

The present status of public libraries in the state of Kuwait: librarians' perspectives

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Abstract

This study aims to explore librarians' perspectives regarding the present status of public libraries and their activities to serve the community in Kuwait. To achieve the objectives of the study, the descriptive analytical method was used. A random sample of 262 librarians was chosen to answer 42 questions in a questionnaire that was

divided into five dimensions: the role of public libraries (9 questions), the availability of information services (6 questions), using information technology (6 questions), library environment (7 questions), the administration and financial level (6 questions) and awareness of whole library activities (8 questions). The data were analysed using SPSS Statistics to calculate the estimate of the librarians' responses and the significant statistical differences in their responses using General linear model. The study found a low level for all axes of the study, with statistically significant differences in the librarians' estimates due to the variable gender, age, educational qualification and number of years of experience. The study recommended the need to support libraries for users, especially with regard to providing advanced materials to meet a wide range of print and digital needs and providing the appropriate environment with a focus on awareness of library activities. The value of this study lies in exploring and understanding the perspectives of librarians, which is indispensable for improving services and resources offered by public libraries.

Keywords

public library; librarians' perspectives; library status, Kuwait

Methodology

To achieve the objectives of the study, the descriptive analytical method was used to investigate the state of public libraries in Kuwait. A random sample of 262 librarians was chosen to answer 42 questions in a questionnaire that was divided into five dimensions: the role of public libraries (9 questions), the availability of information services (6 questions), using information technology (6 questions), library environment (7 questions), the administration and financial level (6 questions) and awareness of whole library activities (8 questions) as shown in Appendix (1). In addition the questionnaire included five demographic variables which are gender, age, qualification and experience. The participants answered based on the five-point Likert scale. The data was analysed using SPSS software for the mean standard deviation and the GLM Multivariate procedure which provides regression analysis and analysis of variance.. In addition the questionnaire included five demographic variables which are gender, age, qualification and experience. The participants answered based on the five-point Likert scale. The data was analysed using SPSS software for the mean standard

deviation and the GLM Multivariate procedure which provides regression analysis and analysis of variance.

In fact, the questionnaire was reviewed by a number of examiners specialists in library and information sciences and modified according to their suggestions. The reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, where data collected showed a high level of internal consistency as Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.89, where a coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable by most social science researchers (DeVellis, 2012), which indicates that the results of the questionnaire can be generalised based on the sample.