IMPACT OF LIBRARIANS' MANAGERIAL SKILLS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES AND QUALITY SERVICES IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES OF PAKISTAN

Zahid Sultan[1] and Dr. Shamshad Ahmed[2]

Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the influence of librarians' managerial skills on the quality of service and library resources in university libraries in Pakistan.

Methodology: A survey was conducted among librarians in Pakistani universities to assess their managerial skills, including library management skills, decision-making, and budget management.

Key findings: The findings reveal that librarians with strong managerial skills significantly influence the quality and availability of library resources and services. By integrating advanced technology and strategic planning, librarians could support education and research effectively.

Practical implication(s): The study highlights the importance of enhancing managerial skills to improve library services, benefiting educators, stakeholders, and the government by bridging the knowledge gap and fostering a conducive learning environment.

Contribution to knowledge: The study contributes to understanding the role of librarians' managerial skills in enhancing library services and resources, which is crucial for creating a more knowledgeable and empowered society.

Delimitations: The study was delimited to Pakistani universities and may not be generalizable to other countries or contexts.

Keywords: Managerial Skills, Library resources and Services, University Librarians, Academic libraries. LIS professionals, University librarians, university libraries.

Introduction:

With the ever-changing nature of higher education and the shift to a more dynamic resource-based environment, the role of managerial skills of librarians is becoming more apparent in the determination of the growth of library resources and the ability to deliver quality services (Farooq et al., 2016). Over the past few decades, the academic library has evolved from being just a storehouse of books and journals to a concept of a learning resource center that plays a tripartite role in teaching, learning, and knowledge creation (Khan & Bhatti, 2016). This transformation requires a different skill set from the managers of the libraries, and these are strategic planning, managing resources, and communicating. A study shows that, when librarians have effective managerial competencies, they can cope with the dynamism of contemporary libraries and manuscripts' development and enhancement of service delivery (Ashiq, Rehman, & Mujtaba, 2021). Thus, skills in managerial capacity remain more central to the librarianship profession than ever before. Management impacts not only the techniques of creating the libraries' daily functioning but also the adaptability to technological changes and demands of users (Khan, Masrek, Mahmood, et al., 2017). For instance, professionals in the position of librarian who possess project management and leadership competencies are in an amazing place to bring about effective and efficient services. In addition, understanding how collaboration and partnership work both internally and externally with other academic institutions can help in the development of the library and can strengthen the contribution of the library in the academic arena (Rafi et al., 2019). Although there is consensus regarding their relevance, the role these skills particularly play in developing the resources and improving the quality of services in Pakistani university libraries has not been well understood (Shahzad et al., 2023). Some of the perennial challenges that many libraries encounter include scarcity of relevant funds, poor infrastructure, and skilled human resources that can hinder the provision of quality library services. There is a need to assess how managerial skills do and can reduce such challenges to enhance the function of university libraries (Ashiq & Warraich, 2023a). However, there has been a lack of research concerning the nature of the above-stated skills, their precise effects/results on the processes of resource development, and the quality of services, particularly in the context of Pakistani university

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[1] Department of Information Management University of Sargodha. Email:zahidsultanrao@gmail.com

[2] Department of Information Management University of Sargodha. Email:shamshad.ahmed@uoas.pk

libraries. There are some reasons why quality library services are important in the provision of support for research activities, learning, and effective experience production that enables achievement, among the reasons being (Khan, 2020). Thus, the findings of this study will contribute to the existing flow of information by focusing on the impact of managerial competencies in improving the services of a university library and facilitating academia in the universities of Pakistan.

Literature Review

The role of librarians' managerial skills in shaping the development of resources and quality services in university libraries has been a topic of growing interest in recent years. Several studies have explored the various aspects of this relationship, particularly in the context of Pakistan (Ashiq, Rehman, Safdar, et al., 2021). The role of librarians in university libraries has evolved significantly, particularly in developing countries like Pakistan, where the need for effective managerial skills is paramount for enhancing resource development and service quality. This literature review explores the impact of librarians' managerial skills on the development of resources and the quality of services in university libraries in Pakistan, highlighting key studies and findings relevant to this topic (Gathoni & Van der Walt, 2019). A study highlighted the challenges faced by women academic library leaders in Pakistan, including organizational barriers, family responsibilities, and gender discrimination (Adil et al., 2024). The authors emphasized the importance of effective use of technology, professional commitment, and continuous learning as key indicators of success for these leaders. The findings suggest that mentorship programs and curriculum updates in library schools can help prepare female students for future leadership roles (Adil et al., 2024). Historically, librarianship has been viewed primarily as a custodial profession focused on the organization and management of collections. However, as libraries transition into dynamic information hubs, the managerial skills of librarians have become increasingly critical (Ashiq & Warraich, 2023b). According to effective leadership and management, they are essential for librarians to navigate the complexities of modern library environments, which include the integration of technology and the need for innovative service delivery. The authors emphasize that librarians equipped with strong managerial competencies can better respond to user needs and enhance the overall effectiveness of library services (Khan, Masrek, & Nadzar, 2017). Khan and Qutab (2016) explored different leadership styles adopted in various university libraries and their impact on job productivity and service delivery and found that transformational leadership practices, such as fostering collaboration and building partnerships, can significantly enhance the library's role as a vital academic resource.

Bukhari et al. (2023) examined the competencies required for professional librarians in the job market of Pakistan. The authors identified the management of academic, public, and special libraries; knowledge of computerization and digitization; and designing library software as essential skills for librarians. The study also highlighted the need for incorporating more IT-related topics in the curricula of library schools to produce efficient and competent academic librarians. The development of library resources is a multifaceted process that requires strategic planning and effective management. Studies have shown that librarians who possess strong managerial skills are more adept at implementing collection development policies that align with user needs (Khan, 2015). The absence of robust managerial skills frameworks can lead to stagnation in resource development, ultimately affecting the quality of services provided to users (Khan, 2015). Issa (2021) reported several challenges faced by university libraries, such as decreasing budgets and the rapid growth of electronic resources, necessitating skilled management to optimize resource allocation and ensure that libraries can meet the evolving demands of their users. The study underscores the importance of librarians' ability to adapt to the changing circumstances and leverage available resources effectively.

Rafi et al. (2019) conducted a qualitative study on the journey of career progression and community service by women academic library leaders in Pakistan. The findings revealed that organizational challenges, family responsibilities, and gender discrimination were the major barriers faced by these leaders during their ascent to top positions. The authors emphasized the importance of effective use of technology, professional commitment, academic contributions, and continuous learning as key indicators of success for women library leaders. The quality of services in university libraries is closely linked to the managerial skills of librarians (Khan & Bhatti, 2024). Khan and Bhatti (2024) conducted a study on knowledge management practice in university libraries, revealing that effective

managerial skills are crucial to enhance service quality. The researcher investigated the status of collection development and management in university libraries in Pakistan (Rehman et al., 2024). The studies show that collection development and management policies and procedures are often ineffective in meeting users' needs. The authors identified the absence of standard air collection development policies, lack of user and collection assessments in summer, and the first growth of electronic resources as major challenges faced by university libraries in Pakistan (Rehman et al., 2024). He provided an overview of the growth of universities adding their libraries in Pakistan. The author noted that while university libraries are better placed in resources, organization, and staff strength compared to two other types of libraries, they currently face stagnation and deadlines due to various factors, including collection development and management issues. Despite the recognized importance of managerial skills, librarians in Pakistan face numerous challenges that hinder their effectiveness (Hanif et al., 2024; Rafi et al., 2019). They also identified organizational barriers called gender discrimination and inadequate professional development opportunities as significant obstacles for libraries and for librarians, particularly women in leadership roles. These challenges can limit the ability of librarians to implement effective resource management strategies and add high-quality services (Gathoni & Van der Walt, 2019). Moreover, the study emphasizes the need for continuous professional development and training programs that equip librarians with the necessary managerial skills to address the complexities of modern library environments. The authors advocate for a shift in library education curricula to include more emphasis on management training, which can empower librarians to take on leadership roles and drive positive changes within their institutions (Hussain & Saddiqa, 2024). In conclusion, the existing literature highlights the critical role of librarians' managerial skills in developing resources and providing quality services in university libraries in Pakistan. The studies emphasize the need for effective leadership, professional competencies, and strategic planning to overcome the challenges faced by these institutions. However, there remains a gap in understanding the specific impact of managerial skills on resource development and service quality, particularly in the context of environmental stability as a mediating factor. This study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between librarians' managerial skills and the performance of university libraries in Pakistan.
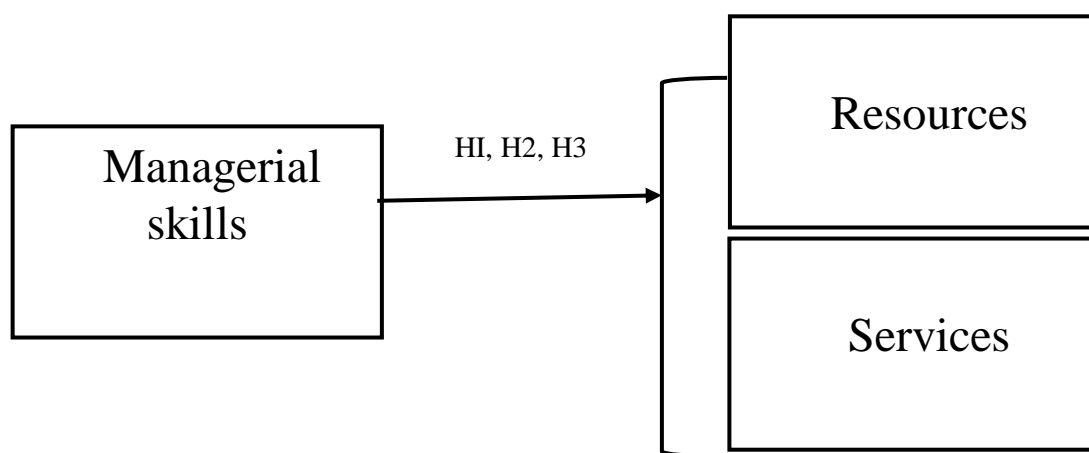

Figure 1: Conceptual model of the study

Development of the Hypotheses

- There is an association between the managerial skills, library resources, and services of university librarians in Pakistan.
- There is a variation in the management of library resources due to the managerial skills of university librarians in Pakistan.
- There is a variation in the provision of library services due to the managerial skills of university librarians in Pakistan.

Research Methodology

In this research, a positivistic orientation and a deductive approach were used in the formation of the research paradigm. The researcher administered a questionnaire that took a lot of effort to design and did a huge amount of literature review to formulate the research questions and create the instrument for data collection and analysis. Data about librarians of public sector universities of Pakistan were collected. Because the study involved different geographical locations and it is physically impossible to conduct data collection from all the locations, the researcher resorted to online data collection, and this was very fruitful. The response rate was relatively high, with 162 librarians responding to the questionnaires. This vigorous reaction of librarians from different parts of the country proves their interest in the study and enhances the external validity of the results. The data gathered were analyzed for reliability and validity to ensure that the output obtained was not only correct but also consistent. Reliability coefficients showed that the questionnaire was valid in assessing the intended constructs throughout the study, while the validity tests affirmed that the instrument captured the intended concepts correctly. The research methodology was sound, which gave a good base to make the subsequent conclusion on the level of managerial skills of the librarians and their effects on resource development and quality of service in the universities' libraries across Pakistan.

Table: Model Fit

	Saturated Model	**Estimated Model**
SRMR	0.088	0.090
D_ULS	0.280	0.289
D_G	0.135	0.136
Chi-Square	773.439	776.521
NFI	0.403	0.401

The table compares the fit indices for a Saturated Model and an Estimated Model. The SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) values are quite close, with 0.088 for the Saturated Model and 0.090 for the Estimated Model, suggesting a similar fit. The D_ULS (Squared Euclidean Distance) and D_G (Geodesic Distance) are also similar, with slight increases in the Estimated Model (0.280 to 0.289 and 0.135 to 0.136, respectively), indicating a marginally worse fit.

Table 2: Path coefficients

	MS	**RES**	**SER**
MS	0	0.195	0.311

The table presents path coefficients for three variables: MS, RES, and SER. For MS, the coefficients with RES and SER are 0.195 and 0.311, respectively, indicating positive relationships between MS and these variables. The diagonal value for MS is 0, which is expected as it represents the self-relationship. These coefficients suggest that MS has moderate positive effects on both RES and SER. The values for RES and SER about MS are not provided, but the coefficients given highlight the influence of MS on the other variables in the model.

Table-3: Outer loading

	MS	RES	SER
DAOLS			0.872
DAOR		0.876	
GS	0.828		
LMS	0.760		
LS	0.497		
MS	0.763		
TR		0.890	
TS			0.815

The table shows the outer loadings of various indicators for the constructs MS, RES, and SER. The outer loading values reflect the strength of the relationship between each indicator and its corresponding construct. For MS, the indicators DAOLS (0.872), GS (0.828), LMS (0.760), and MS (0.763) have strong loadings, indicating they are highly associated with the MS construct. In particular, DAOLS and TR (0.890) have the highest loadings, suggesting they are the most reliable indicators for MS. For RES, the indicators DAOR (0.876) and TR (0.890) are strongly associated, with TR being the highest. For SER, the indicator TS (0.815) shows a strong loading, highlighting its significant role in representing SER. Overall, these high loadings suggest that the indicators are effective in measuring their respective constructs.

Table-4: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
MS	0.701	0.759	0.810	0.523
RES	0.718	0.719	0.876	0.780
SER	0.599	0.611	0.832	0.713

The table summarizes the reliability and validity metrics for three constructs: MS, RES, and SER. For MS, Cronbach's Alpha is 0.701, indicating acceptable internal consistency, and the Composite Reliability is 0.810, reflecting good reliability. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is 0.523, showing that MS explains about 52% of the variance in its indicators, suggesting moderate convergent validity. RES demonstrates the highest reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.718 and a Composite Reliability of 0.876. Its AVE of 0.780 indicates strong convergent validity, capturing 78% of the variance. In contrast, SER has a lower Cronbach's Alpha of 0.599, below the typical threshold of 0.7, which suggests weaker internal consistency. However, SER's Composite Reliability of 0.832 and AVE of 0.713 indicate reasonable reliability and good convergent validity. Overall, RES exhibits the strongest reliability and validity, while MS and SER also show acceptable levels of construct reliability and validity.

*Table-5: Fornell- Larcker Criterion*

	MS	**RES**	**SER**
MS	0.723		
RES	0.195	0.883	
SER	0.311	0.123	0.844

The table presents the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, used to evaluate discriminant validity by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct with its correlations with other constructs. For MS, the square root of its AVE is 0.723, while its correlations with RES (0.195) and SER (0.311) are lower, indicating that MS is distinct from these constructs. RES has an AVE square root of 0.883, and its correlations with MS (0.195) and SER (0.123) are substantially lower, confirming that RES is well-separated from the other constructs. SER has an AVE square root of 0.844, with correlations to MS (0.311) and RES (0.123) being lower, thus showing that SER maintains discriminant validity. Overall, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion confirms that each construct is sufficiently distinct from the others, ensuring good discriminant validity.

Table-6: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	MS	RES	SER
MS			
RES	0.271		
SER	0.445	0.188	

The table presents the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) for three constructs: MS, RES, and SER. The HTMT value between MS and RES is 0.271, indicating a low to moderate correlation, which suggests that these two constructs are distinct from each other, supporting discriminant validity. The HTMT value between MS and SER is 0.445, which, although higher, remains below the common threshold of 0.85. This further confirms that MS and SER are separate constructs. Lastly, the HTMT value between RES and SER is 0.188, reinforcing the distinctiveness of these constructs. Overall, the values indicate good discriminant validity, meaning the constructs are sufficiently distinct from one another in the model.
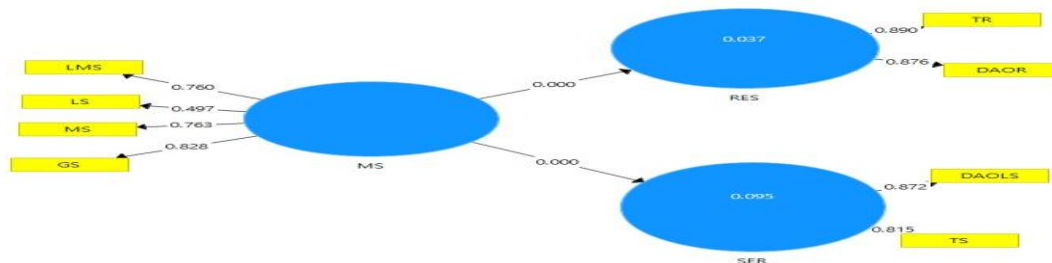
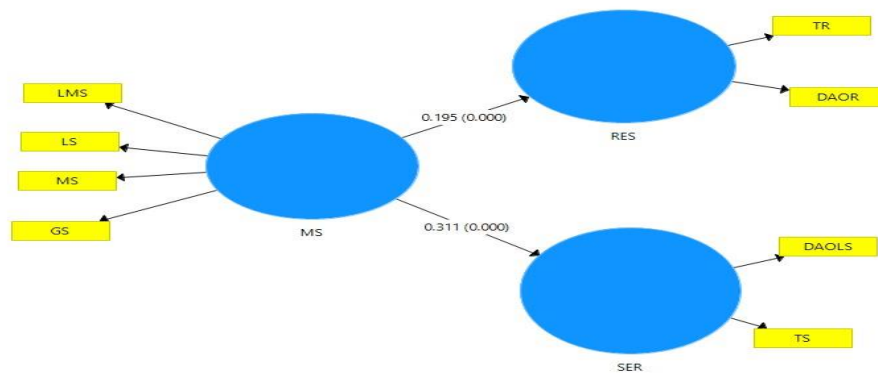*Figure-2 Path Coefficient and P-Value*
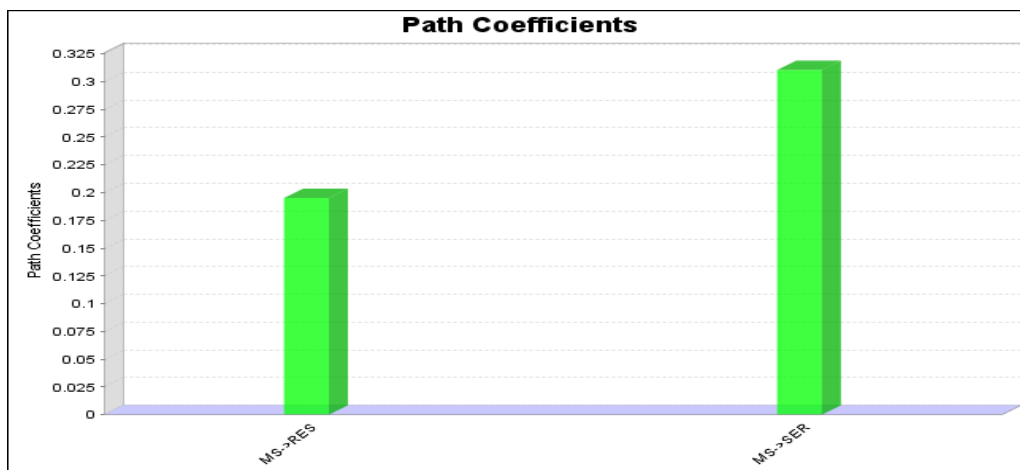
Figure-3: Reliability Value
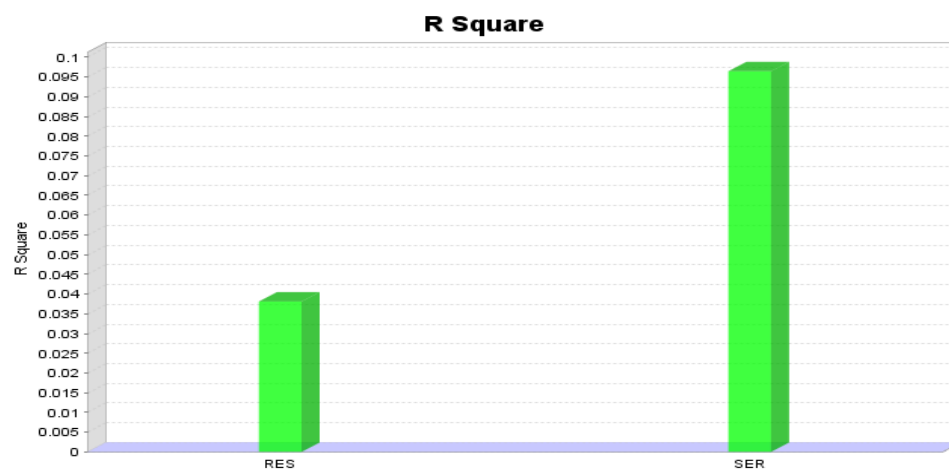

Figure-4: Bar Graph Representation

Figure-5 Bar R Square

Discussion

The role that the managerial skills of the librarians play in the creation of the resources and the quality services of the universities of Pakistan is another important subject of research, mainly because most of the schools and colleges of Pakistan rely heavily on the good quality library services that can assist in achieving good grades. This discourse analyzes selected aspects regarding the following questions: How do the competencies of managers among librarians impact the development of resources and the quality of services offered? Managerial skills are important for librarians so that they can meet the challenges of present-day university libraries. This entails several capabilities, such as strategic management, management of resources (particularly human resources), management of finance (among others), and management of change resulting from increased technology. The role of management is very important, as it determines whether libraries can be able to meet the needs of their users, especially in an ever-changing environment. Khan and Bhatti (2024) highlight that librarians in Pakistan are experiencing different dynamics that present them with the challenge of not only having to undertake the traditional library work of shelving and issuing books and other documents but also the modern managerial challenges of performance management, among others. The authors stress, focusing on the contemporary nature of library management, that library professionals must be skilled in handling both tangible and electronic material, which requires continuing education and training. This is in line with the findings that stress the leadership qualities as the foundation for increasing the productivity of librarians in Pakistani universities (Hussain & Saddiqa, 2024). This paper has also revealed the extent to which the managerial skills of the librarians affect the development of library resources. Carter and Brock outline that skilled librarianship is more than just choosing and obtaining resources; it entails the processes of having resources be well-placed and useful for the target users. It is established from Biber's framework that the evaluation of user needs and matching of resources is another strategic competency of managers (Shahzad et al., 2023). According to Hussain and Siddiqui (2016), this was an important observation because well-endowed libraries are equipped with great collections. They reported that due to a lack of marketing and promotion activities of the library resources, the librarians must market the library resources themselves, which is absent in Pakistan very often (Hanif et al., 2024).

There is an interaction observed between the quality of services offered by university libraries and the managerial competencies of the librarians. Good management practice results in better delivery of services, which is key in creating user interest and participation (Fatima & Mehmood, 2024). For example, when selecting librarians who possess effective communication skills and positive attitudes towards users, the use of the items will result in active responses from the users. Hussain et al. (2024) have highlighted that the user satisfaction level of the service is usually high when the services are efficiently managed. One of the studies conducted was confirmation of the fact that the use of transformational leadership by the librarians leads to better staff motivation and improved quality of the services being offered by the library. This leadership style is another way of enhancing staff motivation and opening the library to a culture of improvement and creativity (Issa et al., 2021).

Although it is assumed that years of experience and knowledge of effective managerial skills play a key role in the work of a librarian, the latter sometimes encounters serious difficulties at their workplace in Pakistan. These are, for instance, lack of time to pursue professional development activities, lack of funds, and lack of support from college and university institutions. Hussain and Siddiqui (2016) also noted that many librarians may not have adequate management training in best practices, which makes them fail in the development of the resources needed and delivery of quality services. But there are areas where it is possible to make some changes. We see that the introduction of technology in the delivery of library services is an opportunity for the improvement of managerial skills among the librarians. Kanwal et al. (2020) also pointed out that integration of digital tools can also help to optimize workflows, enhance the management of resources, and enhance interaction with users. In adopting these technologies, librarians are ready to be strategic players in the context of learning institutions through actively campaigning for the resources and services that would be relevant in the current institutions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the role of librarians' managerial skills regarding the development of resources and quality of services in the university libraries in Pakistan is significant

and has a wide-ranging effect. Good management practices go hand in hand with resource mobilization and deployment that are appropriate for the management of libraries in their provision of services that fit the growing needs of learners, instructors, and researchers. It is these practices that enable universities to reap good scores and output in their research since they get the relevant information at the right time and are encouraged in their learning environment. However, the current themes and issues Pakistani librarians experience include scarce funding, fluctuating technology, and compulsory professional updates. These are some of the challenges that librarians face in institutions; however, there are good opportunities for professional development in areas such as digital literacy, data management, user experience, and centered services. However, all these challenges can be surmounted by ensuring that librarians commit themselves to professional development and adapt to the new technologies by solving new problems arising from research in their institutions. With the dynamic changes of libraries in universities going forward, the librarians who build up managerial competence and leadership and contemporary competency mapping to the evolution of information services will play a key role in the enhancement of the academic libraries in Pakistan. Their roles will be very crucial in the process of changing the traditional image of the library into the center of academic and professional learning for the overall development of the university's society.

Recommendation

This study suggests the provision of opportunities for the professional growth of librarians. This opportunity could enable them to develop and polish their managerial competencies, such as strategic management, financial management, and human resources management. Furthermore, promoting the adoption of transformational leadership practices in the university libraries as embraced by librarians will improve innovation, creativity, and better services delivery. The study also suggests bringing innovative technologies into the operations of the library to automate the flow of operations, make it easy for users to access resources and get information, and improve how services are delivered to the users. This study also postulates collaborative relationships between university librarians and library associations to increase funding opportunities and resources so that they can build up their collections and respond to the demands of their institutions.

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