

Abstract

Public libraries are the public access institutions, which always face lots of different risks that arose from the social environment. As the uncertain factors have been rising, which made the society became more complicated, and increased the probability of crises, it also caused the ordeals and challenges for organizations and individuals. Public libraries are the community information centers for the whole people, undertaking the mission of preserving culture and promoting education, which also have the responsibilities to ensure and provide a safe environment for the readers. Therefore, how to deal with the crisis and emergency situations, revealed the importance of the crisis management for each library.

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the general situation of the human-induced crisis which occurred on the public libraries in Taiwan, and also expected to combine the theory and practical needs. The result of this study would provide a reference model of crisis management for the public libraries. In addition, it could also give suggestions for on-the-job training and curriculum development to the Library Association and the schools of Library and Information Science.

This thesis applied a questionnaire investigation associated with the in-depth interview approach. The interviewers included library directors and decision supervisors of the public libraries. This study further expected to gather the attitude, experience, crisis management plan, related strategies, and the comments from the administrators in the public libraries.

The findings of this thesis are as follows: (1) both the characteristics of the readers and librarians were different, and both of their consciousnesses of crisis were not enough. Furthermore, the nature of the public libraries service, the inappropriate facilities, and management strategies also became the related factors of the human-induced crisis of the public libraries. (2) The administrators of public libraries in Taiwan need to be conscious about crisis. (3) Only a minority of the public libraries in Taiwan had drawn up the crisis management plan, and the implementation of the training courses and costumer charters also couldn't fully accomplish the purposes desired. (4) The public libraries in Taiwan paid much attention on the crisis handling, but usually neglected both the detection and prevention works of the crisis, which also lowered the whole efficiency of the crisis management plan. (5) The main

difficulties and obstacles confronted with the public libraries were: (i) Lack of sufficient funds and human resources. (ii) Lack of sufficient crisis management training courses and related experience. (iii) For a long time, the position of the librarian of public libraries in Taiwan was instable. The staffs turn over also made the crisis management training courses not easy to conduct, either of the impartation of related experiences. (iv) As the sense of the public rights had increased recently, the abusive complain also brought serious stress and anxiety to public libraries. (v) Public libraries were a part of social education institutions, based on their service and education standpoint, which always brought conflicts when they enforced the rules and laws.

The suggestions included: (1) The government and the chief administrators of the public libraries should provide supports and funds to all public libraries, and must take the security issue into account of the library laws and operational standard as soon as possible. Thus, related units must help the public libraries to share experience and form cooperative partnership. (2) The public libraries should review their current crisis management strategies, and make an appropriate revision and augment. Moreover, the public libraries also need to put the trainings into effect, and must enhance the consciousness of crisis for each staff. (3) Both of the association of library and schools of library and information science should try to put the crisis management issues into the library management curriculum to fulfill the practical need of the public libraries, and reinforcing the crisis management knowledge and capacity for the librarians.

【 Keyword 】

Public Libraries ; Crisis Management ; Library Management ; Human-induced crisis