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Management Issues for Female Librarians: A Case Study of University of the Punjab

Abstract

This study examined and explored the latest position and job-related problems of professional academic women librarians in the top ranked Pakistani university named University of the Punjab, Lahore. This study also discusses the general hindrances and stoppages faced by females in librarianship; suggest possible solutions that help in their proficient development. The study was conducted by using quantitative research method. Questionnaires were filled from respondents. The answers point to that working women in Pakistan are not facing issues relating harassment or threats from male co-workers, although there are some cultural traits that still affect the woman's managerial position in Pakistan.

Introduction

In past, the social and cultural factors imposed restrictions on women to enter into job market. Changes in the society caused by increased economic pressures, expansion of educational facilities and extended access of female to the education, increased number of women in the job market at all level. Deyrup, in his study founded that in 2004 women finally occupied over 50 percent of directorships at large research universities (as cited in Bergman, 2005). Librarianship in world is considered a profession of females, as the number of females in this profession more than a male. In Pakistan this number is also increasing every year and trend to join this profession by females is also growing.

It is general perception among society that there is a divergence in the attitude and approach towards women and men at the work place which interpret into noteworthy prejudice against women. In developing countries, and particularly in Pakistani social structure, working women are engaged with household tasks and performing official duties as well, gratifying these everyday jobs, working women frequently face stress due to the traditional gender inequalities as there is continuous social pressure for working women to take up her duties. It was observed that the devaluation of female oriented field's resulted from the fact that women are not valued by society and so neither at their work (Harris, 1992). Like in other developing countries, Pakistani women have always been considered neglected part of the society and this perception has been taken by the international community as well.

Jaswal & Shiekh (2010) presented a paper and highlighted that women are facing lot of difficulties in performing their professional duties and jobs in offices and on work place. This paper is an attempt to find out the problems being faced by professional female librarians while interacting with super ordinates, subordinates, publishers/distributers, and library users.

University of the Punjab has been selected for this case study. The study could easily be replicated in other public sector universities of Pakistan for results generalization.

Aim of the study

Aim of this study was to explore the problems being faced by female library managers at work place and satisfaction level while working with male colleagues. This study also tried to find out managerial issues of female librarians dealing with publishers and distributors.

Objectives of study

1. To explore the level of problems which female librarian is facing in University of the Punjab
2. To find out the managerial issues of female librarians while dealing with male subordinates and seniors
3. To find out the managerial issues female librarians while dealing with distributors and publishers

Significance of the study

Although women are playing vital role in the society and the development of their country and family yet they receive less respect what they expect, especially in developing countries as these are considered male dominant societies. The social structure of Pakistan is changing and women are coming out from their houses and joining professional lives. Librarianship is considered a decent job for the female and numbers of females are increasing every year that are joining this profession. We need to understand whether a professional life of female librarian is comfortable. This study is being conducted in University of the Punjab. This study can be replicated in other Public sector universities of Pakistan to generalize the results.

Review of Literature

Jaswal & Shiekh (2010) started an interesting debate through their research paper "Building strategic vision for invisible librarians: A case study of Female Librarians". In the said study authors tried to explore the status of female librarians and to know whether those are invisible or not. This quantitative research presented data gathered through online survey which revealed that most of the female librarians left their previous jobs because of major three reasons i.e. gender discrimination, unnecessary formalities and lack of recognition.

Fairchild (1904) and Bryan (1952) said that many research conducted in many parts of the world has shown in developing countries that there is gender biasness. It is a fixed fact that women earn less than men, for the same work. This undervalues has often been explained away as a factor of skills, hinting that women skills are not as high or cannot be as highly paid for services as those of men. A series of empirical studies over the course of the twentieth century have documented three themes of librarianship as women's work, clerical and low status, and low pay

Chuan (1991) conducted surveyed 242 women academic library staff in Taiwan. He found that similarity to their male colleagues; women were paid smaller, and give the lower positions in the hierarchy, were more likely to be in

technical services rather than in automation, were younger and better educated. He found a negative relationship of economic and social structure with the women.

Heim (1982) research entitled, "The demographic and economic status of women librarians 1972-1982" exposed in its findings that the salaries and positions of women librarians were lower compared with those of their male counterparts. In his study founded that many facilities such as salaries, promotion, health & holidays facilities were not given to the women as compare to men.

Phenix (1987) said in "The Status of Women Librarians" describes the ratio of women librarians in United States with men. She found out that status of women is lower than men. Also her study describe that Women were long considered naturally weaker than men, Fastidious, and unable to fulfill work requiring muscular or intellectual development. She used different studies and also conducted surveys and pointed out that it's more important to highlight the values and variables. Her survey described that status of married women and unmarried women and also their family problems.

Harris (1992) said that the devaluation of female oriented field's resulted from the fact that women are not valued by society and so neither at their work. In the said study we found that many people thought that women are not good in the progress of country also the progress of organizations, so society pressurizes her and her family also interrupt her working life. Harris further explained that it was not the society, which devalues rather, it is the women's qualities (meaning inferior) which are responsible for the status of women's work (Harris, 1992). The study also found that sometime women could never handle their duties correctly so they remained behind in progress race. The study defined the Kenya's female problems and their status issues and also describes the cultural effects of women development life.

Hope (1995) said the summary of the above findings by observing that women's status in librarianship has consistently been lower in terms of position and salary when compared to men. Whether the status of the profession deducted women in, or whether the efficient of women lowered the profession's status, was not clear.

Hasan (2001) found that librarians are showing positive and enthusiastic images of the occupation and using humour and debate to confront stereotyping. The research described the problem of the negative image of female librarians which makes the women images piety in working environment like as physical appearance, censorship, gender issues and freedom of speech. Their studies describes that in the era or worldwide know librarianship be a part of this technology race, But when we look around our women librarian still stand in old traditions.

Stephens & Coleman (2001) said that Libraries began to see a major surge in the comparative part of top leadership positions held by women around the

turn of the twenty-first century their survey described that from 1990 to 2001, the percentage of female directors of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) members increased from 37 percent to 47 percent.

Women continue to make headway into management positions in the LIS profession in increasing numbers. Deyrup (2004) in this study founded that in 2004 that women finally occupied over 50 percent of directorships at large research universities, and further, that they were also often earning higher salaries than their male counterparts. The research defined that in 21st century women increased their strength and facing their problems or solving their status issues.

Research method

The study was conducted by using quantitative design of research

Population

All the female professional librarians were the population of the study, and no sample was drawn. The research started by identifying women librarians working in the University of the Punjab. All the women librarians of University of the Punjab were included in the study. The population sample was all female librarians of Punjab university main library and female librarians of departmental, Institution and colleges of university of the Punjab.

According to graph there are 74 librarians who are serving in University of the Punjab in different ranks and the no of female library managers are only 25 and whereas male are 49. So our population was 25.

Data collection instruments

The data collection instruments used was questionnaire and the questionnaire was developed not adopt or adapt. It was divided in four sections.

Data Collection

Questionnaires were distributed and collected by one of the researcher. Out of the 25 questionnaires distributed, 20 of them were completed and returned. This represented 80 per cent of the total.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed by using SPSS Version 20.

When respondents were asked that weather their subordinates offer them to chat through social networking website. 95% respondents replied that they do

not face any such problem. Most of the respondents (95%) replied that no unethical statements were exchanged with them by subordinates. Almost all (90%) of the female librarian agree that their subordinates don't try to have unnecessary physical contact with them. They (90%) do not face immoral ogles or staring by their subordinates. 75% percent respondents stated that their subordinates do not pass meaningful remarks, but 20% sometimes face this situation and 5% always face this. 80% respondents don't face a situation when their subordinates chase them only 5% do face, and 15% do sometimes and 5% always face. 85% librarian feel that their subordinates do not have the feeling of jealousy and envy, and 10% agree that their subordinates feel jealousy with

Statements	Yes	No	Sometimes
Offer to connect social network for unethical chat from subordinates	5%	95%	0%

them. 85% female librarian replied that their subordinate do not offer them lunch/dinner dates, but 5% sometimes and 5% always do receive such type of offers. Data in table 1 shows that 15% respondents feel harassment from their subordinates. Seventy percent librarians agree that their subordinates do not degrade them. A good number of respondents (25%) responded that their subordinates do not listen carefully what is ordered to them. 40% respondents agree that sometimes their subordinates never complete given task in time and ignore wording of their boss, and 25% said that they always do not complete their given task in time and ignore the wording of their female superordinate.

Table 1

Issues regarding subordinates (N=20)

Unethical statements from sub ordinates	5%	95%	0%
Unnecessary physical contacts of your subordinate	5%	90%	5%
Immoral ogles from sub ordinates	5%	90%	5%
Jealousy and envy from subordinates	10%	85%	5%
Offer for lunch/dinner dates from sub ordinates	5%	85%	10%
Meaningful remarks from subordinate	5%	75%	20%
Chasing of subordinate	5%	80%	15%
You feel harassment from your subordinate	15%	65%	20%
Sub ordinate degrade you	15%	70%	15%
If something ordered to your subordinate staff they do not listen carefully and obey	25%	30%	45%
When you ordered to your sub ordinate staff they never complete the task in time	25%	35%	40%
your male subordinate ignore your wording	25%	35%	40%

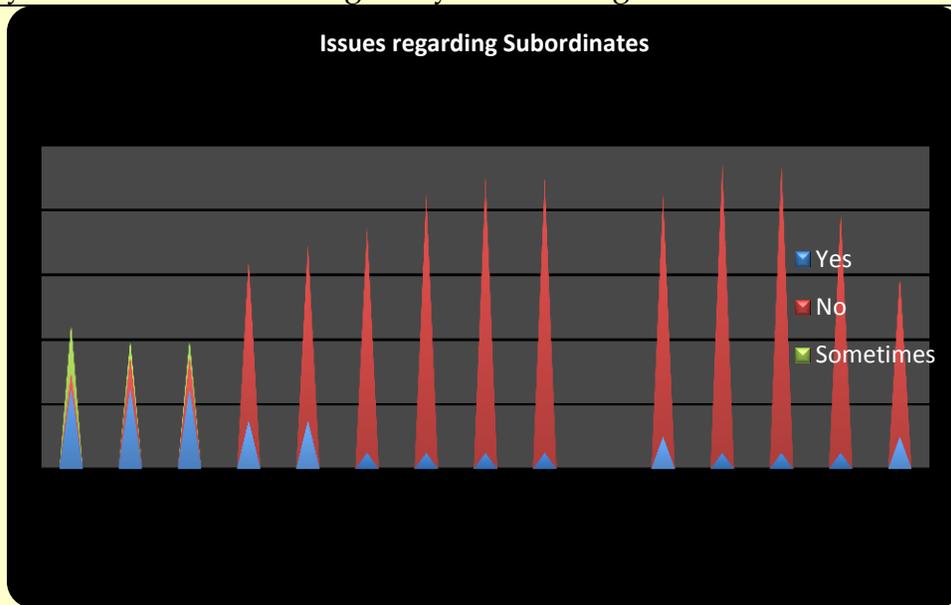


Fig.1 Issues regarding subordinates (N=20)

Issues regarding super ordinates

Table 2

Issues Regarding Subordinates (N=20)

Statements	Yes	No	Sometimes
Meaningful remarks from boss	5%	95%	0%
Unethical statements from boss	5%	95%	0%
Impolite act of seniors.	5%	95%	0%
Feel harassment from your boss	5%	90%	5%
Face any problem during reporting to your seniors	25%	35%	40%
Have any punishment from senior if you daily	25%	30%	45%

report			
Unnecessary restrictions from boss as female	30%	35%	35%
New idea of improvement by you not agreed and never appreciated by your boss	35%	40%	25%
Female supervisor better than male	35%	50%	15%

Data in Table 2 describes that 95% respondents don't receive meaningful remarks from their boss, 5% female librarian face this situation. They (95%) do not face the situation that their super ordinates pass unethical statements, only 5% female librarian face this situation. Super ordinates behave politely with 95% respondents. 95% female librarian feels no harassment at their work place from their bosses. 50% female librarians do not agree that female boss is better for them rather male, but 35% agree that always and 15% agree that sometimes female boss is better than male. 35% respondents experienced that a new idea from them is not appreciated by their boss, 25% sometimes experienced this situation and 40% never experienced the situation like this ever.

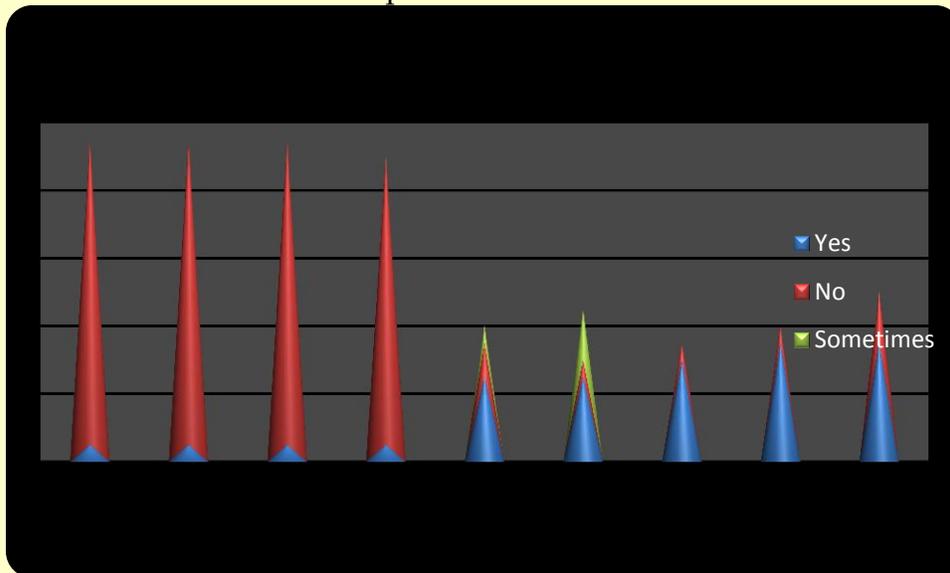


Fig.2 Issues Regarding Super ordinates (N=20)

Issues Regarding Publishers/Suppliers

Data in Table 3 shows that they do not feel harassment from publishers. 90% of the female librarian received no offer from publishers to connect through social networking website to chat other than professional issues. 90% respondents agreed that publishers give the same respect to female librarian as to male librarian. 25% female librarians feel sometimes hesitation while dealing with the publishers because of the rough attitude of vendors, but 65% never faced this situation.

Table 3
Issues Regarding Publishers/Suppliers (N=20)

Statements	Yes	No	Sometimes
Feel harassment from Publisher/suppliers	5%	95%	0%
Offer to connect social network for unethical chat from publisher/suppliers	5%	90%	5%
Is there any learning material pricing problem from publishers	5%	90%	5%
Publisher/suppliers give less respect as compare to male	5%	85%	10%
Feel hesitation dealing with publisher/suppliers due to their rough behavior	5%	65%	25%

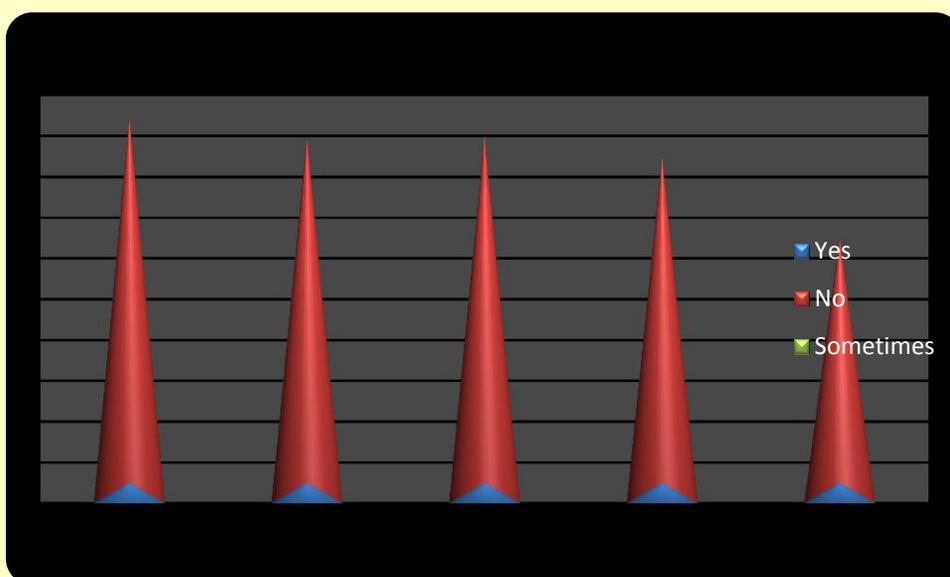


Fig.3 Issues Regarding Publishers/Suppliers (N=20)

Issues regarding Library Users

Out of twenty nineteen (95%) respondents agreed that there is no harassment and meaningful remarks from their male users. They (90%) do not feel any pressure from male faculty members as users. Most of female librarians (95%) replied that behave of male faculty members as users is cooperative. 30% respondents believe that sometimes students respect less than a male manager. 35% female librarian sometime face the problem that male students behave critically during dealings. 35% respondents feel that sometimes male students do not behave in well-mannered way.

Table 4
Issues Regarding Library Users (N=20)

Statements	Yes	No	Sometimes
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Feel harassment from your male users	5%	95%	0%
Meaningful remarks from male users	5%	95%	0%
Feel any pressure from male teachers as user	5%	90%	5%
Behave of male teachers as users is not cooperative	5%	90%	5%
Students respect less than male manager	5%	65%	30%
Male students behave critical during dealing	5%	60%	35%
Students behave is not well manners	5%	55%	35%

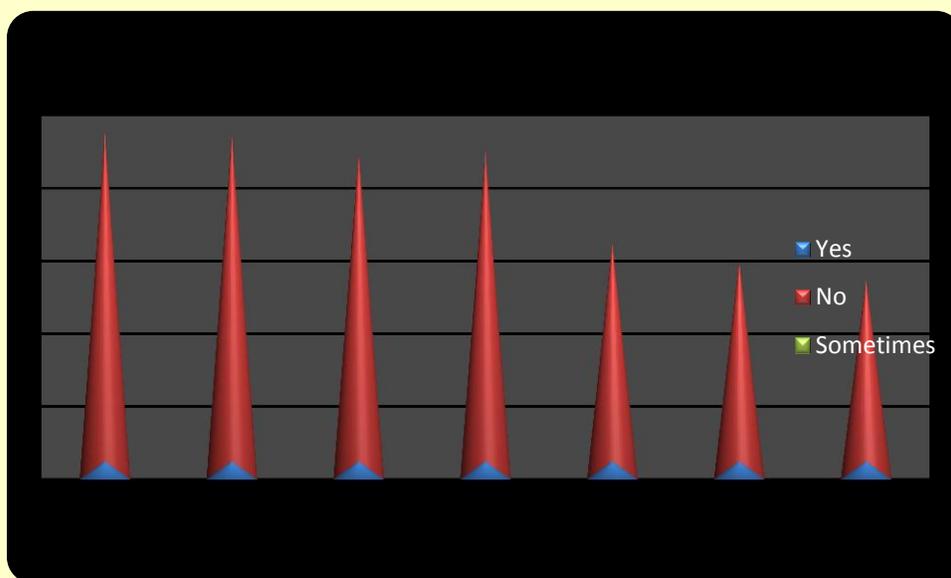


Fig.4 Issues regarding Library Users

Findings and discussion

- Almost all the respondents agreed that they do not feel harassment from their male subordinates, their super ordinates, publishers/ suppliers and library users.
- Almost all female librarians agree that they do not receive unethical statements and meaningful remarks from their male subordinates, their super ordinates, publishers/ suppliers and library users.
- Almost all female librarians agree that their subordinates don't try to have unnecessary physical contact with them.
- Few female librarians sometime face the situation that their subordinates pass meaningful remarks, but most of them do not face the same.
- A good number of respondents complained that their subordinates do not listen carefully what is ordered to them.
- Almost fifty percent female librarians agree that sometimes their subordinates never complete given task in time and ignore wording of their boss

- Almost all of the respondents stated that their super ordinates behave politely.
- Half of the female librarians do not agree that female boss is better for them rather male, but 35% agree that female boss is better than male and 15% agree that sometimes female boss is better than male.
- Some of the respondents experienced that a new idea from them is not appreciated by their boss, but a good number of respondents never experienced the situation like this ever.
- Almost all respondents agreed that publishers give the same respect to female librarian as to male librarian.
- Few female librarians feel sometimes hesitation while dealing with the publishers because of the rough attitude of vendors, but more than half of them never faced this situation.
- Most of female librarians replied that behave of male faculty members as users is cooperative.
- Some respondents believe that sometimes students respect less than a male manager, they behave critically and in ill-mannered way during dealings.

Conclusions

This study shows that workplace at University of the Punjab is quite comfortable for female librarians. They are enjoying the same respect from their colleagues, vendors and users. They do not have issues of harassment or other unethical dealings. It was concluded from the findings that female librarian sometimes face managerial issues , and there is need of training of subordinate staff and the female librarian as well so that they could be good manager.

Recommendations

1. More research on the studied subject should be conducted in different work environments so that some common trends can be identified
2. Female librarian should play an active role in their profession and also participate in professional activities to enhance their communication, managerial and leadership skills.
3. Women librarian should try to use professional forum to write or talk about the issues they face during their jobs and also encourage their other female colleagues.
4. Pre-service and in service trainings should be offered for the female librarians by their respective organizations, Library Schools and professional organizations

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