## Collection Development and Management in The Public Libraries of Pakistan: A Survey of Users' Satisfaction

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### ABSTRACT

*This study is an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of collection development and management policies and procedures in the public libraries in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan on the basis of users' satisfaction. A survey method was employed to conduct the research. The study covered all public libraries (N=18) of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The population of the study was the registered users of public libraries who were purposively selected at the rate of 20 per library (18X20=360). A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population. Out of 360 users', 300(83%) filled in questionnaires were received. Results of the study indicate that the opinion of users regarding various library resources and services were positive and they acknowledge the role of public library in society. They mentioned that public libraries in the province are playing a leading role in the preservation of local literature, promoting women literacy, general literacy and distance education. Users were satisfied that public libraries in province are organized and all citizens can use them. On the other hand, they were not satisfied with availability electronic, digital resources and ICTs facilities in the public libraries of the province. The study suggests users orientated services in the public libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.*

*Keywords: Public Libraries; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Collection Development; Collection Management; User Satisfaction; Library Resources; Library Services; Survey Method; Library Users; Digital Resources; Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs); Women Literacy; Local Literature Preservation; Distance Education; Pakistan*

### INTRODUCTION

Information is a fundamental variable (Schiller, 2024) which is viewed as a significant resource contributing towards building of a nation. It gives the objective to the process of building knowledge, the foundation for innovation, the inputs for educated citizenry, and consequently becomes an essential commodity for the advancement of a society. The functions of libraries become more significant in dealing with such a complicated situation

Public libraries are institutions of democracy that buy and share knowledge, raise awareness and enhance education of people of the society without any regard to creed, race, gender, age and ethnic group (Warraich & Tahira, 2025; Ikenwe & Adegbilero-Iwari, 2014).

Collection Development (CD) is a process of constructing collection of materials based on the information needs of client population. It is the process of identifying the weakness and strength in a collection and then formulating plan to correct the weakness and sustain the strength (Evans and Saponaro, 2012). To collect and develop library collections is in reality, the essence of librarianship

because all library services are centered around the collection. The core activity of every library is the collection, preservation and dissemination of information. Evans and Saponaro (2012) place six components in its loop: study of users, policies, selection, acquisition, weeding and evaluation. Collection development is a global phenomenon for libraries and information centers.

Collection Management (CM) in public libraries involves collection development process and an extended set of decisions regarding weeding, canceling serials, storage, and preservation (Johnson, 2014).

CM is a general term that has taken the place of the more limited "collection building" and "collection development" of previous decades. In its current form CM encompasses: Planning and funding, collection development, book selection, acquisitions, and provision of access, use, maintenance, evaluation, preservation, and weeding. In general, CM is the purposeful development of library collection founded on significant data instead of personal preference (Khan & Bhatti, 2021).

Users' needs are the basic component of any public library. Users' needs identification and their satisfaction are some of the primary goals of public libraries. Bhatti et al. (2015) pointed out that as a significant social institution, public libraries have to develop successful information services and meet their users' needs successfully.

The correlation between service experience, perceived quality, and user satisfaction influence user loyalty in public libraries. That is, service experience had a direct and positive effect on both user satisfaction and loyalty (Tan, Chen & Yang, 2017).

Public library collection development in Pakistan is primarily concerned with printed books, with minimal digital resource provision. It is apparent from research that libraries generally do not have a formal collection development policy and instead follows conventional selection techniques over user-driven practices (Mushtaq & Shah, 2023). Lack of adequate funds, obsolescence, and paucity of skilled personnel hinder proper management further (Warraich, Malik, & Ameen, 2018). Consequently, user satisfaction is still divided—while most appreciate book circulation and reference services, they are dissatisfied with out-of-date collections and poor digital access (Tariq et al., 2022). The current study therefore, aims to bridge this gap by investigating users satisfaction with the collection development and management in the public libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### Research Objectives
The researcher has tried to achieve the following objective.
1. To study the level of users' satisfaction regarding the resources and services of public libraries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

### Research Questions
The researcher has tried to achieve the following research question.
1. What is the level of users' satisfaction regarding resources and services of public libraries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan?

### LITERATURE REVIEW
Literature review is a critical part of research as it offers a basis for grasping the accumulated knowledge, detects gaps, and clarifies the rationale for further research. It assists researchers in critically analyzing previous studies, preventing duplication, and using existing theories and practices as a basis (Snyder, 2019). Through literature synthesis, researchers are able to determine the context of their research and connect their goals to ongoing scholarly discourses (Xiao & Watson, 2019). In addition, literature reviews

increase research credibility by showing understanding of methodological and conceptual strategies that have been utilized in the area (Paré et al., 2015).

Fati and Yelwa (2015) identified that the public libraries of Plateau state, Nigeria, did not extend relevant information to the ruler citizens and as a result, the users were not satisfied. The reasons behind this dissatisfaction were lack of fund, staff shortage, outdated resources and absence of facilities. Sharma and Chauhan (2019) mentioned that Punjab (India)'s public libraries could not fulfill the information needs of users through ICTs. For meeting library users' information needs and preserving local language, literature, and culture for the present and future generations, permanent state fiscal support through library law, renovation of library materials and services, and the appointment of qualified staff were recommended.

The research conducted by Warraich et al. (2016) reported that the majority of public libraries in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, were not providing even simple services to users. Findings of the research reported that users were not satisfied with library resources and services of public libraries. The research recommended that the public library services and resources should be upgraded to make a higher level of users' satisfaction possible.

Public libraries have a significant role in educating society. Libraries are an individual's initial source of contact with books outside the home environment. Public libraries also help the education system in the region to transfer knowledge and habituate children and adults with reading (Shafawi & Hassan, 2018).

Users' needs are the basic component of any public library. The determination of users' needs and satisfying them are some of the major goals of public libraries. Khan (2015) identified that as an essential social institution, public libraries need to develop useful information services and meet their users' needs effectively.

The interrelationship between service experience, perceived quality, and user satisfaction influences the user's loyalty in public libraries. In essence, service experience had direct and positive impacts on both user satisfaction and loyalty (Tan, Chen & Yang, 2017).

Taufiq, Rehman and Ashiq (2020) analyzed the user satisfaction level concerning the services and resources of the public library and the issues of the Lahore public library users, Pakistan. The results revealed that most of the respondents used to visit the public library on a daily basis and were satisfied with the library's circulation services. They viewed the public library as the optimal information source in their region. Yet they were discovered to be unhappy with the internet services provided at their libraries along with the absence of a library-user relationship. The findings of this study are informative and helpful in terms of enhancing public library resources and services in Pakistan with the aim of enhancing the user satisfaction level.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research utilized a quantitative research pattern to explore users' satisfaction with public libraries resources and services of Pakistan. The survey technique was used because it enables gathering data from a relatively sizable number of people within a limited period of time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A structured questionnaire was created as the main instrument for data collection, taking into consideration users' experiences and satisfaction with library collections.

The sample consisted of 18 public library users, and from each of them, 20 users were sampled, making the total sample size 360 users. Questionnaires were administered to the entire 360 users, of which 300

valid responses were collected, achieving a response rate of 83%, and this can be considered adequate for quantitative analysis (Babbie, 2021). The data gathered were summarily tabulated and analyzed by using Statistical package for social science (SPSS) 20, to determine user satisfaction regarding public libraries resources and services.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
### Section A: Demographics of the Respondents

The results show that majority (76%) of the respondents were males followed by (24%) females. Most of the respondents (35.0%) held BS degrees, followed by M.A/M.Sc (21.0%) and B.A/B.Sc (17.3%). Fewer had middle level of education (12.7%) or matriculation certification (7.0%). A small number of respondents held advanced degrees like M.Phil (3.3%) and Ph.D (1.3%). This indicates that the respondents were educated to a high standard, with a large percentage holding undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications. The details of respondents level of education is given in table 1.
**Table 1**

*Educational Levels of the Respondents (N=300)*

| Education | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Matric | 21 | 7.0% |
| F.A/F.Sc | 38 | 12.7% |
| B.A/B.Sc | 52 | 17.3% |
| BS | 105 | 35.0% |
| M.A/M.Sc | 63 | 21.0% |
| M.Phil | 10 | 3.3% |
| Ph.D | 4 | 1.3% |
| Other | 7 | 2.3% |
| **Total** | **300** | **100%** |

The findings of table 2 indicate that majority of the respondents (42.0%) were working in the private sector, while government workers (31.0%) stood second. Fewer respondents (13.0%) were business persons, and 14.0% were in other occupational groups. The above distribution implies that the majority of library users belong to professional and service-based backgrounds, where libraries are often visited by those involved in both public and private sectors of employment.

**Table 2**
*Occupations of the Respondents (N=300)*

| Occupation | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Govt. Employment | 93 | 31.0% |
| Private Job | 126 | 42.0% |
| Business | 39 | 13.0% |
| Other | 42 | 14.0% |
| **Total** | **300** | **100%** |

The statistics in table 3 reflect that most respondents (38.7%) are in the 26–35 years age group, followed by 32.3% of those in the 15–25 years age bracket. Fewer respondents were in the 36–45 years (11.7%) and 46–55 years (9.3%) age groups, while 7.0% were in the 56–65 years category, and a mere 1.0% was over 65 years of age. It reflects that library users are comprised mainly of young adults, supporting the premise that public libraries are used more intensively by students and young careerists.
**Table 3**

*Age Groups of the Respondents (N=300)*

| Age | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 15 - 25 Years | 97 | 32.3% |
| 26 - 35 Years | 116 | 38.7% |
| 36 - 45 Years | 35 | 11.7% |
| 46 - 55 Years | 28 | 9.3% |
| 56 - 65 Years | 21 | 7.0% |
| Above 65 Years | 3 | 1.0% |
| **Total** | **300** | **100%** |

The information in table 4 indicates that the highest percentage of the respondents (28.0%) were casual members, with general members (27.3%) and student members (24.0%) following closely behind. A relatively smaller number were lifetime members (13.0%), whereas only 7.7% were children's members. The allocation of these percentages indicates that public libraries are mostly visited by temporary or casual users, as there is a high rate of regular general and student members. The comparatively lower percentage of lifetime and children's membership reflects the importance of library authorities promoting long-term involvement and young people's participation.

**Table 4**

*Library Membership of the Respondents (N=300)*

| Membership | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Life time Members | 39 | 13.0% |
| General Members | 82 | 27.3% |
| Students Members | 72 | 24.0% |
| Children's Members | 23 | 7.7% |
| Casual Members | 84 | 28.0% |
| **Total** | **300** | **100%** |

**Section B: Users' Satisfaction Regarding Accessing Library Resources and Services**

The statistics in table 5 indicate that most of the respondents visit and utilize library resources on a regular basis. Almost 68% (weekly + daily) of the respondents visit the library and 71% access reading materials within the library on a weekly or daily basis. Likewise, 57% visit the newspaper section on a regular basis, demonstrating continued interest in news.

On the other hand, moderate use exists in specialist divisions: periodicals and journals (61%) are regularly used, but digital collections (26%) and online databases (25%) register relatively lower usage levels, reflecting limited awareness or access of electronic materials.

Reference materials and services usage is also moderate, with archive and Braille sections showing lower usage, indicating that these services serve more niche user needs. As a whole, the results indicate that public libraries are in use for general reading purposes and print-based resources, whereas digital and specialized services need to be promoted further and also with regard to user training.

**Table 5**

*Frequency of Users' Satisfaction Regarding Accessing Library Resources and Services (N=300)*

| Statement | Never | Rarely | Monthly | Weekly | Daily |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How often do you go to library | 0 (0%) | 34 (11%) | 59 | 80 (26%) | 127(42%) |

| | | | (19%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How often do you use reading materials in the library Premises | 23 (7%) | 33 (11%) | 29 (9%) | 86 (28%) | 129 (43%) |
| How often do you go to Newspaper section of the library | 39 (13%) | 54 (18%) | 34 (11%) | 65 (21%) | 108 (36%) |
| How often do you go to Periodical and Journal section of the library | 50 (16%) | 29 (9%) | 35 (11%) | 116 (38%) | 70 (23%) |
| How often do you get the reading materials issued | 41 (13%) | 82 (27%) | 36 (12%) | 97 (32%) | 44 (14%) |
| How often do you get benefit out of Archive Section of the library | 40 (13%) | 105 (35%) | 33 (11%) | 67 (22%) | 55 (18%) |
| How often do you consult reference materials | 31(10%) | 114 (38%) | 41 (13%) | 61 (20%) | 53 (13%) |
| How often do you use any of reference services available in library | 37 (12%) | 111 (37%) | 33 (11%) | 71 (23%) | 48 (16%) |
| How often do you get benefit from digital collection present in the library | 79 (26%) | 106 (35%) | 35 (11%) | 41 (13%) | 39 (13%) |
| How often do you use access to online databases in the library | 73 (24%) | 120 (40%) | 32 (10%) | 39 (13%) | 36 (12%) |
| How often do you visit Braille book section of the library | 114 (38%) | 82 (27%) | 43 (14%) | 36 (12%) | 25 (8%) |

Note: (1= Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Monthly, 4=Weekly, 5=Daily)

Section C: Users' Satisfaction regarding applications of ICTs in the Public Libraries

The statistics in table 6 show a mixed trend of ICT use among library patrons. Internet (59%) and computers (59%) are most commonly used technologies ("often" and "always" added together), showing that libraries have a significant role in offering online access to people. On the other hand, email facilities (55%) are used frequently by most respondents.

Nonetheless, relatively fewer users consistently use photocopiers (40%), printers (26%), or scanners (25%), indicating moderate use of reprographic facilities. One of the interesting findings is low utilization of online databases (27%), digital cameras (27%), online catalogues (26%), and CD-ROMs (20%), indicating limited digital literacy, access problems, or lack of adequate publicity for these resources.

Overall, these findings indicate that basic ICT tools (Internet and computers) are universally used, but sophisticated digital and multimedia tools are underused in public libraries. Improved ICT infrastructure and training initiatives may promote user interaction with these technologies. The over all analysis indicate that users are satisfied with the application of ICT in the public libraries of Khyber Paktunkhwa, Pakistan.

**Table 6**

*Frequency of Respondents regarding Application of ICTs in public libraries (N=300)*

| Statement | Seldom | Never | Little | Often | Always |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Do you use Internet in the library | 38 (12%) | 43 (14%) | 41 (13%) | 66 (22%) | 112 (37%) |
| Do you use Computers in the library | 37 (12%) | 47 (15%) | 36 (12%) | 100 (33%) | 80 (26%) |
| Do you use E-mail in the library | 35 (11%) | 54 (18%) | 46 (15%) | 96 (32%) | 69 (23%) |
| Do you use Photocopiers in the library | 28 (9%) | 101 (33%) | 48 (16%) | 65 (21%) | 58 (19%) |
| Do you use Online Databases in | 32 (10%) | 128 | 57 (19%) | 46 (15%) | 37 (12%) |

| Statement | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| the library | | (42%) | | | |
| Do you use Printers in the library | 37 (12%) | 112 (37%) | 71 (23%) | 52 (17%) | 28 (9%) |
| Do you use Digital Cameras in the library | 40 (13%) | 118 (39%) | 62 (20%) | 51 (17%) | 29 (10%) |
| Do you use Online Catalogues in the library | 43 (14%) | 117 (39%) | 62 (20%) | 48 (16%) | 30 (10%) |
| Do you use Scanners in the library | 37 (12%) | 126 (42%) | 63 (21%) | 45 (15%) | 29 (10%) |
| Do you use CD-ROM in the library | 86 (28%) | 107 (36%) | 46 (15%) | 34 (11%) | 27 (9%) |

Note:  (1= Seldom, 2=Never, 3=Little, 4=Often, 5=Always)

**Section D: Users' Satisfaction Regarding Availability ofLibrary Resource and Services**

The general findings in table 7 suggest an extremely positive attitude towards library services among the users. Most of the respondents concurred or strongly concurred that the collection, organization, and facilities of the library are satisfactory and useful. For instance, 72% valued the library's function of offering purposeful leisure reading, and 73% held that the collection is helpful for enhancing general literacy within the community. Likewise, 67% found the repair and binding section useful in maintaining library collection including books, journals and reading materials.

Satisfied respondents were also reported in the provision of support for distance education (71%), student learning (70%), and preservation of culture (74%). But areas such as digital collections (consensus at only 6%) and ICT maintenance (18% consensus) reported relatively lower positive consensus, indicating the need for modernization and enhanced technological integration.

Generally, the data indicate that although conventional library services—e.g., print collection, literacy assistance, and user access—are well performing, computer and ICT facilities need to be improved to satisfy contemporary users' demands.

**Table 7**

*Users' Satisfaction regarding the availability of resources and services in public libraries (N=300)*

| Statement | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agreed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| What is your opinion to that "services of re-pairing and binding section of the library is commendable in preservation of reading materials". | 0 (0%) | 28 (9%) | 40 (13%) | 200 (67%) | 32 (11%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Ladies section of the library is encouraging literacy in women". | 0 (0%) | 29 (10%) | 48 (16%) | 187 (62%) | 36 (12%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library is preserving literature related to local culture, language and history". | 0 (0%) | 36 (12%) | 41 (14%) | 192 (64%) | 31 (10%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library on the basis of its collection helps the people to spend their leisure time interestingly and purposefully". | 0 (0%) | 37 (12%) | 31 (10%) | 217 (72%) | 15 (5%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library | 0 (0%) | 30 (10%) | 53 (18%) | 202 (67%) | 15 (5%) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| collection is very much supportive in opportunistic learning". | | | | |
| What is your opinion to that "Advertisements display spots attract job seekers in the newspaper section of the library". | 0 (0%) | 25 (8%) | 51 (17%) | 224 (75%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library through its collection supports institutions engaged in distance education". | 4 (1%) | 25 (8%) | 58 (19%) | 203 (68%) | 10 (3%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library collection is good for enhancement of general literacy and numeracy in the community". | 0 (0%) | 33 (11%) | 48 (16%) | 219 (73%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Archive Collection of the library is well maintained to serve researchers" | 7 (2%) | 29 (10%) | 48 (16%) | 206 (68%) | 10 (3%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library general collections are also use by the users of special libraries". | 0 (0%) | 18 (6%) | 90 (30%) | 192 (64%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library Collection is well organized and is easy to find for general readers". | 0 (0%) | 45 (15%) | 38 (13%) | 217 (72%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Senior Citizens are consulted while developing collection in their respective sections". | 5 (2%) | 29 (10%) | 60 (20%) | 206 (69%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library collection is supportive for students as per their syllabi/levels". | 6 (2%) | 36 (12%) | 50 (17%) | 203 (68%) | 5 (2%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library holds exhibitions of its special collection occasionally". | 0 (0%) | 32 (11%) | 76 (25%) | 192 (64%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library collection for adult education, learning and entertainment is satisfactory". | 0 (0%) | 24 (8%) | 96 (32%) | 180 (60%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library keeps the kids engaged through various brain developing toys and arithmetic games". | 8 (3%) | 47 (16%) | 31 (10%) | 216 (71%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library collection is enhancing information Literacy in the community" | 6 (2%) | 43 (14%) | 62 (21%) | 175 (58%) | 14 (5%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library collection attracts children's to implant and promote reading habits among them" | 0 (0%) | 37 (12%) | 79 (26%) | 184 (61%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library Collection is Users friendly and need | 19 (6%) | 43 (14%) | 27 (9%) | 202 (67%) | 9 (3%) |

based for reading and learning".

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| What is your opinion to that "Appropriate reference services are available to locate the required information/source". | 8 (3%) | 47 (16%) | 64 (21%) | 174 (58%) | 7 (2%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Libraries role through its resources for provision of life long leaning/skills is quite appreciable". | 5 (2%) | 47 (16%) | 67 (22%) | 181 (60%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Calligraphic a collection of the library invites youth talent to innovation". | 0 (0%) | 104 (35%) | 30 (10 %) | 166 (55%) | 0 (0%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library digital/electronic collection is encouraging information literacy in the community" | 4 (1%) | 87 (29%) | 157 (52%) | 47 (16%) | 5 (2%) |
| What is your opinion to that "ICTs condition in the library is good and well maintained". | 10 (3%) | 80 (27%) | 157 (52%) | 48 (16%) | 5 (2%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Library Provides access to internet, A.V, apparatus and databases/links" | 6 (2%) | 96 (32%) | 162 (54%) | 34 (11%) | 2 (0.7%) |
| What is your opinion to that "Digital collection in the library is quite adequate and up to date". | 0 (0%) | 248 (83%) | 34 (11%) | 18 (6%) | 0 (0%) |

**Note: (1= Strongly Disagreed, 2= Disagreed, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agreed)**

## CONCLUSION

The study findings indicated that the collection development and management practices in the public libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are highly effective to cater to the informational and educational needs of the users. The users were content with the sufficiency, pertinence, and arrangement of the library collections, and also with the libraries' contribution towards literacy promotion, protection of indigenous literature, and facilitation of distance education. Yet the research also showed alarming gaps in the accessibility and availability of digital and electronic resources and limited ICT infrastructure and services. It was established that although traditional collection management approaches continue to be robust, modernization and integration of technology are necessary to further improve user satisfaction and ensure the ongoing relevance of public libraries. Thus, it is recommended that library authorities and policy-makers accord high priority to the digitization of materials, internet connectivity provision, ICT skills training for staff, and the development of new collection development policies that shift resources in equilibrium between print and electronic media. Increasing budgetary provisions, establishing partnerships with schools and colleges, and engaging community involvement in collection planning can further enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of public library services in the province.

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