Current trends and issues affecting academic libraries and leadership skills

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to reflect on major issues and trends of academic libraries and leadership in the changing nature of higher education. Changing environment of academic libraries has impacted significantly on the knowledge, skills requirement and role of the library leaders, and how organizations can maintain and manage the changing nature of academic libraries as well as leadership while effective leadership is extremely required for the library leaders and organizations are concern about future scenarios. The primary objective is to identify the key challenges in libraries, leadership skills and approaches of the leaders, their effective leadership traits and future perceptions are discussed.

Design/methodology/approach – The aim of this paper is to facilitate as how to develop effective and successful leadership for the academic libraries during the changing nature of higher education. The findings and recommendations in the paper are based on personal experience of leadership positions in an academic library as well as experience of library leaders across the world.

Findings – Academic libraries are facing similar challenges and issues across the world. This paper identifies that library leaders need to be effective communicators, strategic thinkers, visionary, and able to examine the new ways of working.

Originality/value – This paper discusses why academic library leaders need a set of new skills and how can they develop leadership skills and competencies in the changing nature of academic libraries.

Keywords Leadership, Academic libraries, Challenges and opportunities, Changing nature, Skills and competencies, Trends and issues

Introduction

There are several definitions of leadership skills and all definitions try to explain and define leadership qualities and competencies for academic organizations and other organizations as well. Unfortunately, few studies have been conducted related to effective leadership in academic libraries (Fagan, 2012). Although effective leadership traits are vital toward influencing team to eagerly exert them and cooperate toward collective organizational goals. Successful leadership is based on many key skills and competencies, these skills are highly required to be a successful leader in academic libraries, and the best leaders provide integrity, foster moral, clear vision, and stimulate innovation. Though there is no concept of leadership in academic libraries without transformational leadership that motivates subordinates to develop confidence by offering vigorous assistance for building high level of performance. In the beginning, perception of the transformational method was expressed by Burns (1978), in terms of political science area and later articulated in the theory of leadership in institutions. Successful leaders are those who motivate and inspire their subordinates to accomplish more than expectation and increase the workers confidence levels by providing assistance to develop high standard and norms. As other organizations, academic libraries also need leaders who have effective and successful leadership competencies and skills for the future leadership. Library profession is reshaping because of innovative technology and hybrid collections and it is crucial to identify the current requirements for academic libraries, there is a need to build a strong leadership by mentorship and training (Ross, 2013). In terms of an administration perspective, leadership is an ability to transform theory into practice and leaders’ behavior play an important role in
transforming ideas into real world, and leadership is a way of influencing adherents for achieving their objectives. It has been noticed that academic institutions have gone through a rapid transit that is much faster than ever in the history of library profession, and the transit has increased a demand of new set of leadership skills. These skills can be developed by attending workshops and through professional networking that may be used to enhance new skills and competencies. However, a successful leadership not only requires a particular set of skills but also regular practice, which is an important element for the successful and effective leadership. As Fallon et al. (2011) reported in their study that successful leadership needs a systematic and constant exercise as well as a long process and procedure to enhance leadership skills to work in the twenty-first century, and preparation is needed by now. A leader should show eagerness, a solid determination, and self-confidence to achieve the goals and engage with the workers to assist them to the success and provide employees an opportunity of authorization and relaxations at workplace. In general, a leadership is an enormously significant personality that affects organizational values, and achieves goals and mission of the organization. Successful leaders must continuously be concerned with the future scenarios and not just the present situation of whatever issues they have. Leaders must have the ability to look forward as read the direction of the profession including patron’s behavior and emerging trends in libraries. After literature review, the structure of this paper is as follows: collaboration, emerging trends, skills and qualities and leadership development opportunities.

Literature review
A literature review discloses several theories that attempt to describe and explain leadership skills and approaches. Leadership skills vary from organization to organization and person to person, there are no standard norms to measure the successful leadership skills (Fagan, 2012). Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) described leadership traits as behavior theories and situational-based leadership theories while other scholars identified that an effective leadership is more about the characteristic, approach, performance and attitude of followers and from “substitutes for leadership” (Kerr and Jermier, 1978, p. 376). On the other hand, Zehndorfer (2014) described that three skills are more important for the successful leadership “Successful leadership depended upon the possession of technical, human and conceptual skills” (p. 50). A culture assessment of the institution and leadership is complicated and it may be assessed from several different perceptions and process should be implemented step by step (Carter, 2014). Spies (2000) stated that complication of leadership in academic libraries is a result of changing the way of education and managing these changes are not easy for leaders (Miller, 2011). Turock (2003) stated that diverse population of higher education is significantly changing and this current trend affecting library profession; consequently, libraries need more diverse background leaders. Libraries not only need greater diversity in the profession and employees, but also need greater diversity in its leadership. Kotter (2013) described that there are many changes in all types of organization and these changes need more demand to develop more leadership skills. If leaders have high competencies in management and leadership, they can handle challenges in future and present. Successful organizations prepare people to develop their skills to meet future challenges (Spies, 2000; Kotter, 2013). Roe (2014) stated about change that leaders should prepare individuals and the organization for change in spite of accepting a new system and reduce resistance, “It is necessary to prepare individuals and the organization for change. This means articulating the new vision, breaking down the old structure and processes, and sure everyone is ready to leave the old status quo behind” (p. 294). In addition, library leaders and staff of the libraries need new skills and competencies to maintain and manage successful amendment in academic libraries (Riggs, 2001; Delaney and Bates, 2015). Libraries are facing issues of continuous reforms in
information-seeking behavior of library patrons because of shifting resources and information technology, librarians have to focus on their traditional roles toward reorganizing the library services and expectations of their consumers (Novak and Day, 2015). It has been suggested that leaders need a new set of skills and competencies to deal trends and issues in times of change, as Kotter (2013) stated that the present leadership methods are not sufficient to develop organizations in the twenty-first century; thus, leaders are needed to develop new set of skills in the interest to be successful in the competitive era as it is required to maintain and keep up with knowledge and skills (Delaney and Bates, 2015; Kotter, 2013; Leong, 2014). Galbraith et al. (2001) stated in their study that a number of library leaders were found satisfied with their leadership behaviors, attitude and leadership method, they have been applying transformational leadership in their libraries, however, they are eager to enhance their leadership skills and competencies because present skills are not sufficient for the future leadership. On the other hand, Hernon and Rossiter (2006) identified that emotional intelligence qualities are considered to be the most essential qualities that can be applied for transactional and transformational leadership practices. They observed emotional intelligence skills are the most valuable to build a shared vision and demonstrate others about achieving goals and encouraging subordinates (Hicks, 2011). It supports to establish trust among group and increase their motivation to work in a supportive mode that is very significant for the successful leadership in academic libraries. Kreitz (2009) discussed that emotional intelligence traits are used by university library leaders and management people of the organization working with the same skills as other associations in the western USA. Library leaders and management team members of the organization both have different vision and goals while both work in the same way, motivate and encourage team and support them to achieve goals (Moropa, 2010; Kalin, 2008). This reflects on the different roles and responsibilities held by library leaders and management groups in their organizations. Nevertheless, emotional intelligence has positive outcomes on the library leadership as well as institution. Literature review has identified many leadership styles for all types of organization, as one of the leadership theories that often mentions in various leadership books, the idea of “Great Man Theory”, was introduced in the early nineteenth century (Busse, 2014). Great Man Theory has two basic assumptions: leaders are born not made, and a great leader comes up and solves the problems whenever there is a need of leadership (Gill, 2006; Busse, 2014; Roe, 2014; Zehndorfer, 2014). However, the Great Man Theory is unscientific and has no experimental validity. It is only a hypothetical piece of notion. It is believed that some people become great and successful leaders independent of their conservational situations. The Great Man Theory is absolutely rejected by several contemporary theorists and even by few leaders themselves (Zehndorfer, 2014; Gill, 2006). Born leaders are not successful in the fast-changing environment of the academic libraries because leadership needs continue exposure and practice as growing demands of the library profession. Great leadership qualities and traits by themselves are not sufficient for achieving goals and effectiveness. Trait theory is a modification of Great Man Theory which discusses that leadership trait and quality can be obtained (Roe, 2014; Gill, 2006). The trait theory of leadership describes that there are certain recognizable characteristics or qualities that are unique to leaders and those good leaders have such qualities to some extent. Leadership traits and qualities can be inborn or they can be obtained through regular practice and training. Busse (2014) stated that the trait theory is also recognized as outdated by many new theorists, it is not based on any research or logical development of notions and principles. It is more of an imaginary concept that fails when subjected to experiential tests. It is only a descriptive theory on how some persons emerge as leaders. It can be applied by employees at all levels in all types of organizations (Martin, 2016). Leaders can utilize the information from the theory to evaluate their situation in the institution and to evaluate how their position can be made stronger in
the institution. Leaders may get an in-depth understanding of their personality and the way they can affect others. This theory makes the leaders aware of their weakness and strengths and thus they get an understanding of how they may improve their leadership qualities and skills (Gilstrap, 2009; Busse, 2014; Roe, 2014). On the other side, Yang (2015) describes that laissez-faire leadership is recognized as a lack of leadership of any type or a zero leadership because this leadership style does not provide feedback to their assistants. In general, laissez-faire leadership has negative view while a leader expects the workers to carry out many tasks in their own way with minimum supervision and monitor. Many employees want to perform their task without involvement and directions from their leaders but people need a little supervision and they appreciate being left alone to manage their own matters. Yang (2015) tries to draw attention as possible positive consequences of laissez-faire leadership leading to a sense of independence and self-control (Konya and Gurel, 2014; Yang, 2015; Martin, 2016). It has been identified that the laissez-faire leadership style provides a little supervision or no directions and gives employees authority to determine goals, make decisions, and resolve issues on their own. The laissez-faire leadership can be used if employees are greatly experienced, highly educated, and skilled (Kotter, 2013; Yang, 2015). Awan and Khalid (2010) reported that the laissez-faire leadership style shows a little control on the team and does not interfere in the affairs of workers. This type of leadership is successful when followers are trustworthy, experienced, educated, and highly skilled. Awan and Khalid (2010) reported that authoritarian leadership style is also known as autocratic leadership and this type of leadership has complete control over decision making. Subordinates are used as resources for information, but their input is not essentially recognized when it comes time for an authoritarian leader to take action. Some authoritarian leaders act externally aggressive and dominant while others focus on using experience to act quickly and strategically. Awan and Khalid (2010) reported that 93 percent of head librarians adopt autocratic leadership style and only 7 percent head librarians adopt the laissez-faire leadership style. Majority of chief librarians are in favor of the autocratic leadership style at the university level as they are job oriented. An authoritarian leadership style controls and directs all activities of the workers to achieve goals without any participation by the subordinates, such type of leadership has full control over the assistants. It means that an authoritarian leadership is best used in conditions where control is necessary. When team members are inexperienced and unfamiliar with the work and result may be unsuccessful, then heavy supervision is necessary. An authoritative leader organizes the adherents toward a common vision and focuses on achieving goals (Awan and Khalid, 2010). Anyway, it is difficult to decide which leadership style will be more successful for the academic libraries. Fought and Misawa (2016) reported that an effective and successful leadership needs a set of new skills and competencies such as strong communication skills, the ability to manage others and a willingness to embrace change even in difficult situations. Rogers (2007) identified that leadership is currently facing many challenges and issues in academic libraries because future is unpredictable and it is difficult to provide and manage relevant contents to the library users in the digital environment. Library leaders have to make good decisions about facility priorities, resources selection, budget management, and institutional structures (Carter, 2014; Xia and Li, 2015). These tasks are not easy to handle unless library leaders have special and new set of skills for the future leadership while visibility is so limited and future is not clear by now (Moropa, 2010). It is very difficult for leaders to be successful in future, if they do not have a regular exposure to new skills, as Kotter (2013) stated that more change always demands more leadership skills, when leaders have high competencies in management and leadership, they can meet challenges for tomorrow’s leadership. Successful enterprises do not wait for leaders to come along, they seek people with leadership potential and expose them to career experiences designed to develop that
potential. Le (2015) stated that academic libraries in the USA are facing five major challenges and academic library leaders are required to develop five major skills to be successful in the academic libraries. Library leaders need to find the best way to work with the challenges and issues in the academic libraries and support research and scholarship. Le (2015) reported that library leaders are needed to enhance five major skills to handle five major challenges in the changing environment of academic libraries; these skills include a clear vision, integrity, effective communication skills, collaborative mindset, and management skills. These challenges and issues do not end here, rest of the academic libraries all over the world are having the same challenges, thus library leaders need to develop their skills and competencies for the future leadership (Kalin, 2008; Le, 2015).

Yang et al. (2016) identified that a collaborative mindset skill is one of the five key skills for leaders and organizations that has been established to develop collaboration among academic libraries and librarians in the developing countries. A collaborative environment is created through formal gatherings, group discussions, team-based learning approaches, and activities across the developing countries. Many library leaders and senior-level librarians from the region participated in the collaborative activities, and found a positive impact on their skills development, which is required for the future library leadership (Yang et al., 2016). Some institutions support their leaders to develop new skills and competencies but not all institutions support their employees. Another factor is personal interest in new skills development; many leaders do not show their own interest in developing new skills and competencies (Yang et al., 2016; Ansari and Khadher, 2011). However, these issues cannot generalize; it may be considered in the wider perspective of Asian countries in the Gulf region as well as rest of the third world nations. Gwyer (2015) stated that collaboration is important at all levels among academic libraries that increase access to digital resources as a new trend in electronic resources in resource sharing, cooperative collection development needs a strong collaboration. It is identified as an important element to work with research output including working with publishers, at the same time negotiation skills are required for licensing electronic resources that means an effective communication skill is needed to be developed for library leadership (Achua and Lussier, 2010). Novak and Day (2015) stated that libraries are leading with new challenges and issues with collection development in electronic resources and this new phenomenon needs the consortium model as resource sharing. Dewey (2005) reported that university library should be deeply involved in teaching and research with the faculty and researchers because university cannot achieve goals and mission without library. Leaders and staff need new set of skills to work with research and teaching and these skills include collaboration and strong communication skills to work with the students and faculty. Neufeld (2014) stated that structure of the education is altering, users require more services and their expectations are beyond the limitations while budget is main concern and how is it possible to manage. Phillips (2014) discussed that successful leaders manage both in and outside the boundary and achieve objectives by their high quality of leadership skills and traits, by achieving goals and mission in an organization and develop the interest and keenness among employees, “Deciding on appropriate goals and priorities for achieving them” (Achua and Lussier, 2010, p. 371). It can be a realistic approach for enhancing effective leadership behavior, attitudes and traits would have direct impact on the organization in progressive directions for the future. Generally, it has been identified that collaboration, leadership development, effective leadership skills and qualities are the most significant components for the next generation leaders. The structure of this paper is divided into four key sections:

1. Collaboration: Why is collaboration important? Collaboration is a key to success. Many academic libraries encourage library professionals to work with communities outside the library. This section discusses the importance of collaboration and includes some suggestions for ways to collaborate.
(2) Emerging trends: academic libraries have many emerging trends and issues around the world. Some of these are discussed here as well as how those trends are affecting libraries and leadership.

(3) Skills and qualities: What skills and qualities do future leaders need to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century? New set of leadership skills will be required of leaders for academic libraries.

(4) Leadership development opportunities: Why is important to develop leaders? Because leadership development is important for libraries and it is an urgent need of the library profession. Leaders have limited opportunities to engage with leadership development, even the most talented individuals with the greatest potential often lack access to the opportunities.

Collaboration
It is a responsibility of library leaders and administrators to understand both the uniqueness and the balancing nature of all their roles to become more involved in the curriculum of their institution. Leaders must have a clear understanding of the scholarship and university to work closely with the faculty to know about courses offered by the institution, and be active in research activities and get feedback about library resources, facilities and should know outcomes including the impact of the library. Process and procedures of measuring the impact of services and resources are not easy, and by assessing the impact would be securing the future of libraries and preparing the leaders and staff for the future challenges (Carter, 2014).

It has been identified that library users must be aware of library assets and benefit from full range of resources and services; the library needs to closely work with the faculty, researchers and student conducive to awareness of its resources and services. Library patrons can be more engaged with the library if they found the relevancy to their information needs, and librarians should be engaged in the classroom that action can be more useful to the users rather than giving instruction at the reference desk. Engaging in the classroom needs special instruction that should be based on the requirement of special group, and subject-based services and resources should be covered during the class room instructions. Traditional approaches to learning are outdated for both library users and library, library professionals require new approaches and methods that should reflect and assist new teaching techniques. Outreach programs and approaches should be actively implemented as information literacy initiatives, these initiatives increase the relationship between the library and users as well as increase delivery on demand scenarios, it is clear that collaboration with faculty, students and researchers is important for the academic library and leaders must have collaborative mindset (Delaney and Bates, 2015).

Many universities have digitized projects and these projects need a close relationship between faculty and library, library needs to introduce new technology to work with digitized project as well as need subject specialization. In conclusion, leaders must have collaboration with informational technology department to work on and off campus. It means that both internal and external relationships are important for the future leadership in the digital age, and without collaboration it is not possible to work with faculty and researchers.

In addition, the research environment of academic libraries need collaboration and develop a healthy relationship with people at all levels such as:

- Library should hire skilled, collaborative mindset and friendly employees with open mind including new set of current skills. It is a responsibility of library administrators and leaders to create and maintain opportunity to develop a good relationship among the staff members. It helps workers to enhance their skills but it
should be strategically planned. This has a positive impact on both employee and employer as it offers relevant and current information to the research scholars (Le, 2015; Delaney and Bates, 2015).

- Offer best techniques to access and find information for the library patrons, advice on scholarly communication and open access resources at the beginning stage that needs a close relationship (Wynne et al., 2016; Weiner et al., 2009).

- Collaboration provides an opportunity for self-awareness, and awareness of others can transform a leader’s effectiveness in managing change, it means that library leader needs to closely work with faculty, researchers, and students. Library leaders should know about the impact of library, and feedback is the best tool for self-awareness and awareness is a key to managing library response to reform and improve abilities and creative thinking (Schreiber and Shannon, 2008).

- Teach information literacy classes about how researchers may generate and use information, teaching with library patrons needs a good relationship with the students and friendly teaching method creates an active learning environment (Dewey, 2005).

- Create opportunities to develop a good relationship with faculty and researchers because the new trend in library is to support research need and determine the scope and requirement of research data and researchers within a team, faculty and the institution. As a result, new research roles require an informal training and networking support and all these need collaboration and abilities to learn and enhance new skills and work with the change. Managing change is the most important leadership skill to learn for the present and the predictable future (Brown et al., 2015).

Academic libraries need to support in research activities and libraries should also involve in research and collaborate with the current requirement, anyhow, library leaders have to refine their perceptions in terms of supporting and collaborating because collaboration is needed at all levels among faculty, researchers, students, and other stakeholders. Active collaboration in an academic library includes partnership in research, teaching, and decision making with faculty, researchers and students, this collaboration helps library to build robust collection, services, and facilities for the users (Brown et al., 2015). Collaboration assists to build a central role in collection development, information delivery, and preserve contents for the library users and institution at large; whatever strategy a library adapts, there is a need to respond to a rapidly changing global environment through collaboration.

**Emerging trends**

Key issues and trends can be observed as challenges for libraries and leaders as well, these challenges may include:

- Open access material, selection and provide access to the library patrons is not easy for libraries and librarians. This open access trend needs expertise in browsing contents, leaders need to keep their skills and competencies up to date, at the same time discovery and relevance of resources will be challenged for library users as well. Academic libraries need policy and procedure related to the enhancement of services to maintain and offer open access material, including the maintenance of an existing institutional repository of dissertations and research manuscripts (Wynne et al., 2016).

- Changing mode of scholarly communication needs a new set of skills for the library leadership and emerging new form has become extremely important for libraries. Employers have been increasing anxiety to offer successful leadership in academic
libraries because they are reshaping faster than ever to address emerging challenges and institutions need to develop new strategies to support traditional method of scholarly communication (Dewey, 2005). Increasing demands of digital environment in academic libraries need maintainability for digitized content at all the levels.

- In the fluctuating environment, learning commons needed redesigning in academic libraries as demand of the remodeling system of education and academic libraries as well (Moropa, 2010). Academic libraries are facing challenge of the learning commons because it is needed a variety of spaces, equipment and furniture, combine study space, group discussion rooms, flexibility in space use, relaxing and being an all in one place for campus life (Chan and Spodick, 2014);

  Reformatting of information resources have impacted on information-seeking behavior of library users and how users involve in search with the library resources and services, at the same time information delivery is a challenge for the libraries (Brown et al., 2015):

- Evolving trends in competition from other information providers such as Amazon and Google are cause of decline in use of library online catalog; it has been increasing challenge for academic libraries (Law, 2009).

- Shrinking budget of libraries is a great challenge for the future of libraries. Financial support is an ongoing issue for libraries and leaders as well. At the same time, selection and collection development is also a challenge for libraries within a limited budget (Riggs, 2001; Neufeld, 2014).

- Turock (2003) described that educational institutions have more diverse population and this population has been growing faster every year, and libraries require more diverse leaders to work in the twenty-first century. Consumers are looking for information resources from massive open access contents as they are taking online courses from distance and on campus as well; for that reason, they need library resources online to use from distance, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. It means that users are going away from the library boundaries and libraries have to fulfill and support their information needs in a digital age without restrictions to access information (Weiner et al., 2009; Moropa, 2010).

Anyway, there are many emerging trends and challenges for library leaders and not only leadership but libraries also, such as storing information, developing robust collections, licensing and accessing, shrinking budget, retrieving and using information, information delivery, institutional repository at all levels in academic libraries; these are shared responsibilities of library leaders, administrators, and librarians. Academic libraries need leadership to develop new strategies, policies, and procedures to meet these challenges and issues in the restructuring of the education system. Many developments have been noticed in the libraries for last three decades and these alterations are results of emerging trend in technologies and their outcome on how researchers, students, and faculty perceive the academic libraries, and the future needs a clear vision in terms of technology, resources, and services. These kinds of changes have been discussed in the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) reports of the last few years (ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee, 2014).

**Skills and qualities**

From the beginning until now, effective leadership skills and qualities are measured as the highest significance, both from external and within the institution as discussed by a scholar (Cromer, 2009). In terms of skills and competencies development, no one can claim to have reached at the end of skills and knowledge. Every organization has unique
strategic direction and planning as well as different cultural environment of the organization. Therefore, academic libraries need an alignment of skills development with organizational strategic planning, and create a professional motivation. Explosion of information technologies, resources and services demand an increasing level of service expectations that require library leadership must have a new set of knowledge and competencies. Keeping up to date with the profession is vital to the feasibility of the profession, as well as continuing skills development is required. However, shifting model of teaching and learning is a pressure on library leaders to develop their skills along with the existing leadership qualities. It has become clear that leaders are needed to be more advanced with their skills in order to achieve goals and mission of the library. A number of skills and competencies are required to improve in the library profession for the present and the future. Leadership has always been important for all types of organizations, although the altering phase of education demands library leaders to enhance their diverse set of skills to meet the challenges in the reforming of educational practice (Weiner et al., 2009; Gwyer, 2015). Schreiber and Shannon (2008) stated that library profession has adopted new directions in academic libraries such as resource sharing, sharing technology, sharing experience and scholarly communication, a new leadership needs innovative skills to work with the new direction and restructure of libraries. Besides, a new infrastructure is creating concern for the library professionals if they look forward as an opportunity to develop new skills and competencies then they may prepare themselves for tomorrow challenges and handle the situation. Leaders must be curious to know about where are libraries going then they would be prepared themselves to work with the revolution time of libraries. Rooney (2010) reported that academic libraries are quickly changing and leaders need to raise more flexibility, comprehensive leadership approaches, and leadership capability of staff at all levels. Leaders must have the capacity to build innovative organization upon official and informal infrastructure of the organization and create partnership within the policies, and develop relationship with stakeholders. Furthermore, leaders are advised to open conversations at all stages, solve problems and find solutions, and generate innovative ideas for the future leadership (Davis and Macauley, 2011). Leaders must try to handover their skills, experience, and knowledge to build organizational ability with an effective function when they are going to be retired from their current position or leaving the job. They should think about it who will take leadership if they are going to leave.

Moreover, leaders should share their experience, knowledge, and skills toward the success of the organization and prepare their subordinates in order to take leadership position. Schreiber and Shannon (2008) defined a leader’s ability is to clearly explain and concisely convey a concrete plan and vision that is essential to be an effective leader and achieve goals. Developing self-confidence in leadership is necessary to be successful in the environment of academic libraries today. Ross (2013) discussed that leaders should know how to use the past experiences and demonstrate confidence as evidence at the present workplace. Strong points of the previous experience may be good examples to develop confidence among themselves and others. Successful leaders do not show their weaknesses openly, they look ahead and find the solution to developing the confidence from professional networking. On the other hand, one of the most important qualities of leadership development is an eagerness to work with risk and understanding what risk is and be ready to engage with it. Risk is not failure but rather an eagerness to engage with challenging issues while estimating the possibility of success and failure (O’Conner, 2014).

The research has already moved very quickly across the world in which academic libraries exist and noticed several modifications. It was the purpose of this paper to find out the key skills and qualities required by the employers to work in academic libraries of
the future and how those can be developed. Neigel (2015) discussed that it is not the matter of gender, both male and female leaders at all levels need to be develop professionalism, education in library, and information science, and high clever professional skills and qualities to work with change in libraries and change with policies and procedures. It has now become clear that the library leaders need effective skills and extraordinary qualities along with outdated leadership skills and competencies (Davis and Macauley, 2011). Academic libraries have been transforming through a challenging time of revolution and development because of the changing forms of resources, delivery model services, technology, and infrastructure of the organizations. These changes are not ended yet, because of conversion from the traditional resources to digital formats; though libraries have competition with the internet and other information suppliers. Thus, leadership requires innovative set of competencies and great motivation skills to handle the changing shape of libraries, and leaders have to play a significant role in the transforming period of libraries. In addition, financial management skills are also very important to enhance the academic library leaders and they should establish solid procedures and guidelines for financial management. They should show their organizations a positive and actual benefit on the investment, it helps to get continue financial support from the organization, they should explain and clarify their support toward the objectives and mission of the organization. Literature review found leadership training programs and networking help leaders reach their own expectations regarding issues and challenges, manage, and enhance their competencies as well as professional development (Weiner et al., 2009). From a leadership perspective, a successful past does not guarantee a successful future because the academic environment is quickly shifting at an increasing rate, and competencies that may have once developed the great success no longer grip the same promise. As Gill (2006) stated that leaders need seven skills, “A recent model of leadership proposes seven competencies: setting direction, making decision, effective communication, creating alignment, setting an example, bringing the best out of people, and acting as change agent” (Gill, 2006, p. 323). Library leaders need to have broadened and widened knowledge and competencies in their professional life. Leadership quality is not only related to a highly qualified person, but it also needs regularly practice to be successful as a leader, and transformational quality is also required for the future leadership. A regular practice needs positive approach and attitude, self-assurance, and an open mind. Leaders should establish their ethics, values, have high standards, able to motivate others, make a collective decision and empower others. Today, an academic library needs a self-motivated, talented, effective communicator, strategic planner, and a visionary leader along with traditional skills and qualities in order to survive in the future.

Leadership development opportunities

Last few decades, library leadership topic is the ongoing discussion and few scholars have conducted research on successful leadership skills and competencies as well as opportunities to leadership development for the library leaders during the modernizing of advance education. The library and information professionals cannot ignore this important topic of library leadership and now it is time to emphasize on leadership scenarios. There are a wide variety of leadership development opportunities available to academic libraries that help leaders to keep up with the new skills for the future leadership. There are several institutes and programs in developed countries that focus on library leadership but only a few leaders can attend these programs due to limited budget and organizational policies; and these programs are not expensive as compared to the University of California at Los Angeles Senior Fellows Program, the Library Leadership Institute at Snowbird, and the Association of College and Research Libraries/Harvard
Leadership Institute (Riggs, 2001). These institutes offer excellent opportunities to develop leadership skills and competencies for the library professionals; they prepare leaders for the present and the future leadership in library and information profession and demonstrate the innovative skills and competencies (Riggs, 2001). Programs and institutions are needed to assess the outcomes for the challenging roles of academic library leadership in the altering environment of the organization. Leadership must be evaluated, which is very important to measure the outcomes for successful leadership. As Gill (2006) described, leadership can be evaluated based on some criteria, these criteria include the followings: “Leaders develop the mission, vision and values and are models of a culture of excellence. Leaders are personally involved in ensuring the organization’s management system is developed, implemented and continuously improved. Leaders are involved with customers, partners and representatives of society. Leaders motivate, support and recognize the organization’s people” (p. 10). As a result, successful leadership needs a continuing process of skills development to work in the twenty-first century, whereas traditional leadership skills are not valid unless develop new skills for current requirement of the profession. Library profession needs a balance of both traditional and modern set of skills. However, a few staff members and leaders can attend the national and international programs; library administrators and leaders should come up with the strategy to organize and offer at the local institution so that maximum librarians may attend and benefit from the leadership development programs. Enhancing leadership skills should begin at the local institution, it is a responsibility of the leaders and administrators to organize training and workshop at their own organization. This opportunity should design and organize with other institutions and library leader’s collaboration in the region that would provide an opportunity for networking and sharing experience. Moreover, Sears (2014) stated that mentoring is an essential element for maintaining strong leadership and continuity; it is an important element for professional development. It has become clear that leaders who accept and understand the challenges as opportunities they learn and enhance their skills and inspire others for the same. It means that challenges and issues are opportunities to develop leadership skills and competencies; leaders should be sincerely involved in the challenges and issues to motivate themselves and others. Martin (2016) recognized that institutions are responsible to organize and offer the following opportunities for leadership development such as training, coaching, workshops, and social gathering; these opportunities would be beneficial for both the library leaders as well as organizations. Particularly in the academic libraries, leaders should provide opportunities and motivate the employees to participate in training programs and enhance their skills toward achieving the goals and mission of the organization because a successful leadership depends on supporters (Feldmann et al., 2013).

In addition, library leaders are being encouraged to network with peers at the local and international level because this is an excellent opportunity to enhance skills and competencies; it is valuable and rewarding for both leaders and organization. Social networks provide opportunities to expand competencies, sharing knowledge, and experiences whenever have a chance to meet in group, and engagement with the experienced professional, and it is an incredible benefit for leaders as well as institutions. Mierke (2014) stated that leadership development programs should be offered and designed at the local institution with other university partner’s collaboration because it has several benefits such as financial resources that can be shared and reduce cost, further expertise strengths of collaborative partners can be a result of more vigorous learning experience for employees, as Mierke (2014) has identified “With in-house leadership development training, employees would not only learn alongside their peers in a safe and comfortable environment but they would also have the opportunity to discuss ideas, topics and challenges that were relevant to their library and understood by their peers” (p. 72). Anyhow, library professionals should be engaged in the leadership
development opportunity programs because involvement of librarians will prepare future leadership as they are future leaders of library. Finally, leaders should participate in leadership development opportunities and activities in the interest of enhance a high caliber leadership that will be used to the forthcoming library leadership and they would handle future challenges in the library profession.

Conclusions
Academic libraries around the world are facing similar challenges and issues such as the format transition from print to electronic resources, the relevancy of the library, the roles of leadership in networking environment, maintain of balancing between modern and traditional leadership. These current and emerging trends in library profession are affecting libraries and leadership as well. However, leadership cannot be in difficulties and disasters if leaders are eager to develop new set of skills and effective leadership traits. Furthermore, dynamic leadership is essential for libraries, especially in times of challenging and emerging trends in academic libraries. This paper examines a deficiency of new skills development among library leaders because they do not have constant support from their organizations, therefore, leaders do not participate in professional opportunities while institutional support and their personal interest are very important factors to develop new skills. Overall, more attention is needed to develop effective leaders for the future because a successful leadership role in academic library will depend on diverse set of skills, creative thinking and able to examine the new ways of working.

Recommendations
There are some additional skills and qualities with the tradition to become a successful future leader and these qualities can be developed such as creativity, flexibility, and adapt to change, self-confidence and awareness, collaborative mindset, networking capability and become a visionary. Furthermore, library leaders will have to develop effective communication skills, personal interest, motivate themselves and others, and engage in all activities of professional practice, and develop concrete action plans.

References


Further reading

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