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Neglect and Abandonment in Anne Tyler's Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant

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Abstract

Anne Tyler (born 1941) is one of the ingenious twentieth – century American writers. Classified by critics as a Southern writer, Tyler focuses on modern families and their distinctive relationships. She writes with wit and insight about runaway husbands, wives, fathers, mothers and children. Her interest in themes concerning family, home and identity becomes increasingly significant in her later works. This significance stems from her fondness of drawing honest and accurate scenes and people. Tyler's most legendary novel is Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant (1982) was nominated for the National Book Critics circle Award in 1982. This work drew much praise for its psychological insight, rich characterization and well – developed plot structure. It examines many facets of family relationships, particularly as they evolve between mother and child, fester between siblings, and extend into the world beyond. Since this paper is an attempt to bridge the two fields of psychology and literature, Tyler's Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant is examined regarding how the interpersonal trauma of abandonment and neglect experience in childhood had a great impact on the personality in adulthood. The study shows to what extent Anne Tyler, in her novel, succeeds in displaying the psychological difficulties that follow abandonment which leads to disturbed attachment styles, difficulties with trust, diminished social skills and inability to understand social interactions.

Keywords: Anne Tyler, Interpersonal trauma, neglect, abandonment, fatherless families

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Introduction

“By building a child’s social and emotional capabilities we enable children to be happily engaged with others and with society, and learn, to develop fully, to attain and to achieve. In essence, it delivers school ready, life ready, and child ready members of society” (The Allen Report 2011).

The family unit is the basic social unit of any society. This relationship provides balance in a sexual, emotional, intellectual and social way as no other can. From the very ancient times to the present day, family has retained its importance in its role of a primary and vital unit of the social organization. Over the past thirty years, the United States has witnessed a major family transformation – the beginning of the end of the traditional nuclear family. Some important changes have occurred, for example, the divorce rate increased harshly, and some mothers decided to give up marriage, with the result that a large number of children are being raised in single-parent households. It was also observed that the focus of many families shifted away from childcare to the psychological well-being and self-development of their adult members. This is shown in the increasing break up between parents even when they have young children to raise - if the marriage relationship doesn’t meet their psychological and self-fulfillment needs (Popenoe 22).

Anne Tyler is one of the most creative contemporary American authors. Over the past four decades she has written sixteen novels and a number of short stories which are still attracting an increasing amount of critical study in addition to the popular appeal she has long held. Tyler’s Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant is a part of a tradition of fiction that probes the dynamics of family life expressing the common southern themes of the dysfunctional family and the search for self, the desire for shelter, and sense of home. Family problems have emerged as the core of all of her characters issues. She has skillfully chosen the method of placing her characters in familial relationships to show the influences upon them, to explain the motives for their actions, and often to show the effects of their decisions. One of these family problem is the parental abandonment.

Generally speaking, “abandonment” in family context is a relationship dynamic that occurs when an adult voluntarily denies a role that someone expects him/her to fulfill, like parental or maternal obligations. Children need both parents for guidance, protection and love; they not only need to feel secure physically, but also emotionally and spiritually. Accordingly, through the analysis of Anne Tyler’s Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant, the present study examines the parental abandonment and its effect on children, focusing on how such an emotional injury becomes a driving force in children’s childhood and adult lives.

Through her novel, she shows the mother, Pearl Tull’s suffering because of her husband’s unexplained abandonment of the family, leading to her desire to protect her children from the world’s evil. The children, on the other hand are always shown in need of protection and support of the absent father by which they are emotionally hurt and for this reason

the atmosphere of the home becomes depressed and bewildered. Tyler's realistic portrayal of Tull's family life makes it evident that for her as well as for the reader that the axis of the psyche and the well-being of the soul are rooted in the domestic origins of the individual.

More generally, young children develop in an environment of relationships. "Early experiences, especially emotionally or affectively charged experiences with other humans, induce and organize the patterns of structural growth that result in the expanding functional capacities of a developing individual" (Malekpour 81). Attachment theories have made important contributions to the notion of early experience.

Based on the attachment theory, the paper examines how the absence of the escaped father in Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant makes life difficult for his children. Through the analysis of the oldest son Cody Tull, the paper explores some of the most compelling questions about early psychological development and its later consequences. In what ways do early experiences in relationships contribute to psychological vulnerability and strength? How fatherless families affect the mother and children?

Attachment theory was first proposed by British psychologist and psychoanalyst John Bowlby who described it as a 'lasting psychological connectedness between human beings' (1988). He considered that children needed to develop a secure attachment with their main caregiver in their early years. Attachment can be divided into two main categories: secure and insecure attachments. Secure attachments support mental processes that enable the child to regulate emotions, reduce fear, attune to others, and have self-understanding and insight, empathy for others and appropriate moral reasoning. On the other hand, insecure attachments can have unfortunate consequences. If a child cannot rely on an adult to respond to their needs in times of stress, they are unable to learn how to soothe themselves, manage their emotions and engage in mutual relationships. Among the factors that may present a risk to the quality of attachment between child and parent is the exposure to neglect, domestic violence or other forms of abuse and abandonment. Accordingly, the paper focuses on parental abandonment as a source of the insecure attachments which results in aggressiveness, social maladjustment, affectionless psychopathy and depression.

Discussion

Family relationships portrayed in Tyler's novel are characteristically discomfiting and therefore, become sources of frustration and loneliness for her characters. In most of Anne Tyler's novels, the father is quite often absent. Of all her novels, however, the most moving story of a runaway father is the story of Beck Tull in Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant (1982). The action takes the reader from the time when 85-year-old Pearl Tull is dying at her bedside, recalling the history of her marriage and her children's adulthood, then moving to her funeral when her runaway husband, Beck appears that day. The action rotates from her point of view to that of each of her children, chapter by chapter, ending with her funeral. "In journeying through their shared pasts and individual psyches, Cody, Ezra, and Jenny Tull struggle to understand their father's desertion, their mother's love

and anger, and their own responsibility for themselves” (Gibson 49). Beck’s absence “had plunged the family into a quiet swirling darkness that was frequently punctuated by hatred and violence” (Eckard 34).

The traumatic experience of the family starts when Beck abruptly abandons Pearl and their three children. Consequently, she responds by drawing a kind of iron curtain around them. Though the children continue to go to school and she takes a job as a cashier at the corner grocery store, she permits no degree of intimacy or emotional honesty with anyone outside the immediate family. Even her own relatives are kept in the dark about Beck's abandonment. Painfully, Pearl, under the stress of raising them alone, sometimes turns abusive resulting in violent domestic scenes, instances of child mistreatment, and hurtful sibling betrayals. As she recounts the traumatic interpersonal experience of being deserted by her husband, it becomes clear that abandonment is the underlying theme.

Beck’s sudden abandonment is known by psychologists as “actual desertion” in which the deserting partner leaves the relationship, taking his/her belongings and moving into another home without returning. On the other hand, the deserted partner represented by Pearl Tull does not agree with ending the marriage and does not have the opportunity to save the marriage. After left with three young children and forced to become the bread winner, defensively develops a rigid, catastrophic family style. She has no friends, does not visit with the customers at the store where she works, does not even encourage her children to bring friends home. “For years in her stubborn pride, she refuses to admit to her children that their father has left them – the abandonment was simply never mentioned during the time they were growing up” (Rainwater and Scheick 126). Pearl’s unwillingness to tell her children about Beck’s departure originates not only in wanting to protect them, but also in her desire to secure the role that has become so embedded in her identity. Pearl fears telling the children will cause them to turn their backs on her, leaving her empty and without a purpose. Moreover, she sees it as her motherly duty to protect the children from the pain she assumes they will experience if they discover the truth about Beck’s absence.

Trying to deal with her own pain of abandonment, she was sometimes unable to control her frustration and would snap, going on tears brought on by the most innocent and unexpected of circumstances. Although she loved her children, during those moments of fury, she would blow out at them with physical, verbal, and emotional abuse. On the day of her funeral, Ezra’s brother Cody describes Pearl as a “raving, shrieking, unpredictable witch”:

“She slammed us against the wall and called us scum and vipers, said she wished us dead, shook us till our teeth rattled, screamed in our faces. We never knew from one day to the next, was she all right? Was she not? The tiniest thing could set her off. ‘I’m going to throw you through that window,’ she used to tell me. ‘I’ll look out that window and laugh at your brains splashed all over the pavement.’” (294)

This previous extract shows clearly to what extent Beck’s unexplained abandonment leaves Pearl feeling insecure in her position as mother; while not stated outright, Pearl

implies several times that she is an inadequate mother to the children because she must fulfill the roles of both parents. Nonetheless, she realizes that she is all they have and devotes herself to protecting them however she can. Even when her own frustrations emerge in what become frequent attacks on the children, she seems to want to protect them from seeing their only parent and their foundation- in a weak and helpless state. This affects the deserted mother which consequently distresses her attitude towards her children and their memories of childhood.

Cody, the oldest son appears in the third and seventh chapter. According to Mary J. Elkins, Cody is the central consciousness of this novel. His observations are the most acute, and he is the one who suffers a critical change by the end of the novel. Pearl does not seem to realize that Cody secretly wonders whether it was something he did, that made his father leave, nor does she perceive that Cody is conscious of her favoritism toward his younger brother Ezra. These two worries motivate behavior in Cody that Pearl considers difficult and mean. In spite of being handsome, dark-haired, Cody is a hero as well as a villain. Researchers are certain that maltreatment of children results in long-lasting negative effects and more signs of dissociative behavior. This is applied to Cody. He suffers most from his father's abandonment, his mother's verbal and physical abuse, and her preference for his brother Ezra. Obsessively jealous, he is a naughty and troublemaker child. He despises, resents Ezra, and always jealous of him. Therefore, feeling that he must compete with Ezra to win Pearl's affection and approval, Cody exerted all efforts during their childhood to change his mother's passive opinion of him by projecting Ezra in a negative light. After all, Beck is indirectly responsible for Pearl's treatment of the children after his abandonment as well as the behavior of Cody. Paula Gallant Eskard, in "Family and Community" (1990), noted that 'Cody has been similarly hurt by his mother's rejection and his father's abandonment' (41). His experience of his father's leaving is described as follows:

One weekend their father didn't come home, and he didn't come the next weekend either, or the next. Or rather, one morning Cody woke up and saw that it had been a while since their father was around. He couldn't say that he had noticed from the start. His mother offered no excuses. Cody, watchful as a spy, studied her furrowed, distracted expression and the way that her hands plucked at each other. It troubled him to realize that he couldn't picture his father's most recent time with them. Trying to find some scene that would explain Beck's leaving, he could only come up with general scenes, blended from a dozen repetitions: meals shattered by quarrels, other meals disrupted when Ezra spilled his milk, drives in the country where his father lost the way and his mother snapped out pained and exasperated directions (40) .

This powerful account shows how the absence of communication about the father's sudden departure created what some psychologists call "interpersonal trauma". Bowlby (1973) regarded interpersonal trauma as a severe negative effect associated with the exposure and experience of childhood abuse and neglect. Such an experience is considered as interpersonal in nature and is associated with a specific style of attachment, usually an ambivalent, avoidant or disorganized attachment, which is regarded as dysfunctional in nature (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970; Main & Solomon, 1990). Cody was the only child of his siblings to clearly remember his father's desertion. The sociologist

David Popenoe states that “Fathers are far more than just ‘second adults’ in the home,... involved fathers bring positive benefits to their children that no other person is as likely to bring” (qtd in Rosenberg 11). Beginning from the moment Cody realizes the truth about Beck, he claims all of the guilt for this disappearance. He experiences dreams where he is “not his present self [but instead] he had somehow slid backward and become a toddler again” (47). In his dreams, he becomes “conscious of a desperate need to learn to manage, to take charge of his surroundings” and then imagines himself posturing in front of his father to prove that he could make it on his own without Beck’s presence in his life (47). In other words, Cody longed for appreciation from his absent father and wished he could tell him “Look at what I’ve accomplished”... “Notice where I’ve got to, how far I’ve come without you” (48). This shows how children who grow up without fathers, their behavior is more likely associated to depression and low self-esteem. In addition, Cody is tormented with an obscure sense of guilt that he is to blame for his father’s sudden desertion. “Was it something I said, something I did that made my father go away? (47). One would observe that Cody is not the reason his father’s departure, but because he does not voice his feelings, no one in the family understands the extent of his guilt and inner suffering.

Confronting his mother about his father’s absence, she replies that she does not believe that he is “getting so big”. This remark adds burdens of fear from the implications of the responsibility placed on him by his mother’s statement, trying to prove out that he’s “only” fourteen. He resists his mother’s efforts to depend on him. Psychologists, such as Christiane Sanderson, have identified a number of behaviors and psychological disorders related to the absence of the father. Some of these behaviors and disorders are clear in Cody’s attitude, for example, attention-deficit, hyperactivity disorder, memory disturbance, diminished social skills, personality disorders, anxiety disorders, depressive disorders, dissociative disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Regarding his relationship with his mother, Cody is the most disturbed soul of his siblings “who longs for Pearl to be more motherly, both in appearance and personality” (Menon and Hemalatha 34). He remembers “that she’d [his mother] never shown the faintest interest in her community but dwelt in it like a visitor from a superior neighborhood...keeping her door shut tightly when at home.” (284). He once compares his mother to the mothers of his himself friends and was resentful that she had no personal friendships: “Look at his two best friends: their parents went to the movies together; their mothers talked on the telephone” (285). This shows how Cody longs to see his mother acting like other mothers. He wants his mother to have “some outside connection beyond that suffocating house” (59). He yearns to see her gossiping with a little gang of women in the kitchen, letting them roll her hair in pincurls, trading beauty secrets, playing cards” (60). “Cody disapproved of his mother’s disconnection and restraint because it set him apart from his peer group which made him less comfortable with others” (Menon and Hemalatha 35). He both feels as an outsider because of his mother’s continual abuse and never feels “at home” because of his father’s absence. Failure to accomplish the goals in the parent-child relationship due to his father’s abandonment and his mother’s rejection, results in an inadequate attachment relationship which in turn places him on a pathway to relationship difficulties in adulthood.

Cody's jealous towards his brother Ezra culminates in his marriage to the one woman Ezra ever loved, Ruth Spivey. As soon as Cody gets married to Ruth, he moves far away immediately from home because he clearly wants to avoid his mother. This strong desire to escape from his past comes from his traumatic perception of his childhood. He only remembers the bad times, and holds his mother responsible because she causes many of the struggles he recalls so strongly. Pearl physically abuses her children, which Cody remembers all too well, stating his desire to physically remove himself as a natural response to her harm.

Later in the novel, Pearl visits him in Chicago, she notices that although Cody's house is expensive, "with wall-to-wall carpeting and long, low, modern furniture, . . . and outside it was so white-hot, so insufferably hot, that they were confined to the house with its artificial, refrigerated air. They were imprisoned by the house, dependent upon it like spacemen in a spaceship" (179). As for Luke, Cody's son, he is always unfamiliar with his neighborhood and the other children. Cody tries to become the father he always wished he had. Pearl also notices the lack of intimacy between Cody and Ruth but fails to recognize the ironic similarity of her own marriage: "She felt in their house the thin, tight atmosphere of an unhappy marriage. Not a really terrible marriage—no sign of hatred, spitefulness, violence; just a sense of something missing.

Towards the end of the novel, after Pearl's funeral, Cody raises many questions to his father summing up the hurt, the anger, and the injuries of his father abandonment: How could you do that? ...How could you just dump us on our mother's mercy? ...We were kids, we were only kids, we had no way of protecting ourselves. We looked to you for help. We listened for your step at the door so we'd be safe, but you just turned your back on us. You didn't lift a finger to defend us. (Homesick Restaurant 300).

Conclusion

In short, fathers have a powerful and positive impact upon the development and health of children. In fact, fatherless family generally produces lone mothers who are more likely to suffer from stress, depression, and other emotional and psychological problems. In Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant, Cody's aggression and hostility to a great extent is attributed to what psychoanalyst's term "father hunger". Many psychological studies show how the intense emotional crisis of abandonment can create a trauma severe enough to leave an emotional imprint on individuals' psychological functioning, affecting their future choices, and responses to rejection, loss, or disconnection. This is clearly evident in Cody's case. Thus, he is driven from early youth by a rage to dominate; he is endlessly cruel not only to his brother, Ezra whom he steals his girl, but to his own wife and son.

Tyler's novel is beautifully crafted. Her unusual and appealing characters are so powerfully real, so carefully developed, they come to life both for her as a writer and for the reader, who suddenly can see a bit of his own mother, father, brother or even oneself in their touching words, their unspoken impulses, their blunders and their moments of weakness. She locates her novel in a tradition of fiction which probes the psychological dynamics of a family, and goes beneath the surface pieties to the underlying mysteries.

Her novel with its insightful illustration of the dysfunction in the twentieth-century American family, has made a great contribution to an understanding of the significant issues concerning the daily lives in the modern American society.



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Who's Next in Line?: Succession Planning Practices of Academic Libraries

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Abstract

As libraries transform and advance, they go through changes in leadership that affect service efficiency, organizational consistency, and alignment of priorities and strategies. Many Filipino librarians in the top-level management are now approaching retirement. Some librarians leave their organizations for greener pastures and better opportunities in other libraries. A few of them consider a change of career. These problems become complicated as there is a shortage of new licensed librarians, huge gap between top-level and mid-level management, and neglect of succession planning in the human resource development. Succession planning, as a tool for organizational development, is a useful technique for academic libraries.

This paper examines the profile of current library managers in academic libraries in the Philippines, identifies their hiring practices, and investigates their current practices in succession planning. It also aims to identify the factors influencing successful succession planning. An online survey was administered to determine the extent of succession planning to identify a range of factors influencing the implementation of succession planning principles among Philippine academic libraries. The results of this study prescribe best practices of successful planning to prepare the next leaders into their future roles.

Keywords: succession planning, leadership, academic libraries, librarians

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Introduction

As libraries transform and advance, they go through changes in leadership that affect service efficiency, organizational consistency, and alignment of priorities and strategies. Furthermore, challenges to the library profession and the library workforce, such as ageing library staff, generational differences, lack of middle managers, lack of qualified candidates, and shortages of skills and experience, among others, put a strain on organizational coherence (Singer & Griffith, 2010; Whitmell, 2002).

Leaders are necessary in organizations to influence people towards a desired direction. When leaders leave, organizations must ensure that there is still constancy and stability in their company. Employers must be ready and set to replace the leaders who left. Singer and Griffith (2012, p. 1) said that “to have the right people in the right place and at the right time only happens when the library has engaged in a continuous process of identifying, assessing, and developing talent to ensure leadership and management continuity throughout the organization.” This is what succession planning is all about. It is about cultivating individual's capacities in organizations, therefore empowering them to take on bigger roles and responsibilities in their work (Singer and Griffith, 2012).

In the Philippines, librarians are also confronted with similar challenges. This is further compounded by the shortage of Filipino librarians who will fill the vacant positions in libraries and information centers (Nera, Ramos and Ananoria, 2012). Library vacancies, especially in the top management positions, cannot be dealt with vacancy after vacancy (Whitmell, 2002). There must be a formal and a clear succession plan that ensures continuity in key positions.

Succession planning, as a tool for organizational development, is a useful technique for academic libraries. In view of this, this paper examines the profile of current library managers in academic libraries in the Philippines, identifies their hiring practices, and investigates their current practices in succession planning. It also aims to identify a range of factors influencing the implementation of succession planning principles among Philippine academic libraries.

Literature Review

Several works have been written and studies have been conducted on succession planning in libraries internationally, but there is paucity locally (Bridgland, 1999; Deards & Springs, 2014; Golden, 2007; González, 2013; Hatcher, 1997; Nixon, 2008; Rutledge, LeMire, Hawks, & Mowdood, 2016; Schreiber & Shannon, 2001; Singer & Griffith, 2010; Singer, Goodrich, & Goldberg, 2004; Webster & Young 2009; Whitmell, 2002). These literature discuss the relevance of succession planning in libraries and the ways to develop people to take on leadership roles.

Succession planning, according to Singer and Griffith (2010), is a “systematic effort by the library to ensure continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement” (p. 1). It is therefore designed to be incessant and owned by management. Singer et al. (2004) believe that for succession planning to work, there must be key imperatives to be fulfilled, namely: commitment of top management; ownership; a vision for the

organization's future; status of present conditions; openness to nontraditional sources of talents; and, a well documented training and development program (pp. 39-40).

In the Philippines, it is observed that there is difficulty for libraries to look for a replacement when one retires or resigns due to reasons, such as, no one from within the organization is qualified to take on the job or no external candidate is applying for the position. The vacancy would sometimes remain to be unoccupied for several months, or years. Moreover, the relevance of succession planning is overlooked by management, resulting therefore to undocumented or non-existent succession plans. For libraries to move forward, they must be prepared for what the future holds.

According to Whitmell (2001), effective succession planning strategies should include, among others, the following: a formalized managerial and supervisory training; job rotation and regular movement between departments and positions; support for training and education; a strategy for individual career movement; formal and informal feedback; formal evaluation periods; mentoring program; management support for employees' career goals; and, open communication among all employees in all levels.

Methodology

Target respondents of this study were directors, university librarians, chief librarians and head librarians from 179 academic libraries in the Philippines. The data were collected in June 2016 through an online survey questionnaire consisting of three parts, namely: (1) characteristics of library managers, (2) hiring practices of academic libraries, and (3) current practices of library succession planning. The survey questions were adopted from the studies of Rosenwald and Wendell (2013) and Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012). Personalized emails with the URL of the online survey were sent to 85 library managers. Call for participation to answer the online survey was also posted on Facebook pages of some library associations and e-groups. A total of 99 responses were collected yielding a response rate of 55.3%. After excluding invalid responses, 89 responses were analyzed using SPSS.

Profile of Library Managers

Respondents of the current study were asked to indicate the type of organizational structure of their library. Seventy (70) respondents described their library as a flat organization with an average of five librarians per library. Academic libraries that are considered hierarchical organizations employ an average of 23 librarians per library. As noted by Whitmell (2005), the size of an organization can significantly influence its "ability to implement long-term workforce plans" due to time constraints and "minimal in-house capacity" to mentor potential successors (p.135). The library director or university librarian is the highest position among the hierarchical library organizations. The majority of the respondents (58.4%) are master's degree holders while a few hold doctorate or PhD units.

Figure 1 shows the age distribution of library managers in academic libraries. The mean age of top library managers in this study is 47 years; 40 years for mid-level; and 35 years for low-level managers. Consistent with the study of Galbraith et al. (2012), department/section/unit heads are younger than top- and middle-level managers. The

library directors and university librarians tend to be older as they are required to possess more experience in leadership and management. Of the top-level managers, the youngest director or university librarian is 24 years old while the oldest is 68 years old, which is beyond the retirement age. Twenty percent (20%) of the total respondents are 50 years or older and will retire in the next five to ten years.

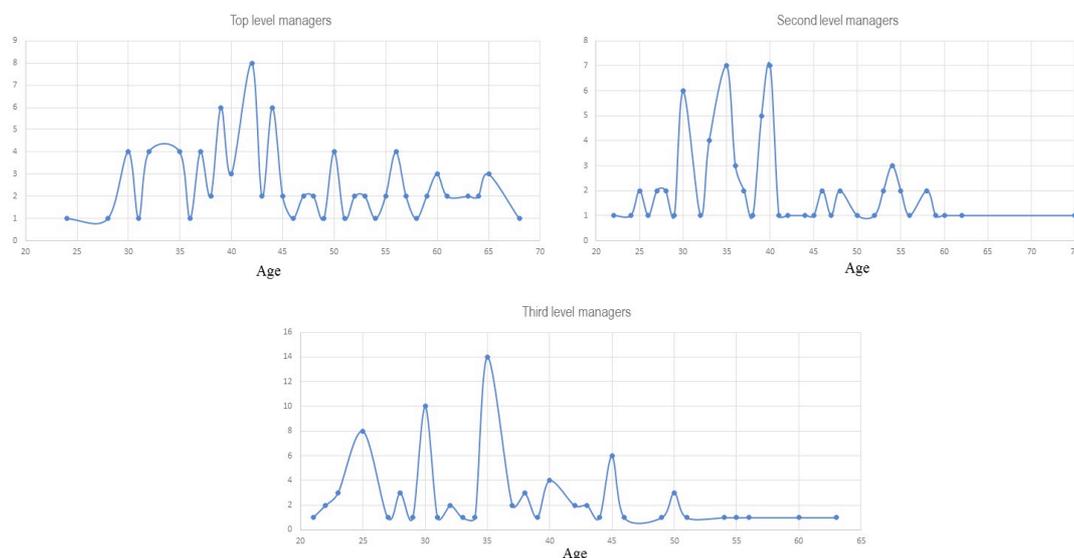


Figure 1: Age Distribution of Library Managers

Hiring Practices of Academic Libraries

As described by Galbraith et al. (2012, p. 222), succession planning involves “selection and training of internal employees for key leadership positions”; thus, it implies that when an organization has a succession plan, such gives a preference to hiring internal candidates. Respondents were also asked whether their libraries have preference to hire internal or external candidates for library management positions. Furthermore, they were asked if they have employed internal and/or external candidates. Figures in Table 1 show that while many respondents prefer to hire internal employees for management positions, they indicated no preference to internal and external candidates in the actual hiring process. Of the 89 respondents, 67 (75%) of them have no written policy that offers a preference to internal candidates. Moreover, 85% of the total respondents do not have a written policy that offers a preference to external candidates. On the average, only 23% of the managerial positions were filled by internal candidates over the past five years. Surprisingly, only 10 academic libraries have consistently hired internal candidates to fill vacant positions. Almost all of these libraries are private organizations and have a flat structure.

	Internal candidates		External candidates		No preference		Not applicable	
	Preference	Practice	Preference	Practice	Preference	Practice	Preference	Practice
Top-level management	54	22	15	26	19	41	1	0
Second-level management	46	7	15	21	21	43	7	18
Third-level management	41	14	21	29	20	38	7	8

Table 1. Preferred and Actual Hiring Practices of Academic Libraries

Tables 2 presents the reasons for hiring internal candidates for the top-level management positions. For academic libraries that hire internal candidates or both internally and externally, respondents perceived that the transition would be easier as internal candidates already understand the culture, strategic goals, and values of the organization. A quick, orderly and clean transition could therefore minimize disruptions in the workflow when managers leave the institutions (Galbraith et al., 2012; Hopper, 2011; Trickel, 2015). Likewise, respondents believed that hiring internally improves the morale of library staff and encourages retention of exceptional people. Weare (2015) argued that when an employer gives preferences to internal talents, it recognizes and appreciates the value of the employees. Furthermore, respondents would also hire internal candidates as they have loyalty and commitment to the library and university.

Reasons	# of respondents	% of 69
The transition is easier because internal employees understand the library's culture, strategic goals and values.	18	26.1
Hiring internally is a good way to improve employee morale and retention.	16	23.2
A sense of duty because internal employees are loyal and committed to our library.	14	20.3
Employees are well prepared for leadership opportunities.	13	18.8
When we hire internally, we get the most qualified individuals.	5	7.2
We have a practice of favoring internal candidates.	3	4.3

Table 2. Reasons for hiring internal candidates for the top-level positions

On the other hand, 11 respondents revealed that they would hire external candidates “who can offer a fresh perspective or new ideas from other libraries (new blood).” Some respondents claimed that external candidates would be more qualified. Others said that internal candidates who might be qualified for vacant positions often do not apply. More so, library managers would hire external candidate to bridge a leadership maturity gap particularly when the best internal candidate is not yet ready to assume the position and the responsibilities (“Top 10 Reasons to Consider External Candidates,” 2016).

Perceived Importance and Succession Plan

Almost 80% of the total respondents have no written succession plan. The majority of the respondents (52%) believed that succession planning is extremely important or very important (see Table 3). When respondents were asked to describe their succession plan, 39 (43.8%) respondents stated that their succession plan is not very well established. They do not apply succession planning principles, but they provide general training for all librarians. Some respondents (19, 21.3%) have a well-established succession plan wherein librarians were given specific opportunities to develop their leadership and management skills. Few respondents occasionally practice succession planning principles, but not very consistent. Probably, these respondents do not have a written succession plan to guide them in managing succession. Results also indicate that a gap between the perceived importance and practice of succession planning exists.

Respondents	Not at all important	Low importance	Slightly important	Neutral	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Without written succession plan	6	1	5	8	16	15	20
With a written succession plan	0	0	1	1	4	6	6
Total	6	1	6	9	20	21	26

Table 3. Importance of Succession Planning

Planning the Succession of Key Positions

While the primary responsibility for succession planning lies on the hands of top-level managers, the majority of the respondents said that all librarians participate in the succession planning. However, 35 (39.3%) respondents mentioned that “planning is only done after the current director/university librarian/chief librarian/head librarian has announced he/she is leaving or retiring soon.” Moreover, 33 (37.1%) respondents said that planning is done before the retirement/resignation of library managers, and is an ongoing activity. Only three respondents do not plan at all.

When respondents were asked if they could identify someone as director/university librarian/chief librarian/head librarian immediately, the vast majority (72, 80.9%) of the respondents said that they could. On the other hand, it would just take them one to two months to identify a permanent successor. Ten (10) out of 89 respondents answered that they could identify their permanent successor in just one day. Interestingly, nine of these respondents do not have a written succession plan.

Succession Planning Activities

This study also attempted to evaluate the succession planning efforts of the academic libraries being studied. Authors of this study modified and adopted the succession planning scoreboard of Rosenwald and Wendell (2013). A five-point Likert scale was used to rate each of the 10 statements associated with succession planning process

(see Table 4). Of the total respondents, 43.8% garnered scores 35-45, which indicate that these academic libraries should assess the activities with lower scores to determine where to focus succession planning efforts. Scores show that 25.8% of the 89 academic libraries could be at serious risk. These libraries should start developing their succession plans and identify key activities to improve their situations. Only seven respondents yielded scores of 46-50 which means that their libraries are in excellent condition to manage succession.

Scores	Interpretation	# respondents	% of 89
46-50	The organization is in excellent condition to manage succession.	7	7.9
35-45	Assess the lower scores to determine where to focus succession planning efforts.	39	43.8
29-34	The organization may be at risk of struggling through a potential transition. Determine where it needs to start to create a viable plan for succession.	20	22.5
28 or less	The organization could be at serious risk. Begin now to create a succession plan and identify key activities to improve the situation.	23	25.8

Table 4. Succession Planning Scores

Succession planning activities	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
The top-level management initiates discussions about leadership and succession planning with the middle/low level management.	16	19	28	17	9
The management team explains the process of selecting a successor and rationale to library staff.	20	20	26	19	4
Your library evaluates and manages staff performance.	3	3	12	23	48
Your library makes an inventory of its librarians' skills, experience and career interests.	10	8	20	32	19
Your library identifies potential talent and develops staff at the middle and low levels.	7	8	18	33	23
The middle-level management in your library have access to various opportunities to develop their leadership potential (i.e. mentoring)	4	8	20	34	23
The top-level management identifies interested librarians in leadership and assesses their capabilities.	13	12	23	26	15
Your library has a strategy in place for recruiting, orienting and developing new library managers.	9	11	25	29	15
The top-level management encourages librarians to work in teams to foster knowledge transfer.	6	8	21	27	27
Your library evaluates its succession plan.	23	17	23	18	8

Table 5. Succession Planning Activities

As shown in Table 5, more than 50% of the respondents said that their libraries evaluate and manage staff performance. The bulk of the respondents mentioned that

their libraries frequently perform the following activities: conduct an inventory of librarians' skills, experience and career interests; provide opportunities for middle-level management to develop their leadership potential (i.e., mentoring); identify interested librarians in leadership and assess their capabilities; create a strategy for recruiting, orienting and developing new library managers; and encourage librarians to work in teams to foster knowledge transfer. Furthermore, the following activities are rarely performed in the libraries: top-level management rarely initiates discussions about leadership and succession planning with the middle/low level management; the management team explains the process of selecting a successor and rationale to library staff; and, library evaluates their success plans.

Opportunities to Potential Talents

Respondents were further asked if their libraries implement succession planning principles, such as, providing on-the-job leadership opportunities (e.g. project leadership assignments, temporary managerial assignments, etc.) and providing job-specific training (e.g. training specific to job duties, general library conferences, or library webinars, etc.) for potential successors. In general, academic libraries in this study frequently offer on-the-job leadership opportunities to potential successors. This means that there is about 70% chance that librarians could have this opportunity. On the other hand, respondents have about 90% chance that they could have job-specific training. Ten (10) out of the 89 respondents claimed that 100% of the time, their libraries have provided the prospective successor training opportunities to hone his/her leadership and managerial skills. Surprisingly, only 16 respondents said that 100% of the time, opportunities for job-specific training were given to potential librarians. Findings show that academic libraries tend to offer opportunities for job-specific training than on-the-job leadership. Many colleges and universities offer financial support for librarians to participate in seminars, conferences and training. However, most of the topics focus on performing various library functions and too little on developing leadership competencies design for first-line or mid-level library managers.

Literature suggest that libraries should develop leadership and mentoring program for potential successors that would enable them to learn about administrative positions, enhance leadership skills, and become familiar with various leadership styles (Springs, 2014). Leadership experience may give internal candidates a competitive edge when they are being considered for top-level management positions. Potential library managers should have leadership skills in the aspects of accreditation and compliance, fundraising, legal issues and facilities management (Harris-Keith, 2016, p. 315). In addition, job-specific training program must be created to build librarians' competencies particularly in the areas of staff selection, project management, budget planning, crisis management, donor relations, and program evaluation (Bridgland, 1999; Nixon, 2008). Training and development program should be well documented as suggested by Singer et al. (2004).

Barriers to Implementation

When respondents were asked to identify the top two factors that affect implementation of succession planning principles, the majority of the respondents selected "little emphasis on succession planning" (53.9%) and "not a priority due to

other initiatives taking precedence (49.4%). As shown in Table 6, lack of talents and limited financial resources to develop internal talents were not the top two answers. It can be deduced that academic libraries have sufficient internal talents to fill vacancies in the future. As today's top-level managers would eventually leave their posts, library management should start taking all the necessary steps to prepare its future leaders and avoid getting trapped in a succession crisis. While many librarians recognize the importance of succession planning in human resource planning and management, it has not been a priority for them. Galbraith et al. (2012) also concluded that "few institutions have established succession plans that actively prepare current staff for future leadership opportunities" (p. 222).

Factors	# of respondents	% of 89
The executive team puts little emphasis on succession planning.	48	53.9
Succession planning is not a priority due to other initiatives taking precedence.	44	49.4
Succession planning is not part of the library's strategic goals or plans.	38	42.7
We do not have program in place to develop for potential leaders.	33	37.1
Employees show little interest in employee or leadership development.	21	23.6
We lack talents.	8	9.0
We do not have the financial resources to develop internal talent.	6	6.7

Table 6. Factors Affecting the Implementation of Succession Planning Principles

Conclusion and Recommendation

Findings show that generally, Philippine academic library managers belong to a flat organization. Library directors and university librarians tend to be older as they are required to possess more experience in leadership and management. While many of the respondents prefer to hire internal employees for management positions, they indicated no preference to internal and external candidates in the actual hiring process. For academic libraries that hire internal candidates or both internally and externally, respondents perceived that the transition would be easier as internal candidates understand the culture, strategic goals, and values of the organization. It is also believed that hiring internally improves employee morale and retention.

Almost 80% of the total respondents have no written succession plan, but majority of them believed that succession planning is extremely important or very important in libraries, even if the executive team or top management puts little emphasis on succession planning. A good number of respondents also mentioned that planning is only done in their libraries after the current head has announced he/she is leaving or retiring soon. While it is believed that the primary responsibility for succession planning lies on the hands of top-level managers, the majority of the respondents said that all librarians participate in the succession planning.

Therefore, although library managers of Philippine academic libraries understand the importance of succession planning in their libraries and that they practice succession planning even without a written succession plan, it is imperative that clear and documented succession plan should be in place as a guide for management to ensure continuity and organizational survival.

Succession planning cannot be dealt with successfully vacancy by vacancy or individual by individual (Whitmell, 2002). Thus, programs on the discussion and understanding of the relevance of succession planning in library and information centers should be on the agenda of upper level management. To successfully manage succession, library management should start incorporating succession planning into their strategic goals and objectives. Moreover, implementation of succession planning should be encompassing all levels of management to “create a surplus of talent” (Bridfland, 1999; González, 2013, p. 413). Instead of asking “What if we train them and they leave?” library directors, university librarians or chief librarians should ask “What if we don’t train them and they stay?” (González, 2013, p. 413). Thus, a change of perspective may change the future direction of academic libraries in the Philippines. Finally, training/workshops on creating a good succession plan for library managers and librarians are also recommended.

The logo for iafor (International Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping circular arcs. The upper arc is light blue and the lower arc is light red, both appearing as thin, glowing lines.

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Antigone and Politics of Plurality in the Postmodern Era

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Abstract

In Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, the heroine Antigone defies the state law, which Creon, the new ruler of Thebes, compels the citizens to comply with. Unlike numerous critics, Fanny Söderbäck regards Antigone as the public sphere and Creon as the private, reversing the old binary opposition of Hegel. By contrast, Söderbäck, drawing on Hannah Arendt's theory, emphasizes the importance of plurality in politics. In the postmodern era, plurality functions as a crucial factor in culture and politics, and, accordingly, I argue that plurality should be accepted in politics concerning *Antigone*.

Arendt draws attention to two aspects of Creon's paradoxical behavior. Firstly, Creon belongs to the private sphere, not the public. On the other hand, Antigone's action belongs to the public realm. Söderbäck (2010) mentions that "By transgressing the law she [Antigone] sets a new standard for lawmaking. She introduces a new model of the political, a model based on speech and action," unlike Creon (p. 70). Secondly, Creon reveals the disposition of a dictator. In this regard, Arendt claims that politics should include plurality, and Arendt's plurality is a crucial factor in postmodern times, in order to include minority groups in the community.

Antigone is, finally, sacrificed by Creon, and she is expelled to the underworld like an exile. From the postcolonial and postmodern viewpoint, Söderbäck and other critics emphasize politics of plurality, and it is meaningful that we should embrace the minority groups in our society because we live in times of diversity and fluidity.

Keywords: *Antigone*, Arendt, Plurality, Söderbäck

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***Antigone* and Politics of Plurality in the Postmodern Era**

Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*,¹ which was written in 442 BC, has been dealt with for centuries by critics and adapted for dramas, poetry, movies and various performances throughout the world. In *Antigone*, the heroine defies the state law, which the new ruler of Thebes, Creon, compels the citizens to comply with, and instead she obeys the divine law. Critics have been, especially, interested in the heroine Antigone who resists Creon, and they have analyzed *Antigone* through confrontation between Antigone and Creon. Most of all, critics focused on the two figures Antigone and Creon, and they discussed *Antigone* through the binary oppositions between the individual and the state or community, particularity and universality, divine law and human law, or female ethics and male authority.

However, German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel, French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and numerous feminists, such as Cecilia Sjöholm and Julia Kristeva, reveal different viewpoints on *Antigone*, and this Greek tragedy is ceaselessly re-evaluated from various perspectives. Among these critics, Fanny Söderbäck intends to reverse the old binary opposition of Hegel and others, according to which Creon represents the public, or the universal, and Antigone represents the private, or the particular. Söderbäck rather regards Antigone as public and Creon as private. Hence, Söderbäck emphasizes the importance of plurality in politics, and she asserts that Creon ignores this plurality in the *polis*. In the postmodern era, plurality is regarded as crucial factor in culture and politics and, therefore, I argue that in compliance with postmodern trait, plurality should be accepted in politics concerning *Antigone* like Söderbäck's claim.

In Sophocles' *Antigone*, Antigone complies with God's law, not the state law enforced by Creon. Consequently, Creon regards Antigone as a rebel. Antigone is the daughter of Thebes' ruler Oedipus and Jocasta, who committed a suicide, and her two brothers Eteocles and Polynices died fighting for each other in order to sit on the throne of Thebes. Afterwards, Creon, who is Jocasta's brother, becomes the new ruler of Thebes and determines that Eteocles should be interred with honor. However, Polynices² is regarded as an enemy because he attacked Thebes, and Creon commands his citizens to leave Polynices body unburied. Antigone, nevertheless, rejects Creon's order and tries burying her brother's body. For this reason, Creon sees Antigone as a traitor:

CREON: And now, thou answer me. Be brief and clear.
 Didst know this burial was by law forbid?
 ANTIGONE: I knew. How could I help it? 'Twas not hid.
 CREON: And that law, knowing, thou didst dare to break?
 ANTIGONE: I deemed it not the voice of Zeus that spake
 That herald's word, not yet did Justice, she
 Whose throne is beyond death, give such decree

¹ In his book *A commentary on the Plays of Sophocles*, James C. Hogan (1991) says, "*Antigone* was the first book of Sophocles' three Theban plays to be produced, probably in 442 B.C." (p. 126).

² Hogan (1991) mentions, in *A commentary on the Plays of Sophocles*, that "As the play [*Antigone*] begins, Antigone and Ismene, the only surviving children of Oedipus, discuss an edict prohibiting the burial of their brother Polyneices, who has been killed in battle while attacking Thebes, leading an Argive army against his brother Eteocles. Creon, their uncle, is the new ruler of Thebes and has determined to leave Polyneices' corps unburied as an admonition for anyone who would attack the state" (p. 126).

To hold among mankind. I did not rate
 Thy proclamations for a thing so great
 As by their human strength to have overtrod
 The unwritten and undying laws of God . . . (445-55)

G.W.F. Hegel explains the conflict between Antigone and Creon through the binary opposition; that is, the critic defines Antigone as a woman, an individual and divine law, whereas he describes Creon as a man, the community and human law. From this viewpoint, Hegel argues that Antigone invades the public realm, the state law, and at the same time she tries to relocate the universality of the state to particularity of the individual. For Hegel (2003), Antigone is, therefore, the figure that attempts to privatize the public matter by infringing the state law:

Womankind—the everlasting irony in the life of the community—changes by intrigue the universal purpose of government into a private end, transforms its universal activity into a work of this or that specific individual, and perverts the universal property of the state into a possession and ornament for the family. (p. 276)

In contrast with Hegel's argument, Arendt draws attention to two aspects of Creon's paradoxical behavior; that is, on the one hand, Creon belongs to the private sphere, not the public; on the other, he is regarded as a tyrant. First, I will discuss why Creon reflects the traits of the private realm, not a public. Söderbäck (2010) asserts that from the viewpoint of Arendt, Creon should be defined as a representative of the private because "the whole concept of ruler and ruled" is seen as "prepolitical" and consequently the notion belongs to "the private realm" (p. 67). Therefore, Antigone does not refuse to conform to the state law, but rather Creon interrupts Antigone's family rite, invades Antigone's personal space and eventually privatizes politics like a household by using his authority as a ruler. In this respect, Söderbäck explains that in accordance with Arendt's claim, Creon lacks "action" in his politics and instead abuses his "strength," and, hence, he cannot be regarded as "public" (p. 67):

ANTIGONE: To thee is hateful all that I hold true.
 Yet, to see true, what praise could I have won
 More high than to have saved my mother's son
 From dogs and birds? — Aye, all these Elders here
 Would praise me, were their lips not sealed by fear.

.....
 CREON: Art not ashamed to be so unlike them?

ANTIGONE: To have done a sister's duty brings no shame.

CREON: No brother, then, was he whom this man slew?

ANTIGONE: That was he; by both sides my brother true. (501-13)

In the conversation of Creon and Haemon, Creon continuously reveals that he intends to exercise authority over the citizen Antigone as if a father rules over his children in the patriarchal system of a household. Creon discloses his real purpose to Haemon regarding Antigone and, in this scene, he reveals that he tries to let his niece Antigone surrender to his patriarchal order, not to the state law. Therefore, Creon's action portrays a paradoxical aspect as a ruler of the city because he applies the public authority to the family sphere:

CREON: She shall die. Oh let her rave
 Of kith and kindred and their patron Zeus;
 If my own kin must practise such abuse
 As this unpunished, what will strangers do?
 The man who keepeth his own household true
 In loyalty, he only in the state
 Is loyal, full-willed either to be great
 And rule, or to be humble and obey: (658-65)

On the other hand, Antigone's action — mourning for her brother Polynices — belongs to the public realm, not the private. In fact, Antigone resists Creon since he intervenes in her personal matter when she performs the family rite for her brother's burial. For this reason, Söderbäck claims that Antigone intends to hinder Creon from ruling over the state "as a patriarchal household" (p. 70). Consequently, Söderbäck adds that "By transgressing the law she [Antigone] sets a new standard for lawmaking. She introduces a new model of the political, a model based on speech and action rather than tyrannical rule," unlike Creon (p. 70).

Moreover, Rush Rehm has a similar standpoint with Söderbäck and supports this claim. Rehm (2006) explains that Antigone's crying and her action, which is to bury her brother Polynices, are related to her family and her duty as a sister, and precede the state law, mentioning that "Antigone feels compelled to bury Polyneices precisely because *he is her brother* . . . Her compulsion to perform funeral rites for his corpse takes precedence over all her other duties and responsibilities, from obeying political authority to building a family of her own" (p. 189):

ANTIGONE: So runs his order. Now thou knowest all.
 Now is the day to show thee nobly brave,
 Or born a princess but at heart a slave.

 ISMENE: Thou thinkst to bury, though the deed is banned. . . .
 ANTIGONE: My flesh, and thine, whom thou deniest: Yes.
 ISMENE: When Creon hath forbid? 'Tis lawlessness.
 ANTIGONE: What right hath he to bar me from mine own? (36-47)

In this regard, Bonnie Honig also reveals the same stance with Arendt, Söderbäck and Rush Rehm's assertions in that Honig describes Antigone as public. For Honig, Antigone's behavior is not limited to the private sphere because her mourning for her brother Polynices can be regarded as a universal if it is considered as part of the tradition of tragedy. Honig (2013) states that in tragedy the protagonists endure "pain" and "suffering" before their heroic death, and therefore their lamenting and mourning are, in general, seen as universalized and humanized features:

Here tragedy's power is not that it redeems suffering, but that it exemplifies it in ways that highlight what many think to be the human's most basic common denominator — the capacity to feel pain and suffer. Of the various tragic heroes, Sophocles' Antigone is taken best to exemplify universal suffering and the ethical turn, both by those who favor the turn to ethics (Butler) and by those who oppose it (Rancière). (p. 18)

In addition to the characteristic as a private sphere instead of a public, Creon exhibits another paradoxical behavior; that is, the disposition as a dictator. He does not admit other citizen's opinion, and he speaks and behaves like a tyrant. In the scene where Creon communicates with his son Haemon, Creon mentions that "the king" owns the state, and he does not think that he needs to listen attentively to citizens' voices. On the other hand, Haemon resists against his father Creon's standpoint and, hence, Haemon depicts Creon as the king of the desert. With regard to this, through Arendt's argument, Söderbäck explains that "Power, for Arendt, is always 'a power potential and not an unchangeable, measurable, and reliable entity like force or strength . . . power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse' (200)" (p. 67):

CREON: Does Thebes think to dictate our laws to us?

HAEMON: Only the very young would argue thus.

CREON: By whose will should I govern save mine own?

HAEMON: No City is that which is one man's alone.

CREON: The City is the King's. That law doth stand.

HAEMON: A king like thee would suit an empty land. (734-9)

Contrary to Creon's stance, Arendt claims that politics should include plurality. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt (1958) defines plurality, stating that "Human plurality, the basic condition of both action and speech, has the twofold character of equality and distinction" (p. 175). Creon, however, governs Theban citizens with dictatorial power and hence Haemon depicts Creon as an isolated king in the "empty land" by using metaphor (739). Unfortunately, it is impossible nowadays that in a democratic state the ruler reigns over the people like a tyrant without accepting citizen's opinions. In this sense, Arendt's claim can be regarded as rational and suitable for postmodern politics, and Söderbäck supports Arendt's argument:

Being political, according to Arendt, is to act and speak in concert. Plurality is the ontological condition of politics. Action, as distinguished from both labor and work, 'is never possible in isolation; to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act' (188). Action 'always establishes relationships and therefore has an inherent tendency to force open all limitations and cut across all boundaries' (190). (Söderbäck, p. 66)

With regard to Arendt's concept of plurality, Kristian Klockars (2008) summarized its characteristics with five elements, that is to say, "equality, diversity, active participation, the shared world as a central mediating factor and the interactive or communicative dimension-" (p. 64). Therefore, Arendt's plurality is linked to postmodern theories, which Lyotard and Hutcheon respectively state in their essays, on the one hand, and to postcoloniality, on the other hand. First, Hutcheon (1988) says, "Postmodern difference or rather differences, in the plural, are always multiple and provisional" (p. 6) as if Arendt stresses a "potential" and changeable aspects in "power." (qtd. in Söderbäck, 2010, p. 67). From this postmodernist viewpoint, Bhabha also asserts that we can render "truth" of politics "relative" when we embrace hybridity in politics:

He [Homi K. Bhabha] has seen the political as a hybrid and multipolar

space that incessantly qualifies meaning, thereby making ‘truth’ contingent and relative. He conceives of political positions as ever-evolving, always in a state of flux that allows for the fullest play of all the possibilities of representation. (Chakrabarti, p. 24)

In a similar manner, Lyotard emphasizes the social bond in postmodern era because modern people cannot live alone, that is to say, the critic asserts that in contemporary times people are all intertwined with each other in their social relationship. For this reason, according to Lyotard (1979), no matter what we are, today we are confronted with the situation when we are placed at the moment of interaction, “nodal points” (p.15). From this standpoint, Creon pretermits plurality in postmodernism and Lyotard supports Arendt’s plurality because she also regards mutuality as important in political plurality:

A *self* does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at “nodal points” of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be. (p. 15)

Secondly, Arendt’s plurality concept functions as an important factor when we analyze the postcolonial texts. Although Sophocles’ *Antigone* is an ancient Greek play, from postcolonial perspective Antigone can be depicted as an exile or a refugee since she is placed in a miserable situation after her father Oedipus died and Creon occupied the throne. By violating the state law, she is finally locked in “the rock grave” and dies there (888). For this reason, she can be regarded as an exile when she is dragged to this tomb in accordance with Creon’s order:

CREON: Away with her; and in that vaulted tomb,
Alone and lost, obedient to my doom,
Let her go free whether she wish to die
Or live in that rock grave.

.....
ANTIGONE: O grave, O bridal chamber; O thou deep
Eternal prison house, wherein I keep
Tryst with my people, the great multitude
Below to Queen Persephone subdued.
To them I take my way, of all the last
And lowliest, ere my term of life is past; (885-96)

According to Söderbäck (2010), Arendt’s claim demonstrates that today “the distinction between private and public has collapsed,” and instead “the social realm” emerged and “modern nation-states” replaced old concept of nation or state (p. 66). For this reason, Arendt’s plurality is a crucial factor in postmodern times in order to include minorities, such as exiles. In this respect, Nicholas Harrison says, “minority groups are ‘unrepresented’ in a democracy, if by ‘minority group’ one understands a number of people with some significant attribute in common whose worldview and/or interests as a group are inevitably consistently ignored or rebuffed by the majority . . . ” (Harrison, 2003, p. 99). In addition, across the border, there is the

marginality for migrants, exiles and refugees like Antigone, and therefore hybridity³ intervenes in in-betweenness and various interpretations are applied to colonial texts. This hybridity, finally, incorporates the voice in the margin — their discourse and writing:

But today, nationalism and national liberation struggles are anathema to postcolonialists . . . a ‘cultural turn’ effectively replaced the revolutionary process in history with an endless process of ‘abrogation and appropriation’ of colonial texts and practices in quest of an identity that is ultimately and forever decentered, shifting, borderless, fluid, aleatory, ambivalent, and so on. (San Juan Jr., 2008, p. 158)

From the similar perspective, Gikandi (2010) explores the issue of postcoloniality concerning refugees’ identity in cosmopolitanism. He mentions that there are problems of “aggregating difference” and “the nature of journey” in transnationalism⁴ (p. 24). In aggregating problem, the conflict between the self and the Other occurs because of their difference. Accordingly, Gikandi and Bhabha focus on the diversity and complexity in postcoloniality. In this respect, Gikandi says, “cosmopolitanism, as Ulf Hannerz has reminded us, is also *a matter of varieties and levels*” (p. 24).

To conclude, Antigone resists the state law since Creon, the ruler of Thebes, abuses his strength like a tyrant by using his authority in a citizen’s household. Antigone is, finally, sacrificed by Creon’s arrogance and she is expelled to the underworld and locked in the rock grave although she is alive. She is, hence, depicted as an exile and excluded from her state Thebes. In this regard, Arendt criticizes Creon’s privatization concerning Antigone’s family rite. Therefore, from the postcolonial and postmodern viewpoint, Arendt and other critics, such as Söderbäck, Lyotard and Bhabha, emphasize politics of plurality in contemporary era, and it is meaningful that we should embrace the minority group in our society because we live in times of diversity and fluidity.

³ Ashcroft (2013) defines “hybridity” in *Postcolonial studies: the key concepts*. He states that “[t]he term ‘hybridity’ has been most recently associated with the work of Homi K. Bhabha, whose analysis of colonizer/colonized relations stresses their interdependence and the mutual construction of their subjectivities . . . For him, the recognition of this ambivalent space [Third Space of enunciation] of cultural identity may help us to overcome the exoticism of cultural diversity in favour of the recognition of an empowering hybridity within which cultural difference may operate” (p. 108)

⁴ Ashcroft (2010) defines ‘transnational’ in his article “Transnation.” He mentions that in postcolonial studies, transnational “might more properly be conceived as a relation between states, a crossing of borders or a cultural or political interplay between national cultures” (p. 73).

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Finding Value that Matters: Investigating Librarians' Attitudes toward Continuing Professional Development Pursuits

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Abstract

This paper primarily investigates the librarian's attitude in their participatory decisions when it comes to their continuing professional development (CPD) engagements, which would eventually contribute to their learning and relevance as a library and information professional. Since quite a number of local research gave focus on competencies, kinds and benefits of CPD pursuits, the intention of the paper is for librarians to look beyond the material and legalistic benefits of CPD initiatives and opportunities, especially in light of the ASEAN economic integration. Using the concept of adult education learning, the study attempts to examine the values librarians attach to determine their professional and personal learning direction. Results of the study point towards understanding the respondents' conscious efforts in their professional upkeep and how they value CPD participation to further develop their expected learning outcomes. It is anticipated that the study will have potential contribution along with the current efforts to strengthen CPD programs in the Philippines.

Keywords: continuing professional development, attitudes, values, participation

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Introduction

Learning and capacity building do not start and end in the university. While structured education lays the foundation for learning, continuous learning results to higher level of competencies in order to further develop the expertise in one's chosen field and branch out to other fields of interest. Competencies could be acquired by engaging oneself in learning venues to keep oneself current.

Professional development is a continuous process, hence, for as long as a professional desires for meaningful learning, there is no end to the process. To obtain new knowledge, a professional has to seize all learning opportunities from both formal and non-formal education, expanding the possibility of deepening professional expertise (Stan, Stancovici, & Paloş, 2013). For librarians, whose roles have transcended the traditional information service, engaging in professional learning activities has become a necessity, especially since the field integrates the latest developments in technology and information literacy, affecting the information seeking behaviors of today's library users. These trends are drivers that require adaptation to the changing times, such that "the availability of relevant and accessible continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities has never been more urgent for librarians, and the survival of the profession depends on the willingness of its members to engage with these opportunities during their working lives and to keep ahead of the curve" (Corcoran, McGuinness, Smeaton, & Davis, 2014, p. 176). Staying relevant is key to professional effectiveness.

Attitude Towards Learning

Lifelong learning is the essence of continuing education. One continues to acquire the needed skills and knowledge because the environment and culture around him changes and has to stay competent. Moreover, continuous learning develops into the most significant means of improving one's quality of life (Ayfer & Gunay, 2015). To stay relevant, librarians should realize that learning is not just about professional advancement, i.e., earning credit units and renewing the license every 3 years. It is about harnessing learning in every nature of the learning opportunity there is available for one's professional development. Attitude towards learning is important as this will underline one's participation decisions in continuing professional development pursuits.

A number of related studies were conducted regarding attitude towards continuing education learning. Ayfer & Gunay (2015) performed a validity on the Turkish version of the Adult Attitudes toward Continuing Education Scale (AACES) using factor analysis. Boeren (2011) found out that most participants in adult education in her study illicit a more positive attitude towards learning and that non-participants who have intentions to participate scored higher on the attitude scales. In their study on the modeling participation intention of adults, Ming Lau and Chen (2012) concluded that positive and negative attitudes, normative belief and motivation to comply served as indicators to participation intention in continuing education. Stan, Stancovici and Paloş (2013) conducted a relationship study between the teachers' attitude toward

continuing professional training vis-à-vis their resistance to change, revealing that older teachers tend to attribute greater importance to CPD compared to their younger counterparts with less teaching experience.

Adult Education Learning in CPD

While library professionals understand the significance of professional advancement in one's career, a deeper sense of understanding on the importance of learning behind every CPD activity one engages in is another challenge.

Incorporating adult education concepts are seen as ways to inculcate meaningful learning whenever a librarian plans to undertake or participate in a CPD engagement. In a literature review gathered by Attebury (2015), *andragogy*, or how adults learn best (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 2011), explains that adults would prefer to participate in activities where they see practical use of their learning and that are drawn from real-life, on-the-job experiences. Perhaps learning will be appreciated more when librarians see the value of the new information they will obtain from a seminar or training based upon their situation at work. This will also lead them to becoming self-directed in their learning. Another is the concept of *transformational learning*, which involves learning as one transitions or evolves roles, as learning takes place in phases. This would develop the learner from within, changing his behavior and attitudes as he goes on to learning new things.

LIS profession in the Philippines

For one to become a library and information professional in the Philippines, a 4-year Bachelor's degree or a 2 to 3-year Master's degree in Library and Information Science (LIS) is a pre-requisite. To date, there are 68 schools in the country offering the LIS degree program. There is no Doctors program on LIS yet in the Philippines, however, quite a few Filipino librarians have earned their PhD in related schools or faculty of information studies abroad.

After earning the degree and the candidate would like to pursue a career in librarianship, professional certification is required. Republic Act 9246, which is the *Philippine Librarianship Act of 2003*, mandates an LIS graduate to take and pass the Librarian's Licensure Exam, otherwise, he/she cannot be hired nor be able to practice librarianship, especially in academic libraries, where these libraries are subject to periodic accreditation. Upon passing the exam and after registry before the government's Professional Regulation Commission (PRC; the office responsible for regulation and licensing of professionals in the country), the professional is given his/her license in a form of an ID - much like a driver's license, but a license to practice the profession.

However, the practice of librarianship does not end with the license. A librarian is expected to keep himself current in the field by educating oneself continuously, which is every professional's obligation to self and his stakeholders. In order to ensure this, a librarian seeks out learning opportunities for professional development from various professional societies offering

continuing education activities, or resorts to becoming a self-directed learner to manage one's own learning.

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Law and Program

In July 2016, Republic Act No. 10912 (2016) known as the *Continuing Professional Development Act of 2016* was enacted into law. The law was promulgated to specifically strengthen the CPD programs of every profession in the country, so as to ensure the upgrade of the skills and competencies of a professional; likewise making their qualifications internationally at par, enabling professional mobility in light of the ASEAN economic integration (through the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement). It also directed for the creation of a CPD Council per profession, who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of its CPD programs.

In Section 10 of this RA, it was also emphasized that CPD is a mandatory requirement for all regulated professions, which is especially crucial in the renewal of the professional license ID in order to continue with the practice of the profession. In its revised implementing guidelines (Resolution no. 2016-990, 2016), details for the crediting of CPD units for every CPD activity engaged in by a professional were elaborated.

With this development in the profession, librarians have taken a self-conscious effort to comply with the requirements of the law. However, the primary intention of the law points towards continuous learning of the professional, in order to keep pace with the changes in the field, society and economy, being the country's best resource for national growth. Learning should therefore be prioritized as the primary gain, over and above compliance, and it takes a positive attitude to value its importance.

Purpose of the Study

Given that there is an existing awareness among Filipino librarians about the CPD requirements to comply with, this study endeavors to capture the attitudes that influence their participation decisions, and how these would direct them to achieving their career-long learning pursuits. It also aims to look into the attributes they tend to value as they seek to engage in continuing education. Attitude and value attributes are contributing factors towards one's relevance as a library and information professional and learning appreciation.

This study seeks to find out the answers to these problem statements:

- What are the librarians' attitudes toward engaging in CPD activities?
- What makes them decide to participate?
- What values do librarians see in continuing education?

Scope and Methodology

The purposive sampling method was used to gather respondents for this study. To capture recent CPD experience, LIS professionals and practitioners who

undertook seminars, training-workshops and conferences given by Philippines-based professional library societies and alumni associations, who are also CPD providers, during the conference season from March to May 2016, were determined to be the would-be respondents of the study. Clearance was first obtained from six (6) professional groups, namely, the *Asosasyon ng Aklatan at Sinupan ng Diliman, Inc.* (AASDI), *Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines* (ASLP), *Philippine Association of Academic/Research Librarians, Inc.* (PAARL), *Philippine Normal University Library and Information Science Alumni Association* (PNULISAA), *Society of Filipino Archivists* (SFA) and *University of the Philippines Library Science Alumni Association* (UPLSAA), to access their participants' directories to obtain a sample. A total of 247 participants from the CPD activities organized by said professional groups were gathered, however, the list was filtered to exclude non-librarian participants.

A survey questionnaire was devised as instrument for this study. It was designed to cull data to correlate the respondent's profile with the 24-item participation attitudes and 12-item value attributes. Attitude attributes were partly based on Blunt and Yang's (2002) *Adult Attitude towards Continuing Education Scale* (AACES), however, indicators and statements were contextualized to adapt to the local LIS environment familiar to the subjects of the study. A five-point Likert scale was used to determine the level of agreement for attitude towards participation and learning and the level of importance for values attributed to CPD engagements, respectively. Participation background in formal and non-formal continuing education activities within the last 3 years (2013-2015) were also profiled.

The online questionnaire was sent out individually through email to all 247 prospective respondents for a period of 3 weeks in the month of June. Responses were recorded and analyzed using descriptive statistics for frequency and cross tabulations, and inferential statistics using the chi-square test.

Results and Discussion

At the end of the data gathering period, 128 responses (52% retrieval rate) were collected as valid data, where respondent demographics, participation background and attitudes and values toward CPD engagements, were analyzed.

Respondent Demographics

Table 1 profiled the age group of respondents and their position distribution in the library. In this table, younger-aged respondent librarians (20-29 years old) are largely part of library pool (16.4%), however, 7.8% of them are middle managers, and interestingly, one of them (0.8%) is a young, chief librarian. Middle-aged respondent librarians (30-39 years old) are generally coordinators/successors (25%), but with 8.6% of them being the chief librarian. Respondent librarians aged 40-59 years old are likewise coordinators/successors, however, librarians in the 50-60 and above age brackets are assuming chief library position. Seniority in terms of age is being considered in appointing top management and administrative positions.

AGE	POSITION IN THE LIBRARY						Total
	First level (team)		Middle management (supervisory)		Top management (chief)		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
20-29	21	16.4	10	7.8	1	0.8	32
30-39	8	6.3	32	25.0	11	8.6	51
40-49	5	3.9	14	10.9	2	1.6	21
50-59	6	4.7	7	5.5	6	4.7	19
60-above	1	0.8	1	0.8	3	2.3	5
Grand Total	41	32.0	64	50.0	23	18.0	128

Table 1: Age vs. Position in the library

Majority of the respondents are of permanent status, regardless of the type of library where they are employed; and a majority of them are employed in academic libraries (63.3%, see Table 2). Meanwhile, respondents of probationary status are apparent in academic and school libraries (3.9%, respectively).

Employment Status	Type of library								Total
	Academic		Public/Government		School		Special		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Contractual (i.e., renewable, time-bound)	3	2.3	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	4
Permanent	81	63.3	13	10.2	6	4.7	10	7.8	110
Probationary (i.e., being considered for permanency)	5	3.9	1	0.8	5	3.9	1	0.8	12
project based (part-time)	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
Temporary	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
Grand Total	91	71.1	15	11.7	11	8.6	11	8.6	128

Table 2: Employment status vs. Type of library

Table 3 describes the respondents' years in the profession, and their education and library position distributions. Respondents with 0-1 year experience are entry level librarians with bachelor's degree (n=4), with 1 assigned as a middle manager. For respondents who have been practicing for 2-5 years, majority are Bachelor's degree holders in all levels of management, with one even assigned as the chief librarian. Respondents who have been practicing for 6-10 years are generally middle managers with Master's degree (n=9), however, only Master's degree holders (n=3) in this career age are chief librarians. Librarians with career age 11-15 years are likewise middle managers with Master's degree (n=12), while chief librarians are also Master's degree holders (n=7). By career age 16 years and above, the number of Bachelor's degree holders at all management levels decreases as career age progresses.

Bachelor's degree holders with career age 2-5 years dominate entry level positions, while Master's degree holders dominate middle management positions from career age 6 years and above. There are Doctors degree holders who are middle managers with career age 11-15 years (n=1) and 21 years-above (n=3), respectively, and a top manager with career age 21 years-above (n=1).

Years in the profession	First level (team)			Middle management (supervisory)				Top management (chief)				Grand Total
	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Total	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctors degree	Total	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctors degree	Total	
0-1 year	4	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
2-5 years	13	3	16	8	2	0	10	1	0	0	1	27
6-10 years	5	2	7	2	9	0	11	0	3	0	3	21
11-15 years	1	2	3	8	12	1	21	2	7	0	9	33
16-20 years	3	2	5	2	7	0	9	0	2	0	2	16
21 years-above	1	5	6	2	7	3	12	0	7	1	8	26
Grand Total	27	14	41	23	37	4	64	3	19	1	23	128

Table 3: Years in the profession vs. Position in the library vs. Education

Participation Background

Respondents were inquired of their participation in formal and non-formal continuing education within the last 3 years (2013-2015).

Figure 1 shows the type of CPD engagements participated in by the respondents per age group. Among the offerings, on-site seminar has the most frequent participation by all respondents (n=128), followed by workshop (n=107), conference (n=95) and training program (n=84), respectively – all onsite. Online counterparts such as webinar, Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) and virtual conference have low participation rate. Other types such as benchmarking and self-study were identified by a few. Meanwhile, respondents belonging to the 30-39 age group participated the most within the last 3 years.



Figure 1: Type of CPD engagements per age group (Multiple responses allowed)

Respondents were asked how frequent do they participate in CPD engagements vis-à-vis their current employment status (see Figure 2). Seasonal participation, i.e., dependent on timing and/or availability of program offerings, emerged to be the most frequent (n=36), however, close to the same number of participants also indicated that they have participated thrice or more a year (n=35) and twice a year (n=33). Per employment status, respondents who are of permanent status has the most frequent participation (n=110).

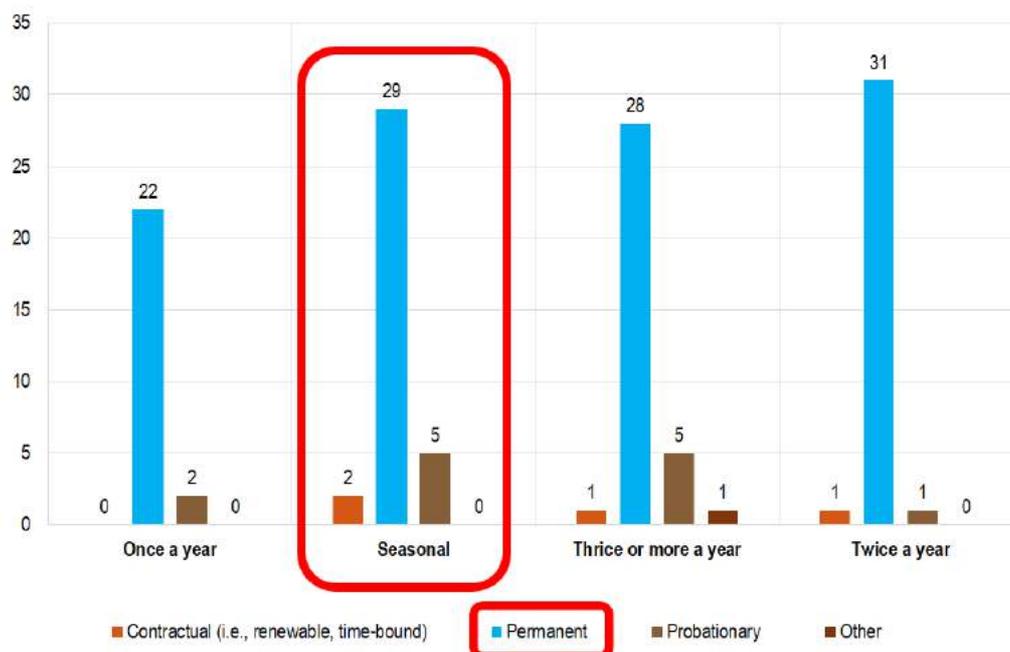


Figure 2: Frequency of Participation per Employment Status

Figure 3 compares the respondents' participation frequency vis-à-vis their position in the library. The numbers reveal the same participation rate (i.e., in this order: seasonal, thrice or more a year, twice a year, once a year), with the middle managers being the most frequent who participate.

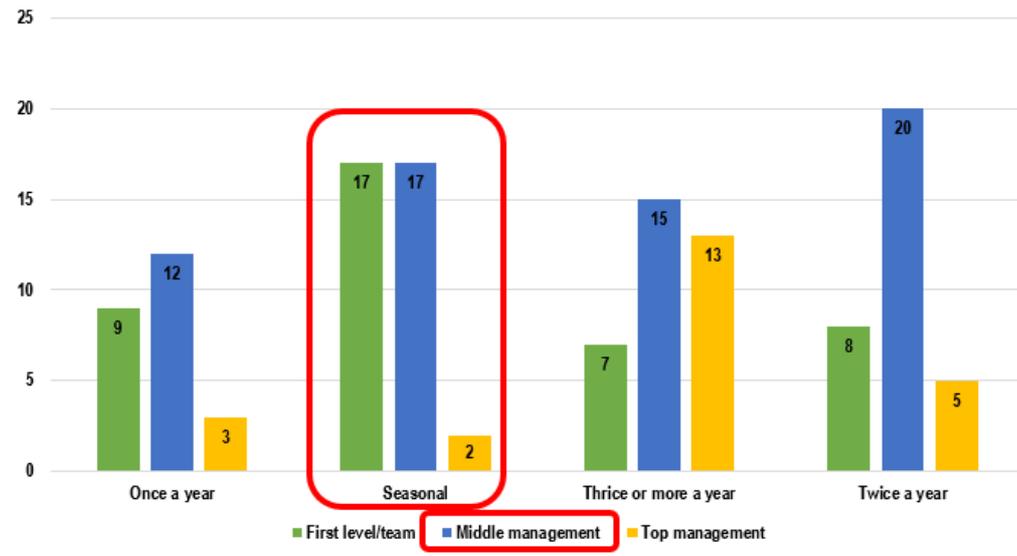


Figure 3: Frequency of participation per Position in the library

In terms of location of CPD engagements participated in (see Figure 4), respondents have generally participated in programs organized locally, within the Philippines (n=128), and those organized by their institutions/in-house (n=88). As per age group, respondents who are 30-39 years old are again the group who frequently participate in these engagements.

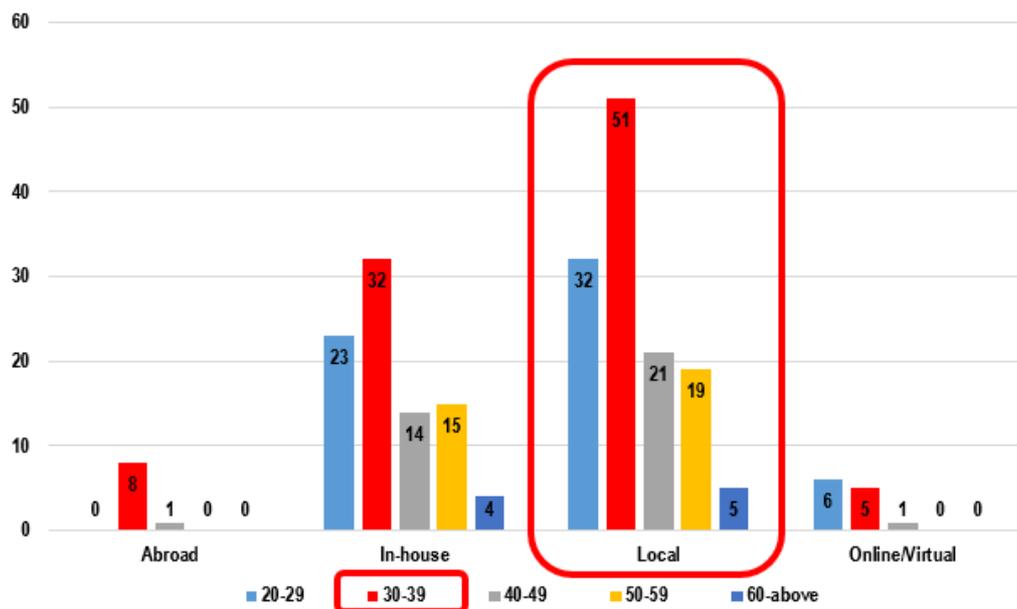
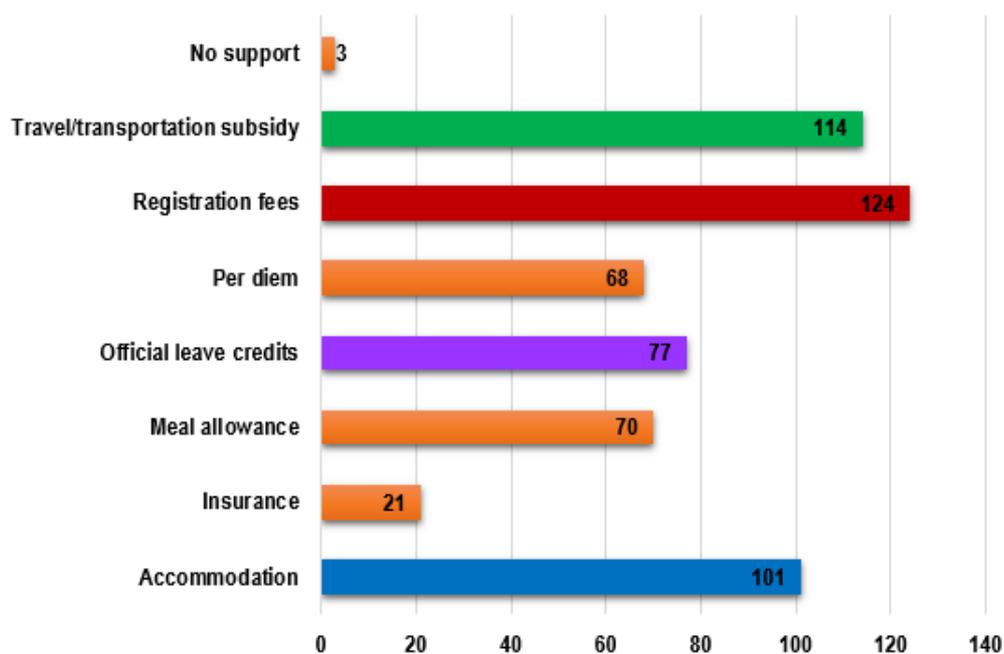


Figure 4: Location of participated CPD activities per Age Group (Multiple responses allowed)

Respondents were asked about the kinds of institutional support they receive when participating in CPD engagements (see Figure 5). The usual financial support received are those intended for registration fees, travel/transportation and accommodation costs. Meanwhile, there were 3 respondents who have signified to have received no support at all. Incidentally, these are librarians belonging to the 20-29 age bracket.



*Figure 5: Types of Participation Support
(Multiple responses allowed)*

Attitudes and Values Toward CPD Engagements

To begin analyzing the attitudes and values, independent and dependent variables were initially identified. The following were the *independent variables*: (1) Age; (2) Educational attainment; (3) Employment status; (4) Years in the profession; (5) Type of library where connected; (6) Position in the library; and (7) Frequency of participation in CPD activities. On the other hand, attitudes (denoting benefits, importance, negative attitudes and intrinsic value) and value attributes of the CPD activities (Topic/theme, Content, Resource persons, Relevance, Location, Venue, Timing, Duration, Cost, Leisure, Organizers) were the *dependent variables*.

The overall mean of the participation attitudes (24 indicators) was obtained in order to determine the level of attitude towards CPD engagements of the respondents of this study, which turned out to be positive (at 3.62). As to the level of importance of the value attributes, 8 items were perceived as very important, with topic/theme, content and relevance emerging as the top priorities (see Table 4).

VALUE ATTRIBUTES OF CPD	Mean	Level of importance	Rank
Timing	4.37	Very important	8 th
Duration	4.41	Very important	7 th
Cost	4.6	Very important	5 th
Leisure	3.82	Important	11 th
Topic/theme	4.88	Very important	1st
Content	4.87	Very important	2nd
Speakers	4.74	Very important	4 th
Organizers	4.44	Very important	6 th
Location	4.19	Important	10 th
Venue	4.19	Important	10 th
Accommodation	4.27	Important	9 th
Relevance	4.81	Very important	3rd

Table 4: Level of importance of value attributes

The chi-square test was conducted to each independent variable against the 24 participation attitude factors to find out its level of association (see Table 5). Of the 7 independent variables, this table reveals that only **employment status** is highly associated with participation attitudes, with the highest chi-square value at 42.458 and p-value at <.01. It also has a strong relationship with attitudes, with the largest Cramer's value at .407. This implies that respondents consider participating in CPD activities as it greatly affects their employment.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	x-value	p-value	Cramer's V	Level of association
Age	5.021	0.755	0.140	-0.115
Education	1.008	0.909	0.063	-0.003
Employment status	42.458	0.000*	0.407**	-
Years in the profession	9.935	0.446	0.197	-0.083
Type of library where connected	1.303	0.972	0.071	-0.039
Position in the library	5.348	0.253	0.145	0.050
Frequency of participation in CPD activities	6.674	0.352	0.161	-0.002

*p-value is <.05, with <0.01 = highly associated

**Cramer's V maximum value = 1

Table 5: Association of independent variables and participation attitudes

The chi-square test was likewise conducted to each independent variable against the 12 value attributes. Among the independent variables, age, years in the profession and frequency of participation are associated with topic/theme, location, timing, content and relevance (see Table 6).

In this table, *age* is associated with topic/theme, location and timing with chi-square values of 9.726, 28.5 and 37.947, respectively. The p-values are less than .05, which indicate that there is a significant association between the variables. Meanwhile, the gamma values (i.e., the level of association) of -0.394 and -0.322 suggest a weak relationship between the respondent's age with topic/theme and location. While timing has the highest chi-square value and p-value, its gamma indicates no relationship, which signifies that age does not predict decision regarding the timing. This furthermore implies that the younger the age, the higher the level of importance is given to topic/theme, location and timing.

Years in the profession is significantly associated with topic/theme, with its chi-square value of 11.77, while its gamma value at -0.282 suggests a weak relationship. This indicates that respondents who are still young in the profession or lesser years in practice give higher importance level to topic/theme when it comes to CPD participation.

Frequency of participation is significantly associated with content and relevance of CPD activities, with chi-square values of 9.915 and 9.063, respectively, although its respective gamma values at 0.372 and 0.361 points to a weak relationship. This implies that respondents who participate in CPD activities once a year give higher level of importance to content of the CPD offering and its relevance to their field(s) of interest than those respondents who attend to CPD activities twice or thrice a year.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	Value attributes	x-value	p-value*	Level of association
Age	Topic/theme	9.726	0.045	-0.394
Age	Location	28.5	0.028	-0.322
Age	Timing	37.947	0.002	-0.166
Years in the profession	Topic/theme	11.77	0.038	-0.282
Frequency of participation	Content	9.915	0.019	0.372
Frequency of participation	Relevance	9.063	0.028	0.361

*less than .05

Table 6: Independent variables and value attributes with significant association

Salient Findings

Data analysis revealed that the respondents' general attitude towards deciding to participate in CPD activities is positive. This favorable attitude is reflective of their desire for professional up keeping and learning.

Topic/theme, content and relevance of the CPD activity to one's current work assignment were highly valued by the respondents when deciding to participate. Interestingly, leisure opportunities that come with the CPD activity was also considered important.

Employment has emerged as the utmost consideration when deciding to participate in CPD activities. This has been likewise evident in the subjects' participation background within the last 3 years.

Results indicate that the younger age and professional bracket value the timing, content, relevance, location and topic/theme of the CPD activity more than the other aspects. This implies that those that are elder and in their senior years in the profession would not put so much value on said aspects when attending CPD activities.

Conclusion

The general positive attitude towards continuing professional development pursuits is expected, as librarians are well aware that there is compliance involved, especially if the librarian decides to practice the profession. Compliance to the law has become the initial reason for engaging in CPD activities. As therefore revealed in this study, tenure security, promotion or rank and file movements at the workplace were the more apparent motivators needing CPD as a pre-requisite, where employment status came out to have a strong relationship with participation attitudes. With the CPD now enacted into law, this new development in the profession will furthermore impose direct implications on their learning and participatory attitudes.

Valuing the topic/theme and content of a CPD engagement is a good indication that librarians see an opportunity to cultivate their learning in every CPD activity that they choose to participate in as they build their career in librarianship. It is important that this value be primarily seen as a priority and the positive attitude towards learning be therefore sustained throughout a librarian's practice as he/she progresses in his/her career or as he/she ages; not being reduced to merely looking into the legalistic and material benefits of a continuing education activity.

Considering the results of this study, CPD providers, i.e., professional societies and alumni organizations, are challenged to revisit their continuing education thrusts and give more weight on the theme, content and relevance of their offerings in order to inculcate more learning outcomes. More learning venues aside from the traditional seminars/conferences (e.g., webinar series) are also recommended for them to develop further for wider reach of intended audience. On a larger scale, it is likewise recommended that CPD providers should align

their programs with the ongoing efforts of the country's CPD Council in strengthening the profession's CPD programs to enhance the skills, competencies and global mobility of the library professionals.



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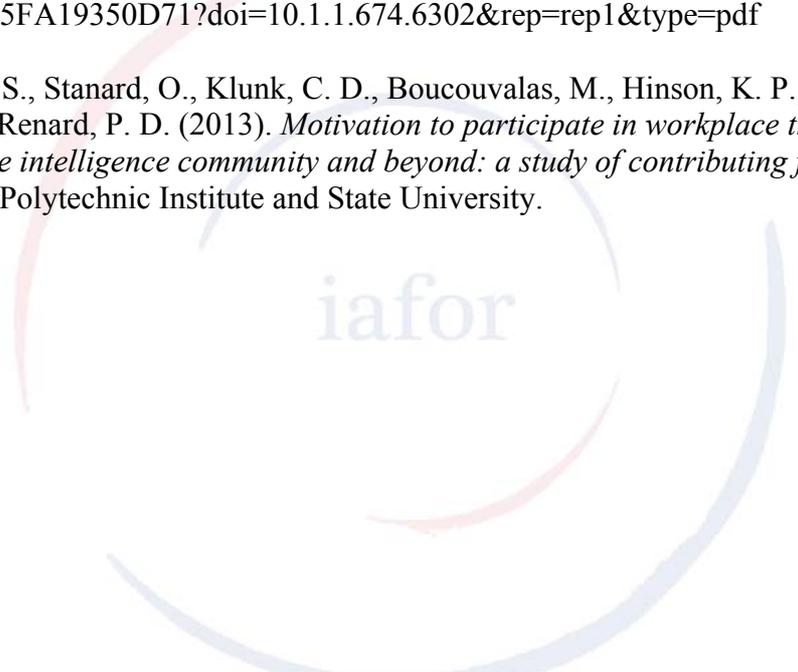
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Unjust Identity Quest: Sahar Khalife's the Inheritance: A Post-Colonial Study

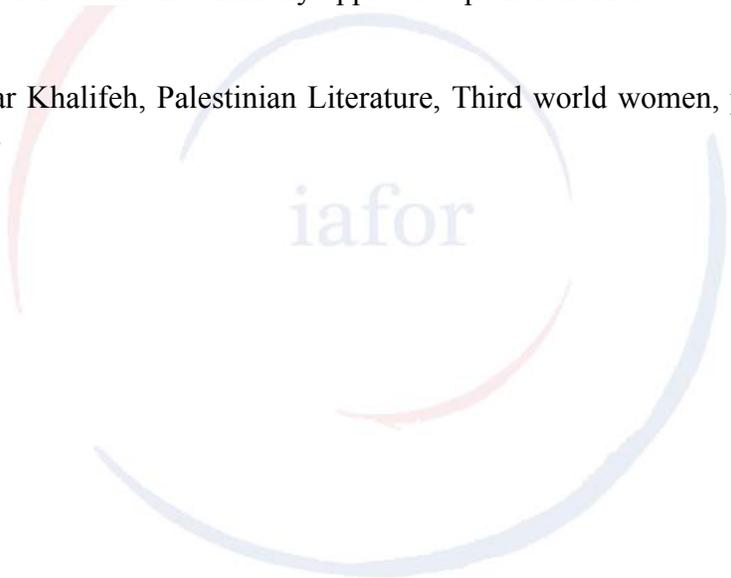
Mona Elnamoury, Tanta University, Egypt

The European Conference on Literature & Librarianship 2016
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

In Sahar Khalifeh's novel *The Inheritance*, fact and fiction parallel each other while a post-Oslo picture of life in Ghaza is delineated with a particular focus on the lives of four Palestinian women. The constriction that blocks their lives because of the Israeli occupation is similar in effect to the obsolete social pressures on them. In portraying their struggles inside the general plight of the Palestinian people, Khalifeh condemns both the colonial military forces and the similarly oppressive patriarchal rules.

Keywords: Sahar Khalifeh, Palestinian Literature, Third world women, postcolonialism, *The Inheritance*.

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Introduction

Postcolonial feminist criticism as used in the present study examines how women are subjugated in a colonial patriarchal post-Oslo Palestine. *The Inheritance* critiques assumptions made about Palestinian women in either literature or society. Women continue to be marginalized, subordinated, and stereotyped. The novel also corrects approaches assuming that all women share a common identity based on a shared experience of oppression. Audre Lodra, the black feminist, states that “*White women focus upon their oppression as women and ignore differences of race, class and age. There’s a pretense to homogeneity of experience covered by the word sisterhood that does not in fact exist*” (Lodre, 1984, p.116). Likely, Khalifeh is aware of the uniqueness of Palestinian women crisis inside the general plight of Third World women. Postcolonial feminists challenge the idea of ‘global sisterhood’ showing the intention of Western feminism to treat Third World women as ‘other’. Third world women are only a broad category, within which postcolonial feminists can explore particular histories and struggles of postcolonial women against colonialism, racism, sexism, and economic forces. As *The Inheritance* conveys, Palestinian women are doubly subjugated; first as women in patriarchal societies and second as politically colonized women. The current paper argues

That the experience of Palestinian women under the Israeli occupation and the unfair social rules of their society makes their identity quest harder than normal and self-fulfillment more or less impossible.

Body

In *The Inheritance*, Sahar Khalife offers a sharp examination into the lives of Palestinians both in exile countries and the homeland in a post Oslo world in the nineties. It is also a world when the first Gulf war has recently taken place and a great number of Palestinians who used to work in either Kuwait or Iraq have returned home. Khalifeh’s real success in this novel is giving voice to different Palestinian characters of various circumstances; most important of who are female characters who are rarely heard in literature before.

The Inheritance is the story of Zaynab or Zayna. Born to a Palestinian father and an American mother, Zayna leads a life tormented between two cultures in the US. Pregnant at fifteen, something her father was about to kill her for, she leaves both her father and his Arabic culture and goes to live with her American grandmother. She enforces the American side in her character to become an accomplished anthropologist. Zayna’s fulfilled professional life does not heal a basic split in her character caused by the past’s wounds, though. In her forties, she decides to go back to Palestine to see her dying father and discover her roots.

I didn’t say I was Arab because I wasn’t. Who am I then? Despite my mother’s citizenship, my birth certificate, my school certificate, my books, my accent, my clothes, and everything about my life, I was not truly American. The depths of my mind were inhabited by visions and pictures, love songs, those Arabic mawals moving like the

passage of a breeze, the scent of violets, the fragrance of memories, all leaving behind a honey-sweet solution in the heart.

(Khalifeh, 1997, p. 17)

Zayna has a deeper ideological split as well. She belongs to no religion in particular. “I was neither Christian nor Moslem. Concerned, my grandmother repeated constantly, ‘You need an ideology, you need faith.’” (Khalifeh, 1997, p. 20)

Home in Palestine, Zayna meets her uncle Abu Jabber: the father of two exiled refugees unable to come back, Mazen an idealistic rebel named Guevara, Kamal, a German scientist, Said a slow-minded merchant and finally Nahleh, a bitter-fifty-year-old spinster who had given up her entire career working in Kuwait for the sake of her family. Zayna meets other people as well like Violet, a pretty sensitive single Christian woman fed up with her inability to settle down and marry Mazen and suffocated by people’s gossip. She also meets Futna her young step-mother who gets artificially inseminated from her husband (Zayna’s father) in an Israeli hospital to guarantee a bigger share of the inheritance. She meets Sitt Amira, Futna’s mother who represents the older generation that lived in a pre-colonial Palestine and witnessed Alnakkbah: Jerusalem’s occupation. Amira and Abu Jabber still embrace many values that are lost to the time of the novel.

The characters reveal themselves slowly as events occur and intertwine. Some chapters are told by Zayna in the first person singular while others are told by an omniscient narrator. Futna’s pregnancy via artificial insemination and what it brings of the inheritance issue, the sewage factory designed by Kamal to initiate an economic renaissance in Palestine, and the cultural center launched by Mazen and Zayna to combat the colonial erasure of indigenous culture are three lines that control the plot. The setting where all this takes place is Wadi Alrihan which is tensely opposed by Kirat Rahil, a Jewish settlement. On the one hand, Wadi Alrihan is a place that lacks security and infrastructure. It is a time after the first Intifada and people are tired of too many deaths and hoping for better lives. On the other hand, the money lovers are hoping for bigger shares of the cake and are involved in all sorts of economic projects. It is a time of change and promising renaissance when both militants and liberal women seem to be undesired.

The sewage factory becomes an environmental disaster after Kamal the scientist gives up on it. The inauguration of the cultural center turns into catastrophe when they forget to number the tickets/seats and huge crowds enter by force. Stray rats from the factory tamper with people in the celebration and it ends up with complete chaos. Because of the closeness between Wadi Alrihan and the Jewish settlement Kirat Rahil, the Israeli security forces besiege the area to prevent troubles. Futna gives birth in the middle of the celebration and starts bleeding. Because of the Israeli blockade, she bleeds to death. The novel ends with Sitt Amira handing her grandson to the fierce Israeli soldiers in the blockade sarcastically thanking them for their effort both in the insemination process and in killing her daughter, “Thank you very much, this is your share.” (Khalife, 1997, p. 251)

Zayna

In the stories of Zayna (and Kamal as well), Khalifeh tackles the different and difficult political and social circumstances that Palestinians in the Diaspora are subjected to. Zayna's father never became a true American despite being married to one. Because his daughter abused "his honor" being pregnant at fifteen, he forces her to live a dubious life and become a permanent alien by his violent threats. It is all for his masculine 'honor'. The same thing happens with a girl named Huda who elopes for fear of her life after becoming pregnant as a teen-ager. It is the dilemma of living in one place using the mentality of another. A similar incident takes place in Palestine when the fifty-year-old Nahleh has an affair with the realtor and is disgraced by her brother Mazen. The fiery males in the three incidents are usually given the very same freedom they deny their females. Khalifeh critiques the double standard of morality that pushes the women to lead diasporic lives.

Making Zayna the main narrator of the novel is significant. As a professional anthropologist she is an expert in studying people and their lives. "...here I am a grown up, coming to gather the details of his life like someone collecting grains of sand." (Khalife 44) Her scientific way in tracing events/lives/histories and roots prove very efficient for the narrative. She forces the reader to think in the same detached manner. The anthropologist's fate, is typically alienated, however. In her difficult research, Zayna and the reader are purposefully lost. "I no longer knew what information to collect or what I had come looking for in my country of origin. In the midst of this overwhelming welter of people's problems and worries, I lost track of my objectives, which scattered in many directions."

(Khalife, 1997, p. 52)

She realizes that language is the first tool to understand people and begins to learn her native language using tapes and books. Spoken language proves insufficient for the quest, so she learns classical Arabic only to discover that Classical Arabic does not best express personal feelings and worries; only colloquial language does. She returns to colloquial losing her way between classical and colloquial eventually. It is as if Khalifeh argues the evasive nature of language especially for women who are often pushed to silence. Zayna begins as a woman caught between two worlds and ends between two worlds as well. In Wadi Alrihan, Zayna awakens to her situation as a single Palestinian woman in that particular society and sees the similarity between herself, Futna, Nahleh, and Violet: a victim to the double oppressors.

Khalife's is mainly an existential pose to life. Zayna's alienation never ends. It only deepens and widens in spite of few glimpses of warmth and understanding. The characters remain restless and insecure throughout the whole novel. This applies to Zayna as well as Mazen, Kamal, Violet, Nahleh, Futna, and even the older generation in Abu Jabber and Sitt Amira.

Nahleh

Nahleh is Sahar Khalifeh's achievement. The voice she gives to ordinary women's innermost feelings and deepest ideas in a colonized place like Palestine is part of her feminist anticolonial attitude that the novel marvels in. Nahleh represents a great number of Palestinian women who sacrificed everything for the sake of their families. She dedicated her entire youth working as a teacher in Kuwait to support the family coming back home only for vacations. Then, when the first Gulf war took place she returned home to be met only by ingratitude and inferiority. It was acceptable to let her lead an independent life all by herself in Kuwait but once back home, Nahleh has to abide by the rules and become a second hand citizen.

Is this what I get n life, is this what I spent my youth for—living in exile! Is this why I gave him hard-earned money and sweated in Kuwait! Is this what I end up with? He and they, all of them, all squeezed me like a lemon and then left me behind. They loved and hated, had relationships with more women than the hairs in their beards. They became engineers, with God's grace, while I worked in Kuwait, being milked like a cow, teaching and bringing them up, but they paid no attention to me and did what they wanted.

(Khalife, 1997,p. 50-51)

At fifty it is almost impossible for her to find a suitable match while her life is slipping away or as she says: "I woke up to find myself old, without a husband, without a house, and no one to call me mama. This is how I ended." (Khalife 52) Nahleh's despair pushes her to imagine she is in love with a seventy-year old married realtor who marries her against the wish of his children. Disgraced by her brother Mazen in public for this relation, and faced by the realtor's cowardice in front of his sons, Nahleh is torn up between two different lives as a second hand citizen. She picks what displeases her less.

Nahleh is the only daughter in a family full of sons. Like so many Palestinian women she needed to prove her validity in the tough times of war and hardship. As Bamia says "Traditionally shunned because they could not perpetuate the family name, girls carried the torch of national struggle" (Bamia, 2000, p. 180) Nahleh carried the struggle she could handle: working to support the family and help her brothers. Of her brothers there was the militant fighting for the motherland, the genius studying in Europe, and the merchant keeping the country's economy. She thought she was acquiring a sense of recognition for keeping them all going. However, discovering the double standards of morality that governs the society, Nahleh willingly and despairingly adheres to the same standards lest she should be outcast. Her rebellion only amounts to being the second wife of an old man. Khalifeh makes it hard for the reader to condemn or judge Nahleh. In picturing the complicated life she has led in a society crumbling with invalid traditions as well as occupation, Nahleh has probably had no other way to behave. "What makes Khalifa's characters real is the absence of heroism in their attitude and a semblance of weakness that transpires through their hesitation in various situations" (Bamia, 2000, p. 184)

Violet

Being Christian in love with a Moslem does not help alleviate Violet's anxieties as a pretty single woman in a patriarchal society. Wadi Alrihan with its continuous gossip is too suffocating for her. This is a problem Khalifeh deals with in other works as well.

Parallel to the portrayal of women's involvement in the political action, Khalifa undertook the criticism of the customs and traditions of her society as hampering factors in women's emancipation. She seems concerned with the misconceptions of society toward beautiful, unmarried women who were always a subject of suspicion without a cause." (Bamia, 2000, p. 183)

This is why Violet is eager to immigrate to the US. Violet confirms the ambivalent situation of men towards women in the novel. Mazen, though a rebel who had cast away all the social traditions and lived freedom to the utmost, still traditionally looks at women. First, he disgraces his sister Nahleh for her relation with the realtor. Second, he uses Violet as a great emotional distraction that can be used but not married. When one male sets this rule, others follow and violet is approached by others who want the same sexual satisfaction from her. One can sense, thus, a glimpse of hope in Violet's determination to leave him and Ghaza altogether. She decides that there is no hope in such a crumbling society and it is not crumbling only because of occupation.

In the juxtaposing destinies of Nahleh and Violet, one clearly understands Khalifeh's message that "As long as love/marriage was a refuge, it held women back and emancipation could not take place. Yet when women decided to face those who tied their hands behind their backs in the name of protection, there was hope." (Bamia, 200, p. 184-185)

Futna and Sitt Amira

Futna is a slow-headed woman who only cares about her attire and material comfort. The reader is not given enough glimpses to her motives in marrying Zayna's aging father but her desperate concern for the inheritance suggests that she married him for his money. Futna's honorable semi-feudal social class has likely lost its financial ability though not its pride or prestige. Futna, however, is kind-hearted, generous and amiable. Her mother, Sitt Amira is a conscientious woman, reliable and meticulous; a woman who keeps things where they should be. When Futna is artificially inseminated from her husband in an Israeli hospital, Sitt Amira cannot accept the idea of her daughter's body being invaded by 'the enemy'. But when Futna dies, Amira takes full responsibility of her grandchild who must be raised the way she raised her own kids. In Sitt Amira's perseverant promise to care for her grandchild there is a clear message that in reality Israel and Palestine exist together unquestionably. Through this very maternal metaphor of this hybrid baby it is as if Khalifeh acquires a new understanding of the situation as well as women's fates under the double oppressors.

Because no women can be free in a generally restrictive society, Khalifeh presents an equally disturbing reality for the male characters in the novel. The end result is a deep impression of injustice and futility of life under the current circumstances: occupation and frail social customs. The female characters, however, are surely superior to their male counterparts. The pressure on them is greater and so is their suffering. Khalifeh has been through most of what her female characters are subjected to and so she pictures them with a first-hand experience. "...Khalifeh learned that the existence of females was seen solely for "miserable, useless, worthless sex," ... Growing up female meant that there would be many rules surrounding her life. As an escape, she resorted to reading, writing, and painting." (Koy, 2006, p. 1)

Mazen

Mazen is a handsome fiery man who has fought in Lebanon and been named Guevara because of his revolutionary nature. Mazen in post Oslo Palestine has nothing to do; he had no real life before the revolution to go back to.

After Beirut and its lights came Wadi al-Rihan! This prison called Wadi al-Rihan, this Oppression known as Wadi al-Rihan, this desperation, those people, the misery and the backwardness of Wadi al-Rihan. My soul is there, I was there, how did I get here?

(Khalifeh, 1997, p. 47)

Zayna is amazed by Mazen's nature that turns every event or action into intense slogan. Violet, on the other hand, has a real insight into his character. She explains that Mazen's fondness with Alatlal's song is a reflection of defeat. "The first time he asked to listen to al-Atlal I thought I understood the message: there was Salma, Beirut, and the revolution, but now there is no Salma, no Beirut, and no revolution, they've become ruins." (Khalifeh 107) Violet knows that Mazen is "a defeated man" and can change anyone into defeated people like him. Mazen's enthusiasm in the inauguration of the cultural center and forgetting to number the seats is a reflection of his idealistic nature and incompetence to run things in a realistic way. Drunk, Mazen opens up to his brother Kamal one night "You're lucky Kamal, that you didn't squander your life. I squandered mine over nonsense and there's nothing left in me but a breath of life. I used to swear at you and Jabber, calling you merchants and slaves. I used to call you opportunists, upstarts, and bourgeois. I used to tell myself that even Said was better than you because he stuck to the land, and I thought naturally, that Guevara was the master of the world because he was the freedom fighter with the belt of death around his waist. I was the one whose life was in the balance of the homeland. Now there is no life left and no homeland. (Khalifeh, 1997, p. 217- 218)

Mazen the militant is a burden to this society that is promised peace and prosperity. Oppressed by colonialism, Mazen goes on living as an oppressor of women; namely, Nahleh and Violet.

Kamal

The first time we hear of Kamal is through Nahleh's eyes who comes back home to be surprised by his unexpected visit from Germany. Her thoughts convey a lot of the nature of the relation between those who chose to live outside home and the homeland: a pragmatic one.

Or was he here to study the situation of the country like other businessmen, and catch the worm before the veterans arrive? Of course he had, he had come to be the first to take advantage of the promising conditions for the future....The returnees would usually bend down and touch the earth with their forehead, and declare before the cameras and the journalists with tears in their eyes, that the homeland was like the lap of the mother and without it they were nothing. ... Now, they wanted a share in the cake."

(Khalife, 1997 94-95)

Though this is true, Kamal's relation to the homeland is deeper. He is seriously stuck in the middle between an economically cold exile and a deteriorating passionate homeland. What would he get from this world and from a life in exile? He had worked many years in exile, in sophisticated laboratories that looked like space stations, he had been given all the advantages, but he had never felt like one of them. The Germans gave him a house, cars, and a bank account, health insurance and a pension yet every morning as he rode the university bus or the metro, he felt his loneliness and estrangement that never stopped growing."

(Khalife, 1997, p. 153)

Kamal thought of himself as a practical scientist who can never be affected by emotions but deep inside he is probably as emotional as Mazen. Apparently Kamal has been suffering deep inside long ago. He once sent to his father complaining "Father, their world is merciless." But the father begged him not to be back. "DO not make the mistake of coming back. I have enough dealing with Mazen and his problems. Here, we have unemployment and war worries. Please please for my sake be wise and do not make rash decisions."

(Khalifeh, 1997, p. 155)

On the one hand, Kamal's plight reflects and confirms Zayan's. He is faced with the dilemma of having to face the meaninglessness and rootlessness of his life abroad against the chaos of the homeland. "In Germany he had felt he was living a superficial, rootless life, but now after discovering the taste of his homeland, he felt like an orphan."

(Khalifeh, 1997, p. 188)

On the other hand, Kamal's work experience in Palestine reveals the inapplicability of the Oslo accords. He could not understand the system which divides all responsibilities between the Authority and the authority. The 'Authority' is the new Palestinian government while the 'authority' is the ones who really rule, the Israeli security forces. The Oslo accords prove to be failure because the Palestinian Authority cannot seriously extend its power over the country. Things are run in a strange bureaucratic way and the

place lacks infrastructure and an autonomous administrative structure away from the military. Only the realtor can handle this because his mind is as corrupt as the system itself. All the permits and paperwork for this project are done by him. When you have business to do in Wadi Alrihan, you need to deal with

The Palestinian Authority in power and the authority over its power, in other words, an authority that rules but does not govern. If a person satisfies Authority, he might upset the power, and if the power is not pleased, it will not trust you or provide you with facilities to deal with the environment and its sewage. It won't even allow you to enter the municipality. As a result you would become entangled in multiple layers that would only lead to headaches.

(Khalifeh, 1997, p. 99)

Like Nahleh who had to choose the least displeasing of two lives, Kamal chooses his European exile to the chaos of the homeland.

Abu Jabber

Abu Jabber represents a disillusioned older generation. Two of his sons are permanently exiled refugees, one is a useless militant, one is a genius living abroad, one is slow-minded merchant and finally there is an ungrateful daughter. The man's disappointment exceeds his family to his country.

He had hoped for things to improve with the Oslo Accords but nothing had changed, the settlement was still on top of the hill, surrounding the plain and his farm, crawling towards the valley and the neighboring villages. Was this the solution? Were those his children? Was this what his generation had dreamt of and rushed to fulfill? Was this what Nasser had announced during the days of glory and the 'Voice of the Arabs?' Was it, was it?"

(Khalifeh, 1997, p. 190-191)

Though his disillusionment and shock remain till the very end, one gets the feeling that he will probably continue doing the right thing in spite of his sure despair. The older generation, represented by Abu Jabber and Sitt Amira, is equally lost between two worlds. Most of the time they cannot believe how degrading things have become.

As Koy points out, the liberation of Palestine had been a dream of the people of Palestine. However, their reality has been to endure more suffering while under Israeli occupation with checkpoints, curfews, and oppression. It is this realization which Khalifeh writes about in her later works. (Koy, 2006, p.,4) *The Inheritance*, then, is a story of Palestinian women who sacrifice much for the men in their lives and their country, while their own lives are lost and forgotten. The colonial situation persists and with it the "nationally endorsed cultural practices that impose and perpetuate the subordination of women" also persist. (Hena, 2009, p.6)

Khalifeh is such a conscientious writer who is deeply concerned about her nation's problems. Most of her fiction closely follows reality in Palestine.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has not been a simplistic two-state solution. There are many complicated facets which make up the prolonged violent conflict between the two sides. There is a long history between Israel and Palestine which is the backdrop for Khalifeh's book. This turmoil still exists today.

(Koy, 2006, p. 4).

She is equally concerned with exploring and expressing the problems of third world women. Asked why she did not want to be like Sagan she answered: "because she would not express the problems of life relevant to the third world people—people who suffer from exploitation, from imperialism, from colonialism, sickness, backwardness... she was not aware of them." (Nazareh, 1980, p. 68) When it comes to women's exploitation, Khalifeh sees the responsibility of colonialism exactly as she is aware of the inherent cultural constriction.

Though fully aware of the Israeli role in the degradation of conditions of her society, Khalifa casts a critical look at her people not to condemn them but to help them assume their responsibilities. Lessons abound in her novels, expressed, mostly through her socialist ideology in less than subtle ways. She seems to imply that women will save the future, after men have destroyed the past, a prospect to watch.

(Bamia, 2000, p. 185)

Part of Khalifeh's concern for the Third world women is her critique of the moral dichotomy as to the concept of honor. As Alhwamdeh explores in his paper on Crimes of Honor "...males play the role of the guardians of honor and victimize their women in cases of violation or breach to the discourse of honor. Ironically, the concept of honor is associated only with the practices of women whereas the males are not responsible to observe their morality and behavior..." (Alhwamdelh, 2015, p.105). This is true for Zayna's father who caused her elopement and permanent alienation as it is for Mazen who caused his sister's embarrassment and awkward situation while both men have been free to pursue sexual satisfaction in as many relations or marriages as they wanted.

Palestine is never seen separately from the female plight in Khalifeh's novel. The last horrifying scene that shows Futna's dead body—having been invaded by the enemy through artificial insemination to protect the inheritance— suggests that Khalifeh sees the female body as infected by colonialism together with patriarchy. The reader is given no consolation after that except for Zayna's tearful departure to the States. So, what now? The question hangs on the reader's mind for a long time bringing Futna's corpse alive to question the world's sanity and justice over and over again.

Conclusion

The Inheritance presents a world that keeps rewarding the characters' attempts at self fulfilment with either blockades or exiles. This is as true for men as it is for women except that women are doubly subjugated. Most of the characters try one way or another to end their alienation and improve their emotional deprivation but they end in more alienation and new exiles. It is as if identity quest in this colonized situation is more or less an unjust activity to the characters: prohibited and invasive to others and so is doomed to failure.

Khalifeh's narrative counteracts nationalism, patriotism, patriarchy as well as Israeli colonialism and the Western empire behind it. Her main concern is with the disempowered; namely women and she critiques whatever disempowers them. In her fiction, there is an implicit rejection of the indigenous culture accompanied by an insistence on the individuality and uniqueness of the characters' plights in question. A uniqueness that refuses to be categorized nor does it ask for sympathy or glorification. It is depicted to be reflected upon, highlighted and sharply remembered.

Khlaifeh adopts a feminist postcolonial attitude that challenges the colonial/national/patriarchal constructions of women as single fixed identity. In *The Inheritance*, she delineates different female characters and shows the reader their innermost troubles as well as the reasons of the troubles. Their plights are presented within the more general Palestinian one. It is as if Khalifeh always has an eye on the female subject and the other on Palestine. Though futility hovers over the scene, there is triumph in exposing the cruel injustice the characters are subjected to.

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***Domestication and Foreignization in the Revolt of the Young:
Essays by Tawfiq Al-Hakim***

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Abstract

The Revolt of the Young is a collection of essays originally published in 1984 by one of the most distinguished Egyptian writers of the twentieth century, Tawfiq al-Hakim. The English translation appeared in January 2015 done by the present researcher. Al-Hakim (1898-1987) muses on the cultural, artistic, and intellectual links and breakages between the old and the young generations. The original title of the book foreshadows the 25 January Revolution in Egypt (The Revolt of the Young: A Case of the Twenty-First Century). The paper shall use Lawrence Venuti's two basic strategies which provide both linguistic and cultural guidance "domestication and foreignization". The translator shall explain the decisions she took to deal with all the cultural specific words such as: "Jubbah, moulid, fezzes", Arab authors who are unfamiliar to most foreign readers, for example, Abul ala-Maari or even Western and Asian writers and philosophers. Works like The Seven Mu'allaqat which are very well known to Arab readers may be quite puzzling to Western readers and they would not know why were they suspended on "Kabbah" in Mecca? The translator will explain her choices as to how she made her translation reader-friendly. This research tends to tackle the concept of justice in this book with special focus on the last chapter which takes place in a courtroom in the USA where the four main characters are searching for socio-political justice in their society.

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I found the Arabic copy of *The Revolt of the Young: The Case of the Twenty-First Century* which was published in (1984) amongst my mother's books at home and the title intrigued me. Having read it I immediately decided to translate it as I thought it deserved to be available in English for those who are interested in Arabic Literature. By the time the 25th January Revolution (2011) took place in Egypt I had already finished translating the book but was even keener on revising it and finding a publisher. The translation came out in January 2015 in New York. Roger Allen has written a "Foreword" to this book which adds more value to the translated work. This presentation will focus on Lawrence Venuti's concepts of domestication and foreignization to analyze my translation.

The book is a fascinating collection of essays for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it sheds so much light on this great pioneer figure in Arabic Literature. Al-Hakim was a prolific and an influential writer, as well as, a great thinker. He was truly interested in the future and the socio-political conditions in Egypt. A number of his works are concerned with the future such as: *A Journey to the Future* (1957) which he classifies as a 'prophetic play.' In 1980 he wrote another collection under the title of *Challenges of the Year 2000*. This interest in the future is undoubtedly apparent in this collection of essays. The clash between generations and the revolt of youth which loom large in this book have been two of my main concerns as a rebellious woman growing up in Cairo. A number of essays also reveal the tense relationship between the writer and his own father and his own son and how al-Hakim was able to resolve these tensions. Lastly, I believe that this book deserves to be in the limelight as it predicts the revolt of Egyptian and American young people socially, literary and politically in the Twenty-First Century. In Chapter nineteen he goes as far as to predict that the resurrection would happen by the hands of young people just like in the Egyptian myth of Osiris and Horus. I recall that some young Egyptian rebels, from April 6th movement, in a television interview in 2011, stated that they read al-Hakim's book *The Revolt of the Young* which inspired them.

In *The Revolt of the Young* one of the characters in the short story explains why the young carry out revolutions and the following is from the translated edition:

"Because they are the ones who will see the twenty-first century. They want to pass on to it a better society. That is the issue. We young people cannot permit this corrupt society to cross the threshold of the new century. We will do everything in our power to pave the way for the new century with new ideas, just as the French Revolution of the nineteenth century paved the way for new ideas...[too]"(ROY 106)

Some of the challenges in translating this book were al-Hakim's style, diction and syntax. One of the most difficult words I had to grapple with is in Al-Hakim's 'Introduction' where he was trying to differentiate between "revolution" and "upheaval;" the words in Arabic are "الثورة" and "الموجة" Alhogah. I had to check the latter word in various dictionaries and ask most of the translators I know and the majority told me that "upheaval" would be the best equivalent in English. I agree it is but I am still not fully satisfied. The other words I thought of were; 'public disorder', 'commotion,' and 'turmoil'. I believe it is all the above but lacking a tinge of the Arabic colloquial word "Hoga".

The following extract is where the writer defines both terms in the source language (Arabic) and then I will provide the passage from the target language:

والفرق بين « الثورة » و « الهوجة » هو أن « الهوجة » تقتلع الصالح والطالح معا ... كالرياح الهوج تطيح بالأخضر واليابس معا ، وبالشجرة المثمرة والشجرة الصفراء جميعا . أما « الثورة » فهي تبقى النافع وتستمد منه القوة .. بل وتصدر عنه أحيانا ، وتقضى فقط على البالي المتهافت ، المعوق للحيرية ، المغلق لنوافذ الهواء المتجدد ، الواقف في طريق التجديد والتطور . ولكن المسألة ليست دائما بهذه البساطة . فالثورة والهوجة



The presence of many adjectives and adjectival phrases in Arabic is ordinary but rather unusual in English prose so it was not easy to translate this part. But that is how I managed to do it.

The distinction between "revolution" and "upheaval" is that the latter sweeps up with it both the good and bad, just as the turbulent wind does with both green leaves and withered ones, the fruitful tree and the barren one. A "revolution", however, retains what is useful and derives strength there-of. It does away with what is useless, worn out, that which impedes vigor, shuts out fresh air, and stands in the way of renewal and development (ROY 1).

Another stepping stone that I had foreseen is his style, which has been described by some critics as elevated and abstruse classical Arabic.

In the following passage Al-Hakim employs an extended metaphor to compare Arabic literature to a garden as in the following lines:

عن السوراني في السوراني ...
ونحن — إذا جلنا اليوم في حديقة الأدب العربي الحديث —
وجدنا أشجارًا مملوءة بعصير الحياة ، يانعة بأزهار الفن ، لا
ينقصها إلا أن ننظر إليها بعين الرضا ، وأن نتخيل ما ستكون عليه
غداً من سموق وارتفاع ؛ فلا شيء يفسد الحديقة ويقفها ويقفها
مثل أن نرى دائماً أشجارها شجيرات ، لن تكون يوماً ضخمة
الجدوع وارقة الظلال !... يجب أن نروض عيوننا على أن ترى
الأشياء والأشخاص في غدها — لا في حاضرها وحده ، وأن
نعرف كيف نقرأ المستقبل من خلال سطور الحاضر !... إذا
استطعنا ذلك ، فما من شك أننا واجدون في مختلف فروع الأدب
أقلاماً ، سيكون لها من الصدارة وانقيادة في الأعوام العشرة أو
العشرين المقبلة ، مثلما كان لأصحاب الصدارة والبروز في
العشرة أو العشرين عاماً الماضية !...

It was translated as follows:

Today, if we walked in the garden of modern Arabic literature, we will find trees filled with the sap of life and diverse flowers of art, needing only that we look at them with pleasure and imagine how tall they will grow in the future, for nothing could spoil or lay waste to this garden more than to always see its trees as small bushes which will never grow large or cast pleasant shade. We should be trained to see things and persons in perspective. We should accustom ourselves to see things as they will be in the future, not only in the present, and know how to read the future through the lines of the present. If we are capable of doing that, we would no doubt find new pens in the various literary fields which will come to the fore in the next ten or twenty years, exactly as was the case of the leading figures in literature of the past ten or twenty years (ROY 6).

In the English version I tried to be as accurate and true to the Arabic extract as I possibly could disregarding whether this would be a fluent translation or not.

Furthermore, in chapter five (p.46) al-Hakim's father quotes a Pre- Islamic poet

"بمن سم ويوطأ... بأن ياب يضر رس كثيرة أمور فى يصان ع لم ومن"

was translated as: "And he, who does not work hard at many things/will be bitten by fangs and trampled underfoot by horses"(22).

Another example is in chapter ten the first sentence is rather a difficult one and it runs as follows:

"(66)"الشيطان سائقها – الخيول مطهمة - الحواشى مذهبة الألوان، زاهية مركبة الدني"

It was translated as "The world is a brightly colored carriage with gold borders – drawn by beautiful horses- driven by the devil."(36)

With Lawrence Venuti's concepts of 'domestication' and 'foreignization' in mind I will explicate which methods I used in my translation. I tried to adhere to Al-hakim's beautiful classical Arabic style which is full of metaphors, grand rhetoric, imagery and similes regardless of how odd or unusual this may seem in English. To begin with Venuti defines Domestication as a translation that

... is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent... in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the "original"...

The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and, presumably, the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text (1-2).

Indeed I had to remove hundreds of exclamation marks which Al-Hakim used so that the English text would be acceptable in the target language. He also used a great deal of ellipsis (...) to show that he was contemplating an issue or instead of using a

comma. I replaced most of the ellipsis with either a full stop or a comma. In addition, the publisher asked me to employ American Spelling and punctuation (they insisted on a comma before and) though I always write British English and I had to acquiesce as it was to be published in the USA. I did not like this one bit but that is the hegemonic power the publisher has over the translator. Therefore, on the one hand I tried to be invisible and on the other the use of archaic and high flown language at times may make me as a translator visible. To illustrate this point the Arabic sentence

"فبيء؟ تاخذنا الذى ال طريق هذا ما ويلك"

was translated as "Woe upon you! What is this path you are taking us along?"(37) Instead of using the more familiar expression; "Damn it! Where are you taking us? I used the more archaic expression: "Woe upon you...." To average American readers this expression may sound quite odd. It may also make the translator at times visible. Moreover, in translating a quotation from The Book of the Dead I resorted to the archaic form "thee, thy and thou"(ROY 87). Such words I believe affects the fluency as these words are not in every day English. Foreignization is something Venuti calls for; "so as to resist and change the conditions under which translation is theorized and practiced today, especially in English speaking countries"(17).

To Venuti foreignization means:

Foreignizing translation signifies the difference of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language. In its effort to do right abroad, this translation method must do wrong at home, deviating enough from native norms to stage an alien reading experience- choosing to translate a foreign text excluded by domestic literary canons, for instance, or using a marginal discourse to translate it (20)

By occasionally using archaic terms and high flown language to be faithful to Al-Hakim's grand rhetoric the translation seemed at times odd or foreignized. Moreover, there are many culture specific words in this book such as: "*Jubbah(garment), Kaftan(coat) are and fanous(lantern)*" (ROY 3) which I had to explain in footnotes. The word "*Moulid*" (religious festival) appears in transliteration in chapter 13 which I defined in a lengthy footnote (61). All the above Arabic words I used in the text as Venuti says, "Foreigniz[es]translation in English [which], in the interest of democratic geopolitical relations can be a form of resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism"(20). Such a strategy sends the readers abroad as Venuti believes (20).

Another stimulating element in this collection is al-Hakim's erudite style. In other words, there are myriads of references to Arab, Asian, and Western works and writers. Therefore, I decided to use footnotes to help the casual readers to know who these writers are. For example: he writes about Abul Ala al-Mari's book Saqt al-zand (The Tinder Spark) (ROY 11) and The Seven Mu'allaqat (ROY 21) therefore, I explained such works in footnotes. In chapter 8 Al-Hakim uses a quotation from the Chinese thinker Lin Yutang so I added a footnote on this writer too (30).

The other unusual aspect in this book is that Al-Hakim hardly ever mentioned the full citations he made use of in writing this book and he did not include a bibliography or

works cited. In his citations he usually refers to the author or/and title of the book but never the page number, publisher or the date which would be unusual for the Anglo-American or Western reader. But I decided to keep it the way he wrote it, except that I added the year of publication of most books mentioned by al-Hakim to make it more reader-friendly. Moreover, I added an index though there was no index in the Arabic version.

As for the cultural political aspects in al-Hakim's **The Revolt of the Young**, he states that young people have always been the sparks of most revolutions around the world. In modern age Egypt, the 1952 Revolution has been led by young army officers. In the twenty-first century, in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, and many other Arab countries young people also played a major role in the so called "Arab Spring". They revolted against the totalitarian regimes of the older generations. Since 2010 until this day young people are still struggling socially and politically, to achieve freedom and social justice.

But why did the young Egyptian rebels fail to rule in 2011? Tawfiq Al-Hakim offers an answer - though he was referring to young people's revolt against De Gaulle's regime –

...young people have not formed their own strongholds yet, being new to their revolution and their own sense of self. They do not yet have clear organized ideas. It is like the onset of any revolution when the old strongholds are destroyed and it stands at a loss for some time not knowing what to do next....The more they rebel, the more the previous generation entrench themselves in their strongholds and the dividing gap between the generations become wider.

Hence the old strongholds are still ruling in Egypt.

This rebellious spirit in the young does not manifest itself solely in the Middle East, but it is inherent in many angry young men and women in the West too. During the last century in America there were many University students' protests, for instance, against Vietnam, which al-Hakim refers too in the last chapter entitled "The Case of the Twenty-First Century". This century as well witnessed various demonstrations in America and sit-ins called "Occupy Wall Street".

I believe as a translator I stand mid way between being invisible and visible. I used some elements to achieve domestication such as an acceptable American punctuation system, American spelling, an index and foot notes to make the translation reader friendly and fluent. But at times I was more concerned to adhere to Al-hakim's style and imagery that I sacrificed fluency to some extent for the sake of the source language. Hence, I resorted to high flown language, transliteration and Archaic English.

It is an inspiring book. Al-Hakim's analytic and at times visionary outlook into the past, present, and future is beyond a shadow of a doubt valuable.

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Easy-To-Read Books for Children with Dyslexia in Public Libraries

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Abstract

In Japan, most public libraries do not provide sufficient easy-reading materials or make available adequate reading facilities that are suitable for Japanese children with dyslexia. In contrast, in the Netherlands, the “Easy Reading Plaza” (*Makkelijk Lezen Plein*, MLP) is a special facility provided for children with reading disabilities, allowing them to see, read, and listen to books in various ways. Our study focused on easy-to-read books in the MLPs of public libraries in the Netherlands and Belgium, and gathered information on them through interviews with librarians. The public libraries investigated provide sufficient easy-reading materials as well as reading facilities suitable for all children, including children with dyslexia. The MLPs were designed for all children; books are set up at the front to make them easy to find, on shelves that are color classified by subject area. The librarians carefully select books for simple language, clear layout, appealing covers, and attractive content. Adapting the concept of the MLP to Japanese libraries might give all Japanese children the opportunity to read more books.

Keywords: dyslexia, public library, information accessibility

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Introduction

Dyslexia is the most common neurological-specific learning disability (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003). Dyslexic readers suffer from a phonological deficiency characterized by difficulties in associating phonemes with the graphemes, or written symbols, that represent them (Bradley & Bryant, 1978; Hulme & Snowling, 1992; Snowling, 1981).

In Japan, 4.5% of children with dyslexia have a learning disability; moreover, 2.4% of children find it hard to read or write (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2012). The Japanese language is written using three types of script—kanji, hiragana, and katakana—mixed together. Over the six years of primary school education in Japan, children are introduced to 1,006 different Kanji characters. Japanese children with dyslexia often struggle to read kanji they are expected to learn when they encounter them in books.

Public librarians are allowed to create audiobook and e-book versions of paper books for children with dyslexia under Article 37(2) of the Japanese Copyright Law (2009 revision) (Copyright Research and Information Center [CRIC], n.d.). Japanese children with dyslexia are often able to read using e-books with audio or Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) formats; however, not all public libraries in Japan have access to books in these formats, and even if they do sometimes, not very many. There are still very few public libraries in Japan providing services for children with reading disabilities. Further, while borrowing for these books is open to people with visual impairment, developmental disabilities, dyslexia, and similar conditions, they are rarely borrowed by people with dyslexia. Most public libraries do not provide sufficient easy-reading materials or make available reading facilities suitable for children with dyslexia.

Most public libraries in the Netherlands have a *Makkelijk Lezen Plein* (“Easy Reading Plaza”) (ProBiblio, n.d.), and the concept is increasingly spreading through Belgium as well. The MLP is a special provision for children with reading difficulties, consisting of a reading environment tailored to allow them to see, read, and listen to books in various ways. Through MLPs, public libraries successfully promote reading in children with reading disabilities (ProBiblio, n.d.).

The purpose of this study is to investigate information accessibility for children with dyslexia in Japanese public libraries, and develop ways to improve it with reference to the best practice upheld by libraries in the Netherlands and the Belgium. In the present study, we focused on easy-to-read books in the MLPs of public libraries in these countries; information was gathered through interviews with librarians.

Methods

Participants

Seven adults—five women and two men—participated in the study. The participants worked for the education departments of public libraries in the Netherlands and Belgium; all participants' libraries had an MLP. Written informed consent was obtained from the participants. This study was approved by Sagami Women's University (No. 1505).

Procedure

The interviews were conducted and surveys completed at the participants' libraries. Survey items consisted of three parts: provision and utilization of easy-to-read books, helping children with dyslexia in the MLP, and cooperation on children's reading between elementary schools and the library.

Results

The provision and utilization of easy-to-read books

1) When did you establish the MLP at your library?

Five libraries opened MLPs between 2004 and 2008, and one in 2013.

2) Do you think that the number of library users has increased since you opened the MLP at your library?

Respondents generally agreed that incorporating the MLP had design increased the number of library users—"strongly agree" received 5 responses, "agree," 1, and "neutral," 1; see Table 1.

Table 1

The Number of Users in the Library Has Increased Since the Establishment of the MLP

<u>Answer</u>	<u>n</u>
strongly agree	5
agree	1
neutral	1
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0

3) How many books do you have in the MLP of your library?

The number of books ranged from around 500 to around 800.

4) What criteria do you use to choose the books?

Criteria mentioned for choosing MLP books were as follows:

- The book has not many words on one page/a lot of white on the page.
- The book has big characters (print size) and many illustrations.
- The font is a font for people with dyslexia (Dyslexie font, n.d.).
- The book looks nice, is attractive, and has a good layout.
- The story is suitable for children, and the text is easy to understand.
- Sentences and words are not too long.

5) Can anyone use the books in the MLP?

In the MLPs are found not only easy-to-read books, but also CD-ROMs, DVDs, DAISY and different materials accessible to everyone.

Helping dyslexic children in the MLP

1) Do you arrange books in the MLP so that dyslexic children can find them easily?

Ways of arranging the books that were used in the MLPs were as follows:

- Books were identified with a *Makkelijk Lezen Plein* sticker.
- Dyslexic children wanted to look at the books and to browse through them and see them all.
- There was a special section of the floor in the MLP where the books were mainly presented such that one could see the front.
- The books are set in front.
- The best thing for children is to set the books in front where children can see them, a little bit low down. Children certainly find it very nice to browse.
- The books are set on a shelf that has been color classified for each subject area.

2) What kinds of books are borrowed most often?

The most popular books in the MLPs were the following:

- The *Geronimo Stilton* series (written under the name of the main character), a series of adventures of a mouse journalist, with many colors, different fonts, and many illustrations.
- The *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series by Jeff Kinney.
- *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and other books by Roald Dahl.
- Some children with reading problems liked books with special fonts for dyslexic children (Dyslexie font, n.d.).

3) Which book type do dyslexic children prefer, paper books or e-books?

According to the respondents, dyslexic children preferred paper books to e-books, and generally did not read e-books.

Table 2

Dyslexic Children's Book Preference

<u>Answer</u>	<u>n</u>
paper books	6
e-books	1

4) We can teach dyslexic children how to read the books in the MLP.

Three respondents chose “agree” (see Table 3). However, two respondents chose “neutral” and two respondents chose “disagree”; comments included “the library would recommend books for children to read, but the library could not be a personal assistant and read with them. Children had to read at school or at home.”

Table 3

The Librarians Are Able to Teach Dyslexic Children How to Read Books

<u>Answer</u>	<u>n</u>
strongly agree	0
Agree	3
Neutral	2
Disagree	2
strongly disagree	0

Cooperation with elementary schools

1) Do you cooperate with elementary schools on dyslexic children?

The public libraries generally cooperated with local elementary schools. Comments included the following:

- In the education department of the library, they had a lot of contact with the schools.
- In the schools, there were special teachers for dyslexic children who would sometimes come to the library and ask them to recommend some books, or to show children the MLP, and the library would do that for the children.

2) Do you lend easy-to-read books to the elementary schools?

The public libraries lent easy-to-read books the elementary school. The respondent's comments were as follows:

- The library lent easy-to-read books to the schools, and they could hold them

for 10 months.

- Every three weeks, all the classes from about six or seven schools in the neighborhood would come to get some books.
- Children would take one book for reading, one information book, and one book they would choose themselves, one comic book.

Conclusion

The investigated public libraries in the Netherlands and Belgium provide sufficient easy-reading materials as well as reading facilities suitable for all children, including children with dyslexia. The MLPs are designed for all children, and it was found that children like books placed out in front that they could see easily and books that had stickers to identify their subject matter. Librarians working on the MLPs carefully select books for simple language, clear layout, appealing covers, and attractive content; they also cooperate with and support elementary schools and teachers, as well as children and their parents. Overall, respondents perceive MLPs as effective at fostering reading among all children. Dyslexic children might be able to learn ways of reading the books in the MLP; however, the librarians have different views from library to library. The results also suggest that the public libraries support and encourage reading and the joy of reading, and that to specialize in teaching children with reading disabilities might be perceived as a responsibility of schools, not libraries.

Adopting the MLP concept might give many more Japanese children the opportunity to read more books using various media. In future study, the author considers ways to improve the reading environment for children with dyslexia in Japanese public libraries.

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Appendix

Question Items

The provision of easy-to-read books, and its utilization

- 1) When did you establish the MLP at your library?
- 2) Do you think that the number of library users has increased since you opened the MLP at your library?
- 3) How many books do you have in the MLP of your library?
- 4) What criteria do you use to choose the books?
- 5) Can anyone use the books in the MLP?

Helping for dyslexic children in their MLP

- 1) Do you arrange books in the MLP so that dyslexic children can find them easily?
- 2) What kinds of books are borrowed most often?
- 3) Which book type do dyslexic children prefer, paper books or e-books?
- 4) We can teach dyslexic children how to read the books in the MLP.

Cooperation with elementary schools

- 1) Do you cooperate with the elementary schools on dyslexic children?
- 2) Do you lend easy-to-read books to the elementary schools?

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