It is the paper published as:

Author: D. Adkins and K. M. Thompson

Abstract: Honduras faces numerous challenges in providing library service to its citizens, including not having indigenous educational programs to train and educate librarians. The purpose of this paper is to provide a model of international library and information science (LIS) education collaboration by providing a brief overview of the current library and information context of Honduras, discussing ongoing efforts to develop advanced library training there, and focusing on the collaborative efforts between Hondurans and external inputs. The article touches upon current supports and barriers to information access found in Honduras, with a particular focus on how LIS education can help build a library and information culture that promotes information access, information and communication technology use in libraries, and fosters the perception that LIS professionals are indeed professionals.

URLs: http://jelis.org/ http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=40503&local_base=GEN01-CSU01

Author Address: kithompson@csu.edu.au

Addressing Information Resource Issues through LIS Education in Honduras

Journal of Education for Library & Information Science

ALISE Best Papers edition

Kim M. Thompson, PhD[1]

Lecturer

School of Information Studies

Charles Sturt University

Locked Bag 588

Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678

Australia

Tel: +61 2 6933 2808

Fax: +61 2 6933 2733

kithompson@csu.edu.au

and

Denice Adkins, PhD

Associate Professor

School of Information Science & Learning Technologies

University of Missouri

Columbia, MO

---

[1] Contact author

Addressing Information Resource Issues through LIS Education in Honduras

Abstract

Honduras faces numerous challenges in providing library service to its citizens, including not having indigenous educational programs to train and educate librarians. The purpose of this paper is to provide a model of international library and information science (LIS) education collaboration by providing a brief overview of the current library and information context of Honduras, discussing ongoing efforts to develop advanced library training there, and focusing on the collaborative efforts between Hondurans and external inputs. The article touches upon current supports and barriers to information access found in Honduras, with a particular focus on how LIS education can help build a library and information culture that promotes information access, information and communication technology use in libraries, and fosters the perception that LIS professionals are indeed professionals.

Introduction

Honduras, like many other developing countries, faces numerous challenges in providing library service to its citizens. The National Library of Honduras (Biblioteca Nacional de Honduras) oversees more than 100 public libraries around the country; most universities and many schools, especially in and near the larger cities, have libraries; and there are a number of special libraries, document centers, archives, and museum collections

as well. Thus Honduras does have a functioning system of libraries and information centers; however, as is the case in many developing nations around the world, Honduran libraries face a problem of not having indigenous educational programs to train and educate librarians. Thus, those working in libraries as either staff or administrators really do not have a well-defined concept of the complexities of contemporary information service provision. In fact, most do not consider librarianship or archival work as professions at all, but rather these are commonly regarded only as duties that take little knowledge beyond housekeeping skills and a willingness to discipline errant users if books are manhandled or go missing.

There is impetus within Honduras to address this situation by developing graduate level education in librarianship. Accordingly, the authors each worked in Honduras in two consecutive Fulbright efforts, Dr. Denice Adkins in 2008 and Dr. Kim M. Thompson in 2010, both working closely with Dr. Nitida Carranza of the National Pedagogical University Francisco Morazán (UPNFM) and others affiliated with the design of a Master's of Library and Information Science curriculum. While in-country, the authors were regularly told by individuals of all ranks and profiles that there was a lack of national support for and use of libraries in Honduras because "we are not a library culture" or "we are not an information culture." These statements sounded disturbingly fatalistic, particularly as we were in the midst of designing a library science curriculum, seeped in literature expounding the notion that the current era is the Information Age (Toffler, 1980), wherein global standing and political, economic, and social competitive advantage is based on the ability of individuals to access, transfer, and manage information freely. If, as Porat (1977), Castells (1998), Webster (2002), and others argue, economic advances today are increasingly reliant on the information skills and knowledge of the labor class, inability to keep pace with the information society has weighty economic, political, and social implications for Honduras and the Honduran populace. Furthermore, this idea of libraries not being used or well

supported for cultural reasons is not singular to Honduras. The same sentiment has been expressed to the authors in so many words by individuals from other Central American countries, the Caribbean, African nations, Polynesia, and elsewhere, usually with an inference that there is nothing that can be done to remedy library and information apathy because it is ingrained in the culture.

This situation led the authors to question whether the "we are not a library culture" phenomenon might be as much --if not more-- of a barrier to information access in Honduras than lack of technology or lack of training in use of information systems and technologies. In light of Burnett, Besant, and Chatman (2001), Borgman (2003), Burnett, Jaeger, and Thompson (2008), Thompson and Afzal (2011), and other works related to information access, these socio-cultural barriers to information access must be taken into account if full information access is to be afforded.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a model of international Library and Information Science (LIS) education collaboration by means of providing a brief overview of the current library and information context of Honduras, discussing ongoing efforts to develop advanced library training there, and focusing on the collaborative efforts between Hondurans and external inputs. The article also touches upon supports and barriers to information access in Honduras, with a particular focus on how LIS education can help build a library and information culture that promotes reading, information access, information and communication technology use in libraries, and fosters the perception that LIS professionals are indeed professionals.

An Overview of the Honduran Information Infrastructure

An information infrastructure is a system of services, facilities, and installations that support information access (Thompson, 2006). Modern national information infrastructures

consist of telephone, postal, and broadcast services; libraries, schools and other facilities; and electric and telecommunication installations that support a system wherein information can be communicated and managed. An information infrastructure provides access to information resources, or the tools necessary to function effectively in the information society. Here we will discuss educational, telecommunication, and library infrastructures and resources in Honduras as a means to demonstrate that, while the Honduran information infrastructure receives much less funding than that of a developed nation, the basic building blocks of an information culture are certainly in place.

Education

Both public and private pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools are available to Hondurans. Primary and secondary education is compulsory in Honduras, and recent statistics show that 94 percent of Honduran youth aged 15-24 are counted as literate (UNICEF, 2010). Comparing youth literacy rates with the 84 percent literacy rate of the whole of Honduras, this indicates a rise in literacy. However, formal education is obligatory for only nine years, so while primary school attendance rates in 2010 reached 90 percent for females and 87 percent for males, secondary school attendance rates are much lower (45 percent for females, 35 percent for males, UNICEF, 2010), and only approximately 19 percent of Hondurans enroll in tertiary education (World Bank, 2008).

In order to extend education to individuals who are not able to complete formal education programs, televised *Education for All* programming takes advantage of the distribution of televisions throughout Honduras (approximately 87 percent of homes in Honduras have television sets; International Telecommunications Union, 2010). *Education for All* broadcasts audio-visual educational material, and the *Honduran Institute of Education*

by Radio broadcasts educational materials specifically to regional areas that have weaker formal educational infrastructures (Secretaria de Educación, 2009).

Telecommunications

It is difficult to measure the degree of Internet use for information access in Honduras, as data sets regarding telecommunication use and access are sparse for the Central American region; however, there is evidence of increased access to the Internet by means of mobile telephones across the whole of the Americas (International Telecommunications Union, 2009). Mobile phone and wireless technologies allow users to leapfrog landlines and wired infrastructures that previously generated long waiting lists for phone and Internet connection installations. In 2010, a reported 125 percent[2] of Hondurans had mobile phone access (UNICEF, 2010). Satellite services ensure some broadcast and telephone coverage even in remote areas, and, although only Nicaragua (11.7 percent) has a lower Internet penetration rate in Latin American than Honduras (13.48 percent), the Hondurans who are online are well represented as subscribers to social media platforms, with more individuals subscribing to Facebook than there are people with dedicated Internet service (116 percent, socialbakers.com, 2012). This indicates that when the infrastructure falls short in providing sufficient physical access to information and communication technologies, Hondurans are finding ways to access online networks in spite of these shortcomings.

Libraries

Data related to Honduran libraries are even less forthcoming than mobile phone, Internet, and Facebook adoption statistics, but we do know that the Honduran infrastructure supports one national library and approximately 116 public libraries, five academic libraries,

---

[2] "Number per 100 population, 2010, mobile phones" (UNICEF, 2010). This seems to indicate that many individuals have more than one mobile phone registered.

382 school libraries, and seven special or other libraries (OCLC, 2012)[3]. In terms of public

library access, this amounts to 0.016 public libraries per 1000 inhabitants, with 6.9 percent of

public libraries offering Internet access to users (Akpabie, 2009). For purposes of

comparison, the United States has 9,225 public libraries (American Library Association,

2012), or 0.03 public libraries per 1000 inhabitants, about double the number of libraries per

capita, and 99 percent offer free Internet access (Bertot, Jaeger, & McClure, 2011).

Even before Hurricane Mitch devastated the Honduran physical infrastructure in

1998, library collections consisted almost entirely of materials "donated by individuals or

embassies, disconnected from any collection development planning" (García de Paso Gómez,

1998, p. 151). Thus, although Honduran public libraries are well-placed, usually in town

centers or in locations with easy community access, "the installations in general are of poor

quality, with little floor space, and inadequate lighting and distribution. The condition of the

furniture (tables, chairs and shelving) is lamentable" (García de Paso Gómez, 1998, p. 151).

So while Honduras has many of the basic infrastructural elements needed for information

access, it is clear that there is still room for improvement in what each can offer Honduras

citizens in terms of information access. But how can Honduras expect to improve information

access and services when funds are tight and information resources are expensive?

Librarians as Information Resources

---

[3] The OCLC statistics are drawn from a number of resources, some of which are dated 1990, so we have chosen
to say "approximately." More recent statistics related to librarians and library training at the national level in
Honduras are not available. Even in resources in which Latin or Central American library statistics are
presented, Honduras data is often missing or incomplete. The most current library statistics available are found
in six reports: the American Library Association published *The World Encyclopedia of Library & Information
Science* (Wedgeworth, 1993), the *2007 International Library Survey in Latin America* (Akpabie, 2009),
Librarian's Companion (Wertsman, 1996), *World Guide to Libraries* (2011), *Directory of South and Central
American Libraries* (2010), and *World Guide to Library, Archive, and Information Science Education*
(Schniederjurgen, 2007). Unfortunately, even these resources sometimes rely on the data found in each other
from years past to complete data tables. Much of what the authors learned about the current state of libraries and
library science education in Honduras was obtained during their respective stays as Fulbright Scholars in
country. Some of the documents cited herein are internal reports obtained from the national library and other
resources that were acquired only by means of social networking in-country.

First, it is important to note that the value of library services for economic development and social progress has been documented (Akeroyd, 1991; McClure et al., 2000; Potella, 2001). According to the United National Economics and Social Council (UNESCO, 2003), "the savings achieved by an organization or a community that has a well-functioning library may range from 2 to 8.5 times if the cost of running the library is weighed against the cost of obtaining library services from outside sources" (p. 2). Emphasis must be made on the "well-functioning library" phrase in this UNESCO report. It is not enough to have a library building, a library building with books, or even a library building with computers and Internet access. It is not the technology or physical resources that develop a nation, it is the *human* resources that foster development (Nyerere, 1974). Thus, when individuals working in libraries and other information agencies, whether as staff or as administrators, do not have a well-defined concept of the complexities of contemporary information service provision, society does not receive the "2 to 8.5 times" the economic return on investment that it could. Beyond the lack of economic means to provide the most current information resources and technologies, as is the case in many developing nations around the world, Honduran libraries face the additional hardship of not having reasonable access to educational programs to train and educate librarians.

The most recent published count of librarians[4] in Honduras, the 1993 edition of *The World Encyclopedia of Library & Information Science,*[5] lists 16 academic librarians, one special librarian, one public librarian, and four school librarians in Honduras (Wedgeworth, 1993). Other library staff without certificates or diplomas totaled 23 in the national library, 134 in academic library positions, 19 in public library roles, 396 in school libraries, and eight other workers in special libraries. Most school library staff are classroom teachers who are assigned to the library for a semester or year –sometimes with two weeks of library technical

---

[4] A librarian being defined as "professional staff with certificate, diploma, etc." (Wedgeworth, 1993, p. 350).
[5] As noted in footnote 3, we realize these data are quite old, but no more recent data are available.

training offered by the Ministry of Education, sometimes not—and then are rotated back to the classroom. Public librarians tend to be school teachers who have taken on public librarianship as a second job or career change, again with no more than two-weeks to three-months of training (García de Paso Gómez, 1998). In academic libraries, it is not uncommon for academic office staff to be moved to the library as a disciplinary measure (E. O. Mendoza, personal communication, 2010). Academic library and other larger library directors generally shoulder the entire burden of personally providing all library training for their staff, whatever their role in the library might be, from reference to information technology services and everything in between.

Although there have been periodic LIS training efforts sponsored and provided by Honduran, Iberoamerican, and United States (US) educators in Honduras, there has been no established school or program for terminal degrees in LIS. This lack of LIS education results in weaknesses in library infrastructures and information management, as both technical and theoretical baselines for library and information services are absent in the service staff and sometimes even in the managers. The lack of organized support for library training results in a situation in which library collections are not cataloged and bibliographic control is minimal. Books and other resources are shelved by broad topics and users and staff rely on browsing to find needed materials. While at first glance this may not appear problematic since most school and public library collections are quite small, this results in students not being introduced to classification systems until university, at which point a requisite one-hour library orientation is not sufficient to foster information literacy. Likewise, physical information resources are unused because they are not presented in an accessible manner or because they are contained in a database or system that the user cannot navigate, thus preventing information access as completely as if the information did not exist at all.

The struggle to provide library services and library education in Honduras has been ongoing since the 19th century but has taken on greater significance with the rapid development of information and communication technologies. Honduran President Marcos Aurelio Soto established the first national library of Honduras in 1880 (Maldonado, 1992). Since that date, support for the national library and other libraries and information organizations in Honduras has waxed and waned through changes in political regimes, natural disasters, and economic overhauls and crises. As domestic and international groups became involved in development efforts after Hurricane Mitch in 1998, for example, libraries were not usually top priority (Inter-American Development Bank, 2000), but neither were they completely overlooked.

In 2003, a small team of administrators from the national library, local academic libraries, the US Embassy Information Resource Center, and the Honduran International Cultural Center banded together to create a national library association, the *Asociación de Bibliotecarios y Documentalistas de Honduras* or ABIDH, to promote collaborative efforts in LIS education in-country and to improve the image of library and information professionals. They invited University of Buenos Aires educator Dr. Elsa Barber to consult on the idea of starting a program of LIS education in Honduras. Then, before the end of 2005, ABIDH inaugurated what was to become an annual three-day training conference for information professionals and invited Fulbright Scholar Dr. Paul Christensen of San Jose State University's School of Library and Information Science to help investigate the possibilities of proposing an in-country LIS degree program.

By this time post-Hurricane Mitch, the National Library had resumed some library training programs, beginning with user-focused workshops offered to National Library and Archive staff by Panamanian Public Library Network coordinator and librarian Olga Ledesma de Cueva (Unidad Coordinadora Red de Bibliotecas Públicas., n.d.). Other

information advocates provided financial and/or expertise support for additional training efforts across the capital city and some rural areas. For example the National Autonomous University of Honduras (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras or UNAH), the national telecommunications company Hondutel, the Royal Swedish Library, the Spanish Embassy, the Colombian Embassy, the United States Embassy, the International Development Bank "Asociación Compartir" program, the Library of the Central Bank of Honduras, and the Riecken Foundation, to name but a few involved, have contributed resources and training for librarians and libraries. Nonetheless, the training programs have not resulted in more than brief and basic technical trainings and the results have not produced a group of librarians who feel themselves to be confident information professionals (Zarate, 2010).

Rationale for Master's Level LIS Education

Several Honduran and international consultants have suggested that starting undergraduate level training, a *licenciatura* program, is the best idea for starting library and information science education in Honduras. Master's degrees are not typically necessary for other professionals such as teachers and civil engineers; the *licenciatura* or *bachiller* is regarded as sufficient. However, the authors argue that an LIS master's program better undergirds cultural understanding of the professional breadth that librarianship entails, and also has a pragmatic goal of becoming self-sustaining. In Honduras undergraduate degrees typically have a five year full-time enrolment period, whereas master's programs are two years of full-time study. According to a study funded by the UPNFM in 2010 to ascertain potential librarian interest in graduate LIS education, 50 percent of the 87 library workers questioned indicated that they have an undergraduate degree in some area of study, and half of respondents also indicated that they would like to increase their level of LIS education, 30

percent stating that they would like to pursue a master's in the field (Zarate, 2010). Offering these potential students a second undergraduate degree would entail up to five years of study without particularly increasing the graduates' credentials.

In addition, Honduran education regulations require that any university-level instructor must have a master's degree. Since there are no graduate-level LIS education opportunities in Honduras, very few Honduran librarians or educators would be qualified to teach LIS subject matter. International LIS educators would need to be enlisted, which would be burdensome to do in perpetuity and, with no graduate level study in-country, the problem of home-grown LIS educators would not be addressed. Teaching only to the *licenciatura* or *diplomado* level would create a situation of perpetual outsider education, with few Honduran librarians qualified to guide Honduran LIS education. A program that educates to the master's level produces future teachers who can later develop undergraduate and technical training programs in-country and with a full understanding of the local cultural norms and contexts. So the proposed program initially relies on adjunct teachers and international instructors who commit to one or two years of instruction and train the first generation of LIS educators for Honduras. Subsequently, these newly trained Honduran LIS educators will be set to take over the instruction.

An additional reason for master's level LIS education in Honduras is a strong need for research related to LIS in Honduras specifically and to Latin America in general. As a developing country, Honduras has a different information perspective from other countries, and, as footnoted earlier in this paper, actualized Honduras data and Honduran viewpoints related to library and information services are almost non-existent in the literature. Master's degreed librarians will be responsible for implementing standards and policies with staff who have subject-area expertise. These management-oriented librarians will ensure that libraries are operated using similar standards and practices, providing increased access and

consistency for library users, and that these standards reflect Honduran best-practices and respond to local needs.

Honduran information policy and practice also needs to reflect Honduran cultural and information practices rather than rely solely on external perspectives. As noted by Angel Castillo and Carlos Martínez's (2008) research in Mexico, an educational focus on the techniques of librarianship and administration that decontextualizes information services and research, separating it from the historical, cultural, and political environment, shortchanges Central American librarians. This concern is valid, and also plays a role in the shaping of LIS education in Honduras.

A regional advantage to offering a master's in LIS in Honduras is the relative affordability for other Central American nations. Costa Rica, for example, has sent cohorts of promising students in a variety of fields to study in the United States. Tuition, room, board, and expenses were paid for by the Costa Rican government. In tight financial times, with Honduras one of the poorest countries in Central America, however, this alternative does not seem a viable national strategy for educating Honduran librarians.

Currently some LIS program alternatives in Central America do exist: Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador have undergraduate-level training or technical programs, and three universities in Costa Rica offer LIS education, but only one offers it at the post-graduate level. Unfortunately, Costa Rica's program is far away and is expensive in relative terms. Those who can afford to go abroad for LIS training tend to choose European, South or North American programs; however, this generally requires a student to leave his or her family and job for a period of at least two years and function in a different culture and sometimes even learn a different language during that time. Dr. William Jackson of Dominican University in Illinois previously invited Honduran librarians to study there, but this too requires relocation, a two-year stay in a foreign country, and a sound knowledge of academic English. Programs

are available in Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Costa Rica that would not require English-language fluency; however, these programs would still require relocation and a significant investment of student funds without the guarantee of gainful library employment in the students' home country. The sacrifice is made by some, but local training expands the opportunity to more individuals. The Honduran master's program has potential to draw students from Honduras as well as other developing Central American countries where there are similar needs and cultures but where LIS graduate study is not yet available.

Drafting a Honduran LIS Master's Program Proposal

As mentioned previously, in 2008, Fulbright Scholar Dr. Denice Adkins of the University of Missouri was invited to Honduras for nine months to work with the ABIDH and the UPNFM to advance the LIS curriculum proposal that had been envisioned in 2003, to provide *diplomado* or basic technical training, and to help organize the annual ABIDH training conference. Adkins coordinated a diagnostic research study through which interest in LIS graduate study was gauged and it was concluded that there was indeed a market for the master's program (Adkins, 2008). When Adkins' term ended, the LIS curriculum proposal was reviewed by the office of graduate studies of the UPNFM. At that time, however, the university graduate office was undergoing a shift to competency based education, and so the graduate office asked for extensive revision of the proposal, which resulted in a shelving of the project until external support could again be arranged.

The global recession was at this point beginning to hamper recent library growth in Honduras, as some charitable foundations lost money and so scaled back international aid. The Riecken Foundation, for example, had been sponsoring 53 community libraries in Honduras, but after the recession, had to drastically scale back to the point of discontinuing funding and support for many of its libraries. In at least one library previously supported by

Riecken, the municipal government agreed to continue to provide limited support in keeping the library space open and paying the staff member, but no budget was allocated for resources or maintaining equipment (M. A. Amador Ruiz, personal communication, September 9, 2010). Situations such as this emphasized to ABIDH members the need for in-country training and expertise.

The dire need for local expertise and training was again reinforced the following year, when, a few days before the start of the fifth annual ABIDH conference in June 2009, Honduran President Manuel Zelaya was ousted from office by Supreme Court mandate. Various versions emphasize different aspects of what is often referred to by international bodies as a *coup d'etat* (Malkin, 2009; Reuters, 2009). Curfews and other policing efforts were put in place to quell protests and still civil unrest. The international LIS educators who had already arrived for the conference were asked to stay in their hotel rooms until they could return to their homelands. The large investment the ABIDH had already allocated in the way of travel expenses for the international speakers could not be recovered and so the conference could not be postponed until a later date.

In addition, many international viewers of the Presidential ousting regarded the Honduran Supreme Court's response to be overly dramatic, and many international governments and agencies withdrew financial supports and removed resources and international personnel from the country (Kelly, 2009; *The Economist*, 2011). In the months that followed, some support was slowly reinstated; however, this situation again clearly illustrated the importance of home-grown librarian expertise rather than reliance on international aid for library support and training.

The day before the inauguration of President Porfirio Lobo Sosa as the replacement president to Zelaya in January 2010, Dr. Kim M. Thompson arrived in Tegucigalpa to begin the competency based education revisions to the LIS master's curriculum proposal. The

15

UPNFM provided two assistants, Marta Zarate and Judith Avilez, to run a second diagnostic study of LIS interest in Honduras, to update the figures from 2008, and to help with the revisions. As with Adkins, Thompson provided professional training sessions for academic, public, special, and school librarians throughout the year, was a member *pro tem* of the ABIDH board of directors, and helped organize the 2010 ABIDH Conference. Before the end of Thompson's time in Honduras the proposal was presented and approved at both faculty and university levels at the UPNFM. However, in Honduras, all new degree programs must be approved, not only by the university in which they will be offered, but also at the national level, through the UNAH board for curriculum review. As there was not time to carry the proposal through this level, Thompson had to leave with the curriculum proposal only two-thirds approved.

The UNAH board for curriculum review subsequently asked for additional changes to the curriculum and the following year, 2011, Professor Lesley Farmer of the California State University Long Beach responded to a Fulbright request for expertise that helped the UPNFM team revise and resubmit the proposal. As of the writing of this article, the authors had received word that the proposal is still under review by the board.

Overview of the Honduran LIS Master's Program Proposal

The proposed graduate level LIS program has international support, with collaborators from the United States, Australia, Argentina, Costa Rica, and elsewhere consulting on the design of the curriculum at different stages and agreeing to act as an Advisory Board to the new LIS program. The Advisory Board helps to establish the direction taken by the degree program, working to ensure global application and training relevance. Potential instructors for the first few years will, of necessity, mainly be visiting international

scholars, but the body of potential LIS educators will expand as the program produces graduates.

The curriculum in the new LIS program focuses on local social needs and preferences. Because the program is situated at a pedagogical university, the curriculum posits the role of librarians as teacher/trainers within society. The UPNFM also has rigorous requirements for graduate students to undergo research training, which promises to produce future scholars and publications related to Honduran information services and resources. One-third of the required courses focus on pedagogical and research theory and practice. The LIS core courses emphasize information needs analysis, collection development, information organization, library management, and applied technology, with electives in archival studies, and school, academic, and public librarianship.

The diagnostic results in 2010 indicated that the vast majority of potential LIS master's students preferred weekend classes. Furthermore, 82 percent of the respondents noted that they have access to computers, and 67 percent report that they have high-speed connections (Zarate, 2010). In light of these findings, the proposal suggests a program that provides evening and weekend courses as well as blended online and face-to-face learning. The LIS program is housed in the UPNFM Department of Information Technology, which, by nature, has a relatively strong online infrastructure; therefore, the program has the potential to pursue a distributed learning model in which some core courses are offered online using a Spanish-language platform (SITEA). Future collaborations with international LIS programs through such systems as Web-based Information Science Education (WISE) or directly with LIS Schools interested in offering international outreach are conceivable.

The students who will be involved in the program are native Spanish speakers, and most do not speak English (Zarate, 2010). The 2008 version of the curriculum called for pre-requisite English-language instruction, but later versions of the program were streamlined to

attempt to provide all primary resources in Spanish, even if translation was necessary. As part of the Fulbright program, the Scholars were each given an allocation of $1000 to provide and/or ship curriculum related books from the United States. Core Spanish language LIS textbooks related to archiving, the information society, library management, children's and school librarianship, public librarianship, academic librarianship, international library collaboration, the role of libraries in national development, librarianship in Latin America, collection development, and information literacy were purchased or donated by LIS faculty in the US and now are part of the UPNFM library collection. The coursework will be taught and supervised by fluent Spanish speakers, and assignments and research will be solely in Spanish. While some of the support resources (e.g., some newer cataloging materials, classic textbooks, LIS research databases) are currently only available in English, the UPNFM Central Library has digital resources such as EbscoHost, JStor, and Project Muse, in addition to more specialized English- and Spanish-language databases, all of which can be searched through Spanish-language interfaces.

Despite this promising start, there are still concerns. It may be difficult for the program to acquire additional Spanish-language textbooks, as these are relatively rare and usually expensive. Spanish-language textbooks and research related to LIS come from publishers in Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, and Costa Rica, and the topics addressed in these materials are often distant from the Honduran context and do not address the infrastructural differences between Honduras and the originating countries. Additionally, while online resources will likely be the primary means of obtaining current research articles and materials in Spanish for staff and students, technology is expensive, especially relative to librarians' salaries. As mentioned previously, much online material is accessed by means of mobile telephones in Honduras, which is very useful for social networking but less useful for academic database searching. Internet access is available in cybercafés, workplaces, and

academic libraries, but this means students may not always have reliable Internet access and library opening hours have not yet adjusted to meet the needs of weekend and after-work students. LIS students may not have had much opportunity to familiarize themselves with online tools before beginning study or have much time to practice during study.

Ways LIS Education Can Help Address Barriers to Information Access

We realize that LIS education on its own cannot overcome all information barriers; however, we propose that LIS education can lay the groundwork to overcome many of the most daunting barriers. For example, when librarians are trained in preservation, collection management, information needs assessment, programming, marketing of information resources, and information organization, books become less valuable for their mere existence and value is added to the information they contain. When librarians are trained in the use of information technology, they can help their communities access relevant information, and they can advocate for increased technologies appropriate to their communities. Librarians with a graduate degree hold more credence professionally when advocating for resources, policy, and changes in practice. Librarians who feel valued in their professions will work to make sure their environments are welcoming and enjoyable places for study and community building. Further, if librarians and teachers develop a love of reading and information among their patrons and students, this can have a ripple effect in the community and could even result in increased local output from Honduran publishers.

Information access will increase as librarians become more active in developing their own collections and seeking sources that are relevant to their own communities. While libraries currently hold many international donations, librarians who develop collections based on their communities' needs will likely advocate for collecting materials in Spanish and about Honduras and Central America. These materials, because they reflect a local

context, will motivate and engage readers more than the donated materials (Freire, 1970; Gambrell, 1996). Trained librarians will also be able to provide appropriate classification for their collections to allow their patrons to access the information held therein.

The socialized belief that Honduras is "not a library culture," can also be changed gradually, and LIS education can promote that change. Rapid growth of mobile phone technologies and social media use, and the increasing literacy rates demonstrate that Honduras is a culture that values information access, although presently that idea is not linked to the idea of libraries. An LIS curriculum that draws Honduran culture and context into libraries and the information environment will help nurture those connections and help Honduran library employees realize they are not custodians of the books but are rather providers of information. Thus, Honduran LIS education makes will make it possible for local librarians to learn how and why to develop collections, how to make them accessible, and how to promote those collections outside the library to their potential users.

Conclusion

It will be a long time before Honduras is in a financial position to ensure that all library employees have a master's degree in LIS. As a result, the initial master's degree in LIS is largely oriented toward building a body of LIS educators and researchers who can not only manage projects and libraries, but who can also use their newfound expertise and skills to support future educational endeavors and provide Honduras with a more solid footing as it progresses in the information age.

Given the lack of educational options currently available in Honduras, those who hire librarians for university, public, school, or special libraries have needed to hire people who lack specialized training in librarianship. While these librarians might have extensive education in other fields, they have little knowledge of effective library or information

management. This means that each Honduran library must invest in training its librarians to perform the basic tasks of librarianship, and each library duplicates these expenditures. Thus, the financial burden of training librarians has been allocated to the resource-poor libraries, at a greater expense than if such training were provided by an institution of higher education. Additionally, the lack of uniformity in training produces a lack of uniformity in implementation of services and development of library standards. This lack of standards means that libraries are less able to work with each other to provide resources to users.

The proposed master's program shows promise of making Honduras self-sufficient in LIS education. Within two years of the start of the Master's degree program it would be possible for graduates of the program to begin teaching the next cohort of LIS students and an undergraduate degree and other basic technical and certificate trainings could be considered. The strong pedagogical requirements of the UPNFM will ensure that LIS educators have the theoretical and practical skills needed for quality education efforts. The strong research element required by the pedagogical university will also ensure that Honduran LIS graduates have the potential to have a very positive impact on LIS research at national and even international levels.

Honduras' neighboring countries will also benefit from this graduate level education, as the formal academic programs in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua are at certification, technical degree, or undergraduate levels and are geared to provide the countries with library and archive technicians rather than researchers, library directors, and other leaders in the field. It is not common for Central Americans to seek undergraduate or technical training in neighboring countries, but looking to other countries for graduate education is more common, and the closer and less expensive the graduate process, the more accessible it is to potential enrollees.

The case of LIS education in Honduras demonstrates that promoting and designing LIS education curricula requires cultural understanding and cooperation. And while the US and other countries have gone to great lengths to support the development of Honduran LIS education, it is time for Honduras to begin to recognize its own information and library culture.

Acknowledgment

References

ABIDH. (2010). *V Jornadas de Bibliotecología en Honduras: Encuesta*. Unpublished raw data.

Ackeroyd, R. G. (1991). White House conference on library and information services: Expand literacy, increase productivity, strengthen democracy. *Library Administration and Management, 5*(2): 70-72.

Adkins, D. A. (2008). *Diagnostico para la Apertura de Maestria en Ciencia de la Informacion y Bibliotecologia.* Unpublished report.

Akpabie, C. (2009). The 2007 international library survey in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Library Statistics for the Twenty-First Century World*. Retrieved from:

http://www.ifla.org/files/statistics-and-evaluation/publications/Report_UNESCO_IFLA_GlobalLibStat_pretest.pdf

American Library Association. (2012). Number of libraries in the United States: ALA library fact sheet 1. Retrieved from:

http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet01

Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., & McClure, C. R. (Eds). (2011). *Public libraries and the Internet: Roles perspectives and implications.* Denver, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Borgman, C. (2003). *From Gutenberg to the global information infrastructure: Access to information in the networked world.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Burnett, G., Besant, M. & Chatman, E. A. (2001). Small worlds: Normative behavior in virtual communities and feminist bookselling. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 52*, 536-547.

Burnett, G., Jaeger, P. T., & Thompson, K. M. (2008). Normative behavior and the multiple layers of information access: Physical, intellectual, and social. *Library & Information Science Research, 30*(1), 56-66.

Castells, M. (1998). *The information age: Economy, society and culture – End of the millennium, Vol 3.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Castillo, A. & Martínez, C. (2008). Library science in Mexico: A discipline in crisis. *Progressive Librarian, 31*(Summer), 29-36.

Chatman, E. A. (2000). Framing social life in theory and research. *The New Review of Information Behaviour Research, 1,* 3-17.

Danesi, M. & Perron, P. (1999). *Analyzing cultures: An introduction and handbook.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Directory of South and Central American Libraries. (2010). Sydney: Asia Pacific Infoserv Pty Ltd.

Economist, The. (2011, June 9). Honduras's indebted economy: The cost of a coup. Retrieved

from: www.economist.com/node/18805653

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: Seabury.

Gambrell, L. (1996). Creating classroom cultures that foster reading motivation. *The Reading*

Teacher, 50(1), 14-25.

García de Paso Gómez, E. (1998). ¿Y después del Mitch? Un recorrido de las bibliotecas

públicas de Centroamérica. *Boletín de la ANABAD, 48*(3-4). Retrieved from:

http://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/oaiart?codigo=51131

Inter-American Development Bank. (2000). Central America after Hurricane Mitch.

Retrieved from:

http://www.iadb.org/regions/re2/consultative_group/backgrounder2.htm

International Telecommunications Union. (2009). *Perfiles estadísticos de la sociedad de la*

información 2009: Región de América. International Telecommunications Union.

Retrieved from: http://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/ind/D-IND-RPM.AM-2009-

E09-PDF-S.pdf

Kelly, I. (2009, September 3). Termination of assistance and other measures affecting the de

facto regime in Honduras. *U.S. Department of State*. Retrieved from:

http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/sept/128608.htm

Maldonado, C. W. (1992). Biblioteca Nacional de Honduras: Instalación de la

Biblioteca Nacional. Boletín de ANABAD, 42(3-4), 267-279. Retrieved from:

http://dialnet.unirioja.es%2Fservlet%2Ffichero_articulo%3Fcodigo%3D224195%26o

rden%3D64215&ei=HULxToanA7OssAKOuczhBg&usg=AFQjCNHN6S6dUKjjWG

Db8Y32sGBon670Xg

Malkin, E. (2009, June 28). Honduran president is outsted in coup. *The New York Times*, p.

A1. Retrieved from:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/29/world/americas/29honduras.html?pagewanted=all

McClure, C. R., Fraser, B. T., Nelson, T. W., & Robbins, J. B. (2000). *Economic Benefits and Impacts from Public Libraries in the State of Florida: Final Report.* Tallahassee: State Library of Florida.

Nyerere, J. (1974). *Man and development.* New York: Oxford University Press.

OCLC. (2012). Global Library Statistics. Retrieved from:

http://www.oclc.org/globallibrarystats/default.htm

Potella, E. (1990). *The book: A world transformed.* Paris: UNESCO.

Porat, M. (1977). The information economy. Washington DC: US Department of Commerce.

Reuters. (2009, September 10). EU to warn Honduras of further sanctions over coup. *Reuters.* Retrieved from: http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/09/10/us-eu-honduras-idUSTRE5893WD20090910

Secretaria de Educación. (2008). National report on the development of Honduras education. Retrieved from:

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/honduras_NR08.pdf

Schniederjurgen, A. (2007). *World guide to library, archive, and information science education, 3rd ed.* The Hague: KG Saur.

socialbakers.com. (2012). Honduras Facebook statistics. Retrieved from:

http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/honduras

Thompson, K. M. (2006). *Multidisciplinary approaches to information poverty and their implications for information access.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.

Thompson, K. M. & Afzal, W. (2011). A look at information access through physical, intellectual, and socio-cultural lenses. *OMNES: The Journal of Multicultural Society, 2*(2), 22-42.

Toffler, A. (1980). *The third wave*. New York: Morrow.

UNESCO. (2008). *The value of library services in development*. Addis Ababa: UNESCO.

UNICEF. (2010). Honduras: Statistics. Retrieved from:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/honduras_statistics.html#90

Unidad Coordinadora Red de Bibliotecas Públicas. (n.d.). Antecedente histórico de la red nacional de bibliotecas públicas municipales. Tegucigalpa: National Library of Honduras.

Webster, F. (2002). *Theories of the information society.* London: Routledge.

Wedgeworth, R. (1993). *The World Encyclopedia of Library & Information Science, 3rd ed.* Chicago: American Library Association.

Wertsman, V. (1996). The librarian's companion: A handbook of thousands of facts and figures on libraries, librarians, books, newspapers, publishers, booksellers. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

World Bank. (2008). School enrollment, tertiary. Retrieved from: http://data.worldbank.org/

World Guide to Libraries 2011. (2010). The Hague: Saur.

Zarate, M. (2010). *Diagnostico para la Apertura de Maestria en Ciencia de la Informacion y Bibliotecologia.* Unpublished report.