A Content Analysis of Librarians' Image on Philippine Films and TV Shows

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Abstract

Objectives. This study aims to explore the representation of librarians in Philippine films and TV shows from the 1970s to 2024 and to identify the librarian stereotypes portrayed in these materials.

Methods. The study employed a quantitative content analysis of six (6) Philippine films and TV shows featuring seven (7) characters of librarians. All films and TV shows selected in the study were accessible to the researchers through the public domain or publicly available pages (e.g., YouTube) under fair use.

Results. The study revealed that librarian characters in these selected Filipino films and TV shows were all female, noting that the profession is dominated by females. Results show that the majority of characters were between 30 and 50 years old and had an indeterminate marital status. However, none were married, suggesting the negative stereotype of librarians as single, unmarried, or "old maids". The study also revealed that saying 'shush' is still a common line for a librarian, with most librarians wearing dull clothes most of the time, depicting uninteresting or dry characteristics. The results also showed that there were still librarian characters portrayed negatively, such as being *affectionless & irritable,* but there are also certain characters that have been shown in a positive light, such as being *approachable, friendly, and kind*.

Conclusions. The overall portrayal of Philippine librarian characters revolves around the same stereotypes that exist within the media. No new librarian representations emerged in Philippine films and TV shows, thus continuing to portray the known librarian stereotype of an old maid.

Keywords: Stereotypes; Films; TV shows; Philippines

Introduction

Every profession has its stereotypes, and librarians are certainly no exception to this reality (Jennings, 2016). Hence, the profession itself is hunted by it (Dickinson, 2003). The prevailing portrayal of librarians in various forms of media, including films, tends to depict them as an "old maid" (Yeagley, 1999) – an elderly woman who sport glasses on chains, wear sensible footwear, and cardigan sweaters, and take pleasure in quieting noisy patrons (Jennings, 2016). These characters fall into unfavorable stereotypes that are detrimental to their line of work by spreading misconceptions about librarians' personalities among clients (Baxter, 2014).

Stereotypes can be positive, negative, or mixed and are broadly applied to all individuals within a group without acknowledging personal differences, and while they may contain some truth, they are often generalized and biased, leading to their acceptance as a perceived "reality" (Meng et al., 2017). Therefore, it is natural for a librarian to take a reflexive look at and analyze how they are presented (Pagowsky & Rigby, 2014).

Librarians, in reality, are so much more than what movies perceive them to be. Librarians bring a variety of abilities, backgrounds, and interests to their work: they're smart, cultured, and well-read (Spear, 2006). According to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers, "Librarians aim at the highest standards of service quality and thus promote the positive reputation of the profession" (IFLA, 2012, p. 4). It was also mentioned by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) Guidelines of Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers 2023 that librarians are approachable; hence, ensuring that the person is well able to ask questions is a first step for library staff when they start their reference interaction (RUSA, 2023). Furthermore, as stated in the Board for Librarians Resolution No. 02, Series of 1992 Code of Ethics for Registered Librarians, Article II Section 4, p. 1, "They must act with dignity, fairness, justice, sincerity and genuine willingness in the discharge of their duties: They should refrain from doing acts contrary to laws, morals, customs, and public interest." Also, Section 5, p. 1 mentions that "Librarians should provide the highest level of service through courteous, prompt, adequate, skillful, accurate, and unbiased responses to all requests for assistance." Librarians deal with people on a daily basis. It is a heavy responsibility that requires a lot of patience and understanding. An engaging librarian is kind, focused on providing exemplary service, and accommodating (de Guzman et al., 2007). Librarians are not only intellectually curious and have unique personalities but are also sensitive individuals who care deeply about their work and the people they serve (de Guzman et al., 2007).

Statement of the Problem and Objectives of the Study

For years, librarians have been perceived negatively in many forms of entertainment, both locally and abroad. Thus, this study aims to explore how librarians are represented in Philippine films and TV shows from the 1970s up to the present. Specifically, this study intends to determine if librarians' stereotypes still exist and to determine if there are new emerging stereotypes within the films and TV shows in the country. The findings have implications for librarians as they can help demonstrate what they can do and offer insights into the reality of what the profession is all about.

Moreover, the study will also inform filmmakers and directors to help them improve their future projects by exploring a more diverse portrayal of librarians. Furthermore, the study aims to contribute to the capacity-building initiatives among librarians in the Philippines. The result of the study will provide a better understanding of how librarians are perceived in popular culture which can be used as a basis to design and organize continuing professional and personal development of librarians that aims to uphold the ideals of professionalism while providing an efficient and effective library service to patrons, further enhancing the user experience in libraries and its service quality.

Review of Related Literature

Stereotypes in Librarianship

According to IFLA (2012), in contemporary culture, information institutions and professionals, such as librarians and libraries, encourage efficient recording, representation, and provision of information access. Librarianship is centered on providing information services that promote social, cultural, and economic well-being. However, despite its beauty, librarianship has a negative reputation (Carmichael, 1992)**.** Typically, librarians are described as gloomy spinsters gazing over the rim of their glasses, wearing their hair in a bun, having sensible shoes, looking stern, acting like a controlling policeman-authoritarian, and quick to say 'shush' at the slightest disturbance (Rubin & Rubin, 2020), cited in Lasig et al., 2024, p. 2). In addition, Meng et al. (2017) and Aldred et. al (2008) mentioned that one of the characteristics of a librarian as being single/unmarried adds to their stereotypical image. A study by de Guzman et al. (2007) described two important characteristics of a librarian: desirable and not-so-desirable. A desirable librarian has 3 E's: *Enticing, Enduring, and Engaging*. On the other hand, the undesirable is explained by the 3 D's: *Disappointing, Depressing, and Depriving* symbolize the harsh librarians who are stern, vile, scowling, snobbish, grumpy, unapproachable, and yelling, wherein it fully describes a 'stereotyped' librarian Moreover, Lasig et al. (2024) found that male and female librarians in the province of Nueva Ecija, Philippines, were subjected to various prejudices about their physical appearance and professional position. Female librarians were seen as spinsters, while male librarians were not considered as librarians. Misconceptions persist about librarians' roles, viewing them as mere bookkeepers, performing menial tasks, and doing nothing when there are no pupils, which prevents them from being regarded as professional contributors to goals. Vassilakaki & Moniarou-Papaconstantinou (2014) further stated that the public holds a negative view of librarians and fails to recognize their role in addressing patrons' information needs. Changing public perceptions of librarians' roles are important factors to consider when improving librarians' image. Stereotypes can lead to misunderstandings and biased assessments of persons (Lasig et al., 2024). Osman (1995) asserts that librarians, as information professionals, must show that they perform information work for society to recognize their role.

In the country, there are a total of 9,125 female librarians out of 10,718 librarians, outnumbering male librarians at 1,593. That is 89% of librarians in total; thus, it somewhat corroborates that librarianship in the country is packed with femininity (E. Bayaua, personal communication, February 8, 2024).

Historically, men were often referred to as librarians or chief librarians until the industrializing nineteenth century, when educated people started working for wages (Boone, 1997). Women have more opportunities in the library profession thanks to library education (White, 2012). Even Melvil Dewey endorsed a woman in 1893 to lead the University of Illinois library school, where he remarked, "The best man in America is a woman, and she is in the next room" (Grotzinger, 1992). In addition, when Dewey was appointed head of the library of Columbia College (now University) in 1883, and accepting female students was not allowed at that time, he was the one who enrolled women in the first classes of his School of Library Economy in defiance of this regulation (Riedinger, 2023). However, although some biographers credit him with being a 'champion of women' in the field of librarianship —Dewey did advocate for more women to work in libraries when few women worked outside of more domestic occupations (Pratt Institute Libraries, 2023) – he also appeared to believe that harassment was a part of the profession, as his infatuation with female students' sexuality was so obvious that sexual allegations started to emerge (Blakemore, 2017). Dewey's actions during the 1905 post-conference cruise to Alaska had alarmed some young women, which resulted in some members wanting the American Library Association to take action against Dewey for allegedly improper advances toward women librarians (Beck, 1996) and it was said that he even insisted on entertaining librarians in private and surrounded himself with them, many of whom were spinsters (Blakemore, 2017). Moreover, in an article by Blakemore (2017), Dewey knew that the contemporary libraries he required would need inexpensive yet eager labor, and the few professional women during that time, who were set on establishing themselves in a male-dominated world, were the ideal candidates.

As a result of seeing librarianship as a feminized profession, males tend to avoid "feminine" occupations like librarianship due to stereotypes, believing they are not the "type" to be working in such a field (Lasig et al., 2024). The predominant stereotype is that of gay and/or effeminate people; male librarians believe that their masculinity is compromised by being associated with a female-dominated field (Carmichael, 1992).

Stereotypes in Media

According to Salman (2024), the media is recognized to be a powerful communication tool in constructing and modifying representations. Each portrayal is meticulously constructed, thus, it is getting harder to overcome prejudices. Walker & Lawson (1993) concluded in their study that the passive, conservative, orderly, introspective, and anxious librarian stereotype is present in various films. The overall reel librarians (i.e., librarians in film) tend to be female, and male librarians exhibit traits more akin to femininity, such as intelligence, kindness, and mildness, rather than the usual macho traits of daring rebelliousness and physical ability (Walker & Lawson, 1993). It is also apparent that the representations promulgated by the mass media tend to focus on the character of the individual librarian rather than on his/her abilities and occupation (Seale, 2008).

However, it is also encouraging to see that in studies like Yeagley (1999), librarians have not been stereotypically portrayed in films but have instead been shown positively. As supported by a study by Wells (2013) claims that "there really has been little change in the image of the librarian in movies in the last 60 years". There is also a considerable change in portraying a librarian as a stylish young lady and

incorporating technology into library scenes (Wells, 2013). What's more, a study by Helms (2006) showed that while representations of the profession have been mostly unchanged, the traditional stereotype of librarians has changed in relation to how they are portrayed. Closing in Asia, a study by Helms (2006) that focuses solely on the film, Library Wars, suggests that the perception of female librarians has changed; the film's director presents the idea of a non-stereotypical woman. Moreover, a study by Mayesti et al. (2018) highlights the diversity in the representation of librarians in films, but also highlights the lack of a unified viewpoint in the mainstream film industry.

Librarians are not frequently featured as characters in Filipino films and TV shows, and when they are, they are typically portrayed negatively. In a presentation by Totanes (2016) titled *'Ssshhhhh! Librarians in Pinoy Pop Culture'*, he highlighted how libraries and librarians are mainly perceived and portrayed in popular culture, thus, significant differences exist between how libraries and librarians are portrayed domestically and internationally; these differences may be caused by more pragmatic issues, such as the condition of libraries in the Philippines and the shortage of Filipino librarians, as well as by common misconceptions about librarians. Among all he presented, he mentioned and showed no positive portrayal of librarians in the Philippine setting.

However, stereotypes do not only exist among librarians in the media. It has long contributed to the promotion and reinforcement of stereotypes not just in the field of librarianship but to other professions as well. In a study by Aquino (2015), it was revealed that both the quality and quantity are lacking in teachers' representation in films in the Philippines, thus, they were highly stereotyped, perhaps due to historical, contemporary, and filmmaking choices. Notably, even the favorable attribute harms the reputation of real teachers. Moreover, the findings of Casil-Batang's (2021) study demonstrated that in the 21st-century Philippine literature, stereotypes are prominent and women are subjected to bias since they are given more unfavorable stereotypes than male characters. This is an illustration of the fact that at the local level, gender-related problems still exist in the modern world despite the awareness and initiatives on gender equality.

For Helms (2006), directors often rely on classic stereotypes to depict librarians as easily recognizable stock characters, raising concerns among librarians about their film portrayal. Since reality is more complex than media representations, it's unlikely that filmmakers will ever accurately capture the true essence of librarians (Mayesti et al., 2018).

Methodology

Content analysis (CA) has been observed as one of the common approaches in LIS research, including, but not limited to, examining the messages presented in various information sources, professional discourses, and citation functions in academic writings (Lin and Jeng, 2015). To address issues both inside and outside the field, LIS researchers have employed content analysis as a methodology to examine a range of data sources (White and Marsh, 2006). According to Hsieh & Shannon (2005), establishing and following a coding scheme or analytical process will improve the study's validity or credibility. Moreover, Beck and Manuel (2008) stated that content analysis is a very appealing approach for library researchers due to its non-reactive,

unobtrusive, and geographically independent nature as it examines textual evidence of people's social behavior or actions rather than the people themselves, and investigates artifacts created by humans rather than directly studying human behavior. Thus, the use of content analysis in research gives the researcher a deeper comprehension of a phenomenon being studied (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

In this study, six (6) Philippine films and TV shows were analyzed. The chosen films and TV shows were *Radio Romance (1996), Wansapanataym (1999, Library), First Day High (2006), In My Life (2009), Wansapanataym (2011, Mga Alipin ng Lumang Aklatan), & Bubble Gang (2019, Most Realistic Library).* However, there were a total of seven (7) characters as librarians that were analyzed because in the TV show *Wansapanataym (2011, Mga Alipin ng Lumang Aklatan),* there were two (2) characters who were portrayed as librarians. The researchers accessed the films and TV shows through the public domain or publicly available pages (e.g., YouTube) under fair use.

The researchers conducted a quantitative content analysis, a manner of analyzing text and media to examine Philippine films and TV shows from the year 1970s, which marks the Third Golden Age of Philippine Cinema (de Castro, 2024), up to the year 2024 and analyzed how librarians are being represented and if stereotypes are present in the chosen films and TV shows. The researchers analyzed the librarian portrayals by identifying and coding recurring themes and traits, thus, noting down the frequency of librarian portrayal based on gender, age, marital status, and type of library along with the attitudes, physical appearance, and characteristics and descriptively analyzed how evident these were in these films and TV shows and how they consistently appeared. Percentage was also used to represent the proportion of scores with a given value. The percentage for a certain value is calculated by dividing the frequency of that value by the total number of scores in the dataset. The most frequently portrayed in the content analysis are identified and shown as a percentage (%) which is shown in one of the findings.

The researchers utilized a validated modified criteria from Rudolph's (2008) study entitled *"Librarians in Film: A Changing Stereotype"*, Helms' (2006) *"Reel Librarians: The Stereotype and Technology"*, and Yeagley's (1999) *"Shelving, Stamping and Shushing: Librarians in the Movies"*. All three studies employed content analysis to examine how librarians are represented in the media which is the same with the current study. The criteria applied in this research were a modified version, maintaining alignment and making some adjustments relevant to Filipino media It guided the identification of common stereotypes and allowed the researchers to analyze the representation of librarians in the Philippine films and TV shows. The criteria from these studies became the blueprint for the criteria that were used for this study. The criteria contain five (5) parts: Part I is about the character data sheet. It includes the film title, release year, librarian character name, who the actress/actor is, role, and film genre. Part II is on character analysis. It includes the gender of the character, the age, the marital status, and the type of library where they work. Part III is about the attitude of the librarian towards (1) profession/job, (2) co-workers, and (3) patrons. Parts IV and V are checklists that focus on the appearance and characteristics of a character. Take note that parts V-VI are compiled based on the researcher's perspective and from other studies. The researchers watched the Philippine films and TV shows and answered by themselves using the validated modified criteria. The traits found in the

Philippine films and TV shows were examined to ascertain whether the reel librarians (i.e., librarians in film) adhered to the accepted and previously stated stereotypes.

Results

This chapter presents the different Philippine films and TV shows analyzed in this study and the analysis of the character portrayal of librarians in each Philippine films and TV shows. It revealed a mixture of outdated and progressive librarians' traits. Table 1 shows that librarians were rarely represented from 1996 to 2019. Specifically, Radio Romance (1999); Wansapanataym *(Library)* (1999); First Day High (2006); In My Life (2009); Wansapanataym *(Alipin ng lumang aklatan)* (2011); and Bubble Gang (*Most Realistic Library*) (2019). Table 2 is about Character analysis of librarian portrayal, specifically, about their gender, age, marital status, and type of library where they work. Table 3 shows the attitude of librarian characters in films and TV shows towards their job, co-workers, and patrons. Table 4 discusses the characteristics of a librarian portrayed in the study based on the checklist.

Table 1. Philippine Films and TV Shows with Librarian Portrayal Overview

Films & TV Shows	Released Year	Genre	Description
Radio Romance	1996	Drama and Romance	Veronica (Gelli De Belen) tries to balance her two lives—that of a DJ at night and a librarian by day. She is forced to choose between the two worlds when she receives a love letter from one of her listeners, who frankly declares his love for her.
Wansapanataym *(Library)* - character a	1999	Fantasy	The librarian here is a secondary character, who is the mother of the main character, Mercy (Manilyn Reynes). She is very kind and caring.
Wansapanataym *(Library)* - character b	1999	Fantasy	The librarian is the villain, Ms. Ke (Bella Flores). She is always grumpy and mean. She always reprimanded the other librarian for being tardy and refused to understand her situation.
First Day High	2006	Comedy, Mystery, and Thriller	The librarian here is just an extra who helps Gerald Anderson and Kim Chiu by giving them some books to do their project. She also shouts

			"quiet" to the users here when they talk so loud.
In My Life	2009	Drama and Comedy	Shirley Templo (Vilma Santos-Recto) is a ruthless woman. Many people deal with her strong attitude only for fear of her cold stare, or her outlash. She works as a librarian in a school and lives in a compound that is owned by her ex-husband, Benito Salvacion
Wansapanataym *(Alipin ng lumang aklatan)*	2011	Fantasy	The librarian here is a villain named Lucresia (Tetchie Agbayani), who is also a witch. Lucresia punished students who didn't return their borrowed books to the library. Like a typical witch, she had a tall long nose and was mean to the students.
Bubble Gang (*Most Realistic Library*)	2019	Comedy	The episode showcased a library where, instead of books, they offered real people, thus, the most realistic library. The librarian here, played by Chariz Solomon, is friendly and greets the clients of the library happily as clients walk in. She is also attentive and answers their query merrily.

The researchers analyzed six (6) Philippine films and TV shows with a total of seven (7) portrayals of librarians. Among the six (6) Philippine films and TV shows, three (3) characters were portrayed in a fantasy genre; three (3) were in the comedy genre, whereas the two (2) films in the same genre were associated with mystery/thriller and drama; and one (1) film was also in drama genre but was associated with romance. In total, four (4) of the films were produced later in the 2000s, while the rest were produced around the 1990s.

Table 2. Character Analysis of Librarians in Philippine Films and TV Shows

Character Analysis				
Films and TV Shows	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Type of Library
A1996	F	30 to 50	Single	Academic
B1999	F	30 to 50	Undetermined	School
C1999	F	Over 50	Undetermined	School
D2006	F	Under 30	Single	Academic
E2009	F	Over 50	Separated	School
F2011	F	30 to 50	Single	School
G2019	F	Under 30	Undetermined	Special

Table 2 shows that the gender of librarians seen in the chosen Philippine films and TV shows was all females, thus depicting that the profession is dominated by females. In terms of their age, it revealed the majority were estimated to be 30 to 50 years old, and two (2) librarian portrayals were estimated to be over 50 and under 30. Regarding the characters' marital status, the majority were undetermined. However, two of the librarian characters were single or separated, respectively. Additionally, most of them were school librarians.

Table 3. Attitude of Librarian Characters in Philippine Films and TV Shows

	A1996	B1999	C1999	D2006	E2009	F2011	G2019	Total
Attitude towards their job								
Positive								0
Neutral	X	X					X	3
Negative			X		X	X		3
Not indicated				X				1

Attitude towards co-workers							
Positive	X	X						2
Neutral								0
Negative			X		X			2
Not indicated				X		X	X	3
Attitude towards patrons							
Positive		X					X	2
Neutral				X				1
Negative			X		X	X		3
Not indicated	X							1

Table 3 shows that in terms of their job, three (3) librarian characters were portrayed to act negatively towards their profession, three (3) librarians' portrayals were neutral, and only one (1) was not indicated or was not seen in the chosen Philippine films and TV shows. Two (2) librarian characters were expressing negative attitudes towards their co-workers, and the same number of characters were also treating their co-workers positively. The majority's attitude towards their co-worker was not indicated. In terms of their attitude toward the patrons, most librarian portrayals showed a negative attitude, and two (2) librarian characters showed a positive attitude, while only one (1) showed a neutral and undefined attitude towards the patrons.
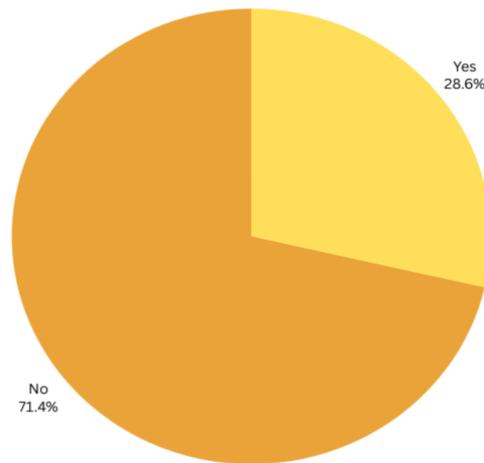
Figure 1. The Use of "Shush" in Philippine Films and TV Shows

Figure 1 shows that out of the seven portrayals of librarians in all the chosen Philippine films and TV shows, only two (2) characters say *"shush,"* which is equivalent to 28.6% – a huge defiance of a stereotypical librarian character. It can be seen in films like E2009 and F2011, where the librarian shushes to make the patron quiet.
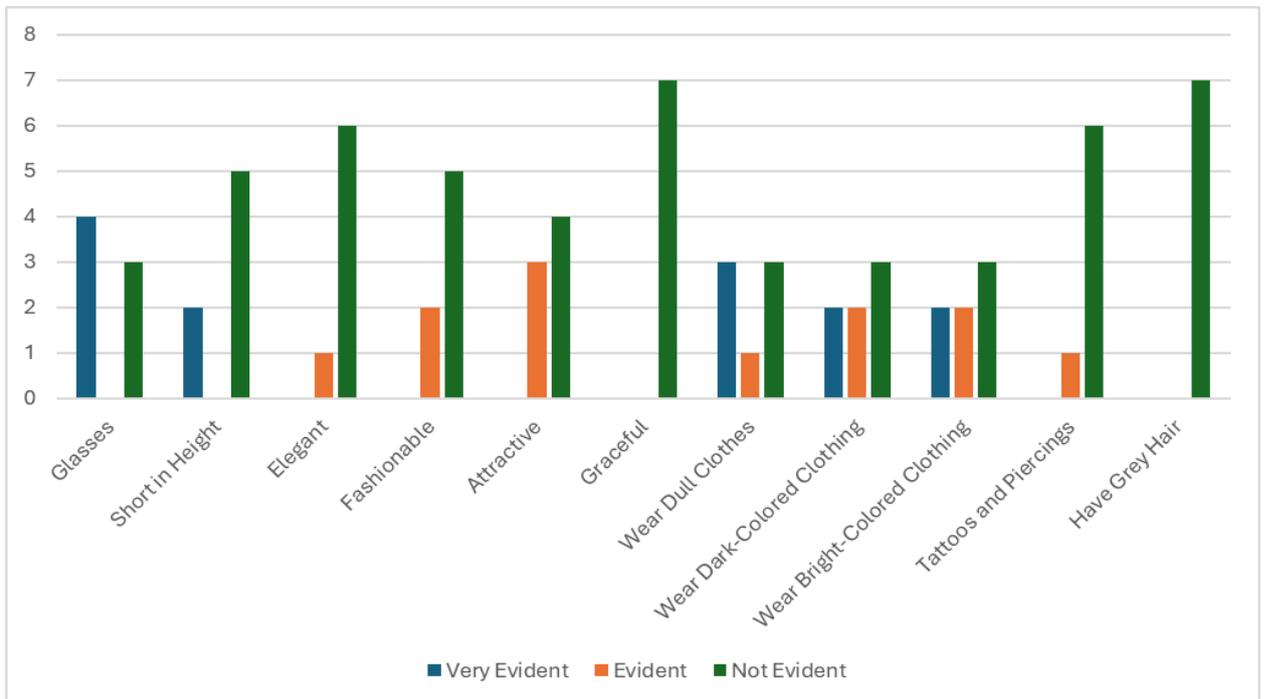

Figure 2. Librarian Characters' Physical Appearance in General in Chosen Philippine Films and TV Shows

The number on the left side of the graph in figure 2 represents the total number of librarian characters in the chosen Philippine films and TV shows, which is seven (7).

As for the physical appearance of the librarians portrayed, it showed that librarian characters did not have grey hair, and only one (1) of the characters portrayed had a noticeable tattoo/piercing. The majority of librarian characters were not evidently dressed in bright-colored or dark-colored clothes; however, two (2) wore very evidently bright-colored clothing, and two (2) wore them evidently. At the same time, two (2) wore very evidently dark-colored clothing, and two (2) wore them evidently. Three (3) characters wore dull or uninteresting clothes, while at the same time, the same number of characters did not. Three (3) characters were deemed to be evidently attractive, however, the majority of the four (4) portrayals did not evidently show attractiveness. Two (2) librarian characters showed evident fashion sense, and only one (1) showed elegance. Moreover, four (4) characters displayed glasses as part of their wardrobe.
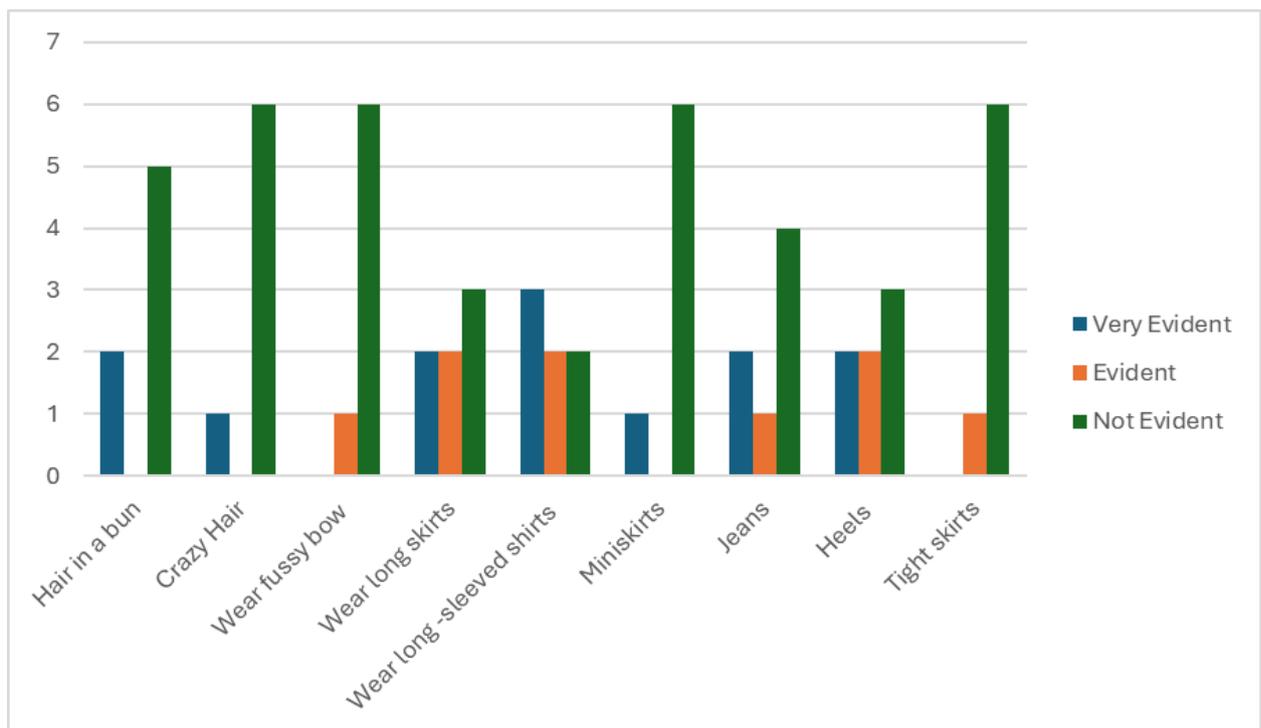

Figure 3. Female Librarian Characters' Physical Appearance in Chosen Philippine Films and TV Shows

With the female librarian characters in the chosen Philippine films and TV shows, figure 3 revealed that only two (2) out of the seven (7) characters were very evidently wearing their hair in a bun. Only one (1) character has very evident wild, crazy hair, and only one (1) was also evidently seen wearing a fussy bow. Two (2) librarian characters wore long skirts very evidently, and two (2) wore them evidently. The majority of the characters wore very evidently long-sleeved shirts buttoned all the way up, and two (2) wore them evidently. The majority of librarian characters were not evidently seen wearing miniskirts and jeans; however, only one (1) wore a miniskirt very evidently, and also two (2) wore jeans very evidently. Furthermore, the character portrayals were not a fan of wearing tight skirts, with only one (1) of them were evidently seen to be wearing a tight skirt.

Table 4. Characteristics of Librarians as Observed in Philippine Films and TV Shows

	A1996	B1999	C1999	D2006	E2009	F2011	G2019	Total
Positive Characteristics								
Approachable	X	X		X			X	4
Calm/Sedate	X	X						2
Confident				X			X	2
Easygoing		X						1
Extroverted							X	1
Friendly		X					X	2
Gentle		X						1
Hardworking	X							1
Helpful							X	1
Independent		X						1
Kind		X					X	2
Nice		X					X	2
Patience		X						1
Polite		X						1
Professional	X	X						2
Rule-oriented					X		X	2
Strong commitment to work						X		1
Talkative				X				1
Thoughtful		X						1

Characteristic								
Warm		X						1
Negative Characteristics								
Affectionless			X			X		2
Aggressive			X		X	X		3
Conservative					X			1
Dependent					X			1
Grumpy			X		X	X		3
Harsh			X		X	X		3
Introverted	X				X			2
Irritable	X		X	X	X	X		5
Lazy			X					1
Mean					X	X		2
No Social life	X				X	X		3
Poor communication skills					X			1
Rule-oriented				X		X		2
Serious					X	X		2
Strict			X		X	X		3
Unapproachable			X		X	X		3
Unemotional			X			X		3

Librarians are portrayed not only in negative aspects, but also can be seen in a positive light. Among the positive characteristics, *approachable* was the most portrayed characteristic, appearing in four Philippine films and TV shows. In addition, there are other positive characteristics that challenge the negative stereotype of a librarian, such as being *calm/sedate, confident, friendly, kind, nice, and professional,* which also appear twice in films and TV shows. However, some characteristics are absent in any of the selected Philippine films and TV shows. For instance, *creative, dignified,* and

honest, when portrayed can be a big help to stop the notion of the negative stereotypes of a librarian. Moreover, characteristics such as *detail-oriented, enthusiastic, good researcher, highly organized, intelligent, and tech-savvy*, though present in the checklist, were not found or observed in any of the characters.

On the negative characteristics, it is more recognized and represented. The most noticeable characteristic is *irritable,* which appears in five Philippine films and TV shows. This indicates that a librarian is easily annoyed or hot-tempered. Negative stereotypes that are prominently seen in popular culture, such as *aggressive, grumpy, harsh, unapproachable*, and *strict,* were seen in three films and TV shows. In addition, there are also some negative characteristics that are unrepresented in the chosen films and TV shows. Particularly, characteristics being *awkward, boring, clumsy, cold, dull, low-self-consciousness, nerd/geek, quiet, shy, unassertive, unimaginative,* and *workaholic*.

Discussion

A total of six (6) Philippine films and TV shows with seven (7) identified portrayals of librarians were analyzed for this study. Four (4) of which some films were produced later in the 2000s, while the rest were produced around the 1990s. Table 2 shows that content analysis results agree with the study of Walker & Lawson (1993) that the overall reel librarians (i.e., librarians in film) tend to be female. The gender of librarians seen in the chosen Philippine films and TV shows was all female, thus depicting that the profession is dominated by females. In terms of their age, it somehow contradicts the study of Yeagley (1999), in which the prevailing portrayal of librarians in various forms of media, including films, tends to depict them as "old maids." Results show that out of seven librarians seen in six Philippine films and TV shows, only two characters were over 50, as the majority were deemed to be around 30-50 years old. Concerning their marital status, the majority of the characters have indeterminate standing in a relationship. However, two of the librarian characters were single or separated. This aligns with the study of Meng et. al. (2017) and Aldred et. al (2008), mentioning that one (1) of the characteristics of a librarian is single/unmarried.

In terms of librarians' attitude towards their jobs, three (3) librarian characters were portrayed to act negatively towards their profession, which is a common stereotype of librarian portrayal. There has been a tie in terms of attitude toward their co-workers as two (2) librarian characters were expressing negative attitudes, and the same number of characters were also treating their co-workers positively. However, the majority's attitude towards their co-worker was not indicated. In terms of their attitude toward the patrons, most librarian portrayals showed a negative attitude, which, as mentioned above, is a reflection of a stereotypical librarian character. Moreover, as seen in Figure 1, the Philippine films and TV shows do not align with the study of Helms (2006), Rudolph (2008), Wells (2013), and Yeagley (1999) that a librarian always says *"shush"* to a patron. Results show that only two (2) Philippine films and TV shows portray a librarian who shushes, specifically in E2009 and F2011. For Spring (2019), librarians shush to show that they are in charge or control.

With regards to the librarian characters' appearance, most characters displayed glasses as part of their wardrobe; according to Aldred et al. (2008), glasses were seen as a sign of intelligence, and those who wore them were usually portrayed in relation

to people who did a lot of reading. The characters were also seen wearing both bright and dark-colored clothing. Three (3) characters were deemed to be evidently attractive, a huge turn from the stereotypical representation, but it is in dismay that the majority still were not portrayed to be attractive. Thus, in contradiction with the study of Yeagley (1999), which described a librarian as an old maid, thus, unattractive, non-professional, older, single females with glasses, hair in a bun, and wearing conservative clothing. Specifically for female characters, most wore long-sleeved shirts buttoned all the way up, showing a traditional, stereotypical fashion of a modest and conservative librarian. Other than that, it is discouraging to see that male librarians' representation in Philippine films and TV shows is lacking.

Moreover, results showed that librarians were depicted not only through a negative concept but also in ways that highlight their positive characteristics. Among the positive characteristics, *approachable* was the most portrayed characteristic, appearing in four Philippine films and TV shows. This aligned with the study of Yeagley (1999) that one of the films also analyzed shows approachable characteristics. In addition, other positive characteristics challenge the negative stereotype of a librarian, such as being *calm/sedate, confident, friendly, kind, nice, and professional,* which also appear twice in the chosen Philippine films and TV shows. These characteristics reflect a more diverse representation of librarians in media – one that is different from the usual and traditional depiction. This is also a turning point, contributing to a more balanced and realistic depiction of librarians. Moreover, the presence of kind alone indicates a shift towards recognizing the supportive and service-oriented nature of librarianship. Thus, it may pave the way for reshaping how librarians are viewed in popular culture, especially among viewers who have limited real-life interaction with librarians.

Nonetheless, the *creative* characteristic is absent in any of the selected Philippine films and TV shows, contradicting the findings of Onwubiko (2022), which state that information professionals must exhibit creativity to keep pace with the advancements of technology. In addition to that, results also opposed Meng et. al.'s (2017) analysis about Chinese films portrayed a positive personality of a librarian that is *honest* and *dignified* in terms of their personality. It suggests that portraying librarians' characters in different countries varies depending on the storyline; however, it's not always the case. Sometimes, stereotypes persist regardless of differences, which suggests that certain stereotypes have been deeply instilled in popular culture.

However, the negative characteristics are still more recognized and present in the Philippine films and TV shows. The most seen characteristic, *irritable,* appears in five Philippine films and TV shows. This reinforces a common, familiar figure of a librarian as seen in the media, which is also an indication that the majority of characters lack patience and are easily annoyed. Negative stereotypes that are still portrayed in popular culture, such as *aggressive, grumpy, harsh, unapproachable*, and *strict,* each appearing in at least three Philippine films and TV shows. Such characteristics strengthen the limited and unfair portrayal of librarians and, at the same time, overshadowing their positive and diverse representation. These portrayals tend to demoralize the reality and diversity of actual librarians, reducing them to narrow stereotypes. Hence, causing discouragement among the public in appreciating the essential role librarians play in education. The results aligned with the study of Meng et al. (2017) that most of the librarians' images tended to be negative. In addition, there

are also some negative characteristics that are unrepresented in the chosen films and TV shows. For example, the *boring*, *clumsy*, *dull*, and *low self-conscious*. In the study of Majid & Haider (2008) findings are not the same as theirs that the library work is shown as boring, and the librarian is also perceived to be a person who is bookish and *boring*. Being *clumsy* is also not shown in the Philippine films and TV shows unlike in the study of Helms (2006) that one of the character they analyze portrays a librarian who is a bit ditzy and *clumsy*, the same with the study of de Guzman et al. (2007) that the librarians in television are very *clumsy*. While for Meng et. al (2017), some librarians' image in Chinese screens is *dull* and *low self-conscious.* This indicates that some negative stereotypes of librarians are not shown in the Philippine films and TV shows.

Conclusions

The overall portrayal of librarians in the six (6) chosen Philippine films and TV shows showed that it revolves around the same stereotypes that exist within the media. All the films and TV shows portrayed a female librarian, depicting that the profession is dominated by females. The characters also presented the 'old maid' stereotype that is deemed to be too obvious or expected in the field of librarianship. It was bothersome to see that despite all efforts throughout the years on gender equality and breaking occupational stereotypes, the media still portrays the same set of characters every time. The lack of diversity among male librarian portrayals not only offers an imbalance view of the profession in terms of gender resulting in the limited understanding of the profession's inclusivity. After all, the media is a powerful tool that could affect one's perspective, and in this case, could further strengthen the claim that librarianship is indeed 'only for women'.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the majority of the librarian portrayals in the selected films and TV shows still have the same stereotypical pattern in terms of age, marital status, and fashion, further depicting the "old maid" librarian stereotype. Even the attitude of the portrayed characters towards their profession, clients, and characteristics mostly presents the same stagnant, stereotypical pattern – leaning on the negative portrayal of librarians still exists. No new librarian representations emerged in Philippine films and TV shows, thus still portraying known librarian stereotypes as an old maid.

While stereotype still exists in the librarianship profession, both librarians and filmmakers should work together to ensure a more inclusive representation of the profession on and off cam. Despite such stereotypes, it cannot be ignored that librarians have a pivotal role in the changing information horizons – beyond the glasses, buns, and cardigans.

Recommendations

Seeing that the field of the entertainment industry has been progressively growing and expanding, filmmakers and directors should consider exploring a more diverse representation of librarians. It would be a sight to see male librarian characterization in Filipino films and TV shows, one showing a great deal of inclusivity and diversity in a so-called 'feminine' occupation. Also, a reflection that male librarians also exist in the field of librarianship in the country. Moreover, films and TV shows should expand

their perspective by creating diverse representations of librarians as those in Hollywood films and TV shows, like showcasing an adventurous and more engaging librarian among others. Although a negative portrayal of a librarian is inevitable, it would be a remarkable view to see a librarian being portrayed differently - one that would defy the stereotyped view in popular culture and embrace a whole new perspective that reflects a real librarian.

In addition, to help filmmakers and producers better understand the role of librarians and portray them more accurately, librarians can engage actively in the media industry. Librarians should proactively collaborate with media production companies by taking part in brainstorming and scriptwriting that involve librarians as characters. Professional organizations such as the Philippine Librarians Association Inc. (PLAI) can also suggest and recommend guidelines and other relevant materials to ensure a more accurate and objective representation of the profession.

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