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A Comparison of MLIS Curricula Taught in Pakistani Library and Information Science Schools with Higher Education Commission Curriculum

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A Comparison of M.L.I.S Curricula taught in Pakistani Library and Information Science Schools with Higher Education Commission Curriculum.

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Abstract:

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to compare Pakistani LIS schools curricula with Higher Education Commission designed curriculum for LIS schools in Pakistan. The paper identified the most common course titles and the most unique course titles taught in Pakistani LIS schools.

Design/methodology/approach – The author requested to the responsible focal persons of the LIS schools in Pakistan through personal phone calls and emails and collects the data through email and personal visits of LIS schools.

Findings–The paper finds gaps of LIS schools curricula's, most common course titles and the most unique titles.

Practical implications–The paper helps in the design of LIS schools curricula according to the market needs. It also enables the higher authorities to know their LIS schools status on the world level. It helps in the LIS schools accreditation at International level.

Originality/value – The study shows level of LIS schools with the help of course titles they offered. It is the first comprehensive study and based on pure research.

Keywords – Curriculum, LIS Schools Curricula, LIS Education in Pakistan, Development of Education, Uniformity of LIS Education

Paper type – Research paper

Introduction:

In the modern world the most important way to improve the quality of any education system are to improve the standard of curricula's. Education is the basic need of every country to improve the services and standards of the Nation. The guidance needed to researchers and other students about their research activities is not possible without proper contact with Professional Librarian. Only Professional Librarian plays a key role in helping the researchers to reach them to their target data, books or articles etc. Professional Librarians also getting knowledge from library schools, if they got standardized knowledge from the LIS schools, they obviously help and guide their library users with proper methods. The question is how the Professional Librarians will be of uniform skills with market oriented techniques? It is just possible with the uniformity of LIS schools curricula's. To select the uniform curricula's of LIS schools according to the market needs and implement it in the LIS schools. It is also necessary

to review the curricula's after every two years for up gradation and amendments as needed by market. The curricula's is the only way to set target and achieve through syllabi. Role of curricula's is just like a superset and syllabi are like a subset. The key role plays by curricula's in the development of education and as we know that the basic role playing in education dissemination by Professional Librarians. In Pakistan LIS schools must develop the curricula's of MLIS. After getting MLIS degree mostly students join Profession. In the study we therefore focus on the standardization and uniformity of curricula's for the program Master in Library and Information Science (MLIS).

Mahmood (1997) also explains the curricula's in terms of "Every good educational program need strong curriculum". For this purpose Higher Education Commission (HEC) Islamabad also call a meeting in 1995 to discuss the MLIS curricula's of LIS schools in Pakistan. The purpose of this meeting was also to design a market oriented curricula's for LIS schools.

Problem Statement:

The standardization always plays an important role in the processing of every work. The simple example is the credit or debit card introduced by banks. They just follow the standards and every credit or debit card use everywhere in the world. To achieve the standards many organization works to design standards, implement standards and to achieve the target output through implementation of the standards. The standard work only compares other works with the planned work. In this way Pakistani LIS schools delivering LIS education in the country. But no uniformity in LIS education by LIS schools, as HEC also designed a standardized curriculum for LIS schools in Pakistan, but there is no proper implementation. As the curriculum needs review after each two or three years at least to meet the market need.

Background Study:

A complete set of taught resources in a school or any other academic institution is known as Curriculum. The outline of topics covered is known as syllabus. Curriculum always describes objectives of the system and syllabus always describes the means to achieve them. The Curriculum basically comes from a Latin word means the course of a chariot race. However, curriculum has come to mean much more than a prescribed one track race and calls for a search for an understanding that gives meaning to education that is both functional and ethical Curriculum as a guiding document helps teachers in understanding standards that students need to achieve at the end of a developmental stage. The curriculum document will indicate "what" to teach, "How" the curriculum is to be taught and help in checking "whether" the curriculum is taught as per the document.

Different educationist define curriculum in different ways. Some of them simply equate curriculum to the syllabus that is to be transmitted in the class. But basically curriculum is the

superset and syllabus is the subset of curriculum. The curriculum just fix target and the syllabi provides a way to achieve the target in a scheduled time. "A syllabus gives a more focused outline for particular subjects. It can't be equated, because a curriculum is for a course but a syllabus is for a subject" (Dr. Yasmin Jayathrithan. d). Syllabus gives contents detail of one subject but Curriculum is designed for the whole course that contains course titles of the whole program. Curriculum plan methods, contents and objectives for achieving the course objectives. It is used as assessment tool to check the progress of the course."Curriculum is developed keeping in mind the standards students should achieve from well- researched best practices. Curriculum is designed so that the teaching and testing are aligned with the standards set for each developmental stage" (Vimala Nandakumarn. d).

Some educationist defined the Curriculum as a goal which is achieved through some proper plan in advance. It is the interaction of knowledge through teachers with students. Curriculum basically is guidance point to teacher about the planning of course, course objective and course completion as well in a scheduled time. "The curriculum can be a strait-jacket or a crutch or a spring-board. For a teacher the curriculum stops being stifling if she understands what it is meant to achieve. But most use it, often badly, as a crutch because they make no effort to engage with it or understand what it hopes to achieve. Once a teacher understands that, she can use it or work around it to achieve the same ends" (Dr. Gurveen Kaurn. d)."Curriculum development describes all the ways in which a training or teaching organization plans and guides learning. This learning can take place in groups or with individual learners. It can take place inside or outside a classroom. It can take place in an institutional setting like a school, college or training centre, or in a village or a field. It is central to the teaching and learning process" (Roger and Taylor (1998). Nwalo (2000) stated about Library Information Science schools that "this doubting task requires the acquisitions of new resources, expertise and careful planning". Minishi and Majanja (2007) stated about the curricula of library information sciences that it must contains those course titles which empowers the professional librarian to play their role effectively.

According to Singh (n.d) about today's librarianship which is the age of information, information produces in bulk at every second as an economic resource. He defined the role of librarian is very important and play a role of facilitator, mentor, guide, tutor, direction-finder, searcher, researcher, assessor, manager, preserver, advertiser, conversationalist, technological expert, as well as director, entrepreneur and imaginative. To accomplish all these roles by librarian the library information science education development is must. Indirectly it means that rich curricula of library information science are needed.

Ocholla (2003) explains about the curriculum that it is a basic part of any educational or training programs which not only provides courses modules offered in a program but it also information about the contents of the program and the scheduled time frame in which the objective of the program is achieved. Furthermore he explains that it is essential in a successful way to train manpower in a simplest process. Another scholar define the role of librarian as "A librarian is a mediator between man and the graphic records that his previous generations have produced; and the goal of the librarian is to maximize the social utility of these records for the benefit of humanity" (Shara 1972).

According to Mahmood, Khalid (1997) curriculum establishes a basic foundation of any course and will help in achieving goals or objectives of the course for which the curricula's were designed. In his view if we want to make librarianship as a strong profession, so we should design curricula's according to the international market needs. For this purpose different meeting were held in UGC now-a-days higher education commission (HEC) to make a standardize curricula's for LIS schools in Pakistan. For achieving the target universities participation is also necessary in shape of implementation of the designed curricula's in their concern LIS schools in Pakistan. To make stability in the courses offered in LIS schools in Pakistan, there should be a board or committee to review the curricula's each year or after some specified duration like two or three years to assure market need course titles inclusion in the curricula's. Mahmood, Khalid (1999) discussed about the curriculum of Library Science that was revised by Board of Studies of Punjab University. In 1991 University Grant Commission (UGC) revised the Library Science curriculum and added computer applications to the curriculum.

The method used for conducting the study is content analysis. Content analysis process is the most common methodology used in quantitative research studies and qualitative research studies. The study is implemented in inductive and deductive research as well. Often researcher confused during the study as they consider it easy. "Content analysis as a research method is a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena" (Krippendorf 1980). Content analysis is defined by Cole (1988) that "it is a method of analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages. The study through content analysis is considered a simplest study scheme for quantitative research study, which needs no complex statistical analysis (Morgan 1993). Content analysis is sometimes used for counting purpose.

Education is necessary for the development of every country. Only education provides good leaders, managers, researchers, trainers and administrators. In the modern world at every stage educated person is needed. From lower grade to the top most grades educated persons are needed by community. There are also different categories of education as well like formal education and informal education. The quality of education is the most important at every

stage that may be formal education or informal education. For the same purpose education of LIS in Pakistan is also playing very important role to educate the community, student, employees and researchers etc. Need of the modern users of libraries are increased day by day. Users demand for the new tools, databases and technologies etc. Every user of the modern world needs their needed information within no time. All these possibilities to satisfy modern library user, modern curricula's are needed to implement in all LIS schools in Pakistan. The modern curricula's will be identified through study modern library users, their demands and expectations from libraries. Basic aim of the curricula to set standard for achieving educational goals within specified time. This study helped us in identifying the gaps among the LIS schools curricula's. The aim of this research to review the curricula's of LIS schools in Pakistan. To find the most common course titles used and the most unique course titles. Higher Education Commission curriculum designed for the LIS schools was selected as model curriculum for the study to compare other LIS schools curricula's with the HEC curriculum. This research identified the gaps among the curricula's of LIS schools in Pakistan.

Objectives:

The main objectives of this study is to compare MLIS curricula's of different LIS schools with Higher Education Commission designed curriculum for LIS schools in Pakistan. Through which a following series of objectives will be achieved:

1) To find most common course titles in MLIS

2) To find most unique course titles in MLIS

3) To identify gaps among the curricula's of MLIS in Pakistan.

Methodology:

To keep the identity secret the LIS schools name are coded and not mentioned their detail names in the study. While course titles are coded but also shown their course title with mentioned code, to know gaps among the LIS schools in below:

1. Introduction to library & information sciences
2. Introduction to catalogue : Theory and practice
3. Introduction to Classification : Theory and practice
4. Collection Development
5. Information Sources and Services
6. Management of Library & Information Center
7. Research Methods
8. Library Automation / Information Storage and Retrieval
9. Introduction to literature of science and Technology
10. Social Science, Humanity

11. Islamic ,Pakistan and Regional Literature
12. Public records, rare material and their conversation conversation-1
13. Resource sharing and networking
14. Communication and media librarianship
15. Advanced management techniques
16. Management of information system
17. Serial Management
18. Marketing with special emphasis on information products & services
19. Study of a foreign language
20. Thesis and viva voce

In below table 1 some details are given:

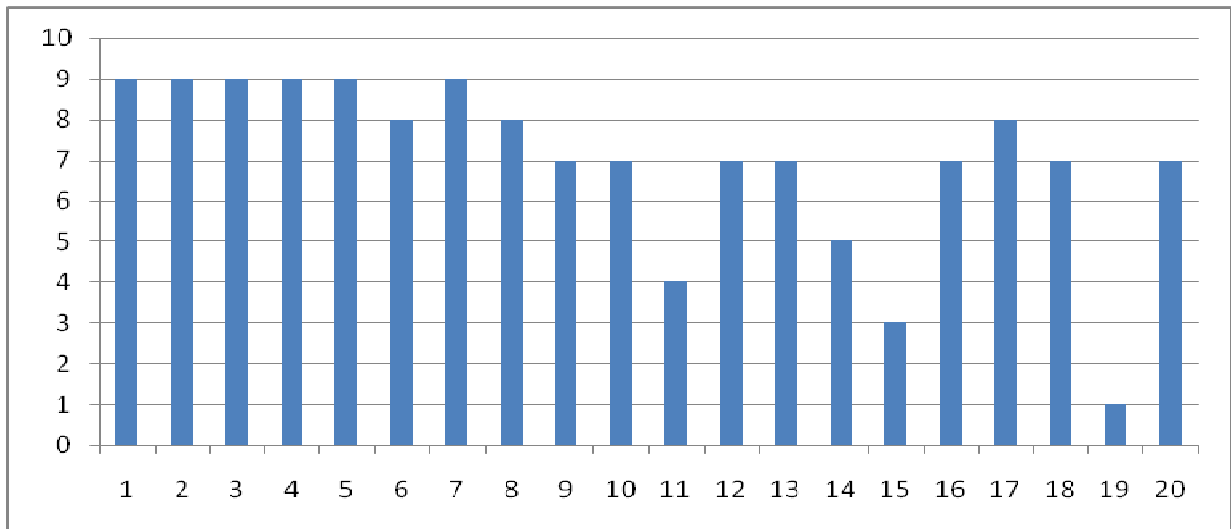| S.No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Sub Total
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	12
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	19
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	17
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	9
5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	16
6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	14
7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	18
8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	15
9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	20
Total	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	8	7	7	4	7	7	5	3	7	8	7	1	7	140

Table 1

In the above table 1 the top row contains numbers that is from 1, 2, 3 ………….20. These are basically codes for course titles.

In the right Colum there are different numbers given which shows the total course titles offered by LIS schools in Pakistan in MLIS curricula's. The sum of all course titles offered in nine LIS schools in Pakistan is 140.

The last row of table 1 shows the course titles offered in how many schools, like course title 1 offered in all LIS schools of Pakistan. The sum for course title 1 is 9. Hence course title 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 are also offered in all LIS schools of Pakistan. Course title 6, 8 and 17 are offered only in eight LIS schools of Pakistan. Course title 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 18 and 20 are offered in seven LIS schools of Pakistan. Course title 14 is offered in only five LIS schools of Pakistan. Course 11 is offered only in four LIS schools in Pakistan. Course title 15 is offered only in three LIS schools in Pakistan. Course title 19 is offered only in one school of LIS in Pakistan. Subtotal of all these course titles are 140. For the study we make HEC curriculum is the basic foundation and we compare all the other LIS schools in Pakistan curriculum with HEC. The gap is 40 course titles among the nine LIS schools in Pakistan.

After analyzing the course titles and making comparison with Higher Education Commission curriculum designed for Pakistani LIS schools, the following results obtained shown in the graphical table 2:

Graphical Table 2

In the study total nine LIS schools of Pakistan curricula's were studied and compare with HEC curriculum. In the above graph nine LIS schools were define from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Total course titles included in HEC curriculum were 20. In the graphical table 2 course titles are mentioned by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20. The graphical table 2 shows that the most common course titles are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7. These six course titles are offered by all nine LIS schools of Pakistan. These course titles are most common in all LIS schools of Pakistan. The course titles coded as 6, 8 and 17 are offered only in three LIS schools. The course titles coded as 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 18 and 20 are offered in seven LIS schools of Pakistan. The most unique course title found in the study is course title coded as 19, which is offered only one LIS school in Pakistan.

In the graphical table 3(S. No) is assigned to show the data in organized form that is to show percentage from lower to higher. This is the graphical representation of LIS schools course titles they offered from low to high. Lowest value is 45% that is only 9 course titles offered by LIS School coded as 4 and the highest is 100%, course titles offered 20 out of 20 by LIS School coded as 9.
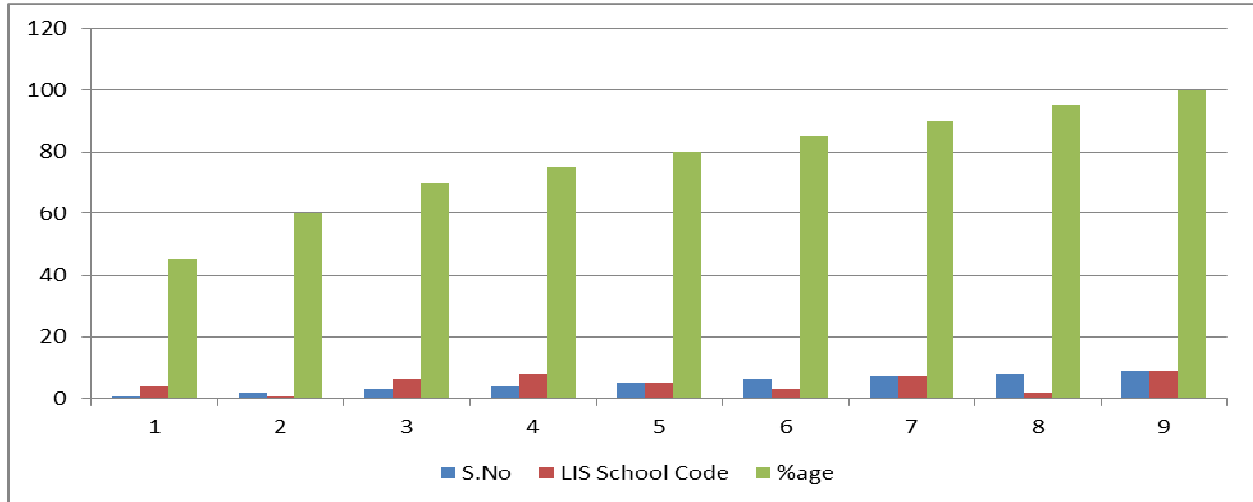
Graphical Table 3

In the graphical table 4, the nine schools of LIS in Pakistan were shown with a graphical representation of course titles they offered in their LIS schools. To rank schools of LIS according to course titles they offered, the hierarchy becomes as:

S. No# 1   School Coded as 9 offered 20 course titles of HEC and ranked as 1

S. No#2   School Coded as 2 offered 19 course titles of HEC and ranked as 2

S.No#3   School Coded as 7 offered 18 course titles of HEC and ranked as 3

S. No#4   School Coded as 3 offered 17 course titles of HEC and ranked as 4

S. No#5   School Coded as 5 offered 16 course titles of HEC and ranked as 5

S. No#6   School Coded as 8 offered 15 course titles of HEC and ranked as 6

S. NO#7   School Coded as 6 offered 14 course titles of HEC and ranked as 7

S. No#8   School Coded as 1 offered 12 course titles of HEC and ranked as 8

S. No#9   School Coded as 4 offered 9 course titles of HEC and ranked as 9
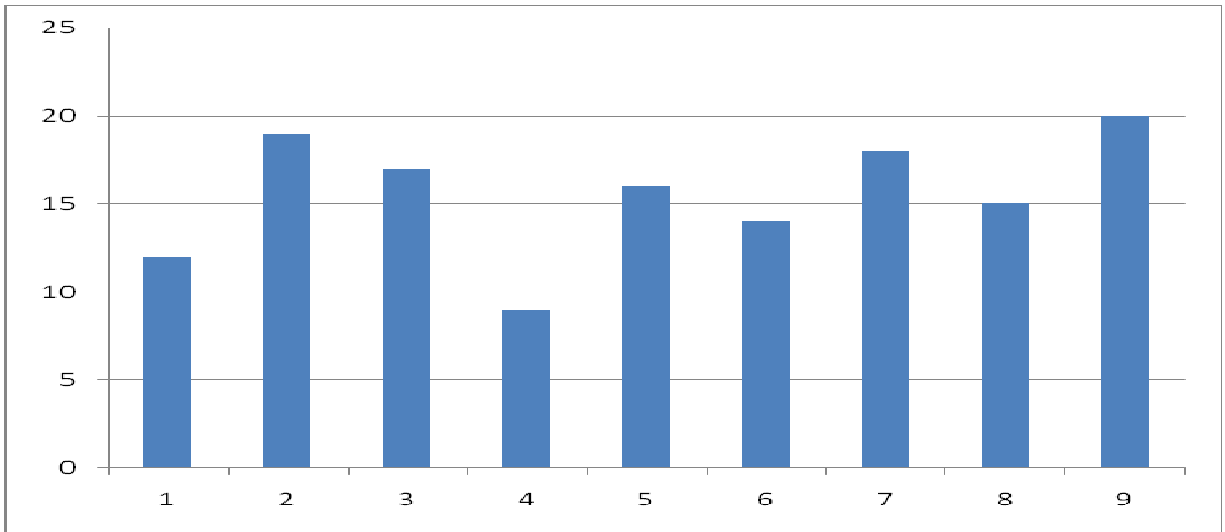
Graphical Table 4

Conclusion and Implication of the Study:

This study helps in the standardization and uniformity at national level of LIS curricula's of Pakistani LIS schools. It helps in the accreditation of MLIS program at international level like ALA accreditation. The study shows that there is no standard and uniformity followed by the LIS schools in Pakistan. Every school of LIS offer courses according to their own interest, which causes problem for the graduates from these schools. During the study we note that there are only one LIS school which follow HEC curriculum and all the remaining LIS schools set their own standards. The study enables us to see the gaps of LIS schools with each other. The studies define the weak areas which needs more improvements to qualify the local competition among LIS schools in Pakistan. The study helps the curriculum designers for LIS schools at National Level. With the help of this study a proposal can be drafted for international accreditation of Pakistani LIS schools. The author not mentioned the schools by their names to keep their identity secret, for this purpose and further studies readers may contact the author.

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