

Reference and Information Services in Selected Philippine Academic Libraries: Trends and Future Prospects

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to find out 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

Research Problem

Survey questionnaire devised by the researcher focusing on the following:

- Reference service models
- Change drivers in introducing new reference service models
- Emerging trends and future plans in reference service
- Use of Reference 2.0 tools
- Issues encountered in introducing changes in reference service

Survey Instrument

Libraries of top universities in the Philippines included in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asian University Rankings

University	Ranking
University of the Philippines (UP)	68
Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU)	86
De La Salle University (DLSU)	142
University of Santo Tomas (UST)	148
University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP)	251-300

Sample

Survey questionnaires were distributed through email and Facebook

Accomplished questionnaires were compiled and analyzed using descriptive statistics

Data Collection and Analysis



RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Simultaneous use of several reference service models

Most common reference service models:

- Traditional
- Team staffing
- Virtual reference

Least popular reference service model:

- Integration of reference and circulation desks

Model not being used at all:

- No reference desk

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	

Types of Reference Service Models Currently Being Implemented

Changing nature of reference queries – 100%

Users' needs – 100%

Changes in user expectations – 80%

Efficient use of staff time – 80%

Size of client population – 60%

CHANGE DRIVERS	ADMU	DLSU	UP	USEP	UST	TOTAL
Size of client population		√		√	√	3
Changing nature of reference queries	√	√	√	√	√	5
Changes in user expectations	√	√	√		√	4
Users' needs	√	√	√	√	√	5
Efficient use of staff time	√	√		√	√	4
Others						

Change Drivers

Email, chat, and
SMS – 80%

IM –
60%

Video chat via
Skype – 20%

MODE	ADMU	DLSU	UP	USEP	UST	TOTAL
E-mail	√	√	√		√	4
Chat	√	√	√		√	4
IM (Instant Messaging)	√	√	√			3
SMS (text Messaging)	√	√		√	√	4
Others		video chat via Skype				

Modes of Provision of Virtual Reference Service

Extend service hours – 100%
Introduction to a tiered reference service – 80%
Introduction of online reference service – 80%
Introduction of self-service tools – 80%
Introduction of IT support – 80%
Created learning commons – 80%
Introduction of roving reference – 60%
Review/rationalize service points – 60%
Construct a new building – 40%
Introduction of integrated desk (loans/reference) – 20%
Removal of reference desk – 0%

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 Implemented within the Last Three Years

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

Trends Planning to be Implemented in the Future

Removal of reference desk – 80%

Introduction of integrated desk – 60%

Construct a new building – 40%

TRENDS	ADMU	DLSU	UP	USEP	UST	TOTAL
Introduction to a tiered reference service model						0
Introduction of integrated desk (loans/reference)	√	√			√	3
Introduction of roving reference						0
Introduction of online reference desk						0
Removal of reference desk	√	√		√	√	4
Introduction of self-service tools (FAQs, Knowledgebase)						0
Introduction of IT support						0
Review/rationalize service points						0
Extend service hours						0
Create learning commons						0
Construct a new building			√		√	2
Comments/Inputs	[on the introduction of integrated desk] the current set up, i.e. return/loan desks in other areas of the library, works best for us					

Trends that Will Not be Implemented at All

Reference blogs and social networking sites – 60%

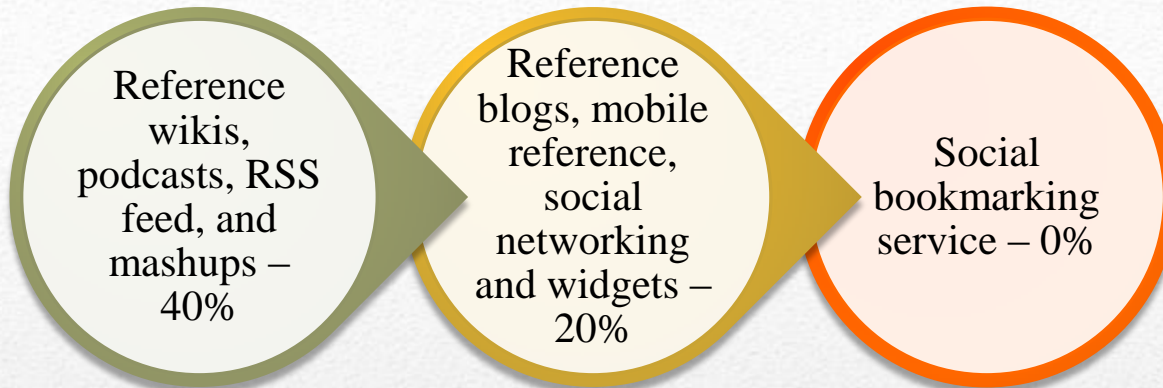
Reference wikis, and mobile reference – 40%

Podcasts, online photo management, widgets and RSS feed – 20%

Social bookmarking service and mashups – 0%

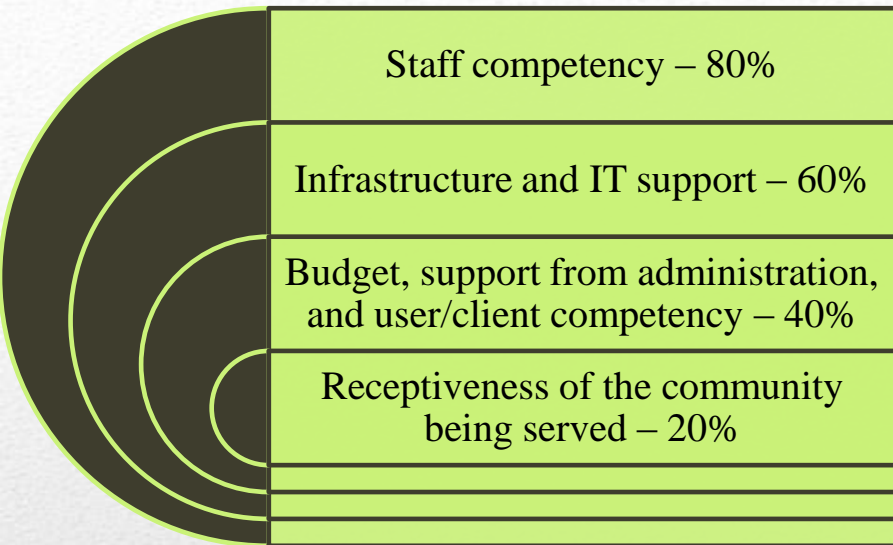
REFERENCE TOOLS	ADMU	DLSU	UP	USEP	UST	TOTAL
Reference wikis			√		√	2
Reference blogs (e.g. Twitter)	√	√	√			3
Podcasts			√			1
Social bookmarking service (Del.ici.ous)						0
Mobile reference	√	√				2
Online photo management (Flickr)			√			1
Social networking (Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster, StudiVz,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

Reference Tools Currently Being Managed



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	

Reference Tools Being Considered in the Future



ISSUES	ADMU	DLSU	UP	USEP	UST	TOTAL
Budget		√		√		2
Infrastructure	√		√	√		3
Staff Competencies	√	√	√	√		4
Support from administration		√		√		2
User/Client competency		√			√	2
IT support		√		√	√	3
Receptiveness of the community being served					√	1
Others						

Issues Encountered



Philippine academic libraries recognize the change in the nature of reference queries



They exert effort in trying to support the changing needs of clients by offering several reference service models simultaneously



The traditional reference desk still remains to be one of the most popular reference service models together with team staffing and virtual reference



Libraries are very cautious in introducing reference service models that will completely rid of the traditional reference desk



Despite wide acceptance of virtual reference, libraries have not taken full advantage of the use of Reference 2.0 tools primarily because of staff competency issues



Plans for further enhancements are underway but libraries need to work double time considering the current state at which Reference 2.0 tools are being utilized

Conclusions

Conduct **extensive trainings on the use of Reference 2.0 tools** for both the reference and head librarians for them to gain better understanding of the different 2.0 tools and appreciate more its use and how it can help further advance reference and information services in the country.

Recommendation



Thank you!
