

The Curriculum of LIS Post Graduate Courses in Universities of Kerala

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Abstract - The study analyses the heterogeneity and homogeneity in the curriculum of Library and information Science(LIS) departments in Universities of Kerala at post graduate level and to know the level of adoption of ICT in the LIS curriculum. LIS programmes throughout the world have instituted many curriculum changes as a result of technological achievements and advancement of ICT. Four departments are included in this study. The curriculum of the departments was collected personally. There are 3 institutions (75.00%) conduct 2-year integrated MLISc programme whereas one department M. G. University conducts one year BLISc and one year MLISc programs. There is a difference in the number of papers in the curriculum of these departments. Both in theoretical and practical perspective, all the departments covered ICT and application of ICT on library field.

Keywords: Curriculum, Post Graduate Courses, LIS, ICT, UGC, MLISc, Universities

I. INTRODUCTION

Library and Information Science (LIS) education is rooted in India at the beginning of twentieth century, now it has completed 107 years. Under the leadership of great legends like Dr. S. R. Ranganathan the subject takes a tremendous growth. The Library and Information Science (LIS) has the attributes of being a discipline of disciplines, subject commenced its advent with a clinical approach and gradually attained the status of a scientific field, emerged subsequently as one of the subjects of highly interdisciplinary approach, with a blend of theories, philosophies and practices incorporated from a host of other subjects^[1]. Nowadays different state universities, central universities, government departments, polytechnics, libraries and library associations offers different LIS education programmes such Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor (BLISc), P.G. Diploma (PGDIT, PGDA & PGDLAN), Masters (MLISc), M. Phil and Ph.D. programmes both in regular and distance stream. Along with these courses NISCAIR and DRTC offers two year Associateship in Information Science.

Ocholla opined that “A curriculum is a fundamental part of any education or training programmes largely because it provides not only a list of courses or modules offered in a programme, but it also gives information on content, purpose, method, time/duration, trainers and location or

situation of a programme or course - all of which are essential in a successful dispensation of manpower training and education”^[2]. The word curriculum derives from Latin word ‘currere’ means runway or path, laid way to reach the goal. In other words, it is some of all the good learning experiences that pupils have in order to achieve the goals of education which determine the direction of these experiences^[3]. LIS programmes throughout the world have instituted major curriculum changes as a result of technological achievements and advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

II. LIS EDUCATION IN INDIA

In 1911 Maharaja Sayajirao III, Gaekwad of Baroda invited a person from America Mr. W. A. Borden, a student of Melvil Dewey, to Baroda, India and he started a short term training programme in library science. Now this place is at Vadodara district Gujarat. After four years the then librarian of Punjab University Asa Don Dickinson, (in 1915) another American student of Dewey, started a three-month apprentice training course for working librarians^[4]. Before independence there were only five universities providing LIS education. Gradually the number of LIS educational institutions increased to provide qualified professionals.

In 1929 Dr S.R. Ranganathan started a certificate course at Madras Library Association later this course was taken over by the University of Madras, and in 1937 the course was converted to Postgraduate Diploma in Library Science. This was the first diploma programme in this subject in India. University of Delhi was the first University to set up a full-fledged Department for Library Science in 1946, and in next year they started PG Diploma course, in 1951 this diploma was changed to Master in Library Science (M.Lib.Sc)^[5].

In 1949 University of Delhi started Ph.D programme in Library Science, they were the pioneers to start a doctoral programme in library science in the entire British Commonwealth^[6]. In 1977 they started M. Phil course too. In India at present more than hundreds of institutions offer LIS education to produce qualified librarians to enable knowledge dissemination.

III. LIS CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The University Grants Commission (UGC) took part an important role in the growth and development of Library and Information Science education in India. They

formulated model curriculums for LIS education from time to time. In 1965 UGC appointed the Review Committee under the chairmanship of S.R. Ranganathan, committee suggested syllabi for CLSC, BLISc, MLISc programmes and recognized areas for research in Library Science^[7]. In 1990 the UGC constituted Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) on Library and Information Science under the chairmanship of Prof. P.N. Kular and the report was published in 1992 under the title “Report of the Curriculum Development Committee on library and information science”^[8]. A committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Prof. C.R. Karisidappa and the report published in 2001 under the title “UGC Model Curriculum library and information science”^[9].

The CDC (2001) recommended that “in view of the emerging network environment, in view of the fundamental shift in the goals of the library, and in view of the changes in information storage and delivery mechanisms, the educational programmes should cater the needs of these changed settings by including in their course contents, the knowledge and skills required to function effectively in such an environment”. Professional associations and organizations such as ILA, IASLIC, IATLIS, and SIS are also helping to revise curricula to meet current demands^[10]. The model curriculum offers flexibility to the departments for the preparation of syllabi.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ganaie^[11] critically evaluated the present status of LIS education at various levels in India. Students intake, mode of selection, duration of course, curriculum are dissimilar with regard to universities and treated LIS discipline under different faculties.

To determine the status of formal LIS education in India, Sanghamitra P.^[12] analyzed 33 universities across the country. Content analysis method was used to examine the courses structure and contents, availability of faculty, research contribution, infrastructural facilities, etc. Paper advocates for the establishment of a national accreditation council for LIS education to sustain quality and standard in LIS courses.

Attitude of LIS schools of northern India to UGC model curriculum-2001 was studied by Ganaie^[13] by gathering the responses of 13 LIS schools. Some departments have adopted the model 85% and others 15%. UGC has not taken any initiative to revise its model curriculum-2001 and in 2012 Ganaie^[14] investigated the course structure in the LIS schools in North India at graduate level. Analysis reveals that there is disparity existing in the curriculum adopted by these schools.

Eqbal, Sohali & Sohali^[15] traced the development of LIS professional education in India and emphasized the need for having a national level accreditation body to maintain uniformity and standards in LIS education.

Wijetunge^[16] carried out a comprehensive analysis of the LIS education system covering the 2004- 2007 period. Most members have no training in curriculum design, and the team’s lack contributions by other stakeholders except LIS professionals.

Varalakshmi^[17] made an attempt to analyze the digital library course content of LIS Master Degree programmes of selected University Departments in India. Recommended to devise innovative LIS programme content on digital libraries in the form of core and advanced elective courses.

V. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

1. To study the level of library science education in Universities of Kerala.
2. To know the heterogeneity and homogeneity in the curriculum of LIS Schools.
3. To investigate the level of adoption of ICT in the curriculum by the LIS departments in Universities of Kerala at post graduate level.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The scope of the study is restricted to the Library and Information Science departments of the Universities of Kerala. Four departments were included in this study. The curriculum of LIS department of Kannur University was downloaded from their official website and rest of the curriculums were collected personally (hardcopy).

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table.1 gives a clear picture about the courses provided by LIS departments under the scope of the study.

A. LIS courses offered

All the surveyed University departments in the Kerala state treated Library and Information Science (LIS) courses under different faculties. University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram started Library Science department in 1961. The department is working under arts faculty. After that the University of Calicut located at Thenhipalam, in Malappuram established Library Science department in 1978. The course is offering under the faculty of Humanities. In 1995 M. G. University, Kottayam launched LIS department under Social Science faculty and in 2009 Kannur University commenced LIS department under the Science faculty.

There are three institutions (75.00%) conducts 2-year integrated MLISc programme whereas only one department i.e, Mahatma Gandhi University offers separate BLISc and MLISc programs having one year duration. M. Phil. course is offered by University of Calicut and University of Kerala and all the universities (100%) provide opportunity for research. (Ph. D.)

TABLE.I COURSES OFFERED

Name of University	Year of Inception	Faculty	BLISc	MLISc		M. Phil	Ph. D	Others
			One year	One year	Two years Integrated			
Kannur University	2009	Science	-	-	✓	-	✓	-
M.G. University	1995	Social science	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-
University of Calicut	1978	Humanities	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-
University of Kerala	1961	Arts	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Total			1 25%	1 25%	3 75%	2 50%	4 100%	0 0%

B. Curriculum Adopted in LIS Course

Most of the(75%) departments offers2-year integrated MLISc programme as Choice Based Credit Semester System whereas only one department provide BLISc and MLISc programmes separately having one year duration. The University of Calicut offers four semester programme with13 credits, 4 electives, dissertation & viva voce and internship. Kannur University carries out four semester programme with16 credits including dissertation & viva voce, internship and study tour and 3 electives. The University also offers three open courses for the students of other departments such as Basics of Library and Information Science, Information Sources and Application of Information and Communication Technology in Learning and Teaching. One of the peculiar features of the syllabus of University of Kannur is a detailed list of reference sources for each paper is given. University of Kerala conducts four semester programme with20 credits, dissertation and viva, internship and electives. The above three Universities enlisted a number of electives. Mahatma Gandhi (M.G.) University does not follow Choice Based Credit Semester System, the syllabus offers 8 papers in two semester including dissertation & viva voce.

Table II portrays a clear picture of the curriculum adopted by the Universities in Kerala for MLISc programme. The papers vary in their nomenclature. Papers when merged on the basis of the proximity of content. On the basis of nomenclature, it is revealed that 22 papers are included in the syllabus of these four departments as credit and 26 as elective (table II).

C. Observations

1. “*Foundation of Library & Information Science*” and “*Library and information society*” papers from different departments share the common contents, so they were treated as one single paper. Most of the departments are found to teach this paper while one department lacks it. One departments offer it under the title, “*Library and Information Society*”. And the remaining under the title “*Foundation of Library and Information Science*”.
2. The papers “*Principles of Management*” and “*Library Management*”, share the common elements so it treated as “*Library Management*”. Majority of the departments are found to teach this paper while one department

lacks it in the syllabus. One departments offer it under the title, “*Principles of Management*”. And the remaining under the title “*Library Management*”. Kannur University and Kerala University offer two separate papers for management “*Planning and Management of Libraries and Information Centres*” and “*Library and Information Centre Management*” respectively. These two papers treated under the title “*Library and Information Centre Management*”.

3. Most of the(75%) departments teach traditional core theoretical papers viz., “*Library Classification*” and “*Library Cataloguing*”. However, two departments(50%) had amalgamated these two papers into one and renamed them as “*Knowledge organization and Retrieval*” or “*Information processing theory(Classification and Cataloguing)*”. One departments (25%) have offered the classification paper under the title “*Knowledge Organization: Library Classification theory*” and Cataloguing paper as “*Library Cataloguing and Metadata (theory)*” and teach these as separate papers. Also there is a separate paper “*Information processing and retrieval (theory)*” in all the departments possess the cataloguing theory contents under different titles: “*Information processing and retrieval (theory)*”, “*Information Retrieval*”, “*Information processing and retrieval*” and “*library cataloguing and metadata (theory)*”.
4. All the departments teach traditional core practical papers viz., “*Library Classification (Practice)*” and “*Library Cataloguing (Practice)*”.However, three departments (75%) teach these two papers as individual papers. M.G. University merged these two papers under the title “*Information processing and retrieval (practice)*”. University of Calicut offer two separate papers for classification practice and cataloguing practice as “*Information processing practice(classification)*” and “*Information processing practice(cataloguing)*”. Like that Kannur University provide two separate papers for classification practice and cataloguing practice as “*Knowledge Organization: Library Classification –Practical*” and “*Information processing and Retrieval Library cataloguing – practical*”. Also University of Kerala offers two papers as “*Knowledge organization: Library classification*

practical” and “*library cataloguing and metadata (practical)*”.

5. The entire syllabi possess information technology in detail as separate papers. 75% of the departments offer basics theory paper “*fundamentals of information technology (theory)*”. Two departments provide under the title “*fundamentals of information technology (theory)*” among them one department treated this paper as an elective whereas one provide this under the title “*Information and Communication Technology-Basics*”. Also there is a separate paper for the application of IT in the library “*Information Technology Applications in LIS (theory)*” in all departments (100%) under the titles “*Information Technology Applications in LIS (theory)*”, “*Applications of Information Technology in LIS (theory)*”, “*Information and Communication Technology Applications – Theory*” and “*Information Technology Applications*”.
6. All the departments provide IT practice for both IT basics and IT application in LIS. 75% departments offer “*fundamentals of information technology (practical)*”. Kannur University provides as a credit and also as an elective under the title “*Application of Information and Communication Technology- Practical*”. The University of Kerala offer under the title “*fundamentals of information technology (practical)*” and Calicut University under the title “*fundamentals of Information and Communication Technology- Practice*” as an elective. Application of IT in LIS practice as “*information technology applications in LIS (practical)*” as “*Application of Information and Communication Technology in lis – (Practice)*”, “*Advanced application of Information and Communication Technologies – Practical*”, “*information technology applications in LIS (practical)*” and “*information technology applications – practical*”.
7. Two departments Kannur University and Kerala University provide the paper “*Digital Libraries*” as credit. Calicut University offers this as an elective whereas M.G. University treated ‘digital libraries’ as unit in the paper “*Information Technology Applications*”. The Kerala University also offers this paper as an elective.
8. Majority of the department provide paper on Information sources. The Kannur University offers this paper under the titles “*Information Sources and Services*”. Calicut University provides this paper as “*Information Sources*” and Kerala University offer two separate papers “*Information Sources*” and “*Information Products and Services*”. 75% Universities offer a separate paper on Information systems. Calicut University offer “*Information Systems and Services*”. M.G. University provide “*Information Systems and Products*” and Kerala University offer “*Information System*”. Kannur

University offers a practical paper on Information sources as “*Information Sources and Services – Practical*”.

9. All the departments offer communication paper. Three departments *paper under the title “Information and Communication”* and one as “*Information, Knowledge and Communication*”.
10. All the departments (100%) offer “*Research Methodology*” paper. Three departments offer this *paper under the title “Research Methodology”* and M.G. University offer this paper as “*Research Methodology and Statistical Techniques*”.
11. Kannur University and Kerala University offer “*Technical Communication*” as credit whereas Calicut University offers this as an elective.
12. University of Kerala offers separate paper “*Information Storage and Retrieval*” and “*Content Management*”.
13. The paper “*Informetrics*” offered by University of Kerala as a credit. It was treated in paper “*Information, Knowledge & Communication*” by M.G. University. Calicut University treated it in the paper “*Bibliometrics, Scientometrics & Webometrics*”.
14. All the departments demand “*Dissertation and viva voce*”. 75% department offer “*Internship*” and only one department (Kannur University) conduct “*Study tour*” and demand “*observation report*”.

Table.III shows the list of Electives insisted by the LIS departments. The Kannur University offers 6electives such as: Public Library System, Academy Library System, Special Library System, Health Information System, Engineering and Technology Information System and Business Information System.

Calicut University enlisted 8 electives such as: Fundamentals of Information Technology (Theory), Statistical Methods, Technical Communication, Digital Libraries, Personality Development & Communication Skills, Organizing Information Resources (Practice), Intellectual Property Rights and Libraries, and Bibliometrics, Scientometrics & Webometrics.

Kerala University provide 14 electives: Technical writing, Statistical methods, Knowledge organization: universal decimal classification (practical) UDC, Electronic information sources in science and technology, Electronic information sources in social sciences, Electronic publishing, Fundamentals of information technology (theory), Information literacy, Digital libraries, Knowledge management, Electronic records Management, Intellectual property rights, Web technologies and Competency development.

TABLE II PAPERS AT MLISc LEVEL

S. No.	Name of Paper	Name of Universities			
		K. U.	M. G.	U. C.	U. K.
1	Foundations of library and information science	✓	-	✓	✓
2	Library management	✓	-	✓	✓
3	Library and information centre management	✓	-	-	✓
4	Knowledge Organization and Retrieval	✓	-	✓	✓
5	Knowledge organization:Library classification practical	✓	-	✓	✓
6	Information processing and retrieval (theory)	✓	✓	-	✓
7	Information processing and retrieval (practice)	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Fundamentals of information technology (theory)	-	-	✓	✓
9	Fundamentals of information technology (practical)	-	-	✓	✓
10	Information technology applications in LIS (theory)	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Information technology applications in LIS (practical)	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Digital libraries	✓	-	-	✓
13	Information sources	✓	-	✓	✓
14	Information systems and products	-	✓	✓	✓
15	Information Sources and Services – Practical	✓	-	-	-
16	Information and communication	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Research Methodology	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Information storage and retrieval	-	-	-	✓
19	Technical communication	✓	-	-	✓
20	Content management	-	-	-	✓
21	Informetrics	-	-	-	✓
22	Dissertation and viva voce	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Internship	✓	-	✓	✓
	Study tour observation Report	✓	-	-	-
Total		18	8	15	22

K.U. = Kannur University, M.G. = M.G. University, U.C. = University of Calicut, U.K. = University of Kerala

VIII. DISCUSSION

Pioneer in LIS education at university level is the University of Kerala (1961). It is palpable from the analysis that the post graduate curriculums of LIS departments in Universities of Kerala have a heterogeneous nature. The curriculums include traditional as well as new and emerging subjects. There is a difference in the number of papers in these departments. All the departments adopted both theory and practices of ICT and application of ICT in LIS. The traditional subjects like “Classification” and “Cataloguing” papers are merged together in two LIS departments. All the departments demand Dissertation and viva voce. Kannur University, Calicut University, Kerala University offer ‘Internship’ in any Library and Information Centre approved by the Department for 15 days (Kerala University-30days). One of the unique features of Kannur University is ‘Study tour & Observation Report’ included in the curriculum. In M.G. University most of the traditional papers not treated in the MLISc curriculum because of the

programme structure: separate BLISc and MLISc one year programs. The curriculum of Kerala University and Calicut University possess the opportunity for project work such as “Evaluation of not less than 75 reference sources including electronic sources” and “Evaluation of not less than 25 reference sources including electronic resources” respectively in the paper “*Information Sources*” in the second semester.

The main papers included in the curriculum taught at MLISc level in LIS departments under the scope of the study are:

1. Foundations of library and information science
2. Library management
3. Library and information centre management
4. Knowledge organization: library classification theory
5. Knowledge organization: Library classification practical
6. Information processing and retrieval (theory)

7. Information processing and retrieval (practice)
8. Fundamentals of information technology (theory)
9. Fundamentals of information technology (practical)
10. Information technology applications in LIS (theory)
11. Information technology applications in LIS (practical)
12. Digital libraries
13. Information sources
14. Informetrics
15. Information Sources and Services – Practical
16. Information and communication
17. Research Methodology
18. Information storage and retrieval
19. Technical communication
20. Content management
21. Information systems and products
22. Dissertation and viva voce, Internship and Study tour & observation Report

TABLE III ELECTIVES AT MLISC LEVEL

S. No.	Name of Paper	Name of Universities			
		K.U.	M.G.	U.C.	U.K.
1	Technical writing				✓
2	Technical Communication	-	-	✓	-
3	Application of Information and Communication Technology Practical	✓	-	-	-
4	Statistical methods	-	-	✓	✓
5	Knowledge organization: universal decimal classification (practical) UDC	-	-	-	✓
6	Electronic information sources in science and technology	-	-	-	✓
7	Electronic information sources in social sciences	-	-	-	✓
8	Electronic publishing	-	-	-	✓
9	Organizing information resources (practice)	-	-	✓	-
10	Bibliometrics, Scientometrics&Webometrics	-	-	✓	-
11	Fundamentals of information technology (theory)	-	-	✓	✓
13	Public Library System	✓	-	--	-
14	Academy Library System	✓	-	-	-
15	Special Library System	✓	-	-	-
16	Health Information System	✓	-	-	-
17	Engineering and Technology Information System	✓	-	-	-
18	Business Information System	✓	-	-	-
19	Digital libraries	-	-	✓	✓
20	Information literacy	-	-	-	✓
21	Knowledge management	--	-	-	✓
22	Electronic records management	-	-	-	✓
23	Intellectual property rights	-	-	✓	✓
24	Web technologies	-	-	-	✓
25	Personality development and communication skills /Competency development	-	-	✓	✓
Total		6	0	8	14

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IX. CONCLUSION

Change is one reality, for providing better service in Library and Information Centres qualified library professionals is a must. By adding new emerging techniques and technologies, LIS Departments should regularly redesign their curriculum to give birth to library professionals who are capable to compete with anything in the knowledge era. The syllabus must be up-to-date and obsolete irrelevant things. There should be enough space for practices in regard with theory.

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