

Chapter 11

Trends in LIS Education and Research in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides an overview of the development of formal Library and Information Science (LIS) education and research programs in Pakistan. It analyzes the trends in scholarly literature publishing while identifying the areas of LIS research addressed by Pakistani authors. It also discusses the challenges faced in LIS education and highlights the milestones of LIS education and research history in the country.

INTRODUCTION

Library and Information Science (LIS) education and research has experienced a visible growth since the beginning of the 21st century in Pakistan. Keeping in view the aims of the present book these developments are worth exploring. While giving an account of the historical milestones, the chapter gives an analysis of the contemporary research outputs and trends by throwing light on the literature published in national and international journals written by Pakistan authors since

2007 particularly, and before that generally. It also discusses the challenges faced to LIS education and research in the country. The first part of this chapter briefly describes the development in LIS education, the second part describes the research trends, and the third part concentrates on the challenges, issues and suggestions.

RESEARCH METHOD

It is based on a review of the published and unpublished literature produced on various LIS research and education aspects in Pakistan. It also used secondary data to explore the trends

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-5158-6.ch011

in the literature publishing pattern in local and international journals. First author's discussions with peers, insight and long experience provide an opportunity to write on the challenges of LIS education and research in Pakistan and furnish some suggestions to improve the scenario. The discussions were made with the community at various occasions such as at conferences, official meetings for various purposes, personal meetings and over a cup of tea.

LIS EDUCATION

Pre-Independence

Pakistan was created in 1947 after partition of the united India under British rule. The history of formal LIS education programs at university level dates back to 1915 in the Subcontinent. Bansal and Tikku (1988) stated that the University of the Punjab (PU), Lahore "was the first university, outside the USA, in the world to introduce regular training in librarianship" (p. 397). Asa Don Dickenson, a disciple of Melvil Dewey, was appointed to start this program to train the already working library staff and to reorganize the PU Library. An American national, Professor James C. R. Ewing, the then Vice-Chancellor of the PU (1910-1917) suggested the recruitment of a trained librarian. The suggestion was approved by the PU Syndicate (Anwar, 1992). Dickenson designed and started in the PU Library a one year certificate course on library education. This was a post-graduate (after 14 years of education) day-time course, but initially undergraduate working librarians were also admitted to it. The course remained suspended after Dickinson's departure in 1916 and was revived in 1918. It was converted into a post-graduate course in 1928. The study of German and French was made compulsory in 1936 (Khurshid, 1992, p. 14). The certificate course remained continued till 1946.

Dickinson's another contribution was writing a book. He wrote worlds' first textbook on library education entitled *Punjab Library Primer* published in 1916 by the PU. Kaser (1992) argued that:

The preparation of true textbooks in the field of librarianship was in its infancy when Dickinson wrote his Punjab Library Primer. Although books had been written about libraries for several hundred years previous to that time, those books had tended to be largely oratory and descriptive rather than prescriptive and were seldom intended to be used for purposes of instruction at all (p. 7).

Dickinson stayed only for one year, but he left behind remarkable imprints. The distinction of PU in offering the first library education program in a university outside the USA has been acknowledged internationally. Kaser (1982) wrote in *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, "Many other countries on earth where librarianship has experienced vastly greater languor would like to know the secret of Pakistan's comparative success (p. 163)" In Kaser's opinion selection of Asa Don Dickinson may be part of that secret (1992, p. 9). He trained librarians and designed a series of lectures on modern library methods. The faculty comprised of Dickinson himself and his wife (as cited by Qarshi, 1992).

Post-Independence

From 1947, the year of Pakistan's creation, to 1949 the course was not offered due to the political unrest and vast scale massacre in the city. It was revived in 1950 by Dickenson's disciples. After 1947, the growth of library education can be categorized loosely as follows: Educational Programs (Certificate, Diploma and Master), Research Program (MPhil. and PhD.). During recent years a four years BS program devised by Higher Education Commission's (HEC) has been also introduced in a few universities without meeting the prerequisites in this regard such as the desired

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