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Evaluation on School Resource Centre Management Courses towards Library and Media Teachers' Competency: A Conceptual Paper

[1]Hasnah Shuhaimi, [2]Norasiah Harun, [3]Saidatul Akmar Ismail, [4]Saiful Farik Mat Yatin, [5]Zahril Shahida Ahmad

[1]Ph.D Researcher, Faculty of Information Management, Malaysia
[2]Assoc. Professor, Faculty of Information Management, Malaysia
[3]Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Information Management, Malaysia
[4]Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Information Management, Malaysia
[5]Ph.D Researcher, Faculty of Information Management, Malaysia
Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Background: In Malaysia, Library and Media Teachers (LMTs) are teachers, academically qualified and trained in the discipline of education. They are subject teachers and familiar with the school curriculum (Norhashimah, 2007; Hussain, 2007; Lee, *et al*.,2003). Once, their services are confirmed with at least three years of teaching experience, they are eligible to be appointed as LMTs (Ketua Pengarah Pelajaran Malaysia, 2005). However, many of them have little or limited library and information science (LIS) qualifications (Raja Abdullah & Saidina Omar,2003). The general practice is for them to attend two training courses which are a Basic School Resource Centre Management (SRCM) Course (35-hour), followed by Advanced School Resource Centre Management (SRCM) Course (45-hour) prior to or after their appointment as LMTs (Tan,S.M. & Diljit. S, 2008; Norhidawati *et al*., 2014; Kamal & Normah, 2012; Abrizah,1999). **Objective:** To identify the relevant constructs of the LMTs' competency; to identify the relevant constructs of SRCM courses for the LMTs; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the knowledge of LMTs' competency; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the skills of LMTs' competency; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the abilities of LMTs' competency. **Result:** This study is currently at preliminary stage. Therefore, findings of the study would not yet be discussed. **Conclusion:** It is hoped that the study would be able to provide new findings and contribute to the development of frameworks in SRCM Courses towards LMTs' competency.

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INTRODUCTION

The school resource centres in Malaysia today is managed by Library and Media Teachers, the new certified term used in Malaysia for teacher librarians. Beginning in 2006, the Ministry of Education of Malaysia has started assigning teachers as Library and Media Teachers in all schools, and these teachers are given training courses so as to enable them to manage the school resource centres. They are expected to function as library managers, as well as information managers to encourage and nurturing reading activities in schools (Norna'ilah, 2007; Kamal M.A and Normah, 2012). The Federal Education Technology Division and State Education Technology Department with the cooperation of Teachers' Activities Centres train teachers in two short courses:

- the Basic School Resource Centre Management (SRCM) 35-hour Course,
- and the Advanced School Resource Centre Management (SRCM) 45-hour Course

These two courses are the basic requirements for teachers to become Library and Media Teachers (LMTs)

After many years, a study done by Fatimah (2002); Kamal & Normah (2012); Tan S.M. & Diljit S. (2008, 2012) revealed that there are no standard method by which LMTs attained their training courses and there are also lack of uniformity in terms of training and the syllabus content.

Problem Statement:

Many LMTs have no prior knowledge on how to manage SRC. However, some LMTs do have basic

Corresponding Author: Hasnah Shuhaimi, Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia.
E-mail: hasnahshuhaimi@gmail.com. Tel. No: +6019-6622572

knowledge, skills and abilities to manage SRCs, but still inadequate for them to manage the library effectively and efficiently (Abrizah, 1999; Abrizah et. al, 2008; Abdullah & Singh, 2000; Raja Abdullah & Saidina Omar, 2003; Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2010; Tan, S.M, Gorman, G. & Diljit, S., 2012). In addition, there is no uniform syllabus and modules, lack of coordinated SRCM courses in Malaysia. Different State Educational Technology Divisions organize their own SRCM courses with varying course contents. On the other hand, SRCM Course objective is to enhance LMTs competency in managing SRC effectively and efficiently. However, there were still regular change of LMTs due to incompetency (Raja Abdullah & Saidina Omar, 2003; Tan, S.M. & Diljit S., 2008; Kamal & Normah, 2012;Nor Ahmad, 2014). The problem is why do LMTs not able to transfer or apply the knowledge, skills and abilities attained from SRCM courses to managing school resource centre (SRC). Many literature are found supporting this problem such as (Nornai'lah, 2007; Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2008; Tan S.M. & Diljit S. 2010; Tan,S.M, Gorman & Diljit, S., 2012; Kamal M.A & Normah, 2012; Zainuddin, 2011; Nor Ahmad, 2014)**.**

Scope and Limitations:

The scope of the study is limited to LMTs in secondary schools only. They receive more grand per capita from the Ministry of Education and also prepare students for tertiary education. This study will measure two training courses of the LMTs, i.e. Basic SRCM course (35-hour) and Advanced SRCM course (45-hour). These courses are the basic requirements for the LMTs.

Basic School Resource Centre Management (35-Hour) Coursel:

The Basic School Resource Centre Management (35-hour) Course comprises of 15 modules:

- Concept of SRC
- Centralized Collection Management
- Physical Facilities
- Introduction to Indexing and Bibliographies
- Classification
- Copy Cataloguing and MALMARC
- Cataloguing
- Resource Centre Collections
- Management and Administration of SRC
- Technical Processing of Print Materials
- Technical Processing of Non-Print Materials
- Automation
- Evaluation of School Resource Centres, and
- Administration of the NILAM Reading Project

(Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2012)

Advanced Srcm Course (45-Hour):

The Advanced SRCM Course comprises of modules related to personal competencies which include:

- personalities skills
- communication skills
- communication ethics
- time management
- functions protocols
- capability skills
- efficiency in managing and problem solving

The personal competencies represent a set of skills, attitudes and values that enable LMTs to work efficiently and effectively (Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2012)

Training Course:

Training course can be described as "providing the conditions in which people can learn effectively". To learn "to gain knowledge, skill, ability" (King, 1968). Training course is the process of acquiring specific skills to perform a job better (Jucious, 1963). It helps people to become qualified and proficient in doing some jobs (Dahama, 1979).

Competency:

Competency is often defined in terms of relationships of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes affecting operation. It can be assessed and compared to standards. It can be enhanced by means of practice and development. Some scholars (Boyatzis, 1982; Schroder, 1989; Burgoyne, 1993) refer to the set of skills that an individual must possess in order to be capable of satisfactorily performing a specified job. Competency

according to Mansfield (1999), Ruth (2006) and Yang *et al*. (2006), the underlying characteristic of a person that results in an effective or superior performance.There is not a single factor, but a range of factors that differentiate successful from less successful performance, including personal qualities, motives, experience and behavioral characteristics (Boyatzis, 1982; Albanese, 1989; Spencer, & Spencer, 1993; Parry, 1996; UNIDO, 2002; Armstrong, 2006).

Library And Media Teachers' Competency:

Professional competencies which are relate to the special LMTs knowledge and qualification. Personal competencies represent a set of skills, attitudes, abilities and values. Both competencies are enable LMTs to work efficiently, be good communicators, knowledgeable, focus on continuing learning throughout their careers, demonstrate the value-added nature of their contributions, and survive in the new world of work. (Standards of Professional Excellence for Teacher Librarians, 2004; Special Library Association (SLA); Canadian School Library Association (CSLA), 1997). In the present study, LMTs competency constructs will be the knowledge, skills and abilities to manage SRCs.

Research Gap:

Based on literature review conducted, it is necessity to measure the SRCM courses that influence the LMTs competency as studies previously measuring in different factors or areas (Mohd. Aduri Sidin, 1981; Halimah Badioze Zaman 1991; Fuziah, Indahsah & Mohd Sharif, 1993; Zohra Ibrahim, 1995, Abrizah, 1998; Abdullah & Singh, 2000; Raja Abdullah & Saidina Omar, 2003; Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2008, Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2010 Tan S.M. & Diljit S., 2012, Kamal MA, 2012, Kamal MA & Normah, 2012). Therefore, the present study is important to point out that there are teething problems in the LMTs' training courses. Thus, there is a gap to fill. The present study will investigate the influence of SRCM Courses towards the LMTs' competency to fill in the gap left in the literature.

Expected Significance Contribution:

Theoretical Contribution:

The main contribution of the study will be the establishment of an empirical-based framework. The findings of the study can be used to either refute or strengthen the theories or frameworks that will be adopted.

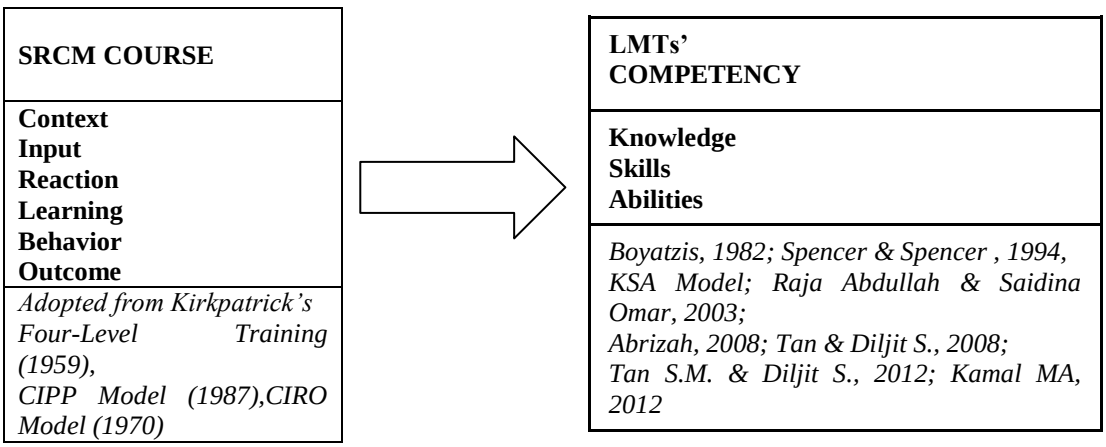
Practical Contribution:

Contribute towards the LMTs competence that can improve SRCs management and services; to assist LMTs implementing effective strategies and to enhance their competencies. Provide data to the responsible officers, researchers and stakeholders to plan and implement effective training courses to enhance LMTs competencies. The study should also serve as useful guidelines to measure LMTs competency.

Methodological Contribution:

The instrument developed in the study will replicate in a different research setting focusing on competencies or training courses. It will also help academics and researchers to use it as reference sources of research and writing.

Conceptual Framework:



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Evaluation Models:

A number of evaluation and research models have been proposed over the years in the area of training, including Stufflebeam's Context-Input-Process-Product (CIPP) model (1971), CIRO model and Kirkpatrick's Training Evaluation. Among the methods used, the one by Kirkpatrick is often cited. This approach is called the Kirkpatrick approach. According to Catalanello and Kirkpatrick (1976: 131-138) attempted to survey the 'state of art' regarding the evaluation of training programs. This approach (Kirkpatrick, 1976: 18-2 in Craig (ed.)) call or four levels of evaluation, and answers four very important questions as follows:

Level	Questions
1. Reactions	How well did the trainees like the program?
2. Learning	What principles, fact, and technique were learned?
3. Behavior	What changes in job behavior resulted from the program?
4. Results	What were the tangible results of the program, in terms of reduced cost, improved quality?

According to Hesseling (1966:44), "evaluation research aims at providing a systematic and comprehensive measure of success or failure for training programs". The effectiveness of a training program can be determined through evaluation. Thus Warr, Bird and Rackman (1970:18) were of the opinion that primary purpose of gathering evaluation data is to provide the trainer with information which will help him increase his subsequent effectiveness. Hamblin (1974: 72) commented that the purpose of evaluation is not to determine if desired changes did occur but rather to determine what should happen next. The findings showed that the evaluation 'state' of art' was still in its infancy in the sense that most organizations were measuring reactions to training programs. The more important and difficult steps in the evaluation process, that is learning, behavior and results are less being done and many of these efforts were superficial and subjective. Methods of evaluation of training vary according to needs.

Another general approach to classifying types of training evaluation outcomes comes from Warr, Bird and Rackman (1970). This approach has a much broader scope than the traditional use of the term "evaluation". In this approach there are four general categories of evaluation studies. They form the letter CIRO meaning Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Reaction Evaluation and Outcome Evaluation.

The effectiveness of training program will depend not only on how well it is organized, but also on how much attention is paid to the development of the training institution itself, that is, how the training institution functions and relates to external factors in the educational system (Rodwell, 1986). Glatter (cited in Rodwell and Hurst, 1986:43) is of the opinion that "concepts of effectiveness vary from one country to another within countries, from time to time and within groups, be it pupils', parents', or teachers' views; whose perceptions then should count in considering training programs?".

The CIPP Model which has featured in number of writings concerning educational administrators' training, highlights the importance of considering evaluation as an on-going process geared towards improvement of training. CIPP evaluation model emphasizes "learning-by-doing"to identify corrections for problematic project features. It is thus uniquely suited for evaluating emergent projects in a dynamic social context (Alkin, 2004). As Stufflebeam has pointed out, the most fundamental tenet of the model is "not to prove, but to improve"(Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007, p. 331). The CIPP model has been advocated for use in evaluating the contribution of educational administrative training (both in general and with respect to specific programs) to overall system goals of improvement (Bolam, 1983).

Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual framework of this study is modelled along with Kirkpatrick, CIPP and CIRO. This model generates questions about context (need), input (design), reaction, learning (implementation), behavior and outcome for a program. In this approach, evaluation is viewed as the "process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives" (Stufflebeam, 1971; 1973). However, this study will concentrate to identify the relevant constructs of the LMTs' competency; to identify the relevant constructs of SRCM courses for the LMTs; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the knowledge of LMTs' competency; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the skills of LMTs' competency; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the abilities of LMTs' competency.

The methodology required a measurement of participants' entry level before training to establish the level of knowledge, skills, performance, attitudes/ expectations prior to the training proper and another measurement of the same participants after training to ascertain their new level of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Research Methodology:

A mixed method research design will be adopted, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Semi-structured, face-to-face interview, content analysis and questionnaire will be used respectively. Participants will be selected from Secondary Schools. There are 2376 secondary schools in Malaysia (*http://www.emisportal.moe.gov.my*). Simple random sampling will be used in the survey. The researcher will send questionnaires via email and online questionnaires to Library and Media Teachers.

For the qualitative method purposive sampling will be used. Semi-structured face-to- face interview and content analysis will be used to obtain the information. There are 10 respondents to be identified:

i) State Library Trainers - 5 respondents
ii) Officers of Education Technology Division (ETD) – 5 respondents

They will be given questions (semi structured face-to-face interview) to identify the relevant constructs of the LMTs' competency and to identify the relevant constructs of SRCM courses for the LMTs. For the questionnaire, they will be given questions to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the knowledge of LMTs' competency; to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the skills of LMTs' competency and to investigate the influence between the SRCM courses and the abilities of LMTs' competency.

Conclusions:

The current role of Library and Media Teacher has evolved over many years. The effective training courses are crucial for library and media teachers for better education quality. The results of the study, will address the multifaceted sets of training courses strategies, advantage both to schools and students.

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