# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (LIS) EDUCATION THROUGH OUT-CAMPUS PRACTICUM

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**Abstract**

*This qualitative study explored the learning experiences of LIS students during the library out-campus practicum. It specifically determined the tasks performed by the students, the competencies improved and acquired by the students, and the influence of out-campus practicum on the students' description of an ideal librarian, and on how they view their career in LIS five years after graduation. An unstructured questionnaire was used to gather data from 32 fourth year students of the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS). Journals of students as well as classroom discussions at the end of the practicum period also provided essential data. Responses were grouped into themes or categories based on thematic analysis. Results showed that out-campus practicum enabled students to experience a variety of LIS related tasks. Through this practicum, students improved their personal and professional competencies; they also acquired other personal competencies. Based on their experiences in the workplace, students described an ideal librarian primarily in terms of values/attitudes necessary in the field of LIS. After the out-campus experience, most students viewed themselves as successfully employed in different libraries and information centers five years after graduation.*

*Keywords:* experiential learning, out-campus practicum, competencies

## Introduction

Experience is the best teacher. This proverbial statement has become the basis for educators to expose their learners in actual scenarios. As learners take part in real experiences, learning becomes more interesting, exciting and even challenging. With the diverse activities, events and learning opportunities which are actually provided, learners gain more holistic experiences that develop their cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

Recognizing the importance of experience in learning, out-campus practicum is the highlight of tertiary education. Students are immersed with different partner industries where they apply the theories, principles and concepts obtained inside the classroom, and at the same time, acquire practical skills and abilities necessary in the work place. Out-campus or internship provides a lot of advantages and opportunities to students. Vespia, Wilson-Doenges, Martin, and Radosevich (2012) enumerated several benefits of internship such as mentorship, networking opportunities, and the ability to gain a deeper understanding of their potential career choice. The authors further cited from Kiser (2008) that internship allows the students to spend several hours in a setting that requires them to: (1) apply knowledge from previous coursework; (2) engage in critical thinking; and (3) reflect on their learning experience. Salmon (1999) also stated that learners learn best when working beside an expert who models skilled practice and encourages and guide the learners as they create authentic products or performances for real audience. The author likewise emphasized that the best learning environment gives students the opportunities to make products that meet the quality standards and venue in which to share their work with others, both inside and outside the school building.

Practicum is an essential component of Library and Information Science (LIS) education. In the Philippines, CHED Memorandum Order No. 08 (2005), now superseded by CHED Memorandum Order No. 24 (2015), stating the guidelines for Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) Program, requires a 6-unit course for practicum undertaken by a student towards the end of such program. This practicum is designed to expose the student to all facets of LIS work in actual libraries and information centers in the public and private sectors. The student is expected to gain on-the-job experience in academic, government, school, public, and special libraries for a minimum of 400 hours.

This provision was the basis for the BLIS program of Benguet State University (BSU) to provide a 6-unit out-campus practicum. This is taken by the student after the completion of all academic subjects. This covers immersion in any library or information center outside the University for at least 12 weeks. Students are fully immersed in their work assignments for eight hours a day from Monday to Friday. Within this period, students are expected to develop and acquire more competencies as they engage in a variety of tasks, assignments and other activities with the supervision and mentoring of their assigned supervisors. To ensure the attainment of this purpose, the immersion program of BSU set the following criteria in selecting a library or information center for out-campus assignment: (1) has qualified librarian/s who can provide the best mentoring to the students; (2) is willing to accommodate practicum students; and (3) has integrated technology in the library operations and services.

The concern of this paper is therefore to evaluate the effectiveness of the out-campus practicum of BSU-BLIS program in relation to experiential learning. As information technology continues to revolutionize librarianship and information work, LIS practicum becomes more complicated. Nevertheless, such complications opened a lot of developments and opportunities for the practicum

students as they immerse in the actual work environment. This fact has been emphasized by Rubin (2000) who stated that as the field of library and information science expands, the potential areas for training and education will expand further.

The significance of this paper may extend beyond the institutional level to the global context. Feedback from the students as well as the supervising librarians provides updates to LIS schools on the competencies required in the current work settings. With this information, LIS teachers may further improve and develop their teaching methodologies and strategies to be able to equip their students with the appropriate knowledge necessary in the work environment. On the other hand, this paper may challenge the partner libraries and information centers to evaluate their systems and operations so they can really serve as practicum centers for LIS students. Likewise, the findings of this paper may inspire and motivate the supervising librarians to further enhance their teaching and mentoring abilities to be more effective. On a broader perspective, this paper may stimulate the LIS schools and the partner agencies to evaluate their own roles in educating LIS students to enable them to graduate with the necessary competencies and perform in a dynamic working environment. Finally, this paper may serve as a springboard in establishing a more active collaboration between LIS schools and the partner industries to further improve LIS education.

This study was conducted to explore the learning experiences of BLIS students during their out-campus practicum.  Specifically, it looked into the following problems:
1. What LIS related tasks are experienced by the students during their out-campus practicum?
2. What competencies are improved by the students during their out-campus practicum?
3. What competencies are acquired by the students during their out-campus practicum?
4. How does out-campus practicum influence the students' perceptions of their career in LIS in terms of the following?
    a. Description of an ideal librarian or information professional.
    b. Career in LIS five years after graduation.

**Conceptual Framework**
Learning through experience has its roots from early educational philosophers. Kolb (1984) presents the experiential learning cycles of Lewin, Dewey and Piaget. In the Lewinian model of action research and the laboratory method, learning follows a four-stage cycle consisting of: (1) concrete experiences; (2) observations and reflections; (3) formation of abstract concepts and generalizations; and (4) testing implications of concepts in new situations. For Lewin, learning starts with concrete experience. Observations and reflections regarding this experience are gathered and analyzed to come up with concepts, conclusions and generalizations which are then tested in new situations. Implications and hypotheses derived from this new situation are again used as the basis for creating new experience signaling the start of another cycle. Dewey's model shows a similarity with Lewin's. This model involves: (1) observation of surrounding conditions; (2) knowledge of what has happened in similar

situations in the past, a knowledge obtained partly by recollection and partly from the information, advice, and warning of those who have had the experience; and (3) judgment which puts together what is observed and what is recalled to see what they signify. As can be noted, both Dewey and Lewin emphasize that learning results from the integration of experience and concepts, observations, and actions. Piaget's model is focused on cognitive development. For Piaget, learning process where cognitive development takes place is a cycle of interaction between the individual and the environment. The key to learning lies in the mutual interaction of two processes – the process of accommodation of concepts or schemas to experience in the world, and the process of assimilation of events and experiences from the world into existing concepts and schemas. These three models illustrate that learning is a cycle starting with experience, which, in order to become meaningful must undergo the process of observation, reflection or analysis.

The integration of this experiential learning in education was advocated by other educational philosophers like Edward Lee Thorndike and Edwin Ray Guthrie. Basing on the works of these philosophers, Olson and Hergenhahn (2009) concluded that both would approve of internship or mentoring programs and would enthusiastically endorse professional trade school approaches to learning. According to them, formal education should resemble real life situations as much as possible in order for the learners to know what they are expected to do once they graduate. In addition, Lang and Evans (2006) stated that higher-order thinking skills – intelligence, understanding and wisdom – develop through experience and reflection. They explained that schools must provide opportunities for students to engage in experiences with real problems and opportunities that include the variables likely to be encountered in real-world situations.

A significant attribute of experiential learning which is commonly emphasized by all advocates is the process of reflection. Mere experience is meaningless. It becomes meaningful and provides opportunity for growth only when subjected to reflection. Through reflection, students link their experiences with the theories learned in the classroom. At a higher level, reflection may be related with students' life and personality. York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, and Montie (2006) cited from Bright (1996) that reflective practice is the process which underlies all forms of high professional competence. Consequently, an individual who reflects on experiences is likely to reach the peak of his chosen profession.

Basing on these theories and concepts, this study is guided by the paradigm shown in Figure 1. This framework illustrates the role of out-campus practicum as a venue for experiential learning in LIS. During the out-campus practicum, students encounter a lot of assignments, tasks and activities through which they further improve and acquire more competencies. To make these experiences meaningful, reflection is done after completing the duration of out-campus practicum through discussion and sharing of observations by group according to their place of assignment. Basing on these reflections, students come up with their description of an ideal librarian and their vision of how their career would
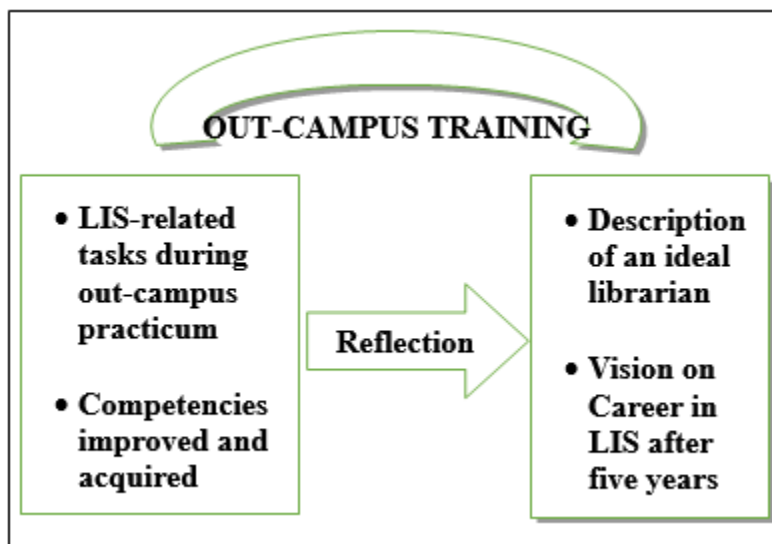
be in LIS five years after graduation.



*Figure 1.* Paradigm of the study.

**Methodology**

Using the descriptive method, this qualitative study explored the learning experiences of BSU-BLIS students during their out-campus practicum in three university libraries, and three special libraries. Respondents included all the 32 fourth year students of BLIS during the school year 2013-2014. An unstructured questionnaire was used to gather data from the students. The journals of students as well as classroom discussions at the end of the practicum period also provided essential data. Informal interviews with students and the supervising librarians were conducted to further clarify the data gathered. Through thematic analysis, responses were grouped into themes or categories. Percentage was used to rank the answers given by the respondents.

**Findings and Discussion**

Findings of the study are presented according to two types of libraries, particularly university and special libraries. Responses are categorized into themes then ranked according to percentage. Responses integrated in the discussion are coded according to type of library where the respondents were assigned, i.e., UL08 would refer to respondent number eight from a University Library, and SL06 refers to respondent number six from a special library.

Tasks Performed by Students During their Out-campus Practicum
Table 1 presents the different tasks that students performed during their out-campus practicum.

Responses are categorized into themes based on the competencies in LIS namely, cataloguing and classification, reference and information services, indexing and abstracting, information technology, and other related works.

Table 1

*Tasks Performed by Students*

| Professional Competencies | University Libraries (n = 23) | Special Libraries (n = 9) | Total (n = 32) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Cataloguing and classification | 23 (100%) | 9 (100%) | 32 (100%) |
| 2) Reference and information work | 23 (100%) | 9 (100%) | 32 (100%) |
| 3) Other Related tasks | 19 (83%) | 8 (89%) | 27 (84%) |
| 4) Indexing and abstracting | 4 (17%) | 2 (22%) | 6 (19%) |
| 5) Information technology | 3 (13%) | 3 (33%) | 6 (19%) |

The table shows that all 32 students performed tasks related to cataloguing and classifying, and reference and information services. This finding is expected considering that these competencies are the backbones of library and information work. Both processes are essential in the organization of information resources for searching, retrieval and access.

During the duration of the practicum, students catalogued and classified library materials most of the time. Respondent UL08 for instance emphasized, "For the technical services, cataloguing and classification were the activities I have experienced most of the days of our practicum. It was great because through these tasks, I was enlightened to perform the right processes of cataloguing and classification." Inside the classroom, students learn the principles and concepts of cataloguing and classification. Application however is limited due to lack of class hours and lack of standard tools for classification numbers, subject headings, and other authority lists. Consequently, when students are confronted with a variety of resources to be organized, the initial reaction observed by the library supervisors from them are usually confusion and hesitation. Nevertheless, among the activities listed by the students include cataloguing and classifying of books/ monographs, and journals. Others indicated cataloguing using the AACR, while some students indicated experiencing cataloguing using RDA. Standards used in classifying depended on the system used by the library where students were assigned.

Another experience equally enjoyed by the students during their practicum is their encounter with the library users. This was emphasized by Respondent UL17 who stated, "Reference service was one of the best experience and most fulfilling because after you assist them, the smile on their faces and their simple 'thank you' made you realize the worth of a librarian/ student librarian." Those assigned at

the university libraries dealt with a lot of students, faculty, and staff of different personalities with varied information needs. For those assigned in the special libraries, their users may be limited to the employees of the organization but their needs are more specialized and specific. Considering their status, practicum students are often uneasy dealing with them. Respondent SL06 commented, "I remember a time when I was assigned to assist a client, I felt nervous because it is my first time to assist a professional." Despite these discomforts, students who experienced assisting professionals or employees develop a deeper sense of respect to authority and at the same time learn to deal with them professionally.

Other related functions were also performed by almost all students. These include mechanical processing of resources such as collating, stamping of ownership, labelling of call numbers, covering of books, answering the phone, and even sweeping the floor. Likewise, many students realized that staying at the baggage counter is not an easy task. Respondent UL10 stated, "In staying at the baggage counter, you should be attentive especially when there are many clients. Staying also in this area is not easy because you should be careful with their bags. In serving them, you should also wear a smile on your face to welcome them." Other students who experienced visiting other libraries were also excited to meet other librarians.

Unfortunately, few students were engaged in activities related to indexing and abstracting, as well as information technology services. Only students assigned at the periodicals section of the different libraries were able to index some articles from journals. Others experienced making annotations for the bulletin boards. Respondent SL09 noted, "Additional experiences that I had were magazine indexing, book annotation, call labelling . . . In the magazine indexing, what I did first was to see the magazine index stored in the index file cabinet. I was to read first the content of the article then provide a subject for it." Other activities experienced by the students were related to the use of information technology. While many students used the computer for MARC cataloguing, some students used it to do some other related jobs. Respondent SL08 gave the following list of what they did, "Audio burning, video and audio downloading, and retrieving lost files from their flash drive."

In general, the above findings indicate that students applied and practiced the theories learned inside the classroom. Basing on the responses, students are able to understand further the knowledge they learn in school, and even add more to what they already have. More important however, is the suggestion that through practicum, students are able to appreciate better the tasks in librarianship and information work as they are actually involved in a real setting. These results match the finding of De Long (2011) in her evaluation on the academic library internship programs in Canada. De Long noted that the internship programs are effective in providing valuable experience and the opportunity to develop professional skills and knowledge which are important to career development.

Competencies Improved by Students During their Out-campus Practicum

     Table 2 presents the personal and professional competencies improved by the students during their out-campus training. Personal competencies are grouped in themes – task related, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Task related competencies refer to the proper attitude and behavior that individuals must have toward their work. Interpersonal competencies refer to how individuals relate or deal with others, while intrapersonal refers to competencies in relation to oneself, especially emotions. Professional competencies are grouped based on LIS competencies particularly on cataloguing and classification, information technology, and reference and information work.

Table 2

*Competencies Improved by Students*

| Personal Competencies | University Libraries (n = 23) | Special Libraries (n = 9) | Total (n = 32) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Task related Competencies | 15 (65%) | 9 (100%) | 24 (75%) |
| Interpersonal Competencies | 12 (52%) | 6 (67%) | 18 (56%) |
| Intrapersonal Competencies | 9 (39%) | 2 (22%) | 11 (34%) |
| **Professional Competencies** | **Univ Lib (n = 23)** | **Special Lib (n = 9)** | **Total (n = 32)** |
| Cataloguing & classification | 15 (65%) | 5 (56%) | 20 (63%) |
| Information technology | 9 (39%) | 1 (11%) | 10 (31%) |
| Reference and information work | 3 (13%) | 2 (22%) | 5 (16%) |

     The table shows that task related competencies got the highest percentage. Such finding is expected considering that the students were exposed in real working situations. One of the most common responses given by the students was initiative. According to Respondent SL03, "I was able to work without my supervisor's instruction as long as I know what to do." Respondent UL15 also stated, "I have developed my initiative in doing something. Being a student I always wait for instructions to do a work, but when I started my OJT, I volunteer to do some works if I know I'm not doing something." Other task related competencies enumerated by the students are punctuality, flexibility, resourcefulness and grooming. Somehow, these competencies are emphasized and attained in the school as part of their academics. But within the work environment, application of these competencies is entirely different as proven by the students' responses. These results illustrate the importance of practicum in providing a good venue for students to put into actual practice the basic attitude and values required in any work environment.

In terms of interpersonal competencies, the students were able to improve their communication skills, cooperation, teamwork, and their ability to deal with other people. According to Respondent SL08, "Because I interact with different users, I was able to improve my communication skills by sharing my thoughts and ideas effectively to their queries." Respondent SL01 likewise emphasized, "Also, I can say that my dealings with the staff are more enhanced because they're very humble and very casual."

These findings correspond with the conclusion of C.-T. Chen and C.-F. Chen (2011) in their study in which students believe that internship programs enabled them to make many friends, increased their interpersonal interactions, and expanded their visions. Library and information work does not only entail interaction between and among library personnel, but equally important is an active interaction with users. Basically, a good set of interpersonal skills is a prerequisite in LIS profession. Fortunately, out-campus practicum enables students to interact with a lot of people with different personalities that include students, professionals and other researchers.

It is also noteworthy that some students improved their intrapersonal competencies. When asked what competencies were improved during the out-campus practicum, Respondent SL01 stated, "For me, I would say acceptance and humility, because I was able to accept mistakes and do some changes within myself and being humble to say "yes, I did it and it was a mistake." Respondent UL17 mentioned, "This practicum also enhanced my self-confidence and self-esteem." These findings indicate that the practicum allowed the students to internalize essential values or beliefs which may help them control their emotions and develop their stress management system. These are necessary in establishing a happy and more fulfilling career.

In terms of professional competencies, the students improved on their cataloguing and classification, computer skills, and on their reference skills. Respondent UL16 commented, "I was able to improve my knowledge and skills on cataloguing and classifying materials." Respondent SL17 also emphasized, "During my practicum, I understood more how to catalog and classify a material. Some lucky students mentioned understanding further the latest trend in organizing resources which is the RDA. Respondent UL11 for instance claimed that, "I was able to improve my knowledge on cataloguing especially on RDA."

A remarkable number of students also improved on their computer skills. Respondent UL05 remarked, "I already know how to use Apple computers because it is way too different from other types of computer – the short cut keys, the tabs, etc., have different functions." Other respondents such as Respondents SL05, UL07 also indicated that their computer skills were improved.

Overall, these findings illustrate the importance of out-campus practicum in honing the professional competencies of students. In school, activities performed are just superficial practices of

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theories and concepts purposely to test the students' understanding of the lessons. In contrast, out-campus practicum provides a variety of real tasks and responsibilities which allow students to have a real overview of what to expect once they embark on practicing their chosen profession.

Competencies Acquired by the Students During their Out-campus

Table 3 shows that the competencies acquired by the students are focused on personal competencies. These are again categorized as task related, interpersonal and intrapersonal.

The table shows that most of the personal competencies identified by the students are task related. Respondent UL17 shared, "The ability to adapt easily to new environment is I think the competency I acquired during my practicum." In line with this comment is the response of Respondent UL06 who also mentioned, "I acquired some personal competencies like the ability to adapt and adjust with the supervisors I am working with." As a practice, most library supervisors usually rotate the students into the different sections. This allows the students to experience working in different environments with different supervisors, and even different users. To be able to survive in each environment, students have to adjust and fit themselves within the workplace. This finding is aligned with what Rubin (2000) expressed that those who choose librarianship will need to be adaptable, patient, able to withstand uncertainty, and amenable to learning new things.

Table 3

*Competencies Acquired by Students*

| Personal Competencies | University Libraries (n = 23) | Special Libraries (n = 9) | Total (n = 32) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Task related Competencies | 12 (52%) | 3 (33%) | 15 (47%) |
| Interpersonal Competencies | 3 (13%) | 2 (22%) | 5 (16%) |
| Intrapersonal Competencies | 4 (17%) | 1 (11%) | 5 (16%) |

In terms of interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies, the responses given are remarkable. For interpersonal skills, Respondent UL7 stressed, "I believe that I have acquired human skills. Working with peers inside the classroom is different when you worked with them in a real library environment, and especially when working with professionals." On the other hand, intrapersonal is illustrated by Respondent SL07 who stressed on being ambitious, "I learn how to be ambitious because in the library there are some things that I want to improve to make the work easier." Respondent UL21 likewise explained that being ambitious is dreaming. The respondent emphasized, "But for me, when I dream, I'm setting a standard for myself and a challenge for me to reach." Other intrapersonal skills mentioned include self-confidence, courage, and being positive.

These findings confirm that learning is not only cognitive as emphasized by Lang and Evans (2006). Learning largely involves the affective domain which unfortunately cannot be actually provided inside the classroom. Lectures and simulations on values, attitudes and behavior inside the classroom may provide some good points for the learners to consider. However, the effect may not be as intense as to when learners are exposed to real situations and be subjected to all kinds of training. During the out-campus practicum, students do not only hear about values, but rather they see the application of these values which is more meaningful.

Influence of Out-campus Practicum on Students' Description of an Ideal Librarian

After the out-campus practicum, the students were asked to describe an ideal librarian. Table 4 presents the categories or themes on which their descriptions revolved. These are values/attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

The table indicates that almost all students described an ideal librarian or information professional in terms of values or attitudes. Respondent UL06 briefly describes, "An ideal librarian loves learning, possesses the 21st century competencies and imbued with the following characteristics: dedicated, innovative, passionate, hardworking, humble, honest, detailed-oriented, unselfish, and willing to learn and share his or her knowledge." Similarly, Respondent UL21 refers an ideal librarian to be "approachable, understanding, and helpful in many ways." For Respondent SL03, an ideal librarian "is sensitive to clients' needs." These common thoughts regarding a librarian strongly suggest that the students realized the essence of values or attitudes in performing their role as future information professionals.

Table 4

*Students' Description of an Ideal Librarian*

| Categories | University Libraries (n = 23) | Special Libraries (n = 9) | Total (n = 32) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Values/Attitudes | 15 (65%) | 9 (100%) | 24 (75%) |
| Knowledge | 7 (30%) | 2 (22%) | 9 (28%) |
| Skills | 4 (17%) | 1 (11%) | 5 (16%) |

Meanwhile, some students also touched on knowledge and skills in their description of an ideal librarian. Respondent UL13 for instance expressed that an ideal librarian "is someone who is knowledgeable and can create a friendly/welcoming atmosphere where users can comfortably do their work." However, for respondent UL22, an ideal librarian "is able to organize the materials in the

library in a way that the users won't be having a hard time in locating certain materials." These results imply that knowledge and skills of the librarian and other information professionals are still indispensable in library and information organization. These competencies are necessary to facilitate information searching, retrieval and access.

The findings capture the ethical and professional obligation of librarians and information professionals which as stated by Rubin (2001) is to provide the highest level of service to each library user. This obligation as explained further is not limited to the provision of accurate and complete information but likewise requires that each library user be treated in an ethical and professional manner. Overall, these descriptions imply that the students are able to realize that as service providers, librarians and other information professionals must possess the right attitude and values to be able to serve their users satisfactorily.

Influence of Out-campus Practicum on Students' Perceptions of their Career in LIS Five Years After Graduation

Table 5 illustrates how the students envision themselves in their chosen career within the next five years. Responses were categorized into themes particularly employment, continuing education, and professional works.

Table 5

*Perceptions of Students Regarding their LIS Career*

| Categories | University Libraries (n = 23) | Special Libraries (n = 9) | Total (n = 32) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employment | 22 (96%) | 8 (89%) | 30 (94%) |
| Continuing education | 2 (9%) | 3 (33%) | 5 (16%) |
| Professional works | 3 (13%) | 2 (22%) | 5 (16%) |

Almost all students responded that they view themselves as successful librarians five years after graduation. More aspiring students even view themselves to be employed and at the same pursuing higher education while doing other professional works. Respondent SL01 stated, "Five years from now, I see myself as a professional librarian who is working enthusiastically and dedicated in rendering full service to the clients and continuing my education and trying other careers related to LIS for the improvement of myself professionally and my library and mostly my clients." Respondent UL3 is another determined student who emphasized on performing other professional works while being employed in a university. The respondent stated, "I am a member of PAASCU (Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities) that is why I am going/travelling to different

schools to conduct accreditation. Also, I am very competent in conducting seminars about librarianship from the different schools here in the Philippines and abroad." Respondent UL17 who is active in sports would like to be employed as a librarian while playing in the field. The respondent expressed, "Five years from now I see myself as a full time librarian in a public secondary school at the same time trainor of the school's softball team.

These findings imply that students model their career aspirations from their supervising librarians during the practicum period. Excitingly, the students are able to recognize the factors underlying the success of their supervising librarians. Basing on these they are able to visualize a successful career after their graduation.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**
Overall, the findings of the study conclude that out-campus trainings are important and valuable in preparing the students for their career in LIS after graduation. From these trainings, students engage in different tasks related to library and information works through which students improve and acquire personal and professional competencies. As a result of these encounters, students realize that although knowledge and skills are important, an ideal librarian is described primarily as someone who has the essential values and attitudes necessary to carry out the services expected from the LIS profession. Finally, after out-campus practicum, students envision themselves as successful LIS professionals based on their exposure in the library during the out-campus training.

Another important conclusion highlights the significant role of partner libraries and information centers in LIS education. These partners are indispensable in shaping the career of LIS students. They serve as venues where students put into action the cognitive foundations provided in school. To a great extent, these partners are the ultimate training grounds for students as they prepare for employment in their chosen profession.

Basing on these conclusions, it is suggested that LIS schools should continue to strengthen their partnership with their existing partner libraries. Utmost, with the ASEAN integration, LIS schools should endeavor to expand their partnership with libraries and information centers in other countries. This will allow more opportunities for the students to be engaged in international librarianship and become globally competitive. It is also recommended that libraries and information centers should continue to upgrade their existing services and programs to be able to provide the out-campus practicum students with the latest trends in the practice of LIS profession. These will equip the students with the competencies required to survive and compete in a changing work environment in this 21st century.

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