



Administrative Challenges to Public Libraries in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa Pakistan: An Empirical Study

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Abstract: This paper studies the rising challenges to Khyber Pakhtunkhawa public libraries administration in setting of goals and achieving targets. A quantitative based study was designed to know the expert opinion by analyzing data using statistical software (SPSS). Questionnaire survey was conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa public libraries to know the critical factors. Findings of the research showed non-professional administrators with no research background are unable to keep pace with demanding issues at hand.

Keyword: Library administration, Library management, User education, Public libraries.

I. INTRODUCTION

Public Libraries are the center of excellence in dissemination of information and creating educational awareness among public community irrespective of caste, creed, gender, age and nationality (Joy & Idowu, 2014). The significance of public libraries can be judged with this statement of international federation of library association (IFLA) committee on library work with children; 1967 books are essential in the life and development of the child. According to Abba Lay (Omotosho & Okiki, 2012) libraries not only facilitate in health care but also plying a vital role in irradiating terrorism, militancy and creating awareness about government state affairs. Less educated people are benefit from these facilities through documentary films translated in to local languages. Traditional libraries use to deliver formal service but information & communication technology is proving to be a handle in overall growth of this sector (Ameen, 2006). Quick answer to various reference queries in information centers compel the professionals and library administrators to have mastery on information and communication technology in information retrieval, collection building, good preservation of archival records and technical processing of library materials (Butt, Mahmood, & Shafique, 2011). No availability of national policy for libraries in a huge demography, cultural variation and linguistically diverse community is a matter of concern for administration (Haider, 2007). For this emerging challenge visionary administrators need to give a clear direction for libraries in the matter of staff training and equipping public libraries with all the sources of information to meet the technological challenges against the private vendors (Lai, 2011). The 21st century has been named the era of technology which simply means globalization (competition) where the role of visionary administration is significant in giving right direction and concept to the degraded and dormant society towards the light of knowledge. Keeping in view all the latest system from technology involvement to user education and from online searching skill to good collection building public libraries need to restructure its

traditional/ manual system according to the changing circumstances of technology. The Khyber Pakhtunkhawa government has started establishing public libraries network in various districts with slow process such as public library Mardan was erected in (1992) Public Library Abbottabad (1993) Khushal Khan Khattak Memorial Library and Akora khattak Nowshera (1995) Rahman Baba complex library Hazar khawani Peshawar (1996) Swat Public Library swat, Swabi Public Library, Bann Public Library, Mufti Mahmood Public Library Dera Ismail Khan were established respectively in (2005) Hakim Abdussalam Public Library Haripure (2012) Public Library Dir lower (2013) and the new public libraries at various districts Chitral, Kohat, Karak, Laky Marwat will soon be inaugurated during (2015-16). Besides the above the Directorate of Libraries Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Peshawar Pakistan established in (1946) has planned to establish new public libraries at district Hyatabad, Charsadda, Mansehra, Bunnair, Ghazi barotha, Hangu and at Malakand division of KPK Province to facilitate the bulk of public through the wealth of education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

(Lai, 2011) reported that Pakistan public libraries need net facility and staff training on ICT for routine library operation in satisfactory service delivery to public like US libraries in the age of information explosion.

(Butt et al., 2011) explored 25% libraries since the advent of internet 1996 used it for online cataloguing rules MARC and classification. Pakistan Libraries are far away from ICT it needs to be motivated for better service delivery.

(Khan & Bhatti, 2014) summarized that increasing cost of library materials no proper training on software in automation and lack of national infrastructure in establishment of digital libraries are the grave issues of public libraries.

(Wooden, 2006) revealed that public library can survive by providing online access facility to its users in the age of information explosion. Libraries besides good collection on reference and general knowledge need to enhance reading skill among adults and

special program on children. (Kaliyaperumal & Perumal, 2012) mentioned that professional students of Indian universities are not skilled in using IT which result computer experts are gradually replacing the professionals. Dynamic software & hardware technologies automation of library materials, maintenance of digitization and selection of e-resources are some grave issues of Indian Libraries

(Behera & Singh, 2011) observed that digital Libraries are the good and safe repositories of information it need huge amount for installation and maintenance. Friendly environment through user education and training is necessary for easy information access. Library personnel are required latest training courses on IT for better service delivery according to the dynamic future.

(Webster, 2002) explored that higher education in North America make 40% information resources available to scholars by spending \$ 727 million on acquisition \$123 million on electronic resources. The cost of scientific journal in 2001 increased 226% in USA 57% UK 36% and Australia 474% which can be saved by web availability \$3000 per month of research publication as roughly \$ 200 to \$ 1000 per article.

(Mahmood, Hameed, & Haider, 2006) recommended that public libraries in Pakistan need to upgrade their poor collection and below quality service. Pakistan spend (80%) budget on defense after 1965-71 ware as a result Universities and public libraries had to serve with the old literature for four decades until new literature contributed by foreign agencies, private vendors, NGOs in the form of gifts, donations e.g. USAID, UNESCO, CODE and BAI etc.

(Chisita, 2011) mentioned that 92% literacy rate of Zimbabwe is due to the white inhabitants who laid the foundation of public libraries in 1890 along with philanthropist. Education gives economic progress social stability good way of living life, earning livelihood and usage of latest technology to make the life smooth and flexible which made worse by rising cost of library materials & sometime natural catastrophes to win the war against unemployment and illiteracy in Africa.

(Cullen, 2001) drafted that through qualitative collection, access to e-resources and using the potential of professionals the global competition can be faced.

(Balina, 2014) reported that public libraries proper infrastructure for knowledge management is very significant in creating sense of competition amongst public with technological skill.

(Joy & Idowu, 2014) discussed that public libraries are the knowledge repositories. It maintained by public funds for the education and recreation purposes irrespective of age, sex, religion and language. Librarians are supposed to make it sure the acquisition of right material and preparation of catalogue for easy searching. Research findings shows the electronic facilities user education, training of staff, transparency in collection development and current awareness services are the most demanding factors of user satisfaction.

(Rehman & Sabir, 2012) explored that library administration need to understand the similarities and differences of services in the changing demography challenging the traditional service delivery. Customer expectation like zone of tolerance (ZOT) services adequacy gap (SAG) service superiority gap (SSG) are the user level of satisfaction. Professionally sound staff well decorated and equipped library with online facility are the desire of readers.

(Haider, 2007) revealed that traditional teaching of LIS need on modern line with practical application. Few schools have Libraries and four Universities are offering PhD in library science in Pakistan Universities. Lack of administrative co-operation no proper national policies and infrastructure for acquisition collection development satisfactory service delivery, no union catalogue, serial list sharing, un futuristic Library network and poor wages have compel the expert professionals to leave for the oily rich countries in search of standardized career. For better service delivery (Higher Education Commission) HEC should prepare durable policy to save & promote this discipline.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The core object of this study is the assessment of administrative challenges of the directorate of public libraries and its sub-offices in various districts in the age of information explosion with the following objectives to achieve its targets.

1. To explore the administrative challenges in goal setting and target achieving.
2. To identify the problems in making decision and policy designing.
3. To identify the problem in the implementation of IT and quality collection.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study quantitative method was adopted. Since public libraries have to depend on a large number of their customers, registered members and general public which are dealing by concern Librarians, therefore quantitative research method is proposed for data collection amongst professionals. For the study of relevant literature besides books, digital access provided by public libraries, HEC digital library, Google search scholar and World Wide Web (WWW) were also approached to the desired literature. An open ended questionnaire was designed with free options for data collection among twelve out of seventeen Librarians in the whole Directorate and its sub-offices, it was not necessary to collect data from all the serving professionals therefore it was decided to include all senior professionals from head office and branch offices including one Chief Librarian (M) one Deputy Chief Librarian (F) three senior Librarians from directorate and seven Librarians from its sub-offices serving as library Directors. All the twelve completed copies were returned. The data was tabulated using SPSS.

V. RESULTS

5.1 Dealing with Library Staff

Table 1 finding shows (41.7%) library experts are of the view that libraries staff are not from professional cadre. Libraries are always taken in the negative sense in developing world due to their defective performance. Libraries are professional centers and the selection of non-professional staff in technical center shows lack of research which has become a questioning mark on the performance of libraries. Pakistan libraries need to

get the service of professionals for the survival of this profession by selecting the field specialists. On other hand (33.3%) recommended for immediate training of these non-professional staff on library affairs and (25.0%) says that the concern staff need improvement on library ethics.

Table 1. Dealing with library staff

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | They do not have library ethics | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| | They are professionally not sound | 5 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 66.7 |
| | They need training/guidance | 4 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.2 Unserious Public Library Administration

Finding of Table 2 reveals that (50.0%) respondents are not satisfied with library administration of not including professionals in making decision. The major reason is that the top library policy makers (25.0%) says are not being from concern professional field do not know about the technical problems to address that's why their decision are always become problematic rather than futuristic.

Table 2. Unserious library administration

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|--|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | The top administrators are not from professionals fields | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| | They are not interested in resolving issues | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 33.3 |
| | They do not include the professionals in decision making | 6 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 83.3 |
| | They do not give importance to professionals suggestions | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 91.7 |
| | They do not know the actual problems of libraries | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.3 Challenge in Human Resource Management (HRM)

Table 3 shows that (33.3%) Librarians are facing the major challenge of necessary competency from its staff to manage public in routine library operation like Accessioning, cataloguing, classification and information management. However (25.0%) experts highlighted the challenge to information centers are in the sense that majority of its serving staff running libraries without professional qualification and field experience. Each experts group (16.7%) respectively of the opinion that due to the lack of full time professional in libraries and most of the competent staff leaving to the oily reach countries (Arbia) and developed world Europe and West (Brain drain) for better incentives are the rising challenges to library administration.

Table 3. Challenge in Human Resource Management

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | The existing work force lack the necessary competency | 4 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| | Absence of competent man power for public dealing | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 41.7 |
| | Lack of full time Professionals | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 58.3 |
| | Nonprofessional staff without experience | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 83.3 |
| | Most of the competent employees joining for better incentives | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.4 Financial Constraints of Library Administration

Table 4 revealed that (41.7%) professionals take the financial constraint as a considerable challenge which has affected directly the quality collection building in libraries due to the involvement of technology in research, standardization in printing

and currency devaluation. Each respondent respectively (16.7%) said financial constraint in digitization of available records newspapers and automation of books with latest software and funding for binding, technology involvement in preservation of books and available records (Archive) are the burning challenges of libraries.

Table 4. Financial constraints of library administration

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Library collection | 5 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 41.7 |
| | E resources | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 50.0 |
| | Journals & Periodicals | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 58.3 |
| | Maintenance of library building | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 66.7 |
| | Digitization of records | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 83.3 |
| | Others | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.5 Quality Collection Management

Table 5 shows that (33.3%) Librarians facing issue related to quality collection management due to the fluctuating rate of Pakistan rupee and rising inflation in front of continued terrorism, political and economic instability for the last ten years. Most of the publications import from the developed countries Like USA, UK, Canada and Australia in Dollars affected the purchasing power of unstable currency. Each respondent respectively (25.0%) says that no set pattern for book selection and non- existence of proper collection procurement policy further threatening the quality collection, however (16.7%) response showed that absence of book selection aid (web site access) is another barrier in the way of collection management.

Table 5. Quality collection management

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Fluctuating rate of Pakistan rupees & inflation | 4 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| | No set pattern for book selection | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 58.3 |
| | Absence of book selection aids(website access) | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 75.0 |
| | Nonexistence of collection procurement policy | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.6 Resource Sharing among Public Libraries

Looking at the Table 6 majority of the library professionals (41.7%) says that resource sharing has become a questioning mark for public libraries in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa Pakistan due to the limited computer application in libraries and deficiency of skilled staff. However (33.3%) experts expressed their concern about the deficiency of dynamic and talented leadership in public libraries to overcome on this challenge. The significance of technology and good leadership is nothing when the serving staff says (25.0%) is not trained in the usage of technology and its implementation.

Table 6. Resource sharing among public libraries

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Limited application of computer technology by libraries | 5 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 41.7 |
| | Lack of trained staff | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 66.7 |
| | Absence of leadership | 4 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.7 Unsatisfactory Digital Library

The finding of table 7 shows that each three group of experts respectively (25.0%) says that the current digital facilities in public libraries are not up to the mark due to its local access. The hot demands of users are access from local publication to international reputed journals such as IEEE, science direct and other journal with train and helpful system supervisor.

Table 7. Unsatisfactory digital library

| | Variables | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | It provides local access | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| | It give no access to science direct & IEEE | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 |
| | System supervisor is not helpful in searching | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 58.3 |
| | Related official need training on Digital library | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 83.3 |
| | Others | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.8 Automation of Public Libraries

Table 8 indicates that 50.0% response received from professionals that mostly Pakistan public libraries are not automated in the advanced era due to the lack of systematic planning for automation of library collections. The major reason is the top administrators are not interested due to their non-professional status which has snatched the users interest from libraries where users feeling their time to be wasted in browsing their desired information. Yet 33.3% experts are of the opinion that constraint in selection of software and hardware (IT equipment) is another concern due to the limited budget for public libraries. Another group of experts (16.7%) says that

deficiency of desired and skilled work force for automation is also barrier in the automation.

Table 8. Automation of public libraries

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Absence of systematic planning for automation | 6 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | Constraint in software & hardware selection | 4 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 83.3 |
| | Lack of human resources | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.9 Need of Effective Write off Policy

Table 9 shows that (58.3%) Librarians favor proper legislation for public libraries which has never been tried from administration side. Legislation for the whole library which may cover all the affairs from staff service structure to routine library operation with slight difference of that University and college libraries in matter of service delivery and administrative complexities as public libraries are open to all citizens which is not possible in academic libraries.

Table 9. Effective write off policy

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | It requires legislation | 7 | 58.3 | 58.3 | 58.3 |
| | The existing policy is ineffective | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 66.7 |
| | The top administration is not serious in legislation | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 83.3 |
| | Public library should have different write off policy | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

5.10 Security System in Public Libraries

In the above table 8 keeping in view the unsatisfactory security situation of Pakistan where explosion in public places have become a routine activity and the users visit to public libraries gradually dwindling due to this constant fear. Another group of experts each respectively 25.0% are unsatisfied with the security situation in their branch public libraries and they witnessed that there are three major security loopholes that is 1. No proper security from police side 2. The existing watchman's in public libraries are without gun 3. Walkthrough gates for security clearance are the major security weakness in KP public libraries to give courage to its users.

Table 10. Security system in public libraries

| Variables | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | No security from police | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| | Untrained watch man | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 |
| | Watchman is without gun | 1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 58.3 |
| | No CCTV camera | 2 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 75.0 |
| | No walkthrough gates | 3 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 12 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

VI. Discussion

In developing countries libraries are always taken in negative sense due to their below quality collection and unsatisfactory service delivery. In Khyber Pakhtunkhawa no researcher ever tried to know the root causes. Public libraries in this province are rendering service without sufficient professional staff and training on latest technological trends. The basic reason is the top administrators of their non-professional status do not include professionals in making decision and giving proper legislation. In KP public libraries only seventeen are professionally sound and the rest two hundred plus are pure non-professional having no professional qualification and field experience

ventured the existing system. The existence of non-professional in technical centers shows lack of research and incompetency of policy makers has become a questioning mark on libraries future. Deficiency of fulltime professionals and bad administrative policy compel the professionals (brain drain) for better incentives which also supported by (Haider, 2007). Financial constraint not only affected the quality collection but also digitization of available records, periodicals, automation and preservation of library materials due to the technological involvement which has supported by (Khan & Bhatti, 2014) by stressing on national infrastructure for public libraries. The existing public libraries in KP having no resource sharing policy which need enough computers, IT experts, database and dynamic leadership favored by (Joy & Idowu, 2014). The established digital libraries give only local access need to extent its facility to famous journals such as science direct, IEEE and others in satisfying the research need of its users. Public libraries in KP need good security in situation of constant fear (explosion) in public places from government side to attract the readers towards it axis.

VII. Recommendations

For running a better and objective oriented library administration the following points should be taken for serious consideration:

1. To bring quality improvement in public libraries, library administration should be from professional cadre. The serving professionals need to include in decision making and immediate training arrangement for non-professional staff on IT, library ethics and operation.
2. In order to stop brain drain sufficient professional staff should be recruited with a proper legislation on service structure for promotion and on routine library matters.
3. Public libraries should have proper infrastructure on quality collection and book selection add (Website access) in front of currency devaluation along digitization of records and automation of books.

4. Public libraries should start resource sharing with skilled IT experts and digital libraries need to give access to famous journal from its local status.
5. Security should be ensured from government side in order to satisfy readers.

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