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Muhammad Taufiq
hmtaufiq21@gmail.com

Shafiq Ur Rehman Dr
suRehman@iau.edu.sa

Murtaza Ashiq
gmurtazaashiq00@gmail.com

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**User Satisfaction with Resources and Services of Public Libraries of Lahore, Pakistan**

Muhammad Taufiq [1] Shafiq Ur Rehman Dr.[2] Murtaza Ashiq[3]

[1]Director
Directorate of Public Libraraies
Punjab Lahore.
Email: hmtaufiq21@gmail.com

[2]Associate Professor & Head ILRC
Deanship of Library Affairs
Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University
Phone office: +966 1333 32833
Email: suRehman@iau.edu.sa    ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8169-0132

[3]Lecturer, Library and Information Science
Islamabad Model College for Boys, H-9,
Islamabad.
Email: gmurtazaashiq00@gmail.com    ORCID.ORG/0000-0002-3926-0673

**Abstract**

This study was intended to examine the level of user satisfaction with respect to the resources and services of public libraries and the problems faced by the public library users in Lahore, Pakistan. For the purpose of the study, a quantitative research approach based on survey method was used. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from the public library users utilizing convenience sampling. The study population consisted of users of four major public libraries in Lahore, Pakistan. The findings showed that the majority of the respondents tended to visit the public library daily and were satisfied with the circulation services at the library. They also considered the public library to be the best information resource in their area. However, they were found to be dissatisfied with the internet-based services available at their libraries as well as the lack of a library-user relationship. This study provides useful information for improving library resources and services in Pakistan, and would help to improve the level of user satisfaction and library services quality in the public sector libraries of Lahore. It also emphasizes the need for the policy makers to device a benchmark for quality service delivery in public libraries in Pakistan.

*Keywords***:** Library user satisfaction, User satisfaction, Public library services, Library resources, Public Libraries, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Introduction**

The basic purpose of public libraries is to provide their communities with the information they require. Libraries have to meet the needs, related to information, education, research and recreation, of a diverse user population irrespective of nationality, religion, gender, age, educational background and language of individual users (Joy & Idowu, 2014). Public libraries are supposed to act as social and political agents for cultural change in the community and cater to an extensive variety of readership (Joy & Idowu, 2014).

A public library is a social institution which is considered to be a repository of knowledge and a resource center of trustworthy information within a community. It is maintained for gathering, organizing, processing, storing and disseminating published information for the purpose of scholarship, consultation, research and leisure. Libraries develop a variety of resources of information and provide various services to their communities in order to help them achieve their social vision, mission and goals. In this regard, a public library needs to analyze and identify the information, education and research needs of its users in order to design effective tools for efficient service delivery (Akparobore, 2004). The activities executed by a library are known as information services (Aina,2004). Modern times demand that everyone stays informed with up to date information and libraries have an important role to play in this regard (Manjunatha & Shivalingaia, 2004). Library services can be defined as the activities performed by the librarians to satisfy their users' information needs. These services may also be considered as the core or basic services that are offered by libraries (Popoola & Haliso, 2009).

Library performance should be periodically assessed in order to determine whether the user requirements and expectations were being met, and to obtain feedback from users regarding any improvements that were needed. Satisfactory services could not be developed and provided

to library users unless the views of the core library users were known (Morgan,2000) Taking into account the active consumption of information resources and services of public libraries, that these libraries should undertake initiatives which motivate their users to use their information resources and services to their full extent (Parvathamma & Reddy, 2009) Furthermore, the libraries should also have procedures in place to address their users' complaints and to modify their services accordingly, in order to achieve maximum user satisfaction (Goulding, 2016). Library personnel generally have to design and deliver some core, traditional value-added services in libraries to meet their users' information needs. There is a need to emphasize that public libraries should undertake such promotional activities which encourage customers to use library information sources. They should also provide internet and community-oriented value-added services like literacy programs for the effective use of collections and services (Parvathamma & Reddy, 2009).

Libraries play a significant role in society by promoting enlightenment and information literacy in communities. Furthermore, sufficient resources and effective customer service are essential elements for any library. Therefore, in order to ensure that a library is adequately providing information resources and services to its surrounding communities, it is necessary to investigate the level of user satisfaction, particularly from the public libraries' perspective. The objective of this research study was to examine the level of users' satisfaction and their perception regarding the resources of information and services provided by the various public libraries in Lahore, Pakistan. Furthermore, it was envisioned that this study would help identify the problems being faced by public library users and highlight ways to rectify those problems ensuring better services.

**Research Questions**

The study addressed the following research questions:

1.  What is the current status of information resources and services of public libraries?

2.  What are the users' satisfaction level with the information resources and services of public libraries?

3.  What are the problems faced by the users in public libraries?

**Historical Background of Public libraries in Pakistan**

Public libraries were established in the Sub-Continent long before the arrival of the British rulers (Siddiqui, 1974). However, during their reign, the British did establish some large public libraries in major cities of the country. Comparatively, there were fewer public libraries in the areas that now make up Pakistan than India. After the end of the British rule, the Pakistani government tried to expand this network of public libraries, however, the state of affairs regarding libraries, especially public libraries, remained bleak for many decades after independence (Siddiqui, 1974).

For many decades after her independence, Pakistan faced many economic, social and political issues that took up most of the country's attention and resources. Consequently many areas, especially libraries in the public sector, experienced benign neglect for a number of years after the country's independence in 1947. There was also no legislation regarding public libraries in Pakistan till the late 70's (Siddiqui, 1974). It was not till the five year plan of 1978-83, that the government finally pledged financial and moral support to the local governments for establishing public libraries. Although, not all of the pledged 1,000 libraries were established, quite a few libraries were, nevertheless, built and inaugurated. In 1981, the federal government created the

Directorate of Public Libraries for the betterment and progress of these public information

centers in Pakistan. The purpose of this directorate was to establish and improve public libraries

in municipal and town committees. In 1984, a technical working group carried out a survey on

the facilities of public libraries in Pakistan. As per the findings of the survey, the group realized

that public libraries in Pakistan do not exist in the true sense of a library. The group

recommended that a national infrastructure of public libraries should be established in Pakistan.

They also put forth other proposals e.g. creation of a department of planning and research in

national libraries of Pakistan as well as establishment of a library cell in the Federal Ministry of

Education. The current status of public libraries in Pakistan is such that there has been no

consensus on the exact number of libraries in Pakistan. In 2013, there were 176 public libraries

present in Punjab. Most of these public libraries were subscription libraries i.e. users can benefit

from library resources free of charge after paying a nominal security deposit and annual

subscription charges (Warraich, 2013). Public libraries are generally financed by the local or

provincial governments, whereas, other sources of funding can be subscription fees, donations

and grants-in-aid (Warraich, 2016).

**User Satisfaction**

Based on different approaches, the term 'user satisfaction' may be defined from two

different perspectives. The 'process-oriented' approach considers user satisfaction as the

difference between expected satisfaction and achieved satisfaction, while the 'outcome-oriented'

approach regards satisfaction as an attribute extracted from a product or service after its

consumption (Lee, 2009). Library user satisfaction is assumed to be positively related to the

user's degree of library use. With respect to customer orientation, quality in the library sector is

defined as permanent customer satisfaction. It is important that quality is defined from the customer's perspective and that it is not predefined by the library's standards. Only a customer who regards the services as being of a high quality from his subjective point of view will remain a satisfied library customer in the long run (Gomathi & Dhanavandan, 2012). Public library digital services might also affect public libraries' user satisfaction levels through changes to libraries' physical spaces, librarians' tasks, competencies and the libraries' economic situations. In the long run, public library digital services could strengthen as well as weaken public library sustainability (Michnik, 2105).

**User satisfaction research in Pakistan**

In Pakistan, there has been no trend of inviting user feedback in order to improve, build and establish library services in the country. Public libraries are in poor condition (Warraich, 2013 & Fatima, 2016) and there is a dire need to embrace information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure in order to uplift the image of public libraries (Mahmood, 2008). Some studies highlighted that users were dissatisfied with the library material, arrangement of collections, behavior of para-professionals, physical facilities and services available to them (Akhtar, 2008). Similarly, it has reported that services being provided by library staff were ranked negatively by most users (Arshad, 2009). In addition, the quality of library services was usually measured by librarians by utilizing conventional methods of analyzing the collection size, number of visitors, number of staff and budget size of a library (Rehman & Mustafa, 2012). The promotional tools such as public relations and publicity were hardly being used by the public libraries professionals (Ameen, 2015). Likewise, a study to examine the status of 11 public libraries in the Rawalpindi district of Pakistan. It was noted that most of the libraries did not have professional library staff. Furthermore, they found that these libraries had outdated

book collections with improper classification and cataloging, as well as poor information and communication technology infrastructure, and offered inadequate public services (Fatima, 2016). The trends of monograph acquisition in public libraries of Pakistan was explored and found that in the last decade, a large number of books written in the Urdu language, focusing mostly on literature and religion, had been purchased by the public libraries, whereas other subject areas such as art, architecture, pure sciences, as well as other languages were mostly being neglected. The study also revealed that the libraries were primarily using traditional and informal techniques for acquiring material (Bashir, Soroya, Soroya & Khanum, 2016).

The reviewed literature indicates that the area of public libraries and user satisfaction has received significant attention from other researchers and practitioners in the past. Public libraries have a long history in the sub-continent, particularly in the region of Pakistan. However, these libraries have faced a lack of government interest with regards to budget, information resources and staff. The literature also highlights that measuring user feedback is a significant method of research in order to assess the service quality of libraries, and to measure the effectiveness of information sources and services provided to the public library users.

**Methodology**

Quantitative approach was adopted to examine the perception of users regarding information resources and services of public libraries in Lahore, and to identify the problems that were being faced by them. Survey method was employed to acquire data for this purpose.

**Population and sampling**

The population framework consisted of public library clients who were using the library resources, services and facilities at the four selected public libraries (Table 1). This data was

acquired from the administration offices of the respective libraries. The sample size was initially determined by applying the Yamane Sampling Farmula (Yamane, 1967). Since the size of the population was N=*62000,* 397 respondents were taken as per the formula (Figure 1).

*Table 1:* Population size and sample determination

| Sr. | Name | Population | Determined Sample Size @ 25% |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Government Punjab Public Library  (GPPL) | 20000 | 128 |
| 2 | Dyal Singh Trust Library (DSTL) | 15000 | 96 |
| 3 | Quaid-i-Azam Library (QAL) | 16000 | 103 |
| 4 | Government Model Town Library (GMTL) | 11000 | 70 |
| | Total | 62000 | 397 |

**Figure 1:** Yamane, T. Sampling Farmula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$

n - the sample size

N - the population size

e - the acceptable sampling error

*\* 95% confidence level and p = 0.5 are assumed*

As the sample consisted of four groups with unequal populations, the sample size was taken as 25% of each group by using the following formula: Sample size of the strata (128) = size of entire sample (397)/ population size (62000) * layer size (20000).

The proportions of all four groups were determined as outlined in Table 1. The conveniently available users were then contacted for survey purposes.

**Instrumentation**

A structured survey instrument was framed for this study. The survey tool was formulated with the help of the reviewed literature and a survey tool designed for the evaluation of users' satisfaction in a previous study i.e. LibQUAL+ (Kyrillidou & Cook, 2008). Furthermore, a modified version of the LibQUAL+, which was locally developed by researchers to assess the university libraries of Pakistan, was also consulted (Rehman & Mustafa El Hadi, 2012). The instrument was divided into five sections: i) "User satisfaction with library services", ii) "User satisfaction with information sources", iii) "User satisfaction with library as a place", iv) "library usage" and v) "personal information". The users were requested to rate their satisfaction levels on a 5-point Likert-type scale.

**Data Collection Procedure and analysis**

The survey was personally administered to collect data through the questionnaire. The questionnaire along with a cover letter was presented to conveniently available users in the selected public libraries of Lahore. The researcher was available for guidance and assistance throughout the data collection process. The collected responses were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

*Survey Response Rate*

The calculated sample size of this study was 397 with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. The response rate of this study was 77%.

**Results and Discussion**

*Demographic Profile*

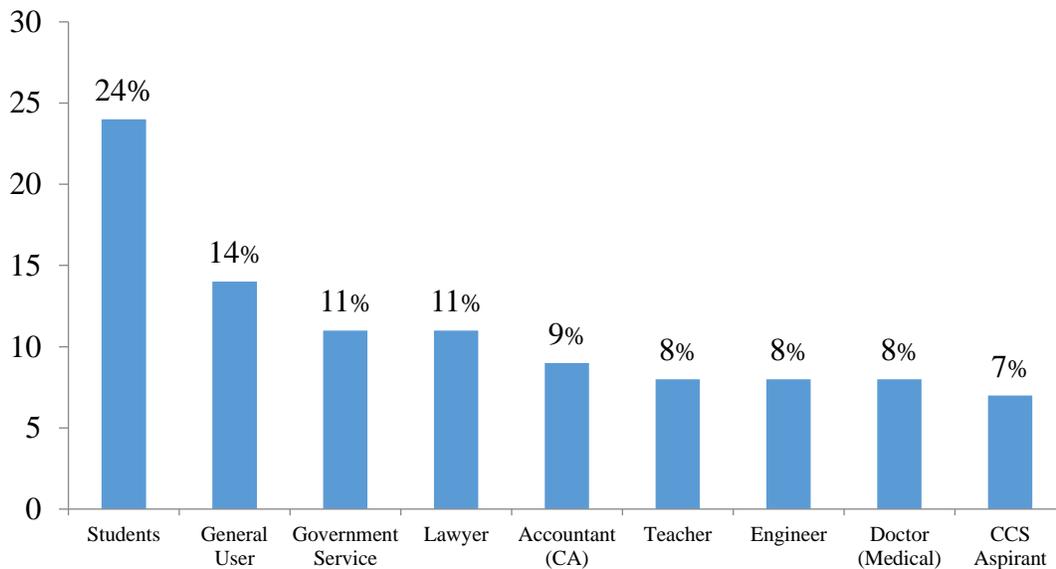**Figure 2:** User Profession/Interest

Figure 2 describes the demographic profile of the users indicated that there were 231 (75.5%) male participants and 75 (24.5%) female participants in the study. Figure 2 shows that majority of the public library users in Lahore were students (24%), followed by general users (14%), govt. servants (11%), lawyers (11%), accountants (9%), teachers (8%), engineers (8%), doctors (8%) and CSS aspirants (and%) respectively.

*Frequency of Public Library Usage*

The respondents were asked about the frequency of their library visits. Majority of the respondents (n=138, 45.1%) reported visiting the public library daily, (Table 2) followed by those who went weekly (n=56), quarterly (n=52), monthly (n=46) and rarely (n=14).

**Table 2:** Frequency of public library usage (n=306)

| *Visit frequency* | *Frequency* | *Percentage (%)* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Daily | 138 | 45.1 |
| Weekly | 56 | 18.3 |
| Quarterly | 52 | 17.0 |
| Monthly | 46 | 15.0 |
| Rarely | 14 | 4.6 |

*Scale*: 1=Daily, 2=Weekly, 3=Monthly, 4=Quarterly, 5=Rarely

The users of public libraries focused on print documents (books) as their preferred information sources and they used the library for the purpose of reading and research (Nzivo, 2012).

**Relationship between library usage and user satisfaction**

Pearson correlation coefficient was applied to test the null hypothesis "there is no relationship between library usage and user satisfaction" (see Table 3). Pearson's correlation was applied at 0.05% level of significance on the null hypothesis.

**Table 3:** Relationship between library usage and user satisfaction (n=306)

| Relationship | Mean | Std. Deviation | Pearson (r) | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Library usage | 2.18 | 1.291 | | |
| User satisfaction with library resources and services | 2.94 | .721 | .470 | .000 |

The results identified a relationship between library usage and user satisfaction as the p-value=.000 had rejected the null hypothesis. There was a significant relationship between library usage and user satisfaction score (r = .470). The value of Pearson's correlation coefficient was positive. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating a significant relationship between library usage and user satisfaction.

**User Satisfaction with Library Services**

The public library users were asked about 27 items in order to answer the research questions. To measure the user satisfaction with library information resources and services, the data collection instrument was segmented into four sections: (i) General services, (ii) Internet Based Services, (iii) Library-User Relationship, and (iv) User satisfaction with library as a place. The behavior of the participants according to the response rate, its calculated mean(s) and standard deviation (SD) is listed separately in the following sections.

*General services*

The users were asked about six different items in order to explore user satisfaction with the services of public libraries on a scale of 1-5. Two out of the six items 'circulation service of

this public library is good' and 'this public library is a best information center in this area' had the highest mean scores of 3.39 and 3.20 respectively. On the other hand 'reference service is good attribute of this library' obtained the lowest mean score of 2.76 as shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4:** General services (n=306)

| Sr. No. | Statements | Mode | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Circulation service of this public library is good | 4 | 3.39 | 1.163 |
| 2 | This public library is a best information center in this area | 2 | 3.20 | 1.218 |
| 3 | Reference service of this library is available to users | 2 | 2.81 | 1.057 |
| 4 | Notice board service is provided in this library for job, ads, and clippings. | 2 | 2.77 | 1.108 |
| 5 | The library has instant mobile massaging service for its users. | 2 | 2.76 | 1.077 |
| 6 | Reference service is good attribute of this library | 2 | 2.76 | 1.071 |

*Scale:* 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree and SD=Standard Deviation

The results show that a great number of participants agreed that the circulation services in the investigated public libraries were available to their users at a good level. However, the users were found to be dissatisfied with other library services including reference, notice board, and instant messaging. Similarly, the concept of service quality was investigated and identified two important aspects of effective service management as maintaining service quality and user satisfaction (Dash & Padhi, 2010). The emergence of technology in every field of life and the concept of managerial technique for measuring service quality has also expanded its importance in industry as well as in libraries.

*Internet based services*

The respondents answered all items related to internet-based services in the questionnaire (Table 5). Two out of the six items, 'Internet service is available in this library' and 'The library announces its events through Facebook page' had the highest mean scores of 3.12 and 3.01 respectively, whereas 'Library provides e-mail response efficiently to queries' had the lowest mean score of 2.79.

**Table 5:** Internet based services (n=306)

| Sr. No. | Statements | Mode | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Internet service is available in this library | 2 | 3.12 | 1.173 |
| 2 | The library announces its events through Facebook page. | 2 | 3.01 | 1.065 |
| 3 | Internet works efficiently in this library | 2 | 2.99 | 1.077 |
| 4 | The library has Facebook page for social contact. | 2 | 2.93 | 1.036 |
| 5 | Wi-Fi service is available to users | 2 | 2.89 | 1.164 |
| 6 | Library provides e-mail response efficiently to queries | 2 | 2.79 | 1.134 |

*Scale:* 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree and SD=Standard Deviation

The findings depicted that most of the respondents expressed that internet-based services were not being provided in libraries. There was even a lack of email services for clients in some instances. In this era of social media where all individuals in a society are interconnected, it is inconceivable that public libraries are not willing to adopt modern technology. Digital services might affect public libraries through changes to libraries' physical spaces, their economic

situations, librarians' tasks and competencies. Digital services in public libraries could strengthen their sustainability by providing increased access to users, but they could also threaten the public libraries' sustainability through increased expenditures etc. (Michnik, 2015) similarly, the need is to develope information and communication technology infrastructure in public libraries and cultivating technologically skilled library staff (Haq, 1993).

### *Library-user relationship*

Only four items were asked about the library and user relationships. All on a scale of 1-5. The mean score of the first item 'Library staff has knowledge to answer users' questions' was 3.21 followed by the item 'Library staff gives individual attention to the users' with a score of 3.15 (Table 6).

**Table 6:** Library-user relationship (n=306)

| Sr. No. | Statements | Mode | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Library staff has knowledge to answer users' questions | 2 | 3.21 | 1.106 |
| 2 | Library staff gives individual attention to the users | 2 | 3.15 | 1.185 |
| 3 | Library staff encourages the users to use library independently | 2 | 3.01 | 1.122 |
| 4 | This library is trying to make  available new Information resources and services  to its users | 2 | 2.55 | 1.110 |

*Scale:* 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree and SD=Standard Deviation

The analysis in Table 6 shows that the public library users were found to be dissatisfied with the library staff's level of knowledge and their behavior. Library staff was neither encouraging their users to use library services independently nor were making new information resources and services available to their users. The finding is in line that users were dissatisfied

with their public library due to the staff's poor attitude towards their work and services (Joy &

Idowu, 2014). Interestingly, a previous study conducted in Punjab University library, Lahore,

had found that readers were not that interested in library services. Therefore, different service

quality improvement methods, such as "user's education" and "automation of library operations"

have been recommended for improving service quality levels in a library (Haq, 1993).

**User Satisfaction with Information Sources**

Four items were used to explore user satisfaction with information sources in public

libraries. The first item 'the library has printed (books and journals) collections, I require for my

work' obtained a mean score of 2.98 followed by the item 'this library has updated catalogue

records' with a mean score of 2.92.

**Table 7:** User satisfaction with information sources (n=306)

| Sr. No. | Statements | Mode | Mean | SD |
|---------|-----------|------|------|-----|
| 1 | The library has printed (books and journals) collections, I require for my work. | 2 | 2.98 | 1.019 |
| 2 | This library has updated catalogue records | 2 | 2.92 | 1.082 |
| 3 | The library has printed materials related to my information needs. | 2 | 2.87 | 1.007 |
| 4 | The library has easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own. (OPAC) | 2 | 2.85 | .987 |

*Scale:* 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree and SD=Standard Deviation

The results indicated that all information resources, including up to date books and journals etc. should be made available to the users. The library catalogues and OPACS should also be improved for better resource discovery in public libraries in Lahore.

**User Satisfaction with Library as a Place**

The users were also asked about their satisfaction with the library as a place. The first item 'the library has comfortable and inviting location' scored mean=3.04 followed by the item 'the library has quite space for individual learning and social activities' with a mean score of 3.01.

**Table 8:** User satisfaction with library as a place (n=306)

| Sr. No. | Statements | Mode | Mean | SD |
|---------|------------|------|------|-----|
| 1 | The library has comfortable and inviting location. | 3 | 3.04 | .901 |
| 2 | The library is a gateway for study, learning, or research. | 2 | 3.04 | 1.046 |
| 3 | The library has quite space for individual learning and social activities. | 3 | 3.01 | 1.011 |
| 4 | Library hours meet users expectations | 2 | 2.94 | 1.088 |
| 5 | The library has space that inspires study and learning. | 2 | 2.87 | 1.069 |
| 6 | Community space for group learning and group study. | 2 | 2.82 | 1.046 |

*Scale:* 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree and SD=Standard Deviation

The findings showed that the public library users were found to be satisfied with the library building, sitting plan and physical environment. However, the respondents indicated that the library timings did not meet their expectations and that there was a lack of proper community space for group-learning activities. Similarly, it has been identified that the contemporary status of public libraries in Punjab, Pakistan. The study found the public libraries in Punjab province were in a poor state and had outdated collections, dysfunctional IT infrastructure, inadequate professional staff, and suffered from disinterested stake holders and lack luster administration (Warraich, 2013) similarly, it has been reported that most libraries, all except three in their study, had inadequate professional staff, outdated book collections with improper classification and cataloging, poor ICT infrastructure and insufficient public services (Fatima, 2016).

**Content analysis of open-ended comments**

The respondents were asked to provide their personal experience in a public library and to highlight any problems that they had faced. This section summarizes the various user comments regarding their experience with library services and library staff (see Table 9).

**Table 9: Problems faced by users in public libraries**

| Sr.# | Comments | Frequency |
|------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | Lack of internet and ICT infrastructure | 45 |
| 2 | Non-availability of modern services and facilities | 32 |
| 3 | Lack of current materials | 25 |
| 4 | Disturbing and noisy environment | 15 |
| 5 | Behavior of library staff | 13 |
| 6 | Lack of trained personnel | 12 |

Lack of internet access and ICT infrastructure emerged as major problems being faced by public library users. The services and facilities offered by public libraries were also deemed to be inadequate. Some users mentioned that the service delivery was often slow and 'time-consuming'. Some highlighted that they were unaware of any modern services being offered by the library staff, while others indicated that there was a lack of specialized facilities, particularly those for disabled and handicapped users. Non-acquisition of current and latest information sources was also highlighted as a major issue, as some respondents stated that they were often informed by staff that their required material was not available. Furthermore, it was indicated that even though the libraries were ideally located in the best areas of the city, the noisy environment in those areas caused certain disturbance and distractions for the users. The behavior of the staff was also found to be lacking and not exemplary. The situation was further worsened by the lack of trained and skillful library professionals.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

*Major Findings*

The findings of this study are provided in the following sections according to the research questions (RQ).

**RQ1: What is current status of information resources and services of public libraries?**

*Frequency of Public Library Usage*

Majority of the respondents showed agreement on frequency of public library usage. The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents used to visit their public library on a daily basis. It was observed that library usage had significant relationship with user satisfaction.

*User Satisfaction with Library Resources and Services*

Findings related to user satisfaction with resources and services are presented in the following sections:

User satisfaction with library services

The public library services were measured as follows:

**General services:** Majority of the participants agreed that the circulation services in public libraries were being maintained at a satisfactory level. However, the users were dissatisfied with other library services e.g. reference, notice board, and instant messaging.

**Internet based services**: The respondents were of the view that there were no services being provided through the internet in their public libraries. They did not even offer an email service to their clients. It is surprising that in this era of social media and interconnectedness, there is a lack of these basic internet services in libraries.

**Library-user relationship**: The analysis of this aspect of public library service showed that the users were dissatisfied with the knowledge and behavior of their library staff. Library staff neither encouraged the users to use the library independently nor did they make new information resources and services available to them.

**RQ2: Are the users satisfied with the information resources and services of public libraries?**

*User Satisfaction with information sources*

The respondents showed dissatisfaction with printed (books and journals) collections of public libraries and catalogue records. The participants noted that the up to date versions of

information resources including books, journals, etc. should be made available in the public libraries and that the library catalogues and OPACS should be improved for better resource discovery.

*User Satisfaction with library as a place*

The users were asked to explore their satisfaction with library as a place. They indicated that their libraries were comfortable and inviting places that provided providing quite space for individual learning and social activities. The public library users were found to be satisfied with the library building, sitting plan and physical environment. However, they indicated that the library timings did not meet their expectations and that there was no community space available for the general public.

**RQ3: What are the problems faced by the users in public libraries?**

*Problems faced by the users of public libraries*

Lack of internet access and ICT infrastructure emerged as two major problems faced by public library users. The services and facilities offered by public libraries were also not up to the mark. Non-acquisition of current and latest information sources was another issue. Albeit, the libraries are situated in the best places in the city, however, the noisy environment caused certain disturbance and distractions for the users. The behavior of the staff was also not exemplary.

**Implications of the Study**

The findings of this study might possibly be used for developing policy and practice of public libraries by the government and administration of the city of Lahore. The results of the study might be considered and implemented nationwide to overcome the problems in public

libraries in the country. More collaborative efforts with the patronage of public libraries are required for the development of public libraries.

**Limitations and future research direction**

User satisfaction can be evaluated through 16 methods of research, and survey method is only one of them. This study used only the survey method, which might not be enough to explore this phenomenon extensively. As the study is limited to only four public libraries of Lahore, therefore, the findings of the study should be considered keeping the given limitations in mind.

The role of management of public libraries and directorate of public libraries might be explored further in order to obtain a holistic view of public libraries. This study might be repeated with mixed method approach under the cross-cultures and other factors. This study explored the problem in four libraries without comparing the four with each other. Therefore, user satisfaction should be examined at each individual library and then compared to the situation at other libraries. This exercise could be conducted at the local, regional, provincial and national level.

**Conclusion**

The public libraries are considered to be a hub of social activity in any given society engaged in life-long learning and nation building. In this study it was found that the public library users in Lahore were visiting the libraries on a daily basis and were mostly satisfied with the physical attributes of their libraries such as the library building, physical environment and the seating area in the libraries. The users did indicate their dissatisfaction with the limited timing of operation as well as the lack of community spaces for the general public in the library. Currently, the public library collections mostly consist of printed material such as books, journals, etc.,

however, there is need is to subscribe to digital resources, if possible, via Pakistani Higher Education Commission's (HEC) digital libraries. Overall, the public libraries in Pakistan needs to be improved, especially their services, infrastructure and facilities. There is a dire need for the introduction of modern library services such as online chat-service, instant messaging, and emailing. Proper marketing and promotion of library resources is also needed. In this era of information and communication technologies (ICTs), public libraries are falling behind and have failed to establish technological labs to facilitate their modern users. Furthermore, they have been unable to accommodate their special needs e.g. handicapped users or those with learning disabilities.

**Recommendations**

1.  Different kinds of reference desk(s) should be established in each public library to facilitate the users.
2.  Public libraries should introduce the e-messaging and online chat services for their readers.
3.  There is dire need of establishing a network among all the public libraries for better communication and exchange of ideas and information resources on provincial and national level.
4.  Online Public Access Catalogs (OPACs) should be developed in multi-language so that every member of the library can get help from OPAC to retrieve their relevant information.
5.  Patron-driven acquisition and e-resources must be acquired and subsequently promoted.

6. The apparatus of heating, air conditioning in reading halls and computer labs should be installed.

7. Government should enhance the budget of public libraries, especially those that are performing well in their communities.

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