Report of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Needs Assessment Conducted among Academic Librarians

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Introduction

The committee of CPD is planning to conduct a CPD need assessment for Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals in Sri Lanka with special emphasis on Academic and Special Library sectors under SLLA Strategic Plan 2016/2022. Identifying training needs is essential to design professional courses, staff development programs and identify the weaknesses of the LIS educational programmes currently existed. Therefore carrying out a survey among library professionals is essential to identify the training needs that are required to improve knowledge, skills and ability related to the performance of professional work and responsibilities.

In the first stage, it was decided to send web based questionnaire for all academic librarians in the universities and attached higher education institutes. The web questionnaire was sent through email to all university librarians on 31/03/2018 and asked to send completed the questionnaires before 16/04/2018 and due to the low response rate the first reminder was sent to those who did not respond on 2/5/2018. Due to the low response received again a second reminder was sent on 10/11/2018 and the last reminder sent on 01/10/2019 and finally it was decided to analyse the data which was available by using SPSS (21.0).

The web questionnaires were sent to 128 LIS professionals in academic library sector and a total of 57 usable responses were received by making 44% response rate. The findings of the survey are presented under various subheadings as follows;

1. Respondents profile

The survey results of the gender, age, work experience, highest educational qualifications and attachment of work of the respondents are presented in table 1. Of the respondents 49 (86%) were female and 8 (14%) were male.

Table 1: Demographic and professional characteristics of the respondents

Demographic Character	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	8	14.0
Female	49	86.0
Total	57	100.0
Age		
26-30 years	2	3.5
31-35 years	8	14.0
36-40 years	18	31.6
41-45 years	6	10.5
46-50 years	16	28.1
51-55 years	1	1.8
56-60 years	2	3.5
Over 60 years	4	7.0
Total	57	100.0
Work experience		
1-5 years	5	8.8
6-10 years	20	35.0
11-15 years	19	33.2
16-20 years	2	3.5
Over 20 years	11	19.3
Total	57	100.0
Qualifications		
Bachelor degree	6	10.5
Master degree	46	80.7
PhD	5	8.8
Total	57	100.0
Subject Discipline		
Library science	51	89.4
Other discipline	06	10.6
Total	57	100.0
Institute works		
Public university	34	59.6
Attached institute	19	33.3
Other institute	4	7.0
Total	57	100.0

With regard to the age of the respondents, 31.6% of respondents belong to 36-40 years age category, while 22.8% belongs to 46-50 age category followed by 14% belong to 31-35 age category and 10.5% belong to 41-45 age category. Only 4 respondents (7%) were more than 60 years of age.

It is further evident from Table 1, that majority of the respondents (35%) reported having been in library profession for 6-10 years. Librarians who had been in the profession for 11-15 years made up 33.2% of the sample, followed by 19.3% had been in the profession for over 20 years and 8.8% had only 1-5 year work experience in the library profession..

With regard to the highest qualification obtained, most of the respondents, 46 (80.7%) indicated that they had a Master degree followed by 10.5% had Bachelor degree and 8.8% of the respondents had PhDs. As expected, the majority (89.4%) completed this highest qualification in LIS, with others having undertaken their highest qualification in other disciplines.

With regards to the institute where the respondents work, majority of them (59.6%) attached to the public universities while 33% work in the institutes of higher education and 7% work in other institutes.

2. Professional development activities attended

The respondents were asked to 'indicate whether they have attended the following professional development activities in the past 5 years'. Eleven professional development activities were listed in the questionnaire for selection and respondents were requested to indicate all that were relevant. (Multiple choices were allowed) Responses are listed in Table 2 according to their frequency.

Table 2: Attendance of professional development activities in last 5 years*

CPD activities	Frequency	Percentage
Conferences	55	96.5
Seminar	47	82.5
Workshops	47	82.5
Publication or presentation of a paper	44	77.2
External training	40	70.2
Workplace training	27	47.4
Personal study project	25	43.9
Professional reading in print or electronic format	24	42.1
Self-paced learning through audio, video, CD media, television programs	20	35.1
Mentoring	15	26.3
Courses provided by tertiary institutions	12	21.1

*Note * Multiple choices allowed*

The three most common forms of CPD undertaken in the five year period are Conferences, Seminars and Workshops which all are likely to have been experienced in the workplace rather than from external sources. The results do, however, indicate a high level of engagement with a variety of forms of CPD. It should be noted that the result for 'Courses provided by tertiary institutions' is the lowest among other CPD activities.

3. Preferred topics for future training and development

Respondents were asked to indicate their preference for the potential topics that need to be conducted through future professional development programs and the responses received are reported in Table 3.

Table 3: Preferred focus of training and development

LIS topics	Not preferred Freq. (%)	Neutral Freq. (%)	Preferred Freq. (%)	Most preferred Freq. (%)	Total Freq. (%)
Management/Administration of libraries					
Strategic planning and assessing the effectiveness of library services	-	2(3.5%)	39 (68.4%)	3 (5.3%)	44 (77.2%)
Project management	4 (7%)	6 (10.5%)	25(43.9%)	12(21.1%)	47(82.5%)
Marketing	-	-	28(49.1%)	1(1.8%)	43(75.4%)
Building/spatial design and use	4(7%)	17(29.8%)	19(33.3%)	-	40(70.2%)
Advocacy	4(7%)	19(33.3%)	9(15.8%)	-	35(61.4%)
Reader services					
Metadata development	7(12.3%)	3(5.3%)	23(40.4%)	3(5.3%)	36(63.2%)
Reader advisory services	4(7%)	6(10.5%)	25(43.9%)	2(3.5%)	37(64.5%)
Customer satisfaction/service	-	-	28(49.1%)	12(21.1%)	40(70.2%)
Technical services					
Cataloguing	-	6(10.5%)	22(38.6%)	6(10.5%)	34(59.6%)
Classification	-	6(10.5%)	22(38.6%)	6(10.5%)	34(59.6%)
Electronic resource Management	-	1(1.8%)	31(54.4%)	6(10.5%)	38(66.7%)
Teaching, learning and presenting					
Information literacy assessment	5(8.8%)	5(8.8%)	19(33.3%)	12(21.1%)	41(71.9%)
Presentation skills	5(8.8%)	1(1.8%)	27(47.4%)	5(8.8%)	38(66.7%)
Information literacy pedagogies and learning styles	-	1(1.8%)	34(59.6%)	6(10.5%)	41(71.9%)
Content design using Virtual Learning Environments	-	5(8.8%)	22(38.6%)	13(22.8%)	40(70.2%)
Information technology					
Web site publishing and design for libraries	1(1.8%)	2(3.5%)	27(47.4%)	13(22.8%)	43(75.4%)
Assessing the success of your web site	1(1.8%)	2(3.5%)	25(43.9%)	5(8.8%)	33(57.9%)
Web 2.0	1(1.8%)	8(14%)	23(40.4%)	4(7%)	36(63.2%)

Writing for the web	5(8.8%)	11(19.3%)	13(22.8%)	2(3.5%)	31(54.4%)
Research support					
Writing for publication	-	1(1.8%)	16(28.1)	29(50.9%)	46(80.7%)
Conducting the reference Interview	4(7%)	1(1.8%)	26(45.6%)	15(26.3%)	46(80.7%)
Bibliometrics	4(7%)	1(1.8%)	22(38.6%)	17(29.8%)	44(77.2%)
Open access and digital repositories	-	-	21(36.8%)	25(43.9%)	46(80.7%)

Respondents were provided with an open-ended question to indicate their preference on any other topics that are not mentioned in the questionnaire. The prospective areas that were suggested by the respondents (with numbers) are listed below.

1. Modern trends in librarianship (18)

2. IT related library and information services (17)

3. Information technology (15)

4. Information literacy (10)

5. Current topic in LIS field (9)

6. Information marketing (8)

7. Digital content management (7)

8. Human resource management (5)

9. Intellectual property management (4)

4. Membership of the Sri Lanka Library Association

On the assumption that membership of a professional association may be an indicator of engagement with the wider profession, respondents were asked to indicate whether they are currently members of the Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA). As present in Table 4, 77.2 % (N=44) of the respondents are currently members of the Association while 9(15.8%) report that they are not members of the SLLA and 4 (7%) did not respond to the question.

Table 4: Membership of the Sri Lanka Library Association

Membership of SLLA	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	77.2
No	09	15.8
No response	04	7.0
Total	57	100

Follow-up questions were asked from the respondents to indicate the reasons why they have become members of the SLLA.

Table 5: Reason for SLLA membership*

Reason for SLLA membership	Frequency	Percentage
Increase my knowledge	19	43.2
Access to news	20	45.4
Access to professional networks	23	52.3
Status	17	38.6
Total	44	

*Note * Multiple choices allowed*

The most frequent reason given for joining the SLLA was to get 'Access to professional networks' and 'Access to news'.

seven respondents, who did not receive the membership of SLLA, mentioned that they have already applied for the membership and only two respondents (3.5%) mentioned that cost of joining is the primary deterrent for not taking SLLA membership.

Survey conducted and results reported by Chamani Gunasekera/ Convener of CPD group 2016/2017

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