

Education for Library and Information Science in Iran: Current Trends

H. Kiani, Ph.D.

Azzahra University, I. R. of Iran

email: Hkiani2000@yahoo.com

Abstract

The article presents an account of the Library and Information Science (LIS) education in Iran. It briefly reviews the growth and development of the LIS education in the periods: 1939-1978, as the Pre- Islamic Revolution period, and 1979- 2007, as the Post –Islamic Revolution period. The paper covers an up-to-date list of the 29 universities in Iran offering various LIS programs including Post-Diploma / Associate Diploma; Bachelor of Library and Information Science; Master of Library and Information Science and Ph.D., and the establishment of the LIS departments in a chronological order (84 depts.). It also emphasizes the re-designing of the curriculum based on the emerging needs to match the new technological age. It highlights the current trends in the last 10 years. The paper concludes that Post Islamic-Revolution LIS education witnessed more progress comparing to the Pre-Islamic Revolution period, particularly in the last decade (1997- 2007). At the end, some suggestions are given for improving the LIS education in Iran.

Keywords: Library and Information Science Education, Librarianship, Iran.

Introduction

Iran is an ancient country with around 5000 years of civilization, more than 1400 years of Islamic culture and with a rich background in education, literature and arts. This Asian country, covering an area of 1.648,000 km² is the 16th largest country in the world with a population of about 70 millions in 2006 (Statistical Center of Iran, 2008).

Until 1979, Iran was a constitutional monarchy headed by "Shah". A prolonged struggle for a popular government culminating in 1978 resulted in the downfall of the "Shah" and victory of the Islamic Revolution. In 1979, the centuries old monarchy was replaced by a popular Islamic government.

Ever since, the country has had many reforms and developments in different areas including higher education. During the last 30 years, the number of schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions has enormously increased and the number of students and teachers at various levels has also risen accordingly. With these advances in education, establishment of libraries and consequential need for library education were the natural outcome.

At present, Information Technology (IT) is a strong force, but it is not an independent agent. IT provides a range of tools for librarians and information scientists to help in providing efficient, economic and effective services to library users. LIS professionals have the main challenge of recognizing and grasping new opportunities already available for those who like to notice the changing trends. They also have a unique competitive advantage over the non-specialists trying to enter the wonderful new age of electronic libraries, intelligent agents and natural language searching, in which machines will do all the work including abstracting (Taneja, 1997).

A Brief Background of Librarianship and Library Science in Iran

A peep into the annals of history of Iran would show that it has had rich and well organized libraries even in the distant past. Some of these libraries are famous for their rich collections especially that of manuscripts relating to religion, medicine, philosophy and arts. But Iran had no facilities for formal training and education in librarianship on modern lines till 1920's.

As a result of scientific policies, the first university of Iran was established in the capital (Tehran) in 1934. At that time, since new academic libraries faced many problems including trained manpower, therefore, the libraries continued to be organized and administrated by educated people without any formal education in librarianship.

During the second half of the 20th century, the role of libraries in educational, scientific, industrial and cultural development has been recognized. As such, concerted efforts have been made by the government to recognize libraries, library systems and library services on modern lines.

Between 1939 and 1966, workshops and short courses were conducted in Tehran by Iranian librarians, having had training abroad, and a number of American librarians.

Within 1966 - 1978, Tehran University was followed by seven more universities in the establishment of regular library science departments in various parts of Iran. All of these universities offered academic programs i. e. Post – Diploma /Associate Diploma of Library Science (ASS. DIP.); Bachelor of Library Science (B.L.S.) and Master of Library Science (M.L.S.).

After the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, there has been a tremendous growth in the field of library and information science education in Iran.

Therefore, historically, the growth and development of library and information science education in Iran can be divided into four phases as follows:

1. 1939-1965: Short courses and informal library education,
2. 1966-1978: Formal library education,
3. 1979-1995: Growth and development of library education after the Islamic Revolution, and

4. 1997- 2007: The current trend

The Study Objective

The present study aimed to describe the current situation of LIS education in Iran including the number of departments; various programs; admission; duration and curriculum. The article will also emphasize on the re-designing of the curricula particularly on B.A./ B.L.I.S. program, recently done by Alzahra University in Tehran and on M.A. / M.L.I.S. program by the Ferdowsi University in Mashhad.

Review of Literature

The articles and theses written by Mangala, (1972); Ebrami (1973); Haidar, (1974); Ganjian, (1975); Sinai, (1976) and Poor Hamzehm (1977) described the LIS education in Iran before the Islamic Revolution. After the establishment of the new government in 1979, several articles and theses written by other authors are illustrative of the importance given to this subject and the related problems.

A comparative study of the educational systems of LIS education in Iran and India showed that LIS education at university level in India is about 75 years old, where as it is only 40 years in Iran. It also revealed that there were few LIS education programs in Iran at M.L.S. and Ph.D. level comparing to India. The programs through correspondence were not available in Iran, where as 10 universities in India offered such programs (Kiani, 1999). Mortezaei compared the curricula of librarianship and information science at higher education level in UK, USA, India and Iran. She analyzed a number of factors such as student skills required and the use of IT in educational programs (Mortezaie, 2001).

A review of the literature revealed that one of the main problems that the LIS departments in Iran have already witnessed was the lack of enough modifications and changes based on the current needs of the society. So they followed a traditional view. However, recently the faculty members revised the content and structure of their courses.

Mehrad put forward the results of a research project at Shiraz University about the curriculum of Information Management, and Information and Communications Systems. He designed a curriculum while specifying obligatory and optional courses (Mehrad, 2002). Dayyani studied the changes in M.L.S. curriculum and emphasized on the discipline of librarianship and information science at M.A. level, exercised since 1967 in Iran (Dayyani, 2006).

Fattahi and his colleagues published an article based on the report of a research project by the LIS department of Ferdowsi University (Mashhad). The goal of the project was to study and revise the current curriculum of LIS education to bring it closer to the changing needs of the present society in Iran (Fattahi, 2006).

*The LIS Education in Iran after the Islamic Revolution (1979 – 2007)**The early years after revolution (1979-1995)*

When the Islamic revolution triumphed in 1979 in Iran, there were only seven university departments offering LIS programs.

In 1980, all institutions of higher education were closed for a period of about three years. During this period, all courses, rules, procedures and total functioning of the institutions were revised by the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution with a view to re-organizing them to serve the society in the changed conditions. The obvious effort was to bring all these institutions under the umbrella of Islamic rules, and some curricula were restructured to make room for Islamic philosophy as well as cultural and moral education.

Soon after the revolution, based on the fact that the libraries and information centers were becoming larger, it necessitated the use of experienced staff in the areas of information management and IT. Thus the government decided to establish new universities including new LIS departments throughout the country. Consequently, LIS departments increased from 7 in 1979 to 20 in 1995.

The current trend (1997- 2007)

Basically, at the end of the 20th century, the country faced many reforms and developments in different areas including technology, research and higher education. During the years 1996-2007, the number of colleges, universities, research centers and as a result, libraries increased enormously.

With the advent of new technological capabilities including IT, ICT¹ and ICTM², library and information science education continued to become complex. Recently, the fundamental issue of LIS education has been kept at the forefront for strategic reasons of being the best way of creating professionals to face the challenges of information society. In the new education procedures, emphasis on

CD - ROM, multi-media, databases, storage media and networking, needs to be realized. Accordingly, Iranian public universities did special efforts to establish more LIS departments. For example, the University of Payam-e-Noor established about 25 new departments, as the city branches, during 2000-2007. Establishing of new Ph.D. programs was the new trend to improve the research programs through the governmental universities in 2005.

Tables 1 and 2 show the latest growth and development of LIS education in Iran and illustrate its chronological position from 1966 to 2007 in governmental and non – governmental universities, respectively.

Table 1

Chronological List of the LIS Departments in the Public Universities till 2006-2007

SN	University	City	Establish - ment of LIS Dept.	Offered Programs *				
				Ass.Dip	BLS	MLS	P.h.D	
1	Tehran University	Tehran	1966	—	✓	✓	✓	* Ass. Dip. = Associate Diploma B.L.S = Bachelor of Lib. Sc. M.L.S = Master of Lib. Sc.
2	Tabriz University	Tabriz	1968	—	✓	—	—	
3	Shiraz University	Shiraz	1974	—	✓	✓	✓	
4	Shaheed Chamran University	Ahwaz	1978	—	✓	✓	✓	
5	Medical University of Iran	Tehran	1978	—	✓	✓	—	
6	Al-Zahra Univresity	Tehran	1978	—	✓	✓	—	
7	Ferdowsi University	Mashhad	1985	—	✓	✓	✓	
8	Isfahan University	Isfahan	1986	—	✓	—	—	
9	Tarbiat Moddares University	Tehran	1988	—	—	✓	—	
10	AllamehTabatabaie University	Tehran	1990	—	✓	✓	—	
11	Shahed University	Tehran	1990	—	✓	—	—	
12	Shaheed Bahonar University	Kerman	1992	✓	—	—	—	
13	Medical University of Isfahan	Isfahan	1993	—	✓	—	—	
14	Birjand University	Birjand	1994	✓	✓	✓	—	
15	Yazd University	Yazd	1994	—	✓	—	—	
16	Medical University of Tabriz	Tabriz	1994	—	✓	—	—	
17	Tarbiat Moallem University	Tehran	1995	—	✓	—	—	
18	Khalij Fars University	Booshehr	1995	✓	—	—	—	
19	Boo Ali Sina University	Hamedan	1996	✓	—	—	—	
20	Payam-e-Noor University	Tehran and About 30 city branches around the country	1997	—	✓ (30)	✓	—	Including 30 city branches throughout the country
21	Razi University	Kermanshah	1997	✓	✓	—	—	
22	Shaheed Beheshti Medical Sc.	Tehran	1997	—	✓	—	—	
23	Medical University of Zahedan	Zahedan	2000	—	✓	—	—	
24	Medical University of Ahwaz	Ahwaz	2001	—	✓	—	—	
25	Ghom University	Ghom	2002	—	✓	—	—	
26	Medical University of Hamedan	Hamedan	2005	—	✓	—	—	
27	Tarbiat Moallem University	Tabriz	2005	—	✓	—	—	
28	Medical University of Tehran	Tehran	2006	—	—	✓	—	
	Total			5	52	11	4	

Table 2

Chronological List of the LIS Departments. in Islamic Azad University Branches (Non-Governmental Universities) within 2006-2007

SN	University	City	Establishment of LIS Dept.	Offered Programs			
				Ass.Dip	BLS	MLS	P.h.D
1	Islamic Azad University (IAU) (IAU)-Rood-e-Hen Branch	Rood-e-Hen	1987	—	✓	—	—
2	(IAU)-Research Unit Branch	Tehran	1989	—	—	✓	—
3	IAU – Tehran North Branch	Tehran	1991	—	✓	✓	✓
4	IAU-Zarand Branch	Zarand	1996	✓	—	—	—
5	IAU-Shirvan Branch	Shirvan	1996	✓	✓	—	—
6	IAU-Masjed Soleyman Branch	Masjed Soleyman	1998	✓	✓	—	—
7	IAU-Hamedan Branch	Hamedan	1998	✓	✓	✓	—
8	IAU-Ton-e-Kabon Branch	Ton-e-Kabon	1998	✓	✓	—	—
9	IAU-Babol Branch	Babol	1998	✓	—	—	—
10	IAU-Arak Branch	Arak	1999	✓	✓	—	—
11	IAU-Ghom Branch	Ghom	2000	✓	—	—	—
12	IAU-Borojerd Branch	Borojerd	2000	✓	—	—	—
13	IAU-Birjand Branch	Birjand	2001	✓	—	—	—
14	IAU-Kermanshah Branch	Kermanshah	2002	✓	✓	—	—
15	IAU-Shiraz Branch	Shiraz	2002	✓	—	—	—
16	IAU-Fasa Branch	Fasa	2002	✓	—	—	—
17	IAU-Darab Branch	Darab	2002	✓	—	—	—
18	IAU-Ramhormoz Branch	Ramhormoz	2002	✓	—	—	—
19	IAU-Azad Shahr Branch	Azadshahr	2002	✓	—	—	—
20	IAU-Marvdasht Branch	Marvdasht	2002	✓	—	—	—
21	IAU-Tabriz Branch	Tabriz	2003	—	✓	—	—
22	IAU-Dorood Branch	Dorood	2003	—	✓	—	—
23	IAU-Sari Branch	Sari	2004	✓	—	—	—
24	IAU-Farahan Branch	Farahan	2004	✓	—	—	—
25	IAU-Shahr-e-Kord Branch	Shahr-e-Kord	2004	✓	—	—	—
26	IAU-Khomein Branch	Khomein	2005	✓	✓	—	—
27	IAU-Ahwaz Branch	Ahwaz	2006	—	—	✓	1
	Total			21	11	4	

As the above tables show, at present 28 governmental universities in Iran are offering the LIS programs, where as, one of them, namely, the University of Payam-e-Noor has itself 30 LIS departments as the city branches throughout the country (Ministry of Cultural and Higher Education, 2006). Islamic Azad University (IAU), as a non-governmental university, also has two LIS departments in Tehran and 25 city branches throughout the country (Islamic Azad University, 2006).

Table 3 shows the total number of the universities as well as the number of departments offering different LIS programs in Iran.

Table 3

The Total Number of the LIS Departments in Iran Offering Different Programs (2006-2007)

S.N	Kind of University	No. of Univ.	Nos. of LIS Depts.	Offered Programs			
				Ass. Dip.	B.L.S	M.L.S	Ph.D.
1	Governmental universities	28	57*	5	52	11	4
2	Non- governmental universities	1	27	21	11	4**	1
	Total	29	84	26	63	15	5

* The University of Payam-e-Noor has one LIS Department in Tehran and about 30 departments as the city branches around the country.

** The LIS Department of the Islamic Azad University in Ahwaz city was established in 2000, as an affiliated branch of Tehran Unit, but in 2006, it was changed into an independent Unit.

Totally, there were 84 LIS departments in Iran at the end of 2007, excluding those LIS departments established in the University of Elmi-Karbordi (University of Applied Sciences and Technology), as the vocational system.

University of Elmi-Karbordi (University of Applied Sciences and Technology)

In order to promote the technical and scientific knowledge of the job holders, mainly those who are working as low-skilled or semi-skilled laborers in different sectors of the economy, the University of Applied Sciences and Technology (UAST) was established in 1992 with the objective to call on all the entities concerned in both public and private sectors to educate specialized manpower required by the economic, political, social, cultural and industrial sectors of the country.

The reason behind the establishment of UAST was to create a sense of unity and conformity in technical and vocational educations at post-high school level. The training courses at UAST consist of full-time degree programs and modular education (Poodmani program).

As mentioned above, UAST has an special structure out of other governmental

university systems. The admission of students in this university is in two different methods:

1. Full-time degree program

- A two-year Associated Diploma program,
- A two year Bachelor program (this program is planned for those who have already finished their Associate Diploma).

finished their Associate Diploma).

At present, there are eight institutions in Tehran and in other cities offering LIS programs at the two levels of Ass. Dip. and B.L.S.

2. Modular education program

In modular education program (Poodmani), the degree is divided into several packages, and the students take the packages in a maximum period of five years. Upon the completion of all packages, they will get an Ass. Dip. degree.

Level, Admission, Duration, Objective and Structure

It is worth noting that there are four levels of LIS education in Iranian universities: a) Associates Diploma (Ass. Dip.); b) Bachelor of Library Science (B.L.S.); c) Master of Library Science (M.L.S.) and d) Ph.D.

For admission to the three levels of: Ass. Dip.; B.L.S.; and M.L.S., a separate centralized national entrance examination is conducted every year by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology; the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education and Islamic Azad University. However, there is a separate decenterized entrance examination annually for the Ph.D. program in four governmental universities located in Mashhad, Shiraz, Tehran and also Ahwaz, and in the Islamic azad University.

a. Associate Diploma (Ass. Dip.) (Kardani)

The program aims at providing the students with basic knowledge about library and information science and to prepare para- professional librarians to work in small libraries. Duration of the program is two years after getting high school diploma. To complete this course, one is required to undergo 70 units. Of these, 33 units consist of general subjects and 37 units are devoted to library and information science.

b. Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science (B.L.I.S.) (Karshenasi)

The aim of this course is to prepare professional personnel to work in junior middle professional positions in large academic, public or special libraries. This is a four year full time course for the holders of high school diploma. It requires completion of about 134 units. The program consists of five categories of subjects, i.e. general subjects (20 units), basic subjects (22 units), compulsory library science subjects (58 units), prerequisite library science subjects (4 units) and non-library science subjects (30 units) (Ministry of Cultural and Higher Education, 1996).

c. Masters of Library and Information Science (M.L.I.S.) (Karshenasi Arshad)

The aim of this course is to acquaint the students with librarianship and also to improve their academic and professional abilities so as to enable them to manage different types of libraries at middle levels. In fact, these are the people who rise to senior professional positions in the course of time. Hence, the courses in M.L.I.S. are designed to prepare people to hold the highest professional positions ultimately. These positions include technical services, user services, research, teaching and etc.

The program requires at least two years of full time study after the Bachelor's degree. Thesis is one of the compulsory courses. Every student has to pass 32-34 credit hours. The course includes general subjects, library science, seminars, internship, thesis (compulsory).

d. Doctoral of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

By the growth and development of the higher education in Iran during 1982-1990, the number and variety of educational and research institutions considerably increased. Thus, the need for more professionals including qualified teachers and researchers in the field increased as well. Although most of the LIS departments faced some obvious problems especially in terms of academic staff, resources, traditional teaching methods, standardization, etc., but a few departments planned to establish Ph.D. program. The Islamic Azad University, as a non-government university, established the first Ph.D. program in 1990. Later, the plan for the purposed program was prepared by the governmental universities and approved by The Ministry of Higher Education. In 2000, the University of Shiraz (Shiraz) and University of Ferdowsi (Mashhad) were also permitted to jointly establish a Ph.D. program. Tehran University and University of Shaheed Chamran (Ahwaz) were the next universities began to establish Ph.D. program in 2004.

Although, the mentioned five universities do not follow a same discipline for admitting students in Ph.D., but the most important factors include Entrance Test (language test and LIS courses) and a professional LIS based interview. In addition, the mentioned LIS departments admit 1-2 extra Ph.D. candidates each year from among the LIS instructors introduced by their own universities, as well as 1-2 Ph.D. candidates as scholarship program introduced by some ad hoc organizations.

The Ph.D. program consists of the two separate phases. The first is a two years program covering 20 units, followed by a regular and comprehensive examination, namely “ Jamme Examination “. In the second phase, the students have to write a dissertation as a qualified research work, followed by a viva-voce test. Then the students are entitled to get their Ph.D. degree. The Ph.D. program has to be completed within a period of at least three years, extending not beyond six years.

Results

Teaching Staff

The results of the present study showed that about 80% of the LIS schools in Iran have full-time faculty, and the remaining 20% are functioning as part-time faculty. The faculty members in Iran are divided into four levels i.e. lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor and professor. Majority of the faculty are lecturers and assistant professors. During 1990-2000, there were no satisfactory facilities for research leading to Ph.D. degree in Iran. So, a number of the LIS teachers were allowed to earn Ph.D. degree from abroad especially from Australia, India and UK based on a government scholarship system. Recently, a number of LIS teachers have been selected to persuade their studies in Ph.D. in one of the mentioned five Iranian universities, offering Ph.D. program.

Need for Revising the Curricula

The early curricula for LIS programs conducted by the Iranian universities were largely based on the recommendations of an ad hoc committee of librarians approved by the High Council of Educational Planning (HCEP) in 1996. The curricula were based on a national scheme; thus they can never be static and must always meet the future demands. The result of a survey conducted on 77 M.L.I.S. graduates showed that 83% of them were not satisfied with the curricula. They believed that it did not match the current needs of librarians (Mortezaie, 2001). Therefore, recently a few universities began to redefine the curricula according to the real needs of the society.

Revising of M.L.I.S. program

The LIS curricula in M.L.I.S. level has been revised in two main periods of the Pre-Islamic Revolution (1966-1979) and Post-Islamic Revolution (1983-1997). But according to the real needs of the society and due to the drastic changes occurred in information technology in the last decade, there was a need to revise and up to date the content of the already revised curricula again.

In the academic year 2003-2004, upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, the LIS department in Ferdowsi University (Mashhad) started revising the curriculum in M.L.I.S. level as a research project. First, the curricula of the USA, England, Australia, India and Iran were reviewed and compared with the aim of introducing a new syllabus for the fields of Information Management and IT Management in Iran. In other words, the goal was to revise the current curriculum of LIS education in Iran to bring it closer to the changing needs of the present society. The curriculum modification program in Iran is effected by two factors: 1) changes in the curricula of Librarianship and Information Sciences of other countries, particularly the U.S.A, and 2) the publicity and extension of IT in Iran

(Fattahi, 2006).

Each year a large number of students, majoring in the areas other than library science, are accepted in this area, and evidently the three prerequisite courses given to such students (collection building, material organization and reference services) are not able to give them a good view of the basic concepts of this major. Thus, there is a dive need for a new curriculum to cover the topics and concepts related not only to Information Technology, but also to the basic courses in LIS (Dayyani, 2006). Accordingly, the LIS department in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad introduced a revised curriculum to keep abreast of the latest needs of the scientific society.

Finally, the new revised curricula were recommended as follows:

Each student must totally pass 32 credits, consisting of basic (4), specialized obligatory (12), specialized optional (8) and supplementary (8) credits. The program was supported by compensatory courses (5 credits) for those M.A. students holding B. A. degree in the fields other than library science (Fattahi, 2006).

Revising of B.L.I.S program

In the academic year of 2003- 2004, a revised Bachelors program was prepared by the LIS department at Shaheed Chamran University (Ahwaz), which was finally approved by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

Later, the University of Alzahra (Tehran), as the only women university in Iran, decided to revise the B.L.I.S. program in 2005. After one year, they finalized the report and recommended a new program with a special focus on the changes occurred in IT and consequently in computer environment. The report included the points as necessary for the development of the following disciplines:

- 1- Increasing the research potentials,
- 2- Enhancing the status of computer knowledge,
- 3- Creating practical skills based on the current needs of librarians, and
- 4- Development of theoretical knowledge.

The research team in the LIS department in Alzahra University finally recommended the new B.L.I.S. program to the university (Table 4). It was then assigned by the Board of Trustees and taken into action immediately (2006 –2007).

Table 4

The Structure of B.L.I.S. Curriculum in Alzahra University

Column	Course type	The whole credits required
1	Basic	36
2	Specialized obligatory	70
3	Specialized optional	10
4	General	21
5	Prerequisite	4
	Total	141

The current changes for the B.L.I.S. and M.L.I.S. programs are arranged in such a way as to provide the students with the expected skills and capabilities. In other words, in the new curricula, two main points are emphasized:

1. Strengthening the theoretical foundation of Library and Information Science,
2. Creating practical skills particularly in the area of applying new technologies (Fattahi, 2006).

During the last 25 years (1983-2007), the responsibility of defining and introducing courses for different higher education levels has been bestowed on “The High Council for Planning in Humanities (HCPH)”. The council established a number of sub-committees for all courses in higher education including a Special Committee of Librarianship (SCL). Thus a few professionals were invited to make the policy for the various academic changes in the field.

The members of SCL were recently changed and the new team consisting of a group of qualified and experienced LIS teachers from Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad, Ahwaz and Isfahan started their first technical meeting on the new changes in LIS education in Iran, in the early 2008.

At the same time, the Iranian Library and Information Science Association (ILISA) also started some meetings with the LIS departments with the aim of improving and developing the LIS education system.

Conclusion

In Iran, the non official education for librarianship started nearly seventy years ago (1939), by a short term training in Tehran, whereas the formal education at university level is around 40 years old (1966, in Tehran University). It has received a better attention after the Islamic Revolution (1979).

As a whole, during the 17 years after the Islamic Revolution, the LIS departments increased from 7 in 1979 to 20 in 1995 and within the last decade (1997-2007), the growth and development of LIS education witnessed its highest progress. So that, at

present, there are 84 departments throughout the country offering LIS programs at four levels: 1) Ass. Dip. 2) B.A./ B.L.I.S. 3) M.A. / M.L.I.S. and 4) Ph.D., plus the Modular education programs (Poodmani system) offered by the University of Elmi Karbordi.

Basically, at the end of the 20th century, the abundant changes resulting from the emergence of new technologies and the variety of needs of the society encouraged the LIS teachers of Iran to reveal their views on the content, methods and educational system of LIS program with an emphasize on the need for revising the curriculum.

Accordingly, a number of universities including Mashhad University, Shaheed Chamran University (Ahwaz), Alzahra University (Tehran) and Shiraz University revised the curricula at B.L.I.S. and / or M.L.I.S. level.

Suggestions

To improve the current condition of LIS education in Iran, the following suggestions, are presented:

1. Though the majority of the LIS departments in Iran have been established during the last 10 years, yet, more such departments needed to be established in the other parts of the country.

2. The LIS departments should be allowed more autonomy with regard to developing their own syllabi including a new curriculum in IT subjects.

3. More qualified LIS teachers have to be invited to work in the departments, which are in shortage of experienced and qualified educational team, particularly at Ph.D. level.

4. More research and educational facilities should be provided for the teachers.

5. The authorities in the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology have to encourage other LIS departments to follow a similar policy as the mentioned departments according to the verified and revised curricula in the related fields.

Notes

1. Information and Communication Technology
2. Information and Communication Technology Management

References

Dayyani, M. H. (2006). Changes in the M.A. curriculum of LIS in Iran. *Iranian Journal of Information Science and Technolgy*, 4 (1), 87-100.

Ebrami, H. (1973). Social obstacles hindering the growth of librarianship in Iran. *Iranian Library Association Bulletin*, 6 (2), 4-20.

Fattahi, R. (2006). The new M.A. curriculum for librarianship and information science: The report of a research project. *Iranian Journal of Information Science and*

Technology, 4 (2), 69-81.

Ganjian, M. H. (1975). The difficulties in the library science education in Iran. *Nameye Anjomane Ketabdarane Iran*, 7 (4), 514-526.

Haider, S. J. (1974). Library education in Iran. *International Library Review*, 6 (3), 309-320.

Islamic Azad University. (2006). *The guide book for the 2006 national entrance test*. Tehran: (IAU).

Kiani, H. (1999). *The growth and development of LIS education in Iran and India: A comparative study*. (Ph.D.Dissertation). Chandigarah(India): Panjab University.

Mangala, P. B. (1972). Library Education in Iran: A survey and some suggestion. *UNESCO Bulletin for libraries*, 26 (5), 253-258.

Mehrad, J. (2002). *The curriculum for information management and information communications systems (in Farsi)*. Shiraz: University of Shiraz.

Ministry of Cultural and Higher Education. (2006). *The guide book for the 2006 national entrance test*. Tehran: The High Education Testing Organization.

Ministry of Cultural and Higher Education. (1996). *The guide book for the 1996 national entrance test*. Tehran: The High Education Testing Organization.

Mortezaie, L. (2001). *The LIS graduate courses in UK, USA, India and Iran*. Tehran: Iranian Information and Documentation Center.

Poorhamzeh, A. (1977). *Current status of library education in Iran: A review of program offered at Iranian academic institutions*. MLS Thesis, Shiraz: Pahlavi University.

Sinai, A. (1976). Some notes on the teaching of librarianship in the Iranian universities. *Iranian Library Association Bulletin*, 9 (2), 261-271.

Statistical Center of Iran. (2008). *Statistical pocket book of Islamic Republic of Iran*. Tehran: SCI.

Taneja, S. K. (1977). Changing trends in LIS. *EESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology*, 17 (3), 21-22.