

Educating library and information science professionals to cater to the modern needs: A Pakistani perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the Pakistani model of library and information science (LIS) education in the light of changes brought about by information and communication technology. Library and Information Science is a profession that is concerned with the attained knowledge and skills that support the collection, organization and utilization of the records of human communication. The education of library and information science at postgraduate level is being offered by ten public sector and three private sector universities of Pakistan. The LIS education during pre-partition period was started in Lahore in 1915 with a certificate course but this program came to an end after few years. After partition, the first diploma course started in 1956 from University of Karachi, which converted into a Master's degree program in 1962 and later on as a Ph.D. program. The other universities of Pakistan followed the traditions of University of Karachi and now a total 13 universities are offering the programs to professionally train the librarians. The courses taught in these universities are regularly revised to meet the demands of the society. Besides educating traditional librarianship, the curricula of all the universities impart modern education to train the future librarians accordingly. This paper completely covers the conventional as well as the modern-day courses being taught in these universities of Pakistan.

Keywords: Library and information science education, library schools, library and information science curriculum, library and information science professionals

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Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to present an overview of the efforts made at university level in Pakistan for training of LIS professionals in the light of challenges faced by the concerned stakeholders involved in library practice and the varying information atmosphere. During the last about three decades, the major themes which emerged in the debate of LIS education include the stress between the traditional librarianship and information science, the influence of information technologies and the progressing LIS curriculum, and the relationship between LIS education and the field of practice. This study's major focus is on literature review but it also explores how the future LIS professionals are prepared and what are the requirements of the employers hiring library professionals. For this purpose, viewpoint of some eminent library employers is sought through verbal communication.

Library Education – Historical Perspective, Current Trends

Library education or Library Science education is not an old terminology as compared to education in other fields or disciplines of knowledge. It has a history of almost 130 years when this discipline was introduced in the University of Germany and later in USA and other American and European countries. Till 19th century, academic librarians were usually scholars, serving as Professor in university and possessed keen interest towards library. No training was provided to the librarian, besides; it was expected from new librarians to serve similarly as previous ones. Similar patterns were practiced by few librarians, while others were apprenticed under the supervision of established librarians.

Library School

The term library school is used for an academic institution imparting professional education and training in the field of librarianship. White¹ says, "Like business school, law school, media school, a library school is an institution of higher learning specializing in the professional training of librarians. The first library school in the United States was established by Melvil Dewey (the originator of the Dewey Decimal Classification System) in 1887 at Columbia University." Another scholar Churchwell² is of the view, "Since then many library schools have been founded in the United States and Canada." Founding library schools at Barcelona (presently as Universidad de Barcelona) and Leipzig (Europe's oldest school of library) became the basis of

¹ White, Carl Milton. The origins of the American library school. New York: Scarecrow Press, 1961,p23

² Churchwell, Charles D. The shaping of American library education. Chicago: American Library Association, 1975,p102

development in other countries in 1915. In between the period of World War II, many other library schools were founded. The first library school of awarding a master's degree was University of Chicago Graduate Library School and even became the first to confer doctoral degree in this discipline, which now carries the status of standard professional degree. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill were among the other highlighted library schools of America.

In North America many library schools offer only graduate programs with the accreditation of ALA (American Library Association). The Library Science's bachelor's degree (formerly Library Economics) got weed out long time ago. Students of Library Science in North America secure master's degree, usually with the name of the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) or Master of Library Science (MLS). This degree permits to serve as librarian in academic and public libraries, special libraries and school library media centers, other individual credited by MLS exercise their skills with dominant library vendors. This degree also provides platform for sectors such as publishing, printing and broadcasting.

Library Science's Master programs are structured in such a manner so as to propose a merger of competent courses required in library science as well as in information science. The courses requisite major attention on foundation skills including: reference, cataloging, collection development and also relevant aspects: like the philosophy over which this profession is based, information management and information technology. Optional courses includes: Genealogy, information management, archives and children's literature, also some special courses with respect to particular types of libraries.

Over the past years, a trend is seen at library schools moderating their names reflecting transformation into electronic media from print version, and for information incorporated beyond the boundaries of conventional traditional libraries. Pursuing names as schools of library and information science (abbreviated to "SLIS", and so calling "SLISers" to the students), although some have eliminated the term "library» overall.

Library Education

Many library managers and administrators believe that the purpose of library education is "to produce qualified staff for their libraries that will be competent to step into a professional post and perform the duties assigned to them, with only the minimum amount of in-service training being necessary."³

³ Bramley, G. World trends in library education. London: Clive Bingley, 1975,p.25

As far as the library education is concerned, in the past it had not been treated as a subject but was regarded as a job-oriented technical education. It was considered, some 125 years ago, that to work in a library, some basic knowledge of selection, acquisition and organization of material and providing readers' services was enough and all that could be learnt through some informal training. Even in the universities of most developed countries like America, it took a long time to introduce library science as a subject taught at Master's level.

Library Education in Sub-Continent

The history of library education in united India (including today's Pakistan) begins from Baroda state in 1911. Through the struggles of Maharaja Sayajrao III, Gaekwar of Baroda (1862-1939) library schools were introduced. He was a library supporter and promoter, a civilized and educationalist ruler.⁴ He called and welcomed "William Alanson Borden, a leading American librarian, who had been a pupil-assistant of Charles Ammi Cutter at the Boston Athenaeum and a lecturer-associate of Melvil Dewey at Columbia University's School of Library Economy."⁵ It was realm of Borden to organize a system of public library that would be free of all charges in Baroda state. He visualized that the scenario requires a professional librarian. He instructed the people of first class present in the Baroda Central Library.

The "Report on Public Instruction" for the year 1910-1911 claimed about the first class that "nowhere in India has there been up to now a single library class attached to any of the libraries where young men and women could be trained in the most up-to-date requirements of Library Economy."⁶ In 1912, another effort, made towards introduction of a two-year graduate library program at Baroda College but this program could not materialized.

Asa Don Dickinson was another American academic library pioneer in British India invited by the University of the Punjab in Lahore for a year during 1915-16 "to organize its library on modern American lines." Dr. Khurshid wrote "Some of the developments emanating from British rule significantly differed from the practice then existing in Great Britain itself. For example, the Commission of Asa Don Dickinson in 1915 specifically required him to organize the library-training class of Punjab University at Lahore. Such attaining did not exist at all in any British universities at that time. The Calcutta University Commission Report (1917-19) on the other hand, stressed the need for appointing a trained librarian with the status

⁴ Nagar, MurariLal (1983). *Foundation of Library Movement in India*. Ludhiana: Indian Library Institute and Bibliographical Center, 1983,p15

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Report on Public Instruction, quoted in Nagar, *Foundation of Library Movement in India*. p. 69

and rank of a professor at Calcutta University. Even this practice was uncommon in British universities where preference for such an appointment was given to those with academic qualifications.”⁷

The significant change of American influence at the Punjab University during 1913 occurred due to the appointment of Professor James C.R. Ewing as the vice chancellor of the University of the Punjab (1910-17). He was an American citizen and had been educated in the United States. As the vice chancellor, he submitted some proposals to the syndicate of the university to allocate “a sum of Rs. 65000 provided by the Government of India for the improvement of the functioning of the University.”⁸

Recruitment of a professional librarian to completely organize the library and to teach young class for library procedures was suggested by Ewing. His suggestion was implemented in selecting Dickinson for the position of a temporary university librarian. Dickinson had “received a year’s training under Melvil Dewey in the New York State Library. Subsequently, he had 10 years varied experience in library work including 3 years in the Brooklyn Public Library and 3 years in the Washington State College Library.”⁹ At that, time training in librarianship was not available in the British universities. Describing the status of the university librarian in 1915, Anwar wrote, “Dickinson was the first highly educated and professionally trained individual to be appointed as the university librarian in any of the universities in British India. One could extend this exceptional development to most of the British Empire including Great Britain and the British colonies in Asia and Africa.”¹⁰

The curriculum introduced by Dickinson covered basic subjects including decimal classification, cataloguing rules, list of subject headings, dictionary catalogue, and open shelves. The syllabus was enlarged in 1921 by Labhu Ram, a student of Dickinson and the assistant librarian of the University of the Punjab, to include seventy-two lectures instead of the original twenty-five. In 1921, the subjects taught included, 1) foreign languages 2) linguistic survey of India 3) basic selection 4) law of copyright in England and India 5) a survey from Tennyson to Bernard Shaw 6) sources of provincial histories of India 7) oriental bibliography 8) milestones of English literatures 9) library buildings, their designs and equipment 10) Anglo-Indian literatures, and 11) open access and technical libraries.¹¹ Dickinson also wrote a book on library science “The Punjab Library Primer” in 1916 in which he

⁷ Khurshid, Anis. Library education in South Asia. *Libri*, vol. 20, no. 1-2, 1970. pp. 59-60

⁸ Anwar, Mumtaz Ali. Asa Don Dickinson: The founding father of modern librarianship in British India. *Pakistan library bulletin*, vol. 21, no. 2. 1990. P.13

⁹ Ibid.,

¹⁰ Ibid.,

¹¹ Ibid, p 62.

described the expansions of Dewey numbers to meet local needs in India as follows: "The Indian librarian will feel the need for further expansions of the 'D.C.' in some fields.... The Punjab University Library has in manuscript the elaboration of 290 (Ethnic and other religions) and 495 (Eastern Asiatic languages), which will probably appear in later editions; and has worked out its own expansions of 891.2 (Sanskrit literature) and 954 (History of India)."¹²

Asa Don Dickinson, through his library school at Punjab University, produced a number of competent and bright students who worked a lot for the betterment of librarianship in the subcontinent. A well-repute journal acknowledged the contribution of Dickinson in library education in India by quoting "Although Dickinson worked in Lahore only for a year, his students and the alumni of his library school established themselves all over India and became leaders in their respective regions, some achieving all India fame. For example, Khan Bahadur K.M. Asadullah was an able student of Dickinson. He worked in Punjab for some years and then served as the Librarian of the Imperial Library in Calcutta from 1930 to 1947. He made significant contribution to the cause of the library movement in India."¹³

Bansal and Tikku¹⁴, on the beginning of library science education in Punjab wrote, "Outside the USA, Punjab University (at Lahore) was the first in the world that introduced a regular training course for librarians at the degree level from as early as 1915.", quoted in Patel and Kumar ¹⁵

The credit for being the first beginner of library education at the University of the Punjab goes to two American leaders, Dickinson and Ewing. The beginning of library science education in the University of the Punjab, which is not only attributed to be the first of India even "in the East because the other formal library school founded in the East was around 1920 at Boon University in China."¹⁶

In 1925, S. R. Ranganathan returned from London, after completing his training in librarianship, to take up the position of librarian of Madras University. He was impressed and inspired by what he observed in England of the potentialities of efficient library service for the public good. He applied the scientific method to solve

¹² Op.Cit. Anwar, Mumtaz Ali. p.16

¹³ Asa Don Dickinson, American academic library pioneer in British India. *International Leads*, vol. 5 (summer 1991). p.5

¹⁴ Bansal, G.C. and Tikku, U.K. Library science education in Punjab. *International library review*, no. 20. 1983. P.395, quoted in Patel and Kumar (Patel, Jashu and Kumar, Krishan. Libraries and librarianship in India. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004. p.209

¹⁵ Patel and Kumar (Patel, Jashu and Kumar, Krishan. Libraries and librarianship in India. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004. p.209

¹⁶ Op.Cit. Anwar, Mumtaz Ali. p. 17

library problems.¹⁷ Ranganathan explored his ideas in a series of lectures to an audience of about a thousand teachers who had assembled to attend the conference of the South Indian Teachers Union in 1929. This was followed up by the Madras Library Association starting an advance certificate course, an annual summer school of librarianship by Ranganathan. The course was of three months' duration, and subjects of the lectures included laws of library science, classification, cataloguing, issue methods, and library routine. In 1931, the University of Madras took hold of this school. In 1937, the three-month training course was upgraded to a one-year full-time postgraduate course, leading to a diploma in library science. Madras University became the first university in India to offer a postgraduate diploma in library science. In 1935, Andhra University initiated a diploma course.

At the same period i.e. in 1935, K. M. Asadullah, the student of Dickinson, started a full-time diploma course in librarianship in the Imperial Library (presently, the National Library-India), Calcutta. This course was based on the pattern of the Punjab Library School. There was cooperation between the University of the Punjab and the Imperial Library in conducting classes on alternate years (however, the course was offered every year between 1944 and 1946). The course was discontinued after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947.

The Bengal Library Association started a certificate course in librarianship in 1937. The example of the Bengal Library Association was followed by the Bombay Library Association, the Delhi Library Association, the Mysore Library Association, and other library associations in India.

The other university library schools who followed the example of the Madras Library School were the Banaras Library School, 1941; the Bombay Library School, 1944; the Calcutta Library School, 1946; and the Delhi Library School, 1947. It is evident from the foregoing that in the year of independence (1947), five university library schools were offering courses leading to the post-bachelor's degree in library science. The library school at Bombay offered an undergraduate diploma.¹⁸

In the present times, the importance of libraries and librarians has assumed high priority. In the West, the opportunity in business community, suggest a boost in professional status of Library and Information Science. Separate distinct positions of library professionals in corporate and business libraries are created under some

¹⁷ Neelameghan, A. India, Education for Librarians and Documentalists. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (Vol. 11, p. 324). New York: Marcel Dekker, 1997

¹⁸ Patel, Jashu and Kumar, Krishan. *Libraries and librarianship in India*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004,p87

attractive titles like Information Manager, Chief Information Officer or Knowledge Officer. However the success of the information is dependent upon the selection and analysis of information that satisfies the requirement of the organization. Here the effectiveness of Library and Information Science could play its important role. The skills of the librarians here can help the employees save valuable time on activities, such as Internet surfing, information access and acquisition of previous information on the subject. Realizing the value of Library & Information Science, many universities in almost every country are offering it as a part of their curricula.

The factors incorporating the advancement, organization, assembling and dissemination of information of world of informational and knowledge based institutions like book and publishing industry, media and other information sectors are quite diverse in nature. Today, positions offered by information industry are providing a supportive platform to stabilize the status of profession and encouraging social value of professionals. Now the LIS professionals have a definite part to play in preparing subject-specific, commercial and public web services.

The LIS learners should not restrict their growth of knowledge in the domain of research, public and school libraries but learn to take into account various demands and requirements of users that originate library services. It will help in finding new aspects for library education transforming from the existing physical form of information and organizational structures. It is very important for the professionals today to have faith in themselves along with professional knowledge of information processes, promotions and marketing.

Time is not very far when LIS programs would evolve from educating traditional librarians to producing specialists employable in the vast information sector comprising publishers, press agencies, multimedia market, bookstores, archives, information services. But all this would only be possible when the curricula for the subject is so designed that is comprehensive and comparable globally in all respect and understand the needs of the market and the field and that it be reviewed and updated regularly.

Present Scenario in Pakistan

The education of library and information science at postgraduate level is being offered by ten public sector and three private sector universities of Pakistan. The following Table-1 elaborates the status of public sector library schools.

Table-1: Overview of Public Sector Universities of Pakistan offering LIS

S.No	Name of University	Faculty	Department	Lib Sc./LIS Program Started in	Title of Postgraduate Degree(s)
1.	University of Karachi, Karachi (founded in 1951)	Social Science	Library and Information Science	1956	BLIS MLIS M.Phil./Ph.D.
2.	University of The Punjab, Lahore (founded in 1882)	Economics & Management Sciences	Information Management	1915* 1959	MLIS M.Phil./Ph.D.
3.	University of Peshawar, Peshawar (founded in 1950)	Management & Information Sciences	Library and Information Science	1962	MA (LIS)
4.	University of Sindh, Jamshoro (founded in 1947**)	Social Science	Lib.&Inf..Sc.&Archives Studies	1965 *** 1970	BS (LIS)
5.	University of Baluchistan, Quetta (founded in 1970)	Management Sciences, Business &IT	Library and Information Science	1981	MA (LIS)
6.	Islamia University Bahawalpur (founded in 1975)	Arts	Library and Information Science	1982-83	BS MLIS MS

7.	Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad (founded in 1974)	Social Sciences & Humanities	Library and Information Science	1985**** 2001****	MLIS
8.	University of Sargodha, Sargodha (founded in 2002)	Arts and Law	Library and Information Science	2010	BS MLIS M.Phil./Ph.D.
9.	Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak (founded in 2012)	No separate Faculty	Library and Information Science	2015	BS MLIS
10.	University of Swabi (founded in 2012)	Arts and Social Science	Library and Information Science	2017	MLIS

* Short Certificate course started in 1915; Postgraduate program started in 1959.

** At the time of establishment, the University was an examining and degree awarding body, but later on, in 1951, it got the status of an academic and research institution.

*** The Department established in 1965 with certificate course, but postgraduate program of Library Science started in 1970.

****The Library Science program was started in 1985 with an undergraduate short certificate course in Library Science but a regular on-campus Department was established in 2001.

Besides the above ten public sector universities of Pakistan, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan had also started postgraduate program in Library & Information Science in 2004, but after four years i.e. in 2008 the program was shelved due to some administrative reasons. Till now this program is suspended. This university had adopted the same scheme of studies being practiced by the University of Punjab.

Three universities in private sector; Minhaj University Lahore, Superior University Lahore and Sarhad University of Science and Technology, Peshawar have also been

offering the MLIS program for the last many years. The following Table-2 elaborates the status of private sector library schools.

Table-2 : Overview of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan offering LIS

S.No	Name of University	Faculty	Department	Lib Sc./LIS Program Started in	Title of Postgraduate Degree(s)
1.	Minhaj University, Lahore (founded in 1986)	Humanities	School of Library and Information Science	2014	BS MLIS M.Phil./Ph.D.
2.	Superior University, Lahore	Social Sciences Arts and Humanities	Library & Information Management	2016	MS/M.Phil
3.	Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology Peshawar (founded in 2001)	Social Sciences	Library and Information Science	2006	AD-LIS* MLIS

*Associate Degree in LIS

University of Karachi, Karachi

University of Karachi is the oldest university (after partition in 1947) offering programs in Library Science. At the time of establishment of Pakistan, the professional training facilities for librarians were very insufficient but immediately after Independence, with the cooperation of local library associations and organizations, a few short-term courses were initiated. All these training courses of very short duration were deficient to fulfill the information and training needs of the staff of libraries associated with the academic, research, and government organizations and institutions of an independent country. So it was badly felt that the standard of library science education in the country be improved and such programs at university level be started. (Dr.) Abdul Moid (the then librarian of the central library of University of Karachi), for the very first time, realized this need. In 1955, he presented a detailed description for the postgraduate library education in

University of Karachi in his M.A thesis which was submitted in Michigan University, USA. On return from United States, Abdul Moid continued his endeavors and ultimately, with the personal interest and cooperation of Dr. Mehmud Husain (the then Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Karachi), who also became the Vice Chancellor of the varsity later on, the very first library school of the country to impart postgraduate diploma course was founded on 10th August 1956. (Sabzwari, 1987). The one-year postgraduate diploma program continued from 1956 to 1961 and upgraded in 1962 when a Master's program in Library Science started.

University of Peshawar, Peshawar

University of Peshawar was established in the capital of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwah (former NWFP) Peshawar on 30th October 1950. After the establishment of the central library in the following year, the need for a professional librarian was felt. To meet the need, Library Science Department was founded in 1962. In the beginning, a part-time postgraduate diploma course (DLS) was started. Later on, the Master's Degree programme in Library Science started in 1983-84. The department offers two-year Masters Programme in LIS including MA (Previous) and MA (Final). The University is practicing the annual system and 12 courses in all (6 in each year) have to be qualified by the students for the fulfillment of Master's degree.

Islamia University, Bahawalpur

The former name of the varsity is Jamia Abbasia, which was founded in 1925 in Bahawalpur. In 1975, after being renamed as The Islamia University, it was given the status of a general university. To provide professional education of librarianship at postgraduate level in the southern region of Punjab, the Department of Library Science was established in 1983. The department started two-year Master's program i.e. MLS, which was later on renamed as MLIS. To facilitate the non-professional working librarians, the department has also started evening classes in 2004. Besides MLIS, the department is also offering 4-year BS and one-year post-Masters MS program.

University of the Punjab

University of the Punjab is the oldest university of Pakistan (pre-partition) which was established in 1882 in the capital of Punjab, Lahore. An American librarian, Asa Don Dickinson started a short certificate course in librarianship in 1915. The certificate course could not continue for a long and suspended till 1959 when the department was established and a postgraduate diploma in library science was started. It was elevated to Masters in 1974, and a Ph.D. program was initiated in 1999. Fulfilling the requirements of Higher Education Commission, a regular course-

based MPhil leading to Ph.D. program started in 2005. The department was renamed as Department of Information Management in 2014.

University of Sindh

The Legislative Assembly of Sindh had passed the University of Sindh Act –XVII of 1947 to establish University of Sindh in Karachi. Till 1951, the university was just an examining body but when it was shifted to Hyderabad in 1951, it started functioning as a teaching university.

For the professional training of librarians and archivists, the Department of Library Science and Archive Studies was established in 1965. In the beginning, the department offered Certificate Courses and later Diploma Courses in the discipline of Library Science at undergraduate level. The Postgraduate Diploma in Library Science (PGDLS) was started from 1970-71, and ultimately M.A. in Library & Information Science program was introduced. The department and the programs were accordingly renamed as “Department of Library & Information Science & Archive Studies” and “PGD-LIS & MLIS” respectively. The two programs continued till the end of 2013 session and thereafter, the BS (4-Year) Program in Library and Information Science was introduced from the Academic Session 2014. The department also offers M.Phil. & Ph.D. programs in Library and Information Science which is temporarily suspended.

Allama Iqbal Open University

Allama Iqbal Open University was established in 1974 under an Act of Parliament. The main campus of the university is situated in sector H-8, Islamabad. Keeping in view the demand of library professional staff and mission of AIIOU, the Department of Library and Information Science was established in 1985 within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. It contributes to meeting the professional requirements of the existing libraries and training skilled manpower scattered all over the country in accordance with the emerging need and trend. Presently the Department offers four programmes i.e. Certificate in Librarianship, BA (Library and Information Science), Master of Library and Information Sciences (MLIS), and MPhil in LIS.

University of Baluchistan, Quetta

The University of Baluchistan was established in June 1970 through an ordinance issued by the then Governor of the newly-made province of Baluchistan. In June 1996, the Baluchistan Assembly passed the University of Baluchistan Act, 1996. Thus the University of Baluchistan became the sole general University of the

province, imparting higher education to the entire population of the province in science, arts and humanities.

Department of Library Science (now Library and Information Science) was established in 1981 with the commencement of classes of Diploma in Library Science (DLS). Master of Library Science (MLS) program was started in 1984. The department started the two years program of master of library and information science (MLIS) from the academic session-2006 and adopted the new curriculum (2004) designed by Higher Education Commission. At that time the curriculum of HEC was based on annual system. In January 2017, the department has switched over to semester system and has adopted the HEC curriculum.

University of Sargodha

The University of Sargodha is a general public sector university. It started its journey in 1929 with the establishment of De Montmorency College later renamed in 1946 as Government College Sargodha, which was granted university status in 2002. The department of library & information science was established in 2008 with the aim to provide academic excellence to develop such professionals who can serve in this cutting edge competitive age. The department is presently offering 4-year BS program, 2-year MLIS program, 2-year M.Phil. Program and 3-year Ph.D. program.

Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan

Bahauddin Zakariya University located in Multan, was chartered in 1975. It is the largest university of Southern Punjab. Bahauddin Zakariya University was formerly known as Multan University. It was renamed in honour of Hazrat Baha-ud-din Zakariya (RA). The department of Library & Information Science was established in 2004 with the launching of MLIS evening programme. The scheme of study followed the same pattern as that of Punjab University. Due to some administrative and other reasons, the MLIS program had been suspended in 2008.

Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak

Khushal Khan Khattak University, a public sector university, is situated in Karak, Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. It was established by the provincial government in 2012. The university is named after the legendary Khushal Khan Khattak. The Department of Library & Information Science was established in January, 2015. It offers 4-year BS (LIS) and 2-year MLIS program. The university is practicing semester system.

University of Swabi, Swabi

University of Swabi was established in Anbar, Swabi in the province of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa in 2012. Primarily, it was a campus of Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan but in 2012, its status was upgraded and a full-fledged university under the name of University of Swabi was established. Presently, the varsity is offering graduate and postgraduate programs in 28 disciplines of Science and Social Sciences. The Department of Library and Information Science established in 2017 with a Master's program in librarianship.

Besides above public sector universities, private universities are also offering LIS education up to Masters and Ph.D. level with highly qualified faculties and facilities.

Minhaj University, Lahore

In Punjab's capital Lahore, a highest seat of learning named as Minhaj University in private sector was established in 1986. The university offers BS, MA, MSc, MPhil, and PhD programs in six faculties of Economics & Management Sciences, Basic Sciences and Mathematics, Computer Science and IT, Social Science and Humanities, Languages, and Islamic Studies & Shariah. The School of Library & Information Science was established in the faculty of Social Science & Humanities in 2014 with BS, MLIS, M.Phil & Ph.D programs in the discipline.

Superior University, Lahore

The recently-established private-sector varsity in Lahore, Superior University has been imparting education at MS and MPhil level in Library and Information Management under the faculty of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities since 2016.

Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar

In private sector, Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology was established in the capital of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwah in 2001. The university offers numerous programs in the faculties of Engineering, Science, Life Sciences, Social Sciences, and Management Sciences. The education of library and information science was started in 2006 under the faculty of Social Sciences.

Opening of LIS programs in both public and private sector universities indicate that this profession is rapidly growing in Pakistan and more and more youths are inclined towards acquiring library professional education which is a good sign for the profession.

Courses of Studies

Almost all the universities of Pakistan are offering more or less same schemes of studies at postgraduate level to professionally train the workforce for libraries. Although the local needs of a province or city may be different but the fundamental and traditional needs are same, so the common courses being offered by these universities are enumerated as follows:

Bibliography & Bibliographic Control
Cataloguing (Theory/Practical)
Classification (Theory/Practical)
Collection Development & Management
Communication Skills
Foundation of Librarianship
Information Literacy Instruction
IT: Concepts and Application
Library Automation
Information Storage and Retrieval
Management & Administration of Library & Information Centers
Marketing of Library & Information Services
Reference/Information Sources & Services
Research Methodology
Revision of Curricula

Being the professional education, the courses of LIS need to be regularly revised and updated to adopt the modern techniques and practices in the discipline. All the library schools keep on reviewing, revising, and updating their curricula from time to time. The curriculum revision committee of Higher Education Commission also helps the library schools to revise and update the curricula and make it compatible with the societal demands.

Expectations of Employers

The basic credential required for entering the field of librarianship is a Master's degree in library and information science and more or less all the countries are following this practice. But besides that qualification, most of the employers expect that the new intakes should have other competencies like to show enthusiasm and love of learning, to encourage users of the library to take full benefit of the library resources, and to provide them better services of reading in and outside of the library.

As personal interviews of the employers of library professional were conducted to find out the capabilities and proficiencies they want in their candidates of library, a number of skills and abilities were identified by the interviewees.

A member of selection board of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) observed that although the library of State Bank is a special library covering the disciplines of Economics, Commerce, Business, Trade and Finance, and related topics but for the last many years, it has been given a status of public library restricted to the scholars, teachers, students, research workers so its users have been spread over the city. For this purpose, we need librarians who have professional experience of managing academic, public or special library. Their command should not be confined to a subject only but they should deal with a variety of subjects including social sciences, banking, religion, literature, education, mass media, fiction, entertainment etc. as the library has rich collection of all these fields. The library is fully automated and much of the collection has been digitized so the library professional working here should be well versed with the modern technologies of computerization etc. The honourable interviewee further explained that ability to design library software of our own will be considered an additional proficiency for a prospective candidate. The additional capabilities other than the professional ones identified are: Management, Team Work, Interpersonal Communication, Conducting Seminars on various topics, etc.

The chief librarian of Habib University Library Karachi, about the competencies of the library professional, says that it depends on the position they have applied for, however few important competencies include: Networking (inward and outward both). In recent times, users do not come to the library; the librarian has to outreach them. Similarly, the candidates must know how to establish learning and personal learning networks by connecting with other library professionals within and outside Pakistan. Similarly librarians should not shy away from building relationships / partnerships with the faculty members. Information Literacy is an essential competency which includes thorough knowledge formulating search strategies using Google and online databases. The other competencies mentioned by the interviews are creativity, innovation, team work, and adaptation. Elaborating his point of view, he said that they should not limit themselves to one type of library operation/service only.

The Director National Library of Pakistan Islamabad is of the opinion that the basic requirement, besides professional degree, should be Computer and IT-literacy since almost all the sections and services of the National Library have been automated. National Library not only serves the Pakistani nationals but the international delegates, foreign ambassadors and staff of foreign missions also frequently visit the library so strong communication skills are the requirements for the library professionals. Official rules and procedures, and administrative qualities are also expected from the candidates to be hired. The library also offers outreach services to its remote readers so the candidates should also be aware of this service. One of the important responsibilities of national library is to compile, edit, compose and publish national bibliography hence the candidates should also have knowledge

about the same. National Library has a long list of activities and responsibilities, including allocation of ISBN and publication of ISBN directory, deposit of books and newspapers under copyright act, preservation of documents and archives, digital preservation, liaison with national and international bodies like IFLA, PLA, PLC, PLWO, PBWG, LPB etc., providing special readers services to CSS candidates, interaction with bureaucracy and diplomats etc. In the perspective of all these activities, the library professionals are expected to deal with a variety of services. So besides professionalism, the library staff must exercise proficiency in all relevant fields.

The Administrator of a private group of colleges based in Lahore says that the core knowledge of librarianship i.e. organization of information, dealing with the users and borrowers, providing reference and information services should be must. Besides this professional knowledge, the prospective incumbent should possess leadership skills and can work perfectly with the members of his team. Assigning and monitoring responsibilities of the subordinates is also another big challenge coping with which congenially and amiably will be an additional quality. The candidate should be a frequent shelf reader so that can have a good knowledge of library's collection.

The Director of Culture and Tourism Department of Sindh Government opines that the candidate must have thorough command on the foundation of librarianship including Classification, Cataloguing, Bibliography, Indexing, Abstracting, Reference and Information Services and Sources. Besides, the incumbent should have reasonable knowledge of some specialized subjects like Information Storage and Retrieval, Digital Librarianship, ICT, Library Software and Automation, Digitization etc. The professional should also be inclined towards research and demonstrates continuing education programs. He must enhance his knowledge and education and be in touch with the modern trends in his subject.

The Principal Staff Officer (PSO) at University of Baluchistan, who is responsible to conduct selection boards, opines that whatever the candidates of librarianship learn during study is not apply in the field. He says he has observed that the fresh graduates are well-versed with the concepts and core abilities of librarianship i.e. Classification, Cataloguing, Indexing, Abstracting, Bibliography, Reference Sources and Services, Collection Development etc. but they have very little or no knowledge about Knowledge Management, Library Marketing, Information Literacy, Digitization, Information Filtration, and Acquisition of Foreign Material.

Some other interviewees representing all provinces and federal capital of Pakistan identified similar competencies and qualities of professional librarians. They include:

- Working with computerization, digitization, and automation

- Designing and developing library software, IT skills
- Creativity, innovation, team work, and adaptation
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Administrative and Leadership skills
- Supervisory qualities
- Frequent shelf reading
- Knowledge management
- Library marketing
- Information filtration
- Knowledge of latest literature
- Storytelling techniques
- Maintaining liaison with all elements of book world
- Understanding psychology of the reader
- Identifying need of the reader
- Good knowledge of archiving and filing information

Discussion

Education of Library and Information Science at postgraduate level in Pakistan is imparted by 13 universities including ten in public and three in private sector, whereas one public university has suspended the program in 2008. The journey of library education which was started in Pakistan in 1956 from Karachi University with a postgraduate diploma, has now reached to masters and Ph.D. programs. After Karachi, the universities of other provincial capital cities (Lahore, Peshawar, and Quetta) also started the program. All the universities of Pakistan, having departments of library & information science, award (or awarded in past) degrees namely PGD (postgraduate diploma) in library science, BLS, BLIS, DLS, DLIS, B.A. (Hon.), BS, MLS, MLIS, and M.Phil. (Lib & Inf. Sc.), and Ph.D. (Lib & Inf. Sc.). Although the title and nomenclature of the degrees are different but the status and programs are almost same and all the universities are offering more or less same courses. The PGD, BLS, BLIS, DLS, DLIS, and B.A. (Hon.) are the postgraduate degrees comprising total 15 years of education and the passed-out students are eligible of applying for a post of BPS-16 in government cadre employment. The students having postgraduate degree or diploma may also continue their education for one more year to complete their Masters. The degrees of BS, MLS, and MLIS are awarded on the successful completion of 16 years of education. After that the students inclined towards

research, are eligible to take admission in MPhil and Ph.D. All these universities offer curricula designed by themselves or by making necessary amendments in the HEC-designed curriculum. Although the foundation, core, specialized, or elective subjects offered by the universities are more or less similar but despite that some additional courses are also included in the curricula of a university or another.

The employers and the members of selection committees and boards, who are responsible to hire the library professionals, during the course of interviews, enumerated a number of competencies and qualities which they seek in the professional to be hired. Much of these capabilities are, definitely, concerned with the library profession and qualification but some of the qualities are related to administration, management, personal behaviour, interaction and dealing with clients, information and communication technology, leadership role, etc. The authorities and management of any organization endeavour to uplift the excellence of their organizations and they do not want to compromise on standard and quality of their services and products. To meet these requirements, they would not take any risk of hiring/employing incompetent or inefficient workers. So during the course of selection, they thoroughly evaluate the competency and capability of the candidate and no doubt, it is their right to hire the most suitable candidate having all required competencies. In case of selecting a library professional, the employers expect that the prospective candidate would efficiently manage and run the routines of the library. They want that the candidate, to be selected, should have sufficient knowledge of modern information technology, have good relations with all elements of book-world like authors, publishers, booksellers, book suppliers, and other libraries and he/she should also be fond of reading books. Besides professional and semi-professional traits, they also require some other qualities like personality, attitude, responsible approach, controlling power, decision making, handling untoward and unpleasant situations, etc. The demands of the employers which were emerged as the major competencies expected from the prospective library professional, besides the core library proficiencies, are knowledge of computer and information and communication technology, and written and verbal communication skills.

Conclusion

The education of library science (now library and information science) was started in 1956 from University of Karachi. At that time it was a one-year postgraduate program and gradually it was elevated to higher level and today has reached to Ph.D. Till 1982, five universities were offering programs in library science but later on, the number started increasing. The other universities of Pakistan, following the example of Karachi University, also started the programs and now ten public sector and three private sector universities of Pakistan are offering professional degree program in library and information science. Realizing the importance of library education, the private universities have started offering the program up to Ph.D. The changes occurred in the surroundings, also affected the libraries to bring changes in their services, structures, and systems of dealing. As a result, the library schools revised their curricula and more and more modern and ICT related courses were introduced and incorporated in the syllabus. Today, the libraries are equipped with modern technology serve by the alumni of these library schools and the library professionals are comfortable and compatible with all innovations introduced in the librarianship. This is not enough but the library professionals are continuously keeping them updated by enthusiastically attending conferences, seminars, workshops etc. They present their research work in such academic and professional events and keep themselves in touch with their professional fellows. They do not miss an opportunity of learning and sharing their views. Hence it can be said that the future of young professionals is bright and prosperous.

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