

**AN EVALUATIVE REVIEW OF THE LIBRARY COOPERATION PROGRAM OF THE
INTER-UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM**

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Abstract

The graduate of business library cooperative program started in the late 1980s with four member universities. The cooperative program was named Inter-University Consortium (IUC). With more than two decades of its existence, this paper will realize how effective the partnership was in terms of providing services to its consortium members, most especially with their students. The paper will also discuss students' awareness toward IUC. The research follows three objectives: to quantify the number of active users visiting the IUC member school libraries; to know the impact of services, programs and facilities of the consortium based on the students' awareness and perception; to understand the limitations, problems and opportunities in strengthening the IUC graduate business library cooperative program. A series of interviews were scheduled as well as distribution of survey questionnaires to the MBA students was facilitated. Findings would suggest that different consortium members have different approaches in promoting the consortia. The strength and effectiveness of the consortium lies greatly to the marketing strategy of the library to ensure that everybody will benefit from the partnership.

Keywords: Resource Sharing, Inter-University Consortium,
Library cooperation, Student awareness

RATIONALE

A library consortium is “an association of independent libraries and/or library systems established by formal agreement, usually for the purpose of resource sharing (ODLIS, 2010). It is a reciprocal beneficial sharing of resources, as pointed out by Verzosa (2008). In the Philippines, a number of consortia have been established since the early 1970s. The first of which is the Inter-Institutional Consortium, established in 1972.

Document analysis would suffice that as early as 1987, there had been an existing agreement between the four graduate schools of business on library consortium. Four (4) universities drafted policies and procedures for the Graduate Business Library Cooperative Program. These four universities are the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), University of the Philippines-College of Business Administration (UP-CBA), Ateneo Professional Schools (APS) and the De La Salle University (DLSU).

Institution	Librarian
AIM	Ms. Victorina Alba
APS	Ms. Teresita Moran
DLSU	Ms. Perla Garcia
UP-CBA	Ms. Zeny Galang

Table 1. Library representatives who drafted policies and procedures for the graduate business library cooperative program approved on September 15, 1987

In August 11, 2000, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) reinforced the linkage among these four institutions. The Inter-University Consortium (IUC) established the Graduate Business Library Cooperative Program. According to the AIM website, “the Ford Foundation gave a grant to Ateneo, De La Salle and University of the Philippines [and] Inter-University Consortium for the development of a full-time MBA program in 1968, with Harvard University as project grant administrator. The Harvard Advisory Group suggested that the schools merge to one institution.”

The MOA further stressed that “cooperation and coordination are essential in supporting the information, instructional and research needs of its constituents and that these institutions of higher learning would provide an avenue for information exchange to support the development of graduate training in business and business administration.”

At this point, there was a move to renew and revise the agreement signed in 2000, since as stipulated, it will only take effect for a period of three years. In effect, the IUC is no longer “legal”, subject to the terms and conditions of the MOA. But the member libraries continue to offer the services mentioned in consortium agreement as all parties believe that the strength of this network is to support the MBA programs of their respective institutions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research aims to determine the efficacy of the Inter-University Consortium (IUC) graduate business library cooperative program in terms of the following:

- a. Quantifiable number of active users visiting the IUC member school libraries;
- b. Impact of services, programs and facilities of the consortium based on the students’ awareness and perception;
- c. Limitations, problems and opportunities to strengthen the IUC graduate business library cooperative program.

METHODOLOGY

A series of interviews with the librarians were done to gather data from the libraries of the Ateneo Professional Schools (APS) and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). A survey was also conducted among the students to gather their perceptions and awareness about the IUC in APS and De La Salle University – Makati Extension Campus (DLSU-MEC). The survey was not advised for the students of the AIM because of their tight schedule. Document analysis and data mining were used to verify usage statistics and historical trends for the MEC library.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study does not include any data or interview from UP-CBA. Only three universities were considered due to its proximity to one another. In support to this, most graduate students chose to visit the nearby member libraries within the Makati area rather than going to Quezon City.

The current state of IUC member libraries

1. AIM (Paseo de Roxas, Makati)

In an interview conducted with Ms. Virginia Ong, it was noted that only a few of IUC users from UP, APS and DLSU use their library (2010-2011).

Institution	Number of users in a month
APS	2
DLSU	2
UP-CBA	0

Table 2. Number of IUC users at AIM

The library issues about 416 IUC cards to its MBA, Master in Management (MM) and Master in Development Management (MDM) students. They provide the IUC cards at the start of their classes during the orientation program. Based on this, it is ascertained that the students may be aware of the IUC.

2. APS (Rockwell Center, Makati)

Institution	Number of users in a month
AIM	12
DLSU	1
UP-CBA	0

Table 3. Number of IUC users at APS

In an interview with Ms. Aisa Moraña, Information Commons Librarian, a total of 42 IUC cards were issued by the library both for their MBA Standard and MBA-Regis students. Every student was informed about IUC at their library orientation program through dissemination of kits and brochures.

3. DLSU (Makati Extension Campus, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati)

Institution	Number of users in a month
AIM	0
APS	0
UP-CBA	0

Table 4. Number of IUC users at DLSU-MEC

Looking through the files of the library, it was found out that only 22 IUC cards were released by the library for their MBA and MBA/JD students (data until third term AY 2010-11). Remarkably, there were no users from IUC member institutions who paid a visit to any of the DLSU libraries (DLSU- Manila, MEC or OEC). In any case, there are at least DLSU students who go to the AIM and APS to use their libraries.

IUC cards

It is important to note that IUC cards differ per institution. According to Ms. Ong, there was a proposal to create a uniform IUC card for the four institutions. The size of the DLSU IUC card is smaller than the AIM IUC card, while the APS IUC card is colored and is printed back-to-back.

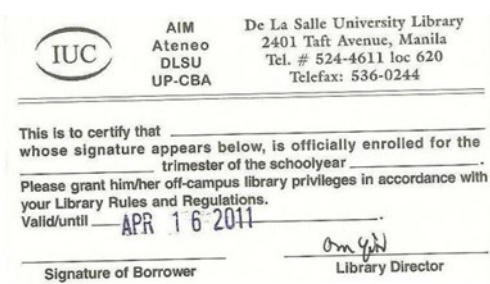


Fig. 1. Sample DLSU IUC card

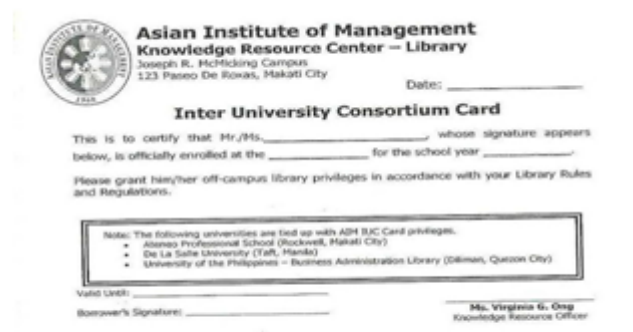


Fig. 2. Sample AIM IUC card

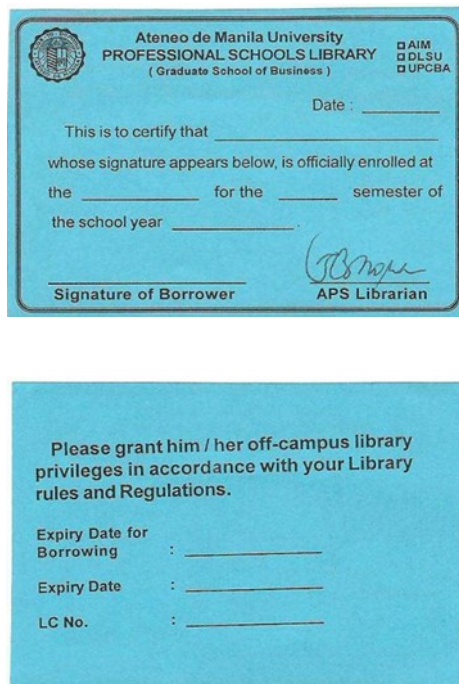


Fig. 3. Sample APS IUC card

Consortia services

Reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan arrangements are some of the provisions for consortia services of the three universities, namely, AIM, APS and DLSU libraries. They have agreed to provide home use for their members for one week, subject to recall. The librarians can visit the libraries of each other should they find that a certain material is available in one member library. For instance, if the AIM librarian searched the DLSU OPAC and found a material available on shelf, the AIM will send their representative to the DLSU to loan out the book. Meanwhile, UPCBA has restricted their materials for room-use only. Interlibrary loan may be available, subject to the availability of the material.

Library usage

There is a very low usage of library from IUC member institutions mainly because users can source their research materials from their own libraries. Those who visit the IUC member libraries just needed other resources, which they could not find in their home libraries.

Notable collection

Each library has unique collections. For instance, the Asian Institute of Management has the Management Research Reports (MRR). The MRR are feasibility studies containing important data on corporate strategies. AIM is noted for their case method learning. The MRR is similar to the Oral Comprehensive Exam (OCE), which came from the Strategic Management papers of the DLSU Graduate Studies, Graduate School of Business. In other words, the MRR of the AIM and the OCE of the DLSU are quite similar to the Master's thesis. In DLSU, if the student wants to pursue doctoral program, s/he should take the master's thesis instead of the OCE.

Comparing DLSU and APS students' awareness and knowledge on IUC

A survey was conducted about the awareness of both the graduate students of business from the DLSU and APS, respectively. Thirty six (36) students from DLSU participated in the survey, while thirty four (34) were from the APS. Results revealed that the APS students appear to be more aware about the services and programs of the IUC, compared to the DLSU students. Problems lie in the promotion of the said consortium. It is hoped that more library users avail of this service. The MEC Library should be more vigilant in promoting the consortium to all its students.

Awareness of IUC

Graduate students of business from the DLSU and APS were asked regarding their knowledge about the existence of the consortium.

Of those who participated in the survey from DLSU, 39% were represented by MBA students, 42% by MBA-JD students, 14% were DBA and 5% were students from other curricular programs of the Ramon V. Del Rosario, Sr. - College of Business.

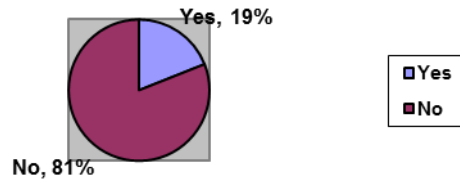


Fig. 4. Awareness of IUC (DLSU)

A large percentage of response (81%) from the graduate students of DLSUs College of Business revealed that they are not aware of the IUC or what it is about (see Figure 4). With this, there is a need to re-introduce the IUC to the new batch of students, and even to the continuing students. A question whether or not the IUC is being tackled, if not mentioned, during the library orientation program conducted periodically at the main campus, should be addressed.

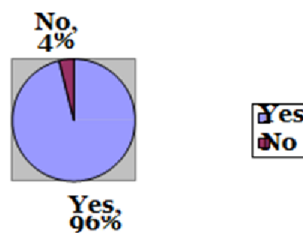


Fig. 5. Awareness of IUC (APS)

Meanwhile, APS students who participated in the survey were 79% from MBA, 17% from MBA-Regis program and 4% from other programs. Contrary to the awareness level of DLSU students, APS students are more aware of the existence of the IUC as 96% said that they know what the IUC is (see Figure 5).

Awareness on the member IUC schools

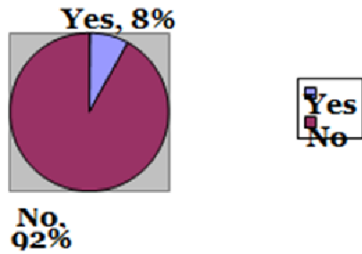


Fig. 6. Awareness on the member IUC schools (DLSU)

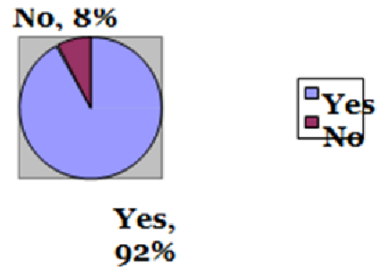


Fig. 7. Awareness on the member IUC schools (APS)

Significant to their awareness level of the IUC's existence, 92% from DLSU responded that they are not aware who the member schools of the IUC are (see Figure 6), while ironically, the same percentage of APS students are aware about the consortium (see Figure 7).

Membership cards

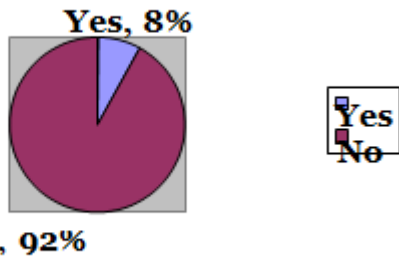


Fig.8. Membership cards (DLSU)

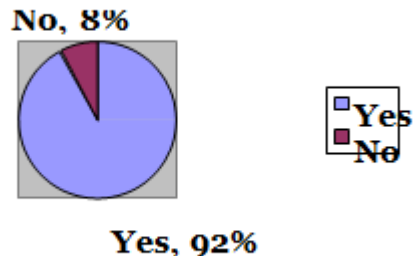


Fig. 9. Membership cards (APS)

Similarly, 92% of the DLSU students answered that they do not have IUC cards, since as mentioned, they do not know what the IUC is. Most of APS students, on the other hand, own an IUC card (see Figures 8 and 9).

Learning about IUC

N=36

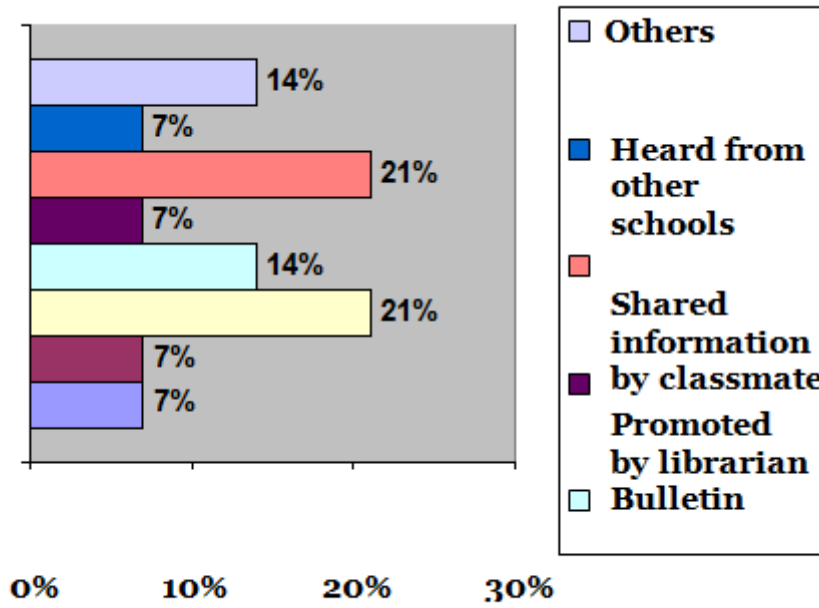


Fig.10. Learning about IUC (DLSU)

Note: multiple responses

Only 21% of the DLSU graduate students' population said that they have only learned about IUC from either their participation from library orientation (or perhaps, as mentioned by the library staff at satellite campuses) or IUC information was shared to them by a classmate. This is a significantly low turn-out (see Figure 10).

N=24

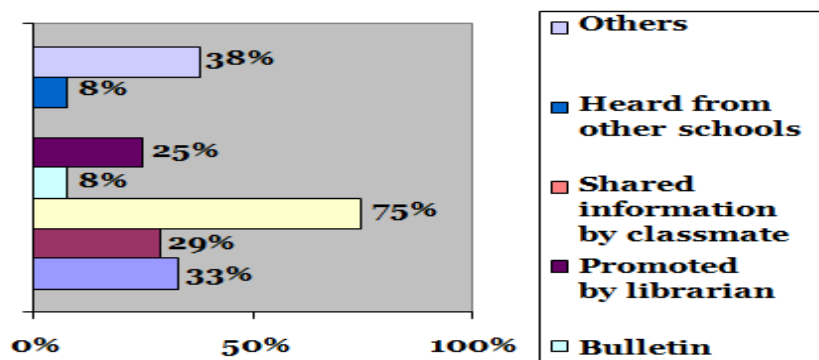


Fig.11. Learning about IUC (APS)

Note: multiple responses

With the library orientation program, most APS students gained awareness about IUC during this activity. Brochures and library guides were also good materials to promote the consortium (see Figure 11).

Awareness on guidelines

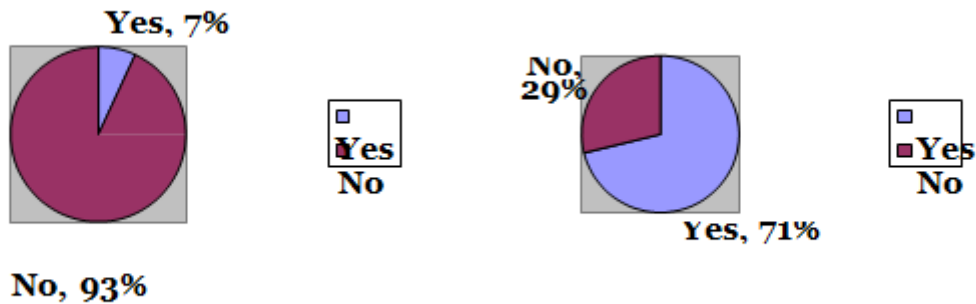


Fig.12. Awareness on guidelines (DLSU) Fig. 13. Awareness on guidelines (APS)

Likewise, a large percentage of DLSU students (93%) are not aware of the policies and guidelines in using IUC member libraries' resources, while 71% from APS said they are aware of the guidelines set by the IUC.

Satisfaction on IUC

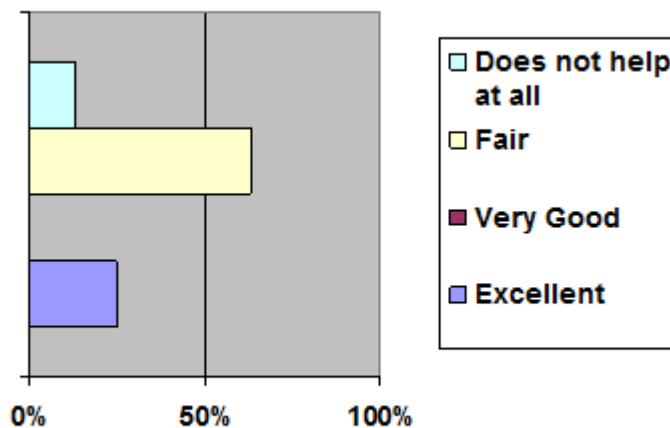


Fig.14. Satisfaction on IUC (DLSU)

More than half of the DLSU students rated IUC services as fair (see Figure 14). Only one (1) student rated IUC as an efficient service of the library, while another one said that IUC does not even help at all. This is alarming, considering that the MEC library has been continuously promoting the IUC.

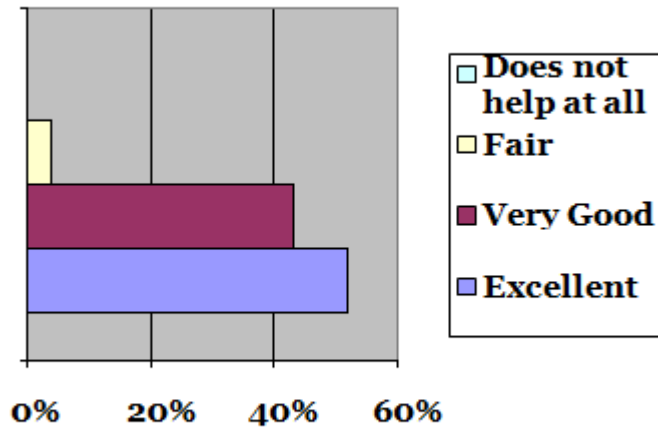


Fig.15. Satisfaction on IUC (APS)

As for the APS, most of the students in the survey commented that IUC is an excellent program (see Figure 15). They said that the services offered by the network are very beneficial to them (borrowing privileges, use of e-journals, interlibrary-loan, etc.)

Best Library

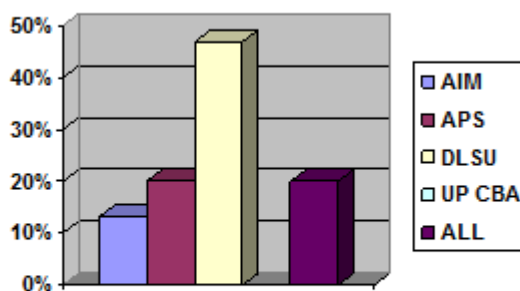


Fig.16. Best library (DLSU)
N=36

Note: Multiple responses

According to the students of DLSU, their home library can already support them with their research and information needs (see Figure 16). They suggested that the library should focus more

on increasing its awareness campaign. Professors, for example, can encourage their students to maximize the resources being provided by the consortium. One student even mentioned that inclusion of the ADB library in the consortium should also be considered. Promotion campaign should be done by the library to increase the patronage of the IUC program.

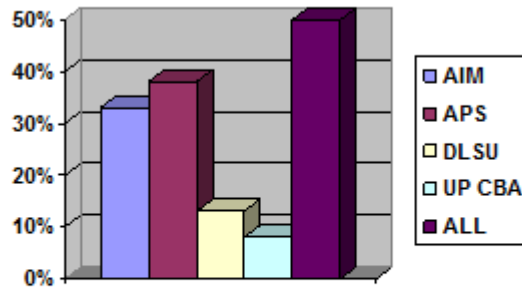


Fig.17. Best library (APS)
N=24

For the APS students, on the other hand, all libraries are diverse and each collection is unique and useful (see Figure 17). They suggested that additional borrowing privileges should be applied. They further suggested that more schools should join in the consortium, but should be promoted intensively. Also noted was the suggestion to liberalize the policies, especially research visit schedules to other schools.

CONCLUSION

The number of active IUC users depends on how many IUC cards are released by the member library. But it does not justify that once a student/faculty holds an IUC card, they are expected to make use of this service to conduct research on a member library. At the end of the day, it is believed that being aware that such a consortium program exists means that students know where to find their needed business and industry-related information sources.

Students' perceptions vary when it comes to the impact of services and programs delivered by the IUC. Students may rate the service as poor because of the fact that they do not know that such a consortium exists. Meanwhile, students who know that there is a consortium that is in place would rate this service as good.

This research found out the following problems:

- a. lack of promotion of IUC, thus, resulting to low awareness level;
- b. faculty members have little support and encouragement on the utilization of the privileges offered by the consortium;

- c. IUC is restricted to MBA students only; it should explore the possibility of including other business management programs in the IUC;
- d. there are only four consortium members and the other one is not proximal to the 3;
- e. there is a limited number of books to be borrowed at a shorter loan period;
- f. the schedule of visit to the member libraries depends on the libraries' policies, which creates a little inconvenience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper recommends that:

- a. a good promotional agenda should be observed to achieve a high-utilization of IUC services;
- b. librarians and faculty members should be active partners in promoting THE IUC;
- c. the consortium privileges be extended to non-MBA students; those that are enrolled in the graduate school of business (e.g. MSCF);
- d. additional consortium member libraries that are relatively near the area of DLSU, APS and AIM (i.e. CEU, Lyceum, FEU) be included;
- e. additional book borrowing privileges be implemented; and
- f. a flexible schedule in visiting the member libraries is likewise suggested since there is only a small number of IUC users availing of the service.

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