

EVALUATION THE ICT COMPONENTS IN MLIS CURRICULUM IN NORTH EAST INDIA : A STUDY

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Abstract : Purpose : The present paper analyses the current status of MLIS education program in the universities of North-East India. The main focus of the study is to assess the Information Communication Technology (ICT) components in the MLIS curriculum in the universities of North East India. The ICT components are recognized sparsely in the curriculum with the help of University Grants Commission's (India) Model Curriculum report. An attempt has been made in this paper to emphasize how the Department of Library and Information Science in the universities of North East (NE) India introduced ICT in the MLIS curricula and inculcate the rigid knowledge of ICT in practice which will help the learners to work in a modern library system.

Methodology : Basically, this study has been conducted on those universities which offer MLIS program and it was found that total eight universities are imparted with MLIS program. The primary information was taken from the website of the universities. Further, personal contact was made with the Department of Library and Information Science of the universities for more detailed information through e-mail, social networks, and the telephone. This study is circumscribed with ICT components in MLIS curriculum of the universities of NE India.

Findings : This paper reveals that almost all the eight universities cover all the ICT components in their syllabus as per semester. The eight universities are: Assam University; Dibrugarh University; Gauhati University; Manipur University; North Eastern Hill University; University of Science & Technology Meghalaya; Mizoram University; and Tripura University. Some of the universities follow CBCS curricula and six out of eight universities have Open Elective Papers related to ICT components.

Originality : Information Communication Technology has become a prominent asset in all the academic field and LIS education is no exception to it. Due to IT era, LIS schools are trying to adopt and use the ICT application in their curricula. This study displays the importance of ICT in LIS curricula and it can be stated how students of each university are learning the ICT components theoretically and practically.

Keywords : LIS Education, CBCS, MLIS curriculum, ICT, North East India.

1.0 Introduction

The school of Library and Information Science was started in India in the early 20th century and the establishment of the schools has already passed more than hundred years. From Baroda school to NISCAIR (formerly known as INSDOC) made crucial contribution in LIS education. The dimension and the pattern of LIS curriculum has been changing day by day. One noticeable phenomenon which became very comprehensive in this field of education is the ICT approaches. ICT enhanced more advanced teaching-learning process. Further, most of Departments of Library and Information Science are making more advanced curricula by integrating ICT components in each semester.

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2.0 LIS Education and Curriculum development in India

There is a widespread use of computers in the Library and Information sections as well as in the LIS department is changing their syllabus for its continuous update. The advancement of information and communication technology has more importance on theoretical and practical approaches in different modes of LIS education. According to the report of the UGC curriculum development committee on LIS education, the LIS schools changed their syllabi as per the requirement in the profession during these periods. This report has been published in 2001 under the chairmanship of Prof. C. R. Karisiddappa under the title "UGC Model Curriculum, Library and Information Science". LIS curriculum supposed to be revised from instance by taking into reflection the advancements in the ICTs. Library and Information Science schools are adopted the modern hardware and software with fastest Internet connectivity, LAN and library management software. LIS schools have also included in their syllabus different international standards and protocols such as ISBDs, Z39.50, MARC, ISO-2709 and Inter Library Loan etc.

3.0 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To give a brief overview of the current scenario of MLIS education programme in selected universities of North-East India;
- To find out the number of papers taught in MLIS curriculum;
- To assess the ICT component in MLIS curriculum in selected universities;
- To identify the ICT related open elective papers taught in MLIS curriculum under study.

4.0 Scope of the study

The scope of this paper is limited to the MLIS Education programme in North-East India. In NE India, there are eight states, viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Out of eight states, we found MLIS Education in five states, such as- Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura. There are in total 8 no. of universities at present offering different MLIS courses in NE India. In this study duration of MLIS course, present intake, total no. of faculty, impact of ICT components in MLIS curriculum, etc. has been discussed.

5.0 LIS Education in North-East India: an overview

This section draws an overview of eight universities which are privileged with the LIS programmes in North East (NE) India.

5.1 Assam

5.1.1 Assam University (<http://www.aus.ac.in/>)

Assam University (AU) is the central university situated in Silchar. It was set up in 1994 and the Department of Library Science was erected in 2009. The department offers two years MLIS programme with the intake of 25 students and also offers M.Phil and PhD programme.

5.1.2 Dibrugarh University (<https://www.dibru.ac.in/>)

Dibrugarh University (DU) is a state university of Assam which was established in 1965 under the provisions of the Dibrugarh University Act, 1965. The Centre for Library and Information Science Studies (CLISS), Dibrugarh University was established and started functioning from 2005. Presently

the department offers one-year B.Lib.I.Sc. programme with the intake of 24 students and one-year M.Lib.I.Sc. programme with the intake of 20 students.

5.1.3 Gauhati University (<https://www.gauhati.ac.in/>)

Gauhati University is the first university in North East India to start LIS education program by introducing one-year B.Lib.Sc. course in 1966. Further, Master of Library Science (M.Lib.I.Sc.) programme was introduced in 1979. In 1983, both B.Lib.I.Sc. and M.Lib.I.Sc. programmes become one-year full-time programme. As per UGC guidelines, two years integrated M.L.I.Sc. programme was started from the academic session 2001-02 by replacing one-year B.L.I.Sc and M.L.I.Sc program. Ph.D programme was introduced in 1987 and M.Phil programme was introduced in 2016.

5.2 Manipur

5.2.1 Manipur University (<http://www.manipuruniv.ac.in/>)

The Manipur University (MU) was established under the Manipur University Act, 1980. It became Central University in 2005. One-year Bachelor's Degree in LIS education was started in 1986 and MLISc. programme was started by the Department of Library and Information Science, MU in 2004 with the intake of 6 students. Later, two-years integrated MLISc programme was introduced in 2006-07 with the intake of 20 students and Ph.D. program was started in 1987.

5.3 Meghalaya

5.3.1 North Eastern Hill University (<https://www.nehu.ac.in/>)

North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) is also a central university, set up by the Act of Parliament in 1973. The Department of Library and Information Science was initiated in 1985 with the two-year integrated MLIS and also the Department offers the Ph.D. programme.

5.3.2 University of Science & Technology Meghalaya (<http://www.ustm.ac.in/>)

This is an autonomous and the first state private university which came into the existence in 2008 under the provisions of the University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya Act. The Department of Library and Information Science provides 2 years MLISc. Program with the intake of 25 students.

5.4 Mizoram

5.4.1 Mizoram University (<https://www.mzu.edu.in/>)

Mizoram University (MZU) is another central university in NE. It was established in 2001 and the Department of Library & Information Science was set up in the calendar year 2002-2003. The Department currently runs 2 years integrated MLIS program with an intake of 25 students. The integrated MLIS programme was revised and applied in the academic session 2011-12. Again, the MLIS course was revised in the year 2012-13 and adopted Choice Based Credit System. The department was also offering M.Phil programme with an intake of 6 students and also started Ph.D programme.

5.5 Tripura

5.5.1 Tripura University (<http://www.tripurauniv.in/>)

Tripura University was founded in 1987 and the Department of Library and Information Science was established in 2016. The Department offers Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) based on the UGC model curriculum in LIS and Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program which was started from the academic session 2017-2018.

Table 1: MLISc Education Program in North-East (NE) India

A table has been given here and it will show a clear view of the state wise MLISc program in NE India.

State	Name of the University	Type of University the Course	Nomenclature of	Duration (Years)	Present Intake	Total no. of Faculty
Assam	Assam University (AU)	Central	MLIS	2	25	4
	Dibrugarh University (DU)	State	M.Lib.Sc.	1	20	3
	Gauhati University (GU)	State	MLISc	2	30	6
Manipur	Manipur University (MU)	Central	MLISc	2	20	5
Meghalaya	North Eastern Hill University (NEHU)	Central	MLISc	2	30	5
	University of Science & Technology Meghalaya (USTM)	State Private	MLISc	2	25	5
Mizoram	Mizoram University (MZU)	Central	MLIS	2	25	8
Tripura	Tripura University (TU)	Central	MLIS	1	20	3

Table 2: Data regarding the no. of papers taught in MLISc Curriculum .

Name of the university	Total no. of papers			
	Semester I	Semester II	Semester II	Semester IV
AU	5	5	5	5
DU	4	4	×	×
GU	5	5	5	4
MU	4	4	4	4
NEHU	5	5	5	5
USTM	5	5	5	5
MZU	7	7	7	7
TU	6	6	×	×

The distribution of the above table no. 2 is segmented by semester and the total number of papers. The distribution shows only two universities have two semesters and the rest of it is four semesters. The highest number of papers (7 papers) taught at Mizoram University and the average number of papers per semester of the other universities is five. DU and TU have the dissertation paper in the second semester; on the other hand, other five universities have the dissertation paper in the fourth semester except Mizoram University.

Table 3: UGC Model curriculum for Library and Information Science: ICT Perspectives

Name of the Paper	Unit	Part I		Unit	Part II	
		Theory			Practice	
<i>Paper IV</i> Information Technology: Basics and Applications	1	Information Technology		1	Use of Operating Systems	
	2	Computer Basics		2	Word Processors, Spread Sheet.	
	3	Computer Architecture-Organisation		3	Database creation and usage	
	4	Software		4	Database search-retrieval	
	5	Word Processors, Spread Sheets etc.				
	6	DBMS packages				
<i>Paper XIII</i> Information Technology: Applications	1	Library Automation				
	2	Multi Lingual Bibliographic Databases				
	3	Communication Technology				
	4	Internet: Basics				
	5	Digital Libraries				
	6	AI and Expert system				
<i>Paper XIV</i> Information Technology: Applications				1	CDS/ISIS	
				2	Library Software Package	
				3	CD-ROM online Searches	
				4	Internet Searching	
				5	Web Page Designing	

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills and expertness have become more important and we can sense the impact of the ICT components in every field. There is a need of well-consolidated ICT knowledge, skills and proficiency in LIS education so that LIS graduates can adopt the new ICT environment and use it in an effective manner. As table no. 3 creates an image of UGC model curriculum in MLISc (2001) and it also defines how the theory and practice papers merged with the ICT module.

Table 4: Distribution of ICT components in MLISc curriculum of selected Universities in North East India

Name of the University	ICT Components																			
	ICT Fundamentals		OS & Programming		Networking		Internet Basics		DBMS /RD BMS		Library Automation		Digital Libraries		Current Trends		Information Storage & Retrieval		Computer Applications	
	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P
AU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DU	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×
GU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓
NEHU	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	
USTM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	
MZU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓	✓	✓	×
TU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓

Abbreviated: T=Theory. P=Practice.

In this table, it can be observed that ICT components are broadly categorized into ten parts, theory and practical papers are also sub-divided under each component. Among the eight universities, only Assam University and Gauhati University cover both theory and practice of ten ICT papers. In Operating System Module, DOS, Windows, UNIX, and Linux are being taught almost in all eight universities. Software packages like SPSS as data analysis tool is kept for practical purposes. Most of the universities indoctrinate OSI, TCP as networking part. Koha and Soul is the part of the curricula as LMS in the sampled universities. Further, Digital Library (DSpace & Greenstone), Digital Documents with Metadata, OAI-PMH and DRM are also being taught in most of the universities, but a very few universities offer the practical approach of it. Mizoram University and Tripura University embellished their content and web page designing section by implementing practical approach of the Dreamweaver and also affixed CCTV, Biometrics, Smartcard, and RFID as part of Library Security Technology. Apart from that, there is an identical curriculum in the all eight universities.

Table 5: Open Elective Papers Taught in MLISc Curriculum

Name of the University	Open Elective Papers
AU	IV Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preservation and Conservation of Library and Archival Materials. ● Management of E Resources and E-Publishing. ● Metrics Studies
DU	Nil
U	Nil
MU	IV Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Technical Writing & Professional Communication ● Metrics Studies ● Integrated Information Systems. ● Marketing of Information Products and Services
NEHU	II Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Library System Analysis and Design
	III Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Database Management System ● Information Communication Technology
USTM	Nil
MZU	II Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E-Resources
	III Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Information Services
TU	II Semester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E-Resource Management ● Preservation and Conservation of Library Materials ● Metrics Studies

The data used in the current table describes how six universities framed semester wise open elective papers which are related to ICT. It also shows Dibrugarh University and Gauhati University do not accommodate any elective papers in their syllabus. Most of the universities-imposed Metrics studies through different tools (Citespace, Bibexcel etc), DBMS, E-resource Management, and Archiving etc.

Conclusion

Information Communication Technology is potentially powerful tool and it has the composition of theoretical as well as practical approach in curriculum that tries to improve the quality of the learners and extends the professional opportunities. ICT introduces new methods and techniques of teaching-learning aspects which enhance students to learn innovatively and ameliorate to use the neoteric

technological tools efficiently in every purpose. ICT curriculum reduces the weakness and helps to face menace of changing situation. Emphatically ICT based education enlarges the socio-economic augmentation of a nation. In this paper, it has been drawn that all the eight Departments of Library and Information Science are very much aware of the ICT components in their curricula.

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