SRYAHWA PUBLICATIONS

Research Journal of Library and Information Science
ISSN: 2637-5915 | Volume 7, Issue 1, 2023
https://doi.org/10.22259/2637-5915 .0701002

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Graduates' Evaluation of the MLIS Program and the Skills Contribution Towards Curriculum Development: The Case of a Private University in the Philippines

David A. Cabonero[1], Rosielyn M. Austria[2] , Regina D. Ramel[3]

[1]Associate Professor, School of Graduate Studies, Saint Mary's University, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines.
[2]Faculty, School of Graduate Studies, Saint Mary's University, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines.
[3]Dean, School of Graduate Studies, Saint Mary's University, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines.

Received: 7 June 2023 Accepted: 14 June 2023 Published: 14 July 2023

Corresponding Author: David A. Cabonero, Associate Professor, School of Graduate Studies, Saint Mary's University, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines.

Abstract

This article presents the results of the tracer study on the extent of the MLIS program's contribution to enhancing the graduates' skills, namely: a) creativity and innovation, b) critical thinking and problem solving, c) communication and collaboration, d) information, media, and technology skills, and e) life and career skills; and their evaluation of the following domains, namely: a) program of studies and curriculum, b) instructional materials, procedures, and techniques, c) evaluation and grading, d) community service and involvement, e) graduate studies library services, f) graduate studies library physical facilities, g) admission, retention, and student services, and h) research activities of the program using a descriptive quantitative research method. It also employed a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test to determine the significant difference in the extent of contribution skills and the evaluation of the MLIS program when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace and the number of years as practicing librarians. Findings revealed that the MLIS graduate program contributes significantly to enhancing the skills of practicing librarians and is excellent on their evaluation the MLIS program as a whole. The extent of the MLIS program's contribution in the graduates' skills and their evaluation of the program has no effect nor significant relationship when grouped by the number of years in the workplace and the number of years as practicing librarians.

Keywords: Library and Information Science Graduates, Library Education Curriculum, MLIS Program, Tracer Study.

1. Introduction

Graduate Tracer Studies (GTS) in universities are necessary to identify and follow up with the produced graduates from higher education institutions (HEIs) primarily to understand how graduates perceive their experiences during their degree studies and transition to the labor market (Badiru & Wahome, 2016). It enables institutions to learn feedback from them, particularly the demands of the actual and potential employers, through evaluation and constant revisiting of their curricula (Canizares, 2015). Over the years, the changing role of academic libraries as research support center also changed the role and work description of librarians, information specialists, and library practitioners. Librarians' roles have become dynamic and challenging, with librarians frequently involved in outreach and management and 'embedded' in the classroom, providing instruction in person or via an online management system (Bennett & Simning, 2010; Tumbleson & Burke, 2010). This can be affirmed by

Citation: David A. Cabonero, Rosielyn M. Austria , Regina D. Ramel. Graduates' Evaluation of the MLIS Program and the Skills Contribution Towards Curriculum Development: The Case of a Private University in the Philippines. Research Journal of Library and Information Science. 2023;7(1): 12-23.

the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)/UNESCO School Library Manifesto (2021), which states that "the school library program and its qualified school library professionals focus on student growth by providing equitable access for learning experiences, resources, and learning spaces that enable all members of the school community to become engaged critical thinkers, effective readers, and responsible users, evaluators, and creators of information in multiple formats."

Librarians can only rise to the highest level of their skills and competencies through rigorous continuous professional development (CPD) programs at the forefront of library transformation. Igbinovia (2016) asserted that libraries and information services that enhance the implementation of SDGs should be consolidated and new roles adapted to ensure high-level contribution to the agenda. Thus, librarians need reskilling or upskilling to support providing quality education in the academic community. In the Philippines, several tracer studies conducted on undergraduate degrees (Del Rosario, 2019; Canizares, 2015; Navida, 2018) show graduates' employability rate and curriculum evaluation in a specific program. The study of Albina and Sumagaysay (2020) revealed that the program's evaluation curriculum is indeed relevant. They further recommended a periodic review of the curriculum by academic leaders, alumni, and industry representatives to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills required in the industry.

RA 9246, known as the "Philippine Librarianship Act of 2003", states the role of librarianship as a profession in developing the intellectual capacity of every Filipino, thereby making library service a regular component for national development. With the provisions of RA 9246 and the purpose of rationalizing LIS education in the country to keep pace with the demands of global competitiveness, policies, standards, and guidelines (PSGs) for the LIS program were issued by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), which is the CMO No. 24, Series of 2015 "Revised Policies, Standards, and Guidelines for the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) Program." The revised PSGs for the program were issued to achieve the highest level of quality education and training for library and information science professionals. Its purpose is to make LIS education responsive to the challenges of society's changing information needs to be brought about by rapid technological changes and in keeping with the need to make LIS professionals globally competitive. The competency-based standards can also be used to evaluate the performance of librarians, especially for accreditations and institutional assessments as HEIs like Saint Mary's University (SMU) of Bayombong (Philippines) will also undergo Institutional Sustainability Assessment (ISA), a quality assurance process that assesses the institutional sustainability of an HEI in five key result areas. One is the quality of teaching and learning which evaluates the programs through the quality of students and graduates. The quality of produced graduates is end-result of the quality of teaching and learning and a stable university environment that sharpens graduates' skills.

Saint Mary's University (SMU) is a premier Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae (CICM) Catholic educational institution in Region 2, Philippines, drawn into communion by the Wisdom of God dedicated to forming persons exemplifying excellence, innovation, and passion for Christ's mission. It was established in 1928 and has steadily grown over the years. It has become one of the more developed and important institutions in the Philippines, particularly in the Cagayan Valley Region. It offers a wide array of courses in different fields for degree and certificate programs, Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU) Level III and Level II accredited. The University is one of the pioneering schools in Northern Luzon, Philippines, offering Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula. It offers a Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) and Master in Library and Information Science (MLIS) with Level III accreditation granted by the PAASCU. The program started in 1986 with the Degree Master of Education major in Library Science. It was changed to a Master in Library and Information Science in the school year 2006-2007. It aimed to prepare professional librarians and would-be information managers with sound philosophical theories and practices in libraries and information management and development attuned to the demands of a highly globalized society. Thus, the following questions were investigated: 1) What is the extent of the contribution of LIS graduate education from SMU in enhancing their skills?; 2) What is the evaluation of MLIS graduates on the program in terms of a) program of studies and curriculum, b) instructional materials, procedures, and techniques, c) evaluation and grading, d) community service and involvement, e) graduate studies library, f) graduate studies library physical facilities, g) admission, retention, and student

services, and h) research activities?; 3) Is there a significant difference in the extent of contribution of the MLIS program in enhancing the skills of the LIS graduates and their evaluation of the MLIS program when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace and number of years as a librarian?

1.1 Statement of Hypothesis

The extent of the contribution of the MLIS program in enhancing their skills is similar, and their evaluation of the MLIS program when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace and the number of years as librarians

2. Literature Review

According to Schomburg (2011), European universities adopted tracer studies for a variety of reasons, including accrediting their study programs, explaining the link between study programs and the job market, demonstrating the uniqueness and positioning of individual universities, and enabling universities and institutions to manage higher education in their respective countries to make informed and evidence-based decisions about improvements and quality education and services in higher education. Tracer study is important to determine a university's academic performance in terms of its graduates' acquired competencies and the preparation for the actual world of work (Cagasan, Dargantes, Florentino, & Lasquites, 2020). The results from these studies are essential for academic administrators and evaluators to gather evidence to assess and revise the curricula in line with the demands of society (Osei, 2010). Employers and governments give graduate degree holder importance worldwide (Matos, & Billiones, 2019). However, there are reasons for pursuing Master's and Doctoral degrees, which are sub-categorized into four main areas: self-development, career enhancement, career switching, and environmental factors (Teowkul, et al., 2009)

Due to the emergence of these new technologies, the LIS profession and professionals must enhance their knowledge, skills, competencies, and abilities in order to be relevant to perform their job duties and responsibilities (Yadav, 2021). Most of the graduates claimed to have increased their motivation to hone their skills and competencies, and their understanding of the role of LIS in society was better, for they are instilled with pro-people advocacies (Apolinario & Oasan, 2021). The major factors considered for job acquisition were skills such as knowledge and technical, communication, human relations, leadership, research, problem-solving, and other competencies specific to the area of specialization and the university's reputation (Gines, 2014). The top five skills learned were teaching, communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, and human relations (Cagasan et al., 2020). According to Yadav (2021), out of the five broad areas, namely, traditional library skills, research skills, computing skills, data management skills and soft skills, computing skills, library automation, and library digitization were considered essential for the LIS professionals. On the other hand, Matos & Billiones' (2019) stated that all teaching and competency skills were highly developed, and critical thinking skills were ranked first.

Fraser-Arnott's (2016) study found that LIS education was valuable to their success in several non-library roles. However, the specific career paths of participants were each unique, and the different roles they occupied required different combinations of skills that a list of crucial transferable LIS competencies could be identified. Fernandez (2018) reasoned that the relevance of the acquired knowledge and skills of the graduates were attributed to the MLIS program in the practice of librarianship which they claimed to be very relevant to their present jobs and that they greatly benefitted from it as professionals. These are supported by the study of Chipeta and Chawinga (2018) that the graduates were satisfied with the skills and knowledge they acquired from their LIS program. However, they recommended more practical sessions in cataloging and classification courses and information and communications technology courses. Moreover, Buenrostro Jr. and Maglaque's (2016) study revealed that most graduates expressed no regrets in choosing librarianship as a profession and affirmed that the MLIS program helped them grow professionally and were satisfied with their jobs.

The curricular programs should be at par with the international standards, responsive to the coming ASEAN 2015 integration, relevant to the competency framework of the 21st century, and have lifelong learning skills (Gines, 2014). In the Philippines, the curricular landscape for offering graduate programs shifted considerably. Students must develop new or enhanced skills to satisfy the demands of globalization, regional integration, and internationalization of higher education. With the provisions of Republic Act (RA) 7722, known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994", in pursuance of an outcome-based quality assurance system, in alignment with the Philippine

Qualifications Framework (PQF), Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 15, Series of 2019 "Policies, Standards, and Guidelines for Graduate Programs" was issued for the upgrade of graduate programs in the Philippines in order to align with the reforms being instituted in the Philippine education system. It was stated that this revised set of PSGs governing the graduate programs was deemed necessary to pursue the needed reforms, including cultivating a culture of research and innovation in graduate programs. The PSGs for Graduate Programs also indicated the requirements for graduation, one of which is publishing at least one research article in a refereed journal.

3. Methodology

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive method of research to trace the graduates of the library and information science (LIS) Master's program of SMU as well as to describe their perspectives on the extent of the contribution of graduate education in enhancing their skills; and their evaluation of the MLIS program. It also employed the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test to determine the significant difference when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace and the number of years as a librarian. Data were gathered from 40 LIS graduates of Saint Mary's University (SMU), Bayombong Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines, from 2008-2021 during the 2nd Semester, SY 2021-2022, through the use of Google Form.

Table 1. *Distribution of Respondents*

Year of Graduation	No. of Graduates	No. of Respondents	Percentage
SY 2007-2008 to 2011-2012	10	7	17.50
SY 2012-2013 to 2016-2017	20	16	40.00
SY 2017-2018 to 2020-2021	19	17	42.50
Total	49	40	100

Table 2. *Demographic Profile of SMU MLIS Graduates*

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Percentage
No. of Years in the Work Place	5 years and below	9	22.5
	6 to 10 years	6	15.0
	11 to 15 years	12	30.0
	16 to 20 years	8	20.0
	21 to 25 years	4	10.0
	26 years and above	1	2.5
	Total	40	100
No. of Years as Practicing Librarians	5 years and below	5	12.5
	6 to 10 years	5	12.5
	11 to 15 years	18	45.0
	16 to 20 years	7	17.5
	21 to 25 years	2	5.0
	26 years and above	3	7.5
	Total	40	100

The research questionnaire used was the SMU School of Graduate Studies tracer survey questionnaire composed of three (3) parts, namely, 1) demographic profile; 2) the extent of contribution of graduate education from SMU in enhancing the skills of the MLIS graduates; and 3) the extent of provision or condition of the LIS graduate program. It was subjected to face and content validation through a panel of library and information science, and research experts. Cronbach's Alpha test was employed to check the reliability of the instrument. Table 3 shows the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the skills (.992) and evaluation of the MLIS Program (.992) exceeded the conventional or acceptable mark of 0.70.

Table 3. *Reliability Test Result*

Skills of MLIS Graduates	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Creativity and innovation	.958	8
Critical thinking and problem solving	.979	9
Communication and collaboration	.905	8
Information, media, and technology skills	.975	13
Life and career skills	.984	33
Total	**.992**	**71**
Evaluation of MLIS Program	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**No. of Items**
Program of studies and curriculum	.973	15
Instructional materials, procedures, and techniques	.980	17
Evaluation and grading	.953	10
Community service and involvement	.963	5
Graduate studies library services	.963	8
Graduate studies library physical facilities	.951	9
Admission, retention, and student services	.991	12
Research activities	.959	7
Total	**.992**	**84**

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The Skills of the MLIS Graduates

Table 4. *Extent of Contribution of MLIS Program in Enhancing the Skills of the Graduates*

Domains	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Creativity and innovation	3.70	.3992	Very Great
Critical thinking and problem solving	3.63	.4489	Very Great
Communication and collaboration	3.73	.3649	Very Great
Information, media, and technology skills	3.64	.4146	Very Great
Life and career skills	3.75	.3562	Very Great
Overall	**3.69**	**.3669**	**Very Great**
Legend: 3.5-4.0 – Very Great; 2.5-3.49 – Great; 1.5-2.49 – Moderately Great; 0.5-1.49 - Low			

In general, the contribution of the MLIS program in enhancing or developing the respondents' skills is to a great extent. It is noteworthy that all the domains were rated as very great, with *Life and career skills* having the highest mean (3.75) while *Critical thinking and problem solving* got the lowest mean (3.63). This implies that the MLIS program of SMU is very effective in delivering its learning outcomes; the students gain the necessary skills useful in their job or employment. This finding is supported by Hill, Walkington, and France (2016), stating that graduates should possess critical thinking skills, such as intellectual curiosity, analytical reasoning, problem-solving and reflective judgment; effective communication; leadership and teamwork skills; research and inquiry skills; information literacy; digital literacy; personal attributes such as self-awareness, self-confidence, personal autonomy/self-reliance, flexibility and creativity; and personal values such as ethical, moral and social responsibility, integrity, and cross-cultural awareness. Likewise, in the study of Cagasan et al. (2020), the top five skills learned were teaching, communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, and human relations skills, while Yadav (2021) specified that the computing skills, library automation, and library digitization are considered essential for the practicing librarians.

4.2 The Evaluation of the MLIS Graduate Program

Table 5. *Evaluation of MLIS Program*

Domains	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Program of studies and curriculum	4.70	.3887	Excellent
Instructional materials, procedures, and techniques	4.69	.4169	Excellent
Evaluation and grading	4.73	.3830	Excellent
Community service and involvement	4.65	.4673	Excellent
Graduate studies library services	4.73	.3830	Excellent
Graduate studies library physical facilities	4.72	.4145	Excellent
Admission, retention, and student services	4.70	.4176	Excellent
Research activities	4.73	.5342	Excellent
Overall	**4.71**	**.3563**	**Excellent**

Legend: 4.5-5 – Excellent; 3.5-4.49 – Very Good; 2.5-3.49 – Good; 1.5-2.49 – Fair; 0.5-1.49 - Poor

The respondents perceived that the MLIS program of SMU is excellent, as evidenced by the overall mean (4.71), which means that the provisions or conditions related to the program are very extensive and functioning perfectly. The domains e*valuation and grading*, g*raduate studies, library services*, and *research activities* got the highest mean (4.73), while *community service and involvement* had the lowest mean (4.65). It signifies that the curriculum, services, and facilities of the MLIS program ensure the development and growth of the students throughout their academic journey as graduate students. This finding agrees with the study of Gines (2014), wherein the graduates rated a high level of satisfaction with the University's services, learning environment, and facilities

4.3 Significant Difference on the Skills of the MLIS Graduates and their Evaluation of the MLIS Program when Grouped According to Number of Years in the Workplace and Number of Years a Librarian

Table 6. Significant Difference on the skills gained of MLIS graduates when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace

Skills	Number of years in the workplace	N	Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Decision
Creativity and Innovation	5 years and below	9	18.83	3.70	.3992	8.668	5	.123	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	26.75						
	11 to 15 years	12	23.25						
	16 to 20 years	8	18.06						
	21 to 25 years	4	8.75						
	26 years and above	1	31.50						
Critical thinking and problem solving	5 years and below	9	20.44	3.63	.4490	3.042	5	.693	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	23.17						
	11 to 15 years	12	22.13						
	16 to 20 years	8	17.38						
	21 to 25 years	4	15.38						
	26 years and above	1	31.00						
Communication and collaboration	5 years and below	9	20.50	3.73	.3649	3.156	5	.676	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	21.33						
	11 to 15 years	12	22.88						
	16 to 20 years	8	18.38						
	21 to 25 years	4	14.00						
	26 years and above	1	30.00						
Information, media, and technology skills	5 years and below	9	21.78	3.64	.4146	5.782	5	.328	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	23.17						
	11 to 15 years	12	22.08						
	16 to 20 years	8	18.81						
	21 to 25 years	4	9.50						
	26 years and above	1	31.50						

Skills	Number of years in the workplace	N	Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Decision
Life and career skills	5 years and below	9	21.44	3.75	.3562	2.123	5	.832	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	18.25						
	11 to 15 years	12	22.04						
	16 to 20 years	8	18.88						
	21 to 25 years	4	17.38						
	26 years and above	1	32.50						
Overall	5 years and below	9	20.61	3.69	.3669	4.789	5	.442	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	21.50						
	11 to 15 years	12	23.08						
	16 to 20 years	8	18.31						
	21 to 25 years	4	11.75						
	26 years and above	1	35.00						

*Significant difference at .05 level

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test show that there is no significant difference in the extent of contribution of the MLIS Program in enhancing the skills of the librarians when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace. This is manifested in the computed p values, which were all greater than the set significant level at .05, indicating the null hypothesis's acceptance.

Table 7. *Significant Difference on the evaluation of MLIS graduates on the MLIS Program when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace*

Evaluation of MLIS Program	Number of years in the workplace	N	Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Decision
Program of studies and curriculum	5 years and below	9	19.61	4.70	.3887	2.780	5	.734	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	21.67						
	11 to 15 years	12	19.21						
	16 to 20 years	8	23.56						
	21 to 25 years	4	15.50						
	26 years and above	1	32.50						
Instructional materials, procedures, and techniques	5 years and below	9	18.17	4.69	.4169	1.784	5	.878	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	21.50						
	11 to 15 years	12	21.08						
	16 to 20 years	8	21.94						
	21 to 25 years	4	17.25						
	26 years and above	1	30.00						
Evaluation and grading	5 years and below	9	16.89	4.73	.3830	3.376	5	.642	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	22.67						
	11 to 15 years	12	19.67						
	16 to 20 years	8	24.38						
	21 to 25 years	4	17.88						
	26 years and above	1	29.50						
Community service and involvement	5 years and below	9	21.33	4.65	.4673	5.569	5	.350	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	23.92						
	11 to 15 years	12	21.46						
	16 to 20 years	8	19.75						
	21 to 25 years	4	9.75						
	26 years and above	1	30.00						

Graduate Studies Library	5 years and below	9	22.22	4.73	.3830	1.940	5	.857	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	18.00						
	11 to 15 years	12	19.63						
	16 to 20 years	8	22.31						
	21 to 25 years	4	17.25						
	26 years and above	1	29.00						
Graduate Studies Library Physical Facilities	5 years and below	9	21.11	4.72	.4145	1.874	5	.866	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	16.67						
	11 to 15 years	12	20.54						
	16 to 20 years	8	22.50						
	21 to 25 years	4	18.75						
	26 years and above	1	28.50						
Admission, retention, and student services	5 years and below	9	21.00	4.70	.4176	6.203	5	.287	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	24.67						
	11 to 15 years	12	19.33						
	16 to 20 years	8	22.75						
	21 to 25 years	4	10.13						
	26 years and above	1	28.50						
Research activities	5 years and below	9	22.67	4.73	.5342	9.134	5	.104	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	23.25						
	11 to 15 years	12	17.88						
	16 to 20 years	8	24.75						
	21 to 25 years	4	9.25						
	26 years and above	1	27.00						
Overall	5 years and below	9	19.50	4.71	.3563	5.157	5	.397	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	6	20.50						
	11 to 15 years	12	20.75						
	16 to 20 years	8	23.88						
	21 to 25 years	4	11.25						
	26 years and above	1	36.50						

*Significant difference at .05 level

There is no significant difference in the evaluation of the MLIS program when grouped according to the number of years in the workplace based on the computed p-values, which is higher than .05, thus, accepting the null hypothesis. This indicates that regardless of the number of years in their workplace, it does not affect their evaluation of the MLIS program.

Table 8. *Significant Difference on the Extent of Contribution of MLIS program in Enhancing the Skills When Grouped According to the Number of Years as Practicing Librarian*

Skills	Number of years as librarian	N	Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Decision
Creativity and Innovation	5 years and below	5	26.70	3.70	.3992	1.854	5	.869	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	20.40						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.72						
	16 to 20 years	7	19.43						
	21 to 25 years	2	18.00						
	26 years and above	3	19.17						

Critical thinking and problem solving	5 years and below	5	25.00	3.63	.4489	2.544	5	.770	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	16.70						
	11 to 15 years	18	20.11						
	16 to 20 years	7	18.93						
	21 to 25 years	2	18.75						
	26 years and above	3	26.50						
Communication and collaboration	5 years and below	5	27.20	3.73	.3649	2.681	5	.749	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	19.20						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.00						
	16 to 20 years	7	19.79						
	21 to 25 years	2	18.50						
	26 years and above	3	23.50						
Information, media, and technology skills	5 years and below	5	27.60	3.64	.4146	2.482	5	.779	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	18.60						
	11 to 15 years	18	20.06						
	16 to 20 years	7	18.79						
	21 to 25 years	2	18.00						
	26 years and above	3	20.17						
Life and career skills	5 years and below	5	27.50	3.75	.3562	3.833	5	.574	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	16.10						
	11 to 15 years	18	18.92						
	16 to 20 years	7	20.29						
	21 to 25 years	2	20.25						
	26 years and above	3	26.33						
Overall	5 years and below	5	28.20	3.69	.3669	3.031	5	.695	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	17.60						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.97						
	16 to 20 years	7	17.79						
	21 to 25 years	2	20.00						
	26 years and above	3	22.33						

*Significant difference at .05 level

Apparently, the extent of the MLIS program's contribution to enhancing the graduates' skills is similar to the number of years as a librarian. This is evident in the computed p-value, which is higher than the set significant difference level at .05, therefore, accepting the null hypothesis. This means that whether they are a novice or seasoned librarians, their perception of the contribution of the graduate program in enhancing their skills is still being determined.

Table 9. *Significant Difference on the evaluation of MLIS graduates on the MLIS Program when grouped according to the number of years as a librarian*

Evaluation of MLIS Program	Number of years as librarian	N	Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Decision
Program of studies and curriculum	5 years and below	5	17.30	4.70	.3887	4.176	5	.524	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	18.39						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.50						
	16 to 20 years	7	26.00						
	21 to 25 years	2	24.67						
	26 years and above	3	17.30						

Instructional materials, procedures, and techniques	5 years and below	5	28.00	4.69	.4169	3.731	5	.589	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	17.30						
	11 to 15 years	18	18.39						
	16 to 20 years	7	19.50						
	21 to 25 years	2	26.00						
	26 years and above	3	24.67						
Evaluation and grading	5 years and below	5	26.20	4.73	.3830	2.850	5	.723	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	14.80						
	11 to 15 years	18	18.97						
	16 to 20 years	7	22.43						
	21 to 25 years	2	24.25						
	26 years and above	3	22.67						
Community service and involvement	5 years and below	5	30.00	4.65	.4673	5.505	5	.357	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	17.80						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.97						
	16 to 20 years	7	18.29						
	21 to 25 years	2	24.00						
	26 years and above	3	15.17						
Graduate Studies Library	5 years and below	5	29.00	4.73	.3830	9.066	5	.106	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	10.70						
	11 to 15 years	18	20.06						
	16 to 20 years	7	19.57						
	21 to 25 years	2	29.00						
	26 years and above	3	21.83						
Graduate Studies Library Physical Facilities	5 years and below	5	25.50	4.72	.4145	8.229	5	.144	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	9.50						
	11 to 15 years	18	20.53						
	16 to 20 years	7	21.64						
	21 to 25 years	2	28.50						
	26 years and above	3	22.33						
Admission, retention, and student services	5 years and below	5	25.80	4.70	.4176	5.151	5	.398	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	19.30						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.39						
	16 to 20 years	7	21.93						
	21 to 25 years	2	28.50						
	26 years and above	3	11.67						
Research activities	5 years and below	5	27.00	4.73	.5342	8.597	5	.126	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	18.00						
	11 to 15 years	18	18.89						
	16 to 20 years	7	24.43						
	21 to 25 years	2	27.00						
	26 years and above	3	10.00						
Overall	5 years and below	5	27.20	4.71	.3563	5.489	5	.359	Accept Ho
	6 to 10 years	5	13.00						
	11 to 15 years	18	19.53						
	16 to 20 years	7	22.43						
	21 to 25 years	2	29.50						
	26 years and above	3	17.17						

*Significant difference at .05 level

There is no significant difference in the evaluation of MLIS graduates in the MLIS program when grouped according to the number of years a librarian. This is apparent in the overall computed p-value, which is higher than .05, thus, accepting the null hypothesis. This implies that regardless of the year as a professional librarian, it does not affect their perception or evaluation of the LIS graduate program of SMU.

5. Conclusion

Tracer studies are one of the bases for improving the curricular programs. It provides feedbacks from the graduates of even the employers specifically on the competencies, skills, and knowledge. To be able to respond to the needs of the highly globalized society, a regular revisit and revision of the program is a must as it is needed in accreditations if not required. Although the findings of the study were of very great extent on the skills contribution and excellent on the evaluation of the MLIS curriculum, there is still a room for improvements. Thus, this study recommends innovative ways to improve the MLIS program on the basis of observing the trends and needs locally and globally.

6. References

1. Albina, A. C., & Sumagaysay, L. P. (2020). Employability tracer study of information technology education graduates from a state university in the Philippines. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, *2*(1). DOI:10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100055
2. Apolinario, R.R., & Oasan, J.P. (2021) A tracer study on the perceived impact of leadership of the University of the Philippines School of Library and Information Studies (UP SLIS) Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) Student Council (SC) to post-graduation professional life. *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries, 10*(3), 329-350, 2021 http://www.qqml.net/index.php/qqml/article/view/722/635
3. Badiru, E., & Wahome, M. (2016). Conducting graduate tracer studies for quality assurance in East African universities: A focus on graduate students voices on quality culture. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(6). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1092473.pdf
4. Bennett, E., & Simning, J. (2010). Embedded librarians and reference traffic: An analysis. *Journal of Library Administration, 50* (5/6), 443-457. https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2010.491437
5. Bueno, D. (2019). Evaluation of students services for continuous improvement in the graduate school of a higher educational institution. *CC The Journal: A Multidisciplinary Research Review, 14*. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.18896.66561
6. Buenrostro Jr., J. C. & Maglaque, L. M. (2016). An online tracer study of the Master of Library and Information Science graduates of Baliuag University. *Harvest, 12(1)*. http://ejournals.ph/form/cite.php?id=11597
7. Cagasan, E.G., Dargantes, T.M., Florentino, N.N., & Lasquites, H.S. (2020). Tracer study of the graduate degree programs of Visayas State University. *Science and Humanities Journal, 11*(2017), 17-39. https://scienceandhumanitiesjournal.com.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Vol11_A2_2.pdf
8. Bulatao, M. G., & Danguilan, A. O. (2010). *Sociodemographic profile, professional achievements, career aspirations and retrospection of the graduates of a Center of Excellence for teacher education in Region 02* [Unpublished dissertation]. Saint Mary's University (Philippines).
9. Canizares, M.J. (2015). Tracing University of San Carlos' science and mathematics education graduates: How well are we in developing teacher professionals? International *Journal of Research Studies in Education, 4*(2). DOI:10.5861/ijrse.2015.985
10. Chipeta, G.T., & Chawinga, W.D. (2018). A Tracer Study of Library and Information Science Graduates of Mzuzu University, Malawi. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science, 28* (1). https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajlais/article/view/174150
11. Chowdhury, M. (2016). Emphasizing morals, values, ethics, and character education in science education and science teaching. *The Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Science, 4* (2). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1095995.pdf
12. Del Rosario, P. Y. (2019). Tracer study of graduates of the college of industrial technology. *International Journal of Advanced Research and Publications, 3*(5), 23-31. http://www.ijarp.org/published-research-papers/may2019/Tracer-Study-Of-Graduates-Of-The-College-Of-Industrial-Technology.pdf
13. Fernandez, R. J. T (2018). A tracer study of Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) graduates of Central Philippine University, Iloilo City (Unpublished Master's thesis). Central Philippine University, Jaro, Iloilo City. https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12852/443
14. Gines, A.C. (2014). Tracer study of PNU graduates. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research, 4* (3), 81-98. https://www.aijcrnet.com/journals/Vol_4_No_3_March_2014/10.pdf
15. Fraser-Arnott, M. (2016). The value of the MLS or MLIS degree: Transferable skills identified by LIS graduates in non-library roles". *The Bottom Line*, 29 (3), 129-141. https://doi.org/10.1108/BL-03-2016-0015
16. Harwood, N. (2017). What can we learn from mainstream education textbook research*? RELC Journal, 48*, 264-277. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0033688216645472

17. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). (2021). *IFLA school library manifesto*. https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/school-libraries-resource-centers/publications/ifla_school_manifesto_2021.pdf

18. Lashley, L. (2019). A reflective analysis of the selection and production of instructional material for curriculum delivery at the primary level in Postcolonial Guyana. *SAGE Open*. doi:10.1177/2158244019858445

19. Matos, M.L., & Billiones, M.G. (2019). Where are the educators: A tracer study. International *Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research, 7* (1), 284-295. https://www.researchpublish.com/papers/where-are-the-educators-a-tracer-study

20. Navida, G. S. (2017). Employability of the Bachelor of Secondary Education graduates of Pangasinan State University Alaminos City Campus. *Journal of Education, Management and Social Sciences, 2*(1), 1-6. http://psurj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/JEMMS-2019-001.pdf

21. Nold, H. (2017). Using critical thinking teaching methods to increase student success: An action research project. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 29*(1), p17-32. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1136016

22. Nwokedi, G., Nwokedi, V., Samuel, N., Panle, P., & Amali, P. (2017). Assessment of physical facilities and users' satisfaction: A case study. *Information Impact: Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*. DOI: 10.4314/iijikm.v7i2.8

23. Osei, C. K. (2010). Perceptions of students towards use of distance learning: The case in an executive masters business program in Ghana. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, 13* (2), 1-12. https://ojdla.com/archive/summer132/osei132.pdf

24. Ritter, S. M., & Mostert, N. (2017). Enhancement of creative thinking skills using a cognitive-based creativity training. *Journal of Cognitive Enhancement, 1*, 243-253. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41465-016-0002-3

25. Runco, M.A. (2004). Everyone has creative potential. In R.J. Sternberg & E.L. Grigorenko (Eds.), *Creativity: from potential to realization* (p21-30). American Psychological Association. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2004-13113-002

26. Rutchinaa, A., Kuimova, M. , Polyushko, D. , Sentsov, A. , & Jin, Z. (2015). *The role of research work in the training of master students studying at technical university*. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 215, 98-101. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.580

27. Schomburg H., & Ulrich T. (2011). *Employability and mobility of bachelor graduates in Europe: Key results of the Bologna process*. Sense Publishers.

28. Stedman, N. R., & Adams, B. L. (2012). Identifying faculty's knowledge of critical thinking concepts and perceptions of critical thinking instruction in higher education. *NACTA Journal*, *56* (2), 9-14.

29. Steiner, D. (2017). Curriculum research: What we know and where we need to go. *Standards Work*. https://standardswork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/sw-curriculum-research-report-fnl.pdf

30. Teowkul, K., Seributra, N. J., Sangkaworn, C., Jivasantikarn, C., & Denvilai, S. (2009). Motivational factors of graduate Thai students pursuing master and doctoral degrees in business. *RU International Journal*, 3 (1), 25-56. https://nsuworks.nova.edu/hcbe_facarticles/422

31. Tumbleson, B.E., & Burke, J.J. (2010). Embedded librarianship is job one: Building on instructional synergies, Public Services Quarterly, 6 (2-3), 225-236. https://doi.org/10.1080/15228959.2010.497457

32. Yadav, A.K.S. (2021). The essential skills and competencies of LIS professionals in the digital age: Alumni perspectives survey. *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication*, *71* (8/9), 837-856. https://doi.org/10.1108/GKMC-03-2021-0049