Roles of the Faculty and Librarian in the Collaborative Relationships at Vietnamese Universities: A Qualitative Methodology

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ABSTRACT

This article is a part of a doctoral research project on developing the faculty-librarian collaboration model to support learning and research at Vietnamese universities. The findings of this study have crucial significance in drawing a broader view of the importance of faculty-librarian collaboration and the roles of such collaborators at Vietnamese universities. Qualitative methodology was used to formulate related topics and achieve these research objectives. Semi-structured interviews were carried out at four universities in Vietnam with three key informants, including the faculty, librarian, and administrators (dean/ vice dean of faculty, director/deputy director of the library). From March to April 2019, researchers conducted 29 interviews with three participant groups. The striking results of this research showed that the faculty and librarians realized the significance of a collaborative relationship and expect that Vietnamese universities will design and deploy a model to boost the effectiveness of this collaboration. Besides this, the study found that the collaborators play certain important roles within the collaborative relationship, for instance, that of reference, coordinator, special lecturer, cooperator, and information user.

Keywords: faculty-librarian collaboration, collaborative relationship, university libraries, Vietnamese universities

1. INTRODUCTION

With the ongoing development of information technology, the nature of higher education and the needs of users have transformed the role of librarians in the university environment. Pham (2016) indicated that the role of the embedded librarian has been a growing trend, in which librarians work with the faculty to "integrate information literacy and research skills into the curriculum and to provide enhanced research support services." At the same time, Dewey (2004) pointed out the roles of embedded librarians in integrating scholarly resources in research projects and publications and initiating information literacy programs. Besides this, the development of the roles of liaison and subject librarians in an academic environment has elevated the contribution of librarians in teaching and research. Librarians can partake in teaching, integrating information literacy into the discipline curriculum (Bewick & Corrall, 2010; Pham & Tanner, 2014; Rodwell & Fairbairn, 2008), data management, publishing support (Corrall, Kennan, & Afzal, 2013), and providing research support services (Corrall, 2014; Kennan, Williamson, & Johanson, 2012). In light of this, the transformation of librarians' roles has altered the perspectives of faculty members and raised concerns about the professional and pedagogical knowledge of librarians (Bell & Shank, 2004). As a result, librarians have started joining in collaborative activities with faculty members in teaching and research work (Pham, 2016).

Furthermore, the emerging trend of many research universities around the world is that they require the faculty to boost the quantity and quality of publications in prestigious international journals. Moreover, faculty have become the heart of research universities, with a strong educational foundation to facilitate teaching and research at the highest level. They must make numerous scholarly contributions by publishing articles and books (Altbach & Salmi, 2011; Mohrmana, Ma, & Baker, 2008).

Changes in the roles of librarians and requirements for faculty members have introduced the necessity for collaboration. However, the big, challenging question is: How does one connect the roles of faculty and librarians to support the university's learning, teaching, and research goals, and how do the faculty understand the importance of collaboration and initiative for collaborative activities? The connection between the faculty and librarians could lead to great efficiency in improving information skills for students and educational quality, thereby strengthening research capacity and publications, effective development of training programs, and so on (Bell & Shank, 2004; Ivey, 2003; Pham & Tanner, 2014). However, defining the detailed tasks and responsibilities within the collaborative process is crucial for each individual to be more proactive and conscious in their work, as well as to support each other in executing the most effective outcomes.

Previous research in Vietnam did not focus on analyzing and exploiting the roles of collaborators to create a background for faculty-librarian collaboration. This paper discusses the perspectives on the significance and roles of collaborators in the faculty-librarian collaborative relationship at Vietnamese universities. Besides this, the results of this article are useful for administrators, librarians, and faculty to understand their individual special roles in the collaborative process, from which they can find solutions to deploy and improve their tasks and establish relationships with partners.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research is a part of a doctoral dissertation on developing the faculty-librarian collaboration model to support learning and research at Vietnamese universities. The research objectives of this paper were to identify the significance of faculty and librarian collaboration and their roles in collaborative relationships at Vietnamese universities.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. The Importance of Faculty-Librarian Collaboration

Various studies have described the significance of faculty-librarian collaboration. It is apparent that collaborative partnership could bring many benefits in sharing expertise and skills (Pham & Tanner, 2014), improving teaching and research experience, and responding to research and teaching demands (Jeffries, 2000; Sugarman & Demetracopoulos, 2001). Besides this, Wijayasundara (2008) pointed out that the collaborative process helps students think critically and enhances the quality of the lesson; improves learning outcomes and boosts academic performance (Montiel-Overall, 2005); and mentors and encourages students to build skills (Kenedy & Monty, 2011). Other researchers also reveal that collaboration helped design and boost a syllabus and subject content (Bell & Shank, 2004; Ivey, 2003), and "helped teachers develop resource-based units" and to plan, provide, and assess learning programs (Kempcke, 2002; Kenedy & Monty, 2011).

Collaborative efforts to integrate information literacy in higher education is a regular collective activity and plays a crucial role in improving information literacy and skills for students. The

collaboration helps evaluate students' progress via co-planning, co-teaching, and co-assessing by faculty and librarians (Franklin, 2013; Kennedy & Green, 2013). At the same time, collaboration also creates opportunities to build connections and stronger relationships, and boosts positive interpersonal relations to form learning communities and "welcome continued collaboration" (Friend & Cook, 1996; Raspa & Ward, 2000; Williamson, McGregor, & Archibald, 2010). Moreover, collaborative partnerships support the development of research projects, project proposals, and organized conferences (Shepley, 2009).

Furthermore, the findings from the study by Yu (2009) also present some advantages of establishing a collaborative relationship in improving the quality of library instruction, such as designing library instruction for users, developing reference consultation services, collection development, and sharing resources.

3.2. Roles of Collaborators

Most studies emphasize the important roles of the faculty and librarian in partnerships, for example, that of a consultant, instructor, reference and co-advisor, faculty member as a library specialist, and teaching partners.

A review of the literature mentions the role of the faculty and librarian as teaching partners in information literacy programs and integrating bibliographic instruction into courses. Most librarians have to collaborate with faculty members for planning teaching, paying attention on accessing and retrieving information, while the academic staff take responsibility for the efficacy of information literacy programs and assessing the needs and learning of students (Ivey, 2003). In addition, "instructors gave direction and motivation to students as to how library materials were to be used in meeting course requirements" (Carlson & Miller, 1984), while librarians often joined in the planning and teaching of students regarding bibliographic instruction for the course (Carlson & Miller, 1984).

However, the study of Scripps-Hoekstra and Hamilton (2016) and Yu (2009) indicate three roles of librarian: as a reference, consultant, and instructor. It can be seen that in the role as a reference, a librarian conducts various tasks to support students outside the classroom by providing information about library resources related to specific topics and locating and accessing the content of documents. Additionally, they help students effectively use information resources to create assignments and projects, write a thesis or dissertation, and increase their interest in the library's reference services. Meanwhile, in the role of a consultant, a librarian has to answer students' questions, consult them to determine appropriate research skills, recommend information resources, and integrate library components into

courses (Donham & Green, 2004). Besides this, "librarians also serve as academic advisors, as the faculty representative for student organizations, and mentors in a thematic residence hall program" (Donham & Green, 2004); they also study students' interests and advise them on the usability and the number of library resources. They also collaborate to develop information literacy programs, evaluate students' learning performance, and revise, distribute and assess the content of the curricula (Scripps-Hoekstra & Hamilton, 2016). Relating to instructors, forming lifelong learning skills in students through library instruction and co-teaching in the classroom (classroom and online), taking responsibility for the level of content distribution in the instruction process, and guiding catalogs, databases, and information technology by using their skills and locating relevant information resources are necessary tasks for a librarian (Scripps-Hoekstra & Hamilton, 2016).

Accordingly, Fishbaugh (2000) revealed that collaboration happens through three models: consulting, coaching, and teaming. In this situation, one partner has more expertise, knowledge, or experience and carries out counseling and advises the other partners. Furthermore, they also entail stakeholders who recognize their strengths and weaknesses to support each other in the collaborative process, and share the purpose and results of their collaborative endeavors. Brown and Duke (2005) also revealed a phenomenological self-study model in which the library staff and faculty as researchers and instructors, respectively, "develop, implement, and evaluate distance-delivered instructional services for public school teachers."

On the other hand, it was found that the librarian plays the role of a co-supervisor to offer professional help to students writing their literature review. They even increase research capacity and information literacy skills; and they reduce isolation for researchers (Macauley & McKnight, 1998).

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article is a part of a doctoral research project on developing the faculty-librarian collaboration model to support learning and research at Vietnamese universities. Qualitative methodology was used in this research to formulate related topics and achieve research objectives. It is useful to get ideas, feelings, and thoughts and to clarify meanings and understandings about events (Pickard, 2007). Therefore, using a qualitative method to discover individual opinions about the significance of collaboration and to deeply understand specific tasks and work in the roles of collaborators is appropriate without measuring exact dates, times, or statistics. However, in

this paper the researchers present a part of the result of an in-depth interview on the perspectives of faculty and librarians on the importance of faculty-librarian collaboration and the roles of collaborators in the working process.

Four universities in Vietnam—Nong Lam University, University of Social Sciences and Humanities-Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (USSH-VNUHCM), University of Technology and Education (UTE), and University of Science-VNUHCM—were chosen for this study. These universities are public and large universities with over 15,000 students and numerous programs covering different fields of study (e.g., social sciences and humanities, technology, agriculture, sciences, economics, and so on).

There were three key informant groups that participated in semi-structured interviews (see Appendix), including faculty, librarian, and administrators (director/deputy director of the library, dean/vice dean of faculty). Interviewees were chosen based on their willingness and understanding of collaboration at their university.

Before carrying out the interviews, the researchers relied on personal relationships to contact the administrators of the library (via email, Facebook, or phone). Next, it was necessary to make an appointment with administrators and meet the director/vice directors of academic libraries to get to know the list of faculty and librarians who were joining the collaborative initiative. Then, based on this list, the researchers contacted the participants to make an appointment and arranged a schedule with them.

Twenty-nine in-depth interviews were conducted at the four Vietnamese universities over three months from March to April 2019. Every interview was about 30 to 75 minutes long. After the interviews, the researchers coded and transcribed the recorded files through word processor software to ensure the accuracy of the information.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of this paper show the perspectives of faculties and librarians about the significance of faculty-librarian collaboration and their roles in collaborative relationships. These results are summarized in Table 1. The detail results are explained in Sections 5.1 and 5.2.

Table 1. Significance of faculty-librarian collaboration and roles of collaborators

Significance of Faculty-Librarian Collaboration	
From the faculty perspective	From the viewpoint of librarians
- Supporting the teaching and research process; - A connecting bridge between faculty and students; - Supporting the process of publishing textbooks and reference materials; - Enhancing faculty ability to embrace information resources, proficiently use search tools, and improve information search skills; - Identifying exact information needs and helping the faculty access and exploit information resources; - Improving analytical and synthetic skills to consult and guide users; - Evaluating information resources through deep analysis; - Accessing and using information effectively and legally; - Having effective communication and interaction skills and the ability to solve problems; - Improving skills in information and pedagogy; - Supporting each other to achieve common goals.	- Improving the learning and research process of the students and faculty; - Providing numerous information resources to faculty research; - Supporting the library's objective better, in which the faculty function as an information channel to promote and share information with students to easily access resources.
Roles of Collaborators in the Collaborative Partnership	
Roles of faculty	Roles of the librarian
Reference - Providing useful information resources for the librarian; - Providing materials that the library does not have yet; - Introducing information resources; - Disseminating library and information services to students.	**Special lecturer** - Teaching information literacy; - Guiding the use of the library and access to the information resources and databases; - Locating materials in the library.
Cooperator - The faculty only partnered with the librarian in the process of printing and publishing books.	**Reference** - Providing materials and information resources; - Searching for and providing information resources based on research topics of faculty; - Suggesting materials according to faculty research topics in the process of developing a subject outline, or proposed substituting of old documents or adding new and more up-to-date documents.
Information user - Asking for materials to serve for research, teaching, and academic exchange.	**Coordinator** - Planning, guiding, and managing of collaborative activities.

5.1. Perspectives on the Significance of Faculty-Librarian Collaboration

5.1.1. The Faculty Members' Perspective

When asked, "Could you please tell me your opinions about the significance of the collaborative relationship between faculty and librarians?", all of the faculty said that such collaboration was very important and indispensable in universities, stating some reasons as follows.

The collaborative relationships would support the teaching and research process because some services were effectively executed, and librarians searched for and provided useful and valuable information resources for the faculty; therefore, the faculty would save time while using library services. One of the faculty members was quoted as saying the collaborations were:

"…very important because in a university environment, having the connection between faculty and librarian will better support the work, serve, and provide good services for the faculty and students. Thus, we have to put ourselves in that position—serving position to meet users' needs and we have to take this relationship to the highest level to collaborate and support the faculty in the reaching and research process."

The faculty-librarian collaboration is essential for research, as some faculty mentioned:

"To be honest, Vietnamese universities have not focused on research or research has not been specialized yet. If we focus on intensive research, this relationship is very important, because when we study deeply, the references are extremely important. When we do research or a project, guiding or teaching also needs references. However, in Vietnam, the research has not been intensive because the lecturers may not have the adequate conditions to study... Normally, research takes more than eight hours to do, but the funding for this research is not enough, so I will not be wholeheartedly doing it, and exploring databases is also not very effective."

Some faculty members mentioned that the librarian's role is very important and is a connecting bridge between faculty and students because while teaching, the faculty require students to read, but they cannot always provide all the materials for students. The faculty might only be able to provide some guiding documents; therefore, when a successful collaboration is established, librarians can better support the learning process by providing information resources for students. As some faculty said:

"The library is an important face to the university. It should be large, have a large number of information resources, abundant service; professional librarians are not only good for students but also faculty and researchers. Therefore, building a collaborative relationship is very important."

"If there is collaboration with librarians, the faculty would work faster, more conveniently and effectively because the teaching activity has to connect to the library, and students also need to use the information resources of a library."

This collaboration is a critical issue because when a collaborative relationship is established, the library also supports the process of publishing textbooks and reference materials for lecturers with prestigious publishers. Furthermore, some faculty members mentioned that the faculty-librarian collaboration is extremely important to achieve these results:

- enhancing faculty ability to embrace information resources, proficiently use search tools, and improve information search skills;
- identifying exact information needs, helping faculty to access and exploit information resources at the library effectively;
- improving analytical and synthetic skills to consult and guide users;
- evaluating information resources through deep analysis;
- accessing and using information effectively and legally;
- having effective communication and interaction skills with user groups and the ability to solve problems during the serving process;
- improving skills in information and pedagogy.

On the other hand, some faculty opined that collaboration is indispensable, and units and individuals must support each other to achieve common goals without any policy or plan as such. For instance, they said that:

"Librarians need to perform their roles and work effectively in their responsibilities, and readers will automatically come and do what they can. For the faculty, librarians should actively contact the faculty to ask for support, collaboration, provision of back and forth materials, or provide books to the library."

"[The name of a vice-dean of faculty] thinks that all units in a university are equally important…in terms of opinion, every relationship must be good and must be in the spirit of fairness, good cooperation; when we need something, they will help enthusiastically or conversely. The faculty members are also very pleased with the materials of our faculty and the library. In fact… if a lecturer or a researcher is not well-equipped in terms of search, inquiry, and synthesis skill, the support of librarians is very necessary. Especially in the section related to the overview, the collaborative relationship will help the faculty find out what and when research works have been

done to help in understanding who has done it and especially in the context of research topics in Vietnam."

Another person pointed out:
"In building a collaborative relationship, the references are still the most important because between librarians and users, what they are interested in is references. Librarians will manage, and lecturers will use it, and I think the relationship is only a working relationship; thus, everyone needs to fulfill their tasks."

5.1.2. The Perspectives of Librarians

Similar to the faculty perspectives, librarians pointed out that establishing collaborative relationships was extremely important and brought many benefits for learning, teaching, and the research work of students, faculty, researchers, and librarians. The following are some of the reasons which help to realize the significance of a collaborative relationship from the librarian's perspective.

If the partners are willing to collaborate, the learning and research process of the students and the faculty will improve greatly, because when librarians grasp the needs of the faculty, they can introduce faculty to useful and valuable information resources that they do not know of. At the same time, it also helps faculty to know what libraries are and what other suggestions beyond the reach of librarians are available to meet their needs. A librarian said:
"…[T]he libraries and librarians provide valuable information for the faculty to better meet the needs of teaching and research, as well as affect the quality of education and research of the university. When this relationship is good, the two parties will be comfortable to easily exchange and support the development of the syllabus, improve the efficiency of the syllabus, ensure the reliability and limit errors and they do not need to adjust."

Librarians provide numerous information resources to faculty for their research. However, in order to carry out their work well, a collaborative relationship and the support of the faculty are required. Working with the faculty for a long time, the library staff know what faculty need and what documents are needed; thus, librarians can modify their library to meet such needs and find other resources to introduce to the faculty:
"This is a matter of survival for a library because, in this relationship, the faculty introduces materials to students and consults librarians regarding some intensive issues; we must create a good relationship where the faculty would support

us. Besides, the faculty can introduce journals that were not available in the library before, and we can ask the faculty to introduce new students to read those materials. Thanks to those relationships, it can meet the needs of students. If there is no relationship then the faculty will not say that to [name of a librarian] and also be apprehensive, or the faculty will go out to find materials without communicating their detailed difficulties to us..."

Collaborations can enable librarians to support the library's objective better, in which the faculty function as an information channel to promote and share information with students to easily access resources.
"Abroad, the faculty knows very well what libraries have, and they are brokers for learners, and support libraries and become collaborators of the library and become subject librarians. However, in Vietnam, librarians do not have a background in other fields. Thus, it is difficult to conduct research and consultancy. Therefore, librarians must connect with faculty members to ask them for help in gaining profound expertise to perform special services such as Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), citation and research software. Besides, library staff do not conduct research; thus, they do not know research support tools, but only offer their support in buying materials. With much collaboration, the faculty would help librarians understand how to cite, how to calculate statistics, how to publish research works, and only an experienced faculty will know those things..."

Another director of a library revealed:
"[Name of a librarian] thinks that it is very important because, for example, I have been studying the UNESCO Information Literacy program since 2006 and I found that if there is no collaboration with the faculty, the library will struggle to succeed, because when I speak, the persuasion is not as high as the faculty. Therefore, I think that by building a good relationship between librarians and the faculty, the success for learners will be higher, and for research, it will be higher because the faculty is often the team leader of students and graduate students, and the librarian is a connecting bridge."

The results of the interview data correspond to the perspective of Pham (2016), who mentioned that the establishment of the collaborative relationships with faculty members was considered the most effective model for enhancing teaching skills, academic performance, and the improved roles of librarians in co-teaching with the faculty. Besides, these results also seem to support the evaluation of current literature which is enriched with the

opinion that collaborative endeavors are a crucial foundation to achieve the university's mission/vision, educational transformation (Bennett & Gilbert, 2009), and knowledge and expertise transformation (Wang, 2011), and to boost research competence (Reynolds, Smith, & D'Silva, 2013).

5.2. Roles of Collaborators in the Collaborative Partnership

5.2.1. Roles of the Faculty

It is seen that the faculty play three major roles in collaboration, including reference, cooperator, and information user.

Reference: In this role, the faculty carry out the function of providing useful information resources for the librarian, providing materials that the library does not have yet, introducing information resources and dissemination of library and information services to students, and so forth.

The faculty said that a librarian is a manager of the entire system of materials of the university, concerning many different disciplines. As a result, they can neither master all the information resources related to advanced discipline-specific knowledge nor understand the professional and research areas of the faculty. Therefore, based on the yearly request from librarians, the faculty could propose and set up a list of additional materials and send it to the library to be implemented, thereby supporting learning, teaching, and research needs. Besides this, in the teaching and research process, the faculty might know the new and useful information resources that they can advise the library to buy or access. Following that, the library would notify faculty via email or send the list of materials directly. Also, some faculty members maintain close relationships with librarians and donate materials to the library when they publish new books or from conference proceedings that took place abroad.

The results of this study support the evaluation of Yu (2009), who mentioned that faculty consult librarians for collection development and helps students in searching for documents in specialized databases. The results also relate to the findings of Pham (2016), who noted that librarians and academic staff work together to supplement and manage materials related to specific subjects, such as reading lists, subject guides, or teaching and research collections at the Hanoi University in Vietnam.

However, some faculty complained that librarians require lists of yearly selected materials for collection development, but after proposing them, the library still did not buy the required documents. Therefore, the faculty felt discouraged from proposing any more. Some of the reasons mentioned by faculty include the lack of funding for additional materials, databases not being used by many users, and documents of other disciplines being prioritized. In this case, the faculty buy books or an access account by themselves or rely on other relationships to search for more up-to-date information (such as friends, students, and colleagues, both internally and externally).

On the other hand, several of the faculty members claimed that they just needed to seek and ask for support from librarians, instead of actively providing information back to librarians. However, they believe that if librarians do request such contributions, they would readily provide additional resources for the library.

Concerning the introduction and dissemination of library and information services to students, when asked whether to provide and disseminate information to students during the teaching process, all faculty agreed that this is their mission; thus, the introduction and provision of information related to professional materials are essential and useful for students. Typically, faculty would introduce a list of references related to the subject they were teaching to the students in the first session and provide the information of access for the resources at the library. In the teaching process, faculty also required students to search, use, and update relevant materials in the library. In addition, for internal and external students who were carrying out research projects, faculty also introduced them to using the library's useful services to search for documents. A faculty member noted that

> "When having new materials or databases, I also shared them with librarians, especially in order to share them with students, because during the teaching process, I make students self-learn, self-research, thus usually when new materials are available, I would require my students to read first."

Cooperator: In this case, the faculty only partnered with the librarian in the process of printing and publishing books. In the process of writing textbooks at the UTE, the library would offer support to the faculty in the following tasks: (a) making a contract and submitting to the leaders to sign a contract with the editor; (b) when the manuscript of a textbook was accepted, the librarian would conduct publication registration procedures; and (c) the publisher would send the appraisal requirements to the authors through the library. The authors would revise and complete final textbooks based on the editorial assessment results. Further, the library would assist the faculty with procedures related to receiving funding for published textbooks. A faculty member said that

> "When working with librarians, I would follow the process of the library, such as the process of writing books, and there are specific regulations for the faculty and librarians in the working process. When I do, I am familiar with this

process, and I have to endure persistence because I have to prepare many documents. Moreover, in some cases, librarians would help the faculty publish and sell books to students for published materials."

Information User: This role is rather common for the faculty. Most faculty members said that they often meet librarians to ask for materials to serve for research, teaching, and academic exchange. However, some of them argued that for the documents they could search themselves, they would not ask the librarians' help and only asked for help in locating difficult and up-to-date information sources that they could not find on their own. Besides this, the reason for faculty members to ask librarians for support in finding and providing professional materials depended on their research topics, because sometimes they did not have much time, could not find information from other sources, or did not know that the library has linked resources that could help them find their required materials.

Furthermore, different opinions also exist when the faculty are asked how to assess the requirements of finding information that librarians have provided. They pointed out that when they require extensive professional materials, the librarians could not provide documents that met their requirements, or some of the materials provided were unavailable or not updated. Therefore, the faculty member had to continue to search for other information sources. By contrast, there are some faculty members who believe that librarians provide very detailed, complete, and timely information which help them save much time during the research process; they would subsequently recommend this service to their students.

Moreover, the faculty also revealed that librarians are very friendly, enthusiastic, and supportive of the faculty in the process of finding materials and this was realized as one of the positive points to attract the faculty and students to use library services and information resources.

On the other hand, as a faculty member mentioned,

"There is no specific role, only working as a library user, there is no gap between the faculty and librarians, just working as colleagues; we must mutually respect and not show attitudes. The faculty has to respect librarians when searching for materials, asking the library staff's support or account access to documents..."

5.2.2. Roles of the Librarian

The results of this research indicate that librarians also carry out three major roles in collaborative relationships: special lecturer, reference, and coordinator.

Special Lecturer: In this role, librarians take responsibility in

teaching information literacy or guiding the use of the library, access to the information resources and databases, and locating materials in the library.

At the USSH-VNUHCM, there is a group of librarians in charge of guiding the search of information and databases for faculty members in different faculties and departments. Particularly, the library director develops a plan and sends it to each faculty/department to ask the administrators to arrange an instructional session on searching for information and databases. After obtaining the consent of faculties/departments, librarians prepare lectures related to specialized disciplines. In particular, the content of instructions includes how to search for documents on databases and how to find information on Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and useful information services for the faculty. Librarians rely on the subject outline as well as the curriculum of the specific faculties/departments to select and extract a list of specialized materials and then they instruct faculty.

Through the guiding process, faculty members provide positive feedback on the guidance of library staff for providing useful information and databases for teaching and research. However, some librarians suggested that 45 minutes was not an adequate amount of time to provide in-depth information for faculty. Therefore, the library staff hope to build a series of study topics related to specialized disciplines in the future so that the faculty could find information more effectively.

Furthermore, some faculties also require librarians to collaborate with the faculty to guide the search for information and databases for students in high-quality programs taught in the English language.

At other universities, librarians only guide faculty while installing new databases or publishing documents or video clips, and this is done either via email or is posted on the library's website, or instructed directly at the library. However, some librarians mention that direct guidance in searching for information and databases for the faculty is ineffective because the number of faculty attending these activities is always limited due to reasons such as (a) lack of time, (b) indifference, or (c) the topic not being appropriate.

The results confirm the previous evaluation of Carlson and Miller (1984) that librarians' roles have changed in the academic environment. They are not only participating in integrating information literacy into courses but are also joining in the educational process by, for instance, planning and teaching bibliographic instruction to students. Another finding by Ivey (2003) also indicates that librarians and the faculty are equal partners in the teaching process. The responsibility of teaching information literacy should be shared by both parties to enhance the effectiveness of such courses. As well, Bennett

and Gilbert (2009) reveals that librarians carry out the planning and supporting of students in searching for articles in databases and electronic information resources, and they also improve the information literacy of students within the learning community.

Reference: In their role as a reference, a librarian conducts some tasks as follows:

- Providing materials and information resources: Normally, a librarian provides a list of new materials to the faculty for different departments after developing specialized materials;
- Searching for and providing information resources based on the research topics of faculty: This is a popular service at Vietnamese universities. When the need to search for information or specialized documents arises, faculty send specific requirements and librarians search and provide references on the faculty member's required topics;
- Additionally, librarians often suggest materials according to the faculty member's research topics in the process of developing a subject outline or propose substituting old documents, adding new and more up-to-date documents.

On the other hand, librarians also face several difficulties: Information resources and databases are not abundant and updated enough to meet the intensive research needs of the faculty; as well, some faculty do not willingly collaborate or lack basic information search skills. A librarian noted that:

"In particular, because some databases bought did not update yearly, the faculty did not read the notes and could not find documents; thus, they asked, and librarians had to explain to them. Alternatively, their account is not accessible because some databases had to be accessed on the campus or had a registered IP address or the Wi-Fi network of its university; however, they did not understand, and they asked why, and I also explained to them the policies which the library signed with the vendors."

"The faculty also introduced us to disciplines databases because they do research, they would know what databases our library has and which ones they were interested in. If our library does not have those, they would suggest buying or they would introduce us to important books to be added; they also suggested and pointed out the sources to buy. However, whether their suggestions were approved or not, depended on many factors. For example, some faculty also suggested to buy literary and artistic materials, but university authorities asked us to prioritize specialized materials."

This result strongly supports the study of Ewbank (2009), who said that through collaborative relationships, librarians could promote information resources for students via email and other online tools. Similarly, Jacobs (2010) observed that the librarian provides reference sources to faculty member and students at the beginning of the academic year and also that "the librarian was able to effectively market her services in the role of librarian-as-reference and, as a result, was inundated with requests for assistance."

Coordinator: In this role, librarians carry out the planning, guiding, and managing of collaborative activities. In particular, coordinating librarians are usually the team leader or the head of a department or deputy director of the library. The coordinator is responsible for planning related to collaborative activities with the faculty, for instance, instruction for using online resources and databases, designing a syllabus, collection development, introducing and promoting information products and services to faculty and students, and so on. Moreover, the coordinator arranges and manages the work of the department and other team members, coordinates other library staff to participate in other activities of faculties, contacts others, and directly solves problems related to collaborative work, besides changing, adjusting, and coordinating other librarians to support other members in certain cases.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several prominent considerations from the findings:

(a) The roles of the faculty and librarian are not defined by any document of faculties/library during the collaborative process. Consequently, collaborators only work as individuals when having the need to or when faced with some problems in the teaching process or with top-down designations;

(b) In the collaborative relationships, the faculty and librarians simply collaborate to conduct basic roles, without focusing on the abundant responsibilities and roles, such as consultant, co-supervisor, information specialist, and co-teacher;

(c) Some faculty have not yet realized the importance and the necessity of the faculty-librarian collaboration to support teaching and research, which leads to them not caring or paying attention to the establishment of a relationship with the librarians;

(d) Some requirements for adding specialized information resources are not met, leading to disappointment for the faculty and therefore, unwillingness to support librarians in collection development;

(e) Some faculty do not care or support librarians in collaborative activities, such as solving problems related

to course syllabus, and they do not share information resources with librarians;

(f) The library's information resources are not up-to-date; especially, some of the specialized databases do not meet the intensive research needs of the faculty.

From the limitations of the collaborative partnership mentioned above, there are a few suggestions to enhance the role of faculty and librarians in the collaborative process at Vietnamese universities:

(a) University leaders should publish an official document that defines the specific roles and responsibilities of the faculty and librarians in collaborative activities. If there is no specific process or regulation, the collaboration could only take place on a voluntary basis without the proper attention and support of the faculty in terms of including librarians in teaching and research activities;

(b) Assign a consultant role for faculty and librarians during collaboration to enhance teaching and research and develop research skills for students;

(c) University leaders should pay attention to and focus on the investment in and development of information resources, particularly specialized databases to serve the intensive research needs of the faculty in the context of universities heading toward becoming research universities;

(d) Librarians should actively contact, interact, and establish relationships with the faculty by participating in university activities and events to connect with them and encourage them to come to the library;

(e) Focus on promoting specialized information resources and useful information services for faculty to promote research needs, thereby helping faculty to realize the value of the library;

(f) Develop incentive policies for the faculty and librarians who participate in collaborative activities. The incentive policy would motivate individuals to be more involved in university activities;

(g) Propagate effective collaboration models and activities to help faculty realize the importance of faculty-librarian collaboration for teaching and research activities;

(h) Develop regulations to encourage faculty to share and introduce more information resources with the library.

7. CONCLUSION

Faculty-librarian collaboration has important significance in boosting the quality of training, teaching, and research,

improving skills and promoting the library's resources and services in Vietnam. Besides this, clearly defining the role of collaborators in collaborative activities helps faculty and librarians clarify their responsibilities and participate in the collaborative process in the most effective way. However, at Vietnamese universities, the faculty and librarian carry out basic roles in collaborative relationships, such as reference, cooperator, information user, special lecturer, and coordinator. Therefore, the development of collaborative models is necessary to support each other, identify specific roles, and promote collaborative work that will be increasing in good, consistent, and wider quality.

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APPENDIX. Semi-structured interview questions

Question	Librarian	Faculty	Dean/Vice dean	Director/ Deputy	Notes
Section 1: Administrative structure					
1. Could you please tell me about your duties at the faculty/library?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2. Does your faculty/library clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the participants in the collaboration? Please specify (if any).	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3. Could you please tell me about the similarity and difference in the faculty-librarian collaboration at different faculties?	✓			✓	
Section 2: Collaborative objectives and activities					
4. What objectives do you expect in the collaborative work to support teaching and research? Are these objectives included in the faculty's strategic plan or policy?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5. Which activities do you collaborate with librarian in supporting teaching and research? How to do?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Section 3: Roles of librarian and evaluating the collaborative work					
6. Could you please tell me about your specific roles in the collaborative process?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7. Could you please tell me your opinions about the significance of the collaborative relationship between faculty and librarian?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
8. What do you think the results of the collaborative model between faculty and librarian? What do your satisfaction level and recommendations to solve outstanding problems (if any)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	