Research Paper   **Library Science**

Library and Information Science Education in India

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Keywords :

Library and Information Science Education in India

Library and Information Science Education in India: In the early 19th Century, young people learned librarianship by working under the more experienced practitioners. But, gradually the tasks performed by librarians became more complex and more dependent on technology. As a result, the study of library science has moved from the work-setting to professional schools in Universities. The first ever library school was started by Melvil Dewey in USA in 1887 at Columbia College (now Columbia University). In 1889 the programme moved to the New York State Library in Albany when Dewey became the Director there. The success of Dewey's training programme and the publication of Training for Library Service, a book by the economist Charles Williamson in 1923, led other universities, institutes of technology, and large public libraries to establish their own professional degree programmes in library science.

1. First Course of Library Science in India: In India the existence of in service training was initiated by John Macfarlane, the first librarian of the Imperial Library (Now National Library) at Calcutta from 1901-06, as mentioned in some reports. In subsequent years, the training programme was opened to the staff of other libraries and even those interested in librarianship who deal with books and other documents.

i) Baroda School: In 1911, Siyaji Rao Gaikwad (1862-1939), the ruler of Baroda state called the American librarian Mr. William Allenson Borden (1853-1931), a disciple of Melvil Dewey to create a cadre of men for the newly established libraries in the state library system. In 1912, he initiated the first training school in library education in India. In 1913, another training class for working librarians of town libraries was started. These classes continued even after the departure of Borden.

2. Certificate, Diploma, and Training Courses

i)   Lahore School: In 1912, the Punjab University called another librarian Mr. Asa Don Dickinson (1876–1960) from USA. He started the second educational course of three month duration in library science in the year 1915. This happens to be the first university course in India. Mr. Asa Don Dickinson later become the Librarian of Panjab University, Lahore (now Pakistan) during 1915–1916.
ii) Andhra Desa: The Andhra Desa Library Association (founded in 1914) started conducting "training classes for the library workers" at Vijayawadain 1920. The classes covered a module on running adult education classes in addition to library technique.
iii) Mysore State: In 1920, a course for the training of librarians was conducted at Bangalore under the "program of library development" initiated by the then Dewan of Mysore Mr. M. Visweswaraya.
iv) Madras Library Association: A summer school for college librarians and lecturers in charge of college libraries in

Madras was held in 1928 and repeated in 1930. The Madras Library Association also organized a regular certificate course in library science from 1929. Then in 1931, University of Madras took up the training course of MALA in 1931 and started offering the course on a regular basis.
v)   Andhra University: Andhra University started a certificate course in 1935, which was leter abandoned.
vi) Imperial Library, Calcutta: The Imperial library, Calcutta started a training class under the supervision of its librarian Mr. K. M. Asudulah in 1935. It was a full time regular Diploma course in librarianship at the Imperial Library, Calcutta (now National Library, Kolkata). It continued till 1946.

3. Post Graduate Diploma

i)   University of Madras: University of Madras, in 1937, introduced a one year Post Graduate Diploma course in place of the certificate course of three month duration. This was the first P G Diploma in library science in India.
ii) Banaras Hindu University: The second university to start a post graduate diploma course was the Banaras Hindu University in 1942.
iii) Bombay University: University of Bombay initiated a diploma course similar to Banaras Hindu University in 1943.
iv) Government of India's in-Service Training Course: A training course for the staff working in various government organizations was started in 1953. This course was recognized as equivalent to the university diploma courses.

4. Degree Courses

i)   Aligarh Muslim University: In 1947, Aligarh Muslim University started B.Lib. Science Course for the first time in the country.
ii) University of Delhi: University of Delhi was the first university to establish a full fledged Department of Library Science in 1946. It also instituted the first post diploma degree course in 1948. In 1949, the structure was changed. The programme of Master of Library Science was introduced as a two year course with the first year leading to Bachelor of Library Science.

In between 1956-59, six new LIS departments were established at Aligarh Muslim University, MS University of Baroda, Nagpur University, Osmania University, Pune University and Vikram University.

iii) Madras University: In 1960, Madras University replaced its full time one year diploma course to B.LibSc. Degree course. By mid 1960, many other universities had fallen in the line of university of Madras following the recommendation of Review Committee Report of UGC in introducing different degree courses.
iv) Government Polytechnique for Women: The Government

polytechnique for women, Ambala, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jullandhur, Rourkela started post matric (class X) diploma courses of two years duration in late 1960s.
v) Documentation Research and Training Centre (DRTC): In 1962, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan established Documentation Research and Training Centre at Bangalore. Previously DRTC courses were of 14 month duration which was later on moved to two years programme.
vi) Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC): INSDOC conducted a short term course for Asian Documentalists in 1963. In 1964, it started a one year post graduate course in Documentation and Reprography leading to "Associateship in Documentation and Reprography". In 1977, the programme was renamed as "Associateship in Information Science (AIS)". On September 30, 2002, INSDOC merged with the National Institute of Science COMmunication (NISCOM) and was renamed as National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR). At present, it is conducting "Courses in Information Science".

The DRTC and NISCAIR in Delhi concentrate on the training of professionals for special and industrial libraries and information centers. Their course contents are biased toward information science and technology. The programme of these two institutes is a class apart from other similar programmes offered by various institutes.

In India advanced professional education has remained attached to universities, though there are some regional library associations conducting certificate courses of a few months duration and women polytechnics offering post-masters two year diplomas in library science to train paraprofessionals. At present, about 107 institutions, mostly university colleges and polytechnics, have library science education courses. Out of these, the M.Lib.I.Sc. course is being offered by more than 75 universities.

5. Five Year Integrated Course in LIS:
In 2010, University of Calcutta introduces five year integrated course in Library & Information Science and thus becomes the first university to launch such course in LIS domain. The entry qualification for this course was set at Higher Secondary (10+2) in Arts / Science or Commerce. Launching of this course will force the learners to choose the LIS by choice and not by chance. It will again help the students to grasp and understand the contents for LIS in a better and exhaustive way.

6. Present Status of LIS Education in India:
A few departments and associations provide Certificate Courses in Library and Information Science (CLIS) and Diploma in Library and Information Science (DLIS). The others provide BLISc and MLISc courses. In most of the universities, the prerequisite for admission into the Bachelor or Master degree course in Library and Information Science is 10+2+3 years of education from any faculty (arts, science, commerce etc). The majority of the universities generally conduct two separate courses for the Bachelor's degree followed by the Master of Library and Information Science of one year (or two semesters) duration each. In recent years, some institutions have offered two years of integrated courses of four semester duration. The University of Calcutta went a step ahead and introduced five years integrated course in LIS with entry qualification as 10 +2.

Specialization: Students in most schools of library and information science have the opportunity to develop at least some degree of specialization. Some may take advanced courses in particular library functions, such as reference work, while others may take courses related to a particular type of library, such as a course in medical librarianship or public librarianship or academic librarianship. In simple, there are many different courses available in LIS. It makes the professionals available to work at all levels of library irrespective of type, structure and function.

Syllabus: The University Grants Commission (UGC), from time to time recommended the broader outlines of courses of Library and Information Science. The latest effort has been through a UGC Curriculum Development Committee (1993). The UGC and other higher bodies now give emphasis to semester system rather than annual system, and credit-based rather than marks-based system. Every university being autonomous is free to frame its own course of studies, and syllabi of many universities / schools are quite modernized.

All programmes to educate librarians share certain characteristics. Programmes typically offer courses in the history of books and librarianship to give students a background in the profession's past. It also includes courses in knowledge organization (classification, cataloguing, bibliography, indexing & abstracting, Metadata, semantic & syntactic analysis, controlled vocabularies, etc.), collection development (acquisition), information seeking behaviors of users, search strategies, library services (dissemination of the acquired library materials, reference), and management of the collection (preservation & conservation of documents). It also includes contents related to scholarly communication (bibliometrics, informetrics, scientometrics, webmetrics), digital libraries and ICT.

*   ICT as an Integral Part: Technology is entering in a very big way to LIS where it has been used extensively to store and retrieve information in different forms and structures. This new dimension is reflected in the course structure of almost all universities that provides courses in LIS. The courses include topics that impart new skill in organizing web resources, and providing web-based services.
*   Practical Exposure: All courses provide scope of practical knowledge rather than restricting to only theory. Even some universities make it compulsory for their learners to undergo some apprenticeship courses before practicing the librarianship.

Problems with Present LIS Education and Research
*   Limited Accommodation Capacity: All universities which provide Library and Information Science courses witness a great flow of learners. But they are able to accommodate only a limited number of such desired students.
*   A Very Competitive Entrance Examination: In most of the universities, students desire to study the LIS has to go through a very competitive entrance examination for admission.
*   Limitation as a Professional Subject: LIS is a professional course and so it has the limitations of any other professional courses. The non-inclusion of Library and Information Science in UPSC, Civil Service / State Public Service Commission examination, SET / SLET is a very common.

The other problems include lack of a standard cohesive syllabus of LIS and low level of awareness among the general people about this course.

7. LIS Research in India:
The LIS research briefly means the collection and analysis of original data on a problem of librarianship, done within the library school according to scientific and scholarly standard. Research in this connection broadly includes investigation, studies, surveys, academic work at the doctoral, post doctoral and research staff level, It also includes in house or action research by practicing librarians, information personnel and documentalist, etc. The aim of research in LIS, like any other discipline is to contribute towards the advancement of subject and contribution to the existing knowledge.

a) Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's Effort:
The era of LIS research in India started with S. R. Ranganathan. He has done individual research for several years. His works that lead to some of the fundamental and theoretical principles have dominated the research activities for five decades. His idea of classification and cataloguing becomes the area of research in different library schools all over the world.

The library and academic community of those days, even to-day also respect him as a pioneer researcher in LIS. Some of his worth notable contributions are

a) Five laws of library science
b) Colon Classification
c) Prolegomena to library classification
d) Classified Catalogue Code
e) Documentation and its facets
f) Library administration, etc.

b) M. Phil Programme
i) University of Delhi: University of Delhi was the first to introduce M. Phil programme in Library and Information Science in 1980. Today more than 11 universities offer the M.Phil programme. The duration of M. Phil programme in almost all universities in this country is one year.
c) Ph.D. Programme
i) University of Delhi: The credit for introducing the doctoral degree programme in library science in India goes to Dr. S. R. Ranganathan (1892–1972). In 1951, he started the same in Delhi University in 1958. The university offered first doctoral degree in Library science to D. B. Krishan Rao for his "Facet Analysis and Depth Classification of Agriculture" under the guidance of Dr. S. R. Rangana-than. In 1977, Panjab University, Chandigarh offered the second Ph.D. Today more than 35 Universities in India have Ph.D. research facilities.
ii) Documentation Research and Training Centre (DRTC): In 1962, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan established Documen-tation Research and Training Centre at Bangalore. Since its inception, it has been carrying out research studies on documentation and related areas.
iii) Library Associations: The contribution of library associa-tion of India towards research activities is negligible. They restrict their activities in the field of publication of journals, organization of seminars, conferences and workshop, etc. only. The ILA, IASLIC are the mentionable among them.

iv) Funding of LIS Research in India: The University Grant Commission (UGC) is promoting LIS research by award-ing different kinds of fellowship to the students. Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and De-fence Scientific Information and Documentation Centre (DESIDOC) are also promoting LIS research programme by awarding scholarship to doctoral students.

Till March, 1997, 350 theses have been awarded under vari-ous Indian universities.

d) D.Litt Programme:
In 1992, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar awarded D.Litt. to Dr. B. B. Shukla. It claimed to be the first such degree in library science all over the world.

8. Let Us Sum Up:
The library and information science deals with all aspects of information and knowledge which includes acquisition of ma-terials, classification and cataloguing, searching tools, infor-mation retrieval, preservation and conservation of documents and so on.

The library and information science closely related to all oth-er subjects. It forms its own foundation by taking the help of some other subjects.

Dr. S. R. Ranganathan in a pionner in the field of Library and Information Science in the world as a whole and India in particular. He contributed almost to all aspects of the library science. Nowadays many university and colleges provides different courses in Library and Information and its related subjects. It ranges from certificate course to PhD.