- Education Policy and Roles of Library

- Digital Learning Environment and NLIST Resources

- LibQUAL + Technique in Libraries

- Information Seeking Behaviour of Patients

- Social Networking Sites and Students

IASLIC Bulletin

A Peer-Reviewed Quarterly Journal

CONTENTS

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Libraries, Education Policy and Library and information Science (LIS) Education, the Fulcrums: A Discourse*

S B Banerjee[a]

1.   Prolegomenon

Excellence in Higher Education (HE) for integrated growth of the Economy is the talk of the day. According to Aristotle, "education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity". Kothari Commission (1964-1966) also elucidated that "it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people the most". Galore have been the moves for change in the education system of the country from time to time and several commissions and committees were formulated to guide the government for befittingly nurturing the education system for the attainment of prosperity. While various issues pertaining to societal development could occupy ardent strategic places in the Education Policies so far formulated, sadly enough, matters relating to the need for development, nourishment and nurturing the Libraries, the strategic and the most essential key instrument for attainment of prosperity did not get the rated importance in reality, although admittedly, there is an inseparable relationship between the libraries and education which are symbiotically and inexorably dependent on each other. This paper aims to embark on the indispensability of the Library for the society to march forward to take the shape of knowledge society and to achieve conjointly excellence in education as aimed at.

2.   Indispensable role of Libraries in Education

The commissions and committees on education formulated on several occasions earlier, one and all, stressed the need and role of libraries in the enhancement of education stressing emphatically that libraries and education are mutually dependent on each other and their functioning coherently is a must for any development. The education system of our country not only emphasized on social duties but also promoted social happiness for which influence of libraries on individuals is a predominating factor. Paramounting role of libraries in ensuring quality education, one of the most significant parameters for development of the economy, is a universally accepted maxim. Education and courses are imparted primarily for the purpose of development of mental and intellectual faculties in individuals and the society as a whole. In fact, if an academic institution is equated with a human body, the students constitute the body, teachers are its head and library is its brain. But despite roomful talks on the efficacy and productive role of libraries in education, a gloomy picture persists even when we talk about the knowledge society.

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3.   A Disquieting Situation Persists

3.1   Libraries in the Schools

3.1.1   Primary Schools

According to 8th AISES (All India School Education Survey) dated 30th September 2009 there are 6, 55,493 pre-primary institutions in the country out of which 6,04,395 (92.20%) are in the rural area. Seemingly there is no fruitful library facility is in existence in the primary schools.

Most of the primary schools in the country are not having libraries. In primary schools, children's mindset and intellect start growing. Libraries can play the most essential role for the purpose. Students are forced to carry heavy school bags to feel tired in learning and attaining fruitful knowledge from their studentship.

3.1.2   Libraries in Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools

As per 8th AISES, 67.71% of secondary schools and 77.97% of higher secondary schools are having library facility. But hardly there is compatible infrastructure in many schools or sincere efforts for making the school libraries to function effectively.

The present system of school education, primary, secondary and higher secondary, has brought about an education industry. A good number of coaching institutions/remedial coaching centres etc have come up in different parts of the country with sophisticated names and nomenclatures to attract the parents to get their wards enrolled in them. It has become almost a go of the day and a feeling among the parents that education in schools, colleges even in universities and technical institutions, cannot be fruitful and result oriented unless they take tuitions / coaching from the coaching centres and the likes.

This situation has come to exist because role of libraries in school education is still a low priority in the eyes of the education planners, administrators and decision makers even though the talk of achieving excellence in education is frequent.

3.2   Libraries in Colleges

It is a matter to ponder as to how many college libraries are well equipped with all resources including human resources to function to meet the call for excellence in higher education. Although at the instance of UGC and INFLIBNET libraries in colleges have taken move for development, many college libraries badly suffer for shortage of professional manpower, infrastructure and academic approaches for its development and for not having any scheduled, policy or programme for updating and up gradation of the professional knowledge of the personnel employed in the college libraries.

3.3   Libraries in the Universities

Surprisingly enough, even today when all out efforts are afoot to attain excellence in higher education, there are some universities which do not give proper attention and care its libraries to function as it should merit in complimenting the academic and research activities in the universities in many cases, the libraries in such universities are run by an Assistant/Deputy Librarian or by a nonprofessional/a teacher of the university. Collection development, policies, service patterns and total management of the libraries suffer as a result.

3.4   Libraries in the Technical Institutions

The picture of the libraries in the mushroomed growth of the Engineering and Management Institutes under the aegis of the AICTE and technological universities is horrible. These institutes have been coming to function in greater number day by day. Most of them do not give importance to libraries nor are there proper facilities for the libraries to function effectively in them. Barring the IITs NITs, IIMs, TIFR, TISR and the likes, libraries in engineering and management institutes bring a dismal picture.

4. National Knowledge Commission (NKC) on Library Development

Where do we stand?

National Knowledge Commission(NKC), the first of its kind in the world, was fortunately set up by the Government of India in 2005 to help develop knowledge society (KS) recommending several parameters for the development of libraries – the "gateways for knowledge". The NKC very aptly emphasized on a wide spectrum of areas such as knowledge concept, creation of knowledge, accessibility to knowledge, application of knowledge and delivery of knowledge. Public libraries essentially are the key and nodal centers to these regards. According to its recommendations national mission on libraries has come up but its mission and programs for the development of public libraries in the country are yet to appear in full swing. The public libraries have been constantly suffering from various traditional ills even though library laws have been enacted in many states by now. Talks and expressions of opinions with regard to the continuity of the sorrowful situation in public libraries in different states of the country are being expressed in different national and state level conferences and seminars.

5. LIS (Library and Information Science) Education

5.1 The Precursor and Prerequisites for Effective Functioning of libraries

Libraries are to function effectively under the leadership of professionally qualified librarians. The need for professional knowledge for handling and managing the libraries was felt in this country as far back as in 1911. Since then library science education has been advancing day by day. The NKC also felt the need for professional expertise for undertaking various important library activities for library development such as national census of libraries, community participation in library management etc and

recommended to revamp LIS education and research. They recommended for setting up an apex institute for the purpose as well. An accrediting body for LIS education and science had also been considered as a must.

But unfortunately neither the apex body nor the accrediting authority for LIS education has come out yet. The UGC has issued a Gazette notification dated 5th July 2014 instructing the universities of the country to comply with the guidelines, nomenclature, eligibility qualification, duration of the courses, B.Lib. I.Sc and M.Lib. I.Sc courses. But some universities are not following strictly the UGC guidelines for imparting LIS courses in letter and spirit.

Any professional course should be employment oriented. Many universities have been conducting the LIS courses without ensuring the employability of the students. Besides there are many universities where LIS departments are manned by only one full time faculty with some guest teachers and having no suitable infrastructure for running the professional course like this. The CDC (Curriculum Development Committee) has not been set up by the UGC after 2001. As a result the universities are conducting the courses on the basis of what CDC recommended in2001 or by modifying it of their own without following uniformity needed for the purpose.

The need is for apex institute, accrediting body, new curriculum for the LIS courses and a complete survey for the requirement for LIS professionals in different institutions, ministries and departments, R&D organizations, corporate houses, banking and other financial institutions etc.

These issues need be taken to consideration while formulating new education policy.

5.2 The Discourse in Brief

The components of the knowledge as

propounded by NKC need be taken into consideration while discussing about the new education policy, library development and for formulating policy for rejuvenating the LIS education in the country.

These components of the knowledge are:

a) Enhancing access to knowledge.

b). Reinvigorating institutions where knowledge and concepts are imparted.

c) Creating worked class environment for creation of knowledge.

d) Promoting application of knowledge for sustainable and inclusive growth.

e) Using knowledge application and efficient delivery of services.

Libraries in all sectors of the economy are obviously the key factors in implementing the above stated components of knowledge. Needless to say that schools are the cardinal sectors to impart basic education and knowledge to the young minds which receive any knowledge at ease. Libraries do play a best role in extending best knowledge to the younger ones especially in schools. So, enhancement and accessibility to knowledge for the school going children first, have to be keenly adhered to. We should adopt the policy to ensure that libraries are made the compulsory components and unit for any school to function, primary, secondary and higher secondary.

College education is the first step for entering into higher education, the key element for attaining prosperity in the economy. True that UGC's attention for excelling the higher education is explicit. But the rate of achievements in higher education programmes is far from satisfactory. Use of libraries in the colleges has not yet become an impelling situation for the students to prosecute their studies. As a result despite the UGC and INFLIBNET's approaches

for the improved functioning of the college libraries, ill growth of the college libraries is still in appearance. Unless the research based and project oriented academic activities are pursued, this situation is likely to continue frustrating any policy to achieve result. The dire need today is to identify what exactly are the reasons for not coming up of the college libraries, in many cases, in the manner it should.

Application of knowledge and its delivery is possible only when the economy is endowed with the facilities to create, organize and preserve the created and acquired knowledge in an organized way. Obviously the libraries are the exclusive organizations for this purpose. Overlooking or not caring for these organizations to fruitfully exist in the society, any program for going in for the knowledge society would be a fruitless task.

5.3   The need for reinvigorating and Redesigning the LIS Education

Libraries are the service units in all academic institutions and in any sector of the economy. LIS professionals are to deal in knowledge with knowledgeable people in any sphere of the economy. Knowledge is the essential product to them. In delivering knowledge to their customers, they are to have specialized training for the purpose. The existing professional course imparted in LIS schools need be reviewed immediately and redesigned to make the LIS professionals well equipped to serve their customers most. The immediate need is to adopt an appropriate policy to identify the needs for LIS services in the society in different fields, namely academic and research, administrative and decision making, business, industry and corporate sectors etc. The LIS courses should be for these specialized fields of activities. The universities should refrain from LIS

courses arbitrarily in them without caring to access the employability of the LIS manpower thus created, overlooking as well the lack of infrastructural facilities for the purpose.

These approaches for adaption of policies for the LIS education are presented to this august assemblage of LIS educators of high repute and the astute experts in the field for their reviewing the matter to help formulate appropriate resolutions in the matter.

Report of the Convention on New Education Policy

IASLIC, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centres for the Arts (IGNCA), organized a convention on 'Libraries, Education and New Education Policy' at the lecture hall of IGNCA, New Delhi, on May 9, 2016. The convention was inaugurated by Prof P B Mangla, former Professor & Head, DLIS, and Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi, who in his inaugural address, pointed out that the post of librarian was vacant in 90 per cent of the universities of the country. He lamented that library was not getting its due importance in the education policy of the government. He suggested that ILA and IASLIC should jointly move in this regard. He also suggested that a note be prepared for submission to MHRD suggesting what should be included with regard to library in the new education policy which was being formulated by the government and that the note should suggest a provision in the policy for spending 10% to 15% of education budget on libraries. Earlier, in his welcome address, Dr P R Goswami, Director of IGNCA Library, pointed out that in the earlier education policy formulated in 1986, there were only two paragraphs on libraries. He also mentioned about the problems of journal subscription, and the effect of privatization of education on libraries. Smt. Kalpana Dasgupta stressed that the proposed note should be submitted to the HRD Ministry as well as Ministry of Culture and that it should not be lengthy and should be drafted in clear and pertinent terms. Dr Barun Mukherjee, President, IASLIC, who presided over the inaugural session, opined that new education policy should also include measures to raise reading habit among the students.

Shri S B Banerjee, Vice President IASLIC, presented the approach paper of the convention, entitled 'Libraries, Education Policy and Library and Information Science (LIS) Education, the Fulcrums: A Discourse'. During the discussions, Dr R C Gaur of JNU stressed on motivating people to visit the library. He also reiterated the need for accreditation of LIS schools and courses. Dr H K Kaul of DELNET felt that many librarians were not providing efficient service to the users. He opined that LIS education in local language should not be encouraged. Dr R K Chaddha of Parliament Library suggested that the issue of incorporating library related policy in the draft new education policy should be taken up with the government diplomatically. He also said that the policy regarding library should be clearly stated and should be relevant to social need. Prof S P Singh of DLIS, Delhi University, emphasised that no school should be set up without a library and every library should have adequate budget provision. Prof Varalakshmi of DLIS, Andhra University, discussed various issues relating to development of school libraries and said that the role of the librarian in schools should be that of a teacher. Prof Pravakar Rath of DLIS, Mizoram University, said that the policy regarding library should clearly indicate the course of action to be taken in the 21st century. He also emphasised that LIS education should be able to create manpower suitable for the new century. Prof Urmila Thacker of DLIS, Sardar Patel University, suggested that the policy document should stress on the role of library in higher education. Prof Sanjay Kr Singh

of DLIS, Gauhati University, stressed on formulation of right policy in the context of changing dynamics of the subject and on common syllabi of LIS courses throughout the country. Dr R K Mahapatra of DLIS, Tripura University, stressed on training of LIS teachers on the current trends in the subject. Mrs Geeta Gadhavi of DLIS, Gujarat University, emphasised on frequent updating of LIS syllabi.

In the valedictory session, Prof N R Satyanarayana of DLIS, Baba Saheb Ambedkar University, Lucknow, highlighted the achievements of IASLIC and identified the tasks for further action. Dr Saptarshi Ghosh of North Bengal University, Rapporteur General of the convention presented his report, while Prof Amitabha Chatterjee, Editor, IASLIC Newsletter, presented the draft recommendations which were unanimously adopted. Prof P K Panigrahi, General Secretary, IASLIC, proposed a vote of thanks. He specially thanked the authorities of IGNCA for their generous financial support in organizing the convention. Around fifty LIS teachers and professional librarians attended the convention.

Background

The library plays a very vital role in education as it not only supplements classroom teaching, but also helps in continuing education and pursuing research in higher educational institutions. The importance of library in education has been repeatedly stressed. Even Radhakrishnan Commission, Kothari Commission and National Knowledge Commission have done so. Unfortunately, many educational institutions in the country do not have libraries in the true sense of the term. Even in most of the institutions which do have libraries, these libraries are not managed by professional library personnel.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the new education policy should clearly recognize the vital role of libraries in education and ensure that every educational institution – general or technical – has a well equipped library having adequate infrastructure, scientifically managed with modern gadgets (such as computers) by well-trained and professionally qualified library personnel. It should also ensure that the libraries receive adequate funding (at least 10 to 15 per cent of the budget of the institution concerned) so that these can meet the need of the users comprehensively and efficiently.

Background

Textbook centred learning is not enough for a person to face the challenges of life. Education is never complete unless a man or woman keeps in touch with the latest development in his or her own area of interest and even in related areas. He or she needs to be a lifelong learner. For this he or she must develop the habit of reading and consulting library. It is necessary that such a habit is developed in his or her childhood itself.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the new education policy should ensure designing of course programmes in a manner (such as incorporating project submission) that the pupils at every level are encouraged to consult library.

Background

Mere existence of information bearing documents in a library is of no use unless these are utilized. For this, the users of a library need to learn how to use a library and search, locate and collect information from different types of information sources, assess the utility of collected information and utilize the information profitably.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the new education policy should ensure that the libraries in the educational institutions regularly impart user education to their users and that information literacy is developed among the pupils through formal training at different levels.

Background

Presently, much confusion prevails in the sphere of LIS education in the country for lack of any well

thought out policy regarding LIS manpower development. A large variety of courses, including some courses not specified by the UGC (such as 5-year integrated master's degree course after 10+2 level), are being run by different institutions. There is also a growing tendency to equate LIS with pure academic disciplines and introduce LIS as an optional or honours subject in general stream. Besides, there is over production of LIS manpower and there are often gaps between the training provided and the market need resulting in wastage of manpower.

Recommendation
It is recommended that the new education policy should ensure:
(1) Recognition of LIS as a full-fledged professional subject;
(2) Formulation of a well-thought out LIS manpower development policy;
(3) Creation of a law backed accreditation body for LIS institutions and courses;
(4) Development of need based (both quantitative and qualitative) LIS manpower;
(5) Regular revision of LIS syllabi to meet the changing needs.

Based on the above Recommendations of the National Convention held on 9th May 2016 organised by IASLIC and IGNCA, the following note was submitted to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India

Role of Libraries in the New Education Policy

Background
Information and knowledge play a vital role in every sphere of life. These have a special role in the field of education. too The libraries are the institutions which provide these vital inputs. They not only supplement classroom teaching, but also help in continuing education and pursuing research in higher educational institutions. The importance of library in education has been emphasized in various Government appointed Committees and Commissions such as Radhakrishnan Commission, Kothari Commission and National Knowledge Commission, etc. The previous policy document i.e. National Educational Policy 1986 included 'Books and Libraries' under Part-VII of the document. It stated that "together with development of books, a nationwide movement for the improvement of libraries and establishment of new one will be taken up. Provision will be made in all educational institutions for library facilities and status of librarians improved". Unfortunately, even today many educational institutions in the country do not have libraries in the true sense of the term. Even in most of the institutions which do have libraries, these are often not managed by professional library personnel.

Recommendation
During the past thirty years major expansion has taken place in the education system of the country. New universities – both public and private – have been set up. Every educational institution – general or technical – should have a well equipped library with adequate infrastructure, scientifically managed with computer and communication facilities by well-trained and professionally qualified library personnel. It should also ensure that the libraries receive adequate funding (at least 10 to 15 per cent of the budget of the institution concerned) so that these can meet the need of the users

comprehensively and efficiently.

Textbook based learning, which is often referred to as programmed instruction, is not enough for a person to face the challenges of life in a competitive environment. Education is never complete unless a man or woman keeps in touch with the latest developments in his or her own areas of interest and even in related areas. He or she needs to be a lifelong learner. For this, he or she must develop the habit of reading and consulting library to gather information and knowledge. It is necessary that such a habit is developed in his or her childhood itself.

Libraries as a building with sprawling reading rooms bring together readers and books by providing space for reading, reflection and contemplation. New education policy should ensure designing of course programmes in such a manner (such as incorporating project submission) that the pupils at every level are encouraged to consult library.

In the present age of information and communication technology (ICT), users of a library need to learn how to use a library and search, locate and collect scholarly information from different types of information sources, assess the utility of collected information and utilize the information in best possible manner. For this, suitable user education programmes should be organized by libraries at various levels.

Public library movement should be strengthened in different parts of the country for adult education programmes. They should have relevant literature in vernacular languages for the neo-literates. An adult education centre in a village should have a learning resource centre in the form of a small library to cater to the needs of the neo-literates. Literature pertaining to various schemes of the Government should form a part of that centre.

The ICT revolution has ushered in a new era in the field of library and information services. It has not only brought in changes in the mode of production of documents but also in the methods of collection, organization and dissemination of information. Most of the libraries now work in a computer mediated environment. A major part of library collections of higher educational institutions are now in digital form. It requires different set of infrastructure, manpower and budgetary allocation to sustain the services at an optimum level. Educational administrators in universities and autonomous research institutions should be sensitive to the technological changes that are occurring in libraries and should modernize their libraries using information and communication technologies at par with the developed countries.

Presently, much confusion prevails in the sphere of Library and Information Science (LIS) education and training in the country. There is a lack of any well thought out policy regarding LIS manpower development. A large variety of courses, including some courses not specified by the UGC (such as 5-year integrated master's degree course after 10+2 level), are being run by different institutions. There are often gaps between the training provided and the market needs resulting in wastage of manpower. A suitable plan for the development of LIS manpower keeping in view the demands of the employers from the public as well as private sector should be devised in consultation with various stakeholders. A law backed accreditation body should also be created for LIS institutions and courses for maintaining quality of LIS education and training in the country.

S B Banerjee has seventeen years of industrial experience in the managerial capacity and more than fifteen years of experience in teaching as Guest faculty. He was a member of Expert Committee for Development of Information System Network for trade and Industry in West Bengal, Govt of West Bengal. He is Former Deputy Manager (Information), Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited, Kolkata; Former Director, Strategic Planning & Marketing, Sulekha Works Ltd. He has edited a number of books and published many papers.

Users in Digital Learning Environment: A Case Study on Access to N-LIST Resources

Thangjam Priyogopal Singh[a]
Ch Ibohal Singh[b]

Abstract

The learning environment has been changed in the last about two decades. Digital Learning Environment is the present environment where users are actually participating in search of needed information. The present case study has been carried out at S. Kula Women's College (SKWC), Nambol, Manipur, India, the first NAAC accredited "A" Grade College in the state affiliated to Manipur University to assess the users' attitude in Digital Learning Environment through N-LIST (National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content)programme which is a recent initiative of the INFLIBNET Centre, Gandhinagar, India that provides an ample opportunity for users to access e-resources in Digital Learning Environment. The same aims to examine the awareness of N-LIST Programme by them, their purpose of accessing e-resources, preferences of e-resources over print resources, frequently accessed resources, their satisfaction level about N-LIST services, to discuss the problems encountered and to draw suggestions on N-LIST Programme. Adopting survey method ,a semi- structurally designed questionnaire has been used to collect data. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed among selected teachers and students and out of which 246 (70.28 %) returned. The study shows many clues concerning access to resources by the users.

***Keywords :** Digital Learning Environment, N-LIST, INFLIBNET Centre, SKWC, Manipur.*

Exploring the Expectations of Burdwan University Library Users: A LibQUAL+ Study

Bairam Khan[a]
Tridib Tripathi[b]

Abstract

Purpose: This paper discusses the expectations of Burdwan University Library (BUL) users' through LibQUAL+ Technique. LibQUAL+ Technique is developed by The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) in the year 2000. It is a suite of services that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users' opinions of service quality. In this paper, an attempt is made to measure the performance of BUL through LibQUAL+ technique. Library as a Place (LP), Information Control (IC) and Affect of Service (AS), Adequacy Gap (AG), Superiority Gap (SG), Radar Chart and Zone of Tolerance are determined. These techniques have been applied to know expectations library users what they are saying about the performance of the library.

Methodology: To conduct this study a large variety of data-gathering and analysis techniques have been adopted such as surveys, interviews, observations, etc. of the users of BUL

Findings: It is found that user's perception of overall quality library services (2.54) is better than their expectations; here perceived mean score is (3.34). So, users of BUL are overall satisfied.

Originality/Value: Burdwan University Library authority should start "remote (i.e. far away from library) access to library resources" (LP 5) and "making library resources available through website" (IC 13) should be hosted more so that users can get their required resources through website.

Keywords: LibQUAL+ technique, Library as a Place, Information Control, Affect of Service, Adequacy Gap, Superiority Gap, Radar Chart, Zone of Tolerance, Burdwan University Library.

Information Seeking Behaviour of Patients at Government Hospitals in the district of Jalpaiguri, North Bengal

Suparna Naskar[a]
Krishnapada Majumder[b]

Abstract

Study of information seeking behaviour is a prerequisite for designing, developing or evaluating of any information retrieval system. The study makes an attempt to determine and identify the information behavior of patients' at government hospitals in Jalpaiguri District through a sample survey. Selection of sample for this purpose has been made covering 292 patients from some selected government hospitals of Jalpaiguri District. Findings are drawn based on analysis of gathered data using questionnaires. It is suggested that a recovery unit, should be established in every hospital where major surgery is done. It concludes with significance and possible implications of the study.

Keywords: *Information, Information need, Information Seeking, Information seeking behaviour, LIS research, Government hospitals, Health information Seeking behaviour, Medical science.*

Use of Social Networking Sites among Undergraduate Students of Arts and Commerce Colleges, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Harish Kumar Sahu[a]

Abstract

In this present era, the use of social networking sites among college students in India has significantly increased and it certainly has far reaching impacts on the academic and other activities. The purpose of the study is to investigate the use of social networking sites among the undergraduate students of nine Arts and Commerce Colleges of Raipur in CG. Structured questionnaires were used to collect the data from a representative sample of 105 students who were selected via random sampling techniques. The collected data was analyzed using different statistical methods. The result indicates that all undergraduate students are aware of social networking sites. They are using at least one form of social networking website to interact with friends and connect to their classmates for online study and also to discuss academic issues, watch movies and share multimedia contents. Facebook and Whats-app are the commonly used social networking sites among the students and they use them for friendly communication. There are benefits of using social networking sites as well as dangers associated with social networking sites which are discussed in this paper. It was recommended that college authorities should organize seminars to draw the attention of students on the good and bad aspects of social networking sites etc.

***Keywords:** Social networking sites, Social media, Social networking.*