

Education in Library and Information Science in India; A Review

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Abstract:

The paper presents a historical review of education in Library and Information Science India, and traced the growth and development of the subject. This education began under the patronage of the erstwhile Maharaja of Baroda when he invited an American librarian to set up public libraries in the state. After independence, Library Associations in the country continued with the efforts of developing US education in India. The Discipline, not recognition with the introduction of various courses at the university level, it has seen periods of growth and maturation. The recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission provide an opportunity for reforms and changes in the educational system that need to be grabbed.

Keywords: Library and Information Science Education: history.

Introduction:

Library and Information Science (LIS) education in India will be completing 100 years in 2011. It is time for introspection and need to know the present status of LIS and areas that need improvement. History provides a picture of the growth and development, which lends a review such a study. This paper presents an insight of these historical developments in LIS education in India from its inception. The beginning of the 20th century marked the beginning of LIS education in India. There is a vast literature crediting Sayyaji N. Gaikwad, the then Maharaja of the erstwhile princely state of Baroda, for initiating the LIS education movement in the country. American librarians, William Alanson Borden and Asa Don Dickson were the first LIS teachers in India. John MacFarlane, an Englishman, who happened to be the first librarian of the Imperial Library (Now National Library, Kolkata) also shares the credit for training librarians in our country. In fact, MacFarlane's training programme is the first case of LIS education in India reported in literature. It took place between 1901 and 1906 in the Imperial Library when training programmes were organized for its staff. Later it was extended to librarians working in Calcutta as well as in other states. It is believed that there was an existence of some training in library routines for the staff of university libraries prior to that also.

Indian Scenario:

William Alanson Borden and Asa Don Dickson initiated the formal course of library education in India. Borden established a training course at the Central Library, Baroda in 1911 and Dickinson at Punjab University in 1915. The Training School at Punjab University was considered to be the second library school known in the world, the first being the Columbia School. Gradually other universities and library associations started setting up library schools. Madras Library Association (1929) and Bengal Library Association (1935) started certificate courses. Among the universities, Madras University under (Dr. S. R. Ranganathan) took over the certificate course from Madras Library Association in 1931. The course was subsequently converted into a postgraduate course of one-year duration in 1937. Postgraduate courses also started in other universities subsequently, i.e. Andhra University (1935), Banaras Hindu University (1941) and University of Delhi (1947). University of Delhi in subsequent years started providing facilities for research leading to doctorate degrees. It was the first to start M. Phil courses in 1977.

In addition to formal teaching courses, some universities have introduced correspondence courses at various levels of education. An important development in non-formal teaching is starting of a free course by Andhra Pradesh Open University Hyderabad in 1955. Mohan Lal Sukhadia University, Udaipur



and Kashmir University, Srinagar provide correspondence education at certificate level, Punjabi University, Patiala at diploma level and Madras University, Chennai both at certificate and degree levels. IGNOU equipped with multimedia instructional system also planned it from 1977. This provides facilities to professionals working at lower level to improve their qualifications and update their limited knowledge and skills and also to those who could not get admission to formal courses earlier.

Present Position:

Since its inception decades ago, LIS education has grown and developed into a full-fledged multi-disciplinary subject. LIS course, at bachelors/masters and research level are being imparted in different institutions - university departments, colleges, library associations and specialized institutions. There are now 96 universities in India imparting Library and Information Science education; 17 independent departments in different levels universities provide Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) course. 71 universities provide Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) course. 72 universities provide M. Phil in Library and Information Science course and 56 universities provide Ph. D. in Library and Information Science. Besides, Worth mentioning is the two years Associateship in Documentation and Information Science (ADIS) imparted by Documentation Research & Training Institute (DRTC), Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore (Karnataka) and National Institute of Science Communication And Information Resources (NISCAIR) formerly INSDOC, New Delhi which is equivalent to Master degree of Library & Information Science (LIS) In addition to, these universities/departments there are several other open universities imparting library education as distance education The professional associations such as Delhi Library Association (DLA) and the polytechnic institutions throughout the country are also imparting LIS education as lower level such as Certificate Diploma in Library & Information Science. NASSDOC once proposed to start Associateship course from 1988. later on it was shelved. National Centre for Science Information (NCSI) located at Bangalore provides an advanced one year training course in Information systems required to submit project report and dissertation in partial fulfillment of the courses. UGC and ICSSR award scholarship to doctoral students. National Commission on Science and Technology, New Delhi. Raja Rammohai Roy Library Foundation (Calcutta) and ICSSR among others provide research Grants for non-doctoral research. Defence Scientific Information and documentation Centre (DESIDOC) also provide JRF programme in Library and Information Science.

Levels of Education:

Out of the 96 university departments, 56 departments conduct the one-year Bachelors degree and one year Masters degree in Library and Information Science at the postgraduate level. Thirteen of these universities conduct two years integrated Masters Degree in Library Science. These programme further leads to M.Phil. and Ph.D. levels. The levels of LIS education in India are discussed as follows:

Certificate or Diploma in Library Science (C/D.Lib.Sc.):

Many polytechnic colleges, schools and Library Associations impart the low level of library science courses in India having duration of six months to one year. The basic qualification for these courses is 10+2. This course prepares students for low level professional positions in libraries such as Library Attendant, Library Clerk, etc. Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS). This is a one-year post graduate degree course. The basic eligibility is a three years degree from any discipline. This course prepares students for junior professional positions.

Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS):



Master of Library and Information Science is imparted as a one-year post graduate degree course in some universities while in some, it is conducted as a two years integrated course. Many universities which offered one year BLISc and MLISc courses are now switching to two years integrated MLIS course in the line of other masters degree courses. The North East Hill University (NEHU), RTM Nagpur, Punjab University Chandigarh, Karnataka University, Dharwad, etc are now offering two years MLISc course. This course trains persons for senior professional position in libraries, documentation centers and or information centers and teachers as well.

Associateship in Documentation and Information Science (ADIS):

The Documentation Research and Training Centre (DRTC), Bangalore (Karnataka) offers two years Associateship in Documentation and Information Science (Now know as Master of Science in Information Science). The National Institute of Science Communication And Information Resources (NISCAIR), New Delhi, formerly INSDOC also impart two years documentation programme i.e., Associate ship in Documentation (AID) after graduation. The course offered by the DRTC and NISCAIR have upper age on the courses as offered by the universities departments in terms of ICT syllabus and intake of the enrolments.

IV Master of Philosophy in Library and Information Science (IVI-Phil):

M.Phil. in Library and Information Science prepares a student for further advanced research in LIS. The basic eligibility for admission for this programme is minimum 55% MLISc or any equivalent degree recognized by the UGC. With candidates having more qualifications are being preferred for superior position, many students are opting for M.Phil. Courses to better equip them for better positions.

Doctor of Philosophy of Library and Information Science (Ph.D):

This is an advanced level of research programme being offered after the completion of MLISc. or M.Phil. Degree depending on the universities. The general aim of a research degree, whether M.Phil. or Ph.D. is to provide training in doing research as well as to develop in the candidate a critical and analytical process of thinking with the purpose that they would be able to provide leadership in the profession. They would also be able to help librarians and information scientists to develop techniques and skills required to meet their requirements of the fast changing society. They should be able to identify the needs, set objectives, identify and analyze the problems and find appropriate solutions. They would also be in a position to participate in the planning, organization and implementation of programmes at various levels.

Course- Contents at Different Level:

- BLIS Course
 - + Classification: Theory and Practice
 - V Cataloguing: Theory and Practice
 - Library Automation
 - Library Administration
 - Library Organization
 - Physical Bibliography and Reference
 - Documentation
 - Research Methodology
 - Information Technology
- MLIS Course



- ◆ Universe of knowledge: Its development and structure
- ◆ Indexing
- ◆ Library Automation
- ◆ Library and Information systems and management + Research Methodology.
- ◆ Literature Survey
- + Information Technology of Information systems and Services
 - ◆ Project Report
 - Associateship Course
 - ◆ Information Society and Information Communication
 - ◆ Sources of information
 - ◆ Information processing and organization
 - ◆ Information system and services + Library Automation
- + Information products and services
 - ◆ Information Technology
 - ◆ Information systems management
 - ◆ Elective paper : Research Methodology, Informetrics and collateral areas, Business information systems, Patent information systems, Geological information systems, Medical information systems, Technical writing etc.
 - ◆ Dissertation

We have been stuck too long to the traditional course contents, but the situation is gradually changing as more and more learning and teaching centers are incorporating the expanding dimensions of the discipline in the course contents. The effort is still sporadic. There is a need for a national body to take up this job earnestly and recommend a model curriculum for different levels of courses.

Conclusion:

Many suggestions have been made by various professional experts and governmental committees to improve the quality of LIS education. These are:

- ◆ The syllabus at all levels should be updated regularly and areas of information science should be correlated with those of Library science.
- ◆ National centre for education and research should be established to plan and co-ordinate co-operative programmes, like exchange of personnel, curriculum planning, extension lectures, continuing education programmes, etc. o The quality to teaching staff should be improved, o Seminars, tutorials, assignments and field tours should be effectively integrated with curricula involving outside experts and agencies.
- ◆ Continuing education training facilities should be recognized as an essential part of manpower development programmes and sufficient financial resources may be allocated for this o To improve quality to research, talented scholars should be provided financial assistance by research organizations, o Last but not the least, our country has no information policy though we have already crossed more than half a century after independence and so, setting up of a National Information Policy is vital in the context of today globalization and IT revolution. Right to Information should be recognized as a fundamental right of the people.

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