

A Teen-Centered Approach to Design Library Services - A Case Study of a Rural Public Library

Xiaofeng Li, YooJin Ha, Simon Aristeguieta-Trillos

^aClarion University of Pennsylvania, United States of America

xli@clarion.edu, yha@clarion.edu, saristeguiet@clarion.edu

ABSTRACT

To develop and sustain youth programs and services in public libraries, it is inevitably important to understand how teens perceive their libraries and how they would design their library services, programs, and spaces. Current research has mainly focused on teens' uses of libraries in urban and suburban communities with little attention to teens in rural areas. Meanwhile, makerspaces have gained popularity in libraries within the past decade. While an increasing number of studies show teens' interests in makerspaces, these studies tend to focus on active library users' perspectives on makerspaces. It is unclear how teens who do not usually go to libraries perceive makerspaces.

This paper reports a work-in-progress study that seeks to explore the opportunities, enablers, and barriers of library uses among teens in a rural area in the US, along with their perspectives on designing a makerspace in their local public library. This selected local library has had challenges in attracting teens to use the teens' space and other library services and consequently placed a hold on teen events.

With a goal to understand rural teens' perspectives on public libraries and makerspaces, this study employs two-phase data collection. In the first phase, teens between 13 to 18 years old will be recruited through the snowball sampling method to participate in an online survey. In the second phase, the research team will host three makerspace programs in the selected rural library. Additional participants will be recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews. The researchers will also conduct field observations during the makerspace programs.

Implications for the LIS research community, practitioners, and LIS education will also be discussed.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

public libraries; young adult services; community engagement

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

youth services; youth programs; public libraries; makerspaces; teen-centered approach; rural libraries