Design and Development of a Gateway of Indian LIS Teachers and Teaching: A Resource of LIS Facts, Files and Figures

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Abstract
Gateways is a new breed of online services gaining popularity among Internet users, specially commercial entrepreneurs. Many gateways are available on Internet mostly by foreign developers/vendors. Gateways is the first of professionally developed gateways in the field of Library and Information Science education in India, covering both LIS education and LIS teachers. Content for Gateways was developed after a specially designed questionnaire was administered to the LIS departments and teachers. The collected data was scrupulously analyzed, organized, validated, and then used for the development of this gateway. The core aim of this gateway is to provide a one stop source for all possible information related to library and information science education and teachers in India.

Keyword: LIS Gateway; LIS Education-India; LIS Teachers-India; Who's Who LIS

1. Introduction
Internet and web technologies have changed the way people communicate, interact, acquire and share knowledge, search, investigate and participate in the creation and re-use of information. It is also an undisputed fact that information and communication technologies have brought new dimensions and opportunities in information access and acquisition, consolidation and communication, creation and retrieval, downloading and distribution throughout the world. Using web technologies, one can easily design and develop a gateway in order to provide reliable, up-to-date, authentic and comprehensive information on the various aspects of LIS education and teachers in India. Gateways provides the academic, research and professional commitments/assignments of an LIS teacher. Apart from personal information such as address and contact information, professional information, such as areas of specialization/interests, research guidance, publications, participations in professional events, work experiences and associations with learned bodies, projects handled etc. is covered in this gateway. Another feature of this gateway is providing useful links. In this project, figures of
the total population of LIS teachers was analyzed, and it was found that that more than 350 teachers work in various LIS departments as Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors. It was realized that many Retired Professors, who played their fabulous innings in growth and development LIS education in India, should also be covered, as much as possible because, after the retirement of such persons, there is no organized source for contacting them and seeking their expertise.

2. Brief epitome of LIS education in India

India has witnessed a slow and steady growth of Library and Information Science (LIS) education. The foundation of LIS education in India dates back to 1911 when W.A. Borden (1853-1931), an American disciple of Melvil Dewey, for the first time started a short term training programme in library science at Baroda under the patronage of Maharaja Sayajirao III, Gaekwad of Baroda (1862-1939). Four years later, in 1915, another American student of Dewey, Asa Don Dickinson (1876-1960), the then librarian of Punjab University, Lahore (now in Pakistan) started a three-month apprentice training programme for working librarians. Before independence, only five universities (Andhra, Banaras, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras) were offering diploma courses in library science. After independence, new colleges, universities, educational institutions and learned societies emerged, and the need for professionally qualified personnel to manage libraries was realized. As a result, the number of library science schools began to increase and various library associations at various places started providing training courses. Dr S.R. Ranganathan started a certificate course at Madras Library Association in 1929 which was taken over by the University of Madras. In 1937 the course was converted into Postgraduate (PG) Diploma in Library Science. University of Delhi was the first to establish a full-fledged Department of Library Science just before independence, in 1946, to impart LIS education at various levels i.e., bachelor, master, and research programmes. Over a period of time, LIS has grown and developed into a full-fledged discipline; courses are being imparted by university departments, institutions, library associations and specialized institutions. It is estimated that today in India, approximately 90 universities and 32 colleges and institutions affiliated to universities are offering regular courses at various levels. 27 universities are also conducting these courses through distance education. In addition, DRTC, Bangalore offers a two-year Associateship in Information Science.

3. Why this Gateway?

Internet and web technologies have changed the way people communicate, interact, acquire and share knowledge, search, investigate and participate in the creation and re-use of the information. It is also an undisputed fact that ICT has brought new dimensions and opportunities in the process of information acquisition and access, consolidation and communication, distribution and delivery. This gateway has been developed to meet the following needs.

- An authentic, reliable, accurate and ceaseless online information tool to
retrieve information round the clock (24x7) and to know the teaching and academic activities of LIS teachers in India;

- To know the statistics of the various segments such as publications, research output, consultancy, research projects undertaken, patents file, foreign deputation, conference participation, national and international recognition etc. individually as well as collectively;

- An online interactive information tool for the students and researchers to find/select guide/supervisor according to his/her areas of interest;

- A standardized and up-to-date tool to utilize the services of LIS teachers in India by the government institutions/bodies, to act as experts for appointments, policy making and other similar assignments; and

- Finally, an online communication tool to interact with LIS teaching communities for research scholars, LIS professionals, publishers, distributors etc. for their academic and professional development.

4. Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to develop an online gateway on Indian LIS teaching and teachers. In addition, this study has also the following specific objectives:

1. To collect, collate and present data related to LIS teaching and teachers working in the various teaching departments of colleges, universities, institutions in India;

2. To design and develop a gateway using web technologies for content development;

3. To develop a login based system to provide facility for edit/add/update work profiles from the work place; and

4. To compile an online directory of LIS schools and teachers in India.

5. Methodology, Scope, Facility and Technology Applied

In order to collect data for this gateway, a structured ‘Data Capture Form’ was designed comprising of all the fields needed for the gateway consisting of information about the LIS teachers such as, (i) working profile, research guidance and projects, areas of interest and specializations, publications and participations in national and international conferences etc.; (ii) official documents/personal websites/institute websites, and (iii) collected data from the targeted populations was scrutinized and validated.

The gateway consists of two basic components interlinked to one domain i.e., LIS Education, which provides information on various segments needed for aspiring
students, working teachers and researchers and general readers of LIS departments such as, address and contact details, availability of seats and courses, availability of courses and faculties. The second segment which, in technical sense refers as ‘online who’s who in LIS teaching’, is a need of the hour and gives information about LIS teachers such as, name, address, contact details, designation, gender, research guidance, publications, conference participation, research projects undertaken, association with professional bodies, awards and recognition etc. The gateway also includes biographical information of all retired LIS Professors.

The entire content of the gateway is developed and designed with dynamic features. It uses PHP technology and provides features such as (i) Login facility to faculty for updating their profile from their work place, (ii) enables users to search faculty by name, gender, field of specialization and keyword. (iii) search information pertaining to the department by state and university, and course wise. Further, the gateway enables the users to save, print and e-mail the search results directly in Doc, PDF and HTML.

6. Discussions and Outline of the Gateway

The following snapshot depicts the features and faculties of the gateway along with discussions on the same.

Homepage

Home page of this gateway provides information about the project, available features and facilities, and also Login option for LIS teachers for logging in to the gateway in order to update/add/modify their profile from the work place.
Welcome

Welcome......

I am Project Director (PD) heartily extend a warm welcome to all the valued LIS professionals personally and on behalf of all my Indian teaching fraternity. When I entered into the world of Library and Information Science in 1970, and enrolled in Jadavpur University, University of Delhi, Delhi [India], which violently started LIS courses as part with the other disciplines in 1946, I had a dream since a long time to develop an online platform in order to bring all information related to LIS teaching and teachers to India, and created it as a clearing house for LIS teachers and teaching in India. By the grace of God and the technical support of the SDI India India, my dream turned into a reality and the present is truly a global act by the global LIS community.

Today, there's an array of tools and technologies, but certainly there's a scarcity of reliable and accurate data. As LIS Gateway generally consists of bibliographic data of the LIS teachers, the PD has therefore, personally contacted many professional colleagues to apprise and sequential those to supply the data for this project. Also Gateway provides information on various courses on LIS departments needed for the aspiring students, teaching faculty and general teachers such as the course name and other details, availability of course material, availability of textbooks, availability of textbooks, etc. to achieve the academic and professional needs of aspiring teachers and LIS professionals. The second approach, which is the heart and soul of this project and technical difficulty at hand which in LIS teaching gives bibliographic and academic information about all courses, address, contact details, designation, gender, research guidance, publications, conference participation, research projects undertaken, association with professional bodies, awards and recognitions. The availability of the term option, the Gateway adds another feature to the PD. User can search information related to departments by name, university, state and course offered, whereas the information also pertain to LIS teachers searchable through key word, name, gender

7. About Us

This link serves as documentation to the entire gateway, and provides information on how and why this gateway has been developed, scope, facility and technology applied, acknowledgement and warm appeal to the LIS professionals for their contribution.

The Internet and web technologies has changed the way people communicate, interact, acquire, share knowledge, search, disseminate and participate in the creation and use of the information. It is also an important fact that ICT has brought new dimensions and opportunities in the process of information searching and access, communication and communication, distribution and delivery. To meet the following needs this gateway has been developed:

- A vast amount of information is available on the Internet.
- The Internet is an essential tool for research and learning.
- The Internet is a vital tool for communication and collaboration.
- The Internet is a powerful tool for the dissemination of information.
- The Internet is a valuable tool for the enhancement of education.
- The Internet is a significant tool for the promotion of research.
- The Internet is a crucial tool for the advancement of science.
- The Internet is a critical tool for the development of technology.
- The Internet is a vital tool for the improvement of society.
- The Internet is a powerful tool for the enhancement of culture.

Scope, Facility and Technologies Applied

The gateway consists of two basic components that are interlinked to use domain i.e., LIS education, which provides information on various courses, seminars attended for the aspiring students, teaching faculty and general teachers of LIS departments such as address and contact details, availability of books and courses, availability of teachers and facilities. Use on and access which is technically serves as a bridge to what's in LIS teaching is a need of time, which gives the learners
8. LIS Departments

This link provides brief statistics on LIS schools/departments in the country. Further link navigates the users to information about the various courses and facilities available in the LIS departments through search options such as Course search, University search and State search.
9. LIS Teachers

This is the soul of the gateway. Through this link, user can learn the statistics on LIS teachers in India, according to designations (such as Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors), gender etc. The biography of the individual teacher can be searched through Keywords (putting any known name, alphabet), Gender, Designation and Field of Specialization.
### Your Result

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10. Contact Us

This page provides contact details to submit comments and queries related to the gateway.
11. Major Findings of the Study

Through this survey and designing this gateway, the following significant findings have been summarized.

- The study finds that one hundred and eighty one (181) LIS departments of various universities/colleges/institutes of the India are offering courses in Library and Information Science;

- Before independence, only three Departments had LIS courses i.e., Andhra University, Vishakhapatnam (1935); Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (1941) and Delhi University, Delhi (1946). Although Madras University is the pioneer in imparting library science education in India with the starting of a summer school in 1929 by Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, its department of Library Science was established much later in 1960.

- The decade of 1990-1999 was a golden period due to establishment of more than thirty-five (35) LIS departments in the country.

- Four LIS departments, namely, Maharishi Dayanand University, Rohtak (Haryana); Central University Himachal Pradesh, Kangra (HP); Central University Gujarat (Gandhi Nagar); Central University Silchar (Assam) are the ones newly established in the year 2009-2010.

- Maharashtra is found to have the maximum number of LIS departments i.e., 41, followed by 19 in Madhya Pradesh, 15 in Andhra Pradesh, 14 in Uttar Pradesh, and 10 in Tamil Nadu.

- Twenty-two LIS departments are affiliated to central universities, including
DRTC and NISCAIR; the rest are affiliated to state universities.

- Study finds that 89 departments have one-year MLIS programme while 47 have two-year integrated MLIS programme; further, more than 58 departments have Ph.D programmes.

- Study finds that more than three hundred thirty (330) teachers are working in permanent capacity, out of whom 98 are female.

12. Conclusion

This LIS gateway is the first endeavor by the developer in his personal capacity. The gateway has been designed and developed using the best possible web technologies and has all possible facilities and scope for future expansion. The gateway is in the developing phase and best scenario includes all LIS departments and teachers. But, there can be gaps in the study; therefore, it is appealed to all LIS teachers to willingly come forward and contribute regularly to this national gateway of library and information science education and teachers.

References:
