LIS Education in India with the Emerging Trends in Libraries: Opportunities and Challenges

Khumbar Debbarma[1] and K. Praveen[2]
[1]Research Scholar, Department of Library and Information Science,
[2]Assistant Professor in Library and Information Science, Department of Education,
[1&2]Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu, India
E-Mail: khumbardebbarma@gmail.com, praveenakrish07@yahoo.co.in

Abstract - This paper traces the scenario of library and information science education in India based on study carried out to bring out the perspective and challenges in LIS education. This also describes the different patterns and levels of LIS education, as well as the research programmes and training being offered by various universities. It provides an overview of the institution providing LIS courses at various levels. It also emphasizes the need for having innovative approaches for reforming LIS education. It discusses the problems and emerging issues affecting the statue of LIS education and give suggestions to solve these problems and the approaches to prepare the LIS professionals to face the growing challenges.
Keywords: LIS Education, Various LIS courses, Opportunities, Challenges, Suggestions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since Information is regarded as the driving force for any kind of societal development whether it is economic, intellectual or cultural, however it can be guaranteed only through efficient deliverance of information to all. And to accomplish this noble task qualified and competent library and information workforce is very inevitable for any society. The process of developing competent library and information science (LIS) professionals is directly related to the quality of LIS education imparted to these professionals. As new trend are emerging in librarianship so to cope with the advances technologies the education system in LIS should also teach about dealing with the modern technology.

A. Need for LIS Education:

The world as a whole is passing through a knowledge revolution and therefore a country without high quality education system will find difficult to benefit from the global knowledge. LIS Education is required to cope with the emerging trends of libraries in learning environment. They are as follows:

1. E-learning in Libraries: The e-learning has emerged as an additional medium for imparting education in many disciplines to overcome the constraint of physical capacity associated with the traditional classroom methods. For a vast developing country like India, this provides an immense opportunity to provide even higher education to remote places besides extending the library services through networking.

2. Market oriented LIS Education: LIS School should plan ahead of time and develop education programs that quickly response to market needs. Current LIS education models in India focus on the functional of document procurement, document organization, document supply, database development and the internet search assistance. The new knowledge resource based models are looking for information professional that can quickly provide problem solving information indicating useful new ideas. Such models should focus on unabated supply of refine, reliable and need based information for continuous learning and preparing and motivating imaginative minds for most appropriately and competitively doing the assigned jobs.

3. Need for Re-skilling: There is a massive need for re-skilling the existing Indian library and information manpower. LIS School must expand their role for providing need based continuing education for working professionals so that they may remain competitive in their jobs. LIS faculty should continuously work to evolve better curriculum delivery methods so that students may find the courses of study interesting.

4. Qualified Faculty: LIS Schools in India are not able to adequately respond to emerging information scenario created by the electronic publishing and dynamics of the knowledge society. Because of lack of adequate faculty strength several library schools are letting the courses go on as they are going on. The course revisions if any are undertaken with some patches here and there, whereas the present courses are required to be completely redefined and recasted keeping in view the contemporary information systems, global technological developments and local needs.

5. Quality Improvement: It is worthwhile to improve quality instead of increasing quantity in LIS education. Such a change is associated with the curriculum, the infrastructure and the staff for quality improvement in LIS education. With this type of changes proper and perfect content/

subject enrichment, teaching technologies, personal development, team work and the like would be obtained.

II. ORIGIN AND GROWTH

LIS education in India started in 1911, when the Baroda School was started by WA Baroda due to the initiative taken by Syaji Rao Gaikwad II, the then Maharaja of State of Baroda. Since then, India has not looked back and has been striding high in the ladder of LIS education. Today nearly 100 Universities in India are running the LIS courses and imparting Certificate Course to MPhil and Ph.D.

III. LIS EDUCATION IN INDIA

At present LIS education in India covers a wide spectrum of courses ranging from low level certificate and diploma in library science to bachelor and master degree in library and information science and to high level M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes. Presently in India, Library and Information Science (LIS) education is imparted in more than 118 universities and institutions.

A total of 105 universities provide Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) courses, 78 universities provide Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) courses, 21 are offering two-year integrated courses, 16 universities provide M.Phil. In Library and Information Science, 46 universities provide Ph.D. in Library and Information Science and 2 Universities provide D.Litt. Degree.

Besides this, the National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR) which was earlier known as the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC), New Delhi, and Documentation Research and Training Centre (DRTC), Bangalore, provide Associate ship courses in Information Science, which are equivalent to the MLIS degree.

IV.VARIOUS LIS COURSES

1. Diploma in Library and Information Science.
2. B.Lib.Sc./BLIS (Bachelor Degree in Library and Information Science).
3. Certificate course in Library and Information Science (C.Lib.Sc).
4. M.Lib.Sc./MLIS (Master Degree in Library and Information Science).
5. PGDLAN (Post Graduate Diploma in Library Automation and Networking).
6. MPhil (Master of Philosophy) in Library and Information Science.
7. PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in Library and Information Science.
8. DLitt in Library and Information Science.

V. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Almost all the universities give admission to the various LIS courses after graduation can go for BLIS (one year course),

MLIS (one year course) or MLIS (two year course) as per merit and government rules prescribed for seat reservation and relaxation of marks for reserved category students. Regular seats are allotted in both open and reserved categories.

All central universities conduct an entrance test to select candidates for MLIS course. Whereas, for M.Phil. and PhD entrance test followed by interview is conducted in most of the universities to test research aptitude of the eligible candidates.

VI. LIS CURRICULUM

With the growth of information technology, LIS Schools have understood the need of periodic examination and analysis leading to necessary changes and improvements in curriculum for the interpolation of new and fast developing areas of information technology and computer science. The objective for training of LIS professionals is to promote library, to educate, to articulate and provide for the need of the clientele to increase productivity and economy.

Curriculum is the core of the reform. Most of the library schools and departments have revised or in the process of re-designing their curricula. In their curricula, courses relating to traditional library science with names such as "History of books" and "Libraries" disappeared. Instead, many computer-related courses were added.

Examples of some of the topics included are:

1. An Introduction to Computers
2. Programming Design
3. Database Management
4. Computerized Information Networks
5. Design and Analysis of Computer Application Systems
6. Computerized Information Retrieval.

VII. VARIOUS INSTITUTION/ UNIVERSITY OFFERING LIS COURSES

1. Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Aligarh
2. Andhra University (AU), Visakhapatnam
3. Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Banaras
4. Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya (DAV), Indore
5. Gulbarga University (GUU), Gulbarga
6. Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (GGU), Bilaspur
7. Guwahati University (GU),Guwahati
8. Jadavpur University (JDU), Kolkata
9. Jammu University (JAU), Jammu
10. Jiwaji University(JIU) , Gwalior
11. Kurukshetra University (KU) Kurushetra
12. North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) , Shillong
13. Osmania University (OSU), Hyderabad
14. Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University (PRSU), Raipur
15. Punjab University (PU), Chandigarh
16. Rabindra Bharati University (RBU), Kolkata
17. Sambalpur University (SU), Burla

18. University of Delhi (DU), Delhi
19. Utkal University (UU), Bhubaneswar

VIII. OPPORTUNITIES

1. LIS have the opportunity to develop at least some degree of specialization.
2. It can take advance courses in particular library functions, such as reference work.
3. Courses related to particular type of library, such as a course in medical librarianship or public librarianship or academic librarianship was given.
4. Every university being autonomous is free to frame its own course of studies, and syllabi of many universities, school are quite modernized.
5. It also includes courses in knowledge organization, collection development, and information seeking behaviours of users, search strategies, library services and management of collection.
6. It also includes contents related to scholarly communication, digital libraries and ICT.

IX. CHALLENGES

Reform in LIS Education: Over a period of time LIS education under gone lot many changes. It needs reform to face challenges of preparing innovative approaches and manpower for hi-tech academic and research institutions.

Updated syllabus: The LIS curricula must empower the present and future professional potential to meet the societal information needs in a timely manner without any bottlenecks. Many LIS schools and universities have not updated their syllabus since long time, which requires to be updated.

Limited Accommodation Capacity: All universities which provide LIS courses witness a great flow of learners. But they are able to accommodate only a limited number of such desire students.

Competitive Entrance Examination: In the central universities, students desire to study the LIS has to go through a very competitive entrance examination for admission for MLIS.

Limitation as a Professionals Subject: LIS is a professional course and so it has the limitation of any other professional courses. The non-inclusion of LIS in UPSC, Civil service/ State Public Service Commission examination, SET/ SLET is very common in some part of the North-Eastern state of India. The other challenges include lack of a standard cohesive syllabus of LIS and low level of awareness among the general people about this course.

X. SUGGESTIONS

The followings are some suggestions for improving LIS education in India:

1. LIS schools/departments may be provided with IT laboratories fully equipped with the latest hardware and software including Internet connectivity, networking and library management software.
2. National Centre for education and research should be established to plan and coordinate cooperative programs, like exchange of personnel, curriculum planning, extension lectures, continuing education programs and so forth.
3. LIS departments provide training programs with ICT specialization for teacher librarians.
4. Seminars, tutorials, assignments and field tours should be effectively integrated with curricula involving outside experts and agencies.
5. Syllabus should be revised from time to time with the advent of the information technology changes.
6. ICT environment may be created in all types of libraries and information centers in the country.
7. Short term and long-term programs such as seminars, conferences, and workshops be organized at regular intervals by library schools and library associations.

XI. CONCLUSION

LIS education system in India indicates that the quality improvement is essential and unavoidable, not only for its survival but also for facing the major changes and challenges of today and tomorrow. Library school and universities in India need to look forward and take advantage of the opportunities lying ahead of us. The Use of Information and Communication Technology for training century. It has been predicted that a country that leads information revolution will provide to be more powerful than any other country. The significance of the role of library schools and universities to train manpower for coming decades can contribute to the progress of the nation. National Centre for education and research should be established to plan and coordinate cooperative programmes, like exchange of personnel, curriculum planning, extension lectures, and continuing education programmes and so forth. To improve quality of research, talented scholars should be provided financial assistance by research organizations.

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