Library and Information Science Education in East and North-East India: Retrospect and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

Due to information explosion library and information centres have important role to play in the information society. Only well-trained manpower can handle this situation efficiently and effectively. Meeting the need of development of manpower requires a systematic education for library professionals. This paper deals with the LIS Education in east and North-eastern India covering eight states of North-eastern India, Orissa, and West Bengal. Identifies that in this region LIS education was started in West Bengal and spread over other neighbouring states. This glorious history is mentioned here. The paper identifies that undergraduate courses were started in many colleges, but most of these have been stopped due to many reasons whereas a few of these still exist. At present, there are different levels of courses, viz., CLIS, BLIS, MLIS, MLIS in DL, PGDLAN, MPhil, PhD, DLit, etc. of various durations. Need of standardisation of these courses is essential. Data related to admission requirements, course content, course material delivery: teaching methods have been collected through questionnaire, interviews, and from respective websites. The data present status of today's LIS education in this region.

Keywords: Library and information science, LIS education, east and north-east India, admission requirements, course content, course material delivery, teaching methods

1. INTRODUCTION

It happened exactly 100 years ago, in 1911, when the then Maharaja of the erstwhile Baroda Sayajji Rao Gaekwad II felt the need of libraries for education of the masses to lead the all-round development of the society, and established a network of libraries in the State of Baroda with the help of William Alanson Borden. Consequently, the Maharaja realised the need of trained manpower for these libraries to achieve his goals and started a library science school for the first time at Baroda in 1911. Though it started in the western part of India, but slowly spread all over India. During the last 100 years, Indian libraries have witnessed many experiments conducted at their shelves and sections. Indian libraries had been the test-bed of Prof. S.R. Ranganathan, a great scientist. Prof. Ranganathan initiated expansion of library education in India. He advocated organising library education programme at university level[1]. LIS education has been evaluated regularly for further improvements. UGC-CDC Report by Karisiddappa Committee gave some recommendations in 2001. Now time has come to discuss and evaluate the system again to proceed for the future.

1.1 Scope

In this paper, LIS education in East and North-east (NE) India has been discussed. Eight states of NE, viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim have been included in addition to two states of East India, viz., West Bengal and Orissa. Levels of courses offered by universities and/or other organisations, admission requirements, course content, course delivery, teaching methods, availability of infrastructural facilities, employability, etc., have been discussed on the basis of data collected from respective websites, questionnaires, and personal interviews. Glorious history of LIS education in these states has been traced and recorded which presents development and trends[2, 3].

2. LIS EDUCATION IN EAST AND NORTH-EAST INDIA: A RETROSPECT

Of 10 states, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, Orissa, and West Bengal, the last one as found, has the credit of introducing LIS education for the first time for

Eastern and NE India. It was possible through establishment of Bengal Library Association (BLA). In 1924 during the Belgaon Session of the Indian National Congress, through the persistent efforts of late Sushil Kumar Ghosh, the 4th All India Public Library Conference was held under the chairmanship of the great patriot Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das where a resolution was adopted in favour of recommending the formation of Library Associations in each of the provinces. Consequently, the first All Bengal Library Conference was held in Kolkata on 20 December 1925 to form a library association for Bengal. Late JA Chapman, the then Librarian of Imperial Library, Kolkata presided over the Conference. During this Conference the All Bengal Library Association was formed under the presidentship of the renowned poet Rabindranath Tagore[4]. The Association was renamed as Bengal Library Association (BLA) in its another conference held on 14 September 1933 and the introduction of librarianship training programme was recommended for producing trained manpower towards smooth running the libraries in this part of India.

2.1 West Bengal

As a part of their movements towards saving the interests of librarians, the Bengal Library Association (BLA) pioneered major steps to introduce librarianship training programme in West Bengal. BLA in collaboration with Hooghly District Library Association started the first library science training camp for working library staff at Bansberia (near Kolkata) in June 1934. This two-week course was attended by 12 participants. In July 1935, another attempt to start a diploma course in librarianship in the Imperial Library, Kolkata, was made under the supervision of the then Librarian, Khalifa Md. Asadulla Khan[4]. This course was conducted for 20 graduates working in government libraries all over India.

Starting of a month long summer training course in librarianship was an historical event through which the Certificate Course in Librarianship was introduced on a regular basis in this part of India. It is a landmark of LIS education in Eastern and NE India of pre-independence period[5]. The then Editor of The Statesman, W.C. Wordsworth inaugurated this first Certificate Course on 30 April 1937 at the Asutosh College. Rabindranath Tagore sent his best wishes on this occasion, mentioning "I wish the efforts of the Bengal Library Association all success. The Association will meet a great demand in the country by training qualified librarians"[6]. Of 60 applicants, 20 were selected for admission in the aforesaid course and 17 of them successful completed the course. They were conferred with the Certificates on 24 July 1937 during the 4th Conference of the Association organised in the Asutosh Hall, University of Calcutta. In 1939, BLA shifted its

course from Asutosh College to the Calcutta University campus. Subsequently the duration of the course was extended to four months. This course had good impact within a short period. This course was not confined to West Bengal. Students from different parts of India, even from abroad, attended this course. To meet the demand, BLA had to open another section in 1951 to make the students' strength double. Apart from the above referred summer course, a week-end course of 7 months duration was started in 1955. At present, the Association is running these two courses with intake capacity of 65 each[7, 8].

2.1.1 University of Calcutta

The University of Calcutta is the first one to start a training programme in librarianship at university level in eastern part of our country. Students of surrounding states and the states of NE were benefited till they could introduce it in their states. On 17 August 1944, the syndicate of the university considered the resolutions of the library sub-committee to the effect that, "The University will institute a Diploma course in Librarianship every year. The course including the examination will extend over one year beginning in the month of January." Admission to the course was open to graduates and the intake was limited to 15 students only. As there was no separate department, a Librarianship Training Committee was appointed every year to run the course. The arrangement, called the Librarianship Training Department under the administrative control of Library Department (i.e., the University Librarian) was placed with the Faculty of Arts. The first Diploma Library Training Programme started in January 1945. In 1959, the Training Department was separated from the Library Department and was renamed as "Department of Library Science". A separate and independent Faculty for PG Studies in Library Science was created under which the department was placed.

From the 1969-1970 session, the Diploma was replaced by PG Degree of Bachelor of Library Science (BLibSc). In 1998 the department was renamed as the Department of Library and Information Science offering the course called Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS). From the very beginning the course was conducted in the evening and the same is being continued. The department is presently under the Faculty of PG Studies in Education, Journalism, and Library and Information Science. Total intake for the course is 110 at present.A master degree course was introduced in 1973. The classes started in 1974 and the first batch of successful students came out in 1976. The name of the course was Master of Library Science (MLiSc). It is a 2-year course at par with other master degree courses of the Calcutta University. In 1998 the

course was renamed as MLIS. Intake of students for the course was initially 10, which later was increased to 22. In 2003, the department introduced self-financing MPhil programme with classes conducted in the evening[9].

2.1.2 Jadavpur University

Jadavpur University was established in 1952. The Department of Library Science was constituted in 1964 under the PG Faculty Council of Arts to offer the BLibSc of one-year duration. The name of Department was changed to the Department of Library and Information Science in 1984. Since then, the department has introduced one-year MLIS. The nomenclature of BLibSc was also subsequently changed to Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS). In 2003, these courses were converted to the semester system comprising 2 semesters for each course. Considering the growth in digital library aspects, the department started a part-time (evening) PG Diploma in Digital Library Management in 2005 of two-year (four semesters) duration; the nomenclature has again been changed as MLIS in Digital Library since 2007, but it is kept as evening (part-time) course of the same duration. Intake for BLIS, MLIS, MLIS in DL (part-time) is 60, 16, and 15, respectively. The department has also introduced PhD programme[10].

2.1.3 Burdwan University

The University of Burdwan was established in 1960. In 1965, it started offering one year Diploma in Librarianship by establishing Institute of Library Science. In 1970, the name was changed to Department of Library Science, which started offering BLibSc. The nomenclature of the department was changed to Department of Library and Information Science in 1980. Subsequently, nomenclature of BLibSc was changed to BLIS. One-year MLIS and PhD were also introduced. The MPhil programme was introduced during 2007-08 academic session. Intake for BLIS, MLIS, and MPhil is 65, 15 and 10, respectively[11].

2.1.4 Vidyasagar University

In 1985, Vidyasagar University was opened with six PG departments including the Department of Library and Information Science, which started offering BLIS. MLIS and PhD were introduced in 1987 and 1992, respectively. At present, intake for BLIS and MLIS is 35 and 15, respectively[12].

2.1.5 Rabindra Bharati University

To cope with the professional manpower requirements for various types of libraries and information centres, Rabindra Bharati University, established the Department of Library and Information Science under PG Faculty of Arts in 1985 at Jorasanko Campus. Initially it started offering BLIS. BLIS was also started as evening course in 1986. The University has introduced MLIS since 2007. Intake for BLIS and MLIS are 40 and 10, respectively[13].

2.1.6 North Bengal University

North Bengal University took initiative to establish Department of Library and Information Science and started offering BLIS since 1990-91 with intake of 56 students. The department has introduced one-year MLIS degree since 2005-06 with 40 seats. From 2009, the department adopted semester system for one-year BLIS course[14].

2.1.7 Kalyani University

The Department of Library and Information Science of Kalyani University was established in 1991. A one-year PG Course leading to the BLIS was formally inaugurated on 29 April 1992. Subsequently, a MLIS course was introduced during 1999-2000. The department has introduced the semester system for BLIS and MLIS courses from the academic session 2008-2009. At present, intake for BLIS and MLIS is 30 and 15, respectively. A PhD programme forms an integral part of departmental research activities[15]. The Directorate of Distance Education (DDE), Kalyani University introduced MPhil in distance mode in 2008.

2.1.8 Netaji Subhash Open University

This university is offering BLIS and MLIS in distance mode[16]. It does not have a fixed intake, therefore scope of producing a large number of LIS degree holders. For example, in 2007 a total of 1061 students were admitted in BLIS and 180 students in MLIS; in 2008 intake was 5160 in BLIS and 225 in MLIS; in 2009 intake was 2750 for BLIS and 278 for MLIS.

2.2 Orissa

LIS education in Orissa came into existence during 1967-1968, when SKDAV Polytechnic for Women, Rourkela, introduced a two-year post-matric diploma course. The course was conducted by the State Council of Technical Education and Training under the administrative control of the Department of Industries, Government of Orissa. The Board of Secondary Education of Orissa, Cuttack, started a one-year post-matric certificate course in library science in 1974, but it could not be continued for more than a year. This paved the way for starting another post-matric certificate course by the Utkal Library Association during 1978-1979, but in 1987 it was also discontinued[17]. Thus Orissa is the first state in India to include library science curricula in graduation level in colleges.

S B Womens' College, Cuttack, introduced Honours in Library Science in 1988. Following this, many colleges in Orissa introduced library science course at graduation level. Kendrapada College, Cuttack; Carilapatna College, Cuttack, Chandbali College, Balasore; and Vedavyas College, Rourkela; are to name a few of this kind. Even Government of Orissa also showed interest to open library science courses in 30 colleges. But this initiative did not succeed due to many reasons. As reported, those who started library science course had to stop these, except only two colleges (i.e. SB Womens' College, Cuttack, and Vedvyas College, Rourkela). They are still running undergraduate library science courses, both pass and honours. However, Pandit Nilakantha College of Library and Information Science, Bhubaneswar, affiliated to Utkal University is offering BLIS course.

2.2.1 Sambalpur University

The PG Department of Library Science of the Sambalpur University has been the first of its kind in Orissa. It introduced one-year BLibSc from the academic session 1976-77 having total intake limited to 16 students including 8 seats for deputed candidates. Three years after its inception, the nomenclature of this department was changed to Department of Library and Information Science in 1979, changing the course name from BLibSc to BLIS. Since 1985, the department is offering MLIS, with the sanctioned intake of 8 students. The department introduced MPhil course in 1994 which is the first of its kind in eastern India. In 1995, the department shifted to its own new building. This is the only department to have a separate building of its own in the eastern India[18]. The department introduced two-year integrated course in 2000. At present, intake for MLIS and MPhil is 20 and 5, respectively. The department has credit of getting UGC-DSR-SAP.

2.2.2 Utkal University

The Department of Library Science of Utkal University was established in 1981 and started offering one-year BLIS. Library professionals from the central library used to look after the departmental activities. In 1984 the department was regularised through the appointment of permanent faculty members. One-year MLIS was also introduced in 1984. The name of the department was changed to Department of Library and Information Science in 1991 subsequently changing the nomenclature of the courses also as BLIS and MLIS. In 1997, these were replaced by two-year integrated MLIS course[19]. Semester system was introduced in 2007.

2.2.3 SMIT College

Sanjaya Memorial Institute of Technology (SMIT), Berhampur, Orissa, was started in 1983 at Ankushpur near Berhampur City, by late Shri Brundaban Nayak, a philanthropist and former Cabinet Minister, Govt. of Orissa.

This institute also started to cater LIS education among the people of South Orissa. The college is run by a private management under a registered society SMIT. The college is recognised by Govt of Orissa and is affiliated to Berhampur University, recognised and approved by UGC u/s 2(f) & 12(B) of 1956. It is a ISO 9001:2000 certified institution, contributing knowledge, research and development in LIS education and profession in India. Number of seats in BLIS amd MLIS is 48 and 24, respectively. Duration of both the courses is one-year each[20].

2.2.4 North Orissa University

North Orissa University established its Department of LIS in 2001 and started offering one-year BLIS course. But this system continued for two years only. Since 2003, semester-based two-year integrated MLIS programme was introduced on self-financing basis with an intake of 20 students. BLIS course is being offered through distance mode since 2008. Students receive regular counselling from the faculty regarding their academic advancement and placement in various institutions and organizations[21].

2.3 Assam

2.3.1 Gauhati University

One-year BLIS was introduced by the University Library in 1966. Initially it was started as an evening course, headed by the then University Librarian Jogeswar Sarama. . The University introduced MLIS since 1979. University's Department of LIS started independent functioning since 1 August 1983. The name of the department was changed as the Department of Library and Information Science on 1 January 1985 and it started functioning as a full-time day department. Both BLIS and MLIS became full-time day courses changing their nomenclature to BLIS and MLIS. In 1987, PhD programme was also introduced. From 2001-02, two-year (four semester) integrated MLIS, programme has also been introduced[22].

2.3.2 Dibrugarh University

The Centre for Library and Information Science Studies (CLISS), Dibrugarh University was established in January 2005 with a view to impart education and practical training in library and information services. A one-year BLIS programme also introduced with intake of 24 (20+4 endowment) students. In 2007, one-year (two semester) MLIS programme was introduced with intake of 20 (15+2 endowment+3 deputation) students[23].

2.3.3 Assam University

Assam University established Department of Library Science' in 2009. But recently it has been renamed as the Department of Library and Information Science. The department has introduced MLIS course. This is a PG full-time day course of two-year consisting of four semesters with intake of 25 students[24].

2.4 Manipur

Manipur University was established on 5 June 1980 at the old historic Langthabal Palace of Canchipur, Imphal, the capital city of Manipur. It was converted into a Central University on 13 October 2005. It is the only University in the state which has library science training programme. The Department of Library and Information Science was established on 2 April 1986 and started offering one-year PG programme in BLIS in response to the demand for training human resources in the field particularly for the state of Manipur. Intake was limited to 40. Subsequently, MLIS was introduced in 2004 with an intake of 6. Since academic session 2006-07, these two have been replaced by a two-year integrated MLIS programme with 20 seats with the provision for 5 seats against lateral entry at the 3rd Semester[25]. In addition, it has introduced PhD programme since 1987.

2.5 Meghalaya

Meghalaya was created as an autonomous state within the state of Assam on 2nd April 1970 and got full-fledged statehood on 21 January 1972. The North-eastern Hill University is the only University of the state to promote higher education in this hill region. The Department of LIS was established in 1985 with a new approach to Library and Information Science education in the country. The Department introduced for the first time in the country a two-year integrated programme leading to MLIS. There are 25 seats of which 20 seats are reserved for the students from Meghalaya. In addition, Department also has PhD programme[26, 27].

2.6 Mizoram

Mizoram is a new name given to the mountainous region earlier known as the Lushai hills, a district of Assam. In 1972 it became a Union Territory. In 1987, it got full-fledged statehood. Soon after this, Mizoram witnessed revolution in library activities. These include establishment and development of number of libraries[28]. Due to high literacy rate and reading habits of the masses, the libraries are constantly getting recognition from all walks of life. Since its inception, Mizoram University introduced BLISc in 2002. In 2003, MLIS of one-year duration was introduced[29]. However, these two courses have been replaced by two-year integrated MLISc since July 2005. The Department has also introduced PhD since 2005. In 2007, MPhil was introduced which is the first of its kind in NE states[30].

2.7 Sikkim

DS College, Gangtok, started BLIS in 2004. Earlier this college was affiliated the North Bengal University, West Bengal. But with the establishment of the Sikkim University, the College was automatically affiliated to Sikkim University, which is a Central University[31].

2.8 Tripura

Tripura was integrated with Indian Union in October 1949 and became a Union Territory in November 1956. In 1972 it was elevated to the status of a full-fledged state. A full-fledged University namely Tripura University started functioning in 1987. The University has recently started (2010-11 session) a BLIS course in Ramthakur College, one of its affiliate. Total intake is limited to 30. Minimum qualification is graduation with honours in any discipline[32]. LIS Education has not started yet in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland.

3. LIS DEPARTMENTS IN EAST AND NORTH-EAST INDIA: PRESENT SCENARIO

Two states of the eastern part of India (West Bengal and Orissa) and eight states of North-eastern part of India (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim) have been covered in this discussion. As it is found, there does not exist any training programme imparting LIS education in the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Library professionals of these states are trained generally in neighbouring states. Tripura is planning to start one-year BLIS (Semester) programme in Ramthakur Govt College affiliated to Tripura University in 2010 whereas Sikkim has already started one-year BLIS (semester) programme in DS College, Gangtok, affiliated to Sikkim University since 2008.

Prior to that this college was offering the same course since 2004 with the approval of North Bengal University, West Bengal. These two states do not have any MLIS programme or any of its equivalents. Three states (Manipur, Meghalaya, and Mizoram) of this region have one central university in each; Manipur University (MU), North-eastern Hill University (NEHU), and Mizoram University (MZU). At this moment all of them are offering 2-year (4 semester) integrated MLIS and PhD programmes. In addition, Mizoram University has MPhil programme. However, they do not have any BLIS programme; neither have they any kind of diploma/certificate courses.

Being bigger in area in this region, Assam has extended scope of LIS education to provide opportunities

training for more students in comparison to other states of the N-E India. Two state universities (Gauhati and Dibrugarh) and one central university (Assam University) are offering LIS Education. Assam University is the new entrants in this list, which is going to offer 2-year (4 semesters) integrated MLIS course from 2010. Gauhati University is the oldest one to impart LIS education for entire N-E region. It is offering 2-year (4 semesters) integrated MLIS and PhD programme. But Dibrugarh University is offering truncated one-year BLIS and one year MLIS programmes. None of these 3 universities are having MPhil course in LIS.

In Orissa, varieties of courses are being offered. There is (university level) a one-year BLIS, both in regular and distance mode, 1-year MLIS, 2-year integarated MLIS course and (undergraduate level) Pass and Hons courses. Three state universities (Sambalpur, Utkal and North Orissa universities) are offering semester-based 2-year integrated MLIS course.

SMIT affiliated to Berhampur University has truncated BLIS and MLIS course of 1-year duration each. Sambalpur University is offering MPhil Course. North Orissa University and Sambalpur University are offering BLIS and PGDLAN in distance mode. Except North Orissa University, other three are having PhD programme. As reported, this is the only state in Eastern and NE India having undergraduate library science course.

Scope of LIS education in West Bengal is comparatively larger than others. Seven state universities are imparting LIS education here on a regular basis. All of these are offering truncated BLIS and MLIS courses. Universities mostly have adopted semester system while a few of them (marked 'X' under the respective column in the Table 1) are yet to accept it. Netaji Subhas Open University is offering BLIS and MLIS in distance mode.

3.1 Level of Courses Offered by Different Universities/Institutions

Table 2 shows the level of courses of LIS offered by different universities/institutions. These are: Certificate in LIS (CLIS), Diploma Course, BLIS, MLIS, MLIS (DL), MPhil, PhD. As far as employability is concerned, these degrees are considered as required qualifications for different level of library workers. DLit program has not been yet started by any of these universities [33, 34].

3.2 Admission Requirements

Table 3 gives details about the minimum qualifications required for different levels of LIS education offered by the universities of east and north-east India.

Some universities are conducting admission test, some are depending purely on merit, and a few of these are adopting both for selecting students for BLIS course. Admission to MLIS course, depends mostly on the basis of the marks obtained in BLIS. However, a few of these are adopting admission test for selecting candidates. Universities are also adopting new regulations of UGC for admission to MPhil course.

3.3 Course Contents and Curricular Structure

LIS departments have adopted a regular syllabus revision policy. Most of the departments revise their syllabi within a period of five years. They try to adopt the course contents from the CDC-UGC module to fit suitably with their curricular structure. Except NEHU and Utkal University, none of the Universities had 2-year Integrated MLIS course structure, but after the recommendations of the CDC, Sambalpur University, North Orissa University, Manipur University, Mizoram University, Gauhati University and Assam University have also adopted this structure along with proposed modules.

Universities of West Bengal, Sikkim, and Tripura have decided to continue with the truncated 1-year BLIS and 1-year MLIS course structure but have adopted course contents from CDC module. Though 80-90 per cent course contents have been adopted from CDC curriculum module, most of the universities follow course contents depending on local variations. However, there are variations in distribution of marks in theory and practice among universities. Weightage to practicals varies from 25 per cent to 40 per cent, which has gone up to 50 per cent. While CDC suggested making the LIS curriculum more practical oriented, much variation is undesirable.

3.4 Human Resources and Manpower Development

There is a direct relationship between manpower development and human resources (faculty members) of the department. Table 4 shows the distribution of faculty positions including vacant post at present. Table shows permanent positions only and Guest teachers/Part-time teachers have not been included here. Figures in the table do not represent the sanctioned positions against the particular category because many faculty members have been promoted to his/her present positions under the career advancement scheme. For example, CU does not have any Professor post but three Readers have been promoted to Professor. However, the table reveals that CU is having highest number of faculty positions whereas DU is having the lowest. When critically analysed, it is found that many universities are yet to follow the CDC recommendations in this respect.

Table 1. State-wise university profile offering LIS education

State	Name of the university	Year of est.	Courses offered with duration at present	Present Intake	Semester (Yr of starting)	Faculty positions
West Bengal	Calcutta University (CU)	1945	1-yr BLIS 2-yr MLIS 2-yr MPhil	110 22 15	X (1998) 04 (2009) 04 (2010)	3 Professors 2 Readers 3 Lecturers 3 Lecturers vacant
	Jadavpur University (JU)	1964	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS 2-yr Part-time MLIS(DL) 2-yr MPhil	60 16 15 10	02 (2003) 02 (2003) 04 (2007) X	1 Professor 4 Assoc Prof 1 Reader 1 Asst. Prof.
	University of Burdwan (BU)	1965	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS 2-yr MPhil	65 15 10	02 (2008) 02 (2008) X (2009)	2 Professors 2 Readers 1 Sr Lecturer
	Vidyasagar University (VU)	1985	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	35 15	02 (2007) 02 (2007)	1 Professors vacant 3 Readers 2 Lectures 1 Lecturers vacant
	Rabindra Bharati University (RBU)	1985	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	40 10	X (1985) X (2007)	1 Professor 1 Reader 1 Lecturer
	North Bengal University (NBU)	1990	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	56 40	02 (2009) 02 (2005)	1 Asst Professor 2 Contractual
	Kalyani University (KU)	1990	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS 1 yr MPhil (D)	30 15 55	02 (2008) 02 (2008) ---	1 Professor 2 Assoc. Prof. 1 Reader vacant 1 Lecturer Vacant
	Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU)		1-yr BLIS (D) 1-yr MLIS (D)	--- ---	--- ---	1 Lecturer 1 Contractual
Orissa	Sambalpur University (SU)	1976	2-yr Int. MLIS 1-yr MPhil PGDLAN(D)	20 05	04 (2000) 02 (1994) ---	1 Professor 1 Reader vacant 1 Sr Lecturer 2 Lecturer vacant
	Utkal University (UU)	1981	2-yr Int. MLIS	24	04 (2007)	1 Professor 2 Readers 1 Lecturer
	SMIT, Berhampur University	1983	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	48 24	X (1984) X (1993)	1 Reader 1 Reader vacant 2 Lecturers
	North Orissa University	2003	2-yr Int. MLIS BLIS(D)	20	04 (2003) Distance	2 Lecturers
Assam	Guahati University (GU)	1966	2-yr Int. MLIS	25	04 (2001)	2 Professors 1 Reader 3 Lecturer vacant
	Dibrugarh University (DU)	2005	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	24 20	02 (2007) 02 (2007)	1 Lecturer
	Assam University (AU)	2009	2-yr Int. MLIS	25	04 (2010)	1 Reader 1 Lecturer 1 Lecturer vacant
Meghalaya	North Eastern Hill University (NEHU)	1985	2-yr Int. MLIS	25	04 (2003)	1 Professor 2 Readers 3 Lecturers
Manipur	Manipur University (MU)	1986	2-yr Int. MLIS	20 + 5	04 (2006)	2 Assoc. Prof. 2 Asst Prof.
Mizoram	Mizoram University (MZU)	2002	2-yr Int. MLIS M Phil	15 05	04 (2005)	1 Professor 1 Assoc. Prof. 3 Asst Prof. 3 vacant
Tripura	Ramthakur College, Agartala, Tripura (RGC)	2010	1-yr BLIS	30	02 (2008)	No permanent faculty right now
Sikkim	D S College (DSC), Gangtok	2004	1-yr BLIS		02 (2008)	N A

Note: X implied that it is not a semester-based system.

Table 2. Level of courses

Course Name	Duration	Professional level	Offered by
Certificate in LIS (CLIS)	6-8 months	Semi-Professional	BLA
BLIS	1 year	Professional	Universities
MLIS	1 year	Higher Professional	Universities
MLIS	2 years	Higher Professional	Calcutta University
Integrated MLIS	2 years	Higher Professional	Universities
MLIS in Digital Library	2 years	Specialist	Jadavpur University
PGDLAN	1 year	Specialist	Sambalpur University
MPhil	2 years	Research	Universities
PhD	2-5 years	Research	Universities
DLit	2-5 years	Research	Universities

Table 3. Minimum qualifications and admission procedure for various LIS courses

State	Name of the University	Courses offered with duration at present	Minimum qualifications and admission procedure
West Bengal	CU	1-yr BLIS 2-yr MLIS 2-yr MPhil	Hons graduation and admission test BLIS and merit MLIS, test and viva
	JU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS 2-yr Part-time MLIS (DL) 2-yr M Phil	Hons graduation and merit BLIS and admission test BLIS, admission test MLIS, test and viva
	BU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS 2-yr MPhil	Hons graduation and merit BLIS and merit MLIS, test and viva
	VU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	Hons graduation and merit BLIS and merit
	RBU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	Hons graduation, and merit BLIS and merit
	NBU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	Hons graduation, test and merit BLIS and merit
	KU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS 1 yr MPhil (D)	Hons graduation and merit BLIS and merit
	NSOU	1-yr BLIS (D) 1-yr MLIS (D)	Graduation BLIS
Orissa	SU	2-yr Int. MLIS 1-yr MPhil PGDLAN(D)	Graduation with 45 %, entrance and merit MLIS, test and viva BLIS or MLIS
	UU	2-yr Int. MLIS	Hons graduation, entrance and merit
	SMIT, Berhampur University	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	Hons graduation and merit BLIS and merit
	North Orissa University	2-yr Int. MLIS BLIS (D)	Graduation and merit Graduation
Assam	GU	2-yr Int. MLIS	Graduation with 45 %, admission test and merit
	DU	1-yr BLIS 1-yr MLIS	Graduation, merit BLIS, merit
	AU	2-yr Int. MLIS	Hons graduation , entrance test and Interview
Meghalaya	NEHU	2-yr Int. MLIS	Hons graduation, entrance test and interview
Manipur	MU	2-yr Int. MLIS	Graduation with 50 %, selection test
Mizoram	MZU	2-yr Int. MLIS 2-yr MPhil	Hons graduation, interview MLIS, written, interview
Tripura	RGC	1-yr BLIS	Hons graduation, merit
Sikkim	DSC, Gangtok	1-yr BLIS	Hons graduation, merit

Table 4. Human resources (faculty members)

State	University	Prof.	Assoc. Prof	Reader	Asst. Prof.	Lecturer/ Sr Lecturer	Posts vacant
West Bengal	CU	3		2	3		3L
	JU	1	4	1	1		
	BU	2		2	1		
	VU			3		2	1P, 1L
	RBU	1		1		1	
	NBU				1	2 Contract	
	KU	1	2				1R, 1L
	NSOU					1 +1 Contract	
Orissa	SU	1				1	1R, 2L
	UU	1		2		1	
	SMIT			1		2	1R
	NOS					2	
Assam	GU	2		1			3L
	DU					1	
	AU			1		1	1L
Meghalaya	NEHU	1		2		3	
Manipur	MU		2		2		
Mizoram	MZU	1	1		3		3L
Tripura	RGC						
Sikkim	DSC						
	Total	14	09	16	11	15+3	1P, 3R, 14L

3.5 Students' Intake

Table 5 shows the intake capacity for different level of courses or programmes offered by universities. None of these universities under study are offering CLIS. But in West Bengal, BLA is offering CLIS (one of the most reputed courses) since last 72 years. Two courses (Summer and week-end) are also offered with the total intake of 130 (65 for Summer course and 65 for week-end course). For PhD column, number of students awarded the degree during last 5 years is given. SET is conducted in West Bengal, other states under the study do not have this test. So the number of students cleared NET/SET during past 5 years is shown in the respective column. Data was not available for courses offered under distance mode except the one.

Table 5 shows that West Bengal is producing maximum number of trained library professionals through regular courses because CU has the highest intake capacity. Intake of students in LIS courses by NSOU in distance mode was 1061 in BLIS and 180 in MLIS in 2007, 5160 in BLIS and 225 in MLIS in 2008; and 2750 in BLIS and 278 in MLIS in 2009. In addition to this, IGNOU also has a good number of study centres in different states in this region.

3.6 Teaching Methods

Chalk and Talk is the main method used in teaching. Besides, OHP/LCDs are also being used as teaching tool. Theoretical discussions, practical classes and demonstrations, tutorials, are the other modes. Extension lectures, special lectures are also held by inviting professional experts.

As per the recommendations and suggestions of the UGC-CDC (2001) all the universities are taking special care to provide a considerable amount of hands-on practice on latest tools and techniques. Study tours and visits, field survey works, etc. are part of their syllabi. Project works, sessional tests, assignments, dissertations on various topics also make part of the course content. But due to lack of infrastructural facilities these are not sometimes implemented.

3.7 Infrastructural Facility

Being a professional course, LIS education is practice-oriented and based on special tools and techniques. Besides, traditional tools, ICT tools are also being used now-a-days in large scale to develop skills and competencies for best practices in libraries. Table 6 gives a list of traditional tools (Classification schemes and Cataloging codes, Subject Headings (SH) lists) and ICT tools available with the universities. Table 6 shows that many departments are still using DDC19th edition and a few are using 22nd edition of DDC. In addition, the ratio 1:2 (at least one schedule/code for two students) is not been implemented in many cases. Such variations affect the quality training. However, ICT infrastructure is bit better than the traditional one. But it can not be said that it is sufficient in terms of number and use. Infrastructure facilities in study centres of NSOU are in very bad shape.

State	University	BLISc	MLISc	Integrated MLISc	M Phil	NET/SET (last 5 yrs)	PhD (last 5 yrs)
West Bengal	CU	110	22#	NA	15	18	10
	JU	60	16+15*	NA	10	15	15
	BU	65	15	NA	10	06	16
	VU	35	15	NA	NA	10	08
	RBU	40	10	NA	NA	NA	02
	NBU	56	40	NA	NA	01	nil
	KU	30	15	NA	55 (D)	05	04
	NSOU$	D	D	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Total	**396**	**148**		**90**	**55**	**55**
Orissa	SU	NA	NA	20	05	13	20
	UU	NA	NA	24	NA	nil	05
	SMIT	48	NA	24	NA	02	06
	NOU	D	NA	20	NA	nil	nil
	Total	**48**		**88**	**05**	**15**	**31**
Assam	GU	NA	NA	25	NA	15	12
	DU	24	20	NA	NA	NA	NA
	AU	NA	NA	25	NA	New	New
	Total	**24**	**20**	**50**		**15**	**12**
Meghalaya	NEHU	NA	NA	25	NA	05	04
Manipur	MU	NA	NA	20+5	NA	02	05
Mizoram	MZU	NA	NA	15	05	10	02
Tripura	RGC	30	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sikkim	DSC	40 ?	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Grand Total		**532**	**168**	**203**	**100**	**104**	**110**

*Note: # indicates the intake for 2-year MLISc; * indicates the intake for 2-year MLISc in DL; $ indicates data is in the next table; D indicates distance mode*

3.8 Evaluation

Usual policy of attendance is being used as the first screening criteria for appearing in the final examinations. In the syllabi projects, survey reports, dissertations are added by the universities as per the recommendations of the CDC. Hence submission of assignments, survey reports, project works, dissertations, etc. and their evaluation is done separately.

There are annual evaluation systems along with sessional tests, submission of project works, assignments, dissertations, etc., during the session. Guidance to all students is given on a regular basis.

But, there is a scope for review of post publication of results as per university rules. Some universities are arranging class seminars, colloquia as a method of evaluation.

3.9 Seminars/Conferences/Workshops

Table 7 gives an overview on seminars, conferences, refreshers courses, workshops conducted during last five years by the individual departments. Most of the departments are active to some extend in this regard. but outcome of these seminars and how far these have been practicable to implement is not known. Analysis of themes/subthemes, discussions, recommendations,

Table 6. Traditional and ICT Tools

State	University	Classification tools			Cataloguing tools			ICT infrastructure		
		DDC	UDC	CC	AACR-II	CCC	SH	Comp	LCD/OHP	Internet
West Bengal	CU	22nd	MED	7th	2005	√	Sears	35	03	Yes
	JU	20th	√	7th	√	√	Sears	35+5 lap	04	Yes
	BU	19th	√	6 & 7th	√	√	Sears	20	02	yes
	VU	19th	√	7th	√	√	Sears	16	02	yes
	RBU	19th	√	6th	√	√	Sears	20	01	yes
	NBU	19th	√	6th	√	√	Sears	15+1 lap	02	yes
	KU	19th	√	6th	√	√	Sears	25	02	yes
	NSOU	Distance								
Orissa	SU	19th	√	6 &7th	√	√	Sears & LC	25	01	yes
	UU	19th	√	6th	√	√	Sears	11	02	yes
	SMIT	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Yes
	NOU	√	√	√	√	√	√	Central Com Lab √		Yes
Assam	GU	22nd	√	6th	√	√	Sears	18 +3	02	Yes
	DU	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Yes
	AU	New			New			New		
Meghalaya	NEHU	22nd	√	6 & 7th	√	√	Sears	26	02	Yes
Manipur	MU	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Yes
Mizoram	MZU	22nd	√	6th	√	√	Sears	15	02	Yes
Tripura	RGC	New			New			New		
Sikkim	DSC	N A			N A			NA		

and their implementation can be a separate study which is not within the scope of this paper. UGC Refresher Courses have been organised by the Academic Staff College of the Universities to train teachers on LIS and Librarians to keep them uptodate. But it has been realised that such Refresher Courses need to be restructured.

3.10 Role of Associations

History of LIS education in India says that Library Associations have taken important initiatives for growth and development of LIS education as well as LIS profession[16]. These associations vary in scope and coverage depending. In north-east India, some state level associations are also there in addition to two/three national level associations. In Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, there is no library association. In Assam, there are a few library associations, viz., Assam Library Association, Assam Public Library Service Association, Assam College Librarian's Association, Guwahati Library Association, Rural Library Association, and Government Library Association. Of these, Assam Library Association is at present working actively.

In Manipur, two associations, viz., All Manipur College Library Association (AMCOLA) and Manipur Library Association (MALA) are functioning. MALA is organising certificate courses. Meghalaya Library Association was formed in 1994 and is conducting certificate courses in collaboration with NEHU. In Nagaland, the Nagaland Library Association (NLA) was established in 1996. Mizoram Library Association (MILA) is the only library association in the state.

One of its objectives is to conduct training on library technologies. YMA (Young Mizo Association) is also playing a vital role for the public library service and movement in Mizoram. In Tripura, there are two Tripura Library Association (TLA) and Nikhil Tripura Granthagar

Table 7. Seminars, conferences, and workshops conducted

State	Name of the university	Seminars, conferences, workshop, refresher courses conducted
West Bengal	CU	1 National , 1 State, UGC Ref Courses,
	JU	5 State Level, UGC Ref Courses,
	BU	3 State , 1 National , 1 Workshop
	VU	5 National , UGC Refresher Course
	RBU	5 State
	NBU	2 National
	KU	4 National , 1 State, 2 Workshop
	NSOU	NA
Orissa	SU	National, Workshop, (no. not specified), UGC Refresher Course
	UU	Class Seminars
	SMIT	Class Seminars
	NOU	Class Seminars
Assam	GU	2 National , 4 Workshops, UGC Ref Courses,
	DU	Class Seminars
	AU	1 Workshop
Maghalaya	NEHU	1 International, 1 National, 1 Workshop
Manipur	MU	2 National , 3 Workshops, UGC Ref Courses,
Mizoram	MZU	2 National , 4 Workshops, UGC Ref Courses,
Tripura	RGC	New
Sikkim	DSC	Not Available

Parishad. TLA conducts certificate course[35]. In Orissa, Utkal Library Association used to offer certificate course. In West Bengal, BLA is efficiently conducting certificate courses. There are two more, West Bengal Public Library Employees' Association (WBPLEA) and West Bengal College Librarians' Association, in West Bengal who are sometimes conducting continuing education programmes.

As far as national level associations are concerned, Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres (IASLIC), Indian Association of Teachers of Library and Information Science (IATLIS), and Indian Library Association are performing well. In mid-sixties when none of the univer-sities in eastern India offered a masters level programme in LIS, IASLIC conducted a 1-year evening course in Special Librarianship and Documentation. After a couple of years when advanced courses were started at other centres, the course was ter-minated and stress was laid on other continuing education programmes[36]. IASLIC has created one Education Division to organise short-term training courses/workshops/round-table meetings on various topics to improve professional competencies. These programmes are also organised in NE region. IASLIC conducts seminar/conferences/SIG meetings on "LIS Education". Their outcomes/recommendations have been either adopted by the UGC review committee[37] or have been used as guiding factors for UGC-CDC[38].

4. MAJOR OBSERVATIONS

For the purpose of this study, the departmental teahers of these universities helped to provide information related to their respective departments. Websites of these universities were also consulted for the same. In addition to these, comments of many leading professionals and faculty members were collected through personal contact. On the basis of these the following observations have been made:

✂ Out of these 20 institutes under study, nine have adopted 2-year Integrated MLIS course merging 1-year BLIS and 1-year MLIS, and 11 have opted to continue truncated BLIS and MLIS. West Bengal,

Sikkim, and Tripura are in favour of continuing this truncated system fully as on today. According to them, they desire to produce professionals for different level of jobs in libraries. In Assam and Orissa, though majority of the Universities are running 2-year Integrated MLIS course, at least one in each of these two states are running truncated courses with the same objective. In West Bengal, duration of MLIS (in truncated system) is of two years in CU and JU. Are all of them equivalent? Other than library professionals, other may raise this question any time. This question must be addressed with justification.

✘ Orissa started offering library science in undergraduate level leading to Pass or Hons degree in Library Science for the first time in this region. Govt of Orissa decided to open such courses in 30 degree colleges. But at present only two are in existence. These perhaps could ensuring employability among students.

✘ Recently there is a move to start 5-year Integrated MLIS Course in CU for +2 pass outs. It has started a debate among library professionals in West Bengal. It is to be noted here that Guru Ghasidas University, Bilaspur have started the same course last year closing their regular BLIS and MLIS course. But they are thinking to revert it from this session. Hence, again issues of equivalence and employability are serious in this case.

✘ Analysis of course contents and syllabus gave satisfactory results. Syllabus is updated to a certain level following UGC-CDC model curriculum. Similarities in core subjects were seen up to 80-90 per cent. Rest of the 10-20 per cent variation is acceptable considering the local need. But as far as practice papers are concerned in comparison with theories, the scenario in not satisfactory. There are variations among universities. As it is a professional subject, skills and competencies development among students should be given importance. There are variations in ratio of theories and practices in syllabi. For example, in case of BLIS of RBU in practice 25 per cent and in theory 75 per cent weightage is given, and for MLIS in practice 30 per cent and in theory 70 per cent weightage is given. Whereas in case of BLIS of CU in practice 40 per cent and in theory 60 per cent weightage is given and for MLIS in practice 36 per cent and in theory 64 per cent weightage is given. Sometimes this ratio goes up to 50:50. Of these 10 universities, as shown in their syllabi, such variations were observed[30].

✘ As far as tools and equipment are concerned, there are two categories–traditional and ICT tools. It was observed that universities are using old tools. For example, for teaching mostly DDC 19th edition is being used while 22nd edition is used rarely. Again in comparison with number of students number of tools available has no parity. So is the case for other traditional tools. However, computers, though less in numbers, are available with the departments to cover ICT components.

✘ While analysing human resources (faculty members), it was found that some universities have not filled their sanctioned post. Faculty is required for quality education. When the semester system is adopted, requirement of teachers is increased. Otherwise the system will run at the cost teaching.

✘ Professional courses develop competent and skilled manpower. Balancing between manpower need and manpower production is required. A careful study and decision thereon is essential.

✘ Except one, none of these 20 universities/colleges has separate building for the department. Only Sambalpur University has its own building. Obviously others are facing space problem.

✘ While interacting with library professionals, about 78 per cent of them expressed that the new PhD rules will be useful to maintain the quality of research but at the same time they felt that a good number of potential researchers who are in job will not be able to do research on part-time basis.

5. SUGGESTIONS

LIS Education is aimed to train students with adequate knowledge and skills relating to the tools and techniques of information handling. On completion of their studies, students must acquire knowledge, understanding, and experience to apply these in libraries.

For this purpose LIS education must be well planned and should be developed with a more realistic manner. LIS education should not only meet the immediate needs but the future needs. The scope and coverage of LIS education should be at par with national and global standard. The following suggestions are made:

✘ Designing the syllabus and course structure is essential for LIS field. To meet the demand of different level cadres at different sectors, a market survey is required. This will help to know the market

demands which help in designing the need-based curriculum. A need-based curriculum should balance between traditional librarianship and scope of including modern technology like library automation, networking and Internet. Depending on the different level of courses, student should acquire knowledge. To make students capable of working in the digital environment, digital library, library website, content development, use and evaluation of web resources, knowledge management, e-publishing should be included.

✄ The departments should try to make course more practice-oriented. CDC suggested a ratio 50:50 among theory and practice components. But it has hardly been adopted. As it is a professional course, emphasis on hands-on practice is required to develop skills and competencies among students. This must be thought of seriously.

✄ The study found that there are variations in level of courses. In addition, some institutes may think to open some new courses with new nomenclature. So an accreditation council is essential like BCI (Bar Council of India), MCI (Medical council of India), NCTE (National Council of Teachers' Education), etc. This Accreditation Council has to maintain the quality and standard of the courses. The Ministry of Human Resource Development, UGC, and NAAC should come forward in establishing a national accreditation council exclusively for LIS to ensure qualitative development of LIS education.

✄ University should give special care towards developing up-to-date infrastructural facilities. Instead of having schedule of old editions they should buy latest editions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In India, LIS Education is approaching its centenary. For the purpose of revamping LIS education, it is required to reevaluate it. It is found in this study that many LIS departments have been established over the period of time but no attention has been paid towards infrastructure and manpower development. For the purpose of rendering better services, the library professionals need to acquire specialised knowledge and skills relating to its professional tools and techniques for handling information. Quality LIS education can make library professionals fully equipped with the specialised knowledge and skills. Quality LIS education can not be operative unless proper infrastructure is developed, skilled teachers are engaged and so on. However, this study reveals that there are

many constraints and problems faced by the LIS Schools to impart proper education in India.

Many LIS schools are lagging behind in terms of infrastructure, human resources, and sufficient financial support. Many schools are using 19th edition of DDC till today. Though ICT components have been included in the syllabus, proper hands on is not sufficient due to lack of infrastructure. To develop need-based curriculum, interaction with different sectors like agricultural, industrial, etc is required. It is also equally important to make the teachers of LIS up-to-date which will have an impact on teaching and learning. Though UGC has career oriented courses like Refresher Course, Orientation Programmes organised by Academic Staff Colleges, but these needs revamping. It has been experienced that much emphasis is given to develop ICT skills of teachers; it is required but not at the cost of acquiring skills related to professional tools and techniques. It is painful to remind some of our fellow professionals that ICT is merely a tool.

Researches on its application over library and information services, as is done in DRTC and some other institutes, is always welcome. But apathy in teaching traditional tools and techniques should not be encouraged. A close link and coordination is very much essential among the LIS educators, practitioners, and researchers. Departments should undertake different types of training programmes with training modules to familiarise and develop hands-on experience on the different components of ICT.

There is a serious need of having standardisation in LIS education system in India. There should be an accreditation council exclusively for LIS education. NAAC does accreditation for the institutes of higher learning as a whole[39, 40]. So in India, BCI (Bar Council of India), MCI (Medical Council of India), NCTE (National Council of Teachers' Education), etc. have been established to maintain quality and to save the interests of the respective profession/subjects. Unfortunately, LIS does no have any council of this kind; neither any library association has been given such responsibilities like abroad.

Rather in contrast universities/institutions are having their own autonomy to experiment with. So it is felt that the Ministry of Human Resource Development in close coordination with UGC and NAAC should think of establishing a National Accreditation Council exclusively in library and information science to ensure qualitative development of library and information science education. Library associations like ILA, IASLIC, IATLIS should start serious movement demanding this.

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