Investigating the Status of Anime Collections in Public Libraries

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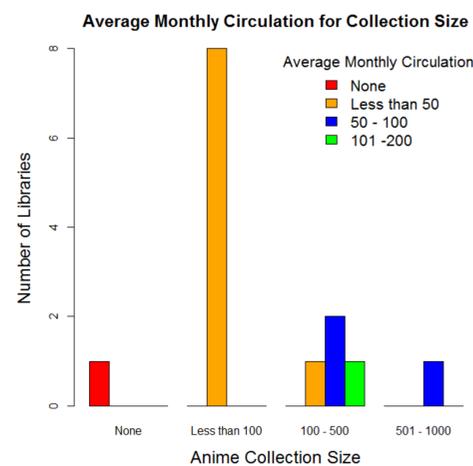
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Question

The goal of the research is to identify the challenges and needs of developing, cataloging, organizing, and providing access to anime collections in public libraries. By doing so this research will provide a foundation for future research on anime collections as well as indicate whether a better system of metadata is needed to accurately portray anime.

Results

- The length of time libraries had been collecting anime for ranged from 0 years/months to 15+ years.

- Patrons were the most mentioned source for obtaining information about anime for collection development

Average Monthly Circulation for Collection Size

Average Monthly Circulation
- None
- Less than 50
- 50 - 100
- 101 -200

Number of Libraries (y-axis)
Anime Collection Size (x-axis): None, Less than 100, 100 - 500, 501 - 1000

Limitations

The major limitation of this survey is the low response rate. Several factors likely contributed to this low response rate, including the survey design and the possible low presence of anime collections in public libraries.
- No identifiers meant participants had to complete survey in one sitting
- Questions number 3 and number 22 had minor design flaws
- It may be the case that most of the libraries survey invitations were sent to either don't have an anime collection or don't consider the few anime titles they hold are enough to constitute a collection

Because of the low response rate, the survey does not hold any statistical significance and the results cannot be used to make generalizations about the state of anime collections in public libraries.

Methodology

Participants
- The subject population consisted of persons who are employed at public libraries, are at least 18 years of age, and have some knowledge of the library collections.
- Survey invitations sent out to 248 public libraries in Washington, Oregon, and Alaska
- 17 libraries responded (6.85% response rate)

Materials and Procedure
- The survey consisted of 26 questions and was hosted electronically using the Catalyst survey tool provided by the University of Washington.
- There were multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. Some of the multiple choice questions allowed multiple answers to be selected.
- No identifiers were collected as part of the survey.
- It was estimated that the survey would take 25 to 35 minutes.

Results

- Fulfilling patron requests was the most common collection development priority followed by ensuring series are complete
- Entertainment was the most common use anime was seen as fulfilling and one library said anime was "another niche for teens and preteens to come together in a positive way"
- Locating items, such as on the shelf, was seen as something the current system does well
- Browsing/searching, such as by subgenre, was seen as a challenge in the current system
- The size of some anime series was seen as a challenge

Conclusions

While they survey cannot be used to generalize about the status of anime collections in public libraries, it has shown that there are potential challenges that warrant further investigation.