Abstract

Paper discusses the present Library staff recruitment policies and essential qualifications/experience in Digital era at various Libraries of India it also highlights the Job responsibilities of the staffs. Few cases have been taken here to compare the relevancy of present recruitment policy, job requirements and the LIS syllabus in ICT environment. The aim of the research in question is to evaluate the effectiveness of current human resource management practices in the Library and Information Science field in ICT environment. The study of qualifications/experience data of the staff presents a summary of findings and recommendations to Libraries. The educational qualifications/experience presented in this paper is taken from the advertisements published by University/Institution for different level of staff in Library which indicates lot of dissimilarity in similar kind of post and lack/explanation of ICT based skills requirements.

Keywords: Library Staff, Qualification, Experience, recruitment, Skill, Education, Syllabus

Introduction

In the present digital environment the recruitment of library staff requires a proper planning. The main aim of recruitment should be to secure best candidates for performing specific jobs in a library. In the ICT environment working methodology and the tools and techniques used in the libraries are changing very rapidly it is very difficult and challenging for the employer to get the employee who is having ability to satisfy the present and future requirements of the complex information needs of the users. Library is the heart of any institution and the staffs are its backbone. Keeping this in view it is very critical for the administrators to pay more attention on recruitment policy of the library staff.

The present scenario of essential qualifications/experience, ICT based technical capability required in the library and the syllabuses of LIS education are not matching up to the mark. In the present paper the author has taken some cases of popular universities/Institutes and the various professional posts in Library. The emphasis has been given here for the post of assistant librarians due to its direct connectivity with the middle level and bottom level working professionals whose responsibility is to provide proper guidance to professional staffs and supervisory for execution of best quality work at minimum effort and use maximum potentials of the staff, as well as to take initiatives for using of modern ICT based tools and techniques. The recruitment policy has been also discussed here with reference to developing country.

Staff Recruitment Policy

Human resources management (HRM) has become a major consideration in today’s competitive knowledge-based enterprises including library and information industries. No resource in the world, even in this age of microchips and globalization, is more important than human resource. Therefore for managers, it is very essential to have a clear understanding of the current and future skills required for any post. Recruiters, have to keep themselves fully up-to-date with developments, especially in the field of technology. A post’s specification is a vital document in the hunt for the ideal employee. It must provide a clear description of the essential skills and attributes that are needed. Specifying “Excellent IT skills essential” is quite good but how much better is “You will have a proven track record in . . . at least three of the core areas of activity (digital library development; electronic resources; collection development”. A good specification should lead to a well-worded advertisement that attracts potential candidates with the right mix of skills and qualities.

Therefore, it is in our own interest to design posts that may help both to attract as well retain high caliber staff. By having a very clear vision of what an institution is trying to achieve and the skills that the staff need to deliver that vision, the recruiter can communicate clearly to the outside world its values and
expectations. Such clarity and objectivity are also vital in ensuring that interviews are conducted fairly and that a person with required skills and qualities as per the job specifications is appointed.

**Recruitment and Selection Procedure in Developing Country**

The recruitment of library staff is to be planned properly. The main aim of recruitment should be to secure best candidates for performing specific jobs in a library. The vacancy advertisement must include details of the job profile, qualifications, experience and other conditions etc. The section 3 describes the advertisement for some Library Professionals post at various Institutes/Universities which indicates lack of job profiles for the advertised post. Presently there is no standard for recruitment policy, different organizations follow their own methods for example AL post is generally filled by interviewing the candidates as well as Professional Assistants positions are filled by either Interview or Written or by both methods.

A prospective employee must be properly trained for performing particular job/jobs. This will help him to know the peculiarities of the job conditions of a particular organization. The training may be imparted through many methods like apprentice system, on the job training, understudy method, role-playing technique, utility squad or flying squad method, educational exertion method, and other audio-visual methods but in developing country no such practice is observed for staff trainings. Further if a post requires high ICT skills then definitely there should be some practical test to know the real potential of the candidate which is again missing in selection procedure of the candidate almost everywhere. Once the applications are received for the advertised post the short listing of the candidate is also done without proper planning, some may prefer candidates having renowned institute’s experience which clearly indicates injustice for those library professionals having high ICT skills and excellent work potentials working in small organizations, schools etc.

**Educational Qualification/Experience for Library Professionals**

The table below contain some advertisements for the post of library professionals at various libraries which indicate a lot of dissimilarity for the same post and missing a lot of information about the job requirements (Job Profile). For the same kind of Post/Job employers require different kind of qualifications/Experiences.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>University/Institute and Post</th>
<th>Educational Qualification/Experience</th>
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| IIT Delhi/Deputy Librarian    | i) Master’s degree in Library Science/Information science/Documentation or an equivalent professional degree with at least 55% of the marks or its equivalent grade and a consistently good academic record.  
ii) Five year experience as an assistant University Librarian/College Librarian or equivalent.  
iii) Evidence of innovative Library services, published work and professional commitment, computerization of Library.  
**Desirable:** M.Phil/P.hd Degree in Library Science/Information Science/Documentation/Archives and manuscript-keeping, computerization of Library, Specialized course in computer application and Networking. Experience in Computer aided management of the Library system. |
| IISER Bhopal/ Deputy Librarian| i) **Educational Qualifications:** 1. Masters degree in Library Science/Information Science/Documentation with at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade and consistently good academic record. 2. 8 years experience as an Assistant Librarian in an University/College/IIT etc. 3. Evidence of innovative library service, published work and professional commitment.  
**Desirable Qualification:** Masters degree in Science/Humanities or in an area of thrust in the Institution/M.Phil / Ph. D. in Library Science with experience of working in a digital library in environment. |
| IIT Rajasthan/Deputy Librarian | i) **Minimum Qualifications and Experience:**  
   i) A post graduate degree with at least 55% marks or equivalent grade in Library Science.  
   ii) 5 years as Assistant Librarian of reputed academic Institute/University.  
   **Desirable:** Knowledge of |
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<tr>
<td>IIT Delhi/Assistant Librarian</td>
<td>Computer application and Library Information software would be preferred.</td>
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**IIT Mumbai/Assistant Librarian**

**Job Profile:** The candidate should be well conversant with various activities of an Academic Library, such as procurement and processing of books and periodicals, supervision of special collections, maintenance of Library materials, reprography, binding unit etc. and providing assistance to general library administration. Experience and knowledge of modern information handling tools, knowledge of any foreign language such as German, French or Russian will be added Qualification.

**Essential Qualification/Experience:**

- Master's degree in Library Science/Information science/Documentation or an equivalent professional degree with at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade with a consistently good academic record. At least 7 years experience in a responsible capacity in a University level Library. Candidates should be familiar with usage of Library software and have experience in library computerization.

  **OR**

- Master's degree in Arts/Science/Commerce or equivalent degree with at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade with Bachelor's degree in Library science/Information science/Documentations or an equivalent professional degree with at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade plus a consistently good academic record. Candidates should be familiar with usage of Library software and have experience in library computerization.

**AMU/Assistant Librarian**

**Qualifications-Essentials:**

1. Master’s Degree in Library Science with 55% Marks

   **OR**

   Master’s Degree in Arts/Science/Commerce or equivalent with 55% marks with Bachelor’s of Library Science or Equivalent.

2. And must have qualified NET.

   **OR**

   Ph.D. or Research Work of equally higher standard and a good academic record with at least IIInd Class ‘B’ in the seven point Scale) Master’s degree in a relevant subjects.

**IIT Patna/Assistant Librarian**

**Minimum Qualification and Experience:**

- Post Graduate with Bachelor’s Degree in Library Science or Graduate with Master’s Degree in Library Science with 6 years relevant experience AND having working knowledge of computer applications.

**IIT Rajasthan/ Sr. Library**

**Minimum Qualification and Experience:**

- Degree from a recognized University or, equivalent with degree of Bachelor of Library Science of a recognized University/Institute.
Skills for the Library Professionals

Skill is an ability or proficiency in execution or performance, which is required for a person to plan and execute an action designed to achieve some goals or accomplish a particular task. A skilled person has the ability to perform any task successfully.

The basic goal of library and information profession has always been to provide access to information for those who need it. The activities realizing this goal have evolved and transformed over the years. Information activities have been guided by the developments in the field of storages, presentation and archiving of knowledge, collection development and organization of knowledge, information explosion and computers in information retrieval. Librarian and information professional involved in information gathering, storage, retrieval and dissemination on one hand and on the other hand the computer specialists who supports the library and informational professionals are partners in this endeavour. For successful implementation of Digital Library, it is essential that LIS professionals are well trained and possess requisite knowledge and skills in this respect.

Technical Skills Required in ICT Environment and their applications

Technical skills mean those skills which are required to handle information technology based tools and routines used for library services like computer operation, knowledge of software, telecommunication media, creation of online database, content management, information retrieval techniques through internet etc. Digital library/Paper less library is nothing but the advanced application of ICT based tools and techniques in the library, so the library professional have to be familiar with the skills to handle IT and its application in the library environment in the relevant context.

Basic ICT Skills

Some basic ICT based skills needed are:

a) Networking: LAN Administration, Network design, Network security and Network management.


c) Project Management: Management IT projects, Production scheduling and supervising personnel.

d) System Development: System design and analysis, object modeling/UML, Case tools, database creation.

e) System application: Installation of software, upgrading software, maintenance, installation and troubleshooting of hardware, performing system maintenance and backups.

LIS based skills needed in digital era

a) Cataloguing: Dublin core, MARC, MESH, LCSH, Authority knowledge, AACR2, OCLC connections, Dewey Classification and Metadata.

b) Serials: Electronic resource management, binding and vendor relation, Consortium management, database searching knowledge etc.

c) Acquisitions: Collection development, vendor relation, budgeting online resources etc.

d) Public services: Reference, interlibrary loan, bibliographic instruction, circulation, User education, online Browsing/Searching knowledge etc.

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<tr>
<td>IIT Hyderabad/ Sr. Library Information assistant</td>
<td><strong>Essential Qualification:</strong> Bachelor’s degree or equivalent Diploma in Library Science from a recognized University / Institute or equivalent obtained after graduation. Experience of 2 years in a Library / Computerization of a Library or 1 year certificate in computer applications from a recognized institute or equivalent <strong>Desirable Qualification:</strong> Candidates possessing higher academic qualification and/or experience, and knowledge of Library automation &amp; networking will be given preference.</td>
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Practical Syllabus of LIS education related to ICT

The table below highlights the practical syllabus of LIS of certain universities of India related to ICT tools and techniques which is different in different universities and lack of ICT based skills in digital era, although some universities syllabus contain good components of ICT in theories yet again it is missing from practical. Almost all Universities are having one computer related paper in theory and practical but they depend on extra computer related certificate course at the time of recruitment which puts question mark on the significance of computer as a main subject in LIS education.

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<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Practical Syllabus related to ICT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangalore University (Bangalore)</td>
<td>Operating System, DOS, Windows, World process, Excel, Power point presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka University (Dharwad)</td>
<td>MS world-Creation of documents. Alignment, Format, MS Excel, Power Point presentation, Web page, HTML, CDS/ISIS, WINISIS, Soul demo (Models only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulbarga University (Gulbarg)</td>
<td>MS DOS, MS windows, MS office, Soul, Easy lib, Winisis, Internet, web page designing and publishing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuvempu University (Shimoga)</td>
<td>DOS, Windows, Power point and Excel, Soul demo (Models only), Libsys, CDS/ISIS, Winisis, Web designing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Delhi (Delhi)</td>
<td>B.Lib &amp; I.Sc (Connectivity of computer system, Common commands of DOS and Windows, File creation, Editing, Application of MS -Word, presentation in Power Point, CDS/ISIS/WINISIS installation, Database design, Data input, Information retrieval, Sorting and printing, Library application software, Internet searching) and M.Lib &amp; I.Sc (Creation of hypertext, CDS/ISIS for Windows-main texts, indexes, Export and import of data, Application of library, Software package – housekeeping, operations, User services: Internet and CD-ROM searching, Internet and Intranet searches, Literature searches on latest IT, Introduction to computer facilities and information technologies in automated libraries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiwaji University, Gwalior (M.P.)</td>
<td>B.Lib &amp; I.Sc (Computer Connectivity, Internet access, Operating System (DOS, WINDOW-Introduction), MS-Office, (Special Reference to MS-Word), Basic CDS/ISIS Practical.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion/Recommendation

The above Data/Description regarding recruitment policy, Experience/Qualifications required by the different libraries in advertisement, skills required in ICT era and the marked differences in the syllabi of Library and Information science shows that. almost everything is mismatching, which needs to be modified in modern ICT environment. All essential degrees must be directly related to job profiles of the vacant position. In a mathematical form it can be described as:

\[
\text{LIS Curriculums} = \text{Skills Required in Digital era} = \text{Job Advertisements} = \text{Recruitment Policy}
\]

The above mathematical description indicates mismatching of all the four components therefore it must match with each other in digital environment to beat the challenges of any libraries in 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Hence above components must be like:

\[
\text{LIS Curriculums} = \text{Skills Required in Digital era} = \text{Job Advertisements} = \text{Recruitment Policy}
\]
Some academic libraries also asked Double Masters degree (one in Library Science and another in any discipline) for the post of Assistant Librarian which is I think irrelevant for the academic libraries in digital era because Masters degree in any traditional subject is not related to any library day to day work. Further, the masters degree may be relevant to any special library dealing with any specific subjects. So in the present ICT environment all the Degree/Technical Degree should be directly related to the Job profiles. Universities/Colleges are typically following UGC norms for the selection of Assistant Librarian which lacks the job experience in essential requirements.

The above Qualifications and experiences for the same post of Various Library staffs reflect some dissimilarity although the job profiles are same. Hence UGC, AICTE, Library associations, recruiting Institutes and top leaders of Library profession should take initiative to make a survey of present ICT based technical skills requirement and future demands of the users. Accordingly they should design the essential Qualifications/Experiences for the post of the library.

The present syllabus raises the question mark on usability of various subjects in the LIS education, e.g. if computer is taken as one of the main subject than why recruiters are asking extra degree/diploma in computers rather than modifying their own syllabus of computer as per digital environment?

References
1. http://bhu.ac.in/Advetisment/Advertisement3.pdf (accessed on 22/08/09)
8. http://www.iitk.ac.in/iitj/ (accessed on 30/07/09)