

# Role of LIS Education and Competency Building for LIS Profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## Abstract

*Today Library is an important social agency for the growth of modern society. Library and Information Science (LIS) education in India goes through a turning point and has become a most fast-growing subject with a multifaceted strategy. The four walls of the library are broadening and heightening by giving way to electronic environments; the LIS teachers and professionals should be up to date themselves or acquainted with different skills.*

*This paper deals with the prominent role of LIS education and professionals in the Indian educational system. In India, the library system exists both traditional and digital environment. Today, the library provides both traditional learning and digital learning or E-Learning. Different library associations and different committees provide valuable suggestions for the development of library services. This paper also discusses the concept of competency as well as the need of training and developing of different skills for library professionals and give some suggestions for the developing of LIS education system to create the library environment in the 21st century up to the level.*

**Keywords:** Competency Building, LIS Education, LIS Professional

## 1. Introduction

The library is the best part of the educational system to collect information and organize knowledge for effective use, and for providing the services and physical facilities to encourage it. Its usefulness will be magnified if it is part of a national or regional network of libraries and related information services. Education system fully supported by information, which is published in different forms like books, journals, reference materials and it, helps in expansion of knowledge. The functions of libraries are to collect, store, preserve and disseminate the different types of information effectively, which helps for the growth of knowledge. Therefore, the

library is the primary essential requirement for any educational institutions.

In the present era, we need self-observation and to know properly the present status of LIS and its requirement to improve the subject domain. The users are required determined information from metadata available on the internet. The role and responsibility of LIS professionals or librarians are changing day by day. The education system is using both formal and non-formal way for propagating the information for the people.

At the time of Independence of India, there were only 20 Universities and 500 Colleges with 2.1 lakh students in higher education. The numbers now have been increasing more than 50 times in the case of the Degree awarding Universities, 82.02 times in the case of Colleges and the student's enrolment



has gone up to over 174.49 times in the system of higher education in comparison to the figures at the time of Independence. (Department of higher education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. (n.d.). Annual Report(2017-2018). (pp. 1–280).)

The education for the library professional is a revolutionary process. It is important to produce library graduates with sophisticated management, policy and planning skill. In a multidisciplinary approach, LIS education in India is a fast-growing and fast-developing subject with great new approaches. Today LIS education not only includes the core subject but it also has extended to different subjects like computer application, statistics, information science, management studies and research methodology. Education plays a crucial role in professional development. The training programme, staff exchanges, study tours, conferences & workshop..., etc., are other activities professionals undertake to develop themselves. Professional development helps to built confidence through knowledge, experience, and skills necessary to practice effectively.

## **2. Library and information science (LIS)**

Library and information science is the combination of two subjects (i) library science and (ii) information science. The combination of two subjects was 1<sup>st</sup> used in the school of library and information science (SLIS) in 1964 at the University of Pittsburgh. In 1990, American Library School has added Information science. Then, both library science and information science were developed by many other countries of the world.

In the new direction of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the word library got a new name and it is used as information

science or i-school. This is not, however a new name for LIS, but it represents a new multifaceted synthesise of various fields including LIS. Whether such a synthesise is considered fruitful or not depends on the theoretical perspective. For those who primarily consider LIS to be related to computer science, it seems to be clearly a productive solution; however, for those who consider LIS to be more related to the knowledge fields.

## **3. Evolution of LIS education**

In 1883 Dewey became librarian of Columbia College, and in the following year established the School of Library Economy, the first institution for the instruction of librarians ever organized. In India, the Central Library of Banaras Hindu University at Varanasi was established in 1917 with the assistance of great Sayajirao Gaekwad III Maharaja of Baroda state (1875 to 1939), known for establishing libraries throughout his state. Before that in 1906 Baroda Central library was established by the same King with the motto of compulsory and free education to the people of Baroda city. He started the library movement in India and increased the number of libraries from one to 1500 during his period.

Before independence, there were only five universities (Andhra, Banaras, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras) were offering the diploma course in library science. After independence, some universities, educational institutions and learned societies have started their libraries. As a result, the number of library science schools started to increase. Dr S.R. Ranganathan started a certificate course at Madras Library Association in 1929, which was taken over by the University of Madras, and in 1937, the course was converted into Postgraduate (PG) Diploma in Library Science. It was the first diploma programme

in Library Science in India. The University of Delhi was the first university to establish a full-fledged Department of Library Science just before independence in 1946 and started admitting students to the PG Diploma in 1947. In 1951, the diploma was changed to Master in Library Science (M.Lib.ISc). Later, between 1956 to 1959, six new LIS departments were established at Aligarh Muslim University, M.S.University of Baroda, Nagpur University, Osmania University, Pune University and Vikram University. Since the 1960s, the number of LIS departments established has continued to increase. (University Grants Commission. (1965). Review Committee Report on Library Science on Indian Universities. Review Committee Report on Library Science on Indian Universities (1965th ed., pp. 1–280).)

### **3.1 LIS education in India During the 1960's**

At the end of the 1960's, there were two documentation schools offering course leading to an Associateship. The Govt. of India has recognized Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) in 1961 and Documentation Research Training Centre (DRTC) in 1968; These Institutions are endowed with all facilities in respect of staff and infrastructure. In addition to this, the trainees are adequately exposed to seminars and special lectures programmes such as annual seminars, refresher courses and workshops.

### **3.2 LIS Education in the 1970's**

In 1970's the professional situations and learning environment started receiving all-around consciousness. The foundation of universal co-operative information systems like DEVIS, INIS and AGRIS under the parasol of Resource. In LIS courses, information sources and its related topics

were given a more priority from the middle of 1970s and nomenclature of 'library science' was changed to 'Library & Information Science' during this period. Delhi University had started M.Phil courses in Library Science in 1978 and that acted as a bridge between M.Lib Sc & PhD.

### **3.3 LIS Education in the 1980's**

During the 1980s, expanding of formal teaching courses in some universities such as M.L. Sukhadia University, Kashmir University and Punjab University. They introduced correspondence courses at various levels like certificate course and diploma course. University of Madras inaugurated postgraduate courses. In 1984, Andhra Pradesh Open University started a degree course in. In 1989, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, introduced BLIS. IGNOU create new environment for LIS education, with BLIS, MLIS, PhD and PGDLAN (one-year postgraduate diploma course). At last, professional development began with the use of microcomputers in libraries. The information collection, storage and retrieval systems are available in electronic ways. During this decade, there was lot of changes in the LIS curriculum.

### **3.4 LIS Education in 1990's-until date**

In the 1990's India exist the computer system. Due to extension and influence of ICT, all type information available in 'e' or electronic formats like e-book, e-magazine, e-journal which changed the library's role from traditional era to digital era and traditional library to the hybrid library. In the middle of 1990s, Telecommunication revolution influenced the field of library like 1G to 4G. More stress has been given on Information Technology (IT) papers in various dimensions, through theory and practical, such as Fundamentals of Information Technology,

Application of IT in Library and Information Services, Networking, Digital Libraries, Internet and Electronic Publishing, Technology for Information Management and Library Automation. From 1990's to 21<sup>st</sup> century's major developments in the field of LIS education took place. In the 21<sup>st</sup>, century, the digital information in electronic format was required by the user to cater to their needs

#### 4. Digital LIS education

The Higher Education scenario has completely changed after implementation of digital literacy. Every educational institution is taking action for promoting E-Learning. In the near future the higher education scenario will completely change by the influence of new technology and we may say it as digital revolution in the Indian education system.

To improve the quality of education using the ICT and to translate the power of IT into expanded learning opportunities, the National Mission on Education through ICT (NMEICT) was launched. Last 3 years, the NMEICT has made outstanding gains after the expanding of information technology interference that made possible to change the higher education background. As part of the digital revolution in the Indian education, Govt. of India has taken so many initiatives like

- ❖ Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)
- ❖ SWAYAM Prabha: the 32 Educational DTH Channels
- ❖ National Digital Library (NDL)
- ❖ National Academic Depository (NAD)
- ❖ e-Shodh Sindhu
- ❖ Virtual Labs

- ❖ e-Yantra
- ❖ Campus Connectivity
- ❖ Talk to a Teacher
- ❖ e-Acharya
- ❖ E-Kalpa
- ❖ The Free and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE)
- ❖ VIDWAN
- ❖ Central cloud Infrastructure
- ❖ NPTEL (National Programming in Technical Education Learning)
- ❖ Digital India
- ❖ Shodh Ganga( Repositories of Indian Thesis)
- ❖ Shodh Gangotri( Repositories of Research in Progress)
- ❖ Spoken Tutorial
- ❖ Development of Library Network(DELNET)
- ❖ e-PG Pathshala

#### 5. Role of LIS in the Indian educational system

Libraries are vital social agencies for the development of modern society; the importance of their role is being increasingly realized. In order to fulfil the expectation, libraries must be developed along proper lines. Education is a key factor for the growth and development of a country, Government of India initiated several measures to remodel education system and to make it relevant to the needs of the nation after independence in 1947. Recently Govt. has prepared a draft of new education policy which mentioned so many changes in the education systems.

The fundamental role of the library is to encourage students, teachers, researchers and faculty members for reading and create the educational environment. The library is not only a storehouse of books and reading-rooms but also dynamic instrument of education. The library invites all who enter its house for reading. The library is the best path for changing our blind beliefs.

The library collections necessarily to support not only the curriculum but also different research projects of the faculty. The collections should be organized to permit easy access to their subject matters. The library should conduct their orientation programmes which are helpful to create a library environment. The professional staff and faculty colleagues should co-operate and collaborate in every possible way to achieve the aims of the university.

LIS in the Indian educational system, creating new interdisciplinary courses and teaching new methods of providing information services. At present, the following LIS courses are available in India:

- ❖ Certificate course in LIS (C.Lib.Sc)
- ❖ Diploma in LIS
- ❖ Diploma Course in Health Science Librarianship
- ❖ Diploma in Digital Library and Data Management
- ❖ Diploma in Information Technology
- ❖ Diploma in Archives and Documentation Management
- ❖ B.Lib.Sc. /BLIS
- ❖ Five years of integrated courses in Library and Information science

- ❖ MLIS (Master of Library and Information Science)
- ❖ MSc in Library and Information Science
- ❖ PGDLAN (Post Graduate Diploma in Library Automation and Networking)
- ❖ M.Phil. (Master of Philosophy in Library and Information Science)
- ❖ PhD (Doctor of Philosophy in Library and Information Science)
- ❖ D.Litt. in Library and Information Science

#### **6. Major Commissions and Committees of LIS Education**

Pre and Post-independence, Government has been taken major steps for the reform of education system by the appointing of various committees and commissions. The UGC, AICTE, CBSE, ICSE and MHRD are the most important statutory, advisory and executive bodies, deliberately established to assist the Government in discharging its constitutional responsibility and they have been playing an important role in the improvement of college, university and school libraries. Different commission and committees are constituted from time to time for the development of the library.

- ❖ Ranganathan Commission: Library committee (1957-59) and Review Committee (1961-65), The UGC programme (commission) appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Dr S.R.Ranganathan.
- ❖ The Government of India created an advisory committee in 1957 under the chairmanship of K. P. Sinha, and its report was submitted in 1959, which provided the draft of Model Public

Libraries Bill. Based on recommendations of the working group, the commission prepared Model Public Libraries Act 1965.

- ❖ In 1985, Govt of India set up a committee on National Policy on Library and Information System (CONPOLIS) with Prof.D.P Chattoapadhyaya as its chairman and he is recommended for the public library system in India.
- ❖ Committee on National Network System for Universities / Libraries in 1988: under the Chairmanship of Dr.N.Seshagiri,
- ❖ Two Curriculum development committee was set up in 1990 and 2001. The first was in 1990 with the chairperson of Prof.P N Kaula and in 2001 chaired by Dr.C R.Karisiddappa. Both the committee had framed the Curriculum and the second committee had suggested for the two years integrated course in the Library and Information Science.
- ❖ Kaula Committee: It was published in 1993, under the chairmanship of Prof. P.N. Kaula, on the title “Report of the curriculum development committee on library & information science”.
- ❖ Karisiddappa Committee: This committee was published in 2001, on this committee remodelling in the ICT sector, which has a straight influence on libraries.
- ❖ National Knowledge Commission was constituted in 2005 and this commission’s report was known as the “Libraries as the gateway to knowledge.”

## 7. LIS professional and Competency Building

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century in higher education system, LIS professional take a major helping hand to the

academic society. Their role is very important in the libraries. They always concerned with the ongoing need for access to learning resources for students, research scholars, teachers and faculty members. They should learn variety of professional skills to manage the institution and ability to organize workshop for building good library environment. Library’s competency building enables Librarian or Library professional for responding to user needs efficiently with new technological developments. India’s education system is highly developed because of the libraries and their contributions.

India’s Library and Information manager and teachers are seriously engaged to organize various professional events and specialized training programmes. LIS professional must take steps to build organisational capacity through the use good management, techniques/methodology, skill and training.

A competency is a potentiality to spread a set of complementary knowledge, skills, and abilities for fruitions perform “critical work functions”. Competency means it is the capacity to do a task effectively.

Competencies are relevant to an individual’s job responsibilities, roles and capabilities. Generally, competencies are two types: Behavioural competency and Functional competency. Combinations of both competencies are always required to be effective. Usually, behavioural competencies are called soft skills and functional competencies are direct attention to as technical skills.

Day to day work in our life competency is the key to face the development challenges in the communistic

world. Success and failure of an individual or institution depend on their competency. Competencies and skills are the basic building blocks of human resources management. The competencies can be defined as the characteristics of an individual which affects the performances and behaviour at work. The competencies, abilities, aptitude, and behaviour are the main support ways of an organisation's mission and planning. The competencies have a great potential role to develop the library environment. Widely, competencies can help in the following ways:-

- ❖ Serving to improve the difficult relationship.
- ❖ Changing the focus on the development of library environment.
- ❖ Promoting continuing professional education programme.
- ❖ Converting critical directions into action.
- ❖ Implement an open learning culture and environment.
- ❖ Promote a new educational programme.
- ❖ Adequately operate new technology for teaching.
- ❖ Execute time management.
- ❖ Build up a conceptual framework. Take possessions of skill and resources.
- ❖ Preparing required tools, handbooks, manuals, advisories and guidelines etc. (keplan,2000)
- ❖ Progress of vision and strategy

### **7.1 Methods/techniques for competency building**

Different types of methods/techniques have to be executed to achieve the desired goals. Here are some

of the methods/techniques mentioned to conduct competency-building programmes.

- ❖ Formal training programme
- ❖ Technical skilfulness/guidance
- ❖ Mentoring
- ❖ Tutoring
- ❖ Observing/shadowing

### **7.2 Different skills for competency building**

Different skills must be imparted for library professionals to create a good library environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **7.2.1 Technical skill**

LIS professions must be conscious of the different technologies, which is suitable to create library environment. In the present scenario, LIS professional should have knowledge about networking, OPAC, different types of open or licensed source software like KOHA, Libsys, SOUL,DSpace,e-Print etc, LAN, MAN, WAN, HTML, telecommunication media as well as knowledge about the different library network like INFLIBNET, DELNET, and CALIBNET etc. The technical skill becomes necessary in our 21<sup>st</sup>-century library environment.

#### **7.2.2 Time management skill**

According to S.R. Ranganathan, the 4<sup>th</sup> law of Library Information Science is "save the time of the users/readers". According to that law, time is more important for LIS professionals. LIS professional should have effective planning, allocating, setting goals, delegation, analysis of time spent, monitoring,

organizing, and scheduling timely delivering of information materials to users.

### 7.2.3 Presentation skill

Library professional should implement new technologies or service for library users with effective presentation skill. They should present an awareness programme for promoting information literacy.

### 7.2.4 Communication skill

Good communication skill is necessary for library professionals. They present information to the users courteously. They always listen attentively to user's problem then solve their problem with good communicative way. They could have the ability to deal practically with customers, publishers and vendors too.

### 7.2.5 Managerial skill

LIS professional should have managerial skill for managing the different section of an organisation. The managerial skill means ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to manage libraries smoothly and adaptively. Some management skill is:

1. Time management
2. Planning & problem-solving management
3. networking management
4. Self- confidence and stress management
5. TQM library information centres

### 7.2.6 Assurance to life –ling learning skill

The library professional should have their own professional qualities. These qualities are:

1. To identify appropriate materials for customers requirement and their abilities.
2. Excellent knowledge abilities about the modern incident.
3. Language learning and computer skill

### 7.2.7 Preservation skill

In the present digital environment, preservation skills are inevitable. LIS profession should learn digital preservation skills and digital security. LIS professional should have knowledge about the different antivirus like Bitdefender, Avast, Malwarebytes, etc for prevention and security/safety of E-resources.

## 8. Competency of LIS professionals in 21<sup>st</sup> century

Library's system was developed from manuscript libraries to virtual and then cloud libraries. The librarians and the library staff have to face new challenges to adapt to the rapidly changing of library environment. The impact of the changes is mainly reflected on collection development, staff strength, library services, content management, finance, library organisation, library professions etc.

ICT has brought dramatic changes in the working of library from traditional library to hybrid library. The library staff is providing information to the users in different forms i.e. traditional as well as modern.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the users refer to books, handbooks, reference books, articles, print journals to cater their needs. Now the user demands have increased as multiple information sources are being made available in e-databases or using search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Google Scholar etc.

The role of the LIS professionals in both traditional and modern era explains below.

**8.1 Role of LIS professional in the traditional era**

- ❖ The librarian and his assistant staff execute their duties in the different sections of a library like acquisition section, cataloguing Section, classification section, periodical section as well as different sections as per need.
- ❖ Identify and recognize different methods to procure books in the library.
- ❖ Procure books, periodicals, journals through right vendors which is recommended by users and the management authorities.
- ❖ Report publisher catalogues among the faculties for the recommendations of books.
- ❖ Communicate with the teaching faculty to recommend different titles, print journals required for the syllabus.
- ❖ Prepare a budget for the purchase of different resources and equipment's in libraries.
- ❖ Maintained record properly acquired resources both print and digital.

**8.2 Role of LIS professional in the modern era**

- ❖ Provide easy access to information to users available in various electronic formats.
- ❖ Identify the user's needs and procure the information resources for the users.
- ❖ Procure e-Books and online journals and other digital publication to the users as per needs.
- ❖ Subscribe online journals, e-books, databases and provide internet facility for the utilization of resources to gain knowledge.

- ❖ Automate the library with library software and provide faster access and reference service to the users.
- ❖ Provide OPAC service with networking facilities to the users and help in resource sharing.
- ❖ Develop library website for getting information from different locations by giving links to resources.

**9. Conclusion and Suggestion**

In India, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century's library environment, the competency of the library professionals need to be more improvement, more concentration and more effort from both from professional side and from the government side. As a LIS professional, he/she should not feel like an old but he/she should feel always to be proud as young learner. Simultaneously, Govt. have also give proper importance to the LIS profession and LIS professionalism for its competency building. With continuously changing technology, the need for reformation and its retrieval is crucial. LIS professionals think globally and act locally and admiring other opinions and suggestion. When a Librarian will choose his/her profession as choice not by chance, then we say that LIS profession is in good competencies

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