CHOOSING THE PROFESSIONAL CAREER: A SURVEY OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS IN KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAD

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Choosing an appropriate career or a course of study reflects the individual's personality formation and his/her ambition in life. This is particularly important in a professional course like Library and Information Science (LIS). Looking into the bright future of the profession in the emerging Information Technology (IT) scenario, the present paper attempts to know the factors responsible for choosing Library and Information Studies as a future career.

1 INTRODUCTION

Career is an occupation or profession, especially one which requires special training. Career development is a progression up in an occupation which one chooses near the beginning of one's working life. People develop various skills and knowledge purposefully to progress in their occupation and to attain higher status. In a technologically and socially complex society education/training plays a major role to help people identify their occupational activities they want to pursue and guide them in their career development.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study were:

- To know the students option to select a course of study.
- To access the factors responsible for opting the LIS course
- To examine the variations in the urban, semi-urban and rural students approach to seek the admissions.
- To find out most influential factors to the success of getting admission
- To ascertain the possible career path of students after obtaining the degree.

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3   METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted taking a sample of 43 students (both previous and final year) who sought admission for Master's dgree in Library and Information Science(M.L.I.Sc.) course during 1999 and 2000. A structured questionnaire was distributed to the students. Out of 43 students, 37 responded.

4   ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND DISCUSSION

Data obtained has been analysed keeping in view the objectives stated elsewhere. The results are summarised and presented in the following sections:

4.1   Population Study

Table 1

Sex	Respondents	Percentage
Male	19	51.35%
Female	18	48.65%
Total	**37**	**100%**

Out of 37 respondents 19(51.35%) are males and the remaining 18 (48.65%) are females.   It reveals that the male and female are in almost equal in percentage in Library and Information Science Course.

4.2   Regional Distribution of Students

Table 2

Region	No. of Students	Percentage
Urban	25	67.57%
Semi Urban	05	13.51%
Rural	07	18.92%
Total	**37**	**100%**

Table 2 presents region wise distribution of students from North Karnataka. Among the respondents 25(67.57%) belong to urban area, followed by semi urban 5(13.5%) and rural 7 (18.92%). This indicates that the urban students of North Karnataka are much aware of Library and Information Science profession. The poor representation of rural areas reveals that there is a lack of awareness about the profession.

4.3   Religion and Caste

Table 3

Religion	No. of students	Percentage
Hindu	33	89.18%
Muslim	02	5.41%
Christian	02	5.41%
Others	NIL	NIL
Total	**37**	**100%**

Table 3.1

Caste	No. of students	Percentage
GM	23	62.15%
OBC	10	27.03%
SC	02	5.41%
ST	02	5.41%
Total	**37**	**100%**

The religion and caste group wise analysis shows that 33 (89.18%) are Hindus and 2 each are (5.41%) Muslim and Christian. Table 3.1 shows out of 37 respondents 23 (62.15%) are General Merit students and 10(27,3%) students are from Other Back Ward Class (OBC) communities, remaining students belongs to SC/ST categories.

This shows that the MLISc. programme is attracting students belonging to various social groups and communities. However, the number of SC/ST candidates qualifying the professional programme is low when compared to other communities' inspite of the liberal provision made in the admissions.

4.4   Mother Tongue

Table 4

Language	Male	Female	Total Percentage
Kannada	19 (51.35)	15 (40.54%)	34 (91.89%)
Hindi	NIL	NIL	NIL
Malayalam	NIL	NIL	NIL
Others	NIL	03(8.11%)	03(8.11%)
Total	**19 (51.35%)**	**18 (48.65%)**	**37(100%)**

Majority of the students 34 (91.89%) have Kannada as their mother tongue and only 3 (8.11%) female students have Urdu, Marathi and Konkani as their mother tongue respectively. This implies that the regional language is a predominant factor.

4.5 Medium of Instruction

Table 5

Level	Medium		Others	Total
	Kannada	**English**		
School	25(67.56%)	10(27.03%)	2(5.41%)	37(100%)
College	04(10.81%)	32(86.49%)	1(2.70%)	37(100%)

At the school level, majority 25 (67.56%) of the student's medium of instruction was Kannada (Regional Language) and 10 (27.03%) students studied in English medium. Only 2(5.41%) students studied in Urdu and Marathi medium. At the college level majority (86.49%) of the students studied in English medium.

4.6 Educational Qualifications

Table 6

Qualifications	No. of Students	Percentage
B.A.	19	51.35%
B.Com.	05	13.51%
B.Sc.	11	29.73%
Others (M.A.)	02	5.41%
Total	**37**	**100%**

It is seen from the table 6 that among the respondents 19 (51.35%) were Arts (B.A.), 11(29.73%) were Science (B.Sc.), 5(13.51%) were Commerce (B.Com.) graduates, and interestingly only 2(5.40%) were Post-Graduates.

4.7 Educational Background of Parents

Table 7

Relation	Educational Qualifications				Others
	Below UG	**UG (Under Graduate)**	**PG (Post Graduate)**	**Illiterate**	
Father	12 (32.43%)	16 (43.24%)	05 (13.51%)	2 (5.41%)	2 (5.41%)
Mother	30 (81.08%)	02 (5.41%)	NIL	2 (5.41%)	3 (8.10%)

Relation	Educational Qualifications				Others
	Below UG	**UG (Under Graduate)**	**PG (Post Graduate)**	**Illiterate**	
Brother(s)	07 (18.92%)	15 (40.54%)	07 (18.92%)	NIL	8(21.62%)
Sister(s)	10 (27.03%)	11 (29.73%)	04 (10.81%)	NIL	12(32.43%)

Table 7 shows that the educational qualifications of the family members of the respondents. 16(43.24%) of fathers are UG and 12(32.43%) are below UG. 5(13.51%) are PG and only 2(5.41%) students' fathers are illiterate. Regarding mother's educational qualifications 30(81.08%) are below UG. Interestingly, 15(40.54%) and 11(29.73%) of brothers and sisters are UG and many of them are Post Graduates.

4.8   Annual Income of Parents

Table 8

Annual Income (in Rupees)	No. of parents	Percentage
Below 50,000	22	59.46%
50,000 to 1,00,000	12	32.43%
1,00,000 and above	03	8.11%

22 of the respondents' parents annual income is less than Rs. 50,000 (59.46%). 12 parents' income is between Rs. 50,000 to 1,00,000 and only 3(8.11%) parents income is more than one lakh. More than half of the respondent parents   come under lower income group 22(59.46%).   The remaining i.e., 12(32.43%) and 3(8.11%) parents are middle income group and higher income group respectively. This shows Library profession is suitable more lower and middle class people acept library profession.

4.9   Inspiration or Motivation

Table 9

Motivators	Nos.	Percentage
Friends	13	35.13%
Parents	08	21.62%
Relatives	06	16.22%
Self Inspiration	08	21.62%
Advertisement	02	5.41%
Total	**37**	**100%**

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| Relation | Educational Qualifications | | | | Others |
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Mother	30 (81.08%)	02 (5.41%)	NIL	2 (5.41%)	3 (8.10%)

Further, 72.97% of the respondents were firm that if they were to get better job elsewhere while doing this course they would not discontinue the course and 27.03% of respondents expressed that if they were to get a better job they were ready to discontinue the course.

5 FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

The following were some of the findings:

1. The number of male students who secured high marks in the entrance and sought admissions were more when compared to female students. It clearly indicates males are more inclined to take the course.

2. Urban area's students of North Karnataka are having more exposure to the usefulness of LIS course.

3. The Forward Communities are much interested in this course than the Backward Communities. While SC/STs comparatively are showing little interest in the course.

4. Majority of the candidates studied in their mother tongue in the school level studied in English medium in College and University level.

5. By and large the students belong to low and middle income group.

6. Friends play an influencing role in selecting the course.

7. The overall purpose for opting the course is because of more job opportunities.

8. Foreign students rarely take admission in these courses.

5.1 Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions are made;

1. There shall be a separate selection and admission criteria for professional course like LIS.

2. Three is a lack of wide publicity of this course. Admission notification highlighting the significance of the course should be made in all leading regional and national news papers. The web publicity is a must for professional courses.

3. Adequate representation be provided to the students from the rural areas in order to encourage them to take up this professional course.

The above table indicates that majority 13 (35.13%) of the respondents were motivated by their friends and little less than that i.e., 8(21.62%) were motivated by their parents and self inspiration to join the course. Marginal percentages of students were inspired by relatives and through advertisements to join this course. Again it can be observed that the popular methods of advertisement has no impact than friends and parents who have major say in recommending the course at the PG level.

4.10 Reasons for Joining this Course

Table 10

Intention	No. of respondents	Percentage
Getting job	25	67.57%
For an additional degree	02	5.40%
Getting promotion from the existing cadre	NIL	NIL
For rendering better service to the society	10	27.03%
Total	**37**	**100%**

Table 10 presents the intention for opting Library and Information Science Course for their future career. Majority (67.57%) of the respondents' opinion was to getting a job. A few respondents intention was for doing better service to the society by equipping themselves with professional knowledge after completion of the course. 2(5.4%) respondents' intention was to join the course for an additional degree. This shows that unemployment is one of the major problems in India in general and North Karnataka in particular.

4.11 Future Plan

Table 11

Future Plan	No of respondents	Percentage
Searching for job	28	75.67%
Pursuing higher education	05	13.51%
Continuing for Ph.D.	02	5.41%
Any other	02	5.41%
Total	**37**	**100%**

The above Table indicates that 28(75.67%) of the respondents' future plan was to search for a job and 5(13.5%) were showing their inclination to continue their studies for higher education, where as 02 (5.40%) student's intention were to do Ph.D.

4. There is an urgent need for placement facilities to direct the successful students to get jobs in various fields according to their skills and knowledge.

5. There should be more IT components in the curriculum of LIS Education.

6. Universities should also start short-term courses with an emphasis on practical training on various aspects of IT application to prepare the LIS professionals to face challenges posed by IT.

7. Recruitment of foreign students should be encouraged.

6 CONCLUSION

The success of any educational programme depends much on adequate provision of funds, student support services and availability of infrastructural facilities. Advances in computer and communication technologies and its application in imparting education is a great boon to LIS education. Creating innovative programmes and acquiring new skills is an added responsibility of the faculty members in an IT environment.

Library and Information Science education is facing a new challenge in the information age. By and large LIS Departments in India follow traditional curriculum in imparting LIS having less provision for the application of new technologies comprising computer application to libraries. The new millennium demands that there is a need to develop a new type of information specialists to cater to the needs of newly emerging information needs of the users. It is very urgent to give a facelift to the existing traditional courses by adding new relevant topics in the curriculum.

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