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## Supportive staff in libraries of Visakhapatnam City: an evaluative study

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The implications of automation, challenges of the internet and other technological advancements brought in considerable change in the library operations and library human resources. This has changed the role of support staff as well and they ought to possess basic computer skills, barcode/RFID technologies, internet use, OPAC operation etc. as they are responsible to manage library at the ground level in accordance with user demands. A survey was conducted to find out the existing situation of semi professional staff in different libraries of Visakhapatnam, India. It was revealed that majority of semiprofessionals are 'on job trainees' and do not have any formal education. Therefore, the study suggests reviewed and revised curriculum suitable to train semiprofessionals of digital era.*

**1. Introduction:** The effective performance of library is inextricably linked to human behaviour. The stakeholders of library and information system / services are librarians, support staff and management. The management has a different role while the library staff is the performers. Hence the vitality of the LICs lies in the knowledge and aptitude of the library personnel – both professional and para professional. As Likert has pointed out, “All the activities of an enterprise are initiated and determined by the competence, motivation and general effectiveness of its human organization” Thus the maintenance of human resources must be considered as the vital element in achieving the set goals of a library. Oberg (1992) found that ‘paraprofessionals constitute a vital, growing force within our libraries’.

In India, the library professionals are grouped into four categories – Librarian – top management, Deputy librarian and Assistant librarian – middle management; Library assistant and Technical assistant – lower management; Record assistants, book keepers,

binders – working category. The first three categories are deemed to be professionals with Bachelor or Postgraduate degree in Library and Information Science (LIS) while the fourth category is semi-professionals with or without formal professional education. This category is considered as support staff whose functions include sorting of documents, labeling and preparation of documents, stock arrangement and maintenance, record maintenance, office assistance, catering to user needs etc.

For the sake of the study Record Assistants, Sorters, Bookkeepers, Library assistants' et al are categorized as semi professionals.

**2. Background of the concept:** Dr S.R.Ranganathan's Report on "University and College Libraries" (1959) stated that the country is in need of library personnel of different levels - a few professionals with leadership and large number of semi-professionals to do repetitive routines in all kinds of libraries." He suggested that the hallmark of such semi professional staff might be a 'Certificate in Library Science.' Accordingly, while LIS departments under University system take care of the professional education, para-professional/ semi professional /support staff training is the purview of State Associations and Department / Directorate of Libraries of respective States.

**3. Need for the study:** In spite of emphasis on the concept of support staff five decades ago, support staff role and training is the most neglected lot in India. Academic and Special libraries do not recruit any semi-professional staff, instead non-technical working cadre of the organization's central administration pool are acting as semi-professionals who are likely to be transferred at anytime to any other department. At present they are getting on the job training without any academic training. As such their professional knowledge is limited and volatile and their role is insignificant.

A cursory review of literature on the theme indicates that very little attention has been paid to assess exclusively the performance of semiprofessional staff in India but was included as part of performance evaluation of professional staff / library staff of different types of libraries. The exception is a PhD thesis on "An analytical study of paraprofessional staff, their cooperation and conflict in University libraries in Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi" by Poonam Chowdury (1995). However as it is unpublished could not be accessed in spite of contacting the concerned University.

In this context a need has been felt to conduct an in depth study of the structure and functions of support staff in different types of libraries. Evaluation enables to know if the system is achieving the set objectives and to what level, and if not what are the constraining factors. Therefore the present study has been taken up to evaluate the status and performance of semi professional staff in different types of libraries of Visakhapatnam.

**4. Objective:** The objective of the study is to analyze the performance of the semiprofessionals in existing library system and ascertain expectations from their performance under the changing information environment; to analyse the education programmes available for them; and suggest curriculum to train them for the contemporary digital environment.

**5. Scope:** The city of Visakhapatnam has been taken as study site that has three public libraries; two universities, 50 degree; eight engineering, three law, one medical and one dental colleges; eight special (industrial/defense) organizations with libraries. The study includes

- Three public libraries, two under the management of Government and one under collaborative management of local government and registered body of citizens of the city.
- Two University libraries, one state University and the other a deemed University recognized by University Grants Commission, New Delhi.
- College libraries include – Bachelor and postgraduate colleges, Bachelor of Education colleges, Engineering colleges, Medical and Dental Colleges, Law Colleges. Though there are about 50 colleges offering graduate and postgraduate courses only two are run by State Government, two autonomous colleges and others are private colleges. Majority (34) of private colleges does not have librarian post and a non-professional is managing the namesake library. Another notable point is with Law and B.Ed colleges wherein there is no semi professional staff and librarian alone manages all tasks. Therefore 14 colleges in total under different subject field have been selected for study.

Five special libraries that have qualified librarians are included in the study. (There are more than about 20 industrial and other service organizations without a librarian position that are excluded from the study)

**6. Sample:** Simple random sampling technique has been employed that represents all types of libraries and categories of support staff. The details of the sample collection are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Data displaying sample size**

Type of library	Number of libraries with librarian	Libraries with semi profess.l staff	Sample served with questionnaire
Public libraries	3	3	3
University	2	2	2
College Libraries:			
Degree Colleges	16	8	8
Engineering	8	4	4
Medical College	1	1	1
Dental	1	1	1
B.Ed Colleges	3	0	-
Law	3	0	-
Special Libraries	5	5	5
Total	41	24	24

**Response rate** is 100% owing to the personal visits of the author to some libraries. The visits helped to observe the real situation, interact with librarians and semi professional staff.

**7. Method of study:** To study the status of semi professionals in different libraries a structured questionnaire containing open-ended questions was used. The study focused on evaluation of support staff in terms of their education, experience, knowledge of information sources, storage and retrieval techniques, ICT skills, records management, interaction with users, training programmes, level of satisfaction and expectations of librarians from them. The data was gathered through the librarians as majority of semi professionals can't understand English and may not be able to fill the questionnaire.

**8. Analysis of data and interpretation of results:** The responses given in the questionnaires have been analysed and the results presented in the following paragraphs.

**8.1. Strength of the staff working in the libraries:** Manpower is the most important asset of any organization and libraries are not an exception. The successful functioning of a library depends on the quantity and quality of the manpower. Hence stock of the present manpower, both professional and non-professional was taken. The workforce, in library terminology, often categorized as professionals, semi professionals and non-professionals. University libraries have office or ministerial staff but no other library has this position. Hence they are clubbed with non-professional staff. The results are tabulated and presented in Table 2

**Table 2: Strength of the library staff**

Type of Library	No. of professionals	Semi professionals	Non professionals
Public Libraries (3)	10	7	11
University Libraries (2)	48	36	52
College libraries (14)	22	36	14
Special libraries (5)	8	10	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>85</b>

Among public libraries the Visakha Public Library has better staff strength (5+4+3). A notable point is that there is no specific staff structure and they are working on contract basis. The District Central Library, Visakhapatnam (under Government management) has yet to fill the vacancies of permanent semi professional staff.

Dr V.S.Krishna Library, Andhra University (Established 1926) is in an envious position with 42 professional, 32 semi professional and 37 non-professional staff. While GITAM University, comparatively new (Established 2007), have 6+4+15 in the order of professional, semi professional and non-professional.

The degree Colleges have only one semi professional staff except Mrs A.V.N.College that has appointed five semi professional staff. However these personnel are working on contract basis with consolidated pay. Andhra Medical College has two untrained semi professionals while Dental College has one. Engineering College libraries

are fortunate to have 2-3 semi professionals' to support the library operations, of course as contract staff.

The special libraries offer a gloomy picture with two semi professional staff each except Naval Scientific Technological Laboratories with four support personnel.

It can be observed from the above data that semi professionals are in equal strength to professionals and non-professionals. However there is no policy in the deployment of semi professionals in libraries of Visakhapatnam. The interaction with the librarians revealed that there is no standard in deciding the staff strength because often they are being shared with parent body / other departments. The staff is not appointed as permanent library workforce. A point of concern is that distinction between semi and non-professionals is blurred and it is only by the nature of duties the librarians are able to categorize them. Majority of semi professionals are working on contract basis or on transfer from other departments of institution except in public libraries. Therefore it is difficult to expect total commitment from them towards library services.

**Designation:** The semi professional staff is designated differently in the libraries under study. The common designations are Library Technicians, Junior Officers, (special); Record Assistant, Sorter, Binding staff (Universities); Library Assistant, Record Assistant, Library Attendants, Library Helper (Colleges); Bookkeeper, Record Assistant, Card Writer (Public). Indeed as has already been mentioned, there is no distinct categorization between semi professional and non-professional staff. In fact the non-professionals are performing semi professional duties.

**8.2. Qualifications:** Educational and professional qualifications are essential for semiprofessional staff to work in the library, as they have to handle knowledge hidden documents and have to participate in its dissemination. It is the general belief hat the qualifications lead to quality of performance. Hence data gathered on the qualifications of semi professional staff working in the libraries of Visakhapatnam.

**Table 3: Display of qualifications and salary structure of Semi professional staff**

Type of Library	Educational			Professional		Position	
	P.G	Degree	School	BLib	C.Lib	Budget post	Contract post
Public Libraries (3)	1	1	5	-	2	3	4
University Libraries (2)	-	12	24	2	-	36	-
College libraries (14)		14	22	-	2	4	32
Special libraries (5)	3	1	6	-	-	10	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>36</b>

The table 3 reveals that the educational qualifications of semi professional staff is not encouraging as 57 out of 89 (64.04%) are from school or higher secondary and only six out of 89 have done some professional course. It was mentioned that two semi professionals in two degree colleges are pursuing their BLISc course through distance mode. Another significant factor is their salary structure, 36 out of 89 (40.44%) are working on consolidated pay.

From the analysis of above data it can be interpreted that the two University and two public libraries have sanctioned posts of semi professionals; other libraries under study don't have sanctioned regular posts of semi professionals. The existing semi professional staff of colleges is under paid as 40.44% of them are working on contract basis. Their salaries vary from Rs1500 to Rs 3000 per month.

**8.3. Nature of Duties:** The focus of the study is to assess the supportive role of semi professional staff in the functioning of the library hence information was sought about the same. The librarians were asked to indicate the works the semi professionals perform generally in order of priority. Table 4 reveals their responses

**Table 4: Nature of work performed by semiprofessional staff in different libraries**

Nature of work	Rank	Public Lib.s	Univ. Libs	College Libs	Special Lib.s
Maintenance of stock	1	0	1	3	0
	2	0	1	2	0
	3	3	0	9	5
Support in acquisition	1	0	0	0	0
	2	0	1	0	0
	3	3	1	14	1
Circulation	1	1	1	6	5
	2	2	1	5	0
	3	0	0	3	0
Maintenance of Reading rooms	1	2	0	2	0
	2	1	1	0	2
	3	0	1	12	3
Reference desk	1	0	0	1	0
	2	0	1	5	0
	3	0	1	8	0
Photocopying	1	0	0	2	0
	2	2	0	2	3
	3	0	0	10	2
Binding	1	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0
	3	0	2	14	0
Preservation (pesticide treatment)	1	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0

It can be observed from the above table that circulation is the major activity of support staff as 54.16% and 33.33% mentioned it as first and second priority respectively. The figures indicate that semi professionals are involved in all works except binding, preservation and photocopying but their nature of duties varies between different libraries. Further it was revealed that the staff is transferable and hence they will be assigned required duty during their stay in the library.

**8.4. Knowledge level of semi professionals in performing duties:** The knowledge level of an employee is essential to extract the desired work performance. With this view responses were asked regarding the thoroughness of semi professional staff in information sources; use of cataloguing and classification; users and their needs; and records management as these are basic components expected from a para professional worker.

**Table 5: Knowledge level of Semi professional staff**

Type of Library	Information sources			Catalog and classification			Users and needs			Records management		
	G	A	BA	G	A	BA	G	A	BA	G	A	BA
Public Libraries (3)	2	5	0	1	0	6	2	3	2	4	2	1
University Libraries (2)	18	18	0	0	0	36	0	36	0	0	36	0
College libraries (14)	28	6	2	2	8	26	12	6	18	24	6	6
Special libraries (5)	4	4	2	0	2	8	4	4	2	4	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>7</b>

**G: Good; A: Average; BA: Below Average**

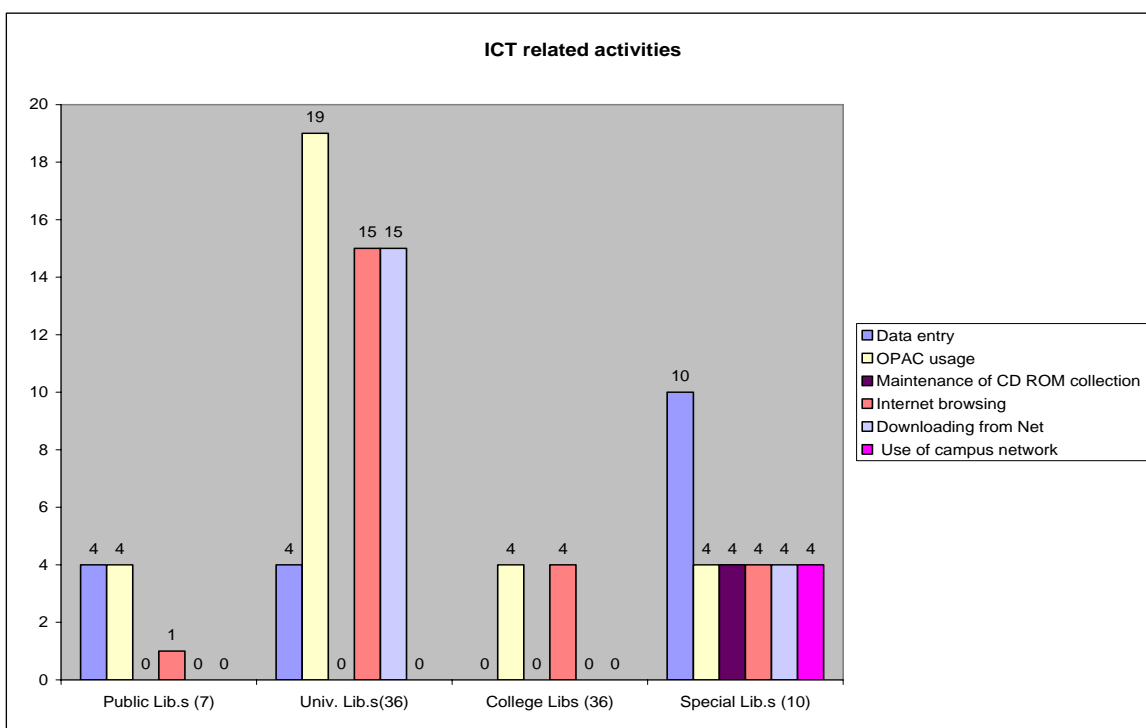
The table reveals the librarians assessment of their semi professional staff regarding their knowledge levels in performing various functions. The analysis indicates that their knowledge level of information sources available in the library, their identification and retrieval are good followed by records management. However their knowledge level of using classification and cataloguing seems to be very poor, as 85.39% have been identified as below average. It is obvious as the semi professionals under study are not having any professional qualification and majority i.e. 64.04% has high school education. Therefore understanding the techniques of knowledge organization and its use for retrieval may be difficult for them. Their interacting with users and catering to their needs is also not encouraging. Further it was revealed that they are good at the maintenance of circulation records only as they are well versed in circulation activity. This finding correlates with that in Table 4 where in 54.16% and 33.33% respectively mentioned circulation activity as first and second priority. All other records are being maintained and managed by professional staff.

Indeed the semi professionals are the front end staff to interact with users and catering to their needs while the professionals involve in behind the screen technical duties. It can be inferred from the above analysis that semi professional's knowledge levels are limited and needs improvement to handle core works in libraries.

**8.5. Training of semi professionals:** The semi professional staff needs specialized training in library operations. How do they get this training tailor made to the needs of the specific type of library? To ascertain this fact the data was gathered. Three options – onsite/ on work, conduct of special training programmes; sponsoring to out side training - were given that are generally in vogue. The respondents (24) in total unanimously reported that onsite / on work training is the only option adopted to train the para professionals. However Andhra University claimed that they are conducting special training programmes also to train their semiprofessionals. This finding indicates the dire need for a structured training programme for semi professionals of this region.

**8.6. ICT related activities:** The application of information communication technologies (ICT) has brought in revolutionary changes in library and information centres. In the new information environment the library manpower contribute specialized IT skills complimenting the traditional professional skills to deal with electronic / online resources and services. As such the subordinate staff needs ICT skills to become partners of the LICs in digital era. Therefore data was sought on the involvement of semi professional staff in ICT related activities. The responses provided in order of priority are tabulated and displayed in Chart 1 below.

**Chart 1: Semi professional’s involvement in ICT related activities**



It is evident from the results that the ICT activities of semi professional staff are very limited in the libraries under study. Among public libraries only one library under local Government and private body collaboration gave positive response while two libraries under State Government negated. It was observed that the later two libraries do not have adequate ICT based operations and services.

Among the special libraries the scenario is good in two industrial libraries as the semi professionals involve in helping users in OPAC usage, handle CD ROM collections, use internet and down load necessary information and further capable of offering services through campus network. The situation is not encouraging in other three libraries as the activity is restricted in case of one library to data entry while the other two draws a blank. In fact these libraries are automated and working in networked environment. Hence it can



be inferred that the semi professionals do not possess required ICT skills to handle the situation.

The situation in college libraries is deplorable as only four out of 36 i.e. 11.11% that belongs to a single college are involved in ICT related activities and the rest 32 representing 13 colleges have no ICT operation skills.

It can be concluded from the above analysis that the semi professional's involvement in ICT related activities are below the level of expectations except in few privileged libraries. Lack of proper general education may also contribute to the situation, as 64.04 % are school out puts. University libraries are better lot as 41% are involved in internet usage and down loading while 52.77% are well versed in the use of OPAC. The availability of infrastructure in university library and exposure to its usage may also be a reason for this result.

**8.7. Involvement in User Services:** As has already mentioned the support staff is the front-end operators of library and the way they respond to users make the difference. Hence a question was asked as 'Do the support staff directly involves with user services?' The answer is affirmative from all respondents indicating that semiprofessionals are interacting with users and offering services. On a supplementary to mention the type of services 24 librarians answered that they help users in locating document; 10 said they do provide reference service while 4 of them expressed that they do help users in Internet browsing and one said they do help users in selection of journals for reading. The analysis reveals that the semiprofessionals are actively involved in interacting with users and attending to their needs.

**8.8. Satisfaction with the performance of semi professional staff:** When asked whether they are satisfied with the general performance of semi professionals, majority (91%) librarians expressed that they are satisfied. Some of them stated that they are the backbone of their library without whose support they can't complete their tasks. Some others opined that their services are praise worthy as they are working with commitment in spite of lack of professional education / training and contract based employment for nominal salary. They do not have a second opinion in this regard.

However the two University librarians differ from this opinion and stated their satisfaction level is 'to some extent'. The reasons mentioned are 'indiscipline', 'absenteeism', 'lack of motivation' and 'lack of service motto'. The University library work culture is different from others in its physical size and services offered. Hence semiprofessionals ought to play a responsible role. Further when there is more staff there is possibility of indiscipline crop up from some corner that may lead to low satisfactory level of their performance in view of management.

The remedial measures suggested by the University librarians to improve the performance of semiprofessionals include:

- The library should do selection and recruitment of semi professionals

- They should work under the administrative control of librarian (not Registrar)
- Training is required to educate and motivate them
- Training in computer literacy is essential
- 

**8.9. Expectations from semi professional staff:** To a question on what the professionals expect from semi professionals the responses are as follows:

- Proficiency in English language
- Basic computer knowledge
- Support in technical processing
- Disciplined worker/ self discipline
- Knowledge of Internet usage
- To work with service motto
- To support in clerical/official duties
- To work in shifts and holiday duties
- Protect and secure library property
- Assistance in user services
- Records maintenance

The list clearly indicates that librarians expect a good support from the semi professional staff in almost all library activities. However with unqualified, untrained, and non-permanent staff realization of the expectations is difficult.

**8.10. Education and training in LIS:** Education and training will make a person knowledgeable that leads to efficient performance of the tasks on hand. The general belief is that semi professionals in libraries also need proper education and adequate training. The opinion in this aspect was sought from the respondent librarians of the survey and cent percent agreed that semi professionals do need education and training. However with regard to mode of providing the same 19 librarians except five from special libraries agreed that conduct of a Certificate Course for semi professionals is essential to provide basic training. However the special librarians were of the opinion that training on site suitable to their requirements is more useful. They cite that their libraries are functioning under specific LAN and software (e.g. ORACLE) environment and offers specialized services hence special training in those aspects is necessary for semi professionals also hence onsite training is preferred than general professional education.

**Course components:** To a supplementary on the components to be included in the syllabus of education programme they have marked components in order of priority from the list suggested in the questionnaire.

**Table 7: Suggested Course Components**

Components of syllabus	Public Lib.s (3)	Univ. Libs (2)	College Libs (14)
Lib philosophy and ethics	3	2	8
Classification and shelf arrangement	3	2	14
Catalogue	3	2	14
Introd. to computers	3	2	14
Information sources	3		14
Basics of LAN	0	0	6
Internet	3	2	14
Preservation techniques	0	2	6

It is obvious from the table that majority of librarians wish their subordinates to have education in training in knowledge processing, i.e. classification and cataloguing; ICT related aspects i.e. Basics of computers and Internet; and information resources – both print and electronic.

**8.11. Interaction with semi professional staff:** The author has taken an opportunity to interact with available semi professional staff while doing the survey. Personal observations and talks indicate that they are highly motivated to work in library except one or two stray candidates. Some of them expressed that they feel proud to work in library the ‘temple of knowledge’ and feel happy to serve the users with required document. The primary complaint from them is that they need good salary structure and incentive for their good work. Their plea seems to be reasonable for the services they are rendering that too to the satisfaction of their superiors. Some of them suggested offering training for 15 days every year during vacation or non-prime period will help to upgrade knowledge.

**9. Findings of the study:** The results of the survey are summarized as follows:

- There is no uniformity in the recruitment of semi professional staff. Distinction between Semi professional and non-professional has been blurred over the years though the terms and nature of duties are clearly defined in Report of University Colleges Libraries, 1959 (Chairman: S.R.Ranganathan).
- Professional qualification or training are not mandatory to take up the semiprofessional post
- The semi professional’s educational qualifications are limited to high school level; their professional knowledge is acquired on work
- They do not have adequate ICT knowledge
- They work with motivation to the satisfaction of their superiors
- Librarians do agree that their subordinate need education and training and prefer to have a certificate course with latest components. Special librarians prefer to have onsite training only.

The findings lead to study the existing system of education and training for semi professionals in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

**10. The present scenario of education and training for Semi professionals:** There are Certificate course programmes in offering to train the semi professional staff. The programmes have long history as they are being offered from 1911. Initially they were offered by Universities but later confined to professional associations and government and private organizations.

Visakhapatnam is a port city, popularized as an industrial hub of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra University is offering Postgraduate and research programmes and there is no institute offering the certificate courses. However there are eight institutions in the state of Andhra Pradesh that offer the Certificate level programmes.

1. Central Institute of Library Science, Hyderabad
2. Gnana Sai Library Science Institute, Mahaboobnagar
3. Institute of Library Science, Hyderabad
4. Naveen Vivekananda College of Library Science
5. Paturi nagabhushanam School of Library Science, Vijayawada
6. State Institute of Library Education and Training
7. The Rayalaseema Institute of library and Information Science
8. Vavilala Samstha School of Library Science, Guntur

The course is of three months duration. The Director of Libraries, Andhra Pradesh prescribes the syllabus for certificate course and conducts the examination at regular intervals. The syllabus includes basic concepts on the following courses in six papers. The term ‘paper’ is used as equivalent to ‘course’.

### **I. Library Classification and Cataloguing (Theory)**

**(a) Library Classification:** Nature and purpose of Classification, General principles of Classification. Arrangement of books, Specific subjects, Filiatory order, Classification schemes (Decimal Classification and Colon Classification), Notation, Mnemonics, Form division, Class Number and its structure, Book Number.

**b) Cataloguing:** Purpose and function of Catalogue, Publishers Catalogue and Library Catalogue, Physical forms of Catalogue, types of Catalogues, Union Catalogue, Cooperative and Centralized Cataloguing, Subject Headings and Chain Procedures, AACR and CCC, Filing of Entries, Main Entry, Added Entries, Rendering Names, Unit Card etc.

### **II. Classification (Practical)**

Working of 150 examples according to DDC and CC

### **III. Cataloguing (Practical)**

Main Entry, Author Entry, Jt. Author Entry, Editor Entry, Translator Entry, Series Entry, Pseudonymous Entry, and Class Index Entries, Corporate Author and Hindu Names as per AACR.

### **IV. Library Organisation and Administration**

**(a) Library Organization:** Laws of Library Science, Public Relations and Extension Activities, Library Movement in India with special relation to Andhra Pradesh, Library legislation, Introduction to types of libraries, and their functions, National Library

System, Building and equipment for Libraries, Library Associations.

**(b) Library Administration:** Sections of a library, ordering and accessioning of books and periodicals, processing them for use, arrangement of reading materials, Maintenance work, book binding, general care and repairs of books, stock verification and withdrawals. Circulation work and issues; Library records, registers and forms; Library finance and accounts;

## V. Reference Service, Book Selection and Bibliography

**(a) Reference Service:** Definition and concept of reference work. Functions of reference department, qualifications of a Reference Librarian, Reference Questions, Different Types of Reference Service, Reference Tools

**(b) Book Selection:** Principles, Sources of Book Selection Routine of Book Selection.

**(e) Bibliography:** Bibliography-Nature and Functions. Different Types of Bibliographies-National, Trade, Subject etc. arrangement and compilation.

## VI. General Information and Books and Authors

(Course components not specified)

It is obvious that the course components are traditional in nature and not suitable to the contemporary internet era. More emphasis is on classification and cataloguing that have limited role in the internet era. Further it was felt that there is need to devise a course structure suitable to the expectations of the librarians of different types of libraries as revealed in the survey. Therefore a model curriculum was proposed to train the semi professional staff of libraries.

**11. Certificate Course In Library And Information Science – A Proposal:** Information Technology (I.T.) virtually transformed both the face and nature of library and information centres. Two vital dimensions of I.T. i.e. increased volume and speed have revolutionized the information environment bringing multiple benefits and accelerated ability to solve many problems. It is necessary to enhance operational skills of semi professionals by offering courses suitable to contemporary Indian information society. Keeping in view the diversities in library functions the following syllabus has been suggested. The course will be of six months duration with 30 credits covering the important components of LIS. The course may be offered to new entrants and also as continuing education programmes for working candidates

### Certificate Course In Library and Information Science

#### Syllabus

**Course 1 (4 credits): Library and Society:** LIS profession, professional ethics; Different types of libraries and their functions 4 credits

**Course 2 (5 credits): Management of libraries:** Different departments/ sections in a library and their activities; role of support staff; different records of library and their maintenance 4 credits

*Practical:* Visit different types of libraries and submit a report on the observations

	1 credit
<b>Course 3 (6 credits): Classification and cataloguing:</b> Knowledge organization – its purpose; Shelf arrangement – importance of classification; Basics Dewey Decimal Classification.	3 credits
Cataloguing – purpose of catalogue in information retrieval; basics of ISBD & AACR II.	3 credits
<b>Course 4 (6 credits):</b> Introduction to computers: Basic computer configuration (Theory)	2 credits
<i>Practical</i> – MS Office; OPACs use and maintenance; bar coding;	4 credits
<b>Course 5 (4 credits): Introduction to Internet:</b> Internet – types of information sources available on the internet; browsing; searching and downloading; Accessing relevant consortia E.g. UGC Infonet (E-Journal Consortium for Universities and Colleges); INDEST etc. (Indian national Digital Library in Engineering, Science and Technology);	4 credits
<b>Course 6 (5 credits): Information sources and services:</b> Different types of sources including electronic and web; reference books – types and importance	2 credits
Users of library; needs and expectations; public relations; role of support staff	1 credit
Information services – types of services – details of loan service	2 credits
<b>Total 30 credits</b>	

The methods of instruction have to be in real environment of a library with less emphasis on theory and more exposure to library, computer and network functioning.

**Conclusions:** The findings of the study reveal the strengths and weaknesses of existing system of library support staff. The situation warrants for immediate action from the authorities and LS profession. There should be permanent semi professional staff to support library activities. They can neither be drawn on temporary basis nor can be shared with general administration of the institute, as they do not know what to do in library. They need special skills to perform the library duties and motivated to serve the public. Owing to its importance in effective library management, LIS profession and education in India ought to throw light on the support staff issues and put things on the right track. The role of professional, semi professional and non professional have to be defined distinctly and their functions have to be reconfigured keeping in view the contemporary information environment.

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