

Establishing Information Consulting Services in Public Libraries

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Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate the opinions of the librarians of Semnan public libraries on information consulting and examine the feasibility and requirements of setting up information consulting services (ICSs) in public libraries, which has become even more important during the coronavirus pandemic. The present study adopted a survey method using the interview technique. The research population included all librarians of Semnan public libraries. The findings showed that more than 75% of the librarians of Semnan public libraries were willing to set up the ICSs in the public library. Librarians of Semnan public libraries believed that specialized human resources hardware and software facilities and funding are required to set up the ICSs in public libraries. knowledge and skills, personality traits, and communication and public relations techniques are mentioned as the characteristics of information consultants. According to the librarians, the ICSs increase the users of libraries, improve library services, provide job satisfaction for librarians, and increase income for the library. They considered these factors as the top benefits of setting up information consulting. Given the willingness of young librarians with less experience, who are educated in Library and Information Science (LIS), to set up the ICSs in Semnan public libraries, they have the potential to provide ICSs in libraries by setting up an information consulting desk. Training of these librarians can provide the necessary basis for setting up the ICSs and information consulting clinics, promoting the position of the LIS field in the community, and leading to the employment market for graduates of LIS. This is the first study on public libraries in Iran. The importance of the subject can be a prelude to launching information consulting services in Iranian public libraries during the coronavirus.

Keywords: Information Counseling, Public Libraries, Semnan Province.

Introduction

Many definitions of information consulting services and information consultants are provided. Some authors such as Wormell, Olesen and Mikulás (2011) believe that definitions of who or what information consultants are, remain diverse, and people in the field use terms such as information consultant, information broker, freelance librarian, information specialist, information retailer, infomediary, info-entrepreneur, intelligence manager and so on to describe themselves. Thus, in most cases, it depends on the person to choose the best fitting. Noruzi and Velayati (2009) defined it as helping the client satisfy his/her information needs, including skills

in the problem-solving model framework. This concept refers to collective wisdom and the use of the opinions and experiences of others. Those who have knowledge and experience of a subject can be consulted. This concept in library and information science is taken from the family consulting field. The term information consulting has been widely used, and most cases are related to consulting at the level of managers and concern various companies (Galyni Moghaddam, 2010); the essence of information consulting service is the transfer of knowledge, intelligence, and ideas (Shen & Yang, 2017).

Information consulting in libraries and information centers can be done in various areas, the most important of which are the following: reader counseling, dissemination of selected information and current awareness, information broker, information entrepreneur and self-employment in the field Information, etc. In other words, information consulting services can provide a wide range of specialized consultations in the area of retrieving, organizing, and accessing the information required by users in various fields of science, art, economics, health, etc., through a digital reference for libraries by chats, web forms, e-mail, and telephone consulting services. Shen and Yang (2017) regard information consultation from a knowledgeable viewpoint and believe that library and information consultation is a knowledge-intensive intelligent service that provides users with the knowledge product and knowledge service by helping users solve the information access barriers via various methods, or provide them with necessary literature, or provide suggestions and solutions to a problem relying on the resources of specialized information, knowledge, skills, and experience.

A committed intelligence consultant tries to help clients address those goals, actions, and activities that can help solve their problems. In other words, information consulting is a process based on a specialized supportive relationship in which an effective counselor uses his/her special knowledge and skills to grow, solve problems, and change his/her clients (Noruzi & Velayati, 2009). Regarding the importance of consulting and the role of libraries in information counseling, Fadaie (2013) believes that the main issue is whether libraries and information centers are accepted as consulting centers and whether a competent librarian is accepted as a consultant. If we say no, it is unfortunate that we have neglected most of the functions of these centers and relegated them to an environment that only takes books and other materials. But if the opinion on this question is positive, we must determine its level. Are libraries and information centers just the centers where we raise our questions, or do we consider them excellent places to consult and ultimately make decisions? Therefore, it is one of the most critical services in library service, which reflects the academic, intellectual, social, and comprehensive characteristics of librarians (Shen & Yang, 2017). Besides, "by marketing ourselves as library and information consultants, librarians have a greater opportunity to showcase the talents our communities rely on" (Murphy, 2011).

Regarding librarianship and information science, libraries also exist as places with a variety of knowledge, and librarians work as specialists and skilled technologists who dominate their work. They are ready for consultation (Fadaie, 2012). Also, he believes librarians have three main interrelated tasks that are useful in counseling. These three functions are familiarity and comprehensive mastery of the collection; the second is the complete mastery of the potential and actual audience community; and the third is the relationship between the two through counseling. In addition, if he/she can handle it well, he/she can connect the person needing consulting to the competent and relevant authorities (ibid). Today, information consulting has become a whole word in information science (Noruzi & Velayati, 2009). The importance of

information consulting caused the issue of "Information Consulting Centers and Information Consulting System of Iran" to be discussed in a specialized meeting with the presence of experts in the 5th Congress of Information Science Specialists in November 2017.

Efforts have been made to launch information consulting services, including the idea of the Information Clinic by Dr. Alireza Noruzi and Allameh Tabatabai University Information Consulting Center in 2014. In the current plan in Allameh Tabatabai University, information consulting has been done in a meeting, and the fee of intelligence counselors has been determined according to the tariff of counselors and psychologists. These have been efforts in this area, but providing information consulting services and establishing information consulting desks in public libraries have not been examined. The nature of public libraries is to provide services to the public. Under their publicity as a public university and the use of their facilities by all, and a large number of libraries in cities, towns, and villages, they can play a different and more specific role compared to other types of libraries in society.

On the other hand, one of the community issues is the spread of the coronavirus, which has overshadowed various domains of society. Hence, public libraries, along with educational and research centers, are among the centers that have been severely affected by the presence of users and customers. Public libraries can be excellent potential to provide library services through consulting services. The idea of information consulting can be helpful in this situation. In this regard, for the first time in Iran, the present article examined the feasibility of launching information consulting services in public libraries. We hope that the idea of information consulting services can move public libraries from libraries and information centers to learning centers. The present study used the views of Semnan and Shahroud public libraries librarians to set up and train librarians to play the role of information consultant. Familiarity with librarians' views as providers of information consulting services and knowledge of their opinions on the feasibility of providing services and the role and importance of these services can be effective in the success of this new service in public libraries. The present study is done for this purpose.

The primary purpose of this study is to assess the feasibility of providing information consulting services in Semnan public libraries based on the opinions of Semnan librarians to more easily access and use scientific methods to obtain the information required by clients and users of public libraries in coronavirus conditions.

The sub-objective of the research is to assess the need for educational content required by librarians of Semnan public libraries about the readiness to create an information consultation desk in public libraries of Semnan province. The current state of society in the era of the coronavirus epidemic and the low activity or inactivity of public libraries in these conditions can provide the basis for providing information consulting services through the library website, by phone or in person, making the public libraries more useful. The public libraries of Semnan province and the big cities of this province, namely the cities of Semnan and Shahroud, have been selected as the pilot libraries of this study so that the opinions of the librarians of these libraries can be used to set up information consulting desk services in these libraries. Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

- What are the opinions of librarians of Semnan public libraries about information consulting services?
- How many librarians of Semnan public libraries want to set up an information consultation desk in public libraries?

- What are the requirements and facilities for setting up information consulting desk services from the point of view of librarians of Semnan public libraries?
- What are the characteristics of the information consulting librarians in the public libraries?
- What are the benefits of information consulting desks for public libraries if they provide information consulting services?

Literature Review

In their research, Frank, Raschke, Wood and Yang (2001) highlighted the importance of information consulting academic libraries and cited it as the key to success in libraries. In their view, information consulting is a dynamic, interactive process between librarians, faculty, and students that facilitates education and research. Shokri and Rahaei (2005) addressed the necessity and role of university librarians as information consultants. Their research showed that effective information consulting improves the position of librarians and libraries. Joung (2008) conducted a study on the establishment plan of a consulting system for constructing and operating a public library in Korea. The results of this study showed that there is a very high latent demand for library consulting, according to public librarians' opinions. The author suggested that government offices execute library consulting services as public services.

Bagheri, Zamani and Abdollahi (2013) examined the effect of information consulting on improving information-seeking behavior and appropriate use of library resources by public library clients. The results showed that information consulting makes people feel self-effective in the library environment. A sense of self-efficacy will leave the library's sweet experience in the community's minds. It will make people more eager to read and make the library space a more enjoyable environment, which will ultimately increase the per capita reading of the community by visiting more libraries. Fadaie (2012) considered consulting as one of the duties of librarians in libraries and information centers and stated that in the matter of counseling if the librarian can handle this task well, he/she can connect the person needing consulting to a competent and relevant authority.

Studies such as Bagheri, Shabani, and Abedi (2014) and Bagheri (2012) show that information consulting courses in public libraries reduce library anxiety and enhance user self-efficacy, eagerness to read them, return to the library, and enjoyment of the library environment. Shen and Yang (2017) have studied tacit knowledge management in library information consulting services. They discussed the concept of tacit knowledge management, the types and contents of tacit knowledge, the necessity for tacit knowledge management, and the strategies for tacit knowledge management in library information advisory services. They found that the tacit knowledge management strategies and activities should be integrated with the behaviors of librarians so that the work efficiency of advisory librarians could be maximized.

The results of Bagheri, Sharif, and Tajafari (2017) showed that information and research consulting services are among the services respondents have chosen as a mandatory criterion. If a service is mandatory, it means that if it is provided, it will have little effect on user satisfaction. Still, if this service is not provided, users will be very dissatisfied. Wang and Lund (2020) studied announcement information provided by United States public libraries during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. A content analysis of library announcements relating to the COVID-19 pandemic posted showed that more than half of libraries posted about COVID-19 and general hygiene practices. Many of the messages have changed in terms of content from

March 14 to April 12, showing the rapid development of the pandemic. This study suggested that libraries could play an important role in providing customers with reliable pandemic information such as COVID-19.

To identify how public libraries used Twitter in the initial months after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Alajmi and Albudaiwi (2021) conducted a study. The study found that 85.5% of tweets posted by New York City public libraries were related to regular library communications, such as library service update announcements, book recommendations, suggested reading and activities, specific occasions or people's celebrations, and announcements of upcoming events. Meanwhile, 14.5% of tweets posted between January and April 2020 were directly and explicitly related to COVID-19. The New York Public Library posted information about remote library services available during closure and announcements that are comforting and socially supportive while also providing information about financial, health, and food-related support available to the community. The results suggest that the New York City Public Library continued to operate normally during the pandemic and may hold a valuable sense of normality for the communities they serve during those troublesome and strained days.

Garner et al. (2021) studied Australian public library responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show that during the closure period of their physical sites, libraries have implemented new services (e.g., telephone calls for social assistance and delivery of craft kits to users) and have expanded some of their existing services, especially those related to e-resources. The biggest problem reported was employee management. Although most libraries had full-time and part-time staff, most completely reduced the working hours of volunteers and regular staff. In general, although city libraries and regional and remote public libraries faced enormous challenges, especially regarding staff and human resources, they could respond quickly and smoothly to the challenges posed by covid-19.

Examining the literature showed the importance of information consultation to improve and promote the position of librarians and libraries. It is also vital for public libraries with a wide range of audiences and needs. The literature review also showed that information counseling affects various aspects, such as information behavior, anxiety, information needs, and self-efficacy. During the Corona epidemic, public library services changed and showed the importance of information consultations. Therefore, it is necessary to create information consultation in public libraries. Still, the background check showed that no research has been done in this field in Iran so far, and this research has addressed this issue.

Materials and Methods

This research used the survey method and a structured interview design to examine the opinions of librarians of Semnan public libraries regarding establishing an information consultation desk in public libraries. This study's research community includes the Semnan province public library librarians. Because of quarantine conditions due to the Coronavirus pandemic, interview questions were sent electronically to the librarians, and 31 librarians answered the interview questions. Accordingly, the return rate of the questionnaires was about 50%. After receiving the answers, the answers were coded according to the grounded theory perspective.

Results

Demographic data

The demographic data of the respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Respondents' characteristics according to the degree and work experience of librarians

Librarians degree	frequency	Types of University Degrees	frequency	Work experience of librarians	frequency
Associates	3	Knowledge and Information Science	20	Less than 10 years	12
Bachelor's	16	Not related to Knowledge and Information Science	11	between 10 and 20	8
Masters and doctorates	12			between 20 and 30	11

According to Table 1, the university degree of librarians in Semnan province mostly specializes in librarianship and information science (knowledge and information science), and about half of them have less than 10 years of experience (i.e., young librarians). The presence of young and motivated librarians in the field of information science will be a good opportunity to provide new library services. Among these services, we can mention the provision of information consulting services.

What is the opinion of librarians of Semnan public libraries about information consulting services?

The first question sought to clarify the views of librarians of public libraries on information counseling. After open coding the answers to this question, we reached four principal axial codes shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Semnan Librarians' Opinions about Information Consulting Services

Open coding	Axial coding
The services that guide the practical and qualitative and explain the treasure inside the libraries' warehouses based on the accurate and appropriate needs of the clients.	Guidance of library users
Guidance services for people and researchers in study areas	
Providing information and guidance to users in various fields other than book lending	
Providing helpful and guiding services for the enlightenment and awareness of users	
Services that help clients to find the right solution for their problems	
Informing clients about obtaining various information	
Guiding the client through the transfer of information and knowledge in one or more subject areas for better decision making	
Guidance for clients regarding their research	
Guidance in finding client information	

Open coding	Axial coding
Services that are provided by human resources through various available facilities and resources to consult in all fields to users.	Consult in one or more areas required by the user
Giving information and introducing needed resources to every stratum	
A service in which a highly knowledgeable person consults others on one or more subject areas.	
Consulting and presenting problems to someone who has high knowledge in one or more fields.	
Providing consultation to people to get the information they need	Q&A process between librarian and user
Questions and answers between the librarian and the client so that the librarian can understand the client's information needs and guide her/him	
The question and answer take place between the librarian and the client to solve the client's information needs.	
Questions and answers between the librarian and the client to guide and meet the needs of the client	Purposeful interaction between the librarian and the user to meet the information needs
Service to provide the most suitable information according to the specialized field of the researcher and the library user	
It is a purposeful interaction between librarians and patrons that helps them search and discover information by paying attention to patrons.	
A set of capabilities that help a person know what they want, services that help the user what and where to search, and how to solve their problems with information.	

According to Table 2, most of the librarians' perceptions of information consulting have been to guide users of the libraries. Unfortunately, due to the lack of information consulting services in public libraries, it can be argued that most of the questions and answers in public libraries are about finding the book needed by the user, and meeting the user's information needs does not take place in libraries.

How many Semnan librarians of public libraries want to set up an information consultation desk in public libraries?

According to the second research question, we sought to determine if librarians are interested in creating information consulting. The answers to this question are shown in Table 3.

*Table 3
Readiness of Semnan Public Libraries for Providing Information Consulting Services*

No		Yes	
Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency
25	8	75	23

According to the data in Table 3, about 75% of librarians are interested in launching information consulting services in the library where they work. This shows librarians' interest in providing information consulting services in libraries, the effectiveness of services, and their role in the library and society.

What are the requirements and facilities for setting up information consulting desk services from the point of view of public library librarians?

Setting up information consulting desk services needs many requirements. Opinions of the librarians about these requirements are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

The Necessary Facilities to Provide Information Consulting Services in Semnan Libraries from the Point of View of Librarians

Open coding	Axial coding
More qualified and sufficient manpower	Specialized human resources and necessary training for them
Creating study opportunities and specialized classes for librarians	
Librarian knowledge and awareness of databases	
experienced, efficient, and studious manpower	
The presence of an expert, skilled and knowledgeable person, related books, and visual and audio resources	
knowledgeable and capable librarian	
Primarily an associate consultant	
Librarians welcome this activity in addition to basic awareness	
Several computers with reference sources, CDs containing books and scientific articles	
Providing infrastructure	
Access to up-to-date resources and databases, access to information technology	
Hardware and software facilities such as computers and databases, and information programs	
Access to Internet networks and preparation of some databases by the library	
A special place for consultants and hardware facilities	
Computer and easy access to databases, an archive of magazines and newspapers, and reference section	
Providing online services	
Advanced and up-to-date search systems and provision of facilities and scientific resources for the library	
More budget	Budget

According to the data in Table 4, the facilities most often mentioned by librarians to set up an information consulting desk in the public library were specialized human resources and training of these human resources. Providing hardware and software facilities and equipment in libraries is the next priority. Finally, the budget is the next most important requirement. The main concern of librarians about information consulting services and their requirements has been the necessary training for librarians in the field of information counseling. The next stage is providing hardware and software facilities and developing information resources.

What are the characteristics of the information consulting librarians in the public libraries?

Information consultant librarians should have some characteristics to provide the best service. Table 5 lists librarians' views on these features and characteristics.

Table 5

Characteristics of Human Resources Providing Information Consulting Services in Public Libraries from Librarians' Perspectives

Open coding	Axial coding
Having sufficient knowledge and familiarity with all kinds of databases and reference sources	Knowledge and skills, especially in librarianship and information science
University education and familiar with the topics to be consulted	
Familiar with up-to-date science	
Having an education in the field of librarianship, being familiar with databases and having the ability to interact with clients	
Having comprehensive and updated information on one or more subject areas	
Capable and proficient in all subjects and with up-to-date information	
Scientifically up-to-date and persistent	
expert, proficient, knowledgeable	
studious, always increasing information	
Knowledgeable and inquisitive	
Aware of the job and position of librarianship	
Be aware of all kinds of information sources	
information literacy skills and awareness of sources and databases	
Work experience in the field of psychology and counseling and specialist	
Patience	Patience, ethics and interest
Compassionate, committed, persistent and articulate	
Eager to provide this type of service	
Interested, book reader, creative	
Very interested and patient	
patient, creative and literate, having the right and good attitude	
cool and cheerful	
Having the ethics of providing helpful information to others and being patient and cheerful	
Has good morals	Communication skills
Good-natured, warm-hearted	
Oratory and ability to communicate with users	
High public relations	
High public relations and fluent expression and good language	
Welcome	
Pleasant and disciplined	
High public relations	

According to the librarians of Semnan public libraries views, an essential characteristic of the human resources providing information consulting services is knowledge and skills, especially in librarianship and information science. After that, several personality traits, such as patience, interest, and ethics, are mentioned. Also, since providing information consulting services requires communication and public relations techniques, librarians correctly point out this feature.

What are the benefits of an information consulting desk for public libraries if you provide information consulting services at the library?

Having benefits can motivate librarians to provide information consulting. These benefits, according to librarians of public libraries, are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Advantages of Providing Information Consulting Services in Public Libraries from the Point of View Of Semnan Librarians

Open coding	Axial coding
Attracting more users and increasing reading per capita	Audience attraction
Increase in clients	
Increasing the attraction of clients and borrowing resources from the library	
Attract more clients, and the library becomes a place beyond borrowing books	
Library services will be more coherent and fruitful.	Improving library services and improving the position of librarians
Improving the position of the library in society	
Increasing the efficiency of the library in the community	
Increasing the number of borrowing resources, information, and requests from clients	
A place to increase knowledge and make optimal use of opportunities	
The dynamics of the library	
Variety of services and improvement of library position	
Updating library resources	
Optimum use of library space, promotion of citizenship, vocational and artistic education, and the possibility of cooperation with schools and colleges	
Per capita increase in study and scientific level of people	
Increasing community awareness of non-book lending services in the library	
More and better services to library users	
In addition to the material and spiritual benefits, it will strengthen the library's foundations.	
Getting to know the clients' needs and prioritizing needs in selection and acquisition	Meeting the needs of users and increasing user satisfaction
Increasing the satisfaction of library patrons	
It will respond to the research needs of people, including students.	
Increasing job satisfaction of librarians	job satisfaction of librarians
Increasing the motivation of librarians	
Attracting more funds for the library	income generation
Income generation for the library	

According to the data in Table 6, attracting more audiences is the main advantage of information consulting services. Improving library services, promoting libraries' position in the community, and meeting users' information needs are in the following ranks, respectively. Job satisfaction of librarians and making money for libraries are mentioned by a small number of

librarians as well.

Discussions

Information consulting means searching for information, abilities, and experiences in particular cases and helping clients (individual, organization, or company) to solve their problems and achieve their goals. Therefore, an information consultant is trained and familiar with the problems, concerns, contradictions, anxiety, and decision-making issues of individuals and knows the principles, methods, and techniques, and can help people solve problems (Noruzi & Velayati, 2009). The primary purpose of information consulting is to help clients meet their information needs, feel confident in their work, and adhere to professional principles. By referring to the library or helping librarians through cyberspace in libraries, the client will feel more satisfied with the work and feel useful, will satisfy users, and thus promote the profession in the community.

Since users with different needs refer to the public library as an integral part of the community, the public library is one of the best places to provide information consultation. Therefore, this research sought to investigate the views of librarians of public libraries in Semnan province on different aspects of this issue. The research results in the demographic information of librarians showed that the university degree of librarians of Semnan province is mainly specialized in librarianship and information science (Knowledge and information science), and about half have less than ten years of experience (i.e., young librarians). The presence of young and motivated librarians in the field of information science will be an excellent opportunity to provide new services in libraries and will be welcomed by them. Among these services, we can mention the provision of information consulting services in Semnan public libraries, and this opportunity should be used.

The results also showed that 75% of librarians are willing to provide information consulting services in the public library. This shows the importance of information consulting services in public libraries and the need to provide this service in Semnan public libraries. In line with these results, the study of Joung (2008) also showed a very high latent demand for library consulting according to the opinions of librarians of public libraries. Examining librarians' opinions about information consultation showed that they believe it is user guidance, consultation in required subject areas, question and answer, and interaction between librarian and client. In a way, it can be said that the public library librarians of Semnan province have a general and traditional view of information consultation. Therefore, it is necessary to teach them the different scientific aspects of this issue through training so that they can implement information counseling in public libraries.

Providing information consulting services requires the provision of the necessary facilities that should be considered before launching information consulting services and the necessary measures should be considered. The results of this study showed that according to librarians of public libraries, specialized human resources and training these librarians is the essential requirement for setting up information consulting. After that, providing facilities and hardware and software equipment in libraries and, finally, the necessary budget was considered by librarians.

Human resource is the main requirement for setting up information consultations. But what are the characteristics of these human resources? Librarians of public libraries believe that first, they have to have knowledge and skills, especially in librarianship and information science. After that, several personality traits, such as patience, interest, and ethics, are mentioned. Also,

providing information consulting services requires communication and public relations techniques. These results show that knowing without communication skills or good ethics is useless in providing information consulting services.

In this regard, Shokri and Rahaei (2005) believe that skills needed by information consultants include communication skills such as active listening, interaction, and writing skills along with the confidence of the information consultant, which play an important role in success. The ability to process information, identify the relevance of the information to the audience's needs, and extract meaning from information to support the decision-making facilitate the success of the information consultant. These skills should be learned, and facilities should be provided so librarians can receive the necessary training to provide information consulting services.

Providing various new services will have various advantages for the public library. The results of this research showed that the librarians of these libraries believe that these services will attract more audiences in the first place, increasing the income for libraries. Also, by providing these services and meeting the different needs of users, the library's position in society will improve, and the value and position of public libraries will be more recognized. This will make librarians feel more job satisfaction. With these approaches and advantages, information consulting services can be considered a kind of entrepreneurship.

This part of the research is consistent with the findings of Bagheri, Shabani and Abedi (2014) and Bagheri (2012). Bagheri, Zamani, and Abdollahi (2013) concluded that information consulting in libraries helps people understand self-efficacy in the library environment. This self-efficacy will make people more eager to read and make the library space a more enjoyable environment. The results of our research also showed that the advantage of providing information consulting services in libraries, according to the librarians of Semnan public libraries, could be the greater satisfaction of librarians with the provision of services. The results of Shokri and Rahaei (2005) also showed that effective information consulting improves the position of librarians and libraries. According to public librarians, promoting the position of libraries in the community is one of the information consulting advantages.

Conclusions

If consulting in the field of information science should be formed in the strict sense, firstly, experts and information consulting teams should be formed. Secondly, senior management should make any decision on information centers subject to reliable consultations. Training information consultants should try to advise these people as compassionate consultants in establishing and maintaining these centers and achieving their goals. This service can be helpful during the challenging situations related to the coronavirus pandemic. In the field of information counseling, the following suggestions can be made.

Research suggestions

- Considering the desire of more than 75% of Semnan public library librarians to provide information consulting services in the public library of their workplace, it is suggested that the preparations for setting up an information consulting desk in public libraries be examined on a trial basis. In this regard, electronic information consulting services can be launched through the website of public libraries in the form of online chats, e-mails, and web forms, as well as telephone services in libraries with the necessary capabilities.

- Considering the importance of specialized human resources for providing information consulting services from the point of view of the librarians, it is suggested that training courses be held for training specialized librarians of public libraries to prepare and launch information consulting services in public libraries. It will teach communication skills, reference interview techniques, verbal and non-verbal communication, and the use of body language, along with specialized courses on familiarity with databases and search strategies in databases parallel with increasing their information literacy skills.
- Another suggestion is that after obtaining the necessary licenses to provide information consulting services from relevant institutions, such as family consulting and psychology services, information consulting services should be able to take action under the supervision of the Library and Information Association of Iran and the Iranian Medical Library and Information Science Association. They should be able to set up offices of information consulting services and information clinics in the country to employ graduate students of knowledge and information science more than before.

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