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Midrar Ullah

National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan,
midrarullah2007@yahoo.com

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Change in the Nomenclature of Library and Information Science Discipline: *Perceptions of LIS Faculty Members, Practitioners and Students*

Midrar Ullah

Chief Librarian, Central Library, National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: midrarullah2007@yahoo.com

Abstract

Objectives: To know the perceptions of LIS professionals and students regarding change of nomenclature of LIS discipline and the location of LIS schools (departments) under the appropriate faculty in the universities.

Methodology: Data for this descriptive study were collected from the university websites and through discussion with the chairpersons of LIS departments in Pakistan. A web-based questionnaire was also posted on Facebook, mailing groups, WhatsApp groups to ascertain the perceptions of LIS faculty members, practitioners and students in Pakistan. The data were analyzed and presented with frequency and percentage.

Findings: There is no uniformity in the nomenclature of LIS departments in Pakistan. Moreover, the placement of LIS schools (departments) in the university faculties also varies. A total of 336 respondents filled in the questionnaire. Majority of the respondents were in favor of renaming the LIS discipline and Information Management (IM) was the most desired nomenclature. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that LIS may be located in the Faculty of Management Sciences.

Conclusion: IM appeared as the most popular nomenclature for LIS discipline and the Faculty of Management Sciences as the most accepted location of LIS departments in the universities. IM requires wide range of capabilities, therefore, LIS professionals need to reinforce their IM-enabled competencies.

Keywords: Library and Information Science, Information Management, Nomenclature, LIS education, Pakistan

Introduction

The librarianship education in the subcontinent was started in 1915 at the University of the Punjab as a Certificate in Librarianship. After the independence of Pakistan, the certificate course in the University of the Punjab was upgraded to one-year diploma in 1956 and two-year master degree in 1974. However, the University of Karachi was the first ever university in Pakistan which offered master degree program in 1962. Nowadays 13 Pakistani universities offer Library and Information Science (LIS) education from bachelor to doctorate level (Ameen & Malik, 2016).

LIS, being quirky and multidisciplinary profession, has been facing identity problem since its inception. Therefore, identity and value of LIS discipline is under discussion due to revolutionary

developments in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) all over the world. The LIS professionals have to manage nontraditional material such as digital and online information rather than dealing with merely books and periodicals. They have to take greater responsibility in the organization of information using computers and other cutting-edge technologies (Chu, 2001). The application of emerging technologies, rapidly evolving information landscape, transformation of library roles and evolving role of librarians paved the way for changes in the nomenclature of libraries, librarians and LIS schools around the world (Davis, 2004; Katuli-Munyoro & Mutuli (2018)). Consequently, LIS schools need to adopt their education objectives, system, and curriculum to the new information paradigm to connect LIS education to practice. Now the information can be accessed from almost everywhere, every time and in any format. Therefore, LIS professionals as purveyor of information would inevitably need to prove their worth not only to themselves but to the public as well.

The nomenclature of LIS discipline has gone through changes from librarianship to Library Science to Library and Information Science (Chu, 2001). Now two LIS schools (departments) in Pakistan at the University of the Punjab and the University of Sargodha has changed their nomenclature from LIS to the Information Management (IM) in 2014 and 2020 respectively. This development brought about a lot of criticism and controversies in the LIS community. It is therefore crucial to find out the perceptions of LIS professionals and students to create a consensus and uniformity in the nomenclature of LIS discipline and the location of LIS schools (departments) under the appropriate faculty in the universities.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the existing nomenclatures of LIS departments (schools) in Pakistan?
2. Currently, under which faculty the LIS departments are placed in the universities?
3. What is the perceptions of LIS professionals and students regarding change of nomenclature of LIS discipline?
4. What are the perceptions of LIS professionals and students regarding appropriate faculty under which the LIS department be located in the universities?

Literature Review

This section reviews the selected literature on the subject and to identify research gaps that provides rationale for the study.

Chu (2001) highlighted the prospects and effects of name change of LIS discipline in China. Chu noted that renaming LIS schools to IM was to deepen educational reform and broaden the professional field. Hjørland (2002) discoursed that an information specialist should be able to classify information, index it, and develop thesauri, retrieval system and a guide to literature in a specific field. OBE and Griffiths (2003) found no difference in the knowledge and skills required for librarians and knowledge managers as both acquire, organize and disseminate knowledge. However, the LIS professionals have to improve their ICT and management skills to compete with their counter parts. Davis (2004) conducted a survey of corporate libraries and concluded that the utilization rates of information resources amongst organizations with non-library names were higher than those with names employing the term “library”. Ferguson, Sarrafzadeh, and Hazeri (2007) revealed that lack of management and leadership skills, lack of business and content knowledge, lack of visibility in the corporate sector, and image and name problems are the major barriers which hampered LIS professionals in contribution to organizational knowledge

management. **Dadzie (2008)** documented that renaming the Department of Library and Archival Studies to Information Studies in Ghana increased the enrolment of the students.

Anwar (2009) opined that the term “information manager” appropriately convey the competencies required to perform LIS related jobs. Anwar also proposed that the name of the degree i.e., Master of Library and Information Science should be renamed as Master of Information Management and that the LIS department be renamed as Department of Information Management. **Paul (2013)** emphasized the need for developing programmes in Geo Information Management and related disciplines in the developing countries. **Okeke, Oghenetega and Erimieleagbon (2014)** found that library schools in Nigeria operated with different nomenclature and were also located under different faculties in the universities. They recommended that internationally well know nomenclature i.e., Library and Information Science (LIS) may be adopted and the LIS schools may be located in the Social Sciences faculty. **Anwar (2016)** opined that there has been a noticeable shift from LIS to Information Management from 1980s. However, to make this shift effective and productive the information professionals have to explore new career opportunities beyond the libraries, make drastic changes in the LIS curricula, develop the faculty to teach the innovative curricula and create a link with other related disciplines. **Weech (2015)** found that few Information Schools (schools) in the USA and Canada offered master degree in Information Management, an interdisciplinary programme covering information science, information technology and management, in addition to LIS degree. **Singh (2015)** opined that all LIS schools in India were not prepared to rename LIS to Information Management, however, they were eager to change the nomenclature for face lifting only. All LIS schools have to redefine their educational objectives and curriculum system to prepare LIS professionals to serve in information industries. They have to include information technology oriented courses in their curriculum.

Nnadozie, Igwe and Nwosu (2016) highlighted various factor such as infusion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), changing needs of current job market and creation of new employment opportunities in business, industries and government sectors and suggested change in the nomenclature of LIS to Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) in Nigeria. **Paul, Bhumali and Ghose (2016)** highlighted various similarities and differences in Information Science (IS) and Information Management (IM) disciplines, and career opportunities available in India in these two disciplines. They found that both the disciplines were interdisciplinary originated from Information Studies, Library Science, Documentation Science, Information Technology, Information System, Engineering and other related subjects. Moreover, both fields deal with identification, processing, management and dissemination of information. However, IS was mostly affiliated with LIS, documentation, computing and technology. While IM was mainly backed by business and commerce studies. They also opined that IS was the most popular field and had more job opportunities than IM. **Chukwu, et al (2018)** conducted a survey of LIS professionals in IMO state of Nigeria to ascertain the desired nomenclature for librarians in this digital age. They found that LIS professionals wanted a change in nomenclature and preferred information manager, information scientist or information professional nomenclature for librarians. **Katuli-Munyoro and Mutuli (2018)** comprehended that LIS education and training system in Zimbabwe required robust strategies to adjust the current environment and their needs.

The literature on the change of nomenclature of LIS discipline and location of LIS schools under the appropriate faculty is limited. Therefore, it was important to know the perception of LIS professionals and students regarding change of LIS discipline nomenclature and placement of LIS schools in the most relevant faculty. This study was aimed to do that.

Methodology

The data for this descriptive study were collected from the university websites and through discussion with the chairpersons of the LIS schools. A web-based questionnaire using google form was also developed and refined after expert review and pilot testing. The web survey, along with covering letter, was posted repeatedly on the Facebook, mailing groups and WhatsApp groups, during the month of November and December, 2020, to ascertain the perceptions of the LIS faculty members, practitioners and students in Pakistan using convenience sampling method. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. In first section, three questions asked the participants to give their opinion about change of nomenclature of LIS discipline, suggest new nomenclature for LIS discipline and appropriate faculty in which LIS discipline may be placed. The second section was to collect the demographic information of the participants. The data were analyzed and presented with frequency and percentage.

Limitations of the Study

The study used convenience sampling method and response rate of this study was also low, therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the population of the study.

Results

Current scenario of LIS schools in Pakistan

Current scenario of LIS schools in Pakistan regarding their nomenclature, placement under the faculty and programs offered is presented in Table 1. The information for this segment of the study was collected from university/LIS school websites and discussions with the heads of LIS schools (departments).

Table 1: Current scenario of LIS schools in Pakistan

S. No.	Nomenclature	University	Faculty	Programs Offered
1	Library and Information Sciences	Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad	Social Sciences	BLIS, MLIS, BS, M. Phil., Ph. D.
2	Information Management	University of the Punjab, Lahore	Economics and Management Sciences	Master of IM, M. Phil., Ph. D.
3	Library and Information Science	The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalpur	Social Sciences	MLIS, BS, M. Phil., Ph. D.
4	Information Management	University of Sargodha, Sargodha	Art and Humanities	M. A (IM), BS, M. Phil., Ph. D.
5	Library and Information Science	Minhaj University, Lahore	Social Sciences and Humanities	MLIS, BS, M. Phil., Ph. D.

6	Library and Information Management	Superior University, Lahore	Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities	M. Phil.
7	Library and Information Sciences	University of Okara, Okara	Management and Social Sciences	BS
8	Library and Information Science	University of Peshawar, Peshawar	Management and Information Sciences	MLIS, M. Phil.
9	Library and Information Science	Khushal Khan University, Karak	Social Sciences	BS, M. Phil.
10	Library and Information Sciences	Sarhad University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar	Social Sciences	Associate Degree, BS, MLIS, MS
11	Library and Information Science	University of Karachi, Karachi	Arts and Social Sciences	MLIS, BS, MS, Ph. D.
12	Library and Information Science and Archive Studies	University of Sindh, Jamshoro	Social Sciences	MLIS, BS, M. Phil, Ph. D.
13	Library and Information Science	University of Baluchistan, Quetta	Management Sciences	MLIS, M. Phil.

Table 1 shows that apart from nomenclature, the positioning of LIS departments within the university organogram varies. Nine LIS schools use the “Library and Information Science(s) (LIS)” nomenclature, two LIS schools use the “Information Management”, one LIS school uses the “Library and Information Management” nomenclature and another one has adopted the “Library and Information Science and Archival Studies” nomenclature. As far as their placement is concerned, seven schools are located in Faculty of Social Science, three in Faculty of Management Sciences and one invariably located in Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Demographic information of respondents

Section II of the questionnaire was designed to collect the demographic information of the respondents for this study. A total of 336 respondents filled in the web-based questionnaire. The demographic information of respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic information of respondents (N=336)

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	237	70.5

Female	99	29.5
Role		
LIS Faculty Members	35	10.5
LIS Practitioners (Librarians)	107	31.8
LIS Student	194	57.7
Highest level of LIS education attained or enrolled in		
BS	46	13.7
MLIS	139	41.4
M.Phil.	106	31.5
Ph.D.	45	13.4
Age Group		
Up to 20 Years	40	11.9
21 to 30 Years	79	23.5
31 to 40 Years	101	30.1
41 to 50 Years	79	23.5
More Than 50 Years	37	11
Professional Experience (for LIS Professionals Only) n=280		
Up to 5 Years	76	27.1
6 to 10 Years	47	16.9
11 to 15 Years	55	19.6
16 to 20 Years	39	13.9
21 to 25 Years ³	33	11.8
More than 25 Years	30	10.7
Status of Institution/University Serving or Enrolled in		
Public Sector	269	80.1
Private Sector	67	19.9
Province / Territory		
Islamabad Capital Territory	62	18.5
Punjab	140	41.7
Sindh	32	9.5
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	86	25.6
Baluchistan	2	0.6
Gilgit Baltistan	1	0.3
Azad Jammu and Kashmir	2	0.6
Overseas	11	3.2

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents were male and LIS students. Most of the respondents had MLIS/M. Phil degrees in LIS or were enrolled in MLIS or M. Phil. Program. The respondents belonged to various age and experience groups. Most of the respondents were serving or enrolled in public sector organizations. The respondents belonged to different provinces/territories in Pakistan. However, the respondents from Baluchistan, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir were very few being remote regions in Pakistan.

Perception regarding nomenclature change for LIS discipline

In first question (Section I) of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to give their opinion regarding change of the nomenclature of LIS discipline. They were provided with following two options: a. Nomenclature of the LIS discipline may be changed; b. the same nomenclature i.e., Library and Information Science(s) may be retained. This question received 336

responses. Majority of respondents (269, 80%) were in favor of changing the name of LIS discipline. However, 69 (20%) respondents desired to retain the same name such as Library and Information Science(s) (Figure 1).

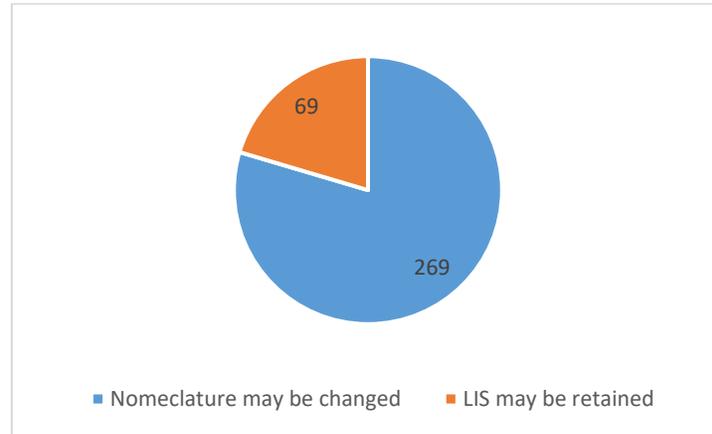


Figure 1: Perception regarding change of nomenclature (n=336)

The respondents who were in favor of change of nomenclature were also asked to suggest new name for LIS discipline. The results are given in table 3 below.

Table 3: New nomenclature suggested for LIS discipline (n=269)

Rank	Nomenclature Suggested	Frequency	Percentage
1	Information Management	89	33.1
2	Information and Knowledge Management	57	21.2
3	Information Resources Management	32	11.9
4	Library, Information and Archival Management	29	10.8
5	Library, Information and Documentation Sciences	25	9.3
6	Information Science	22	8.2
7	Information Studies	5	1.9
8	Library and Information Management	4	1.5
9	Library and Information Studies	3	1.1
10	Information Management Sciences	1	0.4
11	Library and Information Science Management	1	0.4
12	Library and Knowledge Science	1	0.4

Table 3 shows that the respondents suggested 12 nomenclatures for LIS discipline. The most desired nomenclature was “Information Management” as 89 (33.1%) respondents favored this option and was ranked first. The nomenclature “Information and Knowledge Management”, “Information Resource Management” and Library, Information and Archival Management” were ranked second, third and fourth respectively. Moreover, less than 10% of the respondents suggested the other eight nomenclatures as given in Table 3.

Placement of LIS department under faculty

In third question of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to suggest the appropriate faculty under which the LIS schools/departments be placed. Respondents were presented with five options along with “any other please specify” option at the end. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Placement of LIS department under faculty (n=336)

Rank	Faculty	Frequency	Percentage
1	Management Sciences	175	52.1
2	Social Sciences	96	28.6
3	Information Technology / Computer Science	44	13.1
4	Art and Humanities	13	3.9
5	Sciences	6	1.8
6	Separate faculty may be created for LIS	2	0.6

Table 4 shows that the most desired faculty was Management Sciences as 175 (52.1%) respondents favored this option and was ranked first. However, Social Sciences and Information Technology/Computer Science were ranked second and third respectively. Moreover, less than 4% respondents opted for “Art and Humanities” and “Sciences.”. Two respondents were of the opinion that the LIS discipline should not be placed under above mentioned faculties and a separate faculty might be created for LIS.

Discussion

The changing information environment and introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the LIS profession demands drastic changes in the nomenclature, syllabi and practices of LIS discipline (Hjorland, 2002; OBE & Griffiths, 2003). Moreover, the term “information” is more prevalent than “library” in the professional literature. Therefore, LIS professionals need to re-examine their premise and reposition towards current trends and perspective (Chu, 2001). However, two LIS schools in Pakistan have had to change their name from Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS) to Department of Information Management (DOIM) that have broader scope and wider job market. Other LIS schools in Pakistan are still reluctant to the change of nomenclature from LIS to IM. Our study shows that majority of respondents are in favor of change of nomenclature for LIS discipline and the term of Information Management was ranked as first. Our results support the views of Anwar (2009) who was in favor to adopt the same term for LIS discipline. He argued that LIS professionals manage information by performing following functions: identifying, evaluation, selecting, acquiring, organizing, and

disseminating information and delivering information literacy instruction. Therefore, LIS professionals are actually information managers and belongs to the discipline of Information Management. Moreover, the term Information Management is free from space and time.

The adoption of Information Management nomenclature will create more employment opportunities in the government and private sector organizations along with traditional “library market” (Davis, 2004; Nnadozie, Igwe & Nwosu, 2016). However, it will require commensurate changes in the existing LIS curricula to meet the needs of expanded job market. The professional development of existing faculty in the LIS schools is another critical aspect of the shift to IM. Therefore, the capacity and capability of faculty members need to be improved to incorporate and teach IM related subjects to the students (Anwar, 2016). The term “Information Management” portrays progressive, ideological and conceptual image of the profession and also broadens the scope of the discipline as information is everywhere (Chu, 2001). Moreover, we cannot tie the discipline to an institution or building. The change of nomenclature will convey a message that the profession is not limited to the librarianship only and will have positive psychological affect effect on students. LIS is a service oriented profession, therefore, the students need to be properly inculcated in service ethics to become good information managers. Additionally, renaming the LIS discipline may increase the enrolment of the students and improve the standing of the school in the academe (Dadzie, 2008).

The change of nomenclature of two LIS departments to “Information Management” particularly elimination of word “library” from the nomenclature faced criticism from many LIS professionals on social media, The antagonists were of the opinion that the vast majority of LIS professionals work in the libraries and eliminating the word “library” from nomenclature will confuse the identity of librarians with other Information Technology/Computer Science and Business Administration professionals. Moreover, merely change of nomenclature for face lifting without major changes in the syllabi will be worthless. Though, nomenclature change is the first step to the major reforms and the curriculum changes come slowly with the passage of time (Chu, 2001). Some LIS professionals were of the opinion that LIS schools should launch parallel programs both in LIS and IM. Nevertheless, LIS schools cannot ignore the critics’ voice, therefore, the change of nomenclature requires national discourse between LIS schools, LIS associations and regulatory bodies.

Our results show that majority of respondents were in favor of locating the LIS school (department) under the Faculty of Management Sciences. However, the positioning of LIS departments within the university organogram also varies in Pakistan, the change of nomenclature to Information Management will also clarify its placement in the Faculty of Management Sciences. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents desired the placement of LIS departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences and was ranked second. Most of the databases and Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan also group LIS discipline with Social Sciences subjects. Okeke, Oghenetega and Erimieleagbon (2014) also recommended that LIS schools should be under Faculty of Social Sciences. Therefore, all stake holders need to initiate dialogue to reach logical consensus.

Conclusion

Provision of information is crucial for the development in every field of life. Therefore, the LIS schools have to learn to adapt to the changing information environment. They have to prepare students to serve as information managers to see them as an agent of change and not its victims. Information Management appeared as the most popular nomenclature for LIS discipline and the Faculty of Management Sciences as the most accepted location of LIS departments in the universities. However, IM requires wide range of capabilities, therefore, LIS professionals need to reinforce their IM-enabled competencies. Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan should

sit up with all the stake holders to create uniformity in the nomenclature of LIS discipline, placement of LIS schools (departments) under the most relevant faculty in the universities, LIS/IM syllabi in Pakistan. Moreover, LIS professionals need to make responsible choices and implement branding strategy that both communicate the value and identity of the profession.

This study provides policy makers with an empirical evidence for transformation of LIS profession and education in Pakistan and other developing countries. Further studies needs to be done concerning the reasons why LIS professionals resist to accept making changes in the LIS nomenclature and syllabi to avail opportunities offered by the paradigm shift.

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