

Investigating the Status of Ancillary Services Provided in Public Libraries Based on IFLA and UNESCO Standards from the Perspective of Librarians: A Case Study of Public Libraries in West Azerbaijan Province, Iran)

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Received: March, 4 2025

Revised: June, 8, 2025

Accepted: June, 9, 2025

Published: August, 23, 2025

Abstract

Purpose: The objective of this research is to investigate the ancillary services provided in the public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province, Iran, based on IFLA standards and from the perspective of librarians.

Methodology: The research employed a survey and analytical method. The statistical population consisted of 300 librarians working in the public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province, Iran. The data collection tool was a questionnaire developed based on IFLA standards and UNESCO guidelines regarding ancillary services of public libraries.

Findings: The findings indicated that the mean scores for extra-library services, storytelling programs, and study group formation were 2.93, 3.61, and 3.36, respectively. The results of the one-sample t-test showed that, from the librarians' perspective, all three components significantly contribute improving the ancillary services of public libraries. Furthermore, the results of Hotelling's T² test revealed a significant difference among the components influencing the enhancement of these services.

Conclusion: The results of this study demonstrate that, from the librarians' point of view, all components of ancillary service in public libraries are effective - with slight variations- in improving service delivery. However, it appears that offering ancillary services without considering the role and engagement of librarians, who are directly responsible for delivering these services, may alter the outcomes.

Value: The findings of this study provide practical solutions and policy recommendations for enhancing ancillary services in Iranian public libraries.

Keywords: *Public libraries, Ancillary services, IFLA, librarians, Iran.*

How to Cite:

Doulani, A., & Gholamzadeh, Sh. (2025). Investigating the Status of Ancillary Services Provided in Public libraries Based on IFLA and UNESCO Standards from the Perspective of librarians (Case study of public libraries in West Azerbaijan province in Iran). *Journal of Knowledge-Research Studies*, 4 (2): 146-164.

Doi: [10.22034/jkrs.2025.19944](https://doi.org/10.22034/jkrs.2025.19944)

URL: https://jkrs.tabrizu.ac.ir/article_19944.html?lang=en

Article Type: Original Article

©The Author(s)

Publisher: University of Tabriz

E-ISSN: [2821-045X](https://doi.org/10.22034/jkrs.2025.19944)

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Extended Abstract

Introduction: As a social and cultural institution, the public library, through the collection, organization, and preservation of human knowledge, enhances intellectual capacity and transforms a passive mind into an active and inquisitive one. These libraries are regarded as one of the main centers of development in advanced societies, playing a significant and distinctive role in overall growth and progress by providing access to the information resources required by their communities. In general, public libraries serve as valuable cultural centers by offering a wide range of resources -including educational, informational, and recreational materials- in a constructive and healthy manner (Azimi, Khedri & Khademizadeh, 2023).

Purpose: As a social and cultural institution, the public library -by collecting, organizing, and preserving human knowledge- enhances intellectual capacity and transforms a passive mind into a dynamic and inquisitive one. These libraries are considered among the main centers of development in advanced societies, playing a vital and distinctive role in overall growth and progress by providing access to the information resources required by their communities. In general, public libraries serve as valuable cultural centers by offering a wide range of educational, informational, and recreational resources in a constructive and enriching manner. The main objective of this research is to investigate the ancillary services provided in the public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province in Iran, based on IFLA standards, from the perspective of librarians.

Methodology: The present study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of methodology. The statistical population included all librarians and managers of public libraries in Iran. Considering the 31 provinces of the country, West Azerbaijan Province was selected as the sample through cluster sampling. The total population in this province was estimated to be 300 individuals. Based on the Morgan table and using a random sampling method, 171 participants were selected as a sample. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire designed according to IFLA and UNESCO guidelines (Koontz, 2010). The questionnaire consisted of two main sections – demographic information and specialized questions- with a total of 48 items (6 demographic questions, 16 items related to extra-library services, 13 items on storytelling activities, and 13 items on study group formation). Responses were measured on a five-option Likert scale: "very little," "little," "somewhat," "a lot," and "very much," assigned scores from 1 to 5, respectively. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire -after slight revisions based on the study population- was reviewed by 20 experts in public library affairs, and their feedback was incorporated. To assess reliability, a pilot test was conducted with 30 participants, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.924 for the entire questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha values for the subcomponents were as follows: 0.835 for extra-library services, 0.921 for storytelling programs, and 0.923 for study group formation. Since all values exceeded 0.7, the questionnaire demonstrated strong internal consistency and reliability. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 24. Descriptive statistics included frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistical tests included the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (to examine data normality), Student's t-test, and Hotelling's T^2 test.

Findings: Based on the results, the averages score for extra-library services was 2.93, for storytelling programs 3.61, and for study group formation 3.36. The results of the one-sample t-test indicated that, from the librarians' perspective, all three components



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mentioned above contribute effectively to improving the ancillary services of public libraries. Furthermore, the results of the Hotelling T² test revealed a significant difference among the effective components in enhancing the ancillary services of public libraries. Specifically, from the librarians' point of view, storytelling programs and study group formation have a greater impact on improving ancillary services than the extra-library services component. In addition, the findings showed that demographic variables of librarians providing ancillary services in public libraries do not have a significant influence on the quality or quantity of the mentioned services.

Table 1. Results of one-sample t-test on the effect of components of public library ancillary services

Variables	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					lower	upper
Extra-library services	1.07	168	0.039	0.3955	0.23-	0.12-
Forming storytelling groups	1.77	168	0.006	0.5326	0.54	0.70
Formation of study groups	1.90	168	0.017	0.5598	0.28	0.45

Table 2. Results of Hotelling's T-squared regarding the components of ancillary services of public libraries

Hotelling's T-Square	F	df1	df2	Sig
21.548	9.526	2	167	0.000

Conclusion: in conclusion, the main goal of providing ancillary services in public libraries is to encourage and motivate people to read, transforming the library from a mere repository of books into a dynamic and active center that fulfills the cultural, social, and scientific needs of society. Paying attention to ancillary services in libraries is meaningless without considering the individuals who deliver these services. Professional ethics, librarians' interest and sense of responsibility towards their work and institution, staff shortages, issues related to salary and rewards all have a significant impact on the quality of ancillary services provided in libraries. Unfortunately, the Public Library Institution in Iran, as the main authority responsible for public libraries, has not given sufficient attention to the librarians who perform these ancillary services. In general, librarians have limited discretion or budget to implement additional programs, even though they interact directly with the community and are best positioned to identify which programs should be implemented and what resources are required. One of the most critical problems in some public libraries under this institution is the lack of dedicated staff capable of independently pursuing and implementing additional services across different departments. In many cases, librarians perform these activities voluntarily, in addition to their traditional duties, depending on their personal interest and available time. However, since no specific salary or incentive is provided for such work, some librarians are unwilling to engage in it, and even those who do may not devote sufficient time or attention to these services. Considering these issues, the importance of implementing ancillary services and cultural programs in public libraries is now widely recognized. The aim of this study was to examine the successful and popular ancillary services provided by librarians in public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province, based on IFLA standards and strategies. These results and analyses of this study can serve as useful guidance for policymakers and decision-makers in improving the quality and effectiveness of ancillary services in Iranian public libraries.



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Value: The results of this study serve as practical solutions and useful guidelines for enhancing and organizing ancillary services in Iranian public libraries.

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knowledge-Research
Studies (JKRS)**

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Serial Number 12

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Received: March, 4 2025

Revised: June, 8, 2025

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of the research is to investigate the ancillary services provided in the public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province, Iran based on IFLA standards from the perspective of librarians.

Methodology: The research method was survey-based and analytical. The statistical population consisted of 300 librarians working in public libraries across West Azerbaijan Province. The research instrument was a questionnaire developed according to IFLA standards and UNESCO guidelines related to ancillary services of public libraries.

Findings: Based on the findings, the mean scores for extra-library services, storytelling programs, and study group formation were 2.93, 3.61, and 3.36, respectively. The results of the one-sample t-test indicated that, from the librarians' perspective, all three components significantly contribute to improving the ancillary services of public libraries. Furthermore, the results of Hotelling's t-test revealed a significant difference among the effective components in enhancing ancillary services of public libraries.

Conclusion: The results of this study show that, from the librarians' perspective, all components of ancillary service provision in public libraries are effective -with minor variations- in shaping how these services are delivered. However, it appears that offering such services without considering the librarians and the other personnel responsible for delivering them may lead to inconsistencies in outcomes.

Value: The findings of this study provide useful insights and practical guidelines for improving the provision of ancillary services in Iranian public libraries.

Keywords: *Public libraries, Ancillary services, IFLA, Librarians, Iran*

How to Cite:

Doulani, A., & Gholamzadeh, Sh. (2025). Investigating the Status of Ancillary Services Provided in Public libraries Based on IFLA and UNESCO Standards from the Perspective of librarians (Case study of public libraries in West Azerbaijan province in Iran). *Journal of Knowledge Research Studies*, 4 (2), 146-164.

Doi: [10.22034/jkrs.2024.59460.10515.19944](https://doi.org/10.22034/jkrs.2024.59460.10515.19944)

URL: https://jkrs.tabrizu.ac.ir/article_17561.html?lang=en

Article Type: Original Article

©The Author(s)

Publisher: University of Tabriz

E-ISSN: [2821-045X](https://doi.org/10.22034/jkrs.2024.59460.10515.19944)

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Introduction

As a social and cultural institution, the public library plays a vital role in collecting, organizing, and preserving human knowledge. It enhances intellectual capacity and transforms the passive human mind into an active and inquisitive one. Such libraries are regarded as one of the main pillars of development in advanced societies, contributing significantly to comprehensive growth and progress by providing access to the information resources required by their communities. Overall, public libraries serve as valuable cultural centers that offer a wide range of resources -educational, informational, and recreational- in a healthy and constructive manner (Azimi, Khedri & Khademizadeh, 2023).

The services of collecting, organizing, storing and providing information resources to various segments of society are traditional functions for which libraries have long been established. However, the explosion of information and the rapid growth of information and communication technologies have introduced numerous challenges and transformations to the traditional role of libraries. In the past, individual relied on libraries as their primary source of information, but today, the World Wide Web and the Internet deliver vast amounts of information to users within seconds through mobile phones or other digital media (Doulani, Shabani, and Baradar, 2020). If libraries fail to adapt to or utilize these emerging technologies, they risk losing their relevance and effectiveness in providing traditional services. Therefore, in addition to conventional offerings, libraries must providing supplementary and ancillary services to attract, retain, and nd foster the loyalty of their users. From Ranganathan's perspective, ancillary services refer to specific activities that, beyond direct educational and recreational purposes, enhance the reputation of the library -an important outcome of such efforts. These services, also known as extracurricular activities, have no strict boundaries and do not overshadow the library's primary objectives. Rather, they encompass all initiatives that can attract people to the library and stimulate their interest in books and reading. The ultimate aim of ancillary services is to transform the library into a social, cultural, and scientific center that promotes and encourages reading within the community. Thus, the fundamental goal of these services is to turn individuals who are unfamiliar with books into active readers (Ranganathan, 1961).

The *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* introduces a broad range of ancillary services, including storytelling programs, study courses, question-and-answer sessions, exhibitions, traditional and local celebrations, concerts, puppet shows, theater performances, and film screenings, as well as organizing conferences and meetings- all aimed at fostering public interest in reading and libraries (Drake, 2003). Mollaei, Shabani, & Rezaeidaryani (2013) emphasize that, in addition to the effective role of ancillary services in education and entertainment, their contribution to enhancing the reputation and public acceptance of libraries is also of great significance.

Drake (2003) defines ancillary services as a set of activities designed to encourage people to use the library and, consequently, to foster their interest in books and library resources. In the *Encyclopedia of Librarianship and Information Science*, ancillary services are referred to as extension services. These are supplementary activities undertaken by libraries to familiarize groups -particularly those who may not be aware of the library and its services-



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with the resources and opportunities the library offers (Soltani, & Rastin, 2010).

In 1994, the third UNESCO Declaration on Public Libraries was published, drafted by the IFLA Public Libraries Section. This document has become a defining milestone in the development of public libraries, providing recommendations on policies and standards for their operation. Gill (2001), referring to the revised UNESCO document prepared under the auspices of IFLA, emphasizes the development of a comprehensive set of qualitative and quantitative guidelines suitable for public libraries worldwide. However, he considers the key to the sustained development of public libraries to be their ongoing commitment to providing services and resources that meet the needs of society in the information age. These essential elements grounded in education, information, and personal development. Accordingly, in the introduction written by the editor of the working group on behalf of the IFLA Public Libraries Section for the IFLA and UNESCO Guidelines for Public Libraries, it is stated that to succeed in making information accessible to all, public libraries must continue to provide services that deliver information to the public diverse ways.

As mentioned, based on the IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines (1994), uniform standards for public library services were established in all societies. However, since the social, cultural, and economic conditions of each society differ, the standards for public libraries -including ancillary services- must also be defined according to the specific economic and social context of each country. These standards are not fixed criteria; rather, they should evolve alongside the economic and social development of each society. Accordingly, some countries have even developed separate standards for each state or province, while still aligning with the IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines. In Iran, public library institutions have developed their services along three main dimensions - extra-library services, storytelling, and the formation of study groups- based on the IFLA and UNESCO Guidelines and the country's unique economic and social conditions.

The aim of ancillary services in the libraries is to attract the attention and participation of library members by encouraging their attendance and engagement in cultural and educational activities centered on books and reading resources. These services help foster loyalty and ensure the continuous presence of both library members and librarians in such activities. Among the ancillary services offered in the children's section of libraries are: forming book-reading and study groups; organizing reading meetings, book discussions, and storytelling sessions; conducting memoir writing and storytelling workshops; Shahnameh reading; book reading and painting competitions; inviting experts and activists in the field of children's literature to hold literary discussions and lectures; film screenings, theatrical and puppet performances; hosting celebrations and festivals; setting up reading stations and various exhibitions; creating book display tables; appointing school liaisons from among child members, consulting with mothers of child members; arranging visits of a children's librarian to schools; and facilitating school visits to the library (Abdel-Motey & Al-Ansari, 2003). Librarians of public libraries, who directly interact with patrons, are the individuals who, in addition to performing traditional library services, also provide these ancillary services. Consequently, they are more aware than anyone else of the successes



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or shortcomings of the programs they implement. A review of the existing literature indicates that the topic of ancillary services has not received sufficient attention from researchers. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the ancillary services provided in public libraries of West Azerbaijan province based on IFLA standards from the perspective of librarians. To achieve this goal, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the status of extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups in public libraries from the perspective of librarians?

2. Are extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups effective in enhancing ancillary services in public libraries from the perspective of librarians?

3. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of the ancillary service components (extra-library services, storytelling programs, and study group formation) in public libraries from the perspective of librarians?

4. Do the opinions of librarians regarding successful and popular ancillary services in public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province differ based on demographic factors such as age, gender, level of education, work experience, and organizational position?

Research Background

This section reviews some of the most relevant existing literature on the research topic.

De Vries (2008) examined parents' perceptions of the role of music in public library storytelling programs. The results showed that incorporating music into storytelling promotes children's social relationships, enhances their focus on stories, strengthens their engagement with storytelling, and inspires new musical ideas at home. Roman and Fiore (2010) conducted a study to determine the effects of extracurricular services and study programs offered by public libraries during the summer on students' academic performance during the school year. Their findings revealed that students who participated in such programs -such as summer camps-achieved higher grades than those who did not. Furthermore, their parents used other library services more frequently, owned more books, and engaged in more literary activities at home. Mollaei, Shabani, & Rezaeidaryani (2013) investigated the improvement of ancillary services in public libraries in Isfahan Province from the perspective of users, based on demographic factors. The results indicated that, from the viewpoint of all users, the provision of ancillary services positively affects the quality and enhancement of library services, regardless of demographic variables. Chen, Shaw, and Bottino (2016), in a study titled "*The Relationship between Public Library Use and Reading Aloud Among Families with Children and Adolescents*," concluded that public libraries can increase the community's reading level by providing various facilities. They found that reading aloud during library sessions or at home enhances members' motivation to revisit the library. Sturm & Nelson (2016) in their study "*With Our Own Words: Librarians' Perceptions of the Values of Storytelling in Libraries*," found that the primary value of storytelling in public libraries is its ability expose children to culture and history, foster personal and emotional engagement, and promote foundational literacy skills. Hariri and Pagardkar (2016) conducted an



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experimental study at in the Imam Ali Public Library in Yazd, Iran to examine the effect of storytelling on the creativity of 5-6-year-old children. Their findings showed a significant relationship between storytelling and increased creativity among preschoolers, as storytelling enhances initiative and idea development.

Ghanbari, Tajdaran, and kiani khuzestani (2016) examined the current status and facilities of public libraries in Hamadan Province in providing ancillary services to users from the perspective of librarians. The findings of the study indicated that, according to the librarians, the most significant obstacles to providing ancillary services included a lack of budget, insufficient experienced staff to manage such programs, limited user participation, inadequate cooperation from library managers, insufficient knowledge and support from officials of the parent organization, a lack of motivation and interest among librarians, and limited time and opportunity to implement these services. Hedemark (2017), in his article titled "*Storytelling: An Observational Study of Storytelling for Children in Swedish Public Libraries*," examined children's interactions with each other and with librarians during storytelling sessions. The results of the study indicated that, during these sessions, children showed a greater preference for books with attractive illustrations, and their interactions with one another increased depending on the storytelling style and the events described in the story. Clark (2017), in her article titled "*Caregivers' Perceptions of Early Literacy Programming in Public Libraries in Relation to the National Research Council's Guidelines for Quality Environments for Children*," examined caregivers' perceptions of early literacy services that align with the characteristics outlined by the National Research Council. The findings showed that caregivers believed these services helped prepare children for school, fostered reading skills, and promoted social interaction. Wang, Xu & Wu (2017) investigated preschool children's preferences for services offered in three public libraries in China. The findings revealed that librarians and public library service designers should take into account factors such as novelty, convenience, the presence of friends and peers, and enjoyment when planning and implementing their services. Similarly, Kian Rad, Fahimnia, and Naghshineh (2017) conducted a study titled "*Ancillary Services of Libraries Affiliated with the Tabriz Public Libraries and Their Role in Developing a Reading Culture among Children and Adolescents*."

The findings showed that Qur'an education, story writing, book reading and painting competitions, religious celebrations and ceremonies, summer reading, programs, literary centers, book exhibitions, storytelling sessions, and book news are among the ancillary programs implemented in public libraries. In addition, the information dissemination through schools has played an important role in encouraging adolescents to use of ancillary services of public libraries. Pourasgari-khiyavi, (2018) conducted a study to investigate the impact of ancillary services in public libraries of Ardabil Province on child and adolescent users. The results indicated that librarians believe the existence of ancillary services is both effective and essential in motivating children and adolescents to visit libraries. However, the most significant obstacles in providing ancillary services were identified as the lack of human resources, budget, facilities, and adequate space in libraries. Lee & Wu (2019), in their article "*A Game-Based Learning and Augmented Reality Navigation Program for Children's Public Library*," examined the effects of using augmented reality

in library environments. The results showed that the augmented reality navigation program (simulation and gameplay through software such as iBeacon) encouraged children to be more patient and provided them with the opportunity to explore library facilities and virtual resources. It also enabled children to study and learn collaboratively with their parents. Soheili, solgi & khanjar, (2019) investigated the effect of teaching through storytelling, reading, and film screening in public libraries in Kermanshah. Their findings indicated that in all three groups (storytelling, reading, and film screening), the level of motivation and interest in studying increased in the pre-test and one month later (post-test), with the storytelling method proving to be the most effective. In another study by Hajdarpasić & Madacki (2019), examined library and information services in academic libraries, specifically at the University of Sarajevo. The results showed that 58.8% of academic libraries serve users with disabilities, primarily students with partial or complete visual impairment. The authors emphasized that ensuring accessibility of library and information services for users with disabilities should be a fundamental principle of library operations, characterized by "universal design." In summary, their analysis concluded that focusing on universal access -rather than limited or special access- places social justice at the center of library services. Bećirović (2024) examined the services provided to people with disabilities in the University of Sarajevo Library. The results showed that, according to IFLA standards, the studied libraries largely met the recommended standards for serving blind and visually impaired users, while services for individuals with other disabilities still need improvement. The author also suggested collaboration with other institutions supporting people with disabilities to address organizational challenges in service provision. Similarly,, Nazim and Ali (2025) investigated library facilities and services for persons with disabilities (PwDs) in Indian universities. The findings revealed that only 35% of university libraries in India provide adequate facilities for PwDs. The researchers emphasized the importance implementing library initiatives such as increasing accessibility, empowering PwDs, and offering support services like proxy lending and reserved study tables.

In summary, the reviewed literature indicates that while library services have long been important research topics in both public and academic library studies, ancillary services -particularly the provision of extra-library activities aimed at attracting users, members, and the broader community- remain relatively underexplored. These emerging areas, given the current service contexts, highlight existing challenges and opportunities, enrich the understanding of library functions, and contribute to the theoretical development of this field.

Methodology

The present study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of methodology. The statistical population included all librarians and managers of public libraries in Iran. Given the number of provinces in country (31 provinces), West Azerbaijan Province was selected as the sample province through cluster sampling. Since obtaining a complete list of all librarians in the country's public libraries was difficult, and direct access to them would have been both time-consuming and costly, cluster sampling was deemed the most appropriate method. This approach is effective when a



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complete sampling frame is unavailable. The total statistical population in West Azerbaijan Province was estimated to be 300 individuals. Using the Morgan table and random sampling, 171 participants were selected as the study sample. The research instrument was a questionnaire designed based on IFLA and UNESCO guidelines (Koontz, 2010). It consisted of two sections - demographic and specialized questions- with a total of 48 items (6 demographic questions, 16 related to extra-library services, 13 to storytelling groups, and 13 to study group formation). Each question was rated on a five-point Likert scale: very little, little, somewhat, much, and very much, with scores ranging from 1 (very little) to 5 (very much). To ensure validity, the questionnaire -slightly revised to suit the study population- was reviewed by 20 experts in public library affairs, and their feedback was incorporated. To assess reliability, the questionnaire was pilot-tested with 30 respondents, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.924 for the entire instrument. Specifically, Cronbach's alpha was 0.835 for the extra-library services component, 0.921 for the storytelling component, and 0.923 for the study group formation component. As all alpha coefficients exceeded 0.7, the questionnaire demonstrated acceptable reliability. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 24, applying descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential tests, including the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for normality, Student's *t*-test, and Hotelling's T^2 test.

Findings

In this section, descriptive statistics are first presented, followed by inferential findings addressing the research questions of the study.

Table 1. Frequency of research sample based on gender, age, organizational position, organizational history, and level of education.

Gender		Age(years)				Organizational post			Service history(years)			Education	
Female	male	20-30	31-40	41-50	>50	Boss	Vice	Staff	1-10	11-20	>20	BA	MA
113	58	40	71	45	15	7	18	146	58	81	32	115	56
66.1%	33.9%	23.4%	41.5%	26.3%	8.8%	4.1%	10.6%	85.4%	33.3%	47.4%	18.7%	67.3%	32.7%

The data in the table above show that females, with 66.1%, constituted the majority of the sample. In terms of age, the 31-40 age group accounted for 41.5%. Regarding organizational position, librarians with the position of "expert" comprised 85.4% of the participants. In addition, those with 11–20 years of work experience represented 47.4% of the sample, and respondents with a bachelor's degree made up the largest proportion at 67.3%.

Table 2. Results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for data normality based on ancillary service components

Variables	Kolmogorov-smirnov ^a	Sig
Extra-library services	0.064	0.081
Formation of study groups	0.054	0.093
Holding storytelling programs	0.047	0.152

Given that the significant value calculated for each of the components in the table is greater than 0.05 (Sig.>0.05), the assumption of data normality is confirmed.

Research Question 1: What is the status of extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups in public libraries from the perspective of librarians? To answer this question, the items related to the components of ancillary services are presented in three separate tables, using descriptive statistics (frequency and mean).

Table 3. Frequency, percentage, and mean scores of respondents regarding the storytelling programs component

Questions	Very Low	Low	Average	Much	Very much	Sum	Mean
service in hospitals and medical centers	8	38	91	32	0	169	2.93
	5.3	22.2	53.2	19.3	0	100	
services provided to prisoners in prisons	0	31	98	40	0	169	3.05
	0	18.7	57.3	24	0	100	
services provided to newly literate groups	4	25	115	25	0	169	2.96
	2.3	14.6	67.8	15.2	0	100	
services provided to people with disabilities	5	34	99	30	1	169	2.94
	2.9	19.9	58.9	18.1	0.6	100	
services for the elderly in nursing and residential homes	8	44	101	15	1	169	2.84
	4.7	26.3	59.6	8.8	0.6	100	
services for all age groups of children and adolescents in schools and educational institutions	0	13	71	80	5	169	3.45
	0	8.2	41.5	47.4	2.9	100	
service in mobile libraries	12	91	59	7	1	169	2.38
	7	53.2	35.1	1.4	0.6	100	
books available in public places, exhibitions, and bookstores	2	14	71	69	12	169	3.44
	1.2	8.2	42.7	40.9	7	100	
Planning group visits to libraries	0	10	77	65	17	169	3.53
	0	5.8	45.6	38.6	9.9	100	
Field research planning within the framework of local issues	2	28	87	47	5	169	3.15
	1.2	16.4	51.5	28.1	2.9	100	
Providing remote access to networks and library systems	7	95	57	9	1	169	2.43
	4.1	56.1	33.3	5.8	0.6	100	
Ongoing awareness raising in areas of interest to clients	6	41	99	21	2	169	2.84
	3.5	24	58.5	12.9	2.1	100	
Consultation and guidance provided through libraries' online systems	21	109	25	11	3	169	2.21
	12.3	64.3	15.2	6.4	1.8	100	
Remote document delivery service	22	110	35	4	0	169	2.12
	12.9	64.9	19.9	2.3	0	100	
Virtual training of users in information	6	58	87	16	2	169	2.70
	3.5	34.5	51.5	9.4	1.2	100	



Questions	Very Low	Low	Average	Much	Very much	Sum	Mean
retrieval skills using continuous classes							
Reference services (telephone, mail, and internet)	18	71	75	5	0	169	2.40
	10.5	42.1	44.4	2.9	0	100	

The descriptive results presented in Table 3 indicate that among the extra-library service items, the highest mean value belongs to item 9, "Planning group visits to libraries," with a mean of 3.53, showing that this activity is implemented to a relatively high extent from the librarians' perspective. Conversely, the lowest mean value is observed for item 14, "Remote document delivery services," with a mean of 2.12, suggesting that this service is provided to a limited extent in public libraries.

Table 4. Frequency, percentage, and average of respondents regarding the storytelling component

questions	Very low	Low	Average	Much	Very much	Sum	mean
Special services for children and adolescents in the library	1	2	22	99	45	169	3.94
	0.6	1.2	13	59	26.2	100	
Organizing storytelling classes in the library	2	3	21	114	29	169	3.95
	1.2	1.8	12.4	67.4	17.2	100	
Providing appropriate printed and audiovisual resources for storytelling classes	0	4	60	87	18	169	3.72
	0	2.3	35.5	51.4	10.8	100	
Brain games and sports during storytelling	0	11	57	89	12	169	3.62
	0	6.4	33.3	52	8.2	100	
Holding meetings to critique and interpret fiction books	1	6	58	91	13	169	3.66
	0.6	3.5	33.9	53.2	8.8	100	
Choosing stories appropriate for different age groups	0	11	47	96	15	169	3.70
	0	6.4	27.5	56.1	9.9	100	
Allocating appropriate time for storytelling program	0	2	53	101	13	169	3.75
	0	1.2	31	59.1	8.8	100	
Allocating a suitable location and space for holding storytelling classes	1	4	49	95	20	169	3.78
	0.6	2.3	28.7	55.6	12.9	100	
Liaising with other relevant centers, including, Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults and schools, to present storytelling sessions	0	12	73	70	14	169	3.53
	0	7	42.7	40.9	9.4	100	
Continuously holding storytelling programs	1	5	67	89	7	169	3.57
	0.6	3.5	39.2	52	4.7	100	
Using new technologies in storytelling programs	3	14	87	58	7	169	3.31
	1.8	8.8	50.9	33.9	4.7	100	
Parents and educators collaborate with the librarian in holding storytelling classes	8	33	66	47	15	169	3.17
	4.7	49.9	38.6	27.5	9.4	100	



questions	Very low	Low	Average	Much	Very much	Sum	mean
Introducing popular culture, social skills, etc. to children and adolescents in the form of stories	1	16	97	40	15	169	3.31
	0.6	9.9	56.7	23.4	9.4	100	

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that item 18, "Organizing storytelling classes in the library," has the highest mean score of 3.95. In contrast, item 28, "Collaboration of parents and educators with the librarian in organizing storytelling classes," has the lowest mean score of 3.17.

Table 5. Frequency, percentage, and mean of respondents regarding the component of forming study groups

Questions	Very low	Low	Average	Much	Very much	Sum	Mean
Forming study groups in the library	2	8	88	63	8	169	3.40
	1.2	4.7	52	37.4	4.7	100	
Developing a policy for the proper flow of study in study groups	2	13	85	65	4	169	3.33
	1.2	7.6	50.3	38.6	2.3	100	
Investigating topical issues in study groups (e.g., research on animals, provinces, ancient monuments, mosques, movies, television)	2	3	78	63	23	169	3.60
	1.2	1.8	46.2	37.4	13.5	100	
Weekly meetings in study groups	1	14	85	57	12	169	3.39
	0.6	8.2	50.3	33.9	7	100	
Distributing a list of new books for the information of study groups	2	13	99	52	3	169	3.25
	1.2	7.6	58.5	31	1.8	100	
Compiling research lists for study group members	1	23	90	53	2	169	3.19
	0.6	13.5	53.2	31.6	1.2	100	
Writing articles and reports by members of study groups	0	15	79	69	6	169	3.39
	0	8.8	46.8	40.9	3.5	100	
Holding training workshops related to the topic of study groups	1	21	86	53	7	169	3.27
	0.6	12.3	50.9	32.2	1.4	100	
Providing appropriate facilities for study and research	0	15	48	76	30	169	3.71
	0	8.8	28.7	45	17.5	100	
Librarian advice and guidance (answering questions and information requests using information materials)	0	17	89	55	8	169	3.32
	0	9.9	52.6	32.7	4.7	100	
Determining the timetable from the beginning to the end of the work of the study groups	0	19	42	87	21	169	3.65
	0	11.1	25.1	51.5	12.3	100	
Using capable and experienced members in study groups	0	30	76	47	16	169	3.29
	0	17.5	45	28.1	9.4	100	
Advertising and informing library members to attract them to study groups	3	47	79	29	11	169	2.98
	1.8	28.1	46.8	17	6.4	100	





The descriptive results of Table 5 indicate that the item "Providing appropriate facilities for study and research" (item 38) has the highest mean value of 3.71, reflecting that librarians consider it the most important component in forming study groups. Conversely, the item "Advertising and informing library members to attract them to study groups" (item 42) has the lowest mean value of 2.98, suggesting that promotional activities for study groups are less emphasized or less effectively implemented according to the respondents' perspective.

Research Question 2: Are extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups effective in providing ancillary services in public libraries from the perspective of librarians?

Table 6. One-Sample t-Test Results on the Effectiveness of Public Library Ancillary Services Components

Variables	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence interval of the difference	
					lower	upper
Extra-library services	1.07	168	0.039	0.3955	-0.23	-0.12
Forming storytelling groups	1.77	168	0.006	0.5326	0.54	0.70
Formation of study groups	1.90	168	0.017	0.5598	0.28	0.45

According to the results of the one-sample t-test and the significance level for all three components (Table 6), the components of forming storytelling groups and forming study groups are considered effective in enhancing library services from the librarians' perspective.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference between the mean values of the ancillary components (extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups) in public libraries from the librarians' perspective?

Hotelling's T^2 test was used to examine and determine the significance of difference between the mean values of the components of improving ancillary services in public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province.

Table 7. Results of Hotelling's T-test for Components of Public Library Ancillary Services

Hotelling's T^2	F	df1	df2	Sig
21.548	9.526	2	167	0.000

The value of Hotelling's T^2 test statistic is 21.548 the F statistic is 9.526, and the significance value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 (Table 7). Therefore, the difference between the averages of the components of improving ancillary services in the public libraries of West Azerbaijan province is significant from the perspective of the librarians, indicating that the rate of improvement of ancillary services in these libraries is not uniform.

Research Question 4: Is there a difference in librarians' opinions on successful and popular ancillary in public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province based on gender, age, level of education, organizational background, and organizational position?

To examine differences in opinions of public library librarians regarding the extent of ancillary services based on demographic variables, an independent

t-test was used for variables with two groups, such as gender and field of study, while analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for variables with more than two groups.

Table 8. Independent t-test results by gender for the components of ancillary services in public libraries

Variables	Sex	Mean	SD	t	Sig
Extra-library services	Female	2.8396	0.362	0.205	0.838
	Male	2.8168	0.434		
Holding storytelling programs	Female	3.6426	0.537	0.938	0.350
	Male	3.5623	0.514		
Formation of study groups	Female	3.3417	0.528	-0.851	0.415
	Male	3.4178	0.598		

Based on the results and software output, there is no significant difference at the 5% significance level between the components of ancillary services in public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province with respect to gender.

Table 9. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) by age for the components of ancillary services of public libraries

Variables	Age	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Extra-library services	20-30	2.881	0.300	0.397	0.755
	31-40	2.810	0.396		
	41-50	2.795	0.432		
	>50	2.833	0.423		
Holding storytelling programs	20-30	3.657	0.527	0.250	0.861
	31-40	3.627	0.617		
	41-50	3.584	.0391		
	>50	3.538	0.480		
Formation of study groups	20-30	3.548	0.470	1.167	0.092
	31-40	3.312	0.620		
	41-50	3.255	0.495		
	>50	3.184	0.496		

The results of Table 9 show that the three components examined -extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups- do not differ significantly among the age groups of librarians at the 5% significance level. Therefore, the mean scores of these components are statistically similar across the different age groups studied. .

Table 10. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Organizational Position Regarding the Components of Ancillary Services in Public Libraries

Variables	Age	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Extra-library services	Boss	3.044	0.322	0.790	0.501
	Vice	2.781	0.574		
	Staff	2.817	0.384		
Holding storytelling programs	Boss	4.980	0.475	1.621	0.073
	Vice	3.346	0.707		
	Staff	3.583	0.509		
Formation of study groups	Boss	3.637	0.670	1.025	0.339
	Vice	2.923	0.761		
	Staff	3.370	0.546		



The results of Table 10 indicate that the three components examined, based on the organizational positions of the librarians, do not differ significantly at the 5% significance level. Therefore, the mean scores of the components -extra-library services, holding storytelling programs, and forming study groups- show no significant differences across organizational positions.

Table 11. Independent t-test by level of education of librarians regarding the components of ancillary services in public libraries

Variables	Age	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Extra-library services	1-10	2.820	0.349	0.029	0.972
	11-20	2.823	0.383		
	>20	2.839	0.649		
Holding storytelling programs	1-10	3.539	0.599	0.931	0.396
	11-20	3.662	0.499		
	>20	3.632	0.466		
Formation of study groups	1-10	3.401	0.598	0.343	0.710
	11-20	3.330	0.521		
	>20	3.399	0.555		

The results of Table 11 show that the three components studied based on the librarians' level of education do not differ significantly at the 5% significance level. Therefore, the mean scores of the components of extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups do not show significant differences according to librarians' educational levels.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

In the present study, three components -extra-library services, storytelling, and the formation of study groups- were examined as ancillary services of public libraries. From the librarians' point of view, the impact of extra-library services on improving the communication processes of libraries in West Azerbaijan Province is above average, and the results of the statistical test also confirmed its significance (Table 6). Therefore, extra-library services are effective in improving the ancillary services of public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province. In explaining this result, it can be stated that public libraries are service-oriented and social institutions whose services have changed and evolved in recent years, taking on new forms. In recent years, in-person visits to libraries have decreased due to the development of virtual services and networks. These developments have promoted public library administrators to transform their service models; thus, ancillary and extra-library services have become emerging trends in libraries worldwide. Moreover, as stated by the American Library Association, extra-library services are specifically aimed at disadvantaged groups such as retirees, prisoners, the sick, the disabled, and residents of deprived areas without libraries (Shah, Shah, & Jbeen, 2024). In Iran, according to the guidelines of the Public Library Administration (2013), activities and ancillary services are organized according to the space designated for the children's section. Group activities and educational games, book reading, storytelling, film screenings, puppet shows, book making and forming summary writing and research groups, preparing wall newspapers, oral book introductions, meetings with authors and illustrators of children's books, book reading competitions, library and school visits, preparing author portraits, book reviews and readings, and



book reading meetings are among the ancillary services implemented under the supervision of the country's public Library Institution and cultural officials in public libraries and other cultural centers (outside the library). Accordingly, it can be concluded that extra-library services, by addressing the needs of specific users (such as the disabled, prisoners, and the elderly) and adapting to the changing preferences of ordinary users in utilizing library services, can contribute to the successful implementation of ancillary services in public libraries. Therefore, to improve exter-library services, it is recommended to expand mobile library programs in remote areas and strengthen cooperation with local institutions such as schools, prisons, and nursing homes to provide targeted services.

According to the research findings (Table 6), the component of forming storytelling groups is effective in improving the ancillary services of public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province. In explaining this result, it can be stated that the main goal of public libraries is to increase per capita reading and institutionalize the culture of reading and studying, especially among children and adolescents as the future builders of every society (Haggstrom, 2004). The realization of this fundamental goal depends on activities that can ensure the continuity of reading behavior in future generations by educating children interested in reading. A child who continuously visits the library with their family from early childhood and participates in the library's ancillary services, in addition to reading books, will gradually develop a natural and lasting reading habit. Therefore, public libraries must provide their services in attractive and engaging ways that also foster user loyalty. One of the most effective ways to attract children and adolescents to the library is through storytelling and story reading. As Khanjar (2017) stated, storytelling is one of the most important ways to read stories to children and make them interested in the library. Storytelling in a cheerful and friendly environment of the library by a kind, articulate, and expressive librarian or storyteller provides children with lively and enjoyable experiences. During these sessions, children not only enhance their creativity and thinking skills but also form friendships with other children who visit the library. This encourages them to attend the library regularly and participate in other library programs. Therefore, if storytelling sessions are conducted in an attractive and well-organized manner with the consistent participation of children, they can have a significant impact on improving the ancillary services of public libraries. The results of studies by Mollaei, Shabani, and Rezaeidaryani (2015), Hariri and Pagardkar (2016), Andrew (2008), Sturm and Nelson (2016), and Hedemark (2017), who examined storytelling as part of ancillary services in public libraries, are consistent with the findings of this study. Furthermore, based on the research results (Table 6), the formation of librarian-led study groups is also effective in improving the ancillary services of public libraries in West Azerbaijan Province. In explaining this result, it can be stated that a more intimate and closer relationship between the librarian and library members makes users more willing to return to the library and participate in ancillary, collective, and group programs. Various study groups can be formed among librarians and library users, including study groups focused on specific field or disciplines (e.g., law or literature study groups), those centered on particular talents (e.g., poetry reading, writing, or Shahnameh reading groups), and those designed for specific demographics (e.g., women's study groups or fifth-grade children's



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study groups). These groups, organized under the supervision of librarians and based on available library resources, allow participants to discuss topics of shared interest, exchange ideas, and learn from each other's perspectives. When such groups are conducted effectively in an engaging and enjoyable manner, they foster warm and friendly relationships between librarians and members, as well as among the members themselves. This increases satisfaction with and the effectiveness of study groups, thereby enhancing the overall quality of ancillary services in libraries. Jazayeri Saghi (2018) showed in his research that the implementation of study groups is effective in attracting students to study, which aligns with the goals of implementing ancillary services and supports the findings of this study. Similarly, Roman & Fiore (2010) found that students who participated in study programs and ancillary library services, such as summer camps, achieved higher grades than those who did not participate in such programs. Their parents also used other library services more frequently, which is consistent with the results of this study. According to Table 8, the results show that the opinions of female and male librarians regarding extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups are similar. Likewise, according to Table 9, the average scores of these components do not differ significantly across the studied age groups. Examination of other demographic variables -including organizational position (Table 10), organizational experience (Table 11), and level of education (Table 11)- also revealed no significant differences among librarians' opinions regarding successful and popular ancillary services in public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province.

In explaining the results of this question, it can be stated that extra-library services, storytelling programs, and the formation of study groups -identified as successful and popular ancillary services- are each more relevant and specific to particular age groups or social groups. For example, storytelling programs are more suitable for children and adolescents, while book review groups, critique sessions, or summary writing and reading groups are more appropriate for older audiences and various age ranges. Extra-library services implemented in prisons, hospitals, nursing homes, or remote villages are designed according to the mental and psychological conditions of the target community, and naturally differ from those organized for children in libraries. A similar situation exists for study groups, as participants are selected based on their interests and academic abilities. In general, ancillary services -whether conducted inside or outside the library- are always implemented under the supervision or direct involvement of a librarian or instructor. The design and execution of these programs depend largely on the librarian's individual interests and skills. One librarian may prefer working with children, while another may be more inclined to engage with housewives, students, or working adults. Moreover, each library implements its programs based on available staff, the interests and expertise of the librarians, the community's needs, and the library's budget. There is no strict obligation for librarians to provide ancillary services beyond their capacity or field of interest. Therefore, there is no significant difference among librarians' opinions on ancillary services based on age, gender, educational level, employment status, or job position, since the type and extent of services provided largely depend on the individual librarian's discretion. Based on this, it is suggested that, to improve this component, librarians receive training in engaging storytelling techniques and the use of

new technologies -such as virtual and augmented reality- and that dedicated storytelling spaces equipped with multimedia facilities be established in libraries.

As a final conclusion, it can be stated that the main goal of providing ancillary services in public libraries is to encourage and motivate people to read, transforming libraries from mere repositories of books into dynamic and interactive centers for meeting the cultural, social and scientific needs of society. However, paying attention to ancillary services in libraries is meaningless without paying attention to the people who perform these services. The professional ethics, motivation, and sense of responsibility of librarians, as well as shortage of human resources and inadequate compensation, have a significant impact on the quality of ancillary services provided in libraries. Unfortunately, the Public Library Institution in Iran, as the main governing body of public libraries, has not given sufficient attention to the librarians who perform these services. In general, librarians have limited authority or budget to implement additional programs, despite being the individuals most directly engaged with the community and best able to identify which programs and facilities are needed. One of the major challenges in some public libraries affiliated with this institution is the lack of personnel who can independently manage and implement ancillary services alongside their traditional duties. Many librarians provide these services voluntarily and based on personal interest, often without additional compensation or recognition. Consequently, some are reluctant to participate, while others who do so may not devote adequate time or attention to these programs. Considering these points, the importance of implementing ancillary and cultural programs in public libraries is now widely recognized. The present study aimed to investigate successful and popular ancillary services in public libraries of West Azerbaijan Province based on IFLA strategies. The results and analyses obtained can serve as valuable guidance for policymakers and decision-makers in the field of public library management and development.

According to the general results of this study, it is possible to propose solutions for improving library service standards at the macro level. For instance, the mean score for extra-library services based on librarians' opinions is 2.93, which is below the desired level and the IFLA standard, indicating the need for improvement and stronger compliance with established guidelines. Conversely, the storytelling program demonstrated an above-average impact with a mean score of 3.61. Therefore, offering these services in a more specialized manner -specifically by individuals with storytelling expertise, particularly in regions where library services have limited appeal (such as underprivileged areas)- is recommended.

There are also several obstacles in this regard, including:

1. **Lack of financial and human resources:** To overcome this obstacle, it is suggested that libraries address these deficiencies by attracting public support or partnering with non-governmental organizations.
2. **Resistance to change:** It is recommended to hold training workshops for librarians to familiarize them with the benefits of ancillary services and effective methods for implementing them.

Therefore, it should be emphasized that the ancillary services of libraries not only help attract a wider audience but also play a vital role in transforming libraries into dynamic cultural and social centers. Achieving this goal requires



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close cooperation among librarians, policymakers, and the local community. Furthermore, paying attention to the opinions of librarians as the primary implementers of these services and providing them with both material and non-material incentives can significantly improve the quality and quantity of ancillary services.

Limitations: Every study faces limitations depending on the subject matter, research sample, geographical scope, and methodology, which may affect the research process and even its results. In the present study, one limitation was the geographical dispersion of public libraries, which inevitably led to the selection of the cluster sampling method. In addition, the lack of cooperation from some librarians in completing the questionnaire as the primary research instrument was another challenge and limitation encountered during the study.

6. Acknowledgment

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the successful completion of this research.

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