A Study on The Employability of Library Science With Special Reference To Kerala

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Abstract - *The purpose of the study is to discover the status of the job market for library professionals in state of Kerala (India) to examine the job titles used in advertisements. Content analysis was applied to discover the status of the job market. LIS professional vacancies from 2010 to 2015 in four leading newspapers were analyzed. There were 231 announcements during that time. Findings of the study reveal a lack of consistency in job titles. Academic librarianship predominated in the LIS job market during those years. Most of the job titles do not address the requirements of the job market. This paper is the first study done in Kerala. It is recommended that library professionals, library associations, and LIS departments in the universities to design a uniform descriptive nomenclature and help the provincial government understand the importance and necessity of LIS professionals in the development of the higher education.*

Key Words: LIS Education, Content analysis, Higher education

Introduction

Change is a natural phenomenon. We are in a period of rapid change. Library and Information Science is a rapidly changing and growing field. This profession began its journey when writing and reading materials were stone, dry leaves, leather, clay tablets, etc. With the passage of time, paper replaced other kinds of material and was shaped into books. Now, books and other printed material are in digital form. Libraries are transformed from their four walls and now exist in a networked environment. The application of Information and Communication Technology in libraries changes the working patterns of librarians as well as the traditional name "librarian." This change has brought new nomenclature including Librarian, digital librarian, information scientist, digital library operations officer, library technologist, IT resource manager, knowledge manager, etc. Nomenclature has an impact on our minds. It also defines the status of a job. A new name makes an impression. According to Nicholas, Debrowolski, and Huntington (2000), "terminology drives our thinking and, most importantly, the perception of the people we serve."The success of an organization depends on qualified, energetic, and dynamic personnel. The selection of suitable professionals is an important and sensitive process. Professionals are invited through job advertisements in newspapers, professional journals, the Internet etc. In Kerala, library professional positions are advertised in newspapers, although this practice is gradually changing. Jobs are now being announced via the Internet. LIS journals are published in Kerala, but jobs are not advertised in these journals. Newspapers are still the main source of job openings in Kerala

Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:
1. Discover LIS job openings in Kerala
2. Identify job openings in different types of libraries
3. Analyse trends in job titles for LIS professionals

Scope of the Study

The present study was limited to Kerala (India). This study covers all types of jobs relevant to librarianship in all types of libraries, i.e., academic public, special, etc. in the state of Kerala. Professional librarian positions were included, while library science educators and non-professional library jobs were excluded from the study. This study covers jobs announced from 2010-2015.

Literature Review

A number of studies have been conducted which trace changes in the job market by examining advertisements. Yelinek (2009) determined the training needs and experience of temporary government Documents librarians. The librarians tended to work in academic libraries and felt frustration regarding the inadequate training they received. Payment (2008) explores the role of professional development in library information services. The author's investigations indicate employer expectations for wide rangeof generic skills in addition to the specific skills. One of the research techniques used by researchers is content analysis of job advertisements. Kavulya (2007) conducted a descriptive study to review the status of the job market for library professionals in Kenya. Du, Stein, and Martin (2007) conducted research to construct a mechanism for employers to post jobs opportunities on the Web at no cost. Using content analysis, the researchers found similarity among job postings. The author's findings indicate that the volatility of electronic media creates difficulties for LIS job seekers. Deeken and Thomas (2006) analyzed technical job advertisements published in library science journals in 2001.This study replicates the research results of Beile and Adams (2000) that analyzed job advertisements from the mid-1990s.Results indicates large increase in LIS openings, increase in number of jobs reposted and in salaries. Starr (2004) compared the job advertisements two library journals in 1983 and 2003.

The results indicate a continuous technological change even as librarians' core responsibilities remain the same. Stronski (2004) conducted a study on special librarians and alternative careers, and found an increasing market for special librarians. Blessinger (2002) analyzed the influence of the information age on librarianship, tracking job market trends and needed skills from1985 to 2000. The results show a mutual influence between IT professions and librarianship. Moreiro (2001) analyzed the ability of Spanish library and information science graduates to meet the needs of the companies and institutions employing them. Beile and Adams (2000) analyzed LIS job advertisements published in library journals in 1996, and compared requirements and benefits among various positions in academic libraries. Keeping in view the speed of change, Croneis and Henderson (2000) recommend further studies should to at all types of positions. Consequently, the present research covers all types of jobs in all types of libraries in Kerala. This is the first research of its kind in Kerala to examine job trends for LIS professionals in the country. The researcher has conducted this research with confidence and hope that it will be a milestone in LIS in the state of Kerala (India).

Methodology

Content analysis was applied to identify LIS job trends. LIS advertisements published in newspapers is the best source for current trends in the Kerala environment. In this environment, library professionals consult newspapers for new openings. Therefore, it was decided to use newspapers as the source of data.

Four leading daily newspapers were selected for the collection of data. These are *Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi,The Hindu,The Indian Express.*. These newspapers covered the five years from January 2010 to December 2015. A total of 231 advertisements was collected. The research instrument was a checklist that was developed for data collection.

Results and Discussion

Four groups were formed according to job position and responsibilities. These groups are Top management (TM), middle management (MM), operational group (OG), and other group.   Data was Analyzed using these groups. These levels of administration are responsible for overall output. TM (top management group) is involved in policymaking, decision-making, and planning. The MM group coordinates between TM and the

operational group. Those positions need instructions for action or are responsible for a specific section in a library. The LIS professionals work under the supervision of MM group comprises the operational group. The fourth group was "Other Title," including advertisements with unclear or irrelevant job descriptions.

Number and Sources of Advertisements

The year wise data is presented in Table 1.

Newspaper Announcement	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	%
MalayalaManorama	32	30	25	15	18	120	43.01
Mathrubhumi	29	25	15	9	8	86	27.28
The Hindu	4	3	2	6	0	15	8.02
The Indian Express	1	5	4	0	0	10	2.93
Total	66	63	46	30	26	231	

Table 1: Chronological Analysis

Results indicate an increasing demand for library professionals, with the percentage of jobs that were LIS jobs increasing from 8.86 % to 43.01 % during the study period. **Mathrubhumi** and **Malayala Manorama** had the most advertisements.

Job Openings by Type of Library

Title	Academic	Public	Special	School	Other	Total
Chief Librarian	6	0	1	0	0	7
Head Librarian	1	0	0	0	0	1
Senior Librarian	2	0	0	0	0	2
Librarian	41	4	34	8	6	93
Research Librarian	2	0	1	0	0	3
Librarian Research Officer	0	0	1	0	0	1
Manager Archives	0	0	1	0	0	1
Archive Incharge	0	0	1	0	0	1
Archive Officer	0	0	1	0	0	1
Library Officer	1	0	2	0	0	3
Information Officer	1	0	0	0	0	1
Document Officer	1	0	0	0	1	2
Museum Officer	0	0	1	0	0	1
Video Librarian	0	2	0	0	0	1
Music Librarian	1	0	1	0	0	1
Total	50	6	44	8	7	119
Percentage	60.97%	2.43%	27.43%	4.87%	4.26%	

Table 2: TM Advertisements

Academic LIS job openings were predominant in TM, with special libraries coming in second. The academic library announcements demonstrate the wide scope for academic librarians in the province. According to Spang and Kane (1997), academic librarians are always the high demand. Independent organizations are also involved in research activities which require the services of LIS professionals, especially in Karachi which sets the second trend for the TM

group. Public library vacancies in the province are decreasing, which indicates the lack of interest of the provincial government towards establishment of public libraries.

Middle Management

Title	Academic	Public	Special	School	Other	Total
Deputy Librarian	5	0	1	0	0	6
Deputy Director Library	3	1	0	0	0	4
Library Management Consultant	0	0	1	0	0	1
Project Manager	0	0	1	0	0	1
Librarian Event Coordinator	1	0	0	0	0	1
Coordinator Digital Library	1	0	0	0	0	1
Digital Library Operating Officer	0	0	2	0	0	2
Library Technologist	1	0	0	0	0	1
IT Resource Center Manager	0	0	1	0	0	1
Document Controller	0	0	0	1	2	3
Medical Records Librarian	0	0	1	0	0	1
Librarian Editor	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total	11	1	9	1	2	24
Percentage	45.83%	4.16%	37.53%	4.16%	5.23%	8.5%

Table 3: MM Openings

Nearly the same trend (academic libraries predominating) was found with MM openings. Opportunities for library professionals in academic librarianship are better than in any other type of library.

Operational Group

Title	Academic	Public	Special	School	Other	Total
Assistant Librarian	27	0	13	11	0	51
Library Assistant	10	2	3	0	0	15
Cataloguer	9	2	4	0	0	15
Classifier	2			1	0	3
Total	48	4	20	12	0	84
Percentage	57.14%	4.76%	23.80%	14.28%	0	29.78%

Table 4: OG Job Openings

Once again, academic library jobs were the most frequent.

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Other Job Titles

Table 5: Other Job Titles

In this area as well, academic library jobs are the most numerous.

Title	Frequency	Academic	Public	Special	School	Other
Librarian/Receptionist	2	2	1	0	0	1
Librarian / Administrator	1	1	0	0	0	1
Librarian / Admission Officer	2	2	2	0	0	0
Librarian / Teacher	3	3	3	0	0	0
Librarian/Accounts Work	1	1	0	0	0	1
Librarian/Incharge Student	1	1	0	0	0	1
Total	10	10	6	0	0	4
Percentage		60%			40%	

Job title analysis

Top Management			Middle Management			Operational Group			Other Job Titles		
Title	#	%	Title	#	%	Title	#	%	Title	#	%
Chief librarian	7	4.26	Deputy Librarian	6	25	Assistant Librarian	51	60.71	Librarian/Receptionist	2	20%
Head librarian	1	0.60	Deputy Director Library	4	16.66	Library Assistant	15	17.85	Librarian/Administrator	1	10%
Senior librarian	2	1.21	Library Management Consultant	1	4.16	Cataloguer	15	17.85	Librarian/Admission officer	2	20%
Librarian	138	84.14	Project Manager	1	4.16	Classifier	3	3.57	Librarian/Teacher	3	30%
Research librarian	3	1.82	Librarian Event Coordinator	1	4.16				Librarian/Accounts work	1	10%
Librarian research officer	1	0.60	Coordinator Digital Library	1	4.16				Librarian/In charge student affair	1	10%
Manager archives	1	0.60	Digital Library Operating Officer	2	8.33						
Archive Incharge	1	0.60	Library Technologist	1	4.16						
Archive officer	1	0.60	IT Resource Center Manager	1	4.16						
Library officer	3	1.82	Document Controller	3	12.25						
Information officer	1	0.60	Medical Records Librarian	1	4.16						
Document Officer	2	1.21	Librarian Editor	2	8.33						
Museum librarian	1	0.60									
Video Librarian	1	0.60									
Music librarian	1	0.60									
Total	164	58.15%	Total	24	8.5%	Total	84	30.14%		10	3.54%

Table 6: Job Titles

From 231 advertisements, the majorities were for TM, and the most frequent titles were Research Librarian, Library Officer, and Document Officer.MM titles included Deputy Librarian, Deputy Director, Document Controller, as well as less frequent choices, such as Librarian Event Coordinator, Library Technologist, and Librarian Editor. In OG positions, the title of Assistant Librarian was most frequent. There were a small number of other titles, including receptionist, administrator, teacher, account work, etc. Job titles in advertisements depict the nature of the work. There are variations in job titles. No consistency is found in government or private organizations. Technically, a librarian is a person having master's degree in library science and capable of performing a wide range of tasks in a library. The study found that these criteria are ignored in the employment of LIS professionals. The advertisements, announced a vacancy for a "librarian," with other irrelevant responsibilities, i.e., librarian/administrator, Librarian/receptionist, librarian/accounts, librarian/in-charge of student affairs, etc. include in "other Title "Advertisements were librarian positions with the complex descriptions as mentioned. Such job titles were Mostly announced by private institutions or private organizations.

Titles like Chief Librarian, Senior Librarian, and Head Librarian normally represent the TM level, but other titles were also found at this level, including Librarian Research Officer, Research Librarian, etc.MM positions show the trend toward requiring IT skills, i.e., Digital Library Operating Officer, Library Technologies, Coordinator Digital Library, etc. Stoker (1999) argued that these and similar changes in library terminology stem not only from a desire to promote the library and information profession but also from the increasingly complex role of information in society. LIS professionals in Sind Province should be aware the situation and prepare for new developments. OG positions are involved in technical operations under the instruction of the MM group. Titles for Oppositions are familiar, i.e., Cataloguer, Classifier, Assistant Librarian, etc. There are also titles that depict the changing work of the library.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Application of ICT in libraries has reshaped the libraries and the working pattern of librarians. With Change, the nomenclature of library professionals has also changed. Nomenclature has a profound Impact on the mind. It also defines the status of positions. A good and new name can have a profound Influence. Awareness of this change is low in neighborhood countries. Job titles of library professionals have been unchanged since 1947. They are outdated and there is no consistency applied. Unfortunately, library professionals have failed to achieve a high status identified job titles for library in Pakistan. In developed countries, IT-oriented terms are being used. Starr (2004) professionals in the US, including Visual Resource Director, Information Technology Specialist, and Software Analyst. It is the responsibility of LIS educators, LIS associations, and all concerned to prepare for upcoming challenges to skills and training in the LIS job market in this country. There is a need to develop an infrastructure for the automation of libraries, with revised job descriptions and nomenclature. We must change obsolete titles in this digital era.

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