

Origin and Development of LIS Education in India

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Abstract

Library and Information Science (LIS) education in India had completed 100 years in 2011. It is time for introspection and need to know the present status of LIS and areas that need improvement. This article describes the current status, the different patterns and levels of LIS education, as well as the programmes being offered by various universities and Associations. History provides a picture of the growth and development, which lends a perspective to such a study and also presents an insight of these historical developments in LIS education in India since its inception.

Keywords: Library Science, LIS education

Introduction

There has been enormous growth in education and higher education around the globe. There has been a fast growth in institution of higher education and more particularly, after India independence. India started its development program to achieve the new educational, cultural and economic objectives at the national level. Such developments at these institutions contributed to the development of more libraries, which in turn had to accept new responsibilities to meet society's changing needs and demands. Libraries are recognized as an important role in education, scientific research and social-economic development of a country. This envisages the need for professionally qualified personnel to manage and run the libraries and information centers effectively and efficiently. In order to feed the growing number of libraries, more trained library professionals were needed. For this purpose, library science departments started springing up, and library science developed into a distinct field of specialization with its own normative principles, theories, techniques, and practices that were deemed sufficient to meet the growing dimensions of library services.

Development of LIS education in India

The beginning of the 20th century marked the beginning of LIS education in India. There is a vast

literature crediting Sayyaji Rao Gaekwad, the then Maharaja of the erstwhile princely State of Baroda, for initiating the LIS education movement in the country. American librarians, William Alanson Borden and Asa Don Dickinson were the first LIS teachers in India. John MacFarlane, an Englishman, who happened to be the first librarian of the Imperial Library (now National Library, Kolkata) also shares the credit for training librarians in our country. In fact, MacFarlane's training programme is the first case of LIS education in India reported in literature. It took place between 1901 and 1906 in the Imperial Library when training programmes were organised for its staff. Later it was extended to librarians working in Calcutta as well as in other states. It is believed that there was an existence of some training in library routines for the staff of university libraries prior to that also.

The first formal training course in library routines, started anywhere in the country, began in 1911 when classes were held to impart professional training to librarians in the erstwhile Baroda. W. A. Borden was invited by the State to develop its library system. Another landmark year in the history of LIS education in India is 1915 when it was started for the first time at the university level in Punjab University, Lahore. As a Don Dickinson, the university librarian started the course. The subjects taught comprised were basic like decimal classification, cataloguing rules, list of subject