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An Analysis of Library Professionals' Communication Skills: Status and Effectiveness on Workplace Productivity

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Abstract

This study's basic purpose was to examine the effects of library professionals' communication skills on workplace productivity. The survey method was adopted and used a self-developed questionnaire as a data collection tool. The questionnaires were administered to LIS professionals were working in central libraries of universities and degree-awarding institutions in Punjab and Islamabad the capital of Pakistan. The response rate was 83%. To analyse data used SPSS and applied different descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings argued that librarians have a high level of communication skills and there is no significant difference in communication skills level concerning their demographic characteristics. The study dug out a significant relationship between the independent variable communication skills and the dependent variable work productivity. Communication skills help library professionals enhance their work performance, service provision, build healthy relationships with library patrons and colleagues, and help reference librarians meet users' information needs. Results of this research work persuade library leaders, organisational management, decision makers, and professional development program organising agencies to put attentions on developing or honing the communication skills of employees.

Keywords: Communication skills; workplace productivity; university libraries; LIS workplace; work performance

Introduction

The word communication originates from the Latin word *commūnicāre*, which means impart, share, contribute, etc. (Gonzalez, Abu Kasim & Naimie, 2013). Cited by Aliu and Eneh (2011),

the experts James, Ode, and Soola (1999) explained communication as exchanging ideas, information, understanding different situations through discussion, resolving conflicts, and developing plans or policies to make decisions. Communication skills are defined by Gonzalez, Abu Kasim and Naimie (2013) as the ability to impart information to others through speech, writing, or any other means. According to Vamsi (2019) communication skills are the capabilities to speak for facing different situations, how to deal with colleagues, clients, employees, employers, vendors, etc., while doing work in the workplace environment. Adair (2007) declared Communication and motivation skills as sister and brother of leadership skills.

DeVito (2015) identified different eight forms of communications, intrapersonal communication: communication with oneself, interpersonal communication: communication between two or more personas, interviewing communication: communication through questions and answers, organisational communication: communication within an organisation, small group communication: communication within a small group of peoples which consist of 5-10 persons, public communication: communication of speaker with the audience, computer-mediated communication: communication between people via computers and mass communication: communication addressed to a vast audience, mediated by audio and visual means.

Antwi and Bello (1993) designated three directions of communications within an organisation, downwards: the direction of communication is from superiors to juniors, upwards: the direction of communication is from juniors to superiors, horizontal: communications follow not any direction which moves crosswise between employees. According to Dixon et al. (2010) communication process is "a two-way process in which exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas takes place" (p. 37). Gonzalez, Abu Kasim, and Naimie (2013) explained that communication is

completed when the exchange or transformation of information occurs from one person to another. The whole communication process is described by Moita (2015) in four steps first is sender or encoder, the second message, third receiver or fourth one is decoder and feedback.

Statement of the Problem

Communication skills play a vital role in workplaces to improve organisational work performance. In various studies (Kernan & Hanges, 2002; DeKay, 2012; Reinsch & Gardner, 2014; Zaharim et al., 2012; Femi, 2014; Conrad & Newberry, 2011; Aliu & Eneh, 2011; Kakirman-Yildiz, 2012; Pellack, 2003) researchers proved that communication skills have strong effects on the job performance of employees. However, while browsing the LIS relevant literature it was found, in the international scenario, considerable studies have been conducted (Conrad & Newberry, 2011; Latham, 2002; Soong, 2007; Kakirman-Yildiz, 2012; Aliu & Eneh, 2011; Pellack, 2003; Gerolimos & Konsta, 2008) but at the local level there is a gap in the literature, weather work productivity of library professionals, affected or not, with communication skills has yet to be explored. Therefore, the present study will examine the effects of library professionals' communication skills on workplace productivity.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

This study's primary purpose was to examine whether LIS professionals' communication skills affect their workplace performance. To fulfill this purpose, the following research questions and hypothesis were developed.

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the status of communication skills among university library professionals in Pakistan?

RQ 2: What is the status of communication skills of university library professionals based on their demographic characteristics (i.e. gender, designations, type of institutions, education level, and professional experience)?

RQ 3: What are the effects of communication skills on university library professionals' work productivity in Pakistan?

Hypothesis

There is a relationship between communication skills and the work productivity of university library professionals in Pakistan.

Literature Review

Communication Skills and Work Performance

Communication skills are endorsed as most important from another soft skill set (Klaus, 2007, p. 51). It helps employees create or maintain working relationships for better workplace production (Conrad & Newberry, 2011). Communication skills are not only about conveying a message across to others, but it also involves considering the matters of effective questioning, listening, and timely effective answering (Meeks, 2017). Effective communication in organisations provides clear instructions to employees, which eventually achieves higher work performance and reduces uncertainty about work complexities (Kernan & Hanges, 2002). DeKay (2012) also asserts proper communication has a positive effect on the organisation's workforce personal and professional goal attainment. Effective communication is a useful role-playing tool to influence a team toward its goal achievement (Reinsch & Gardner, 2014). Communication skills are always highly appreciated in all types of job advertisements (Vamsi, 2019). Communication skills take into account the most essential and most useful employees' skills in the workplace, namely

communicating through speech, writing, body movements, etc. Five general purposes of communications stipulated by Rubin, Fernandez-Collado, and Hernandez-Sampieri, (1992) communication skills can use for, to learn, help, interact or build relationships with others, to give some type of services and to influence or motivate towards some directions.

Defined group by Aliu and Eneh (2011) as three or more people make a group. The communication between group members is called group communication, like the workplace discussion between library staff members, senior managers and lower staff members. According to Conrad and Newberry (2011), employees' communication skills are very significant for an organization's better performance. They posited organizations must encourage workers to develop and enhance good communication skills for all types of activities, not for specific projects. Communication was declared the best managerial tool to establish or maintain favorable relationships with groups of an organization (Van, 1992). Zaharim et al. (2012) surveyed Malaysian engineers' soft skills competencies, and engineers considered communication skills most important in their workplaces, among others, i.e., teamwork, professionalism, problem-solving, and decision-making. The researchers commented that engineering graduates should consult experts in soft skills to fulfill the demands of employers.

Effective communication builds a strong relationship between workers and managers for better job performance, ultimately affected by the communication gap (Femi, 2014). Bambacas and Patrickson (2009) asserted that communication skills, like writing, verbal, and listing, are essential for effective managerial performance. Gray (2010) analysed essential needed oral communication skills to accountancy graduates of New Zealand. The researcher investigated 27 oral communication skills expecting to enter into professional life. The findings of the study indicated graduates must have strong communication skills to counter professional obstacles

effectively. Students should equip themselves with communication skills through academic programs demanded by employers and necessary for organisation success.

The performance of organisations mostly depends on employees' communication skills. But there is a disparity between the communications skills needed in the workplace environment compared to those emphasized in school curricula (Brink & Costigan, 2015). Femi (2014) examined the effectiveness of communication on workers' performance in organisations of economically strong states of the country, the Lagos State of Nigeria. He collected data from systematically selected workers through a questionnaire. The study found a significant relationship between communication and workers' productivity. The researcher reported a vital means to contact organization managers and employees for order delivery, policies, or organisational goals based on results communication. The study revealed communication helps to build working relations within a variety of organisations.

Effects of Communication Skills on LIS Workplace Productivity

Effective communication of library staff plays an essential role in making library services successful (Kakirman-Yildiz, 2012). Delivering efficient library services depends on effective communication between library staff and clients (Aliu & Eneh, 2011). Literature spectacled Special Library Association (SLA) divided special librarians' competencies into professional and personal. The personal attributes are defined as helping tools like good communication, teamwork, life-long learning to do efficient work and improve work productively (Pellack, 2003). Communication skills play a crucial role at the circulation desk while providing services to library users. To polish communication skills, experts suggest various methods, i.e., training, workshops, short courses, etc. (Aliu & Eneh, 2011).

Afkhami et al. (2019) assessed the level of communication skills of librarians working in public libraries. The survey method used to carry out the study, the data was collected through a self-made questionnaire. The study found librarians' communication skills were not at the desired level and found no significant differences between the levels of communication skills according to their different demographic characteristics. Owoeye and Dahunsi (2014) examined the effectiveness of library professionals' communication skills in service delivery. The researchers used questionnaires as data collection tools and responses recorded by university library staff members. Results argued from the study elaborated and communication is a useful tool to deliver efficient and effective library service delivery that, ultimately, impacts job effectiveness. O'Connor and Li (2008) reported that traditional skills could not fulfill modern and challenging working demands, and librarians need to equip with reliable communication, interpersonal, and teamwork skills. Several researchers have commented on this alarming condition of LIS graduates' communication proficiencies and endorsed a need to equip LIS graduates with communication skills during formal education in Pakistan's library schools (Ameen, 2006; Chaudhry, 2007; Warraich, 2008; Ullah, 2010; 2011).

Ameen (2013) stated, there has not been an enormous literature on communication skills in the library profession in Pakistan. Ameen (2013), in her experience through LIS job interviews as a panel of experts, observed that LIS graduates fail to get jobs due to a lack of communication skills. She recommended social, and communication skills should be developed among graduates. Warraich, Ameen, and Malik (2019) critically analyzed the challenges and issues facing library and information professionals' during recruitment and retention in academic libraries. The researchers collected initial data through interviews of 20 library leaders selected through Pakistan's private and public sector universities. The study resulted, in communication

or interpersonal communication skills both oral and written are the most anticipated while hiring and survive in a challenging and dynamic library and information science profession.

Gerolimos and Konsta (2008) analysed 200 job advertisements to affirm the skills required by library professionals to compete in the job market; for their study, researchers collected data from Canada, United Kingdom, United States, and Australia 2006 and 2007. This research found communication and interpersonal skills are the most demanding skills repeated many times in job advertisements. The study indicated these skills are considered necessary because of their effectiveness in creating a productive work environment with colleagues and providing efficient library services to library users. Latham (2002) conducted a study to determine the need for technical and professional communication for LIS professionals' workplace success, the qualitative research approach used to gather data, i. e. content analysis of job advertisements in the LIS profession and analysis of LIS schools' curriculums. When Latham analysed job announcements collected with communication skills key words, the researcher discovered that communication skills were very demanding by employers. The paper argued that technical and professional communication skills are most important for information professionals to perform job activities. LIS schools should recruit faculty and develop courses to support such instruction.

Farooq et al. (2016) carried out a study to analyse university librarians' perceptions of Pakistan's current and required level of their competencies. Data collected through questionnaires filled by librarians who were working in public sector universities. The researchers applied inferential statistics to analyse data. The study concluded a significant gap between university librarians' personal and professional competencies' current and required level. Moreover, there is a need to improve skills, particularly communication skills that effectively educate library users, deliver sophisticated modern services, and cultivate a cooperative and healthy work environment. The

study highlighted a sound point that the agencies providing professional development opportunities do not incorporate modern managerial skills in their agendas. Junrat et al. (2014) examined soft skills like innovation development, leadership, ethics, communication, problem-solving, and university library staff's lifelong learning. Data collected using a questionnaire filled by librarians, sampled via stratified random sampling technique. This study's findings revealed library staff having low-level skills, particularly innovation development, communication, leadership, critical thinking, and problem-solving, but these are crucial for library professionals.

While considering the importance and need for soft skills, library schools have included courses in the curriculum to develop such traits among library graduates (Ameen, 2013). Ameen (2013) received feedback on the course entitled "Personality Development and Communication Skills," which is enlightened in the education department of library and information science of the University of Punjab in Pakistan. Respondents found it useful for their profession to attain a space in the job market but were not satisfied with this course's time duration. Study pointed out that Library and Information Science (LIS) associations are not playing a severe role; there is a need to develop soft skills among new and senior library professionals through professional development activities (Ahmed, 2017; Ashiq, Rehman & Batool, 2018). Ameen enforced in her studies (2006; 2011) that library schools should take a keen interest in developing most neglected communication and leadership skills through various professional development programs, i.e. training, workshops, etc. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) should also focus on this issue through library and information science schools' revised course curriculum.

Research Methodology

Through reviewing the study related literature found various researchers conducted studies using quantitative research approach, used survey method and questionnaire as data collection

instrument (Afkhami et al., 2019; Sitthisomjin et al., 2014; Crosling, & Ward, 2002; Paksoy, Soyer, & Çalık, 2017; Femi, 2014). Quantitative research is defined as the type of research used to explore the relationship between variables using specific statistical strategies (Creswell, 2014). Based on the reviewed literature survey research method was employed to conduct this study. Population defined by Bergin (2018), the entire set of people, groups, things, societies, or other entities you are pursuing to comprehend called population. The library professionals worked at central libraries of universities and DAIs in Punjab and Islamabad, recognised by the HEC considered as population for this study.

Questionnaire as data collection instrument developed with the help of available relevant literature (Ameen, 2017; Conrad, & Newberry, 2011; Brink, & Costigan, 2015; Afkhami et al., 2019; Yildiz, 2017; Anyim, 2018; Owoeye, & Dahunsi, 2014) this online questionnaire was industrialised with the help of Google Documents, it consists of three sections. The first section asked the respondents' demographic information like type of institution, sex, age, professional experiences, professional education, etc. The second section collected data to check the communication skills level, while the last third section consisted of information to assess the level of work productivity level.

The consistently use an instrument called reliability, measured via statistical correlation with Cronbach's alpha value (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Cronbach's alpha is the coefficient of internal consistency. The pilot study is a smaller-scale study conducted by a researcher to examine research methodologies before performing the actual, more extensive study (Leon, Davis & Kraemer, 2011). To check the reliability of the research instrument pilot study was conducted. A questionnaire was distributed to the library professionals who were part of the study population. They suggested minor changes from which necessary incorporated, and their

responses entered into the Statistical Product Service Solution (SPSS) to yield Cronbach's alpha value by applying statistical tests. Cronbach's alpha is a well-known measure to verify a questionnaire's reliability, and its acceptable value must be at least 0.70 (Spector, 1992). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated, the values obtained for communication skills employed at the workplace ($n = 16$, $\alpha = 0.931$) and for effects of soft skills on workplace productivity ($n = 26$, $\alpha = 0.964$) which were above than minimum accepted value 0.70 to confirm internal consistency so that the data collection instrument was reliable.

Data Analysis

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Two hundred eighty-seven questionnaires were administered to the library professionals working in central libraries of the universities and higher education institutions of Punjab and Islamabad city the capital of Pakistan. 239 (83%) respondents consisted on 162 (67.8%) male and 77 (32.2%) female filled questionnaires. In this study, a high response rate was received from male library professionals' side. The following demographic information was gathered from the respondents regarding their highest academic qualification. No, any respondent belongs to the BLIS/Diploma-LIS group, the highest 168 (70.3%) number of respondents have 16 years of qualification as MLIS/BS-LIS, MPhil-LIS 66 (27.6%) and PhD-LIS 5 (2.1%) respondents have their highest professionals' qualification. Found professionally experienced respondents in our cohort 75 (31.4%) have 16 years and above work experience, 80 (33.5%) fall in group 11-15 years. 66 (27.6%) respondents have experience 6-10 years, and only 18 (7.5%) newly entered in professional life fall in category 1-5 years of work experiences. The respondents of this study have a variety of designations 23 (9.6%) were working as Chief Librarians in different organizations, 35 (14.6%) belong to title Deputy Librarians and mostly fall in group Librarians

122 (51%), and 59 (24.7%) belonged with designations Assistant Librarian. 144 (60.3%) respondents were from public institutions, and 95 (39.7%) associated with private institutions. The response rate received from public institutions was high than in private institutions.

Table 1. Demographic information of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	162	67.8
Female	77	32.2
Academic qualification		
BLIS/Diploma-LIS	0	0
MLIS/BS-LIS	168	70.3
MPhil-LIS	66	27.6
PhD-LIS	5	2.1
Job experience		
1-5 Years	18	7.5
6-10 Years	66	27.6
11-15 Years	80	33.5
16 Years and above	75	31.4
Designation		
Chief librarian	23	9.6
Deputy librarian	35	14.6
Librarian	122	51.0
Assistant librarian	59	24.7
Type of institute		
Public	144	60.3
Private	95	39.7

Level of Communication Skills of Library Professionals

Library professionals were working in universities and DAIs were asked to assess their communication skills level on a five-point Likert-type scale from very low to very high. This was comprised of sixteen question statements. The descriptive analysis showed in (Table 2) the respondents' communication skills levels are arranged in descending order according to their mean values. Descriptive statistics indicated that librarians perceived their skills level high. The results are as, friendliness (M=4.38), professional communication (M=4.17), positive thinking/openness (M=4.15), self-confidence (M=4.08), effective listening (M=4.07), and verbal

communication (M=4.01). Courtesy (M=3.99), receptiveness to feedback (M=3.95), nonverbal communication (M=3.94), and written communication (M=3.91). Public speaking/presentation skills (M=3.90), timing (M=3.88), clear and concise communication (M=3.85), emotional awareness and management (M=3.85), questioning (M=3.84), and taking criticism (M=3.78).

Table 2. Level of communication skills of library professionals

S. No	Communication Skills Attributes	Very Low f (%)	Low f (%)	Moderate f (%)	High f (%)	Very High f (%)	Mean	SD
1.	Friendliness	2(.8)	0	13(5.4)	114(47.7)	110(46.0)	4.38	.668
2.	Professional communication	3(1.3)	7(2.9)	10(4.2)	145(60.7)	74(31.0)	4.17	.745
3.	Positive thinking/openness	1(.4)	1(.4)	33(13.8)	130(54.4)	74(31.0)	4.15	.694
4.	Self-confidence	1(.4)	4(1.7)	23(9.6)	159(66.5)	52(21.8)	4.08	.644
5.	Effective listening	0	7(2.9)	23(9.6)	155(64.9)	54(22.6)	4.07	.660
6.	Verbal communication	4(1.7)	3(1.3)	16(6.7)	180(75.3)	36(15.1)	4.01	.648
7.	Courtesy	1(.4)	18(7.5)	30(12.6)	124(51.9)	66(27.6)	3.99	.862
8.	Receptiveness to feedback	0	6(2.5)	33(13.8)	166(69.5)	34(14.2)	3.95	.617
9.	Nonverbal communication	0	11(4.6)	29(12.1)	163(68.2)	36(15.1)	3.94	.674
10.	Written communication	1(.4)	10(4.2)	38(15.9)	150(62.8)	40(16.7)	3.91	.725
11.	Public speaking/presentation skills	1(.4)	17(7.1)	17(7.1)	173(72.4)	31(13.0)	3.90	.718
12.	Timing	2(.8)	15(6.3)	49(20.5)	116(48.5)	57(23.8)	3.88	.871
13.	Clear and concise communication	1(.4)	10(4.2)	40(16.7)	162(67.8)	26(10.9)	3.85	.678
14.	Emotional awareness and management	3(1.3)	20(8.4)	28(11.7)	146(61.1)	42(17.6)	3.85	.850
15.	Questioning	0	9(3.8)	48(20.1)	154(64.4)	28(11.7)	3.84	.667
16.	Taking criticism	3(1.3)	11(4.6)	50(20.9)	146(61.1)	29(12.1)	3.78	.763

Scale: 1-Very Low, 2- Low, 3- Moderate, 4- High, 5- Very High

Status of Communication Skills of Library Professionals Based on Demographic Characteristics

Gender Difference in Status of Communication Skills

Investigated the gender difference in communication skills status, the independent variable consisted of two groups, male and female. So the independent sample t-test is a valid statistical technique to test the difference of opinion between two independent Groups. The criterion of .05 was used for this purpose of calculating significance. The result of Table 3 indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean scores of males (M=3.95, SD=.48) and females (M=4.06, SD=0.54); t (237) = -1.533, p = 0.838. It denotes there was no significant difference existed in this regard.

Table 3. Gender Difference in Status of Communication Skills

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Male	162	3.95	.48	-1.553	.838
Female	77	4.06	.54		

*Note. Significant at ≤ .05

Institute Type Difference in Status of Communication Skills

The researcher examined whether or not a statistically significant difference exists Among perceptions' of the respondents belong to different types of institutions, independent samples t-test was run on the cumulative mean scores. The statistics indicated in Table 4, respondents belong to public institutions (M=3.98, SD=.52) and private (M=4.01, SD=.47); t (237) = -.561, p = .534 there is no significant differences existed. The library professionals from public and private institutions had the same perceptions regarding their communication skills.

Table 4. Institute type Difference in Status of Communication Skills

Institution	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig.
Public	144	3.98	.52	-.561	.534
Private	95	4.01	.47		

*Note. Significant at ≤ .05

Difference in Status of Communication Skills Based on Designations

The researcher examined whether or not a statistically significant difference exists among different library professionals concerning their designations. ANOVA is a valid statistical technique to test the difference of opinion among more than two independent groups. It was applied to library professionals' mean scores with four different designation groups to determine whether they differed significantly in their opinions for communication skills. The analysis results confirmed no statistically significant difference between groups was determined by one-way ANOVA (F = 1.445, p = .230), which is higher than 0.05.

Table 5. Difference in status of communication skills based on designations

Designations				ANOVA	
Mean				F	Sig.
Chief Librarian	Deputy Librarian	Librarian	Assistant Librarian		
4.08	4	4.01	4.87	1.445	.230

*Note. Significant at ≤ .05

Difference in Status of Communication Skills Based on Work Experiences

One way ANOVA was also run on the mean scores of library professionals with different experienced groups to determine if the respondents differed significantly in their opinions for communication skills. The results exhibited there was no statistically significant difference between groups was determined by one-way ANOVA (F = .067, p = .977), which is higher than 0.05.

Table 6. Difference in status of communication skills based on work experiences

| Work Experiences | | | | ANOVA | |
Mean				F	Sig.
1-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	16 Years and above		
3.95	3.98	4	3.99	.067	.977

*Note. Significant at ≤ .05

Difference in Status of Communication Skills Based on Qualifications

The inferential test was run on library professionals' mean scores with their different academic qualification categories to determine if the respondents differed significantly in their opinions for their communication skills. The results presented no statistically significant difference between groups was determined by one-way ANOVA results (F = 1.638, p = .197), which is higher than 0.05.

Table 7 Difference in status of communication skills based on qualifications

| Academic Qualification | | | | ANOVA | |
Mean				F	Sig.
BLIS	MLIS/BS-LIS	MPhil-LIS	PhD-LIS		
0	4.00	3.92	4.29	1.638	.197

*Note. Significant at ≤ .05

Effects of Communication Skills on Work Productivity

Person correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship between communication skills and work productivity of library professionals. The correlation of coefficient attained was .582 with p-value < 0.05. The results revealed a positive correlation between the variables communication skills and work productivity of universities and DAIs' library professionals as indicated in Table 8 as (r = .582, N = 239, p = .000). So the hypothesis, there is a relationship between communication skills and work productivity of university library professionals in

Pakistan is accepted. The study found a significant relationship between communication skills and librarians' workplace productivity.

Table 8. Correlation Analysis between Communication Skills and Work Productivity

		Communication Skills	Work Productivity
Communication Skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.582**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	239	239
Work Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.582**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	239	239

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings

RQ 1: What is the status of communication skills among university library professionals in Pakistan? The study results indicated a high level of communication skills among library professionals working in universities and degree awarding institutions.

RQ 2: What is the status of communication skills of university library professionals based on their demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, designations, type of institutions, education level, and professional experience)? Different inferential tests were applied and found; library professionals have the same perceptions about their communication skills level. No significant differences were found with respect to their different demographic characteristics.

RQ3: What are the effects of communication skills on university library professionals' work productivity in Pakistan? The study findings revealed that communication skills have significant effects on university library professionals' work productivity in Pakistan.

Hypothesis: There is a relationship between communication skills and work productivity of university library professionals in Pakistan. The study found a significant relationship between

communication skills and work productivity of university library professionals in Pakistan, so the hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Statistical tests were applied and found no significant difference with respect to different demographic characteristics, librarians felt that their communication skills status is the same. The study explored a positive correlation between the variables communication skills and work productivity of universities and DAIs' library professionals, as indicated in Table 8 ($r = .582$, $N = 239$, $p = .000$). The correlation of coefficient attained was .582 with p-value < 0.05. Therefore, hypothesis *There is a relationship between communication skills and work productivity of university library professionals in Pakistan* is accepted ($p = .000$). It has been proven that communication skills of University and DAIs' library professionals have significant positive effects on their work productivity.

Findings of the study in line with the various researches in which proved communication skills of library professionals are essential, enable them to perform different operations of library workplaces, interaction with patrons, colleagues, faculty, organisation administrative staff, organising of information literacy programs, delivery of reference service (Yusuf, 2011; Owoeye, & Dahunsi, 2014; Kernan & Hanges, 2002; DeKay, 2012; Reinsch & Gardner, 2014; Zaharim et al., 2012; Femi, 2014; Conrad & Newberry, 2011; Aliu & Eneh, 2011; Kakirman-Yildiz, 2012; Pellack, 2003). Olakunle, Adeyemo Oladapo (2017) concluded that communication skills positively affect library workplace activities, and findings revealed 93.4% of respondents opined that communication skills help library professionals improve library services.

Communication skills augment workers' efficiency to achieve organisational goals as portrayed in the literature (Conrad & Newberry, 2011; Aliu & Eneh, 2011; Kakirman-Yildiz, 2012; Pellack, 2003). Communication has significant importance in a library to perform workplace activities within and outside the library like reference interviews of users, service delivery at the circulation desk, information literacy lecture delivery, etc. are all contingent on communication skills (Aliu & Eneh, 2011). Library staff must have communication skills to create a collaborative environment for organisational tasks' best performance (Soong, 2007; Tanawade, 2011). Latham (2002) explored technical and professional communications play a critical role in the success of information professionals in the workplace.

The study's findings aligned with the study carried out by Owoeye and Dahunsi (2014). They also argued that communication skills affect library professionals to perform work activities while providing library services to patrons. Yusuf (2011) opined in his study that communication skills play a leading role in carrying out activities in the library workplace, primarily to deliver reference services. These help reference librarians understand users' quires in a better manner. Corroborating the current study results with a previous study carried out by Femi (2014) found a significant relationship between communication and worker productivity. Several studies produced results that are directly or indirectly inline with findings of the current study, communication skills have effects on employees job satisfaction, improve workplace productivity, enhance the level of innovation and quality of service (Paksoy, Soyer, & Çalık, 2017; Clampitt & Downs, 1993).

Conclusion

The findings arising from this study show that library professionals have a high level of communication skills, friendliness, professional communication, positive thinking/openness,

self-confidence, effective listening, verbal communication, meetings, presentations, phone calls, and one-on-one conversations. Demographic characteristics do not affect their perceptions of the level of communication skills. The results supported the hypothesis, so library professionals' communication skills enhance their workplace productivity. Several past studies have similar results and reported communication skills are affected in every profession or every aspect of life. Effective communication is used to share feelings, ideas, information, and understand situations. In the office environment, communication in various forms dramatically increases to instruct, juniors, clients share information with colleagues, policymaking, and minutes of writing meetings. If we talk about specifically library workplace, library professionals belong to a group of service providers. Communication skills are the most effective tool to provide library services, as reference interviews of users, service delivery at the circulation desk, information literacy lecture delivery, and effective use of interpersonal communication by staff members to create a healthy cooperative working environment.

Recommendations

In the light of study and considering the importance of communication skills in the library workplace, especially for reference librarians. Therefore it is recommended that, LIS professionals should put concentrates to develop communication skills, it can do through training programs, books reading, and soft skills development courses. Communication skills help to perform different library functions, gain users' trust, understand, and encounter information needs in an effective way so LIS professional agencies must incorporate communication skills in their professional development program agendas. Research work persuades library leaders, organisational management, decision makers, and professional development program organising agencies to put attentions on honing the communication skills of employees.

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