Need and Impact of Continuing Education Programmes for LIS Professionals of Universities in Hyderabad

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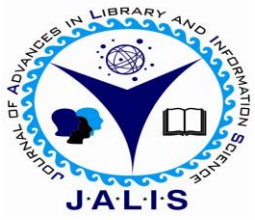
Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to trace out the Continuing Education Programmes (CEP) for Library Science Professionals of Universities in Hyderabad. Organizations / Associations / Institutions viz. NISCAIR, INFLIBNET, DESIDOC, NASSDOC, ILA, IASLIC whether they are organizing Continuing Education Programmes (CEPs) for Library and Information Science Professionals in India. The study also reports the importance of CEP, how these programmes help the LIS professionals to upgrade their knowledge, develop information skills and competencies in the changing environment. The role of university libraries in the promotion of LIS profession and satisfaction and role is highlighted..

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Keywords
Continuing Education; LIS Professionals; Universities in Hyderabad

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Introduction

Education and development is the essence of life. Today all developing countries have a chance to make tremendous breakthrough in economic development. The advent of information technology has opened up new vistas for both economic and social development of the country. But, without education all development programmes will go in vain. Continuing Education facilitates the professionals to continue their learning after completion of formal education. This type of education is supposed to fulfill the skill requirement on the job. In this type of education the practical aspects are discussed and taught. The Continuing Education tends to solve the practical problems faced by the professionals in their day-to-day life. There are various types of continuing education programmes i.e. conferences, seminars, symposia, workshops, refresher courses, special lectures, orientation programmes, on - the - job training, industrial training, etc. According to Ramaiah and Moorthy (2002) the different terms are being used for Continuing Education by various experts such as adult education, continuing professional development, continuing professional education, professional development, further education, lifelong learning, vocational training, industrial training or labor training. In the changing face of the profession, the role of the LIS professionals is also changing. Hence, the continuing education is necessary to develop the skills and knowledge of the professional. Continuing Education programmes help to maintain the status of the profession. The drastic change in environment and advancement in technology are the main reasons to conduct the Continuing Education Programmes.

Continuing Education Programmes

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1995) defines training as the act or process of teaching or learning a skill or discipline. It is also noticed that the Human Resources Management/Development definition of training does not differ significantly. It is defined as "a planned and systematic effort to modify or develop knowledge, skills and attitudes through learning experiences to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities" (Garavan, 1997). Training in this context will be understood to be the process through which library staff learn new skills or techniques, and which then causes them to change from a state of not being able to do their jobs or being efficient to being

able to do the job competently and efficiently and achieving a change in behaviour and attitude. Continuing education can be referred to as a career-long process of improving and updating skills, abilities and competencies of staff by regular in-service training and education, supported by external courses (Prytherch, 2005). Continuing professional education refers to education that takes place once professional qualification is achieved, with the intent of maintaining competence and/or learning new skills (Balakrishnam & Paliwal, 2000). Non-professionals staff refers to the supporting staff but don't have any knowledge about the Library and his duty is only to assist the activities of a professional staff and Semi-professional staff in LIS sectors are the staff who has the diploma or certificate in LIS and doing the lower level technical work in the library.

According to Online Dictionary of library and Information Science defines continuing education is the "Formal instruction for persons who have completed an academic degree, moved into the workplace, and wish to keep up with changes and innovations in their field. For librarians, continuing education opportunities include courses offered online or traditionally through a library school, training provided by commercial vendors, and workshops sponsored by bibliographic service centers and library associations, as well as independent study."

According to businessdictionary.com Continuing education programme (CEP) is formal lectures, courses, seminars, webinars, or any other similar type of educational program designed to educate an individual and give him or her further skills or knowledge to be applied in his or her line of work. These programs are intended to educate persons on new
advancements, or to build upon a person's expertise in a given field. These may be optional for some trades, but in other circumstances can be required to maintain status, certification, or licensure.

Meaning of Continuing Education Programmes

All types of learning processes after the completion of formal education is called Continuing Education Programmes. These processes may include formal speeches, courses, seminars, webinars, workshops, symposia, short term training programmes or any other similar types of educational programmes (Qutab et al, 016). The motive of conducting Continuing Education Programmes is to help the professionals to learn the latest technologies and furnish and improve their existing skills.

Continuing Education Programmes conducted by different institutions, professional associations, libraries, Library school and training centers, UGC and library networks.

International Associations:

- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)
- American Library Association (ALA)
- Library Association (LA), London

National Institutions

- Defense Scientific Information and Documentation Centre (DESIDOC)
- National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC)
- National Medical Library(NML)
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)
- National Information System for Science and Technology(NISSAT)

Libraries

- Indian Institution of Sciences (ISSc)
- Indian Institute of Technology (IITs)
- Central Universities.

Professional Associations

- Indian Library Association (ILA)
- Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centers(IASLIC)
- Society for Information Systems (SIS)

Library school and training centers

- All LIS Schools
- Indian National Scientific and Documentation Centre (INSDOC)
- Document Research and Training Centers (DRTC)

UGC

- Human Resource Centre of different universities
- INFLIBNET

Library Networks

- Delhi Library Network (DELNET)

- Ahmadabad Information Network (ADINET)
- Mysore Library Network (MYLIBNET)
- Pune Library Network (PUNENET)
- Bombay Library Network(BONET),
- Madras Library Network (MALIBNET), etc.

Review of Literature

Ramaiah & Moorthy (2002) in "The impact of continuing education programmes on library and information science professionals" article describes the need and impact of continuing education programmes (CEP) for library and information science (LIS) professionals in India, particularly for college librarians. For this, a survey was conducted to assess the impact of CEP courses organised by different agencies in the field of LIS. The results of the survey are presented in this paper. Dasgupta & Satapathi (2006) in "Continuing education programmes of library & information science (LIS) professionals in the universities of west Bengal (India) with special reference to the University of Calcutta" has describes the need of Continuing Education for the LIS professionals in this modern era of information and technology. It narrates the activities of Continuing Education and Professional Development (CEPD) in different developed and developing countries of the world. It enumerates the role of various associations and institutions of India such as ILA, IASLIC, BLA IIMs, ICSSR, AIIMS, which are actively connected with programmes of continuing education. Natarajan (2008) in "Training needs for LIS professionals: current & future patterns" has discussed the demand for training the LIS professionals are increasing as the information, communication and technology (ICT) applications to LIS services and users" needs are changing day by day. The Librarians" at various levels from school, college, universities, R&D organizations and Government of India Undertakings have to serve their different types of users with various kinds of services. Satpathi, Satpathi, & Ghosh (2012) in "Role of IASLIC in developing computer skills among LIS professionals in India" gives a brief overview of IASLIC activities like Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, Study Circles, Special Interest Groups, publications, lectures by experts, etc. related to computer training organized by IASLIC and its role as advisory organization to Government for making policies related to LIS. Harake, Suresh & Hadagali, Gururaj Shivanand (2015) in their article "Continuing education programmes for library and information science professionals: An Indian scenario" discussed about changes in libraries and the expectations of their clientele are related aspects of LIS training. Those changes, like the use of IT, computers, communications, Internet and multimedia, increase expectations of users about the quality of the library services. And also describes the need and impact of continuing education programmes (CEP) for library and information science (LIS) professionals in India, particularly for college librarians. Jayasree & Siba Prasad (2019) in "Role of LIS Education and Competency Building for LIS Profession." discusses the concept of competency as well as the need of training and developing of different skills for library professionals and give some suggestions for the developing of LIS education system to create the library environment in the 21st century up to the level.

Need for Continuing Education

Maesaroh and Genoni (2010) opine that continuing education is the process of transformation which is accompanied by a general and rapid rise in the need for highly qualified manpower. In the preparation of education and continuing education policies, questions of training related to future employment and employability are gaining more importance. The continuing education provides tools and techniques to the Library and Information Science professionals for successful professional development. This can attract the users to library and satisfy their information needs. The skilled and knowledgeable professional can handle library and information centre effectively. Weber and Wittpoth (1999) point out that continuing education is to be viewed as an integral component of a typical educational system which was the responsibility of the state.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the present study is limited to the Library and Information Science professionals working in the Universities in Hyderabad. There are 12 Universities in Hyderabad i.e. Three central universities and nine state universities taken for survey.

Objectives of the study

- To identify the different Continuing Education Programmes provided by the

Continuing Education Programmes (CEPs), Organizations, Institutions, Associations for LIS professionals.

- To know the awareness and participation in Continuing Education Programmes by the LIS professionals working in the Universities in Hyderabad.
- To know the opinion of the LIS professionals on the advantages of Continuing Education Programmes in the Professional Development activities.
- To identify the problems faced by the LIS professionals while attending the Continuing Education Programmes.

Methodology

For the present study, the survey method was adopted in order to collect the data from the professionals who are working in the Universities in Hyderabad. The Questionnaire tool was used to collect the data from the LIS professionals. A total of 80 questionnaires were distributed to the library professionals who are working in Universities location capital city of Hyderabad of Telangana State. A total of 72 duly filled in questionnaires were received back with a response rate of 90%. The researcher visited all the Universities in Hyderabad and collected the data personally. The collected data then was fed to the MS-Excel was used for simple frequency calculation and statistical tests and presented table and graphs.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Demographics of respondents

Gender	**Frequency**	**%**
Male	63	87.50
Female	9	12.50
Age		
21–30 years	2	2.78
31–40 years	27	37.50
41–50 years	23	31.94
Over 50 years	20	27.78
Edn. Qualification		
Diploma	0	0.00
Bachelors	6	8.33
MLISc	22	30.56
M.Phil	11	15.28
Ph.D.	24	33.33
Pursuing Ph.D.	9	12.50
Post-Doctoral	0	0.00
Type of job		
Permanent	69	95.83
Part time	0	0.00
Ad-hoc	3	4.17

- It is evident from the table-1demographic picture of the respondents for continuing education in universities located in Hyderabad city. The majority 87.50% of the respondents are male and only 12.50% of them are female respondents.
- In case of age-wise, 37.50% of the respondents are age between 31 to 40 years, followed by 31.94% of them are 41 to 50 years, 27.78% of them are above 50 years, and few 2.78% of the respondents are age between 21 to 30 years.
- The majority 33.33% of the respondents are completed Ph.D. degree, 30.56 % of them have MLISc degree, 15.28% of them are have M. Phil degree, 12.50% of them are just pursuing Ph.D. degree, 8.33% of them have bachelors degree in LIS and there is no body have diploma or Post-Doctoral education.
- In case of type of job they are doing in universities, 95.83% of the respondents are in permanent job position, 4.17% of them are in ad-hoc position and nobody are in part-time job

Table 2: Years of experience

Experience	**Frequency**	**%**
Less than 4 Years	2	2.78
5 to 8 Years	8	11.11
9 to 12 Years	12	16.67
13 to 16 Years	15	20.83
17 to 22 Years	11	15.28
21 to 24 Years	9	12.50
More than 25 Years	15	20.83
Total	72	100

Table-2 shows the years of experience of LIS professionals, most of the 20.83% respondents have 13 to 16 years and more than 25 years of experience, 16.67% of them have 9 to 12 years, 15.28% of them have 17 to 22 years, 12.50% of them have 21 to 24 years, 11.11% of them have 5 to 8 years and only 2.78% of respondents have less than 4 years of the experience in their job.

Table 3: Designation wise distribution of respondents

Designation	Frequency	%
Professor	0	0
Associate Professor	2	2.78
Assistant Professor	1	1.39
Librarian	8	11.11
Deputy Librarian	2	2.78
Assistant Librarian	11	15.28
Professional Assistant	25	34.72
Library Assistant	23	31.94
Total	72	100

Table-3 illustrates the designation-wise distribution of respondents, majority 34.72% of them are in professional assistant grade, 31.94% of them are in library assistant grade, 15.28% of them are in Assistant librarian cadre, 11.11% of them are in librarian position, 2.78% of them are associate professors, and 1.30% of the respondents are assistant professor grade.

Table 4: Conferences/Seminars/Workshops attended

Level of programme	International	National	Regional
Less than 5	6 (3.26%)	45(24.46%)	37(20.11%)
6-10	6(3.26%)	39(21.20%)	24(13.04%)
11-15	1(0.54%)	11(5.98%)	15(8.15%)
16-20	0	0	0
More than 20	0	0	0

Note: Multiple answers were permitted.

Table-4 shows the conferences/seminars/workshops attended by LIS professionals in the universities. The majority 24.46% of the respondents attended conferences /seminars/workshops less than 5 times, 20.11% of them regional programmes, 83.26% of them attended international programmes. 21.20% of them national, 13.043% of them regional, and 3.26% of them attended international programmes about 6 to 10 times national programmes. 8.15% regional, 5.98% regional and 0.54% of them attended international programmes.

Table 5: Orientation Programmes/Refresher courses (N=182)

Programme	Male	Female	Total
Orientation Programme	45(24.73%)	5(2.75%)	50 (27.47%)
Refresher Courses	49(26.92%)	5(2.75%)	54(29.67%)
Training programme	67(36.81%)	8(4.40%)	75(41.21%)
Not attended	2(1.10%)	1(0.55%)	3(1.65%

Note: Multiple answers were permitted.

It is clear from the Table-5 that majority 41.21% of the respondents attended training programmes in their tenure, 29.67% of them are attended refresher courses, and 27.47% of them are attended orientation programmes.

Table 6: Areas of training

Areas of training	Frequency	%
Applications of IT	31	3.91
Bibliometrics / Scientometrics	67	8.46
Database Management	38	4.80
Human Resource Development	70	8.84
Information System Management	64	8.08
Internet	64	8.08
Library Automation	69	8.71
Library management	71	8.96
LIS software	26	3.28
Marketing	61	7.70
Multimedia	37	4.67
Networking/consortia	70	8.84
Soft skills	69	8.71
Web based services	55	6.94
Total	792	100

Note: Multiple answers were permitted.

Table-6 illustrates the areas of training taken by LIS professionals, the majority 8.96% of them are participated training on Library management, 8.84% of them are participated training on Human Resource Development and Networking/consortia, 8.71% of them are participated training on Library Automation and soft skills, 8.46% of them are participated training on Bibliometrics / Scientometrics, 8.08% of them are participated training on Information System Management and internet, 7.7% of them are participated training on Marketing, 6.94% of them are participated training on Web based services, 4.8% of them are participated training on Database

Management, 4.67% of them are participated training on Multimedia, 3.91% of them are participated training on Applications of IT, and 3.28% of them are participated training on LIS software.

Table 7: Satisfaction of CEP attended by you

Satisfaction	Frequency	%
Highly satisfied	22	30.56
Satisfied	46	63.89
Not satisfied	3	4.17
Neutral	1	1.39
Total	72	100

It is reveals from the Table-7 that majority of 63.89% of the respondents expressed their opin that they are satisfied with continuing education programme, 30.56% of them are highly satisfied, 4.17% of them are not satisfied and 1.30% of them are in neutral they have not given any answer.

Table 8: Problems in attending CEP

Problems	Frequency	%
Lack of time	4	5.56
Lack of funds	5	6.94
Venue will be too far	4	5.56
Inconvenient time	19	26.39
Not a suitable programme	17	23.61
Authorities are supporting	3	4.17
Family problems	8	11.11
Eligibility problem	5	6.94
Shortage of leave	7	9.72
Total	72	100

It is explains from the Table-8 that most of the 26.39% respondents said it is a inconvenient time for them, 23.61% of them said it is not a suitable programme, 11.11% of them said family problems, 9.72% of them said shortage of leave, 6.94% of them said lack of funds and eligibility problem, 5.56% of them said lack of time and venue will be too far, and 4.17% of them said authorities are supporting to participate in continuing education programme.

Conclusion

The Continuing Education Programmes help to maintain the status of any profession in the society. There are many organizations playing a vital role in conducting continuing education programmes for the Library and Information Science professionals in University libraries of Hyderabad. These continuing education programmes are very helpful in learning, upgrade knowledge and develop competencies and professional skills. The status of any profession depends upon the skilful and knowledgeable professions in particular field. In this regard, these organizations are trying to provide advanced skills and useful knowledge to the Library and Information Science Professionals in India. The LIS professionals should attend these continuing education programmes for their career development. The institutions, in which the professionals are working, inspire the professionals to attend such continuing education programmes. There are many institutions/associations/agencies organizing workshops, training programmes, conferences, seminars to enhance the capability and competency of the professionals. In Indian scenario the Academic Staff Colleges, NISCAIR, INFLIBNET AND DESIDOC, etc are leading the CEP organizers in India. The professionals working in the field of the Library and Information Science should attend these programmes and increase the status of the profession by serving the society efficiently. The emerging changes in the field of Information and Communication Technology have made it compulsory to the professionals to attend the Continuing Education Programmes to stay up-to-date. The professional can learn new techniques and skills by attending the Continuing Professional Education Programmes. The university libraries should be engaged in conducting such type of programmes for the professionals working in the universities and affiliated colleges.

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