

Research paper

Library and Information Science Education in India: Growth, Development, Problems and Prospects

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to explore the history and growth of the Indian LIS education system, its sustainability, and describe a critical review of recent UGC proposed Learning Outcomes-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF) syllabi. The formal LIS education which was started before independence with few universities currently witnessed a phenomenal growth of LIS departments/schools in the country. The structured questionnaire and survey methods were used to collect relevant data about availability of various courses and supplemented by searching websites and personal contacts. The findings of the study indicates that that 237 universities/colleges/ polytechnic institutes and professional associations found offering LIS education from six months certificate course to a doctoral research program. The survey revealed that at present B.A. (Hons.), B.Sc. (H), Dip. in LIS (3 years), CLIS, BLIS, MLIS, MLIS (two years integrated), PGDLAN, M. Phil., Ph.D., and D.Litt. courses are available in 31 states and UT of Indian universities/colleges in Library and Information Science. The study also finds that during the span of 20 years (2001-2020) 105 LIS departments came into existence primarily in private universities and colleges. The latest UGC proposed LOCF syllabi for BLIS also examined its acceptability and sustainability as a uniform model curriculum framework for the LIS departments in India, In addition, the study describes key issues, challenges and recommendations to enhance LIS education scenario.

Keywords: LIS Education, LIS Curriculum, Choice Based Credit System, LOCF, Growth of LIS

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Introduction

This study focuses upon historical growth and development of LIS departments/ schools in India. The history of the education of library science in India dates back to 1911 when W. A. Borden (1853-1931), an American disciple of Melville Dewey started a short-term training programme in library science at Baroda under the patronage of HE Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad II of Baroda at the Central Library, Baroda. “Four years later in 1915, Asa Don Dickinson (1876-1960), then the librarian of Punjab University, Lahore (now in Pakistan) started a three-month apprentice training programme for working librarians. In 1929, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan started a certificate course at Madras Library Association which was taken over by the University of Madras, and in 1937 the course was converted into a Post-Graduate (PG) Diploma in Library Science. This was the first postgraduate diploma programme in library science in India. Before Independence, only six universities namely the Andhra University (1935), Madras University (1937), Banaras Hindu University (1942), Bombay University (1944), Calcutta University (1946) and Delhi University (1946) were offering a diploma course in library science. 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” (Singh & Negi, 2020). In the study an attempt has been made to map LIS education state wise. This study also discussed overview of curriculum of BLIS, MLIS, CBCS, and LOCF. On the basis of collected data and observations, the authors have given some recommendations to make LIS education system impart the best education and training.

Research Questions:

1. Which are levels of courses in LIS education offered by Indian LIS departments/ schools?
2. How many LIS departments/ schools came into existence during the last two decades in India?
3. What is the status of LIS education system statewide?
4. What is the curriculum pattern and which subjects are covered/ taught broadly in the LIS curriculum?
5. How can we make LOCF more effective and comprehensive?

6. How can educationalists and LIS professional associations contribute to making the LIS education system truly global and relevant?

Research Methodology

The relevant data in the present study is collected from multiple methods of research. The quantitative data such as origin of the departments/colleges, availability of courses and mapping of state-wise LIS departments collected through a structured questionnaire, administered to all the LIS departments in India followed by browsing websites of universities/colleges. The gap in data received through a questionnaire was filled up through personal contacts with professional faculties working at the LIS departments. To trace the old historical facts and figures of LIS education in India, the role of pioneers, UGC commissions and committees, quality literature was extensively searched directly from the primary sources such as research articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings. Enormous literature found on LIS education and its various facets, the most pertinent literature which was useful for this study has been reviewed and presented separately in 'Literature Review'. Besides, the prospectus of various premier LIS departments was also reviewed to draw inference on courses being taught at UG and PG levels. Further UGC proposed Learning Outcomes-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF) which is available on the public domain including the UGC website was also carefully analyzed.

Literature Review

Enormous literature is available on LIS education and research in India, some most relevant studies have been reviewed and presented as the following:

Khurshid, (1970) discussed the history and the LIS education scenario in four Asian Nations i.e. India, Pakistan, Srilanka (Ceylon), and Burma. Financial conditions, library facilities, services, the role of LIS associations, standards, government initiatives in LIS education in India, etc., were described.

Basu and Sarkhel (1995) had evaluated CDC in the LIS, they realized that UGC-CDC focused upon redesigning courses and bringing improvement in the education system but no major actions are taken to implement recommendations, while examining the status

of higher education, the role of NKC, UGC, CDC, NAAC, various committees formed to build up standards and bring quality in the LIS education were surveyed comprehensively in his study (Joshi, 2010). Another study reported issues and trends in LIS education in India, realized the need for redefining objectives of LIS education (Singh, S. P, 2003). The study reviewed century years (1910-2011) of LIS education in India, they presented an analytical survey of LIS teaching and teachers. The study describes a brief history of LIS education in India, chronological growth of LIS departments, levels and courses offered in LIS, state-wise distribution of LIS schools and status of universities; designation, qualification, age and gender-wise study of LIS teachers. (Singh & Moirangthem, 2016)

Kaddu & Haumba (2018) discussed the process and significance of curriculum development in LIS; the role of social media, challenges and solutions associated with the LIS curricula formulation using social media in developing nations discussed. The study indicates that when the learners and faculties are unable to commute to venues due to geographical, physical, and financial barriers, the flexibility of participation, sharing and responding could be achieved by the usage of social media and blended learning models. Khan (2018) studied what is being taught by 258 universities of US in the data science program. feeling the need to focus upon data librarianship in the US, and given the significance of this study, it helps to identify gaps in the LIS curriculum and to understand cross-disciplinary relationship between LIS and data science.

The Presentation of Surveyed Data

The data which was collected through a questionnaire as discussed above in the methodology has been analyzed and presented as below in the following with their interpretation.

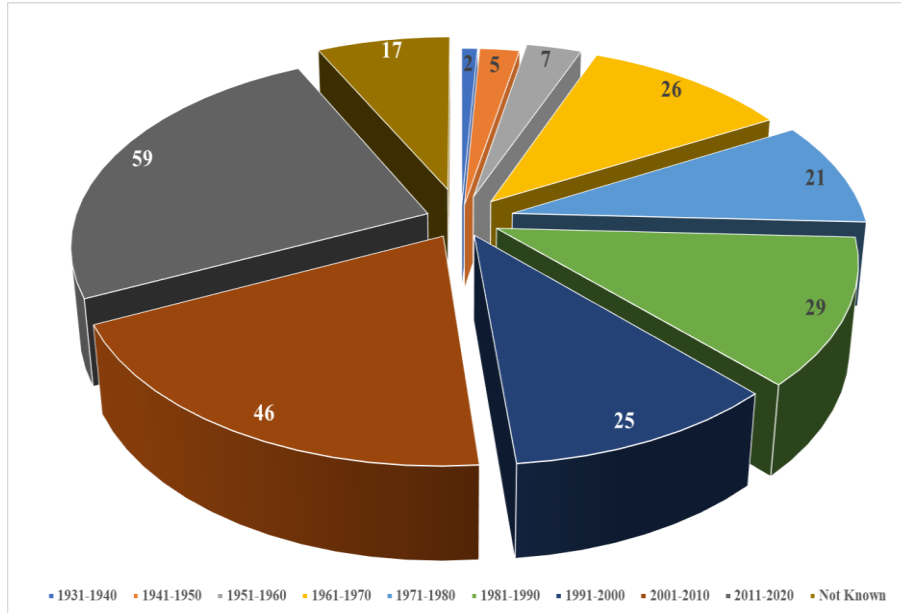


Fig.1: Chronological Presentation

Figure 1 depicted the decadal chronological growth of LIS education in India. Before independence, only six universities started a diploma course in library science namely Andhra University (1935), Madras University (1937), Banaras Hindu University (1942), Bombay University (1944), Calcutta University (1946) and Delhi University (1946). It is shown that there is a phenomenal growth of LIS departments particularly since the 1960s onwards. During two decadal periods (2001-2010 & 2010-2020) 105 universities/colleges have started various levels of LIS educational programs. From the analyzed data it reveals that during the last 20 years (2001-2020) many private universities/colleges particularly in Punjab, UP, MP, Chhattisgarh, Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat came into existence and started LIS courses, these are: Venkateshwara Open University (2018) and Himalayan University, Itanagar (2019) in Arunachal Pradesh. Kalinga University, Raipur (2010), MATS University, Raipur (2010), C. V. Raman University, Bilaspur (2010) in Chhattisgarh while C. U. Shah University, Surendranagar (2015) and Parul University, Vadodara (2015) in Gujarat, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal (2012), Madhya Pradesh. Lovely Professional University, Fagwara (2012), Guru Granth Sahib World University, Fatehgarh Sahib (2013),

Desh Bhagat University, Gobindgarh (2013), RIMT University Mandi Gobindgarh (2015), Adesh University of Medical and Health Sciences, Bhatinda (2015), Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabu (2015) and SBBS University, Jalandhar (2017) in Punjab. Shri JYT University, Jhunjhunu (2010), Sangam University, Bhilwara, (2018), Sir Padmapat Singhania University, Udaipur, (2018) and Apex University, Jaipur (2019) in Rajasthan. Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut (2010), Galgotia University, Noida (2011), Shri Venkateshwara University, Gajraula (2012), Integral University, Lucknow (2012) in Uttar Pradesh. Furthermore, many central universities during this period also came into existence with various LIS courses namely the Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharmasala (2010), Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar (2010), Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Mothihari, Bihar (2010), Central University Haryana, Mahendragarh, (2014), Tripura University, Suryamaninagar (2016), Central University of Tamil Nadu (2017) and Central University of Punjab, Bhitanda (2019).

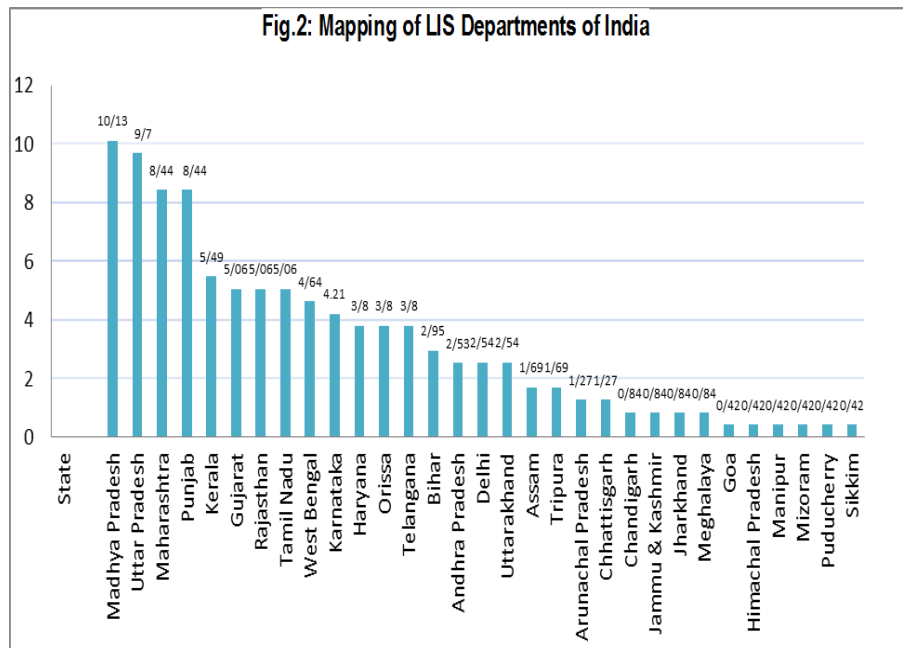


Fig.2: Mapping of LIS Departments of India

Figure 2 exhibits the state-wise distribution with percentile coverage of LIS departments. It is shown that Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have maximum numbers of universities/colleges thus constituted the highest figures of LIS departments in the country i.e., 19.38%, followed by Maharashtra 8.44%, Punjab 8.44%, Kerala 5.49%, Rajasthan 5.06%, Gujarat 5.06%, Tamil Nadu 5.06%, West Bengal 4.64%, Karnataka 4.21%, Odisha 3.8%, Telangana 3.8%, Haryana 3.8%, Bihar 2.95%, Andhra Pradesh 2.53% of LIS departments respectively. Based on the analyzed data study inference, that out of the 28 states and 8 union territories of our country except for Nagaland, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Ladakh had LIS educational programs.

Table 1: Course wise distribution of the LIS departments

Sr. No.	State	Schools of LIS (No.)	Certificate/Diploma	UG	PG	Integrated	M.Phil.	Ph.D.
1	Madhya Pradesh	24	0	24	14	0	3	9
2	Uttar Pradesh	23	0	21	13	2	3	9
3	Maharashtra	20	0	18	14	2	4	9
4	Punjab	20	4	17	15	1	0	7
5	Kerala	13	1	11	5	3	2	2
6	Gujarat	12	1	10	9	2	2	5
7	Rajasthan	12	3	10	9	1	0	6
8	Tamil Nadu	12	3	4	5	5	7	6
9	West Bengal	11	0	8	8	2	4	5
10	Karnataka	10	0	0	0	9	3	9
11	Haryana	9	4	4	4	2	2	3
12	Orissa	9	0	3	1	5	1	3
13	Telangana	9	1	6	3	1	1	1
14	Bihar	7	1	7	5	0	1	2
15	Andhra Pradesh	6	1	1	1	6	4	4
16	Delhi	6	4	3	3	1	1	2
17	Uttarakhand	6	0	6	4	0	0	1
18	Assam	4	0	1	1	3	0	0
19	Tripura	4	0	4	3	0	0	0
20	Arunachal Pradesh	3	2	3	3	0	1	2
21	Chhattisgarh	3	0	2	3	0	2	2
22	Chandigarh	2	1	0	0	1	0	1

Sr. No.	State	Schools of LIS (No.)	Certificate/ Diploma	UG	PG	Integrated	M.Phil.	Ph.D.
23	Jammu & Kashmir	2	0	1	1	1	1	2
24	Jharkhand	2	0	1	1	0	0	1
25	Meghalaya	2	0	0	0	2	0	1
26	Goa	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
27	Himachal Pradesh	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
28	Manipur	1	0	1	1	0	0	1
29	Mizoram	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
30	Puducherry	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
31	Sikkim	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total		237	27	168	126	52	43	96

Table 1 shows the data related to different levels of LIS programmes being offered by 237 LIS departments/colleges. The more interpretations according to course wise distribution are presented as:

Certificate Course /Diploma in Library and Information Science-

It is identified from the table that 27 institutes are offering certificate and Diploma courses in LIS, the Punjab, Haryana and Delhi sharing an equal number of LIS schools (i.e. 4) offering these courses.

Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) - Through the table, one can easily understand that 168 universities/colleges found offering one year BLIS degree course after graduation. Further, through the above table, the first six states namely MP (24), UP (21), Maharashtra (18), Punjab (17), Kerala (11), Rajasthan (10) and Gujarat (10) represent 66.07% (111) of the total universities/colleges.

Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) - Regarding one year Master's degree in LIS out of 237 universities/colleges 126 departments are found to offer the PG program in LIS. The States like Punjab (15), MP (14), Maharashtra (14), UP (13), Gujarat (9) and Rajasthan (9) constitute 58.73% (74) of the total PG departments.

Master of Library and Information Science (Two Year Integrated MLIS)- In addition to the one-year master programme in LIS, it is observed from the table-3 that 43 universities/colleges have been found offering two years of integrated Master's degree in library and

information science. Also, it is important to mention here that Kaula Committee (1992) has recommended two year integrated Master's degree in LIS, hence many LIS departments switch over one-year master's degree to two years integrated (B/MLIS). But before the Kaula Committee, North-Eastern Hills University (NEHU) has already introduced two year integrated master's degree in LIS in 1986 followed by the University of Madras (1988).

Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) - It is shown from the table that 43 universities are offering M. Phil. program. **The** universities in Tamil Nadu found maximum departments (i.e. 7) for the M. Phil. program followed by Maharashtra (4), West Bengal (4) and Andhra Pradesh (4) departments respectively. Further, it is important to mention here that M. Phil program was first started by the University of Delhi in 1976 and the first degree was awarded to Mr. V. Pulla Reddy under the supervision of late Prof. M. M. Kashyap (1928-2014) on the topic “A study on Job Satisfaction among Professional Staff working in University and College Libraries of Delhi” (Singh & Negi, 2020)

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)- The table also shows the data related to Ph.D. programmes and it is found that 96 universities offer Ph.D. research programmes. The Universities namely MP, UP, Maharashtra and Karnataka share an equal number of LIS departments i.e., 9 respectively. Further, it is noteworthy that the LIS department of the University of Delhi was also the first in the country to award Ph.D. degree to Mr. DB Krishna Rao under the supervision of all times national icon *Rai Shaib Padma Shri* Dr. SR Ranganathan (1892-1972) on the topic “Facet Analysis and Depth Classification of Agriculture” (Singh & Negi, 2020)

An Analysis of Curriculum of LIS Programmes

The curriculum of any academic program reflects the richness and advancement of a discipline/subject. It is necessary to maintain uniformity of courses, paper structure, admission policy, intake, fees structure, evaluation, examination, etc., so the UGC in the early 1990s constituted a Curriculum Development Committee which is publicly known as CDC for Library and Information Science under the chairmanship of late *Padma Shri* Prof. P. N. Kaula, which was first published in 1993. Another CDC in LIS was re-constituted under the

chairmanship of Prof. C. R. Karisiddappa in 2001 which submitted a report titled “Model Curriculum in Library and Information Science” to achieve uniformity in the teaching of LIS. But, the syllabi developed by these CDCs could not achieve their objectives, as the proposed recommendations could not uniformly and strictly be implemented by most of the departments/schools/colleges.

Making Curriculum More Vivacious – A case of Choice Based Credit System

To provide more flexibility, options and choices in the courses of higher education in India, the UGC in 2011 introduced a ‘Choice Based Credit System’ (CBCS) publicly known as CBCS and recommended to be implemented at UG and PG courses by all higher educational institutes (HEIs) of the country. The CBCS provides an opportunity for the students to choose courses from the prescribed courses comprising a core, elective/minor, or skill-based courses. The courses can be evaluated following the grading system, which is considered to be better than the conventional marks system. The CBCS syllabus is the student-centred which primarily focused on Programme. The Structure means a list of courses (Core, Elective, and Open Elective) that makes an Academic Programme, specifying the syllabus, Credits, hours of teaching, evaluation and examination schemes, the minimum number of credits required for successful completion of the Programme, etc. prepared in conformity to university rules and eligibility criteria for the admission. The Core Course- means a course that a student admitted to a particular programme must complete receiving the degree and which cannot be substituted by any other course. The Elective Course- means an optional course to be selected by a student out of such courses offered in the same or any other Department/Centre. While the Open Elective means an elective course, which is available for students of all programmes, including students of the same department or students of other departments (Singh, 2019).

Furthermore, most of the LIS departments/schools in India on the guidelines and laid down policies of Choice Based Credit System have converted their syllabi into BLIS/MLIS in CBCS mode.

Status of Core subjects of BLIS and MLIS in Indian universities/colleges

Based on the analysis of syllabi of various LIS departments, at the level of 'Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) following papers namely Foundations of Library, Information, and Society; Information Communication Technology (Theory and Practice); Library Cataloguing and Classification (Theory and Practice) (in some university by the name of Knowledge Organization); Library and Information Centre Management or Library Management; Information Sources and Services; Information Processing and Retrieval (Theory and Practice) are being taught in the majority of the LIS departments.

While at Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS/ MS-LIS) the various papers in two semesters are taught in the majority of LIS departments/universities in India which are Information Systems and Programmes; Information Storage and Retrieval System or Technology; Advanced Application of ICT in LIS or Library Operations and Management (theory & practice); Advanced Knowledge Organization (Classification and Cataloguing-Non Book Material); Application of Information Literacy in LIS; Marketing of LIS Products and Services or Consolidation of Information Products and Services; Research Methodology.

Under the CBCS following elective (specialized) courses such as Preservation and Conservation of Library Materials; Library and Management Systems on Academic, Special, Agricultural, Health Sciences, Legal Studies, Management Studies, Technology, Corporate Librarianship, etc. TQM, Content Management System, Data Management, Digital Libraries, Semantic web, Informatics, Scientometrics, Web-Based Information Services, Web Technologies, Knowledge Management Systems, etc., and open elective papers such as Print and Electronic Sources in Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences are being offered by many universities including the University of Delhi. The project report cum field survey and dissertation is also a common feature.

Critical Analysis of Learning Objectives based on Curriculum Framework (LOCF) of Philosophy behind LOCF

The UGC has notified proposed LOCF based syllabi for the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) in mid 2019 to imbue LIS curriculum with quality, innovation and flexibility. The philosophy behind the entire exercise to design and develop such innovative syllabi is a welcome step and certainly brings catalytic changes in LIS education and making students more focused on the profession and society (UGC, 2019).

The subjects of the core papers are LIS Foundation, Library Management, Information Sources, Systems and Services, Knowledge Organization: Classification and Cataloging (Theory and Practice), and Fundamentals of ICT (Theory and Practice). The subjects of Discipline-Specific Elective (DSE) papers are School Library and Media Library, Public Library and Information System, and lastly Literature Survey and Fieldwork.

As per the LOCF, the attributes that a LIS graduate should have are disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking ability, excellent communicator, professional skills, problem -solving ability, digitally literate, perpetual learner, team worker and ethical awareness.

The learning outcomes include the capability of presenting deep knowledge of fundamental principles, concepts and theories of LIS and making them conversant:

1. To apply skills about the acquisition, classification, cataloguing, ICT, external or physical processing of documents.
2. To provide library services more effectively, to manage library housekeeping operations with LMS, to create of digital libraries and institutional repositories, to manage library collections and to educate users.
3. Understanding of skills and job opportunities of public, school, university, corporate, industrial, health science, etc. librarians, focus upon the usage of reading materials and user satisfaction, professional attitude to connect the user with the right information, in the right format at the right time.
4. To demonstrate sensitivity towards culture, gender, religious differences, ethical integrity, honesty, biases, and intolerance at the workplace.

5. Treating students, users and colleagues with respect and dignity by promoting diversity, etc.

The authors critically analyzed this proposed LOCF syllabus in the light of the philosophy of LOCF and future requirements. The analysis with shortcomings and suggestions are presented as below:

1) The proposed LOCF syllabus for implementation completely lack futuristic foresightedness/demands without accommodating the new papers/concepts, moreover, the suggested reading lists in some papers are very old, outdated, and irrelevant. In the true sense of the word, the recommended syllabi are a replica of existing syllabus adopted from a few selected universities syllabi. Hence, it must be revisited, reframed and revised to meet the future needs of the students and employability.

2) Keeping in mind that the libraries are user-centered there is no component or unit on user education/studies mostly.

3) Learning outcomes are listed for each paper but it is a basic overview of the contents of a unit/section rather than learning outcomes.

4) Nearly half of the core papers (four out of nine) are covered by papers on knowledge organization. Some papers are integrated or embedded with topics of MLIS, e.g. Foundation of LIS includes knowledge society and topics about current trends in cataloguing.

5) The LOCF curriculum concentrates more on some papers rather than focusing on the library and information science ecosystem in the new environment. Therefore, a complete revision of this curriculum and formulation of LOCF for MLIS along with BLIS is suggested having comprehensive participation of teachers and practicing librarians throughout the country.

The Key Issues, Challenges and Recommendations

1. The holistic progress of students, job requirements and needs of library patrons are important factors. The LIS departments/schools may plan the policy of the syllabus based on proposed factors. i.e., regular revision of syllabus with international standards and market demands on the emerging concepts related to knowledge management, knowledge mapping, data analytics, big data, data science, data visualization, plagiarism detection systems, research ethics, creative commons, open-source technology, AI-based information systems and services, networking, digital preservation technology, etc. are

required. The uniformity in the curriculum of various universities in India and designing curriculum at par global perspective are also equally important factors to make LIS education more efficient, practical and employable oriented.

2. At the national level Government must take the initiative to set up a national accreditation body for the LIS education and research as proposed "*Library Council of India (LCI)*" on the similar policy and mandate of existing professional educational accreditation bodies such as in Medical Sciences (i.e. National Medical Commission formerly MCI), Legal Studies (BCI), Education (NCTE), Technical and Management Sciences (AICTE), Agricultural Sciences (NAEAB), Accounts and Accounting (ICAI) to maintain quality standard and regulate the LIS education, library research, library services and library practices in the country.

3. The regulatory body like UGC must take the serious steps/initiatives to control the mushroom growth of LIS departments/schools leading to education and research by the private colleges/universities and distance mode. Mostly, the private academic institutions are functioning as commercial enterprises for revenue generations, hence, deteriorating the quality of education and research in a professional course like Library and Information Science.

4. The professional associations primarily have the mandate to promote, preserve, excel, standardize, innovate, develop new tools and technologies and negotiate with the governments, library service matters, pay scales, service conditions, filling professional positions, parities on the pending issues, professional development, career enhancement, training, teaching and research, etc. But if we look at the current scenario of professional associations of our country, in general, all the national professional associations derail from their prime role and responsibilities. Besides, these associations are only symbolic entities and are not bringing about any seminal change in the LIS education, LIS research, LIS services and in the entire health system of the library profession now. Hence, it is need of the hour that the leadership/governance of such national professional associations must lead from the front and revisited, rethink the overall functionality and operations of these associations. In true sense, the leadership of national professional associations must strictly adopt the professional code of conduct and act seriously towards making professional

associations more effective, responsible, accountable, productive, result-oriented and vibrant rather than symbolic monuments.

5. The affiliated universities/colleges of LIS departments/schools must have a provision for at least six-to-one-year paid internship for the pass out PG students of library and information science on the model of the University of Delhi for their practical exposure and learning in the real environment.

6. It is also suggested that LIS departments must collaborate and coordinate with their parent university/college librarians and libraries for academic and interactive research.

7. LIS departments/schools must strengthen and make the Alumni Associations of their own departments/schools operational to connect old alumni for professional development and engage students of the institutes/departments in professional activities hence making them more confident and professionally sound.

Conclusions

The present study discusses the various dimensions of LIS education in India. The study reflected that in the last two decades (2001-2020) there has been the unprecedented growth of universities/colleges offering bachelors to doctoral research programs in library and information science, particularly by the private universities/colleges. The intake capacity of library science students and researchers has increased unimaginably which is producing a large amount of qualified but unskilled LIS professionals' hence there is a great concern of employability. The LOCF syllabus proposed by the UGC for library and information science, has hugely failed and is incompatible with the fulfillment of its basic philosophy and objectives for which it has been designed. Hence, if it is implemented, as proposed there will be no meaningful changes in library education, library research, library services and the profession on the whole. Furthermore, the governments of India constituted from time to time many commissions and committees in higher education and research a little exclusively for library education and library profession. But unfortunately, the recommendations of such commissions and committees could not bring any satisfactory results/ changes in the overall health of library education, library research, library services and professional development. Even today the majority of LIS departments/schools don't have basic teaching, learning, and research

facilities such as teaching staff, classrooms, furniture, teaching aids, computer laboratories, Internet facilities, etc. Hence, in the welfare of the profession, the governments including the LIS professional bodies and professionals seriously revisit and act.

Recommended Citation

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