

Need of Continuing Education Programs (CEPs) for LIS professionals of Management Institutes in Mumbai

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Abstract

The constant changes, owing to technological developments in the academic libraries and changing perceptions of users have compelled Library Information Science (LIS) professionals to provide responsive and advanced information services using latest technology. Changes in users' needs and expectations for information obviously change the provision of information by libraries. These changes leave no alternative but make LIS professionals to acquire, maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and competencies. LIS professionals need to remain current and keep updated. In this context, continuing education is the key. Continuing Education for LIS professionals is one of the chief means of making library and its services effective. LIS professionals also need to fill the gap in learning through attending continuing education programs (CEPs). Academic scene in India is set to change. In future, LIS professionals need to attend CEPs more fervently to catch up the galloping speed of technological development. Hence, in order to face the challenges posed by ICT successfully, LIS professionals need to equip themselves with necessary skills and knowledge. This situation calls for determining the future needs of CEPs for LIS professionals. Present paper tries to identify the prospective need of CEPs and describe the preferred structure of CEPs for LIS professionals working in Management institutes in Mumbai.

Keywords: Academic Libraries; Continuing Education Programs; LIS Professionals; Lifelong Learning; Management Libraries; Training Needs.

Introduction

The constant changes, owing to technological developments in the academic libraries and changing perceptions of users have compelled Library Information Science (LIS) professionals to provide responsive and advanced information services using latest technology. Changes in users' needs and expectations for information obviously change the provision of that information by libraries. These changes leave no alternative but make LIS professionals to acquire, maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and competencies. Continuing Education (CE) for LIS professionals is one of the chief means of making library services effective. With changing situation of library and information

services, LIS professionals employed in academic libraries not only think how to keep up with such changes, but how to incorporate new learning to deal with the changes. Continuing professional education must change with changing circumstances. In order to meet the challenges of changing needs, LIS professionals should get chance to attend the CEPs as per their job requirements. This triggers the need of addressing the needs of CEPs which will be required in future.

Continuing Education: Concept

Dictionary of Human Resource Management (2008) [1] defines Continuous Learning as 'The process through which employees and managers meet the challenge of perpetual change that faces many contemporary organizations in a highly competitive, turbulent environment. Knowledge and skills quickly become obsolete, so there is requirement to update them constantly through training and development. Learning becomes an important feature of the organization, and contributes at the least to its competitive survival and, at best, to its competitive

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advantage. Continuous learning is a vital component of the learning organization. There is no specific definition of Continuing Education (CE) in Harrod's Librarian's Glossary and reference book (2000) [2]. However, it describes the lifelong learning as 'The process whereby people continue their own education by formal or informal means-training courses, academic courses, reading, evening classes, work based activity, discussion groups etc. which will be increasingly essential in an age of technological advance and an employment situation in which short term contracts'. As continuing education is for lifelong learning, the description is significant from the point of view of the topic of the paper.

Weingand (1999) [3] has sub-divided the phrase 'continuing professional education' into its components, in order to better understand its origins.

- Continuing... To go on with a particular action or in a particular condition; persist; to exist over a prolonged period;
- Professional... Of, relating to, engaged in, or suitable for a profession; engaged in a specific activity as a source of livelihood; performed by persons receiving pay; having great skill or experience in a particular field or activity.
- Education... the knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process
- Continuing education... An educational program that brings participants up to date in a particular area of knowledge or skills.

Thus, continuing professional education for academic LIS professionals can be summarized as the continuing educational activities primarily designed to keep practicing academic LIS professionals abreast of their particular domain in the library and to provide them with training in new fields.

Need of Study

The students of management institutes are graduates and aspiring to pursue post-graduation degree in Business and Management. They have multiple sources of information such as internet, commercial information service providers etc. They can obtain the information overcoming the geographical barrier and can access the worldwide information across the globe through their desktops or laptops or mobile gadgets like phones and tablets without any time limitation (24 x 7). As recommended in AICTE norms, the library of management institutes subscribe to various e-databases including bibliographic and full text databases, online journals and e-books. Hence they have access to various

information resources. They are better educated, better informed, more knowledgeable about technology and mature than student community in other types of colleges and therefore, they have pressing demands from the service providers. The technological factors and alternative channels available to the users are forcing librarians to equip their libraries with better facilities and services to attract users and keep them satisfied.

If LIS professionals would get chance to attend the CEPs as per their needs, the better results can be achieved. If CEPs meet the needs of participants, they are going to be effective. This will provide opportunity to LIS professionals gain knowledge and implement at their workplace as their needs. Hence it is important to assess future needs of the library professionals for continuing education and professional development in a changing electronic environment of academic library like the library of the management institute. .

Objectives

This study aimed to study the prospective need of Continuing Education Programs (CEPs) of LIS Professionals of Management institute libraries. To achieve this purpose the following objectives are addressed:

- To identify training needs of professionals working in Management Institutes
- To study the opinions on probable structure of CEPs
- To find out the desired structure of CEPs
- To study the role of Library Associations to be played in organizing CEPs

Scope and Limitation

This study focused on the CEP attendance and prospective need of CEPs for library professionals working in Management institute libraries in Mumbai. CEP includes conference, seminar, refresher course, orientation course, workshop, training programs, and online instructions. Library professionals working in the libraries of Management institutes affiliated to University of Mumbai were covered in the study. This study was limited to Librarians and Assistant Librarians of college libraries. The study was based on the self-perceptions of the respondents.

Literature Review

Literature review indicated that the topic 'Need of continuing education for Librarians' was researched

extensively. There are a few major studies surveying CEPs in India and abroad. They cover the areas like CEP attendance, attitude of LIS professionals towards CEP attendance, need of Continuing education for LIS professionals and professional development of Librarians. Academic librarian was most heavily studied.

Due to the advent of technology, importance of training the library staff is stressed comprehensively in the related literature review. Mapulanga (2014) [4] conducted study on staff development and its challenges in the University of Malawi Libraries. The findings revealed that due to financial constraints, the majority of the library staff lacked LIS professional qualifications. The study recommended that libraries should consider budgeting for continuing professional development. Davis and Lundstrom (2011) [5] discussed the challenges of promoting staff development of USU (Utah State University) library. Adams (2009) [6] stressed the need of staff training programs in the University of Auckland Library, UK. Smith (2002) [7] examined the pattern of staff development activity in Australian academic and research libraries. The study indicated staff development in Australian libraries to be in strong and healthy state. Garrod (2001) [8] stressed the need of training to staff as well as end-user in the hybrid library. Prakasan, Swarna and Vijay Kumar (2000) [9] explained the need of Human Resource Development in the libraries and provided insights into its implications in hybrid libraries. Osei (1996) [10] has stressed the need for professional staff development in University of Science and Technology Library in Kumasi Ghana. Conner (1992) [11] provides an overview of the implications of automation for staff training in libraries

The need of assessment of training needs for LIS Professionals working in academic libraries is found to be stressed universally. Sahoo and Pradhan (2013) [12] conducted the study identifying the training needs of LIS professionals. The study was based on three components i.e. Information Technology, sponsorship and training techniques. They have described the Training and Development process required for library professionals working in academic libraries. The training needs, evaluation and techniques are discussed. Cassner and Adams (2006) [13] surveyed distance learning librarians in academic libraries to find out their professional development needs. Respondents were asked to indicate which professional development activities they were participating in and those they were likely to engage in within the next five years. Survey unfolded that List-servs targeting distance librarians,

distance learning conferences, and professional journal articles were the most important in meeting professional development needs of distance librarians and instructional design, Web page design, and marketing/public relations were the Professional Development activities desired by respondents within next five years. Kannappanavar and Praveen Kumar (2005) [14] evaluated the training programs pertaining to Library and Information science and their effectiveness of training programs attended by library professionals in selected Agricultural Science Libraries in India. It is found that the workshops organized are generally designed to provide practical training on IT applications, but they are not assessing the training needs of library professionals. Ondari-Okemwa (2000) [15] examined the training needs of practicing professional librarians in the Kenyan public university libraries.

The review of literature indicated that the need of CE for LIS Professionals was strongly stressed. The review of literature indicated that the perception of LIS professionals towards Continuing Education (CE), CE opportunities, problems faced by the professionals and need of technology based training were studied globally. Literature Review conducted from 1992 to 2014 reflects that the need for technology related Continuing Education was felt for a very long time-as long as more than two decades.

Research Method

The study was quantitative and descriptive. The survey method was used to investigate the needs of CEPs of LIS Professionals working in management institute libraries affiliated to university of Mumbai. Structured Questionnaire was used to collect the data of LIS Professionals. Both open and close ended questions were put across. The population of the present study included the LIS professionals employed in Management institute libraries affiliated to University of Mumbai. This is a study of the defined population of 48 LIS professionals. Total 42 respondents responded yielding the response rate of 87.50 %. The Annual Reports of University of Mumbai 2012-2013. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS package (version 16.0).

Major Findings

In order to identify the future needs of CEPs of LIS Professionals, the opinions of LIS professionals on probable LIS areas and LIS topics, duration, medium of instruction, fee structure, type of instruction, and

mode of instruction were analyzed. The opinions on availability of CE opportunities in Mumbai and role of Library Association in regard to CEPs were studied.

Demographic Details

Demographic details i.e. sex, age, qualifications, work experience and designation of LIS professional were analyzed.

Sex

As indicated in Table 1, majority of respondents (62%) were women as opposed to men (38%). Since librarianship in India is a women dominated profession, it is obvious that more number of women were employed in academic libraries. This also confirms that there were more female librarians working in management institute libraries.

Table 1: Sex

Sex (n=42)	Frequency	%
Male	16	38.1
Female	26	61.9
Total	42	100

Age

More than 64% of LIS professionals belonged to Middle-aged group (31-40 years) followed by Young professionals (14.3%). Middle-aged and Young age group constituted larger part of sample (79%) than senior and very senior age group 21.4% (Table 2).

Table 2: Age of LIS professionals

Age (n= 42)	Frequency	%
31-40 (Middle-aged)	27	64.3
21-30 (Young)	6	14.3
41-50 (Senior)	6	14.3
51-62 (very Senior)	3	7.1
Total	42	100

Qualifications

As data reported in Table 3, 93% of LIS professionals are M.L.I.Sc degree holders. Since M.L.I.Sc. degree is the requirement for the post of Librarians, 7.1% of LIS professionals who had not completed M.L.I.Sc were assistant librarians. 21 % of respondents had received M.Phil. 7% of respondents had completed Ph.D degree. Also 14.3% of sample had upgraded their knowledge through continuing education in Computer Applications. This is noteworthy gesture that LIS professionals were keen in continuing education and updating knowledge.

Table 3: Qualifications

Qualifications (n=42)	Frequency	%
M.L.I.Sc.	39	92.9
M.Phil	9	21.4
PGDCA/PGDIT/PGDLAN	6	14.3
Ph.D	3	7.1

Work Experience

More than 45% of LIS professionals were having experience of 6-10 years followed by 1-5 years (19%). 7% of LIS professionals were having 11-15 years of experience. 16.7% of LIS professionals were having more than 15 years of experience. Majority(64%) of them were having experience less than 10 years as most of LIS professionals belonged to Middle and young age group i.e in between 21-40 years.

Table 4: Work experience

Experience(n=42)	Frequency	%
6-10 years	19	45.2
1-5 years	8	19
11-15 years	7	16.7
16-20 years	6	14.3
26-30 years	1	2.4
31-35 years	1	2.4
Total	42	100

Designation

As indicated in Table 5, sample constituted more number of Librarians(52%) as compared to Assistant Librarians (48%).

Table 5: Designation

Designation (n=42)	Frequency	%
Librarian	22	52.4
Assistant Librarian	20	47.6
Total	42	100

Future needs of CEPs

As identifying the training needs of LIS professionals was the prime objective of this study, the opinions of LIS professionals were sought on the potential needs of CEPs. The respondents' views on prospective LIS areas, duration, medium of instructions, fee structure, and type of instruction and mode of CEPs were sought. In order to assess the ratings for the LIS topics, duration and Mode of CEPs given on five point scale of 1 to 5, 3.0 was taken as benchmark of mean. Based on this set benchmark, given options were considered.

LIS Core Areas and LIS topics

Respondents were given the list of core areas and the topics in Library Science and were asked to rate them on five point scale indicating their preferred areas topics for CEPs needed.

As reported in Table 6, majority of LIS professionals wanted CEPs to be conducted in the area of new developments in Library Information Services and procedures. Application of ICTs (74%) was the second most preferred LIS core area in which CEPs was felt to be conducted. The LIS areas like managerial skills (57.14%) and competencies and Library Management (40.48%) followed. The respondents were asked to rate the LIS topics on the five points scale, in which, CEPs were needed by them. As per ratings given by the professionals, open source software packages (4.24), Managing digital library (4.24), Acquiring and managing e-resources (4.14), Database management (4.07), knowledge Management (4), creating and using Electronic information resources (3.98), Networking and consortia (3.9), Developing content for websites (3.86), Marketing of Library and Information Science (3.86) and Website design (3.86) followed in preference list. The next 10 topics preferred by respondents are:

Information Services (3.83), Web 2.0 applications (3.81), writing reports, articles and conference papers (3.81), library PR and publicity (3.79), digital copyright Issues (3.79), building Institutional Repository (3.79), user Education and information literacy (3.74), Library automation (3.74), Leadership skills (3.74) and team building. The topics like Soft skills (3.64), cloud computing (3.6), reference services (3.57), negotiation skills (3.5), library design (3.45), human resource management (3.31), financial Management in libraries (3.31), computer hardware and trouble shooting (3.24) and Indexing and abstracting (3.19) received comparatively low rating. The less preferred topics were classification (2.9) and cataloguing-new developments (2.86) (Table 6). Due to automation in academic libraries, indexing and abstracting, classification and cataloguing received low rating.

Table 6: LIS core Areas

LIS Core Area (N=42)	Frequency	%
New developments in library	41	97.62
information services and procedures		
Application of ICT	31	73.81
Managerial skills and developments	24	57.14
Library Management	17	40.48

Table 7: LIS topics

S.N.	LIS topics(N=42)	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Open Source Software Packages	4.24	0.85
2	Managing a Digital Library	4.24	0.958
3	Acquiring and managing e-resources	4.14	1.049
4	Database Management	4.07	0.997
5	Knowledge Management	4	1.036
6	Creating and using Electronic Information Resources	3.98	1.199
7	Networking and consortia	3.9	0.983
8	Developing content for Web-sites	3.86	1.095
9	Marketing of Library and Information services	3.86	1.072
10	Web site design	3.86	0.926
11	Information Services	3.83	1.124
12	Web 2.0 applications	3.81	1.065
13	Writing reports, articles, conference papers	3.81	0.994
14	Library PR and Publicity	3.79	1.116
15	Digital Copyright Issues	3.79	1.138
16	Building Institutional Repository	3.79	1.2
17	User Education and information literacy	3.74	1.127
18	Library Automation	3.74	1.345
19	Leadership skills	3.74	1.17
20	Team building	3.67	1.203
21	SoftSkills	3.64	1.303
22	Cloud Computing	3.6	1.499
23	Reference services	3.57	1.107
24	Negotiation skills	3.5	1.215
25	Library Design	3.45	1.131
26	Human resource management	3.31	1.137
27	Financial Management in Libraries	3.31	1.239
28	Computer Hardware and trouble shooting	3.24	1.394
29	Indexing and abstracting	3.19	1.215
30	Classification-New Developments	2.9	1.303
31	Cataloguing -new Developments	2.86	1.28

Duration

The opinions on preferred duration of the CEPs wanted by LIS professionals in future were sought. The most favored duration was one full weekday followed by one full Saturday and then followed by 2-3 consecutive week days and weekend. The rest of the options for the probable duration of the programs were below the set benchmark i.e. (Mean =3.0), thereby, considered as less preferred.

Table 8: Duration

Duration (N=42)	Mean
One Full Weekday	3.76
one Full Saturday	3.44
2-3 Consecutive Week Days	3.17
Weekend	3.02
2-3 consecutive Saturdays (Full days)	2.93
4days-6 days	2.59
5-6 Consecutive half-days	2.39
One Full Week	2
More than two weeks	1.68
More than three weeks	1.46

Medium of Instruction

The respondents' opinions on medium of instruction were sought. As indicated in Table 9, 74% of the LIS professionals wanted English as medium of instruction. Combination of English and Local Languages (35.71%) and depending upon the participants (11.90%) followed. The Hindi language, Marathi language and any language with translation in English followed in decreasing order.

Fee Structure

The opinions on fee structure of CEPs were sought. For one day program (83.33%), the preferred fee structure was 'Less than Rs. 1000/-' For two days program, the preferred Fee structure was between Rs. 1000- Rs.2000 (61.90%) . For more than two days program probable fee structure desired by LIS professionals was 'between Rs.1000-2000' or More than Rs. 2000 (38.10%). For one week (30.95%) ,more than one week program (28.57%) and more than two

Table 9: Medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction (N=42)	Frequency	%
English	31	73.81
Combination of English and local language	15	35.71
Depending upon the participants	5	11.90
Hindi	4	9.52
Marathi	4	9.52
Any language with translation in English	1	2.38

Table 10: Fee structure

(N=42)	Less than Rs. 1000		Rs.1000-2000		More than Rs. 2000		Rs. 2000-3000		More than Rs. 3000		Rs. 3000-Rs. 5000		More than Rs. 5000		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
One day Program	35	83.33	7	16.67											42	100
Two days Problem	13	30.95	26	61.90	3	7.14									42	100
More than two days program	3	7.14	16	38.10	16	38.10	7	16.67							42	100
One Week			8	19.05	9	21.43	13	30.95	7	16.67	2	4.76	3	7.14	42	100
More than one week			3	7.14	8	19.05	12	28.57	9	21.43	5	11.90	5	11.90	42	100
More than two weeks			3	7.14	4	9.52	11	26.19	8	19.05	6	14.29	10	23.81	42	100

weeks (26.19%), the fee structure desired by LIS professionals was between Rs. 2000-3000/-.' For more than two weeks, the probable fee structure wanted by LIS Professionals was 'in the range of Rs. 2000-Rs.3000/-' (Table 10).

Type of Instruction

The respondents were asked to rate them on five point scale indicating their preferred type of instruction for CEPs needed. LIS Professionals have given high rating to multimedia (4.68) followed by hands-on-training (4.54) and then web based CEPs (4.20). Class room lectures (3.68) had got lowest rating compared to all other media of instruction (Table 11).

Mode of CEP

The views on preferred mode of CEPs were sought. Majority of LIS Professionals wanted teleconference (88.10%) as mode of CEPs. webinar (83.33%) and face-to-face interaction (80.95%) followed. Online courses (76.19%) and live lecture or demonstration (61.90%) followed in decreasing order (Table 12).

Opinion on Availability of CE Opportunities in Mumbai

The views of LIS professionals on adequacy of CE opportunities available in Mumbai were sought. As shown in Table13, majority of respondents (61%) expressed positive response towards availability of

CE opportunities in Mumbai whereas a few respondents responded negatively. Most of the respondents recommended that universities in Mumbai should take active part in organizing the CEPs.

offered by Indian or Local library associations were sought. Around 52% of respondents stated that adequate Continuing Education (CE) opportunities were made available by Library Associations and 47% of respondents opined that adequate CE opportunities were not made available by Indian or Local Library Associations (Table 14).

Opinion on CE opportunities made available by Library Associations

Library Associations

The respondents' perceptions on CE opportunities

Table 11: Type of instruction

Type of instruction (N= 42)	Mean
Multimediasbased	4.68
Hands-on-training	4.54
Web based	4.20
Class Room Lectures	3.68

Table 12: Mode of CEP

Mode of CEP (N= 42)	Frequency	%
Teleconference	37	88.10
Webinar	35	83.33
Face-to-Face Interaction	34	80.95
Online Courses	32	76.19
Live Lecture or demonstration	26	61.90

Table 13: Availability of CE opportunities in Mumbai

Availability of CE opportunities in Mumbai (N=42)	Frequency	%
Yes	26	61.0
No	16	39.0
Total	42	100.0

Table 14: CE opportunities made available by Library Association

CE opportunities made available by Library Associations (N=42)	Frequency	%
Yes	22	52.38
No	20	47.62
Total	42	100.0

Work to be done by Library Association

If adequate CE opportunities were not made available by Library Associations, the views of respondents on work to be done by Library Association with reference to CE programs were sought. As reported in Table 15, most of the Professionals (90%) expected Library Associations

to organize ICT Training Programs followed by organizing certificate programs in LIS (65%) and then organizing conference/seminar annually and online courses followed. Organizing Refresher courses annually (45%) and organizing webinar (40%) followed in decreasing order.

Table 15: Work to be done by Library Associations

Work to be done by Library Associations (N=20)	Frequency	%
Organizing ICT training courses	18	90
Organizing Certificate programs in LIS	13	65
Organizing conference/seminar annually	12	60
Organizing online courses	12	60
Organizing Refresher course annually	9	45
Organizing webinars	8	40

Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on data analysis of the preferences, the desired structure of CEPs emerged as following. The

preferred structure is given serially by the order of preference.

Table 16: Preferred structure of CEPs

Future CEPs		Prospective structure of CEP	
i.	Preferred LIS core Areas	•	New Development in Library Information services and procedures
ii.	Top 10 LIS topics	•	Application of ICT
		•	Managerial skills and competencies
		•	Open source Software Packages
		•	Managing Digital Library
		•	Acquiring and managing e-resources
		•	Database Management
		•	Knowledge Management
		•	Creating and using Electronic Information Resources
		•	Networking and consortia
		•	Developing content for Website
		•	Marketing of Library and Information services
		•	Web site design
ii.	Top three preferred duration	•	One Full Week day
		•	one Full Saturday
		•	2-3 Consecutive week days
v.	Top three Languages of instruction	•	English
		•	Combination of English and Local language
		•	Depending upon participants
v.	Preferred Fee structure	•	For one day program-less than Rs. 1000/-
		•	For Two days program- in between Rs. 1000- Rs. 2000
		•	For more than Two days program- in between Rs.1000- Rs.2000
		•	For One Week, More than one and two weeks - in the range of Rs. 2000-Rs. 3000
i.	Top three preferred type of instruction		Multimedia based
			Hands-on-Training
			Web based
ii.	Top three preferred medium of instruction		Teleconference
			Webinar
			Face-to-Face Interaction

As mentioned in the above table at Sr. No. i, the preferred LIS core areas are new developments in library services and procedures, ICT applications and managerial skills and competencies. The 10 topics indicated at Sr. No. ii, preferred CEP topics inclined towards integration of ICT applications into library services and procedures with exception of Marketing of Library information services and Networking and consortia. This indicates that professionals are also keen in improving marketing skills and networking and consortia management techniques. The need of networking and consortia may have emerged due to financial constraints. Due to budgetary constraints, the single library cannot suffice the diverse information needs of users. This may be the reason why this topic has been preferred by the respondents. The CEPs with short durations are preferred by professionals. Fee structure ranges from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 3000 for various options of duration of

CEPs. Professionals preferred English over regional languages. The impact of ICT has been observed on preferences given on LIS topics, type of instruction and mode of CEPs. They preferred Multimedia based CEPs or web based CEPs in the form of teleconference or webinar and hands-on-training in the form of Face-to-face interaction.

The professionals strongly opined that universities in Mumbai should take initiatives to provide more CE opportunities. Professionals expected library associations to take active participation in providing CE opportunities for professionals.

Conclusion

LIS professionals update their knowledge and fill the gap in learning through attending CEPs. In order

to serve the users in digital age, they need to provide responsive and innovative services matching with requirements of users. For the purpose, they need to implement learning on the job. Based on the working conditions of the institutes in which they are employed, LIS professionals may have specific CEP needs. However, they do not get chance of attending CEPs designed as per their needs. If LIS professionals would get chance to attend CEPs as per their needs, better results from CEP attendance could be achieved. If CEPs meet the needs of participants, they are going to be more effective. Thus, in order to get desired results from CEP attendance, prospective need of CEPs should be taken into consideration while planning such courses.

As LIS professionals are keen in updating the knowledge, more CE opportunities should be made available to LIS professionals in Mumbai. Universities in Mumbai should take up a leading role in organizing CEPs for library professionals. Library associations should continue to conduct the CEPs on ICTs and also start certificate courses.

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