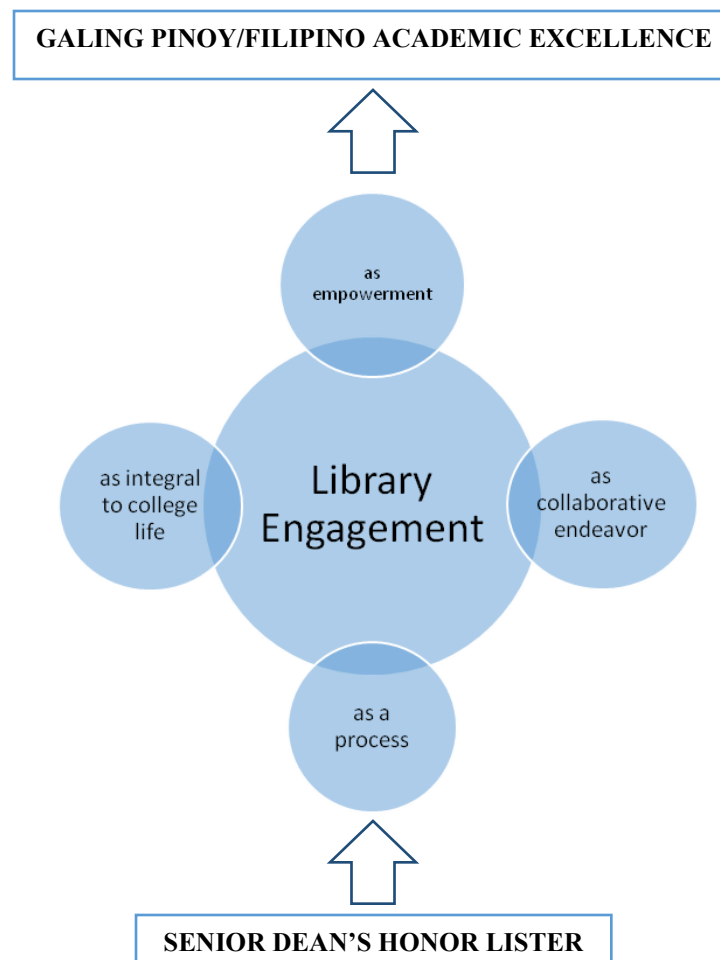
Library engagement as empowerment means how one makes meaning out of the library experiences by engaging in teaching minds, touching hearts, and transforming lives. This is the true essence of *pakikipagkapwa* as fruit of library engagement. In the words of Maribao, “*pakikipagkapwa*” is “*galing Pinoy* par excellence” (1997, p.iv)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the lived experiences of the three DLSU-D senior students who are in the Dean's Honor list from the College of Education, Bachelor of Secondary Education program, the following notions were unearthed from the interview transcripts:

1. Library engagement is seen as a process that has to be nurtured through time.
2. Library engagement as a collaborative endeavor is a product of innate characteristic of a person as a social being.
3. Library engagement as an integral to college life is seen as how the library serves as important partner in the educative process of teaching and learning.
4. Library engagement as empowerment means how one makes meaning out of the library experiences by engaging in teaching minds, touching hearts, and transforming lives. Thus, realizing the Lasallian educational philosophy and Expected Lasallian Graduate Attributes of Excellence, God loving and patriotism.

The synergism of these four themes is depicted in the following illustration:



Recommendations

To make the student's library experiences more meaningful the researcher is proposing the following recommendations as noted from the interview transcripts:

- Provide orientation to novice library user about the library and new library services and programs.
- Intensify marketing strategies of library resources and services especially those underutilized by the participants such as IPAD, preview area, among others.
- Create library programs and design learning spaces that will answer the needs of different library users especially those running for academic honors.
- Involve library users in developing creative and innovative library programs (for instance, re-activate Friends of the Library or Book Lover's Club); student representative in the University and Collegiate Library Development Committee, among others.

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THE READINESS OF SOUTH MANILA EDUCATIONAL CONSORTIUM (SMEC) LIBRARIANS IN THE ADOPTION OF THE RDA STANDARDS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the readiness of South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC) librarians in adopting Resource Description and Access (RDA), a new cataloging standard, designed for the digital world. The data needed were gathered through an online survey questionnaire that was sent and answered by the SMEC librarians. The study reveals that SMEC librarians are aware of RDA and the Philippine Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians (PPRBL) Resolution prescribing the use of RDA. Majority of them have no problems in implementing RDA except for the need for more trainings as gleaned through their perceived inadequacy and minimum level of competency in adopting RDA to their respective libraries. In view of the fact that all are willing to attend further RDA trainings to help them adopt the RDA standard, this study recommends a proposed training plan to be conducted in the near future.

Keywords: RDA, Resource Description and Access, Cataloging, SMEC, South Manila Educational Consortium

INTRODUCTION

Resource Description and Access (RDA) is the new cataloging standard replacing Anglo American Cataloging Rules 2 (AACR2) and was published in 2010 (OCLC, 2015). It is a new cataloging standard, designed for the digital world. On March 31, 2013, the Library of Congress (LC) has fully implemented RDA standard in cataloging. That early, World Catalog (WORLDCAT), a union catalog that itemizes the collections of 72,000 libraries in 170 countries and territories that participate in the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) global cooperative, already contains RDA records.

With these developments, several studies abroad have been conducted to assess the readiness of catalogers in adopting RDA. One of which is the study done by Lambert, R., Panchyshyn, S. & McCutcheon, S. (2013) which examined the current state of knowledge about RDA among Ohio public library catalogers. Said study found out that although a majority of catalogers know about RDA, their working knowledge about it is still minimal. Thus, they proposed that further training and education opportunities for Ohio catalogers be carried out and recommended that a similar research be conducted to determine if this lack of knowledge of the new descriptive standard among public library catalogers is a national challenge.

In Northern Ohio Technical Services Librarians (NOTSL) Spring 2012 Meeting, Chris Oliver of McGill University shared a scenario outlining RDA's early stages of development until 2013. Included in her presentation was the program for cooperative cataloging task groups for a coordinated implementation.

The National Library Board (NLB) of Singapore decided to implement RDA in May 2012, and targeted its execution on April 1, 2013. To do this, they customized and packaged training programs to suit the specific needs of NLB staff which was largely based on the Library of Congress' training materials. In addition, they made local decisions needed before the implementation process which was communicated to a user group and obtained feedback from them. According to Choia, K., Yusofa, H. & Ibrahim, F. (2014), as RDA is still a work in progress, where more effort is required to take RDA to the next level of NLB's future plans.

Locally, a study published online in 2014 was conducted by A. P. Acedera, titled *"Are Philippine Librarians Ready for Resource Description and Access (RDA)--The Mindanao Experience."* Findings of the study revealed that majority of librarians are aware of the Philippine Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians' (PRBFL) prescription to adopt RDA in libraries and that librarians who received RDA trainings perceived that the training they got was adequate and were more comfortable with the use of RDA compared to those who received little or no training at all. However, it was also found out that most Mindanao libraries do not have access to the RDA Toolkit.

In adherence to the PRBFL's prescription to adopt RDA in Philippine Libraries, the Philippine Association of Academic/Research (PAARL) Librarians, in cooperation with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) – National Committee on Library and Information Services (NCLIS), conducted a "National Training-Workshop on Resource Description and Access (RDA)" on August 30-31, 2012 in De La Salle-College of St. Benilde, Manila to provide participants with a better understanding of the adoption of RDA in cataloging different types of library materials. This was followed by a training workshop for the Filipino RDA trainers conducted by Dr. Barbara Tillet, Chair of the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA, on April 3-5, 2013 at the Learning Commons, De La Salle University, Manila attended by 54 selected librarians, catalogers, and teachers of Cataloging courses coming from major cities/provinces/regions in the country. Participants who have successfully completed the trainer's training signed a memorandum of understanding committing themselves to cascade RDA training in their respective institutions/regions. As a result, in years 2013 and 2014, a series and public consultations and RDA trainings were conducted nationwide by the members of the National Committee on Resource Description and Access (NCRDA) to prepare Filipino librarians in adopting the new cataloging standard. The series of national and regional public consultations and trainings held were the following: 22-24 April 2013, Davao City; 15-17 May 2013, Cavite; 26-28 June 2013, Cebu; 27-28 March 2014, UST, Manila; 29-30 May 2014, University of St. La Salle, Bacolod; 26-27 June 2014, Baguio City; and 27-29 August 2014, General Santos City.

Henceforth, the Cataloging Policy Statement for Philippine Libraries proposed by a pool of RDA trainers is now made available in print for active members of the Philippine Association of Academic/Research (PAARL) librarians.

The NCRDA was organized through the effort of the National Library of the Philippines. It is composed of six member institutions who are recognized experts in the country in the area of cataloging and classification. Three of the six member institutions (namely, De La Salle University, Lyceum of the Philippines University, and Philippine Normal University) form part of the South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC), (formerly known as the South Manila Inter-Institutional Consortium (SMIIC), which is a group of higher education institutions in the southern portion of Manila. Together with nine other member institutions (namely, Adamson University, De La Salle-College of St. Benilde, Emilio Aguinaldo College, Philippine Christian University, Philippine Women's University, Sta. Isabel College, St. Paul College, Manila, St. Scholastica's College, Manila and the University of the Philippines-Manila), the consortium aims to collaborate actively to effect social transformation by promoting the cause of education and by making quality and relevant learning accessible to as many as possible.

SMEC members, being among the frontrunners of RDA in the country, offered a seminar-workshop in RDA on February 27, 2015, which was attended by librarians coming from the consortium's member institutions. Prior to this, two of its members, the Philippine Normal University and Adamson University, received separate RDA trainings from one of the committee members of NCRDA as part of their respective institutions' staff development programs in 2014.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

After almost a year of attending RDA trainings, SMEC librarians are expected to have acquired the readiness to implement RDA. This study endeavored to provide a preliminary picture of the readiness and current state of knowledge about RDA and the progress of its implementation among the catalogers and librarians of the South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC).

It specifically attempted to find out the following:

1. The awareness and acceptability of the SMEC catalogers, librarians and administrators in adopting RDA;
2. The factors that might hinder/hindered them from implementing changes in cataloging practices brought about by RDA;
3. The number and adequacy of RDA trainings received;
4. The level of competency of catalogers who have acquired the necessary trainings; and
5. The willingness of SMEC catalogers to undergo further training and join/participate in the SMEC RDA implementation plan.

METHODOLOGY

It was established in this study that not all of the respondents were catalogers, hence the term librarians as respondents is inclusively being used in discussing the results.

Survey Instrument

An online survey questionnaire was devised, where some questions have similarity with that of A. P. Acedera's study. This was then validated through the help of selected catalogers who were involved or who possess knowledge in the use of RDA. The questionnaire was divided in five parts—part 1 (2 items) were related to the respondents' demographics; part 2 (3 items) pertained to the awareness and acceptability of the SMEC catalogers, librarians and administrators in adopting RDA; part 3 (1 item with 7 sub items) pertained to the factors that might hinder/hindered them from implementing changes in cataloging practices brought about by RDA; part 4 (12 items) were questions pertaining to the SMEC librarians' plans and preparedness of RDA implementation which included number and adequacy of RDA trainings received and the level of competency of catalogers who have acquired the necessary trainings; and part 5 (2 items) were related to the willingness of SMEC catalogers to undergo further training and join/participate in the SMEC RDA implementation plan

The online survey questionnaire was sent among the catalogers/librarians of the South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC). It was posted from May 2015 until July 30, 2015. The SMEC Directory was used to identify contact details (e-mail, FB accounts, and telephone numbers) of the target librarians who participated in the online survey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Demographics

Profile of Respondents by Designation

The respondents' professional positions indicated that most of them were cataloging and professional librarians (heads and librarians with different designations). There were eight (8 respondents or 29.60%) catalogers, sixteen (16 respondents or 59.30%), librarians (including college and head librarians), one (1 respondent or 3.70%) acquisitions and systems librarian, one (1 respondent or 3.70%) periodicals librarian and one (1 respondent or 3.70%) reference and media librarian. See Table 1.

Table 1
Profile of Respondents by Title Designation

| Librarians' Positions/Designations | Number | Percentage |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Catalogers | 8 | 29.60% |
| Librarians (Including College and Head Librarians) | 16 | 59.30% |
| Acquisitions and Systems Librarian | 1 | 3.70% |
| Periodicals Librarian | 1 | 3.70% |
| Reference and Media Librarian | 1 | 3.70% |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100% |

Profile of Respondents by Level of Formal Education

Ten (10) of the respondents were Bachelor's degree holders in Library Science, fifteen (15) or more than half were Master's degree holders, one (1) had a certificate degree while another one (1) was about to complete her/his Doctorate degree.

Profile of Respondents by Names of Institutions

The online survey questionnaire was disseminated to the heads and librarians of the SMEC member institutions. Out of the twelve (12) member institutions, ten (10) institutions, corresponding to 27 respondents, participated in the online survey, namely: Adamson University (1 respondent or 3.70%); De La Salle University (9 respondents or 33.33%); De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (2 respondents or 7.42%); Emilio Aguinaldo College (1 respondent or 3.70%); Lyceum of the Philippines University (2 respondents or 7.42%); Philippine Women's University (3 respondents or 11.11%); St. Paul College, Manila (1 respondent or 3.70%); St. Scholastica's College, Manila (1 respondent or 3.70%); Santa Isabel College (1 respondent or 3.70%); and the University of the Philippines-Manila (6 respondents or 22.22%). See Table 2.

Both the Philippine Christian University and Philippine Normal University-Manila did not join the survey.

Table 2
Profile of Respondents by Names of Institutions

| Names of Institutions | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Adamson University | 1 | 3.70% |
| De La Salle University | 9 | 33.33% |
| De La Salle-College of St. Benilde | 2 | 7.42% |
| Emilio Aguinaldo College | 1 | 3.70% |
| Lyceum of the Philippines University | 2 | 7.42% |
| Philippine Women's University | 3 | 11.11% |
| St. Paul College-Manila | 1 | 3.70% |
| St. Scholastica's College | 1 | 3.70% |
| Santa Isabel College | 1 | 3.70% |
| University of the Philippines-Manila | 6 | 22.22% |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100% |

Librarians', Administrators' and Institutions' Awareness and Acceptability of RDA Implementation

All of the 27 respondents or 100% of the surveyed librarians are aware of the of the Philippine Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians (PPRBL) Resolution No. 4 prescribing and adopting the International Cataloging Principles and Resource Description and Access (RDA) as technical standards in bibliographic description approved by Professional Regulation Commission.

Similarly, almost all of them indicated that their institutions are aware that Resource Description and Access (RDA) is now the new technical standards in bibliographic description. However, one respondent indicated that his/her institution was not aware of RDA yet.

When asked if they are in favor attending RDA trainings as this is already part of the continuing professional education (CPE) of registered and licensed librarians, all of the respondents responded positively. Moreover, since SMEC librarians are already aware of RDA and its advantages both for the users and catalogers in the present and future needs of bibliographic description particularly in providing the best access of users for the multiple resources available in the library, RDA is a positive welcome among them. This can be related to what the Follet Company Software remarks as to the benefits of RDA, where the user also comes first in the International Cataloguing Principles, with the first principle being “convenience of the user.” RDA provides guidelines for cataloging by indicating what data to record in the bibliographic record to assist the user in finding the resources they seek, thus meeting the FRBR user tasks as well as the first International Cataloging Principle (Yurczyk, J.,2013).

Majority or twenty five(25), 92.6% respondents answered that their institutions are in favor of using RDA. The fact that their institutions and administrators are aware of the innovations and trends in the activities of the library particularly in cataloging the resources, it was undoubtedly reasonable that their administrators are accepting the use of RDA in their respective libraries.

Similarly, majority or (25), 92.6% of them were also encouraged by their administrators to attend RDA trainings.

Since three institutions, namely, De La Salle University, Lyceum of the Philippines University, and Philippine Normal University form part of the South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC) and are also members of National Committee on Resource Description and Access (NCRDA), it was clear that most of the librarians from these institutions were encouraged by their administrators to attend said trainings.

Factors That Might Hinder Librarians From Implementing RDA

Based on the results of the study, majority of the respondents have no problems in implementing RDA. It was clear that the respondents are ready to accept RDA as the new cataloging standard replacing Anglo American Cataloging Rules 2 (AACR2). In fact, a number of them have already acquired/purchased the RDA Toolkit. Evidently, there were also no problems in their institutions' infrastructures, like Internet connection as well as their Library Information systems since their Online Public Access (OPAC) and /or library databases are RDA compliant. Undoubtedly, there were also no problems concerning their library personnel as many of them are interested to attend trainings and are willing to adapt changes in their respective institutions. There were also no problems posed concerning budgetary constraints.

As far as these factors are concerned, there was only one respondent who said that he/she is used to using AACR2 in cataloging materials. Based on her comments, another

respondent said that he/she is interested to implement the RDA standards but the problem was that their library data base is not RDA compliant. They are using a customized library database. Added to this, he/she said that they are planning to adopt other database - an open source database like KOHA.

SMEC Librarians' Plans and Preparedness of RDA Implementation

For those who have not yet started adopting RDA in their respective institutions, it was found out that only one (1) respondent said that their institution plans to implement RDA next year, while two (2) of them answered that they haven't yet determined how they will use RDA. These institutions were St. Scholastica's College and Sta. Isabel College. It was also found out that nobody in the group, has no plans of not cataloging their materials using RDA. This may indicate that these librarians are welcoming the use of RDA in the near future.

Acquisition of RDA Toolkit

Furthermore, in terms of the efforts made by SMEC libraries and institutions in preparation for RDA implementation, the acquisition of RDA Toolkit has been made by some institutions which are already on their way of implementing RDA.

Aware of its necessity in the implementation, fourteen (14) or 51.85% respondents have signified that they already acquired/purchased the RDA Toolkit (either print or online). Thirteen (13) or 48.15% of the respondents apparently have not yet acquired the RDA Toolkit. See Table 3.

Table 3
Acquisition of RDA Toolkit

| Responses | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Acquired | 14 | 51.85% |
| Have not acquired | 13 | 48.15% |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100% |

Based on the results, the following member institutions: De La Salle University (9 respondents), De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (2 respondents), Lyceum of the Philippines University (2 respondents) and the University of the Philippines-Manila (1 respondent) had already acquired the RDA Toolkit.

Noticeably, and based on their answers, thirteen (13) respondents from Adamson University (1 respondent), Emilio Aguinaldo College (1 respondent), Philippine Women's University (3 respondents), St. Scholastica's College (1 respondent), St. Paul College, Manila, (1 respondent), Santa Isabel College (1 respondent), and the University of the Philippines-Manila (5 respondents) have not yet acquired the RDA Toolkit.

In this instance, it was apparent that many institutions have not yet purchased the RDA Toolkit. This was a similar problem or factor where most of the Mindanao libraries still do not have access to the RDA Toolkit (A. P. Acedera, 2014).

Trainings Received

Concerning the efforts that have been made in preparation for its implementation, twenty six (26) or 96.30% out of the twenty seven (27) respondents answered that they already received or participated in RDA training/s, only one (1) or 3.7% answered “no”. This again may be attributed to one respondent whose institution was not yet aware of RDA.

Aware of the need for RDA trainings, seventeen (17) respondents or 63% said that they were allowed to participate in the recently held PAARL National and Regional trainings for RDA, while ten (10) or 37% responded negatively. See Table 4.

Table 4
Respondents Who Were Allowed to Participate in PAARL RDA Trainings

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Have participated | 17 | 63.00% |
| Not participated | 10 | 37.00% |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100% |

Likewise, in preparation for RDA implementation, twenty four (24) respondents or 88.9% were allowed to attend other RDA trainings (In-person trainings, seminars and workshops, webinars, etc.) and only three (3 or 11.10%) were not allowed.

Types of Trainings Received

When asked to describe the types of trainings received or attended, twenty six (26) or 81.25% said they have joined in-person trainings, seminars and workshops. None of them have attended a webinar. This may be attributed to the fact that locally, there may have been no webinars yet being offered for RDA trainings. Six (6) of them or 18.75%, however, indicated that they have received trainings through print or online documents such as handouts, books, kits, "Maxwell's Handbook for RDA. See Table 5.

Table 5
Types of RDA Trainings Received

| Types of Training | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| In-person trainings, seminars and workshops | 26 | 81.25% |
| Trainings through print or online documents such as handouts, books, kits, "Maxwell's Handbook for RDA | 6 | 18.75 |
| TOTAL | 32 | 100% |

Numbers of Trainings Attended

To quantify the number of trainings received by the respondents, out of 26 respondents, nine (9) or 34.60% said they only had (1) training. Nine (9) or 34.6% have two (2) trainings attended and 6 or 23.10% had 3 trainings. Nobody has received 4 trainings (including Webinar/s). As was mentioned, webinars for RDA trainings in the country may have not yet

introduced. Moreover, two (2) respondents or 7.70% answered that they have received more than 4 trainings. From these statistics, it was revealed that many of them have limited number of trainings attended. See Table 6.

Table 6
Number of RDA Trainings Attended

| Number of Trainings | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 Training | 9 | 34.60% |
| 2 Trainings | 9 | 34.60% |
| 3 Trainings | 6 | 23.10% |
| More than 4 Trainings | 2 | 7.70% |
| TOTAL | 26 | 100% |

Adequacy of Trainings Attended

Of the 26 who have participated in RDA trainings, (14), 53.84% answered that their RDA trainings are adequate, while twelve (12) or 46.16%, which also means almost half responded negatively. This indicates that majority of them found that their trainings are few in numbers, hence they perceived their RDA trainings to be inadequate. This can also be attributed to the fact that majority of them are not practicing catalogers. Moreover, the use of RDA may not be of interest among those respondents whose main responsibility is not cataloging. As gleaned from the results of the questionnaire, librarians whose designations are catalogers were likely to feel that their trainings are adequate. See Table 7

Table 7
Perceived Adequacy of RDA Trainings Received/Attended

| Adequacy | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Adequate | 14 | 53.84% |
| Not adequate | 12 | 46.16% |
| TOTAL | 26 | 100% |

Level of Competency

In terms of their level of competency using RDA, only sixteen (16 or 61.53%) respondents participated or answered this part of the instrument. It was revealed that the practicing catalogers have higher levels of competencies. Out of the eight (8) practicing catalogers, two (2) or 12.40% said they are very competent and five (5) or 31.30% said they are competent. More than half or (9), 56.30% said they are somewhat competent. See Table 8. Based on these findings, librarians whose library task/s is not cataloging may find that their level of competency as not enough or sufficient. This maybe attributed to the fact that many of the respondents have other designations other than cataloging tasks, such as head librarians, acquisitions and systems librarian, periodicals librarian and reference and media librarian.

Table 8
Respondents' Levels of Competency in Using RDA

| Level of Competency | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Very competent | 2 | 12.40% |
| Competent | 5 | 31.30% |
| Somewhat competent | 9 | 56.30% |
| Not competent | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 16 | 100% |

Libraries/Librarians Who Are Already Implementing RDA

Mainly because of their participation in the PAARL national and regional trainings, other RDA seminar-workshops received and with the availability of the print PAARL Cataloging Policy Statements and RDA Guidelines for Philippine Libraries proposed by a pool of RDA trainers, majority of the SMEC librarians bravely started cataloging their resources using RDA. This may also indicate that the trainings given by PAARL have been effective in so far as these SMEC librarians who are already implementing RDA are concerned.

Table 9 below indicates that nineteen (19) respondents, equivalent to 70.37% or more than half, said that they already started implementing RDA in their respective libraries. These librarians were from seven (7) member institutions, namely: Adamson University (1 respondent), De La Salle University (9 respondents), De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (2 respondents), Emilio Aguinaldo College (1 respondent), Lyceum of the Philippines University (2 respondents), Philippine Women's University (3 respondents) and the University of the Philippines-Manila (1 respondent).

On the other hand, eight (8) respondents or 29.63% said that they have not yet started implementing RDA in their respective institutions. These librarians were from four (4) member institutions, namely: St. Paul's University-Manila (1 respondent), St. Scholastica's College (1 respondent), Santa Isabel College (1 respondent); and the University of the Philippines (5 respondents).

Table 9
RDA Implementation Status

| Status | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Have started implementing | 19 | 70.37% |
| Have not yet started implementing | 8 | 29.63% |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100% |

From those nineteen (19) respondents who were already implementing RDA in their respective institutions, twelve (12) librarians or 63.15% from three (3) institutions, namely, Adamson University (1 respondent), De La Salle University (9 respondents) and Lyceum of the Philippines University (2 respondents) started implementing RDA in 2013. Four (4) librarians

or 21.05% from two (2) institutions, namely, Emilio Aguinaldo College (1 respondent) and the Philippine Women's University (3 respondents) started implementing in 2014. Three librarians or 15.80% from De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (2 respondents) and from the University of the Philippines-Manila (1 respondent) started in 2015. See Table 10.

Table 10
RDA Implementation Dates

| Dates Implemented | Librarians | Institutions | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------|--|-------------|
| 2013 | 12 | Adamson University (1) De La Salle University (9) Lyceum of the Philippines University (2) | 63.15% |
| 2014 | 4 | Emilio Aguinaldo College (1) Philippine Women's University (3) | 21.05% |
| 2015 | 3 | De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (2) University of the Philippines-Manila (1) | 15.80% |
| TOTAL | 19 | | 100% |

Willingness of SMEC Catalogers to Attend Further RDA Trainings/Workshops/Seminars and Join in the Implementation Plan

In terms of attaining greater adequacy and raise the level of competency of the librarians in using RDA especially those doing cataloging tasks, the respondents were asked if they are willing to attend further RDA education, trainings/workshops/seminars. Majority of them or twenty (22) or 81.49% said yes, while three (3) or 11.11% said they have no need for further training. This may be attributed to the respondents who perceived that their trainings were already adequate.

On the other hand, there were two (2) or 7.40% respondents who abstained in answering the said question. Noticeably, these were the same respondents who answered that their level of competency using RDA is very competent. See Table 11.

Table 11
Willingness to Attend Further RDA Education, Trainings/Workshops

| Responses | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Willing to attend | 22 | 81.49% |
| No need for further training | 3 | 11.11% |
| No answer | 2 | 7.40% |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100% |

In conclusion, majority of the respondents agreed to join or participate in the SMEC implementation plan to effectively prepare and help them more in adopting RDA standards. Again, only two (2) respondents or 7.40% responded negatively.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study serves as a significant contribution in finding out the present scenario of SMEC libraries and librarians as far as the RDA implementation is concerned. Although seen that majority of the librarians have no problems in implementing RDA, the scenario is also a work in progress because not all of them have started implementing it and more efforts in terms of trainings and actual implementation for some libraries have to take place. This may be similar to what the National Library Board (NLB) of Singapore's situation that RDA is still a work in progress, more effort is required to take RDA to the next level of NLB's future plans (Choia, K., Yusuf, H. & Ibrahim, F., 2014).

Furthermore, this study revealed that SMEC librarians are unquestionably open in adopting changes and are already prepared in adopting RDA as the new standards in bibliographic description. With the trainings being offered by the Philippine Association of Academic/Research (PAARL), coupled by the seminar-workshops being held by the National Committee on Resource Description and Access (NCRDA) who are preparing Filipino librarians in adopting the new cataloging standard, SMEC librarians, with the support of their respective institutions proved that they are ready in embracing changes in the field of cataloging.

In connection with this, some of the librarians especially the practicing catalogers who have received trainings have started using RDA in cataloging their resources with competency.

Meanwhile, those who are not doing cataloging tasks found that both their RDA trainings and level of competency are minimal.

To fully prepare librarians in adopting RDA, the acquisition of RDA Toolkit among member institutions which still have no access to it, is imperative. Similarly, librarians, whose library databases are not yet RDA compliant should seek support from their administrators to acquire a system compliant to RDA to help them cope with the new trend in cataloging task.

To attain an adequacy and raise the level of competency in using RDA, it is recommended that a proposed training plan be prepared for further trainings, workshops, seminars, etc. on specific modules for RDA. Added to this, a concrete RDA implementation plan among the SMEC member librarians who have not yet started implementing RDA in their institutions should be conducted simultaneously after attending further RDA trainings, workshops and seminars.

Moreover, in this modern age where almost every information is free, a compassionate way of helping and sharing especially to our underprivileged colleagues in the library profession, it is highly recommended that outreach programs among librarians who are already RDA competent may conduct similar RDA trainings for free.

Finally, it is also recommended that future researches may be conducted to assess the implementation of RDA in the country.

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REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN SELECTED PHILIPPINE ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: TRENDS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

With the steady decrease in face-face reference transactions, Philippine libraries have accepted the challenge to embrace Reference 2.0 tools and be one with their clients in finding and providing information electronically. New reference service models have likewise emerged in view of further improving reference and information services that would respond to the changing needs of library patrons. While the pace of change has been rather slow, it has surely brought patrons and librarians to a higher plane in as far as the new information environment is concerned. To gather information on the current trends and future directions of reference and information services in Philippine academic libraries, the libraries of the top universities in the country included in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asian University Rankings namely, the University of the Philippines (UP) (ranked as number 68), Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) (ranked as number 86), the De La Salle University (DLSU) (ranked as number 142), the University of Santo Tomas (UST) (ranked as number 148) and the University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP) (ranked as number 251-300) were surveyed. The survey questionnaire focused on the use of different reference service models as well as Reference 2.0 tools, adoption of emerging trends in reference and information services, future plans, and issues encountered in the process of introducing changes in the way they render said services. The instrument was distributed to the head librarians of the sample being studied through email and/or Facebook (private message). Accomplished survey questionnaires were compiled and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results of the survey revealed that while a number of new service models are currently being implemented in most of the surveyed libraries simultaneously, they remained very cautious in introducing models that will completely rid of the traditional reference desk. Likewise, despite the wide acceptance of virtual reference, the libraries have not taken full advantage of the use of Reference 2.0 tools primarily because they have to wrestle with staff competency issues.

Keywords: Reference 2.0; Reference service models

Introduction

Rapid developments in the information environment has brought about the need for libraries to implement changes in the way they render reference and information services. With the steady decrease in face-to-face reference transactions, the following

new reference service models have emerged as libraries try to adjust correspondingly to the changing needs of library clients (Cassell and Hiremath, 2011):

| Type | Description |
|--|--|
| Traditional | Librarian serves user at the reference desk |
| Reference consultation model | Complex questions are referred to a consultation service |
| Tiered reference service | Three levels of service—information desk, general reference desk and consultation service |
| Team staffing | Librarian and paraprofessional work together at reference desk |
| Integration of reference and circulation desks | Integration of reference and circulation desks |
| Roving | Librarians circulate throughout the reference area |
| Virtual reference | Librarians answer questions by e-mail and chat |
| Outreach model | Librarians go out to departments, groups and organizations |
| No reference desk | Users can make an appointment with a librarian or contact them by telephone, email or chat |

Among the different reference service models, it is virtual reference that takes advantage of the use of technology. Known also as live reference, digital reference, online reference, electronic reference, remote reference, virtual reference is an Internet based reference service where a user can ask a question online. It comes in two modes -- synchronous, where patrons ask and expect to receive answers, real time, through the use of chat, instant messaging, or voice over IP; and asynchronous, where patrons ask questions usually through email or web forms and the librarian responds at a later time (Bhatia & Bohra, 2007).

The move towards Reference 2.0 (library services provided via the internet that encourage feedback and participation from users) gave rise to users who are not merely information seekers but are likewise information providers (Agosto, D. [et al.]). Librarians and users, therefore, collaborate with each other using tools such as wikis, blogs, microblogs, folksonomies, and podcasting. As social networking, customization, and seamlessness also turn out to be prominent patterns of the Reference 2.0 universe, sites like Facebook, Flickr, and Second Life have become extremely popular among users and librarians as well. Other tools such as RSS feeds, widgets, mashups, IM and SMS have also become equally important components of the 2.0 universe (Cassell & Hiremath, 2011).

In the Philippines, libraries have gradually adapted to these changes by introducing new reference service models and have challenged themselves to embrace 2.0 tools in an effort to be one with their clients. While the pace of change has been rather slow, it has surely brought patrons and librarians to a higher plane in as far as the new information environment is concerned.

Purpose of the Study

This paper primarily aims to gather information on the current trends and future prospects of reference and information services of top ranked academic libraries in the Philippines included in the QS Asian University Rankings, namely, the University Library of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Rizal Library of Ateneo de Manila University, the University Library of De La Salle University, the Miguel de Benavides Library of the University of Santo Tomas, and the Learning Resource Center of the University of Southeastern Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What reference service models are currently being implemented in libraries of these top ranked universities?
2. What were the driving forces that made these libraries decide to adopt the different reference service models?
3. In what mode does virtual reference provided in these libraries?
4. What current trends in reference services have these libraries implemented in the last three years? What are they planning to implement in the future? Which of these trends will they not implement at all?
5. What Reference 2.0 tools are currently being managed in these libraries? What are they considering in the future?
6. What were the issues encountered in the process of introducing changes in the way they rendered reference and information services?

Results of this study will help determine the current state of reference and information services among academic libraries in the country and the direction to where it is heading. It is also hoped that through this study, librarians will gain a better understanding of how academic libraries are advancing in as far as Reference 2.0 is concerned and the issues being faced by library administrators, and from there try to find ways on how libraries can cope with the rapid changing technology.

Methodology

Sample

Libraries of top universities in the Philippines included in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asian University Rankings, namely, the University of the Philippines (UP) (ranked as number 68), Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) (ranked as number 86), the De La Salle University (DLSU) (ranked as number 142), the University of Santo Tomas (UST) (ranked as number 148) and the University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP) (ranked as number 251-300) were chosen as subjects of this study because these libraries set the trend in the field of library and information science in the country specifically among academic libraries because of

their stature. Moreover, these libraries represent a combination of public and private universities, thus they very well reflect the prevailing developments in the field.

Survey Instrument

The survey questionnaire focused on the use of different reference service models as well as Reference 2.0 tools, adoption of emerging trends in reference and information services, future plans, and issues encountered in the process of introducing changes in the way they render said services.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was distributed to the head librarians of the sample being studied through email and Facebook. Accomplished survey questionnaires were compiled and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussions

Types of Reference Service (RS) Models Currently Being Implemented

When asked to identify which reference service models are currently being implemented in their respective libraries, responses showed that they are all using several service models simultaneously. The ADMU-Rizal Library carries out 7 types of reference service models, UST-Miguel de Benavides Library and USeP Learning Resource Center are both using 6 models, DLSU Library provides 5 types of reference service models, while UP Library implements 4 types of reference service models. This somehow shows how Philippine academic libraries have advanced in their provision of new service models in an attempt to reach out to more number of clients so as to compensate for the declining number of face-to-face reference transactions.

Among the different types of reference service models, three types surfaced to be the most common namely, the traditional model, team staffing, and virtual reference, as these are being used by all five libraries. Reference consultation and tiered reference service are models that are fast becoming popular among libraries of top ranked universities as these are being used by 80% (4 out of 5) of the libraries. The least popular among the different types of reference service models is the integration of reference and circulation desks considering that this is being adopted only by USeP. It seemed, however, that for some reasons, the no reference desk model remained to be unpopular among all five libraries as none of them have tried implementing the said model.

Table1: Reference Service Models Currently Being Implemented

| Reference Service Models | ADMU | DLSU | UP | USEP | UST | Total |
|--|------|------|----|------|-----|-------|
| Traditional | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 5 |
| Reference consultation model | √ | √ | | √ | √ | 4 |
| Tiered reference service | √ | √ | | √ | √ | 4 |
| Team staffing | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 5 |
| Integration of reference and circulation desks | | | | √ | | 1 |
| Roving | √ | | | √ | √ | 3 |
| Virtual reference | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 5 |
| Outreach model | √ | | √ | | | 2 |
| No reference desk | | | | | | 0 |
| Comments | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 7 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 6 | |

Change Drivers for the Different Reference Service Models Currently Being Implemented

The changing nature of reference queries and users' needs were two major drivers identified by 100% of the libraries that pushed them to implement changes in the way they render reference service. Likewise, changes in user expectations, as identified by 80% (4 out of 5) of the respondents, have also strongly influenced libraries to adopt new service models. Similarly, 80% of the respondents recognize the need for efficient use of staff time as influential in the decision to implement changes. The size of client population, as a change driver, has been identified by 60% (3 out of 5) of the respondents, which among all drivers proved to have been considered the least.

Modes of Provision of Virtual Reference Service

Virtual reference being one of the most common reference service models being employed by all the subjects are made available using e-mail, chat, IM, SMS. DLSU uses all four modes and noted that aside from the four, they are also using video chat via Skype. ADMU is using also all 4 modes, while UP and UST use three modes. USEP, on the other hand, is the sole library making use of just one mode which is SMS.

Email, chat and SMS are equally popular modes being used by 80% (4 out of five) of the libraries. Surprisingly IM seemed to lag a bit behind with only 60% (3 out of 5) of the libraries making use of it.

Trends in Reference and Information Services Implemented within the Last Three Years

To respond to patrons' needs, 100%(5 out of 5) of the libraries have extended their service hours while 80% (4 out of 5) have introduced tiered reference service, online reference service, self-service tools such as FAQs, and IT support, and have created learning commons within the last three years. Only 60% (3 out of 5) have introduced roving reference and have reviewed or rationalized their service points. Twenty percent (20% or 2 out of 5) of the surveyed libraries have constructed a new library building and only one (20%) had introduced an integrated desk for loans and reference. None among the libraries had been bold enough to remove the reference desk (refer to Table 1).

Among the surveyed libraries, ADMU has initiated the most number of changes in the last three years having embraced nine current trends in reference and information services. Conversely, USEP demonstrated to be the least active having initiated only 5 recent trends in reference and information services.

Table 2: Trends Implemented within the Last Three Years

| Trends | ADMU | DLSU | UP | USEP | UST | Total |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Introduction to a tiered reference service model | √ | √ | | √ | √ | 4 |
| Introduction of integrated desk (loans/reference) | | | | √ | | 1 |
| Introduction of roving reference | √ | | | √ | √ | 3 |
| Introduction of online reference desk | √ | √ | √ | | √ | 4 |
| Removal of reference desk | | | | | | 0 |
| Introduction of self-service tools (FAQs, Knowledgebase) | √ | √ | √ | | √ | 4 |
| Introduction of IT support | √ | √ | √ | √ | | 4 |
| Review/rationalize service points | √ | | √ | | √ | 3 |
| Extend service hours | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 5 |
| Create learning commons | √ | √ | √ | | √ | 4 |
| Construct a new building | √ | √ | | | | 2 |
| Comments/Inputs | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 9 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 7 | |

Trends in Reference and Information Services Planning to be implemented in the Future

Despite the many reference models that are simultaneously being implemented in all the libraries surveyed, 80% (4 out of 5) are still considering to implement additional reference models. The DLSU Library is planning to introduce roving reference and review/rationalize reference service points. UP Library on the other hand, intends to introduce tiered reference service and roving reference, as well. USeP is planning to introduce online reference service while UST intends to introduce IT support.

Trends in Reference and Information Services that Will Not be implemented at All

Although the surveyed libraries remain open to changes in reference and information services, there are some trends that they think they would not take on. Eighty percent (80% or 4 out of 5) of the respondents said that they have no plans at all of removing their reference desks. Similarly, 60% (3 out of 5) of the subjects expressed no plans of introducing integrated loans and reference desk with one of the libraries noting that the current set up, i.e. return/loan desks in other areas of the library, works best for them. Two out of 5 or 40% of the surveyed libraries also do not have plans of constructing a new building.

Reference Tools Currently Being Managed

As the use of reference tools like networking sites, wikis, blogs, RSS feeds, mashups, podcasts, and streaming videos proliferate in libraries of first world countries, Philippine academic libraries have also tried to catch up with the trend by attempting to manage selected reference tools that they think will be widely accepted and well received by Filipino clients.

Among the different reference tools, reference blogs (such as Twitter) and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster, StuiVz or Hi5) revealed to be the most used, as both are being currently managed by 60% (3 out of 5) of the surveyed libraries. Reference wikis and mobile reference are only being used by 40% (2 out of 5) of the respondents. Othertools like podcasts, online photo management (Flickr), widgets and RSS feed used for reference showed to be uncommonly used with only 20% (1 out of 5) of the libraries currently managing these tools. None among the libraries are currently using social bookmarking service (e.g. Del.ici.ous) and mashups. This brings to the realization that even in top ranked Philippine academic libraries, reference tools like these, are not commonly supported.

Of the five libraries surveyed, only UP Library makes extensive use of these reference tools as they are presently managing 7 different tools. ADMU and DLSU libraries are both managing 3 while UST is only managing 1, and noted that it makes available remote access to online databases. USeP is way behind as they still have not used any or the reference tools up to the writing of this paper but specifically noted making available access to Infotrac (refer to Table 3).

Reference Tools Being Considered in the Future

Despite the seemed unfamiliarity of the surveyed libraries with the different reference tools that they can take advantage of, 80% (4 out of 5) of the libraries are still considering the use of selected tools such as reference wikis, podcasts, RSS feed and mashups as expressed by 40% (2 out of 5) of the libraries. The use of reference blogs, mobile reference, social networking, and widgets for reference are being considered by 20% (1 out of 5) of the libraries (see Table 4).

UST plans to implement the use of 5 additional reference tools aside from the one it is currently managing. DLSU would want to make use of 4 more to add to the 3 reference tools being used at present. UP, despite the numerous reference tools being managed at the moment, still wants to add 2 more. ADMU intends to implement 1 more in addition to the 3 tools it is managing at the moment. Although USEP is not managing any, it conveyed no plan of making use of reference tools to advance the way it render reference and information services. However, it expressed intentions of subscribing to an additional online database which is Proquest.

Among the different reference tools, the surveyed libraries seemed not to favor *social bookmarking* service (Del.ici.ous) as no one is currently into it and none expressed intentions of using it in the future.

Table 3: Reference Tools Currently being Managed

| Reference Tools | ADMU | DLSU | UP | USEP | UST | Total |
|---|------|------|----|---|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Reference wikis | | | √ | | √ | 2 |
| Reference blogs (e.g. Twitter) | √ | √ | √ | | | 3 |
| Podcasts | | | √ | | | 1 |
| Social bookmarking service (Del.ici.ous) | | | | | | 0 |
| Mobile reference | √ | √ | | | | 2 |
| Online photo management (Flickr) | | | √ | | | 1 |
| Social networking (Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster, StudiVz, Hi5) | √ | √ | √ | | | 3 |
| Widgets used for reference | | | √ | | | 1 |
| RSS feed used for reference | | | √ | | | 1 |
| Mashups | | | | | | 0 |
| Others | | | | Infotrac (Gale Virtual Reference Library) | online databases w/ remote access | |
| TOTAL | 3 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 1 | |

Table 4: Reference Tools Being Considered in the Future

| Reference Tools | ADMU | DLSU | UP | USEP | UST | Total |
|---|------|------|----|----------|-----|-------|
| Reference wikis | | √ | | | √ | 2 |
| Reference blogs (e.g. Twitter) | | | | | √ | 1 |
| Podcasts | | √ | | | √ | 2 |
| Social bookmarking service (Del.ici.ous) | | | | | | 0 |
| Mobile reference | | | √ | | | 1 |
| Online photo management (Flickr) | | | | | | 0 |
| Social networking (Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster, StudiVz, Hi5) | | | | | √ | 1 |
| Widgets used for reference | | | | | √ | 1 |
| RSS feed used for reference | √ | √ | | | | 2 |
| Mashups | | √ | √ | | | 2 |
| Others | | | | Proquest | | |
| | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 5 | |

Issues Encountered in Introducing Changes in the Way Reference and Information Services are rendered

Introducing change is not at all easy as there will always be issues along the way. Libraries of top ranked universities also had their share of difficulties in the process of introducing changes in the way they render reference and information services. Among other issues, staff competencies confirmed to have been experienced by 80% (4 out of 5) of the surveyed libraries. Infrastructure and IT support were problems common to 60% (3 out of 5) of the respondents. Budget, support from administration, and user/client competency, were difficulties that 40% (2 out of 5) of the libraries had to go through, while receptiveness of the community being served is an issue which only 20% (1 out of 5) of the respondents had to face.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Evidently, Philippine academic libraries recognizes the change in the nature of reference queries and are thus exerting effort in trying to support the changing needs of their clients through the introduction of new reference service models. Although the traditional reference desk still remains to be one of the most popular reference service model, team staffing and virtual reference have emerged to be equally extensively adopted.

While a number of new service models are currently being implemented in most libraries simultaneously, the libraries remained very cautious in introducing models that will completely rid of the traditional reference desk.

Despite the wide acceptance of virtual reference, the libraries have not taken full advantage of the use of Reference 2.0 tools primarily because they have to wrestle with staff competency issues and secondarily with infrastructure and IT support issues.

Clearly, plans for further enhancements are underway for most of the libraries. However, considering the current state at which Reference 2.0 tools are being utilized, libraries have to work double time to catch up with the latest trends.

Based on the above findings, the conduct of extensive trainings on the use of Reference 2.0 tools for both reference and head librarians is highly recommended for them to gain a better understanding and appreciate more the application of the different 2.0 tools.

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