Research Trends of Library and Information Science (LIS) In India: 2009 - 2012

Satya Nand Pandey
Senior Library and Information Assistant
Central Library, 2nd floor
Indian Bureau of Mines, Ministry of Mines
Civil Lines, Nagpur- 440001 (Maharashtra)
Email- satyanandpandey2103@gmail.com

Abstract

Research in Library and Information Science (LIS) is an important activity and without research no new advancement is ensured in this field. Library professionals strive hard to find solutions of certain problems which they face from time to time through their Ph.D. This study helps to know about the trend of choosing a Ph.D. topic during 2009 to 2012. Some areas like User services are in trend and others like Intellectual Property Rights issues do not attract Ph.D. scholars to choose a topic from those areas. Various online and print recourses have been used to know about the ongoing Ph.D. topics through out the country.

Keywords

Ph.D. in Library and Information Science; Research in LIS; Library and Information Science.

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INTRODUCTION

Discovery and dissemination of new knowledge has always been a necessary work to uplift social and economical status of the people. Advancement in knowledge is invariably accompanied by social change and progress. In the pre- industrial society research was mostly a private affair and the researchers and scholars were patronized by the kings and elite. After the industrial revolution the pace of research had to be quickened to meet the growing demands of the society. Mounting population pressure, growing consumerism, fast depletion of limited natural resources; perceived need to have political or military edge by one nation over the others, urge to save time and space, need to find cures for diseases to prolong health and longevity have given rise to planned, organized coordinated research at national and international levels. Our security, health, education and economy depend mostly on scientific research. Research is an activity which is related to search a known idea again with a different perspective. Research is an intellectual activity of gathering information and thus concluding all the materials and findings to give justification of the solution of a problem thereby helping to solve a problem. Research is necessary in every field to contribute into its progress and thus uplifting the country in terms of intellectual assets.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (LIS) RESEARCH

Research is a prime developmental activity of any discipline and profession including the profession of librarianship. LIS research helps in identifying issues that affect the growth and development of librarianship as well as that of the LIS education. The genesis and development of LIS research in India may be traced back to the year 1924 when Dr. S.R. Ranganathan joined this profession. His seminal contribution to various facets of LIS enriched the discipline and elevated its status from art to a discipline in social sciences. Library Science which was started as a school now grown up to a full fledged department renamed and called as Library and Information Science. In due course of time many universities in India including open universities have introduced M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes in LIS. Now LIS has become a full fledged discipline like other social science's discipline and enriching itself day by day. Research initiatives in Library and Information Science are also increasing day by day. Research in Library and Information enables to know

the needs and expectations of the actual and potential users. The extent of user's satisfaction or dissatisfaction could only be known through research. The most important advantage of LIS research is to improve the status of LIS professionals. In India LIS has changed its traditional mode of providing services to the users into a new scenario. In LIS, as other fields requires constant innovation and research so that new techniques can be discovered and the same can be applied for uplifting its professionals. Major changes in the trends related to LIS research commence during 1980 to 1990 where there was a continuous shift of research related to various areas from traditional based systems to machine operated systems. In LIS traditional manual techniques started declining and new ICT enabled techniques started growing for serving users. LIS in global scenario has reached up to a superior level and the professionals of LIS have started working towards the practical aspects of modern libraries.

LIS RESEARCH: HISTORY

Dr D.B. Krishna Rao was the first research scholar to obtain Ph.D. degree in LIS from the University of Delhi in 1957 under the able guidance of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan. For nearly two decades no other university in the country seems to have either introduced Ph.D. programme or conferred a Ph.D. Degree. It was Punjab University, Chandigarh which turned out the second Ph.D. in 1977. He was Dr. Pandey S.K.Sharma who was awarded Ph.D. under the supervision of Dr. J.S. Sharma.

METHODOLOGY

This study presents a report of choosing areas for Ph.D. research only by research scholars from various universities of India by analyzing data of four years i.e. 2009- 2012. The study has been further strengthened and supplemented from various scholarly journals and especially from "University News" published by Association of Indian Universities which includes the list of Ph.D. awarded by various Universities during a specific time period.

TRENDS OF CHOOSING RESEARCH AREA IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE DURING 2009 TO 2012: A STUDY

1 ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

"Libraries are the heart of any Academic Institution" rightly quoted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, former President of India. Academic library serve the informational needs of the students and teachers of its parent institution. Seven theses have been found related to the working conditions of University Libraries. Some of the notable areas are, Analysis of web based library services in University Libraries in India; Growth and Development of Journals in economics with special reference to E- Journals: A study of the Libraries of central universities in Delhi; A study of organizational structure of University Library in Rajasthan; Development of University libraries in Gujarat state: A study; Engineering College Library System: A futuristic study of College Libraries under the jurisdiction of University of Pune; Development and management of Engineering College Libraries in Western Vidharba region: An analytical study; An evaluative study of information sources and services in University Libraries of Punjab and An evaluative study of transit from print to e-print journals and their effect on Library services in University Libraries of Western U.P. Most of the topics found under this area are related to the analysis of university libraries in terms of applicability of Latest advancement in the field of Library and Information Science because there are continuous demands from the students and faculty members to improve academic library services. Research in this area is also necessary to formulate certain ways to cope with the current demands of users in the age of information explosion.

2 BIBLIOMETRICS

Under this area four topics have been found and these are, Contribution of Parsis to Gujarati Literature: Bibliography and Bibliometrics Study; a web retrieval model for Bibliographic information based on morphological analysis of Marathi; Literature from Vidharbha in Marathi (1975-1999): a survey and bibliometric study. The studies are basically regarding the bibliometric analysis of literature of particular area.

3 CITATION ANALYSIS

Two M.Phil. Dissertations, Citation Analysis of selected E- Journals in Library and Information Science: a comparative study and Citation Analysis of Law Journals are found related to citation analysis. These studies are related to citation analysis of journals of Library and Information Science.

4 COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN LIBRARIES

Computer machines are very important devices to control any system. In libraries the increasing use of computer systems in providing automated and networking services inspired library professionals to research into those aspects which are necessary to provide quality services to the users. In this area, a lot research is already done or is going on in many Universities like Nagpur University, Pune University and Delhi University. Some of the topics which have been found under this area are, A Study of Multimedia resources in selected libraries of Delhi: a study; Computerization of Library catalogue and OPAC services of Institutions of Higher Learning in Maharashtra; Application of Library Software's in Technical Universities of UP with special reference to Roorkee and Pant Nagar: A critical study; A study of Library Software used in Health Science College Libraries in Maharashtra and Free/ Open verses commercial software: A study of some selected library management software; Problem and prospects of Library Automation in select central university libraries in Delhi: a comparative study. Research in this area is not only related to the computerization of Library Activities with the help of software, but related to developing an Information retrieval system for easy and effective Information access. Research in this area shows that computerized information retrieval system is very important for executing Library activities. Thus research in this area is required to discover new ways to make computerized library activities more user friendly to operate and execute.

5. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Cost benefit analysis is very important tool to analyze the usability of any system in terms of the cost involved. One thesis entitled 'Costing and Cost benefit Analysis of Academic Libraries' is found and it indicates that cost benefit analysis is one of the important area for management of Libraries but this area is not being taken for research by LIS research scholars very frequently.

6. DIGITAL LIBRARY

Digital Libraries use latest techniques to render library services in today's Information and Communication Technology environment. Much research is going on relating to this area but few research scholars are studying about the technology involved in creating digital libraries. The main focus of research under this area is only on finding out the initiatives of digitization in libraries and the related aspects. Three titles have been found related to this area such as, Digitization and Open Access initiatives: A study of special libraries in national capital region; Trends and development of Digital Libraries in scientific and research institutions in Delhi: a comparative study and Design and development of digital database of homoeopathic information resources in India: a plan proposal.

7.INFORMATION HANDLING AND MANAGEMENT

Libraries preserve knowledge for the knowledge seekers and it is very important to research about new ways in the field of Information Handling and Management. Some of the major research topics in this area are, Evaluation of Library Services of engineering Colleges in Kota region; Information Services and their efficacy of Science Libraries in Pune Metropolitan area: A Critical study; Provision of Library and Information Services for the Visually Impaired in India: A study; Information management in Akashwani and Doordarshan Kendras of Madhya Pradesh: Bhopal, Indore, Gwaliar and Jabalpur; An Assessment of the services of college Libraries in the context of changing information scenario with special reference to Mizoram; Status of information services and health awareness among the rural women of Sagar district: A study; Information Resource Management of Engineering College Libraries in West Bengal, A study of data retrieval techniques of online databases available in libraries of central universities in India and Quality Management Practices in University Libraries of Uttar Pradesh: A study. These studies indicate that research is very important in this area to find better ways of handling of whatever the library and Information centers possess, so that it will be easy for the users to use libraries.

8. INFORMATION SOURCES AND SERVICES

Information is scanned, stored and presented in such a way that it will be easy for a user to locate and use it. Two topics have been found related to this area entitled "Utilisation of information sources in drugs and pharmaceutical laboratories and their linkages with industries in Karnataka: Designing information system" and Marketing of information products and services in selected libraries of Chandigarh region: a study. Both the researches are related to information services, marketing and utilization in depth. This area requires more research to find new information sources and services.

9. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

ICT has influenced each and every sphere of human activity. LIS field is also greatly influenced by it. Two topics have been found relating to ICT applications in Libraries. These are, "Impact of Information technology on the services provided by the Library and Information Centers attached to the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories to support research and development" and "Trend and Impact of Modern Communication Technology in Biomedical Information Centers and Libraries in Western India". This area is important to know ICT effect on libraries as well as to know about new prospect for handling library activities using ICT.

10.INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) ISSUES

One topic has been found relating to this area entitled "Legal Aspects of Information with special reference to India" which reflects the IPR issues in digital libraries. Research is required in this area to know about the Intellectual Property Rights Issues related to digital libraries and ways to manage them.

11. INTERNET APPLICATIONS IN LIBRARY

Internet is incomparable and helpful at any time. Internet is a virtual life or it is a life beyond real life. In libraries of the today's world internet is playing its part very well to expand the service area of libraries. A lot of research is going on relating to the applications of Internet in today's library activities such as, Internet and its use by the faculty members of the University of Delhi: a study; Evaluation of web- based online public access catalogues of Indian Institutes of Technology Libraries in India: a study; A study of Web Interface in Library management software system: a study; Design and development of web-enabled online directory of Library and information Science teachers in India. More research in this area is required to assess internet applications to Libraries.

12. OPEN ACCESS AND E- JOURNALS

Open access and E- journals have become important topics for research in almost every University. Some of the topics covered under this area are, Open sources movement in India with special reference to digital library software: a study; Use of Electronic Journals in Agriculture Libraries by the Agricultural Scientists in Delhi; Electronic Journals: a study of UGC Infonet E- Journals Consortium with special reference to University Libraries in Delhi: a study; Use of E- Journals by users of ICMR labs in Delhi; Use of E- Journals in the field of chemistry by faculty members and research scholars in select university libraries in Delhi: a study; Use of resources in the field of geography by the users in select university libraries in Delhi; Electronic resources: A survey of current practices in university libraries in Delhi and Electronic resources in Physics in selected libraries in Delhi. Open Access resources are becoming popular because of their unrestricted access. Research in this area is important to find better service conditions for users.

13. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Performance Appraisal plays a very important part to assess working capabilities of employees of any organization. Three topics have been found which are related to this area such as, Skill development among LIS Professionals in Electronic Environment: A study of selected special Libraries in Delhi; Job environment and life style of Library professional of Orissa: a socio economic study and a comparative study of performance measurement of R&D and special Libraries. Research in this area is important to ensure better service conditions for library professionals so that they may give maximum output from their routine work.

14.PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Public libraries play a very important role in dissemination information to the people of community. It gives free information services for the lifelong learning of its patrons. In this area some research has been done so far. Notable topics are, Information management in Public Libraries of Tehran: a study in the changing environment and the role of Village Libraries in development: A case study of Mizoram North Eastern Hill University, Shillong. It is found that a few researchers have taken this area for research and more research is required in this field.

15. THESAURUS

Two topics have been found out of which first one is regarding creation of Bilingual Thesaurus of LIS: A pragmatic and thematic approach and the other is

'Thesaurus of LIS in Gujarati'. It indicates that there is a slow speed for taking thesaurus as a theme of Ph.D. research.

16. USER STUDIES

Users are the most important component of a Library system because without users there is of no use of collecting, processing and managing informational content. Many topics have been found which are related to user studies or its related area. It has become a prominent area to work and pursue a Ph.D. Main topics are Reading Habits among Science college teachers in Vidarbha region; Information Seeking behavior of researchers in Bio Sciences of the University of Chhattisgarh; Information seeking behaviour and reading habits of high court lawyers of Madhya Pradesh; Information needs and Information seeking behaviour of professionals in medical field: A case study of Jammu and Kashmir State, Information seeking behaviour and reading habit of secondary student in changing academic environment: a case study on Saharanpur district and A study of Information needs and information seeking behaviour of vertenary scientists in University and Research Institutes of Haryana, Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh; Information seeking behaviour of faculty members and research scholars with reference to Punjabi Literature: An analytical study and Information seeking behaviour of managers working in financial institutions in India: A study. This area has been in trend for PhD research.

17. UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION'S ROLE IN PROMOTING LIBRARIES IN INDIA

One topic has been found regarding relating to this area and it is "The role of University Grants Commission in the development of the University Libraries of the Gujarat State: A study". A few researchers are taking University Grants Commission's role in promoting libraries as a topic for their study.

CONCLUSION

Research in Library and Information Science plays a very important role in shaping the future of this profession. LIS research has given a new height to this profession and given a chance to the professionals for uplifting their career. As far as trend in choosing a PhD topic is concerned, User's services and ICT related area are the choice of researchers. Researching an area ensures some new clarifications of the earlier problems. In LIS research, Libraries and their services in ICT environment are most important topics for research. The continuity of research in LIS helps the profession to go higher in terms of providing better services to users.

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