

LIS journals in India: Current status and some improvement measures

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The paper identifies the present status of journal publishing in India in the field of library & information science. Identification of journals were made by consulting various sources. The characteristics of the journals have been studied on various parameters like number of years of existence, type of publisher, accessibility, references and citation characteristics, etc. Of the total 72 identified journals, it was observed that almost 70% journals started their publication from 2000 onwards. About 81% journals are available on subscription basis. Print as well as online format for dissemination of research have been adopted by 59% journals, however, 30% journals are still available only in print form. It is seen that private or profit-making (59%) organizations are more interested to publish LIS journals than non-profit making organizations (41%). One of the major drawbacks of Indian LIS journals is there poor visibility and limited coverage in various bibliographical databases. More than 54% journals are not indexed in any important bibliographic database and only 6 journals are indexed in LISA, LISTA or ILSA. The citation statistics of these journals are not satisfactory as 42 journals did not receive any citations for their articles published during 2011-2013. At the end, the study suggests a few measures for improving the quality of journal in LIS domain.

Keywords: LIS Journals; Indian LIS Journals

Introduction

In scholarly communication process, journal serves as an important vehicle for formal communication. It gives the researchers a platform to make their research known to their peer group and to promote, share and make accessible their research to world at large. The publishing of scholarly journals dates back to 17th century with the publication of *Journal des Scavans* edited by Denis de Sallo first published on Monday, 5th January 1665 in Paris followed by *Philosophical Transactions of Royal Society* edited by Henry Oldenburg and first published on 6th March 1665 in England¹.

In India '*Library Miscellany*' can be considered as the first LIS journal that started publishing in 1912 by State library department, Baroda. It stopped publishing in 1920 but it lead to the publishing of library and information science (LIS) journals in India.

Review of literature

Over the last few years, there has been a steadily growing interest in LIS research. There is some

evidence of research by Calvert and Shi² on quality and quantity in journal publishing in China. Anderson³ and Gorman and Calvert⁴ have provided another view of journal quality, arguing that it is linked to 'excessive publication' – submitting the same manuscript to two or more journals. Their researches were mainly qualitative in that they used journal editors' opinions on a number of questions as their major sources of information. Day and Peter⁵ used qualitative methods to ask subscribers and authors, plus some editors and editorial advisors, as to what they thought about the quality of a journal. Acceptance⁶ and rejection rates⁷ have also been theorized as a measure of journal quality. Rousseau⁸ summarized the 10 characteristics of a "quality" journal by reviewing Zwemer⁹, Garfield¹⁰ and Testa¹¹. These ten criteria are: 1) High standards of acceptance (acceptance and rejection rates); 2) Subject and geographical representativeness of the editorial board; 3) Use of a critical refereeing system; 4) Promptness of publication; 5) Coverage by major abstracting and indexing services; 6) High confidence level of scientists using the journal in its contents; 7) High frequency of citation by other journals (impact); 8)

Inclusion of abstracts/summaries in English; 9) Providing author(s) addresses (author reputation score); and 10) Providing complete bibliographic information.

One widely accepted indicator of journal quality is peer review¹². Some studies indicated that 'peer review' is not a luxury for research and researchers, for certification is essential¹³. There are also many accounts of the refereeing process¹⁴ both from the point of view of the author¹⁵ and from that of the reviewer¹⁶. After peer review, the most widely accepted indicator of journal quality is the ISI journal impact factor. The impact factor has been criticized extensively because of its validity, its variation among disciplines^{17,18}, and a low correlation with expert opinion surveys¹⁹. It includes self-citations, and a single, highly cited article can strongly influence it²⁰.

However, in India, there are no qualitative indicators available to measure how well are these journals integrated into scientific communication system, more so in the LIS discipline.

Objectives of the study

- To trace the growth of scientific journals of India under LIS discipline, and to identify its present status;
- To suggest measures to improve the quality of Indian LIS journals.

Methodology

The methodology included three stages viz., identification of journals from various sources, verification of journal physically, and evaluating journals by applying certain criteria.

In order to identify the Indian LIS journals, various print as well as web based resources were consulted. The most authoritative print source, *Ulrich Periodicals Directory* (2012) was consulted to know the title of such journals which are being published from India. Additionally, in order to identify other journals, if any, following non-print (online) directories were also consulted. These are:

- Directory of Open Access Journals (Lund University Library),
- IndianJournals.com
- Indian Citation Index
- SCOPUS
- J-Gate

Some libraries were also visited to obtain first hand information by consulting the journals available in these libraries. The available information about journals were noted down .

The journal selection criteria of various popular indexing and abstracting databases, like, Thomson Reuter ISI, Elsevier's Scopus, EBSCO, SciELO etc. were studied. We have discussed only a few such criteria under qualitative issues to be considered for evaluating journals.

Results

In the present study we are able to identify 91 unique titles which are involved in publishing primary literature in LIS field in India. Of the total 91 titles, 9% or eight journals were multidisciplinary in nature and 12% (11 journals) didn't have any web presence. Among the multidisciplinary journals, there are relatively few with a very strong relevance to the LIS field, whereas there are many with a weaker relevance. We have excluded these 19 journals from the present study.

Annexure I gives the list of all 72 titles that were considered here. Although, we have observed that most of the journals have retained their nomenclature as it is since its inception, five journals have changed their title with the changing trend of library science field. These includes *Annals of Library and Information Science*, into *Annals of Library and Information Studies*, *DESIDOC Bulletin*, into *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology* and further to *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, *ILA Bulletin* into *Journal of Indian Library Association*, *Indian Library Movement* into *International Library Movement*, and *Library Science with Slant to Documentation* into *SRELS Journals of Information Management*.

Growth of LIS journals

The oldest live journal is *Granthalaya Sarvaswamu* that was started in 1915 and is being published till date. During 50s three journals came into being whereas in 60s there were five journals, in 70s three journals, in 80s again three journals, and in 90s five journals came into being. However, since the turn of the century, there has been a rapid growth journals with nearly 70% (or 47 out of 67) new journals starting their publication, among which 15 journals were brought out during in the first decade of the

present century and 32 journals in the last four years, i.e. 2011 to 2014. We were unable to trace the starting year of five journals.

Accessibility of journals

Of the total 72 journals, 59 or 81% of journals are still available on subscription basis. Only 13 journals are accessible freely. It seems that although open access movement has had a huge impact in scholarly communication process, such an impact is yet to be noticed in Indian LIS domain.

Availability

To ensure rapid delivery of the scholarly contents, journals are increasingly becoming online but in LIS field such initiatives are yet to gain momentum as only 30% of the Indian publishers have online journals. It was observed that of the total 71 journals, only eight are available exclusively in online format. No print issue is available for these journals. However, most of the journals [43 (59%)] are available in both print and online formats followed by 22(30%) journals that are available only in print format.

Nature of publishing body

We observed that of the total 72 journals, 30 (41%) journals have been published/sponsored by non-profit organizations while 42(59%) journals have been published by private or profit-making organizations. Of the total non-profit making organizations, 13 are professional associations, nine educational institutes and three government bodies. Remaining are either foundations or endowment supported publications. Further it is also observed that there are nine publishers who have been publishing more than one title. Among them, Research India Publication with five journals, Ocean Research Journal and Publishing India with three journals each and IAEME, GBS Publisher and Distribution, Trans Steller, Priyanka Research Publication, Society for Advancement of Library & Information Science & St. Anne Mary Publication are been publishing two journals each.

Indexing and abstracting of journals

It has reported that conventional bibliographic databases are still the most important tools that scholars and students use to identify journals articles for use in their research and teaching²¹. However, in the present study we found that of the 72 journals, 39

or 54% journals do not get indexed in any important bibliographic database. Only six journals are indexed in important LIS databases like LISA, LISTA or ILSA and only two journals are indexed in Scopus. So far, no Indian journal is indexed in Thomson Reuter's *Web of Science* database.

Reference style

In order to know whether the journal uniformly follows a similar pattern while writing references, we studied at least 10 articles from different issues of each journal. We found that most journals do not follow a similar pattern while rendering references. There are at least 17 journals that follow different reference styles. Further in 32 journals, although instruction to authors to maintain style of reference is given, most of the articles however do not follow such instructions. APA was found to be the most commonly followed reference style followed by MLA (3 journals), Chicago (2 journals) and Harvard (2 journals) reference styles.

Citations

Although India has considerable number of journals in LIS field, very few of them get citations in Google scholar. Of the total 72 journals, 42 journals did not receive any citations during 2011-2013. Further 12 journals have received less than 10 citations and 13 journals received 10-20 citations. The top five cited journals are: *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology* with 258 citations, followed by *Annals of Library and Information Studies* with 132 citations, *Trends in Information Management* with 116 citations, *International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology* with 57 citations and *Pearl : A Journal of Library and Information Science* with 28 citations for the articles published during 2011-2013.

Measures for improving quality of Indian LIS journals

We attempted to identify core issues that need to be focused on so as to enhance the quality of journals. A journal's basic publishing standards, its editorial content, the international diversity of its authorship, and the citation data associated with it are all important for a journal to gain reputation. No one factor can be considered in isolation.

Longevity: The number of years of existence of the journal in scholarly communication process is an

important criterion to evaluate a journal. If a journal survives for a decade or so, it is an indicator that the journal has been accepted by the peers and it has required institutional support for publication.

Nature of publishing & sponsoring body: The authority of publication is another criterion to evaluate quality. Although, in developed nations, the most common publishers are commercial in nature however, in India most authoritative publishers are still either educational or non-profit organizations

Regularity and promptness in publication: Publishing journal regularly without delays and maintaining periodicity and not combining issues are important towards enhancing the quality.

Review policy: One of the most important steps in journal publishing is the review process. In fact it is very difficult to ascertain whether journal actually follows the review process that it claims. Journal publishing is now an industry in India and the motto of publishing seems to be to earn revenue compromising on quality. The peer review has to be strictly followed.

Editorial board: Qualitative journals maintain a small but effective editorial board. It is expected that if the board members of a journal are from different organizations and have geographical diversity, it can be considered as a qualitative feature of the journal. Further, the professional standing of editor and associate editors is also important.

Geographical diversity of contributors: Geographic diversity of contributors shows the contribution and recognition of a journal in the concerned field at international level.

Coverage by indexing databases: Indexing of a journal by well reputed databases like *WoS* and *SCOPUS* reflects its quality in publication. Indian LIS journals should strive to meet the criteria stipulated by these databases so that the journals are included in these prominent citation indexing databases.

Article structure: Structure of an article indicates clear publication policies of a publisher. While evaluating a journal, analyzing the structure of article should be an important criteria. The clear cut structure includes standard length of text-not too long or not too short; common structure in explaining the research process; uniform reference pattern; clear readability of article etc. A qualitative journal always maintains a process for above such issues.

Article publishing history: The publishing history of an article should include the date of submission, review date and date of publication so that it enables to understand the review process as well as time lag of publication.

Conclusion

The study reveals that while a number of LIS journals are being published from India, there are concerns regarding the quality of Indian LIS journals. A few indicators have been discussed that may enable Indian journals to enhance their quality.

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LIS of LIS Journals of India									
Name	Publisher	Frequency	Year of Start	Reference Pattern	Indexed in	GS Citation	Nature of Publishing body	Accessi-bility	Format
<i>Annals of Library and Information Studies</i>	NISCAIR	Quarterly	1954	NISCAIR Guide style	C,D,O	132	Non Profit	Open	O/P
<i>Asian Journal of Information science & Technology</i>	The Research Publication	Half-yearly	2011	M	O	3	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Asian Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	St. Anne Mary Publication	Quarterly	2009	M	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>CLIS observer</i>	Centre for Library and Information Studies	Quarterly	1984	NA	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Collnet Journal of Scientometrics and Information Management</i>	Taru Publication	Half-yearly	2007	I	C,D,O	18	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>DESIDOC Journal of library & Information Technology</i>	DESIDOC	Bi-monthly	1981	I	B, C, D,O	258	Non Profit	Open	O/P
<i>e-library science research Journal</i>	LSRJ, affiliated to Solarpur Univ.	Bi-monthly	2012	I	O	0	Pvt	Open	O/P
<i>Global Journal of Academic Librarianship</i>	Research India Publication	Bi-annually	2012	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Granthagar</i>	Bengal Library Association	Monthly	1953	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Granthalaya Sarvaswamu</i>	Andhra Pradesh Library Association	Monthly	1915	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Granthalaya Vigyan</i>	Late Prof. Kaula Library & Information Science Endowment	Semi annually	1970	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Granthaana</i>	RRRLF	Bi-annually	1990	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Gyankosh the Journal of library and information and management</i>	Integrated Academy of Management And Technology	Half-yearly	2010	I	O	3	Non Profit	Close	O/P
<i>Herald of Library Science</i>	DLIS, University of Lucknow	Quarterly	1961	I	D	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>IASLIC Bulletin</i>	IASLIC	Quarterly	1956	I	E,O	10	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>ILA Bulletin (Journal of Indian Library Association)</i>	ILA	Quarterly	1964	A	C,E,O	3	Non Profit	Open	O/P
<i>Indian Journal of Information , Library and Society</i>	Publishing India.com	Quarterly	2012	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Indian Journal of Information Sources and Services</i>	The Research Publication	Half-yearly	2011	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P

Name	Publisher	Frequency	Year of Start	Reference Pattern	Indexed in	GS Citation	Nature of Publishing body	Accessi-bility	Format
<i>Indian Journal of Information Technology and Library Science (IJITLS)</i>	GBS Publisher and distribution	Bi-annually		I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Indian Journal of Librarianship and Administration, (IJLA)</i>	GBS Publisher and distribution	Bi-annually	2010	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Indian Journal of Library and Information Technology</i>	ijlit.net	Monthly	2011	I	O	2	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Indian Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	Red Flower Publication Private ltd.	Triennial	2007		O	16	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Information Studies</i>	Ranganathan Centre for Information Studies	Quarterly	1995	A	O	19	Non Profit	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Digital Information and Knowledge Management</i>	Ocean Research Journal	Three Issue per year	2013	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O
<i>International Journal of Digital Libraries and Knowledge Management (IJDLKM)</i>	Research India Publication	Triennial	2011	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Digital Library Services</i>	ijodls.in	Bi-annually	2011	A	O	17	Pvt	Open	O/P
<i>International Journal of Emerging Trends in Library and Information Society</i>	Ocean Research Journal		2013	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O
<i>International Journal of Information and Library Science (IJLIS)</i>	St. Anne Mary Publication	Bi-annually	2011	I	O	8	Pvt	Close	O
<i>International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology</i>	ijidt.com	Quarterly	2011	A	O	57	Pvt	Open	O/P
<i>International Journal of Information Library and Society</i>	Publishing India.com		2012	A	O	2	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Information Technology and Library Science (IJITLS)</i>	Research India Publication	Bi-annually	2012	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Knowledge Management and Practices</i>	Publishing India.com	Annual	2013	A	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/p
<i>International Journal of Librarianship and Administration (IJLA)</i>	Research India Publication	Bi-monthly	2010	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Library & Information Science Research And Development (IJLISRD)</i>	Priyanka Research Publication		2012	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P

Name	Publisher	Frequency	Year of Start	Reference Pattern	Indexed in	GS Citation	Nature of Publishing body	Accessi-bility	Format
<i>International Journal of Library & Information Science Research Student</i>	Ocean Research Journal		2013	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	IAEME.com	Bi-annually	2012	I	NI	0	Pvt	Open	O/P
<i>International Journal of Library and Information Studies</i>	IJLIS.org	Quarterly		M	O	3	Pvt	Open	O
<i>International Journal of Library Automation, Networking and Consortia</i>	Research India Publication	Triennial	2012	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of library science</i>	CESER.in	Triennial	2010	I	O	19	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>International Journal of Library Science and Research</i>	Trans Steller			A	NI	0	Pvt	Open	O/P
<i>International Library Movement</i>	ILM Foundation of India	Quarterly	1979		O	3	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>International Research : Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	IRJLIS	Quarterly	2011	H	O	15	Pvt	Open	O/P
<i>ISST Journal of Advances in Librarianship (IJALIB)</i>	Intellectuals Society for socio Techno Welfare	Bi-annually	2010	I	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Journal of Advances in Library and Information science</i>	JALIS.in	Quarterly	2012	A	O	15	Pvt	Open	O
<i>Journal of Knowledge and Communication Management</i>	DLIS, Aligarh Muslim University.	Half-yearly	2011	H	O	15	Non Profit	Close	O/P
<i>Journal of Library Metamorphosis</i>	Educational Publisher & Distributor	Half-yearly	2013	A	NI	0	Pvt	Close	P
<i>Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	DLIS, University of Delhi, Delhi,	Half-yearly	1976	M	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	O/P
<i>Journal of Library and Information Science Technology(JLIST)</i>	IAEME.com				NI	0	Pvt	Close	O
<i>Journal of Library management</i>	Management Libraries Network& Indian Research.com	Quarterly	2012	A	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Journal of Library Science and Information Technology (JLSIT)</i>	Priyanka Research Publication	Bi-annually	2012		NI	0	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Journal of Library Science and Research</i>	Trans Steller			A	NI	0	Pvt	Close	O

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<i>Journal of Library, Information and Communication Technology</i>	Central Library, Dayalbagh University	Half-yearly	2009	A	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Journal of Scientometric Research</i>	Wolters Kluwer Health - Medknow	Triennial	2012	I	O	17	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Journal of the M.P. Young Librarian Association</i>	M.P. Young Librarian Association		2008	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>KELPRO Bulletin</i>	Kerala Library Professional Organisation	Half-yearly	1997		O	2	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>KIIT Journal of Library and Information Management</i>	KIIT School of Management	Bi-annually	2014	A	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>KLA Newsletter</i>	Kerala Librarian Association			I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Library Herald</i>	Delhi Library Association	Quarterly	1962	I	O	10	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Library Progress(International)</i>	BPAS Research	Half-yearly	1981		E, O	16	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Lucknow Librarian</i>	U P Librarian Association	Monthly	1969		NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Pearl : A Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	University library teachers association of Andhra Pradesh	Quarterly	2007	I	O	28	Non Profit	Close	O/P
<i>Professional Journal of library and information technology</i>	Dr. S. K. Sharma	Bi-annually	2011		NI	0	Pvt	Close	P
<i>RBU Journal of Library Information Science</i>	DLIS, Rabindra Bharati Univ.	Annual	1997	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>Research Journal of Library Sciences</i>	Indian Science Congress Association	Monthly	2013	I	O	3	Non Profit	Open	O
<i>SALIS Journal of Information Management and Technology</i>	Society for Advancement of Library and Information Science	Half-yearly	2002	C	I	0	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>SALIS Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	Society for Advancement of Library and Information Science	Quarterly	2002	C	O	2	Non Profit	Close	P
<i>SPOARS International Journal of Information research</i>	Scholarly Publishing and Open Access Resources			A	NI	0	Pvt	Close	P
<i>SRELS Journal of Information Management</i>	Sarada Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science,	Bi-Monthly	1964	NI	C,D,E	14	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>Trends in Information Management</i>	DLIS, University of Kashmir	Annual	2005	A	O	116	Non Profit	Open	O/P

Name	Publisher	Frequency	Year of Start	Reference Pattern	Indexed in	GS Citation	Nature of Publishing body	Accessi-bility	Format
<i>Vidyasagar University Journal of Library and Information Sciences</i>	DLIS, Vidyasagar university		1996	I	NI	0	Non Profit	Close	O/P
<i>World Digital Libraries</i>	TERI Publication	Bi-annually	2008	I	O	9	Pvt	Close	O/P
<i>World Research Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	Bio- Info Publication	Quarterly	2012	I	O	0	Pvt	Close	O/P

Note: Indexing Services: A. WoS, B. SCOPUS, C. LISA (2012 ed.), D. LISTA (2014 ed.), E. ILSA, O. Others (EBSCO, DOAJ, Index Copernicus, Google Scholar, Library Literature, ProQuest, J-Gate, etc.). Reference Style- M. MLA, A. APA, C. Chicago, H. Harvard, I. Individual, NI-Not Identified