

Library and Information Science Education in Maharashtra: A Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Library and Information Science education in India is undergoing a fundamental change in its basic framework and is being re-oriented to meet the current needs of the information society. This paper highlights the programme of study, the current state of affairs and the different components of the LIS syllabi taught in the universities in Maharashtra. The discussion is limited to teaching, research, and course content through regular learning. Distance learning and vernacular media courses are not covered.

Keywords: Library and information science education, knowledge society, Maharashtra, curriculum development

1. INTRODUCTION

The vital role of libraries and information centres, in an upcoming knowledge society, in improving the socio-economic status is now a recognised phenomenon. The discipline of LIS is a composite one and has appropriately integrated in itself the best of principles from other disciplines like management, computer science, philosophy, statistics, and also handling of technology. India is fortunate to have visionaries like Dr S.R. Ranganathan and his distinguished scholar disciples who were instrumental in establishing formal library science schools in the country. The library science course, being a professional one, is somewhat analogous to other professions like law, medicine or engineering as far as learning or teaching is concerned because both theoretical knowledge and its applicability are synchronous in practice.

2. SOME LANDMARKS IN LIS EDUCATION IN INDIA

Formal library education in India has a history of 100 years behind it. Chronological developments as reported in the literature reveal the following as important milestones in the history of LIS education in India:

✧ John Macfarlane, the first Librarian of the Imperial Library (now the National Library) Calcutta (now

kolkata) started the first in-service training programme for the staff in 1901.

✧ W.A. Borden initiated training for librarians at the invitation of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad II of Baroda in 1911.

✧ Asa Don Dickinson started a systematic training programme at the Punjab University in Lahore in 1915. This was first university course in the undivided India. He also prepared a manual namely, "The Punjab Library Primer."

✧ Andhra Desa Library Association, founded in 1914, started conducting training classes for library personnel in 1920 at Vijaywada. This is known as the "Peoples' Movement."

✧ M. Vishveshwaraiah, the then Diwan of Mysore state in 1920, started training course for librarians at Bangalore as, "Programme of Library Development."

✧ University of Madras in collaboration with the Madras Library Association started offering a certificate course in librarianship from 1929, which was taken over by the University in 1931. In 1937, it converted the certificate course in librarianship to Postgraduate diploma course of one year duration.

- ✧ Andhra University, the Imperial Library, and the Bengal Library Association imparted training through Certificate/Diploma courses for shorter duration of varying period.
- ✧ Banaras Hindu University in 1941, University of Bombay in 1944, Calcutta University in 1946, and Delhi University in 1947 too started diploma courses.

Aligarh Muslim University is the first university to start the degree course as Bachelor of Library Science. At present, there are about 100 universities in India which are imparting different levels of courses in LIS ranging from certificate course to PhD. DRTC and INSDOC (now NISCAIR) offer two-years Associateship programme. DRTC has recently converted this programme as MS in LIS.

2.1 Research in LIS in India

Delhi University instituted the doctoral programme leading to PhD in Library Science in 1951. Dr D.B. Krishna Rao was the first recipient of PhD in Library Science in India in 1958 from University of Delhi, under the guidance of Prof. S.R. Ranganathan. His topic was "Facet Analysis and Depth Classification".

However, the second PhD degree in Library Science was awarded to Dr Pandey S.K. Sharma by Punjab University in 1977 only after 19 years. He received the degree under the guidance of Dr J.S. Sharma. His topic was, "Expansion and Modification of DDC (18) for Classifying Indological Books with Special Reference to Indian Philosophy and Indian Religion." With this modest beginning of PhD research, as of now, there are approximately 800+ PhD degree holders in LIS in India. It is an accepted fact that at any given point, the major objectives of the academic work in a university are teaching, research, and publications; research being the core function. Apart from PhD, the components of research at elementary level are also covered through the following ways:

- ✧ MPhil course.
- ✧ MLIS projects/dissertations.
- ✧ Individual or team research projects sponsored by UGC, ICSSR, DST, MHRD.
- ✧ Self-supported research.

3. EDUCATION IN MAHARASHTRA

Maharashtra is the third largest state in India known for its outstanding educational quality and facilities at all levels in almost all the major disciplines of study. There

are 35 districts in the state with best colleges and higher education institutions. As per the 2001 census, the literacy rate in the state was 77.27 per cent (male 86.27 per cent and female 67.51 per cent). There are more than 3000 colleges in the state imparting higher education (non agriculture), with a student strength of nearly 32 lakh, University of Mumbai established in 1857 is one among the oldest universities in the country.

3.1 LIS Education in Maharashtra

The subject of LIS is relatively a younger one compared to those like Chemistry, Physics, Literature, and Philosophy. In Maharashtra it is taught as short-term certificate level to postgraduate research degree level. The universities offering LIS in Maharashtra are:

- ✧ University of Mumbai.
- ✧ SNDT Women's University, Mumbai.
- ✧ Pune University, Pune.
- ✧ Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMU), Aurangabad.
- ✧ Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj Nagpur University.
- ✧ Shivaji University, Kolhapur.
- ✧ Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University.
- ✧ Swami Ram, Teerth Marathwada University (SRTMU), Nanded.
- ✧ North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon.
- ✧ Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune.
- ✧ Bharati Vidyapith Deemed University, Pune.
- ✧ Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU), Nashik.
- ✧ IGNOU Regional Centres.

IGNOU, YCMOU are distance learning open universities. Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, conducts courses in vernacular medium. Bharti Vidyapeeth is a deemed university, not covered by Maharashtra University Act. Therefore, LIS courses conducted by these institutions have not been covered in this study. Addresses of universities covered under the study are given in *Appendix 1*.

4. METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

The purpose of this paper is to examine critically the state of affairs of LIS education in Maharashtra; the

programmes, structure of the courses, teaching methods, research, admissions, and variations in imparting the education. The information for the study was collected from the respective university websites (*Appendix 1*), their syllabi, requests to teachers and librarians, telephonic conversation, and personal contacts.

The scope is limited to postgraduate level LIS courses conducted by the universities which are governed by Maharashtra Universities Act 1994. The study has not covered certificate courses, privately-run PG Diploma Courses in Library Networking, vernacular medium courses, and open university/deemed university courses. The study is a general overview of the LIS courses and not the detailed analysis of the syllabus of each university. Preliminary enquiry was made to find out:

- ✕ Year of establishment of the university.
- ✕ The year of establishment of the Department of LIS.
- ✕ Courses conducted.
- ✕ Annual/semester pattern of examination.
- ✕ Whether integrated/non-integrated.
- ✕ Intake capacity.
- ✕ Whether credit based.
- ✕ Recent revision.
- ✕ PhDs awarded.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the year of the establishment of the universities and respective department of LIS. University

of Mumbai is the oldest university and also has the oldest department of LIS. The LIS course offered earlier by the university was PG Diploma in Library Science, which was converted to a full-time degree course leading to Bachelor's degree in library science. Similarly a change from library science to library and information science came into effect in most of the universities around 1995-96.

5.1 Conduct of the Courses

Table 2 shows the types of LIS courses conducted by the universities under study. University of Mumbai, SNDT University, Shivaji University, and Amravati Universities conduct BLIS and MLIS courses separately of one year duration each. University of Pune, RTM, Nagpur and Marathwada University, Aurangabad have integrated, combined course of two years duration leading to master's degree in LIS. However, colleges, affiliated to the universities to conduct the courses are following annual pattern and granting two, BLIS and MLIS degrees SRTMU, Nanded is conducting only MLIS course. Pune and Aurangabad are running MPhil course and one year duration, respectively.

University of Mumbai and Nagpur have the approval but not yet started the course. It has been observed that students' first preference is to complete NET/SET than take up MPhil course. Except North Maharashtra University, all universities have PhD programme. Admission to these courses is strictly on merit basis depending upon the performance at the graduation level followed by personal interview. Shivaji University conducts a written test also for admission to BLIS course.

Intake capacity and the structure of the LIS courses offered by the universities are given in *Appendices 2* and *3*.

Table 1. Year of establishment of the university and department of LIS

Name of the university	Year of establishment	Year of establishment of the department of LIS
University of Mumbai	1857	1944
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai	1916	1961
University of Pune, Pune	1948	1958
BAMU, Aurangabad	1958	1968
RTM Nagpur University	1923	1956
Shivaji University, Kolhapur	1962	1965
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University	1983	1990
SRTMU, Nanded	1994	1999
North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon	1989	2000

Table 2. Types of LIS courses conducted

Name of the University	BLIS 1-year	MLIS 1-year	Integrated BLIS & MLIS	MPhil	PhD
University of Mumbai	✓	✓			✓
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai	✓	✓			✓
University of Pune, Pune			✓	✓	✓
BAMU, Aurangabad			✓	✓	✓
RTM Nagpur University			✓	✓	✓
Shivaji University, Kolhapur	✓	✓			✓
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University	✓	✓			✓
SRTMU, Nanded			✓		✓
North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon			✓		

5.2 PhD Research

Table 3 shows the numbers of PhD degrees awarded and ongoing at the various universities. University of Pune has awarded highest number of PhDs in Maharashtra, followed by Nagpur and Aurangabad. A list of completed PhD and on-going research is available on the respective websites of the universities. Although the Department of LIS, Mumbai University is one of the oldest in the country, its PhD turnout is low in number. Nagpur University has 75 candidates enrolled for PhD with as many as 11 supervisors as guides for research. Varied topics have been undertaken by the candidates for pursuing PhD including classical base such as development of public libraries, legislation, role of UGC, evaluation of library services, measuring library effectiveness, information needs and so on.

The decade of 90s was dominated by topics covering resource sharing, bibliometric studies, abstracting services, technology transfer, information retrieval, vocabulary control, whereas impact of ICT is

clearly visible in the topics undertaken by the candidates in the current decade. Emerging trends and innovative areas such as web designing, consortia, electronic resources, grey literature, web content management, and ontology are undertaken for advanced research by candidates, which is a welcome scenario.

6. COURSE CONTENTS

The basic framework of all the LIS courses conducted by universities in Maharashtra, is almost up to 95 per cent in conformity with the model curriculum suggested by the committee constituted by UGC under the chairmanship of Prof. Karisiddappa. The committee recommended modular approach to curriculum as a flexible structure to be adopted by the departments with ratio of 80:20, (80 per cent from the modules and 20 Per cent emphasising local needs). It further suggested to offer electives pertaining to different subject fields like commerce, business, industry, health science, archives management, and so on. A close study of data gathered on course components revealed that the subject and

Table 3. PhD research

Name of the University	No. of PhDs awarded	On-going
University of Mumbai	5	5
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai	9	5
University of Pune, Pune	48	No. not available
BAMU, Aurangabad	11	No. not available
RTM Nagpur University	34	75
Shivaji University, Kolhapur	6	No. not available
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University	11	11
SRTMU, Nanded	4	5
North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon	---	No. not available

topics covered during the first year of the two-years integrated MLIS course are nearly the same or equivalent to one-year BLIS course and those covered in the second year of integrated course have a near match with the one-year MLIS course. The difference is in the nomenclature of title of the papers and in offering electives. The first year covers the following (with some variation) subjects:

- (i) Foundations of Library and Information Science.
- (ii) Library Management.
- (iii) Knowledge Organisation, Information Processing and Retrieval (covers classification and cataloguing).
- (iv) Information Sources, Products, and Services.
- (v) Information Technology (basics and applications).
- (vi) Research Methods and Techniques.
- (vii) Electives or Reference Sources and Services

The one-year BLIS course of the universities has two separate papers, Library Classification and Cataloguing, with a variant title as subject access to documents and two different papers covering Reference Sources, Services and Information Services, and Systems. The core component of all other papers is nearly the same. The paper on Research Methods is covered at the MLIS course of one-year, wherein following subjects are covered (with some variation):

- (i) Information and Communication.
- (ii) Management and Libraries and Information Centres.
- (iii) Organisation of Information.
- (iv) Information and Communication Technology in Libraries.
- (v) Research Methodology.

Thus, it may be stated that whether one-year or integrated pattern, universities have uniformly maintained the core objectives and learning outcomes of the LIS curricula though the methodology differs. A balanced focus on technology-related topics like library automation, networking, communication technology, data communication systems, digital libraries is observed in syllabi of all the universities. Electives are offered by Pune, Nagpur, and Marathwada Universities as per the UGC recommendations. The practicals component covers book/documents classification, cataloguing–AACR II, reference sources, abstracting, indexing, thesaurus construction, search methods, Internet and CD Rom searches, search strategy, and

practice of one or more library software such as WINISIS or SOUL. All the universities have project or dissertation with viva-voce as mandatory exercise. An extensive syllabus revision was done by all universities during the years 2007 to 2010, incorporating the latest trends and needs of the profession.

7. MAHARASHTRA UNIVERSITIES ACT 1994

The Maharashtra Act No. XXXV of 1994 is an act to unify, consolidate and amend the law relating to the non-agricultural and non-technological universities in the state of Maharashtra. Clause No. 19 (1) (a) and (b) of Chapter IV P. 335 of the Act, read the following:

19. (1) (a) where in a University, there is a department of Library Science, the head of that department, not below the rank of a reader, shall ex-officio, function as the librarian.

(b) where in a University, there is no department of Library Science, or where the head of the department is below the rank of a reader, the Librarian shall be the principal officer of the university library. He shall be full-time salaried officer of the university. He shall work directly under the control of the Vice Chancellor.

The above clause of the Act is left to wide interpretation by the universities in Maharashtra. In Mumbai, Pune, and SNTU universities, the department and the library is headed by a single authority. He/She, since holding the dual post as Head of the Department and Librarian, is automatically designated as Professor. Whereas, RTMU, Nagpur; BAMU, Aurangabad; Shivaji University, Kolhapur; SRTMU, Nanded; and SGBU, Amravati have independent posts of Librarian and Head of the LIS department. University of Mumbai is perhaps the only university in the country having combined teaching posts as Lecturer/Assistant Librarian, Reader/Deputy Librarian, with no clear distinction or guidelines for number of teaching hours or workload, either in the department or in the library. This has affected the appointment of full-time teachers in the department. It is also the reason for low turnout of PhD researchers, compared to the fact that it is one of the oldest departments in the country.

The situation in other universities is also not much different, with number of full-time teachers (engaged only in teaching) ranging from 1 to 3. Pune University has 5 full-time teachers, in addition to a common Head of the Department who is also the Librarian. Departments are largely depending on contributory teachers. However, all the Departments are well equipped with independent computer labs, multimedia gadgets, printers, and scanners to impart training. University Libraries are well stocked with good number of latest books in LIS,

collection of reference sources, encyclopedias, e-journals (under UGC INFONET), audio-visual material, educational CDs, DVDs, etc. and so on. Students are given exposure to the use of variety of information sources, secondary periodicals, and electronic resources. Visits, study tours, tutorials, assignments, seminars by students are permanent features of all university departments. Continuing Education Programmes are regularly arranged on theme-based seminars, national level conferences, workshops, SET/NET guidance lectures, refresher courses, and additional lectures on latest developments by visiting professionals.

8. CONCLUSION

The transition of libraries from information centres to resources centres in a knowledge-based society is a noteworthy phenomenon of the 21st century. The advances in ICT has intensified the expectations from librarians. The performance of future librarians will be dictated by how efficiently the library services will be designed and disseminated. Attitude towards service, social sensitivity, time management, communication ability, curiosity and desire to perform well, will be the personal characteristics that will be detrimental in measuring effectiveness of a librarian. Library schools may also have to seriously prepare themselves for e-Learning mode and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The regular courses will have to be continuously supplemented by periodic training and acquiring new skills.

Web-based seminars (called as Webinars) may have to be thought of as regular part of the training, as they could be cost-effective too. Library Science schools have to take a cognisance of such emerging trends and needs of the knowledge-based society and prepare an action plan on collaborative basis. The present syllabi would possibly need frequent restructuring with computer-supported training, online/web-based learning to suit the environment. The LIS departments affiliated to universities in Maharashtra have taken a positive note of the changing scenario, which is an encouraging scene.

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About the Author



Dr (Smt) Pratibha Gokhale is currently a teacher in the Department of LIS in the University of Mumbai. She has more than 30 years of experience in the field of library management and teaching. Initially she worked at TIFR and then moved to a multinational chemical company where she worked as a corporate librarian for 15 years. She possesses an ideal combination of having an experience in library management and full-time teaching in library science. She is the first recipient of PhD in Library Science from University of Mumbai. Her research topic on Grey Literature was a unique area of study in the field. She has contributed several articles in professional journals, national and international conference volumes, has edited books, and presented papers at various platforms. She received the *C.D. Sharma Award* for best presented and written article at the ILA National Conference in 2003. She attended and presented a paper at the 3rd International Conference on Grey Literature at Luxembourg in 1997. Her areas of specialisation are library management, organisation of knowledge, IT applications to library work, and grey literature.

Addresses of universities in Maharashtra conducting LIS course

Name of the University	Address	Phone No.	Website
University of Mumbai	Department of LIS Jawaharlal Nehru Library, Vidyanagari, Kalina, Santacruz (E) Mumbai-400 098.	022-26528201 26543000	www.mu.ac.in
SNDT Women's University	S.H.P.T. School of LIS, 1, Nathibai Thackersey Road, Mumbai-400 020.	022-22031879 22085439	www.sndt.digital university.ac
University of Pune	Department of LIS Jaykar Library Ganeshkhind Road, Pune-411 007.	020-5696061, 5696065	www.unipune.er net.in
Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University	Department of LIS, Aurangabad-431 004.	0240-2400431, 2400437	www.bamunivers ity.ac.in; www.bamu.net
Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur Univesity	Department of LIS, Ravindranath Tagore Marg, Nagpur-440 001,	0712-2523045, 2548577	www.nagpuruniv ersity.org
Shivaji University (Kolhapur)	Department of LIS, Balasaheb Khardekar Library. Vidyanagar, Kolhapur-416 004.	0231-655571, 693140, 2690571	www.unishivaji.a c.in
Sant Gadge Baba Amravti University	Post Graduate Department of LIS, Tapovan Road, Camp Amravati-444 602.	0721-2662358 2662206, 2662208	www.amtuni.com www.sgbau.ac.in
Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University	Department of LIS, Dnyanteerth, Vishnupuri, P.B.No. 87 Nanded-431 606.	02462-229242 229560	www.srtmun.ac.in
North Maharashtra University	Umavinagar, P.Box No. 80, Jalgaon-425 002.	0257-2258428 2258438	www.nmu.ac.in
Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University	Department of LIS, Dnyangangotri, Near Gangapur Dam, Nashik-422 222	0253-2231714 2231715	www.ycmou.com
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth	Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Vidyapeeth Bhavan, Gultekdi, Pune-411 037	020-24261856 24264699	www.tmv.edu.in
Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University	Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, Lal Bahadur Shastri Marg, Pune-411 030.	020-24335701 24335709, 24335710	www.bharatividya apeeth.edu

Intake capacity

Name of the University	BLIS	MLIS	Integrated	MPhil
University of Mumbai	40	20		
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai	40	12		
University of Pune, Pune			30	10
BAMU, Aurangabad			22	15
RTM Nagpur University			40+40	10
Shivaji University, Kolhapur	40	15		
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University	30	20		
SRTMU, Nanded			20	
North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon			20	

Structure of the course

Name of the university	Annual examination	Semesterised	Semesterised and credit-based
University of Mumbai	For MLIS	For BLIS from 2010-11	
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai	✓		✓
University of Pune, Pune			✓
BAMU, Aurangabad			✓
RTM Nagpur University		✓	
Shivaji University, Kolhapur	✓		
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University	✓		
SRTMU, Nanded		✓	
North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon		✓	