

A Survey on Students' Perception of Librarianship as a Profession for Marital Choice

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Abstract

Librarianship has traditionally been considered to be a generalised service profession which involves the job of information management in a supporting role. The advancement of ICT mediated information processing has transformed librarianship as a highly specialised career opportunity. The paper carried out a study to find out the students perception toward librarianship as a profession for marital choices. 200 postgraduate students from both the gender have been surveyed and the result finds that boys are more inclined towards librarianship as a marital choice. The general perception of the students towards librarians is quite positive.

Keywords: Librarianship; Professional Status; Social Status-Librarianship; Marital Choices.

Introduction

Traditionally, librarianship is a profession associated with acquiring, organizing of books and other documents and disseminating information to the users according to their information need. The rapid technological developments like internet and World Wide Web have affected the role of a librarian. Now librarianship has become a very challenging profession collaborating with other profession. Of late librarian's role has been changed to information officer, innovator/website designer, educator, database manager, so and so forth. However, librarianship presumed to have not been attained the stature as it is expected to be at par with other professions such as medicine, engineering, education, etc. Professions are social facts, social/economic categories highly valued for their services and commitment to the community and the society at large. Sociology of professions means to

understand the role, status and position of various occupations, trades in society. Among others, profession is an important criterion for marital choice which indirectly signifies the image of professionals in the society. The present study is an attempt to find out the marital choice for librarianship among marriageable students of universities and thereby to trace the social image of the profession.

Objectives

- To find out the perceptions of postgraduate students towards librarianship as a career.
- To study the mind of the young students to accept librarians as their spouse.
- To find out the likes and dislikes about librarians.
- To make a comparison of male and female students marital choice for librarians.
- To understand the social and professional status of librarians.

Methodology

- The prepared research work is a social survey among university students to study their marital preferences for librarians.
- Survey instrument- a structured questionnaire (Appendix-1) was developed and distributed

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Received on 18.11.2017, Accepted on 24.11.2017

among 200 postgraduate students (100 Boys+100 Girls) of Sambalpur University.

- The data collected from the survey has been tabulated, analysed statically, interpreted and generalization developed.

Statement of the Problem

- Whether the postgraduate students like to marry librarians?
- Whether there is a visible difference of opinion of the boys and girls marital choices?
- Which qualities of the librarians the students like and which qualities they don't like while making marital choice?

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Knowledge about Library & Information Science subject

Since Library and Information Science is a non-traditional subject, it has not been generally offered as a subject at the undergraduate level. Obviously, the students seldom have any idea about the subject, its course content, scope and applications, etc. The following table discloses familiarity of the students with library and information science as a subject.

It is evident from the Table 1 that majority of boys (62%) and girls (61%) are of the opinion that LIS is both a science and an art. It reflects that majority of them have reasonable understanding of the subject.

Knowledge about Library & Information Science Profession

By and large, the students are unaware about the job profile of a librarian. The reason is that, the students have minimal interaction with the library professionals. Most of the library services, these days, are automatically available through computers and therefore, less direct interaction with the librarian. Unless someone is very closely associated with the back end activities of the librarian, it would not be possible to figure out the knowledge, skill and responsibilities involved in the job.

As per the data shown Figure 1, most of the boys (53%) and girls (72%) feel that librarianship involves both knowledge and skill. However, very few of both boys (16%) and girls (9%) understand it as knowledge based profession. Again boys are ahead of girls who think LIS is knowledge based as well as skill based.

Student's perception of the job of a librarian

Perception of the job profile of any profession decides the image and status of the professionals. In the present context, the librarians are mostly serving as teaching staff and in some cases as supporting professionals in the core pedagogical activities. In the era of information explosion driven by ICT, the librarian's job has become very challenging and interesting at the same time. The librarian plays the role of an academic councillor, information aggregator, facilitator for reliable personalised information to the entire academic community.

Figure 2 discloses that, as compared to girl

Table 1: Understanding of students about library and information science

Respondents Comments	Boys (n=100)	Girls (n=100)
It's a Science	18	15
It's an Art	13	18
It's both Science & Art	62	61
I don't know	7	6
Total	100	100

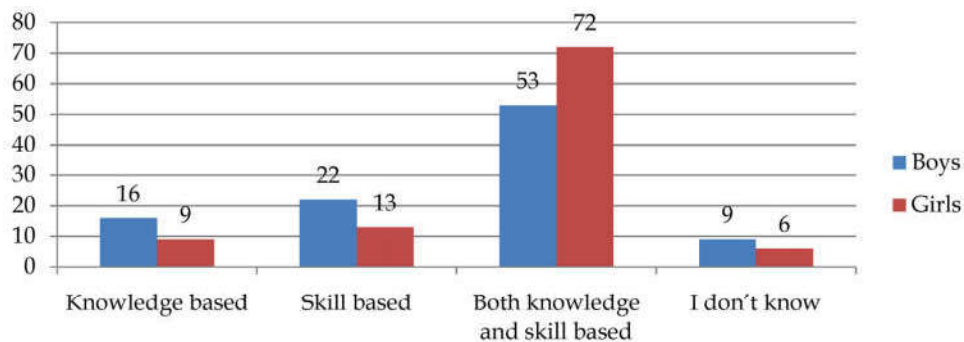


Fig. 1: Knowledge of librarianship as a profession

students, boys possess a more positive perception of the job of a librarian. About one third of boys (36%) found the librarian's job is interesting followed by one fourth (26%) who think the job challenging. On the other hand, one third of girls (33%) think librarian's job is monotonous. However, one fourth of the girls also feel the librarian's is challenging (24%) and interesting (25%).

Personality of librarians

According to Denham (2010), "Personality traits are distinguishing qualities or characteristics that are the embodiment of an individual's habitual patterns of behaviour, temperament and emotion. The building block of successful career development is comprised of four components: skills, values, interests and personality traits. In the present investigation, the postgraduate students of the university were questioned regarding the personality type of librarians and the students responded as indicated in Figure 3, it is clear that majority of both boys (32%) and girls (35%) feel that librarians are extrovert people. Most people believe that

an *extrovert* is a person who is friendly and outgoing. An *extrovert* is a person who is energized by being around other people. This is the opposite of an introvert who is energized by being alone. Since the librarians keep silent inside the library most of the time, 30% of the girls feel that they are introvert and 18% boys also think the same way. As regards to intuitiveness of the librarians, boys (27%) have better opinion than (16%) girls. Only 15% of each category of students feel librarians are decisive professionals.

Likeness of marrying a librarian

Marriage, also called matrimony or wedlock, is a socially or ritually recognized union between spouses that establishes rights and obligations between them, their children, and their in-laws. In Indian society, the selection of a bride for a groom or a groom for a bride involves a lot of criterions such as education, family, caste, religion, profession, etc. When it comes to profession, the choice is always for a profession which has a high social image and status. The marital choice for librarianship would certainly reflect the social image and status of the profession.

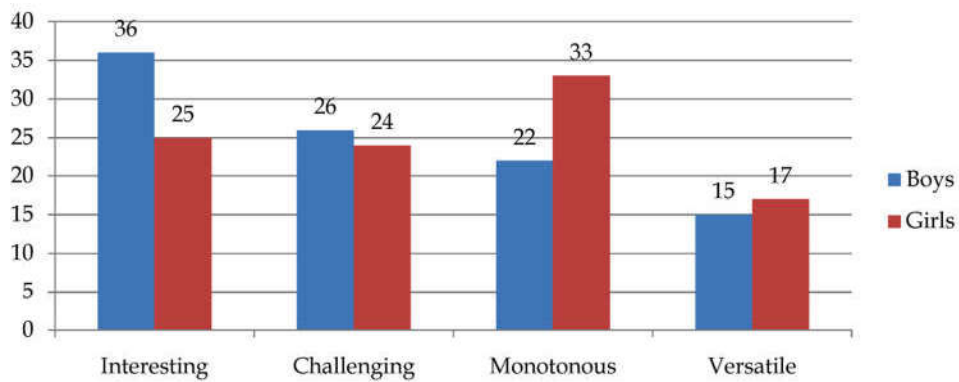


Fig. 2: Students perception of the job of a librarian

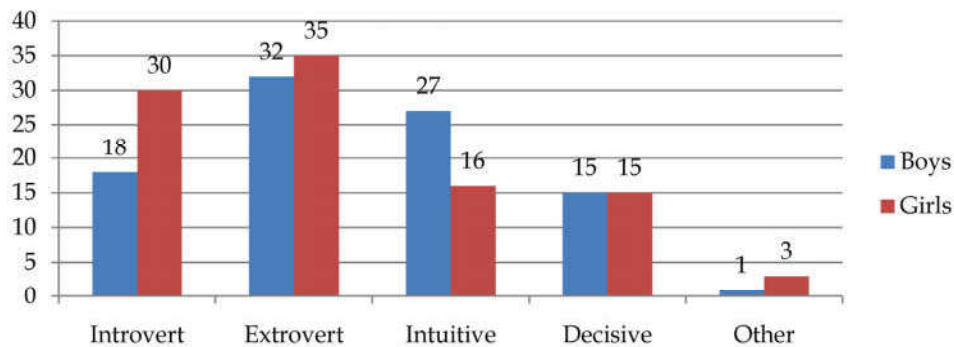


Fig. 3: Personality trait of the librarians

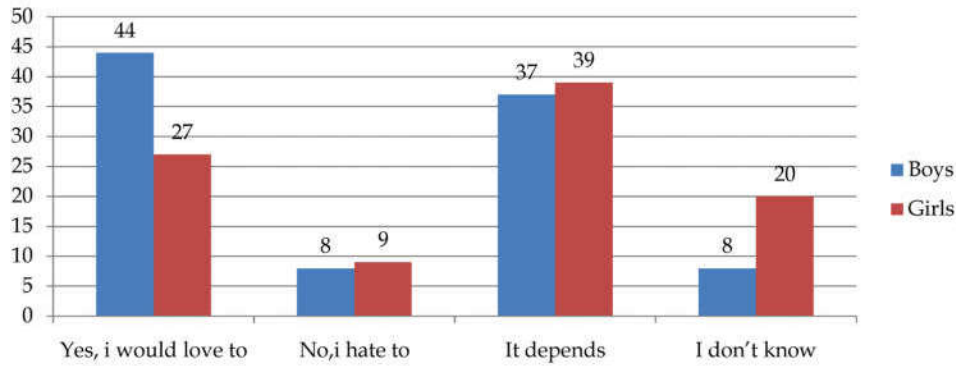


Fig. 4: Likeness of marrying a librarian

Figure 4 reveals that a majority of boys (44%) would like to have librarians as their spouse, but only a few (27%) girls are interested to marry a librarian. However, 8% boys and 9% girls hate to marry a librarian by profession. It was further observed from the table that their marital choice for librarians would depend upon other criterions such as his look, educational qualification, financial status, etc.

Reasons of marrying a librarian

The job of a librarian is non-hazardous and low risk like the teaching professionals. In India, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has given the librarians the status of a teaching staff. Similarly in Odisha, the government by an order of the Department of Higher Education has declared the librarians of degree colleges as academic staff. It is quite perceptible that librarianship is an intellectual and respectful job similar as teaching professionals

in academic institutions. In the scientific organizations such as CSIR, DRDO, IARI, etc. librarians are designated as scientific positions.

In order to know whether the students are aware about the professional status of librarians and to find out why they would like to marry a person in librarianship profession, the data in the following table has been collected.

The data in the Table 2 is evident that majority of boys (40%) would like to marry librarians because they are respectful professionals and 25% girls also feel the same. While majority of girls (31%) designate the librarians as serious professionals, boys seem to disagree with only 8% responses. Almost one forth of both boys (25%) and girls (21%) opine that librarians are intelligent. As regards to the resourceful quality, the two categories of students differ in their opinion. While boys (16%) feel the librarians are resourceful who have the ability to find quick and clever ways to overcome difficulties.

Table 2: Why the students would like to marry librarians?

Respondent comments	Boys	Girls
Intelligent	25	21
Resourceful	16	8
Respectful	40	25
Serious professionals	8	31
Any other(please specify)	8	7
Total	97	92

Table 3: Why the students would not like to marry librarian?

Respondent comments	Boys	Girls
Boring	28	32
Stupid	7	3
Lethargic	12	7
Un privileged	9	6
Any other(please specify)	12	9
Total	68	57

Reasons of not marrying a librarian

There are many people who have strong dislikes to certain professionals for reasons associated commonly with the profession. The *skills/attributes/traits/knowledge* that librarianship considered consider most valuable for the work include: communication *skills*, presentation *skills*, critical thinking *skills*, problem solving ability, intellectual curiosity, knowledge of academic subjects/ scholarly communication, etc.

However, the students in the present investigation and cited some of the reason why they did not like to marry a librarian as indicated in the table below.

Table 3 reveals that majority of boys (28%) and girls (32%) feel that librarians are boring as they are confined into the library, not much interactive, silent and docile. A few of boys (12%) and girls (7%) also viewed that librarians are lethargic. 9% boys also feel that librarians are unprivileged professionals.

Table 4: Ranking of Professions as marital choice for Girls

Professionals	Overall Points	1 st Choice	1 st and 2 nd choice	Overall Ranking
Teacher/Professor	342	29	42	1
Banking Professional	345	20	39	2
Engineer	395	11	25	3
Doctor	383	3	24	4
Scientist	447	10	20	5
Business Man	541	10	14	8
Librarian	493	7	8	6
Legal Professional	514	4	7	7
Manager	565	2	6	9

Table 5: Ranking of Professions as marital choice for Boys

Professionals	Overall Points	1 st Choice	1 st and 2 nd choice	Overall Ranking
Teacher/Professor	366	28	40	2
Librarian	315	12	27	1
Scientist	433	9	22	4
Doctor	427	3	16	3
Banking Professional	452	11	16	5
Business Man	477	13	16	7
Engineer	481	4	12	8
Legal Professional	474	3	9	6
Manager	539	2	4	9

Table 6: Students perception on Dr. Kalam's view of librarians

Respondent comments	Boys	Girls
It's very true, i agree	69	65
To some extent true, not always	11	15
Its kalam's greatness..but i don't agree	6	7
No idea.. can't comment	12	12
Total	98	99

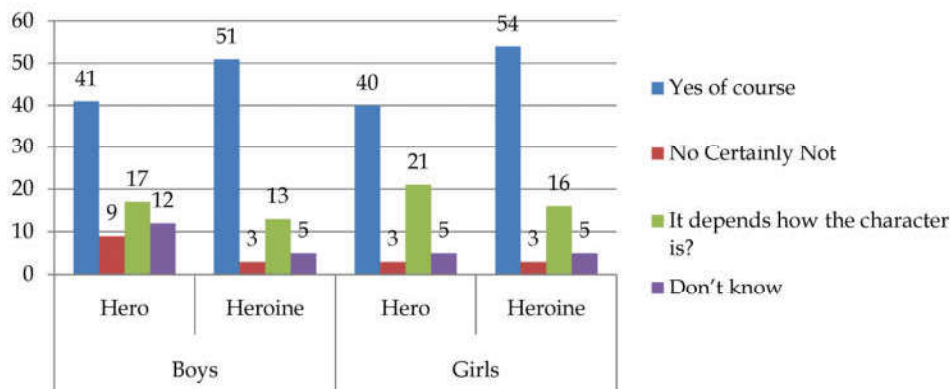


Fig. 5: Hero/heroine of the movie as a librarian by profession

Table 7: Hero/heroine of the movie as a librarian by profession

Respondent of Comments	Boys		Girls	
	Hero	Heroine	Hero	Heroine
Yes of course	41	51	40	54
No Certainly Not	9	3	3	3
It depends how the character is?	17	13	21	16
Don't know	12	5	5	5
Total	79	72	69	78

Ranking of professions as marital choices of girl students

The postgraduate girl students have responded to the question to which profession they would like to marry in order of their preferences ranking 1 (first choice) to 10 (last choice). As the girls were asked they cited the 9 professions whom they would prefer to marry are given in the Table 4. On the basis of the overall points (aggregated points from all the students), the first choice and the second choice of girls, the following table ranking has been reflected in the table below. In the ranking of professions on the basis of marital choice of girls, teachers/professors has been the rank-1 with a highest 29% of girls showing their first preference and 42% girls as first and second preference together. Next to teaching professional, the banking profession is the second choice for girls followed by engineers as third choice. Librarian is the seventh rank as per the marital choice of girl students. Managers are at the last choice for marriage.

Ranking of Professions as marital choices of boy students

Traditionally, in Indian society the job of the boy is prime criteria for selection as a groom. In marriages girl's profession or job has never been given much importance. However, in the post modern society especially after the globalization, boys also started looking for jobs of the girls and thus the profession become criteria for marital choice. The following table embodies data relating marital choices of boys and the ranking of professions.

Table 5 reveals that marital choice of boys for spouse selection. The first choice for boys is teaching professional (teacher/professors) with 40% boys indicating as their first and second choice. For boys librarians are the second rank professionals for marital choice with 27% indicating their preferences. Surprisingly, the boys have a higher preference for librarians as their spouse than the other professionals.

Students perception of librarianship as a profession

Librarianship is a missionary profession and many people feel those who are blessed would become

librarian. A librarian is a highly privileged human being as he live in the temple of knowledge and has access to world's best knowledge resources. Many academicians have perceived librarianship as highly intellectual profession who support the academic endeavours to take shape.

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the former president of India, a great academician, scientist par excellence, visionary and a philosopher has said, "Librarian is the best academician in any university system". A librarian understands, identifies, validates and channelizes treasures knowledge to the students and teachers in the university. In order to know whether the postgraduate student agree to this view point of Dr. Kalam, the following data has been collected and tabulated in Table 6.

A majority of boys (69%) and girls (65%) agree with what Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam thought about the librarianship as a profession. They feel that librarian is the best academician who guides and supports the students and teachers in their academic discourses with desired information. Yet, a few of the boys (11%) and girls (15%) feel the statement of Dr. Kalam is true but not always. In some cases the librarians do not support to their expectation.

Students Perception of Librarianship as a role model

In the bollywood movies the hero and heroine play the character of a professional which the audience like a lot and that become role model profession for them. For example, in many films the hero is a teacher or a lawyer or a doctor or a scientist or a businessman or a policeman. The characters played by the heroes indirectly reflect the status of that profession in the society. Once the people like the profession, then only they would like to see the hero of the film as a professional. (Table 7 and Figure 5)

Interestingly, more than half of both the boys (51%) and girls (54%) would like to see the heroine of a hindi movie in the role of a librarian. On the other hand, equal number of both boys (41%) and girls (40%) want to see the hero of the movie playing the character of a librarian. Both the boys and girls designate librarianship a role model feminine profession.

Conclusion

Librarianship is a noble and knowledge based profession. Librarianship is a profession that is dedicated to serving the general public, providing timely and accurate information, thus contributing to the development of the society. Now librarianship profession is popular in all spheres of activities such as education, scientific, industry, public services, etc. The present study highlights the social image of librarians as professionals. The study finds that the general perception of the students towards librarians is quite positive. As compared to girls boys are more inclined towards librarianship as a marital choice. However, students of both the gender believe librarianship is a highly skilled and challenging profession.

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