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### LibQuest: A Problem Based Learning Approach to Information Literacy

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# LIBQUEST

## A PBL Approach to Information Literacy at Li Ka Shing Library, SMU

**Priyanka Sharma**  
**Yuyun Wirawati Ishak**

Presented at European Conference on Information Literacy  
Istanbul, Turkey, 22-25 October 2013

Problem Based Learning (PBL) appears to be the way forward. Gen Z students seem to prefer discovery and a self-paced learning environment (often using a variety of gadgets) rather than a more structured instruction module in a classroom setting. Kenney (2008) found that PBL provides the theoretical framework for a learner centered, active instructional experience that relies on collaboration, critical thinking and hands-on interaction with resources. Pelikan (2004) developed and delivered course-related library instruction using PBL over a period of two years in Penn State School of Information Sciences and Technology and concluded that PBL is a worth pursuing approach to library instruction. Kim (2012) found that game dynamics can raise library users' level of engagement with library resources, programs and services. They can help library users to solve problems more effectively and quickly by making the process fun. Furthering this idea, research librarians at the Li Ka Shing library at Singapore Management University designed an information literacy (IL) programme in the form of a scavenger hunt. The programme enabled the students to experience the thrill and excitement they commonly associate with a gaming environment. The hunt led them to myriad twists and turns – and each of these contained within them embedded IL learning outcomes – the same outcomes that have guided our previous IL programmes that utilized the more traditional hands-on classroom based learning model. In our presentation, we will provide the details of our scavenger hunt model which involves working in pairs, is friendly to gadget use, and combines the learning outcomes of both a traditional IL programme as well as a library tour in one engaging, exciting, fun filled activity. The process of creating LibQuest began with identifying 6 learning outcomes that needed to be met. The learning outcomes were intended to introduce students to the library, and included elements such a locating different library materials, becoming acquainted with the library's communication channels – including social media, being able to identify subject specialist research librarians, and getting to know the physical space of the Library. LibQuest also necessitated students approaching library staff for help – an important component that sets the tone of the relationship library staff hope to nurture with students. We will also present the results of a survey conducted with the participants, which shows overwhelming appreciation and support for LibQuest. Finally, we will discuss enhancements to the programme.

## References

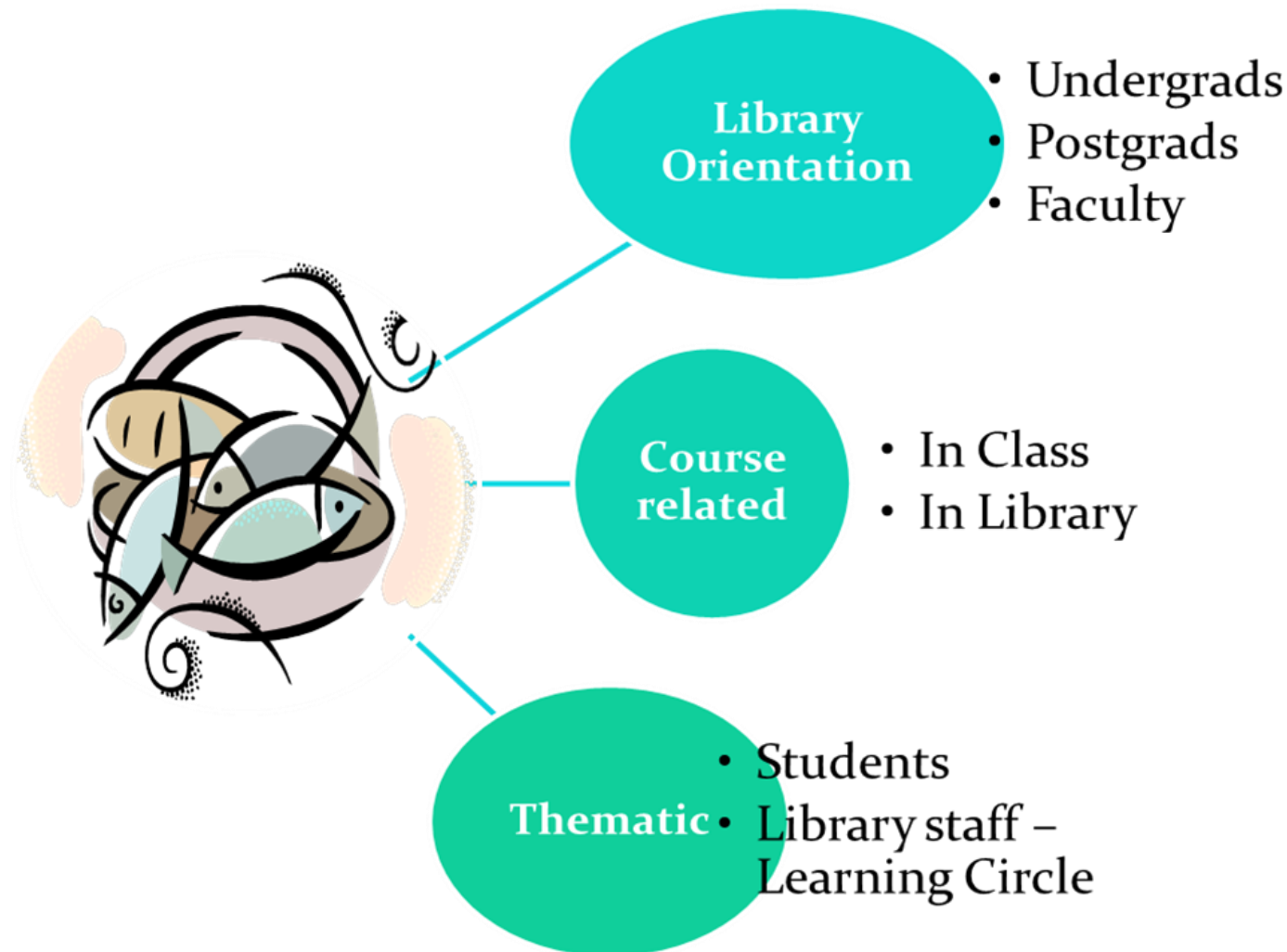
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**Keywords:** Problem-Based Learning, Information Literacy, Academic Libraries

# SMU Libraries

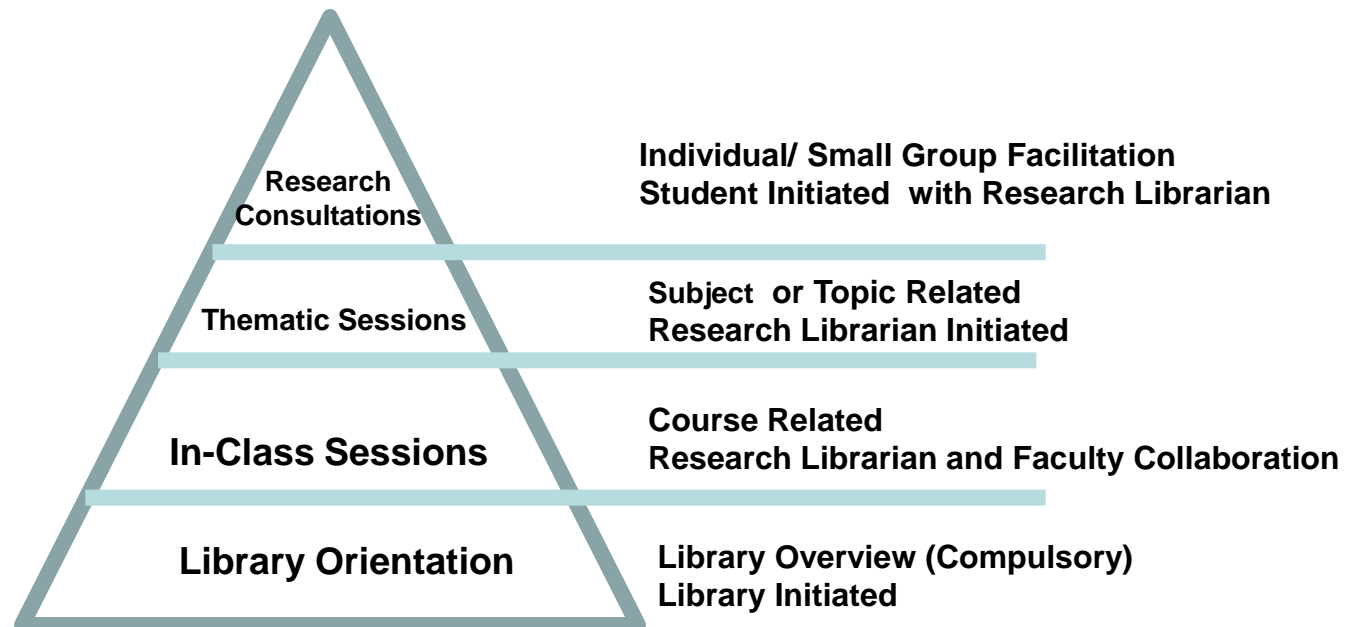


***Our Passion, Our Commitment, Your Advantage***

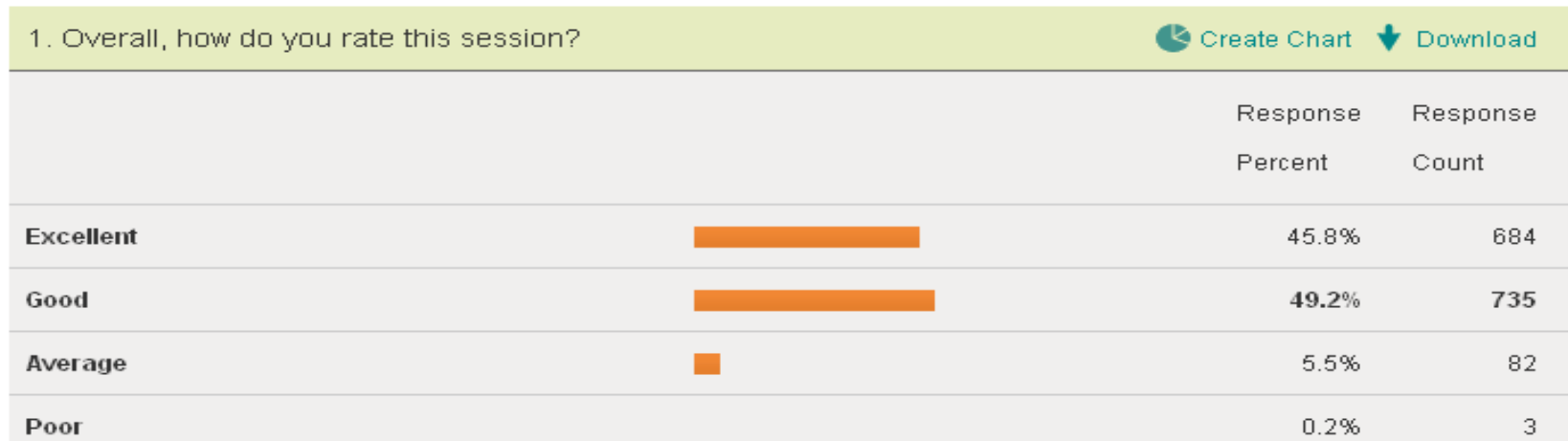


## SMU Li Ka Shing Library freshmen orientation 2008-2011

- Target audience: entire cohort (approximately 1,500 – 2,000 students)
- 1 hour hands-on session delivered by librarians using an activity sheet (5 – 7 questions)
- Add on: an optional library tour



## Quantitative feedback:



## Qualitative feedback:

- “Too fast, can’t really remember whatever she said, quite dry”
- “It becomes a bit monotonous after a while”
- “It could have been more interactive”
- “We can learn most of the stuffs ourselves”

- Gen Z prefers discovery and a self-paced learning environment
- “Problem Based Learning (PBL) consists of creating real-life problems for students to work on in small teams” (Barrows, 1989)
- PBL addresses the preferences of Gen Z



## Format

Scavenger Hunt

## Learning Outcomes

- Where to start search (PYXIS+)
- Differentiating books & articles (reading citation)
- Librarians are student's best friend
- Research Guides
- Knowing the locations & facilities of libraries
- Introduce Library's social media
- Introduce Subject / School Liaison Librarians
- Incorporating information on library etiquette
- Self-assessment

This format combines the learning outcomes of the hands-on training and the library tour.



**Orientation:** Explore the Library

“PBL provides the theoretical framework for a learner centered, active instructional experience that relies on collaboration, critical thinking and hands-on interaction with resources”

# Logistics are Crucial

## Logistics are more important than ever before

- 1,791 students participated in the LibQuest over 5 days
- LibQuest took place during Matriculation
- Multiple strategies employed to ensure a smooth LibQuesting experience (e.g. we used 7 different quest sets to spread LibQuesters all around the library)
- A more efficient method of taking attendance and feedback (which incorporates self-assessment)

## Very Short Briefing by Librarians

- Select your quest mate! LibQuest is best done in twosomes and threesomes
- Briefing is no more than 15 minutes



## 1. Locating a book

- Read citations
- Start search with PYXIS+
- Read catalogue records and locate books from shelves
- Approach library staff to ask questions



## 2. Locating articles and Library's Facebook Page

- Find Library's Facebook Page
- Read citations (differentiate books & journals)
- Start search with PYXIS+
- Find and download full text
- Approach library staff to ask questions



## 3. Locating Key Library Facilities

- Find Reserves (location)
- Borrow items (with self-check machine)
- Return items (bookdrop)
- Find printing rooms
- Pay closer attention to information on library etiquette
- Approach library staff to ask questions



## 4. Locating Research Guides

- Approach library staff in order to understand what Research Navigators are (terminology)
- Explore Research Guides
- Recognize Subject / School Liaison Librarians



# LibQuesting Begins – Part 3

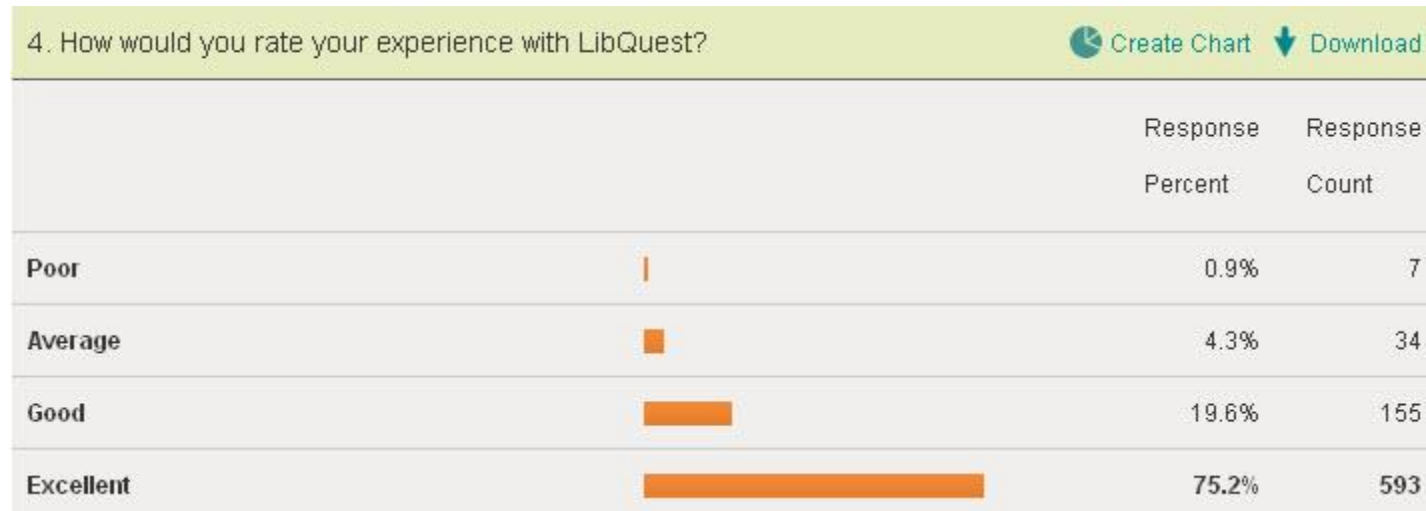
## 5. Self-Assessment

- a. “Enforced” self assessment incorporated into LibQuest
- b. Reinforce key learning outcomes
- c. Feedback on LibQuest activities





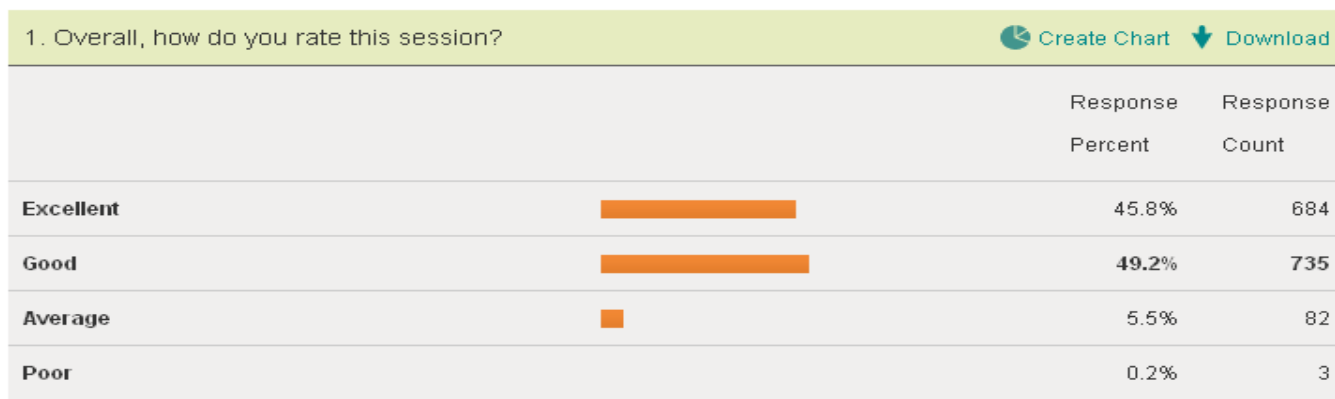
## Quantitative feedback:



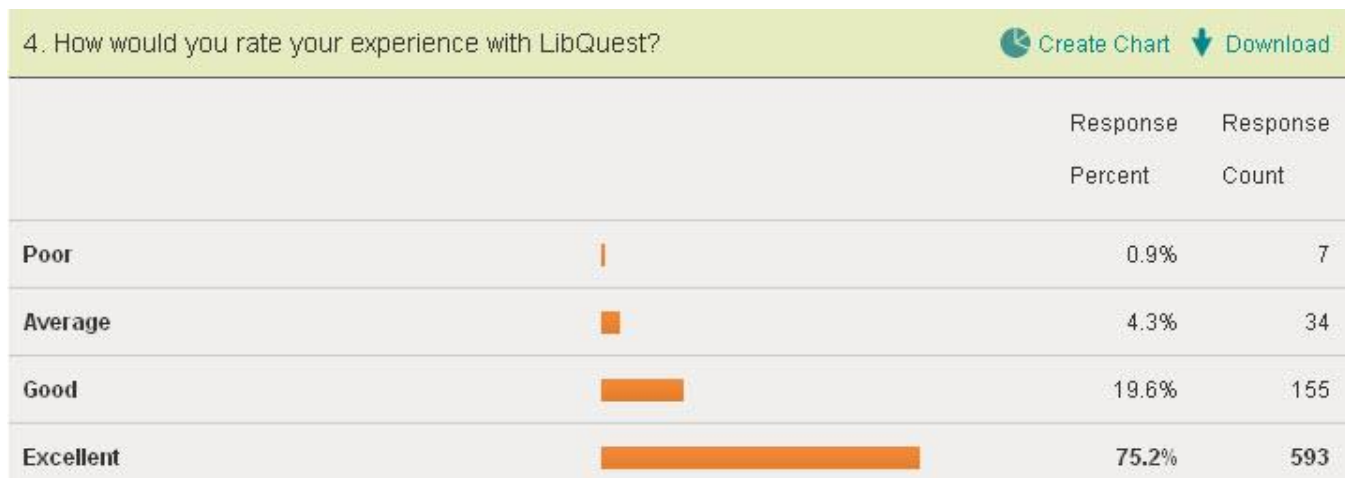
## Qualitative feedback:

- “AWESOME”
- “It was an effective and fun way to get to know the library! Kudos :)”
- “The LibQuest was very fun and innovative!! i love you <3”
- “It was fun and interactive”
- “Library rocks”

## Before LibQuest



## After LibQuest





LibQuest Video:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1idO2jq7EDY>