

The Status Of Quality Assurance In The Libraries Of Vietnam National University At Ho Chi Minh City

By Mr. Nguyen Minh Hiep
Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City
Vietnam

Overview

The libraries in Vietnam have been under the influence of various tendencies in which the most salient one is of the former Soviet. They have been trying to innovate themselves, but this innovation is not identical and comprehensive – Vietnam hasn't had the National Library Association yet. Thus the status of quality assurance hasn't been very good yet. The libraries of Vietnam National University at Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCM) is also in that situation.

The Outline of VNU-HCM

VNU-HCM currently comprises of four member universities, an institute and the affiliated organizations.

VNU-HCM is located in Ho Chi Minh City, the biggest cultural, business and industrial center of Southern Vietnam as well as of the country. It has 2,350 staff members (of which 1,860 are faculty), 40,000 full-time and part-time undergraduate students and more than 3,500 graduate students. Presently, it offers 120 academic programs for bachelors, 88 for master's degree and 80 for doctorate's degree.

The Libraries of VNU-HCM

Each member university has a library in VNU-HCM. They will be combined in a VNU-HCM library system in the future. There are four libraries at the present:

- The Central Library, which was founded in April 2005, is the newest one. It was funded by the World Bank in order to build the library that is equipped with modern conveniences. It holds around 15,000 books.
- The Natural Sciences University Library was founded in May 1995. It was known as a model of the modern library since it was founded. From 1998, this library began to organize the in-service trainings and workshops in order to train librarians with the knowledge and skills of innovative librarianship, as well as to encourage colleagues to apply the bibliographic standards and new technologies. It holds around 55,000 books.
- The Technology University Library inherited the Institute of Polytechnic Library of former Saigon University. It holds around 60,000 books.
- The Social Sciences and Humanities Library inherited the libraries of former Ho Chi Minh City University and the Faculty of Letters of former Saigon University. It holds around 100,000 books.

Library Services Assurance of the Libraries of VNU-HCM

The Central Library and the Natural Sciences University Library (NSL) have been developing fairly well. Their information resources can be accessed by all faculty and students of VNU-HCM. Apart from the print collections held in the libraries, the libraries of VNU-HCM are circulating 12 online databases consisting of:

1. Association for Computing Machinery
2. CRC Press EnviroNetBase
3. CRC Press EngNetBase
4. CRC Press MathNetBase
5. CRC Press ItknowledgeNetBase
6. Ebrary
7. EBSCO Host
8. Emerald Full Text
9. H.W.Wilson
10. IEEE: ASPP
11. Proquest Digital Dissertation
12. SpringerLink

Besides there are more than forty digital collections built with Greenstone open source software by the NSL. These electronic resources can meet the need of teaching, study, and research in the VNU-HCM as well as are ready for sharing to other libraries. NSL has also encouraged the libraries of VNU-HCM and others to use the Greenstone open source digital library software for building collections. There are some libraries that have been building many valuable collections now. Vietnamese version of Greenstone has been published by NSL and IES (Integrated e-Solutions, Ltd.). NSL holds training how to use Greenstone regularly for everybody.

Generally, although being invested for building and equipping, the quality assurance of the libraries of VNU-HCM hasn't been very good yet because of the lack of good educated and trained human resources. This is the general problem for Vietnam libraries at the moment as having been mentioned in the open of this presentation.

Dr. Patricia Oyler, an American expert for developing Vietnamese libraries said at the international seminar on **“Learning Resource Center and Library Projects”** in Hue that *“Learning Resource Centers and Libraries and Information Centers without educated and trained professionals to manage them and to assist faculty and students to use them are just buildings”*. Indeed, to have quality assurance for the academic libraries in Vietnam, training library professionals according to standardization is essential. It is the reason we have proposed a training program for Vietnamese librarians according to the training program of AUN Inter-Library Online Working Committee (AUNILO) with the hope that we are able to get the assistance and sponsor of AUN (ASEAN University Network).

Training Program of AUNILO

Within the framework of training program of AUNILO, we have designed a workshop program on **“Fundamentals of Electronic Libraries and Digital Libraries”**, which is available at the website http://202.185.96.188/aunilo/training_electronic.asp, for Vietnamese librarians with the objective:

- To raise the knowledge of fundamental standardization of Library and Information Science;
- To orient building and developing library;
- To build and organize electronic library and digital library.

This training program will be held in all three regions of Vietnam – HCM City (South), Da Nang (Center), and Ha Noi (North). It consists of three workshops for around three hundred librarians from the libraries and information centers of more than two hundred universities and colleges in Vietnam. The lecturers are Mr. Nguyen Minh Hiep (NSL – VNU-HCM), Mr. Nguyen Huy Chuong (Library and Information Center of Vietnam National University at Ha Noi), and Mr. Ha Le Hung (Learning Resource Center of Da Nang University). The expense for this training program costs 7,000 USD. We hope that it will be done by the funding and with the title of AUN. We need this first workshop with the title of AUN in order to be able to raise the knowledge of fundamental standardization for Vietnamese librarians, which benefits for the organization of the long term training programs by ourselves as well as for the attendance of the Training Program of AUNILO in the future.

Conclusion

VNU-HCM as well as other universities in Vietnam is of interest to the government and the foreign organizations. There are opportunities to develop but lack of human resources. Thus, the quality assurance is not very good. It is necessary to develop people by:

- a Concentrated training
 - standardizing librarianship in order to reinforce the fundamentals of the traditional library;
 - applying the new technology in order to build electronic and digital library.
- a Intensifying the cooperation by:
 - building Consortia;
 - forming the Vietnamese Library Association.
- a The workshop **“Fundamentals of Electronic Libraries and Digital Libraries”** under the title of AUN is necessary and meaningful for Vietnamese librarians at the present.