



### *Evidence Summary*

#### **National Survey Identifies Disaster Preparedness Gaps in Philippine Libraries**

##### **A Review of:**

Superio, D. L., Yap, J. M., Sebial-Guinanao, J. M. L., & Calilung, R. P. (2024). When a disaster strikes: Are libraries in the Philippines ready? *IFLA Journal*, 50(2), 322-340.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/03400352231222039>

##### **Reviewed by:**

Lisa Shen  
Business Librarian & Director of Public Services  
Newton Gresham Library  
Sam Houston State University  
Huntsville, Texas, United States of America  
Email: [lshen@shsu.edu](mailto:lshen@shsu.edu)

**Received:** 09 May 2025

**Accepted:** 25 Aug. 2025

© 2025 Shen. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons-Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike License 4.0 International (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly attributed, not used for commercial purposes, and, if transformed, the resulting work is redistributed under the same or similar license to this one.

**DOI:** 10.18438/ebliip30787

---

### **Abstract**

**Objective** – To assess the level of disaster preparedness and management practices of Philippine libraries.

**Design** – Web-based survey questionnaire.

**Setting** – Online survey conducted between March and May 2019.

**Subjects** – Ninety head librarians or officers-in-charge of academic (52), school (24), public (8), or special (6) libraries in the Philippines.

**Methods** – Participants were recruited online by convenience and snowball sampling. Invitations were posted on the Facebook pages of various library associations and councils and shared through personal posts and messages.

**Main Results** – Thirty-nine (43%) of the respondents indicated that their libraries had experienced at least one natural or human-caused disaster between 2009 and 2019, including earthquakes (18%), floods (18%), typhoons (16%), and fires (10%). However, only 21 (23%) of the surveyed libraries had a formal disaster management plan (DMP). Limited financial (51%) and human (41%) resources were the most frequently identified constraints for the lack of DMP. Even so, most libraries did employ some preparedness measures, such as fire and theft alarms (63%), emergency kits (59%), or scheduled trainings or drills (46%).

**Conclusion** – Noting the limited capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters at most Philippine libraries, the researchers called for systematic interventions by national and local government agencies and library associations to provide the necessary resources and training to improve knowledge around and capabilities for disaster resilience across all types of libraries.

### **Commentary**

Given the escalating impact of global climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, this study provides a timely contribution to library management literature by examining emergency preparedness efforts by Philippine libraries. The authors provided a robust literature review supported by a sound theoretical framework, clearly outlined results, and in-depth discussions. However, some of the methodology elements were vague and left readers wanting more specification. An assessment using the EBL Critical Appraisal Checklist (Glynn, 2006) yielded an overall validity of 63%, with the data collection (80%) and results (80%) sections meeting the validity threshold of 75% and the population (33%) and study design (66%) sections failing to do so.

The authors acknowledged several study limitations, including that the responses represented a “minimal percentage” of all Philippine libraries (Superio et al., 2024, p. 327), and that academic (n = 52) and Mindanao region (n = 42) libraries were disproportionally represented. It would be informative to know the total population size (i.e., the approximate number of Philippine libraries), the response rate for each subgroup, and any notable differences in their preparedness levels. Information about the different geographic regions would also help inform whether limited preparedness at some institutions reflected an appropriate low-risk assessment or complacency in higher-risk areas.

Additionally, the authors presented the research as a mixed-methods study, but the only qualitative portion seemed to be open-ended questions about factors related to the lack of DMPs, and the responses were presented as descriptive statistics more appropriately categorized as quantitative research. Such misclassification of the research design could misinform aspiring LIS researchers and learners. It is possible that thematic coding protocols were employed to analyze a substantive set of qualitative survey responses, but those details and the survey instrument were unavailable.

Finally, while the authors provided a logical rationale for using Facebook for recruitment, they did not address other data collection elements, such as processes for recruiting through direct messaging or methods of identifying library organizations and obtaining their buy-in to share survey invitations. These details would be desirable to assist future researchers interested in replicating the study or improving upon the response rate.

The authors’ thorough literature review and analysis of the study results can serve as a good starting point for those interested in expanding upon current research in library emergency preparedness. However, readers are advised to consider the overall representativeness of the study findings with some caution and refrain from using the design as an example for mixed-methods research. Nevertheless, given the comparatively limited current literature on this pertinent topic, including but not limited to Philippine libraries, this article is a valuable contribution to library and information studies literature.

## **References**

- Glynn, L. (2006). A critical appraisal tool for library and information research. *Library Hi Tech*, 24(3), 387–399. <https://doi.org/10.1108/07378830610692154>
- Superio, D. L., Yap, J. M., Sebial-Guinanao, J. M. L., & Calilung, R. P. (2024). When a disaster strikes: Are libraries in the Philippines ready? *IFLA Journal*, 50(2), 322-340. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03400352231222039>