

JOURNALS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE IN IRAN

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Abstract – This article aims at describing three points on Library and Information Science Journals of Iran: (1) how Farsi Library and Information articles are produced and published in Library and Information Science Journals? In this regard, six routes of producing journals were investigated: the route of native culture; the route of the current status of book and library in Iran; the route of the past and current status of book and library out of Iran; the route of making connections among dispersed works in works of Library and Information Science written in Farsi; the route of translating non-Farsi works into Farsi ones; and finally the route of the current works produced within Library and information science in Iran, (2) what criteria are used for ranking Farsi journals and what is the status of Farsi Journals of Library and Information Science in this ranking? And finally (3) a brief history of six journals of Library and Information Science with circulation and three that are no longer published is presented.

Keywords - Farsi Library and Information Science Journals, Ranking Farsi Journals, Writing Library and Information Science Articles, Translating Library and Information Science Articles.

The Library and Information Science training program with contents that we have today, was officially started in 1967 by establishing a Master degree at Tehran University. The first instructors of this Major were Americans who came to Iran under different missions and took the responsibility of training the students. At first, this newly established Major was taught using English texts and resources. At the first stages, translating non-Farsi articles into Farsi was used as a policy to make up for the unavailability of Farsi textbooks. With an increase in the number of graduate students of Library and Information Science and as they occupied the administrative positions of university libraries as well as the positions of faculty members a need was felt to study the history of librarianship in Iran, the status of librarianship in other countries and also the problems as well as the past and the current issues of Library and Information Science in Iran. Such works were published in the form of articles in journals of librarianship of that time. The first formal Farsi journal of librarianship, entitled “Daftare Ketabdari”, was published by the Central Library of Tehran University in 1966. This journal is still and is still published. The second journal was published by the Publication Committee of ILISA three years after the establishment of the Department of Library and Information Science, in 1970, at Tehran University.

This journal was in circulation as a quarterly journal until 1979 but its circulation was stopped when the ILISA stopped its activity (More details of these two journals are provided in the last section of the article).

This paper follows 3 objectives: (1) How are Farsi articles of Library and Information Science produced and published in Farsi journals of Library and Information Science? (2) What are the criteria for ranking Farsi journals and what status is the of Farsi journals of Library and Information Science this ranking? (3) Providing a brief history of the publication of the most important journals of Library and Information Science in Iran.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF PRODUCING ARTICLES OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

The information related to books, libraries and Librarianship find their ways into the journals of Library and Information Science in a number of ways. Below six important routs are described:

1. The route which is known as '*native knowledge*' or the '*native culture*'. The information related to these two domains conform traditional librarianship of Iran, which involves a collection of rules on book writing, manuscripts, epigraphy, illumination, cataloging and classification of books, etc. while observing a special scheme. The whole of these rules are of vital importance in Manuscriptology, which deals with the identification and organization of the cultural heritage of each country. The second group of native knowledge refers to the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of the collections of Iranian/Islamic libraries as well as librarians who were scientists in their periods. These librarians were 'Epistemologist' and were fond of arts and poetry.^[1] These two capabilities were important elements in meeting the needs of library users, because their good knowledge with regard to the content of resources made them enable to guide the users in the best way possible. Therefore, they were more Epistemologists rather than librarians because they were, in fact, involved in knowledge management. These kinds of knowledge were not learnt in a classroom, rather they were learnt through apprenticeship in libraries. After the establishment of Departments of Librarianship in universities of Iran, some parts of this knowledge found their way into the classrooms and some are still used in training environments. Not all pieces of information found their way into the classrooms. In such cases, the findings appeared in the form of articles in journals of Library and Information Science to enable those who did not have access to classes or workshops to get access to these pieces of knowledge. This is especially important because the new innovations in book-producing technology and other printed works are causing the traditional procedures to disappear, and publication of articles will help us record the traditional procedures. These kinds of articles are

mostly produced by “traditional librarians” or “Manuscriptologists” who are near to retirement and are interested in transferring their knowledge and experiences to the public by writing and publishing articles.

2. The route of ‘*describing the current status of books and libraries in Iran.*’ This route includes two items: (1) the native knowledge that has the potential to be international and (2) the knowledge that is national and an emphasis on them will clarify whether the way to progress is open or closed. Such articles embody statistical, sociological, economic and political analyses of the quantity and quality of libraries and publications either in some parts of Iran or throughout the whole country. Those articles that deal with the characteristics of libraries of cities, provinces or the whole country while adopting specific viewpoints are also included in this route. These articles are mostly written by educated librarians of Iran (B.A. and the higher levels).
3. This route can best be defined as the route of ‘*describing the pre and current conditions of book and library outside Iran.*’ While taking advantage of sociological and statistical analyses, this route puts forward invaluable information concerning the status of books and libraries in other countries of the world and the patterns used in each country – patterns that could possibly be exercised in Iran. This route also provides quantitative and qualitative information concerning the facilities and services given by large libraries or even national libraries of other countries. Articles that reflect such topics intend to motivate librarians and introduce them to suitable patterns that will ultimately enhance the quantity as well as the quality of library services. Such articles make mainly use of non-Farsi resources, and thus they could be easily used by those with no or little familiarity with the English language.
4. The route that aims at ‘*bridging the non-Farsi works of librarians and information experts that are related to varying subject areas and, thus, are not ordinarily categorized in the same group.*’ This route includes information and findings that have acquired a lofted status in other countries. This embodies policies adopted as well as the performances of libraries in other countries with the objective of their Iranization wherever possible. The intent of articles in this route is knowledge dissemination, that is, the findings of other countries could best be applied to our country. This fact will play an active role in enhancing the status of life and will improve the scientific endeavors that are carried out in Iran. Again, such articles heavily make use of non-Farsi articles and information resources. It is, therefore, evident that those who do not master a foreign language, i.e. English, will not be able to function as writers in this route. Unfortunately, in certain cases some writers do not master the foreign language, which itself raises problems. In fact, one of the bottlenecks the editorial boards of journals of Library and Information Science are faced with is the need to make a distinction between the two types of writers. It is called a bottleneck because they have no way out of the responsibility of comparing

and contrasting the Farsi text with the original non-Farsi text. This job is in deed both time consuming and expensive.

5. The route that could best be labeled as the route of '*translating non-Farsi information resources*.' This route covers those works that embody practical information and messages to the benefit of Iran's Library and Information Science experts. Such messages cover theories, methodologies, etc. that could practically be applied to Iran. The writers of such works were encouraged particularly when there were few library resources to be taught and used at Iranian universities. In fact, during this period, journals of Library and Information Science in Iran were abundant with translated works. Mainly, those familiar with a foreign language, (Iranian students in other countries, etc.) played the role of translators in this route.
6. The route related to '*the current information outputs of Iranians*.' Those active in this route are mainly students of higher education levels who participate in the production of science through their theses and dissertations. This route embodies discussions related to the area of Library and Information Science. Although these works are produced in Iran, theories and methodologies of foreign research activities could be traced in them.

Students of higher education at Tehran University, Tarbiat Modarres University, Mashhad Ferdowsi University, Shiraz University, Ahvaz University, the Department of Medical Library and Information Science and Azad University are all obliged to propose and defend a good research project, which will be monitored by the supervisor and one or more advisors. If such theses and dissertations are done appropriately, scientific articles could be extracted from them and published in journals. The new policy of the above universities that necessitates the publication of at least one article from the thesis/dissertation by the student is another important factor that can encourage and increase the number of articles published. In Mashhad Ferdowsi University, for instance, articles have been extracted from theses and dissertations, which have been published in the form of article collections. Tehran and Shiraz Universities have been among the forerunners in this area. Nevertheless, the reality is that only a small number of such articles are written in a way that could be published in scientific journals. One reason behind this is that students of higher education are not experienced enough to extract qualitative articles from their theses and dissertations. This is while theses and dissertations are considered to be a vital resource for production of standard research and native scientific articles. If, for instance, an increase is observed in the number of articles extracted from dissertations, a subsequent increase could be expected in the scientific and technological development of the country. I would like to call this route, the route of '*Knowledge Production*', and I believe that it can play a vital role in the scientific and technological development of Iran.

RANKS OF JOURNALS

How are the above six routes ranked by those responsible in the Commission for the Ranking of the Scientific Journals of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology? This Commission ranked the scientific journals into three groups, i.e., (1) Scientific, (2) Informative-Scientific and (3) Research-Scientific journals. In the following part a description of each will be given:

1. *Scientific journals*. These journals reflect scientific information and are useful but their publication will bear no specific privilege for the faculty members. The following journals are named *scientific*:
 - a. Faslnameye Payame Ketabkhane [Library Message] (The Office of the Board of Trustees of Iran's Public Libraries, Tehran)
 - b. Faslnameye Ettela'eresani [Journal of Information Science] (IRANDOC, Tehran)
 - c. Faslnameye Ettela'shenasi [Informology] (The Office of Cultural Research, Tehran)
 - d. Iranian Journal of Information Science and Technology (RLST, Shiraz)

The two journals labeled as C and D have recently started their publication and have not yet been ranked by the Commission for the Ranking of Scientific Journals. I think both these journals embody the required potential to be ranked as Informative-Scientific.

2. *Informative-Scientific*. These journals embody original, descriptive, explanatory and translation articles. The publication of articles in such journals will bear a privilege for faculty members of universities. Nevertheless, the total mark each Informative-Scientific article receives is not more than one third of the maximum mark a Research-Scientific article may receive. The following journals, related to the area of Library and Information Science, are all Informative-Scientific:
 - a. Faslnameye Ketab (Iran's National Library, Tehran)
 - b. Daftare Ketabdari [A Quarterly Journal of Academic Librarianship] (The Central Library of Tehran University)

From amongst these two, Faslnameye ketab is, at the moment, in the process of reevaluation so as to acquire the Research-Scientific rank.

3. *Research-Scientific*. Such journals publish original articles that include analyses and argumentations related to Iran. These may all be labeled as articles related to native science production. The main feature of Research-Scientific journals is that more than 70 percent of their articles are received through the sixth route or routes akin to it. The other characteristics of such journals is that the members of their Editorial Boards are at least Associate Professors. Half of the members of the boards are selected from persons within the university and the other half are selected and appointed from amongst persons from outside the university. Moreover, such journals make use of literary and scientific editors, and publication of an article in such

journals will bear the highest privilege for their writers, i.e. faculty members, etc. *Faslnameye Ketabdari va Ettela' resani* (published by the Central Library and the Documentation Center of Astane Qodse Razavi, Mashhad) has been ranked as Research-Scientific.

In the next part, the most important journals of Library and Information Science of Iran are reviewed, and the article will be closed with a description of the journals of Library and Information Science that were being published before the Islamic Revolution in 1978.

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1. Journal of Ketabdari va Ettela' resani, The Quarterly Journal of Organization of Libraries, Museum and Document Center of Astane Qodse Razavi.

This quarterly is the first journal published in the area of Library and Information Science in a city other than Tehran. It is published in Mashhad and 33 issues of it have been published since 1997. The subjects covered by this journal are as follows: Library and Information Science, Archive, Information Networks, Information Technology and Communications, Manuscripts and Bibliography. This journal is financed by the Central Library and Document Center of Astane Qodse Razavi. It is, in fact, the only journal within this subject area that pays a specific amount of money to translators and writers of articles. The members of the Editorial Board have been appointed so as to follow the instructions made by the Committee for the Scientific Journals. The majority of articles published in this journal are papers extracted from theses and dissertations. Between 8 to 10 articles are published in each issue. Dr. Mohammad Hossein Dayyani^[21] has been the Editor-in-Chief of this journal since its first circulation. The articles of each issue could be accessed through, <http://www.aqlibrary.org/Main/main.aspx>.

2. Daftare Ketabdari (A Quarterly Journal of Academic Librarianship)

This is the oldest journal of Library and Information Science in Iran that has been published nonstop and biannually since 39 years ago. So far, 44 issues of it have been published. Three librarians, Iraj Afshar, Dr. Qasem Safa, and Dr. Abbas Horri, have already been the Editor-in-Chief of this journal. More information could be obtained about this journal through its homepage, <http://library.ut.ac.ir/fact/pub/librarianship.htm>.

3. Faslnameye Kitab (Quarterly Journal of the National Library)

The National Library of Iran could prepare the grounds for the publication of a three-monthly journal on Library and Information Science after half a century. The first issue of this journal was published in 155 pages in 1990 by its Editor-in-Chief who was Mr. Norollah Moradi. In the first article of that issue, the following points were included and discussed: The role of information, the expansion of technology, changes in the electronic

world, the role of current librarians, the need for holding formal and informal training courses for librarians. The article also stated that publication of journals and specialized periodicals could be counted as a good means for training specialized librarians. That is why the National Library of Iran is after publication of three-monthly journals on library and Information Science. It is believed that such journals will open the eyes of librarians to the latest developments made in Library and Information Science and make them acquainted with the latest specialized articles written by Iranian and foreign librarians.

Fasnameye Ketab has been published consistently and each three months since 1990. During this period, three Iranian librarians were appointed as the Editor-in-Chief of this journal namely, Norollah Moradi^[3] (issues 1-16, with 10 articles in each issue on average), Dr. Abbas Horri^[4] (issues 17-47, with 8 articles in each issue on average), and Fariborz Khosravi^[5] (issues 48- current, with 12 articles in each issue on average). The paper size used for issues 1-48 was 23×16.5 centimeters, and for the following issues was 26×19.5 centimeters. Each issue, in addition to the articles, embodies reports, news and book reviews.

The advantages of this three-monthly journal are two-fold, due to its affiliation to the National Library of Iran: (1) availability of substantial budget for qualitative publication of the journal and (2) the availability of experts who may function as writers, editors, litographers, etc. Moreover, during the Editorship of Dr. Horri, grounds had been prepared for an easier delivery of articles, extracted from theses and dissertations completed in Tehran University, supervised or advised by Dr. Horri. This journal is now ranked as an Informative-Scientific journal despite the quality of the articles because it has not met the requirements set by the Commission for Ranking of Scientific Journals with regard to the features the Editorial Board of journals must have.

4. Ettela' resani (Journal of Information Science)

This journal was published with the name Nashriyeye Fanni between 1972-1978 by IRANDOC affiliated to the Research and Planning Institution for Science and Research. No issue of this journal was published between 1978 and 1982 due to the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution and other factors. The second phase of its publication started from 1982 with the name, Ettela' resani: Nashriyeye Fanniye Markaze Asnad va Madareke Elmi, affiliated to the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education (currently called the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology). It is still published with this name. The articles of this journal mainly cover topics related to information organizations and information related to information science in Iran and the world.

The position of Editor-in-Chief of this journal was bestowed on Jalal Mosavat from the beginning to the year 1982. This position was bestowed on Dr. Hossein Qaribi, Ph. D. in Chemistry, who is also the President of IRANDOC. The homepage of this journal is <http://www.irandoc.ac.ir/jrnl-all.htm>. The full-text of the previous articles of this journal

could be accessed through this homepage as well.

5. Ettela shenasi (Informology)

The first issue of this three-monthly journal was published in 2003, with Dr. Abbas Horri and Dr. Narges Neshat being its Editor-in-Charge and Editor-in-Chief respectively.

The main objective sought by this journal is to provide a suitable basis for exchanging information concerning the information infrastructure and the related areas. It concentrates on conceptual, instrumental and functional aspects of the above topics as well as on theoretical foundations. So far, eight issues of this journal have been published. This journal has to be taken as a qualitative journal taken the quality of the articles as well as the quality of the paper, cover, paper size, binding, lithography, etc. This journal is not yet ranked as an Informative-Scientific journal despite the quality of the articles because it has not met the minimum requirements set by the Commission for Ranking of Scientific Journals with regard to the features the Editorial Board of journals must have. This journal is mainly directed to the faculty members of universities as well as librarians, M.A. level, who work at libraries.

6. Payame Ketabkhane (Library Message)

The first issue of this journal was published by the efforts made by the Board of Trustees of Iran's Public Libraries in summer 1991. This journal first introduced itself as a literary cultural periodical although it is abundant with library and Information Science articles. In fact, as it moves on, the number of articles related to Library and Information Science increases. The paper size of this journal is 30×22 centimeters and is unique, with regard to lithography, photos, etc., amongst all journals of Library and Information Science that are currently published in Iran. Between 2005-2006, only one or two issues of it were circulated. Dr. Abbas Horri was the Editor-in-Chief of some issues and it was published under the Editorship of the Writers' Council.

7. Iranian Journal of Information Science and Technology

This journal has been published each six months by Regional Library of Science and Technology, www.srlst.com / www.rlst.ac.ir, located in Shiraz, since 2003. The writers of this journal are from all over the world. It covers topics like, Information Science, Information Technology, Information Management, Library and Information Science, Computational Linguistics, etc. So far, eight issues of this journal have been published. This journal, while observing the international standards, is published outside Iran and takes advantage of an international editorial board as well. Nevertheless, it has not yet been ranked by the Commission for the Ranking of Farsi Journals. So far, it has had two Editor-in-Chiefs namely, Dr. Nezameddin Faghih^[6] and Dr. Jafar Mehrad^[7].

JOURNALS WHICH ARE NOT PUBLISHED ANY LONGER

8. Nameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran

At the beginning, it was published with limited circulation and three-monthly with the name, Khabarnameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran (Newsletter of the Association for Iran's Librarians) in 10 to 15 pages. It was just distributed among the members and embodied information related to the activities carried out by different groups of the association. The first issue was published in spring 1967. Gradually, pages were added such that in 1970, it included 103 pages and embodied articles besides reports, etc. From 1967 until 1972 it was printed seasonally. At the sixth year of its publication, its name changed into Nameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran and was published as a scientific journal rather than a newsletter. It was then that its objectives underwent modifications. It, now, embodied not only specialized and technical articles but also articles related, in one way or another, to book, library, book reviews, literacy, librarianship, etc. The last issue of Nameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran was published in the first half of 1979, when the association's activities came to an end. The Editor-in-Chief of this journal was Ms. Poori Soltani^[8].

9. Karane

Karane is the first journal in the whole history of librarianship in Iran, which is published by private sector. In *A Note from the Editor-in-Chief* published in the first issue of this periodical, Mr. Mehrdad Niknam, the Chief-Executive, the publisher and the Editor-in-Chief of Karane, wrote, "The private sector can also publish journals in Iran using the help of experts in Library and Information Science". Despite making such remarks, those responsible could just send four issues to the Printing House due to expenses, paper problems, etc. that usually the private sector has to deal with. In fact, this periodical could survive only for one year. An interview with librarians and scientists has a special place in Karane. In the first issue, an interview with Bahaoddin Khorramshahi, in the second issue, an interview with Abdolhossein Azarang, and in the third and the fourth issues an interview with Iraj Afshar were included, which embodied useful information. One of the interesting things done by this periodical is the publication of the questions related to the entrance exam (Konkooor) of Library and Information Science at M.A. level.

10. Ketabdar

As soon as Iran's first Association for Librarians brought its activity to an end and changed its Charter, Ketabdar replaced Nameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran, but just for a short period of time. In fact, this journal is the weakest, in terms of the content, Farsi journal related to the area of Librarianship within Iran. It also lived the shortest life amongst the other journals. Its first issue was published in January 1979 and its last issue was published in the first half of 1980. In all, four issues of it were published in three volumes.

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF JOURNALS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

In this section, the status of journals of Library and Information Science will be discussed. To do so, a comparison will be made between the status of such journals with those of other disciplines, mostly those taught at the same faculty. Such subgroups are Faculty of Psychology and Faculty of Education. These two disciplines have acquired a better status compared to the Faculty of Library and Information Science because they utilize more faculty members and faculty members of higher ranks, they deal with a larger audience, etc. In all, there are more than one hundred faculty members in the area of Library and Information Science in Iran from whom less than twenty have a Ph.D. degree and the rest hold an MA degree – In all, there are three Full Professors and eight Associate Professors. The users of journals of Library and Information Science are mainly faculty members of universities as well as students of higher education of librarianship. This comprises a smaller population compared to the other two disciplines of Psychology and Education. Library and Information Science entered, as a discipline, into the Iranian universities in 1967– thirty three years after the first appearance of Psychology and Education in Iranian Universities. In all, nine Research-Scientific and two Informative-Scientific journals concerning Psychology and Education are published in Iran. This is while for Library and Information Science only one Research-Scientific journal, two Informative-Scientific journals and three Scientific journals are available.

It deserves mentioning that two of the Editor-in-Chiefs of Research-Scientific journals of Psychology and Education were Editor-in-Chiefs of journals of Library and Information Science. These were Dr. Abbas Horri, the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Education of Tehran University and Dr. Mohammad Hossein Dayyani, the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Education and Psychology in Ahvaz Shahid Chamran University as well as the Journal of Education and Psychology in Mashhad Ferdowsi University both of which acquired the rank of Research-Scientific during the Editorship of Dr. Dayyani. One interesting point is that all the three journals in which Dr. Dayyani hold the position of the Editor-in-Chief are published in a city other than Tehran and have been ranked as Research-Scientific.

The other point is that Dr. Abbas Horri has been the Editor-in-Chief of three journals of Library and Information Science during the past years namely, *Faslnameye Ketab*, *Daftare Ketabdari* and *Payame Ketabkhane*. It deserves mentioning that he is also the Executive Editor of the Journal *Ettela'shenasi*. An interesting point is that he is the Editor-in-Chief of three, out of four, journals of Library and Information Science published in Tehran.

Based on what was mentioned it could be concluded that librarians hold a small population in Iran, nevertheless they have proved active in publicizing their findings. It seems that we are approaching the era of institutionalization of information production

among librarians in Iran.

ENDNOTES

1. Afshar, I., "Moje No dar Ketabdari va Daryaye Sonnat". *Nameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran*, Vol. 10, No. 4, p. 478.
2. Dayyani, M. H., Faculty Member of the Department of Library an Information Science, Mashhad Ferdowsi University.
3. Moradi, N., M. A. in Library and Information Science and M. A. in Social Science, Tehran, University.
4. Horri, A., Faculty Member of the Department of Library an Information Science, Tehran University.
5. Khosravi, F., Ph.D. in Library and Information Science. Vice - Chancellor for Research Affairs, Iran's National Library.
6. Faghih, N., Professor of the Department of Management, Shiraz University.
7. Mehrad, J., Professor of the Department of Library and Information Science, Shiraz University and the President of Regional Library of Science and Technology.
8. Soltani, P., M. A. in Library and Information Science. She is one of the Professional librarians who has been teaching Information Organization and Classification at M. A. Level at Tehran University for a long time.