

# PHILLIPINES



***Darrel Manuel O. Marco, BLIS 2005***

Knowledge Manager

Baker & Mckenzie

Bonifacio Global City, Taguig

I have been in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS) for 7 years now. After graduating from college and passing the Board Exam, I landed a job which was naturally close to my heart – a school librarian. I am always fascinated by kids and their curiosity, so while I played as teacher and librarian at the same time for Early Grade School (i.e. Kinder to Grade 3) students of De La Salle Zobel School, they served as my inspiration to strive harder and do something worthwhile as a school librarian. It was at this stage that I discovered that I can tell stories – I am a storyteller! This passion for telling stories has led me to different parts of the country served by our Book Mobile, and to write research papers that I was able to present in IFLA in Finland in 2012 and Osaka Japan in 2015.

I continued my passion for providing information for, and satiating curiosities of both children and teens by being a teacher-librarian for Xavier School Nuvali (XSN), where I served as a one-man librarian for students from Kinder to Grade 10. This stage has taught me that in order to be an effective teacher-librarian, one needs flexibility and the drive to innovate. I would still recall the collaborations I did with the different subject areas and how students would love them! It is one way of inculcating to the students and teachers alike the value of the library in a community. The library would usually spearhead literacy activities during July's National Children's Book Week and November's National Book Month. However, the most important lesson I learned when I was the librarian of XSN was that, more than the books and information librarians can provide, what children really look forward to in the library are empathy, compassion and personal touch; that beyond the stories and illustrations in books are librarians who are willing to listen and create human connections.

At present, I work as a Knowledge Manager for a global law firm situated in the Philippines. I never really let go of my role as a teacher/school librarian. On weekends, I work as a volunteer for The Storytelling Project, with the objective of promoting literacy and leisure reading to public school students.

Consequently, together with some of my librarian friends, we also organize literacy activities for various communities such as Reading along the Railways – for urban poor communities living near railroads; Regalo – for Aeta people, an ethnic group in the Northern Philippines; Summer Reading Camps – for children in rural communities where we also donate books; bibliotherapy for children with cancer in the Philippine Medical Center.

Through all these stages, I learned the power of stories – to create connections and see the world in different perspectives, to imagine, create, share new and fresh ideas, and to make the world a better place one chapter at a time.



***Martin Julius V. Perez***

Archivist

Department of Foreign Affairs

Pasay City, Philippines

In 2007, I took the course Bachelor of LIS at the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman. Back then, I had no idea what kind of future is at stake for me with it. As far as I can remember, what made me stay and finish the course are following: (a) the inspiring and family-like environment of the UP School of Library and Information Studies, and (2) the vibrant and encouraging LIS student organization which I joined, the UP Future Library and Information Professionals of the Philippines (UP FLIPP). After graduation, I took the statewide examination (Librarians Licensure Examination) in November 2011 and passed it with flying colors.

Aside from my internship experience in college, my early work experiences after graduation include the part-time archivist & librarian job in a Catholic Church convent, and a library assistant job in a school library. My first formal employment was at the Far Eastern University (FEU) Library, an academic library, as a library assistant, and later on as a librarian. During my years in the FEU Library, I was assigned in its various sections: Periodical Section, Electronic Library and the University Librarian's Office. The last position I held in this Library is as Collection Development and Special Projects Librarian wherein I assisted the University Librarian in her projects including the design and renovation of the Library.

After a few years, I decided to join government service by being a librarian at the Carlos P. Romulo Library of the Foreign Service Institute, which is a special library. However, I decided to follow my passion on archives, currently, I work as an archivist of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of the Philippines. As an archivist, I am in charge of establishing and managing the DFA Archives – which is an



exceptional opportunity. Aside from this, I am also a part-time faculty member in UP Diliman teaching archives and records management.

I may share, more or less, the same experience with the librarians and archivists around the world. This made me realize that being a librarian and archivist has opened many doors of opportunities for me. Foremost, it provided me the opportunity to connect with people who would have shaped and influenced me in one way or another. I have met prominent people who are really inspiring and dedicated to their jobs/advocacies. Secondly, I was able to travel and see the world. I was able to attend international conferences such as CONSAL in Bali, Indonesia, IFLA WLIC in Finland and Singapore, and ICA Congress in South Korea, and even participate in the 2015 IFLA OCLC Jay Jordan Early Career Development Fellowship in Ohio, USA. Lastly, I was able to write, present and publish scholarly papers and articles, and even edit a book entitled “Special Library Administration, Standardization and Technological Integration” (2015). This indeed is my humble contribution to the profession. I can definitely say that I am happy and proud to share the same passion with the rest of the information professionals in shaping and changing the world through the LIS profession.

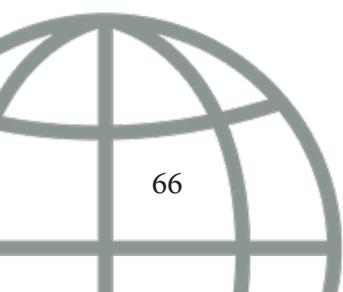
***Kimberly Ann Occeña-Soria, MLIS***

Asst. Chief Librarian  
Mapua University  
Manila, Philippines



Working as an Acquisitions Librarian for five years now in an academic institution, I always look forward to providing service to the community I am in. It is the love to communicate and coordinate with the faculty members that drives me at work. There is joy in hearing their academic needs, plans and aspirations. There is much joy when you are able to provide solution to said needs and be able to support their academic plans and projects. It has been thirteen years now after completing my Bachelor’s degree in Polytechnic University of the Philippines since 2003 and three years after earning my Master in LIS in University of the Philippines, Diliman since 2014. I have worked into various library types, from academic, school, special and back to an academic library. Whichever type of library I may be, I would always look into building a good connection and partnership with the people in the institute. I believe that it is in this way that we can really know how to respond to and address their curriculum and research needs.

The institute where I am working has about 10 000 plus enrolled students. Students are majoring mainly in engineering programs. Although the institute also offers non-engineering courses. I rarely have



interaction with the students being an Acquisitions Librarian. But I provide library orientations and facility tours to first year students. Also, every November, I and the team of librarians gather up to create and implement programs for the library clients. It is in this month that we offer free seminars and trainings, facilitate games, and appreciate our avid library users through awarding of tokens to top library users. Generally, I have more partnership with their teachers and deans. Collaborating on the development of the materials for curriculum and teaching use. Through the Library Committee of the institute, I closely monitor each programs' resources and acquisition activities. Even though the institute is on a quarter system and faculty members are always on a strict schedule of their academic activities, I make it sure that the selection and recommendation of materials for their programs are not missed out. One of the tasks I am in-charge of is the training and orientation of new databases or tools acquired. I make sure that necessary training is provided to maximize the use of the new materials or services. Also, I am coordinating with subject experts on the development of a study, by which for one, I was assigned as one of the panellist in an undergraduate engineering thesis. It is one of the projects between the library and the programs to see and evaluate the relationships between tasks and how one can help each other. Currently, I am partnering with the faculty members on their research activities.

***Joseph M. Yap, MLIS***

Instructional Media Services Coordinator  
De La Salle University Libraries



Year 2016 marks my ten years in the LIS profession. I have seen my growth and development for the last decade from being a graduate of Bachelor of Library and Information Science in 2006 and earning my Master of Library and Information Science from University of the Philippines Diliman in 2010. 2016 was also the year where I have written my experiences both as a medical and an academic librarian in my own book chapter entitled, “Flipping the Pages: Tracing Experiences from Both Sides of the Road” published by Rowman & Littlefield (Yap, 2016). The book’s title is Career Transitions for Librarians: Proven Strategies for Moving to Another Type of Library edited by Davis Erin Anderson and Raymond Pun. My first work as a medical librarian gave me the opportunity to collect, travel, and select medical and health resources for malaria and vector-borne diseases. At a young age, I was given the responsibility to build library networks in the Asian region. Health information collected was organized, digitized and shared to all the members of the network. Partnerships blossomed and many researchers benefited from the re-



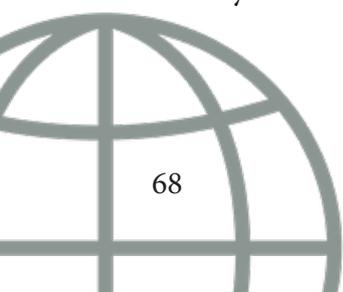
source-sharing project. While I was still a health librarian, my application to participate in a three-month training course on Information Management was approved. I was able to meet young LIS professionals in Brussels, Belgium. The program was called Scientific and Technological Information Management for Universities and Libraries: An Active Training Environment (STIMULATE) sponsored by the Flemish universities and the government of Belgium. It was an enriching experience to learn about creating databases and digital libraries. It was a fruitful event in my life. Before the end of 2009, I was able to cross the bridge and transfer to an academic library. Currently, I am the Expert-Manager/Reference Librarian at Nazarbayev University Library in Astana, Kazakhstan. Previously, I worked as a faculty librarian of De La Salle University Libraries where I became a cataloger, reference librarian, business librarian, public programs librarian, and Instructional Media Services Coordinator. Being an academic librarian paved me the way to learn more about the profession. I am honoured to have worked in one of the best libraries in the Philippines. It nurtured me to become a responsible individual which I can always cherish for the rest of my life. I was given projects that I can lead and be a part of. I was able to handle the information literacy program dubbed as *IamInfoSMART*, the award-winning program called the Human Library, the annual book fair named *GreenSpine*, our community engagement program termed as *Teach-Meet with LORA the Librarian* and many others. In one way or another, I have given my best and contributed to the best of my abilities, and I am thankful to them for giving me such confidence. As a librarian with a faculty status, we are also expected to do research, publish peer-reviewed articles, and present papers in local and international conferences.

Aside from being a fulltime librarian, I also became the Public Relations Officer of the Philippine Librarians Association, Inc. (PLAI) – National Capital Region Librarians Council (2017–2018), Secretary of the PLAI House of Delegates, and the Chair of the National Book Week. In 2019, I am elected Secretary of the Special Libraries Association – Asian Chapter.

### **Introduction to Libraries and Library Education in the Philippines**

Putting into context, the history of libraries in the Philippines is intertwined with the political and social history of the country. It was believed that pre-colonial/indigenous documents were destroyed by colonizers, and that the first libraries in the Philippines were established by religious orders. Early libraries in the Philippines may have existed during these early years of Spanish colonization, but the first documented reference to the existence of a “library” in the island of the Philippines was in the letter to Philip II of Fr. Domingo de Salazar, the first Bishop of Manila, on June 18, 1583 complaining about the destruction of a “very good library” in the fire, which consumed his living quarters (Hernandez, 1996). Along with the colonizers came the evangelization by the Catholic missionaries. These have probably provided a direct impact in the history of libraries in the Philippines, as surviving library collections and convent libraries formed the nucleus of modern day rare books collections and heritage libraries in the country (Perez & Pineda, 2014).

In terms of LIS education, the first library science course was offered in 1914 in the University of the Philippines (UP). In 1916, in the same university, a curriculum that leads to Bachelor of Science in Library Science (BSLS) degree was introduced. It was in 1952 when graduate courses were initiated at UP,



while the Master’s degree in Library Science existed only in 1962 in the same university (Vallejo, 1994). At present, around 83 schools had offered or are still offering library science courses or full bachelor’s and/or master’s programs in LIS, however until the present time, no school in the Philippines is offering a doctoral degree in LIS.

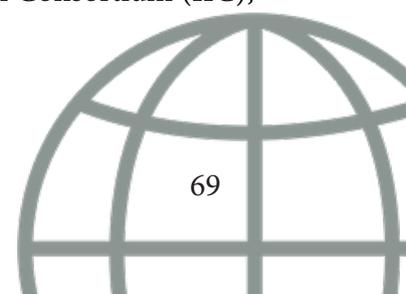
In the modern days, the Philippines is one of the countries that have enacted a law to regulate the practice of librarianship. As stated in the Republic Act (RA) No. 9246 (of 2003) “An Act Modernizing the Practice of Librarianship in the Philippines”, the Philippines “recognizes the essential role of librarianship as a profession in developing the intellectual capacity of the citizenry thus making library service a regular component for national development.” Under this law, the term “librarian” is defined as a Filipino citizen who is “a bona fide holder of a Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card issued by the Professional Regulatory Board for Librarians and by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) in accordance with this Act.” This directs a graduate of a bachelor’s degree or master’s degree in LIS to take and pass the Librarians Licensure Examination in order to be a registered librarian in the Philippines. As of 2017, there are approximately 8 000 registered librarians in roster of the PRC (Professional Regulation Commission, n.d.). Below is the summary of the approximate numbers of libraries and information centres in the Philippines, without the figures for the special libraries:

Type of Library	Count	
National Library	1	
Primary Schools Libraries	46 404	59 282
Secondary Schools Libraries	12 878	
College & Universities Libraries	2 299	
Public Libraries	1 399	
Special Libraries	(unknown)	
Approx. Total	62 681	

### **The state of LIS associations / consortia in the Philippines**

The oldest library association in the Philippines is the Philippine Librarians Association, Inc. (PLAI). It was founded on 22 October 1923 (Philippine Librarians Association, Inc., 2017). PLAI became the only accredited organization of professional librarians in the Philippines when RA No. 6966 was passed into law. The law professionalizes librarianship in the country. In 2004, the law was repealed by RA No. 9246 or the Philippine Librarianship Act of 2003. Other library associations include: Association of Special Libraries in the Philippines (est. 1954), Philippine Association of Academic and Research Librarians (est. 1973), Philippine Association of School Librarians, Inc. (est. 1977) and Association of Librarians in Public Sector (est. 2013). Specialized groups like Agricultural Librarians Association of the Philippines (est. 1972), Medical and Health Librarians Association of the Philippines (est. 1988), Philippine Group of Law Librarians (1980) and Philippine Theological Librarians Association (est. 1985) were also formed.

The emergence of library consortia in the Philippines started in the 1970s (Fresnido & Yap, 2014). The earliest library consortia established in the country is Academic Libraries Book Acquisition Services Association (ALBASA). It was founded in 1973. The year after, the Inter-Institutional Consortium (IIC),



now South Manila Educational Consortium (SMEC) was organized. Member institutions agreed to have cross enrolment of students and maximization of resources through joint offerings, restructuring of curricula, exchanging of vital information for academic excellence, and sharing of facilities. Furthermore, Mendiola Consortium, consortia of four academic institutions in the Mendiola area aimed at maximizing utilization of resources by sharing, was created in 1975. Nowadays there are more than ten consortia in the country. Here is a partial list of existing consortia in the country: Academic Libraries Information Network in Mindanao (ALINET), Aurora Boulevard Consortium (ABC), Bicol Consortium of Academic Libraries (BCAL), Consortium of Academic Libraries in Albay (CALA), Davao Colleges and Universities Network (DACUN), Intramuros Library Consortium (ILC) and many others.

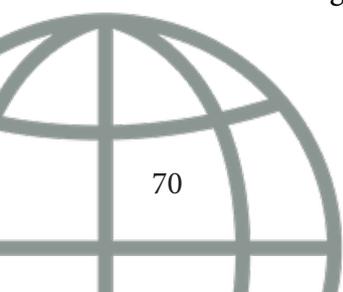
### **Special and Public Libraries**

The first public libraries in the country were set up according to the Regulations for Public Instruction approved by the Spanish Congress in June 1821 in the Philippines. It was called “provincial universities”. Libraries was mainly managed by the Dominican, the Franciscan, the Augustinians, the Vincentian and the Benedictine Orders. During the American regime, the first public library, the American Circulating Library, was founded to create a source of instruction and profitable entertainment for the residents of Manila. During the short period of American regime, a total of 12 public libraries were set-up.

The Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines (ASLP), is an active group of special librarians who published a directory of special libraries in the country. Based on said directory, a total of 229 special libraries are in existence. Although few in number, there are special libraries that are influential and outstanding in the country. The Asian Development Bank Library has an excellent physical facilities and library service offered to its’ clients, while the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) at Los Baños, Laguna which is supported by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, the governments of this country and other countries as well, is leading the rice research advocacy. There are also other special library organizations in the country who are active and are engaged into developing relationships and connections. There is the Agricultural Librarians Associations of the Philipines (ALAP), Court Librarians Association of the Philippines (CLAPHIL), Medical and Health Librarians Association of the Philippines (MAHLAP), Philippine Group of Law Librarians (PGLL) and Philippine Theological Librarians Association (PTLA).

### **Academic and School Libraries**

With the introduction of the K-12 program in all basic education institutions in the Philippines, school and academic libraries are both being challenged to shape up and provide the information needs of students, teachers, faculty and those who work in and for the Philippine education system. As a relatively new practice in the Philippine setup, the K-12 system is shaking both school and academic libraries to provide materials and resources, which would cater to the burgeoning demand for information especially about the Senior High School programs – how it will affect the honing of students’ skills while in high school and the preparation and readiness of the academe for their intake. Alongside this development there are the trainings and innovations for librarians. School librarians are now in the forefront of teaching media



and information literacy – skills that used to be taught by teachers. Academic librarians are empowered to do research on vocational schools and how they can assist Senior High School students further.

Aside from the K-12 program, the more pressing issue that most public schools experience in the Philippines is the lack of libraries. In most instances, libraries are book repositories-cum-classrooms; worst, there really are no libraries at all. Consequently, there is also a lack for trained librarians, who can manage these libraries and assist students with their information needs. While it may be a sad state, there are many organizations pushing for the existence of libraries in public schools such as the Philippine Association of School Librarians and the National Library of the Philippines. The Department of Education for its part continuously develops Library Hubs, which aim “to develop the love for and habit of reading among pupils and students in public elementary and secondary schools by building “warehouse” libraries equipped with supplementary reading materials (SRMs)”. The Library Hub provides reading and reference materials to be borrowed by the public school teachers for distribution to their pupils/students to support their lessons and help improve reading skills, vocabulary, knowledge, perspectives, and critical thinking.” (DepEd Order, 2011).

The Philippine Association of Academic and Research Libraries (PAARL), on the other hand, is the primary national organization pushing for recognition of academic libraries. In contrast to the state of public school libraries, most state colleges and universities have their own libraries albeit small. Many academic libraries in the Philippines take pride of their collections which include Filipiniana i.e. books about and published in the Philippines, written and published by Filipino authors, and everything that features the Philippines. There are academic libraries, which cater to persons with disabilities (PWDS) such as those handicapped with hearing and sight. Moreover, academic libraries are innovating thru introduction of different information commons, makerspaces and human libraries.

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