

Prospect of Personality Development and Communication Skills in LIS Education: A Study of the Indian Context

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Abstract: The paper considers the proposed inclusion of personality development and communication skills in the LIS curriculum. Content analysis of post-graduate curriculums of Library and Information Science studies in India and online job advertisements are taken as case studies to examine the proposal. The data displays a certain level of mismatch in the course content and job requirements. The content counts job requirements display requirements of communications skills but personality development is not mentioned at all. Instead broader and generalized terms like personal managements or human resource managements are found to be part of the job requirements. Interestingly, course contents show the inclusion of both Personality Development and Communication Skills in the post-graduate studies.

Keywords: Library & Information Science Curriculum, Course Content, Personality Development, Communication, Content Analysis, Job Market, Employment

I. INTRODUCTION

Human resource is the key factor to success in any organization and the same holds true in organizations employing library and information science professionals. The literatures while deliberating on competency or skill requirement that various competencies for Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals are proposed but such proposals change over time. A revisit of the national and international LIS curricula shows that LIS schools generally focus on developing professional various competencies which keep growing in due course of time. However, the emerging employment market scenario appears to emphasis various other sets of skills which are otherwise not considered core to the profession. In this context, various literatures demonstrate that professionals must not only develop core professional competencies but also focus on other competencies such as personality development and communication skills. Gradually, personality development and communication skills are emerging as necessities to achieve professional competency. Recent studies in Pakistan show the demand for imparting a fair level of communication skills in LIS education. These studies underscore the fact that lack of personality development and communication skills often led to lose of employment opportunities. In a study conducted by Warraich (2008), the employers find weak communication, practical and presentation skills as the chief reasons for

rejection in the selection process of LIS professionals for employment.

The professionals are expected to display more of these skills at the time of employee selection. Such findings suggested that the time is ripe for the library and information science courses to retrospect on the exclusion of obsolete course contents and the inclusion of non-core course contents like personality development and communication skills in the curriculums. Interestingly, inclusions of such non-core course contents are so uncommon in the existing library and information science curriculums in India. This paper is an attempt to explore the actual job market requirements and the current course content of post-graduate studies, both in the Indian context. It may be mentioned that such nonconventional propositions often risk inviting irks from many professionals who refuse to go with the change. Yet in another study conducted by Ahmad and Yaseen (2009) on the role of LIS professionals as managers identified the core competencies wherein Personality Development and Communication skills are place as highly required or demanded.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out if Personality Development and Communication Skills are part of Job Requirements and Course Content of Post-graduate curriculum.
2. To identify the contents of Personality Development and Communication Skills as reflected in the Job Requirements and Post-graduate Courses.
3. To examine the comparability of Job Requirement and Post-graduate Course contents.

III. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

Content analysis is used to examine the content components of Personality Development and Communication skills of Job Requirements and Course Content of post-graduate studies. The Job Requirement contents are taken from 110 library and information science professional job advertisements of corporate and university libraries from December 2012 to November 2013. The Course Contents are taken from the

curriculums of 55 post-graduate studies in various universities of India. Post-graduate studies without master’s degree level courses are not included in the sample. Altogether 247 Job Requirement contents and 8858 course contents were counted.

IV.DATA ANALYSIS

On counting the frequency of the occurrence of curriculum content the main heading of the contents as given in the syllabus is use to contextualize the ambiguous contents. Further, the Dewey Decimal Classification 21st edition is also used to group the content into main classes, wherever necessary. The total frequency count of the occurrences of all the curriculum content is 8858 consisting of various topics and sub-topics in library and information science. This total frequency of content forms the basis of deriving the percentage of coverage for subject areas like Personality Development and Communication Skills.

As shown in table 1, Personality Development is placed mostly under the main topic Personal Management. The total occurrence of Personal Management amounts to 103 which is only 1.16% of the entire curriculum content count (n=8858). Personal Management is further divided into Personality Development and Human Resource Management. Out of the 103 occurrences of Personal Management, 57.28

percent of the content consist of Personality Development whereas, Human Resource Management consist of 42.72 percent. Within Personal Development more weightage is given to Personality Development. However, Personality Development forms only 0.67 percent of the entire curriculum content.

TABLE I PERSONAL MANAGEMENT

Personal Management	No. of Occurrences	% (n = 103*)	% (n = 8858**)
Personality Development	59	57.28	0.67
Human Resource Management	44	42.72	0.50
Total	103	100.00	1.16
Total Curriculum Content	8858		

*Total content count of Personal Management = 103
 ** Total content count of 55 Post –graduate curriculum = 8858

The contents of Personality Development vary from conferences to organizational behavior. Of all the content ‘staff development’ occurs 28 times in the entire syllabus while decision making, commitments, and deadlines combine occurs only once. Leadership skills and organizational behavior occurs 7 times each. Time management, stress management, team building, and conferences etc occurs 4 times each.

TABLE II PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Course Content of Personality Development	No. of Occurrences	% (n = 103*)	% (n = 8858**)
Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, Training & Staff Meetings	4	57.28	0.67
Decision Making, Commitments, Deadlines	1		
Time Management: Strategies for managing time and Time management tips	4		
Stress Management: Techniques & Tools	4		
Team Building	4		
Leadership Skills: Nature of leadership and Leaderships Skills, Motivation & Leadership Quality improvement	7		
Staff Development	28		
Organizational Behavior, Organizational Psychology & Understanding Self in the organization	7		
Total count of Personality Development	59		

*Total content count of Personal Management = 103
 ** Total content count of 55 Post –graduate curriculum = 8858

In the curriculum, 'Communication Skills' are found mostly under the main heading 'Communication' which also consist of communication technology, scientific communication, and data communication. Though communication seems to be the main heading, at times it appears odd because communication technology and data communication are basically computer science and telecommunication technology subjects while scientific communication is about research publication.

TABLE 3 COMMUNICATION

Communication	No. of Occurrences	% (n = 242*)	% (n=8858**)
Communication Skills	39	16.12	0.44
Communication Technology, Scientific Communication, and Data Communication	203	83.88	2.29
Total	242	100	2.73%
Total Curriculum Content	8858		

*Total content count of Personal Management = 103
** Total content count of 55 Post –graduate curriculum = 8858

As shown in table 3, the contents of communication as mainly grouped into communication skills, communication technology, scientific communication and data communication which accounted for a total of 242 times of occurrences. Communication contents are just 2.73% of the whole curriculum contents. Out of which communication is 0.44% and 2.29% is rest of the communication contents.

TABLE 4 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Course Content of Communication Skills	No. of Occurrences	% (n = 242*)	% (n=8858**)
Office Communication: Writing, Notices, Memos, Letter, Publishers, Book Sellers, Binders, and Users/Patrons/ Clienteles	21	16.12	0.44
Interpersonal Skills	1		
Communication: Verbal & Non-Verbal Skills	9		
Questioning & Listening Skills	4		
Meeting & Telephone Communication	4		
Total count of Communication Skills)	39		

*Total content count of Personal Management = 103
** Total content count of 55 Post –graduate curriculum = 8858

The content of communication skills include office communication, interpersonal skills, verbal & non-verbal communication, questioning & listening skills, and meeting & telephone communication. Office communication with 21 times of occurrences is given maximum emphasis while verbal & non-verbal skills with 9 times come second in the number contents. The total communication skills appear 39 times in all the curriculums.

Job requirements are collected from 110 job advertisements made for the corporate and university libraries. The job requirements are usually brief and not as enumerative as the course contents. As shown in table 5, Personal Management aspect of the job requirement simply stated as Human Resource Management. Interestingly no Personality Development is visibly seen in the job requirements mentioned in the advertisements. Communication is more elaborative and it contains Communication Skills, Information & Communication Technology Skills and Communication Skills in English and Hindi.

TABLE 5 JOB REQUIREMENTS (N=110)

Broad Subject Categories	Job Requirements	Corporate Libraries	Corporate Libraries%	University Libraries Count	University Libraries %	Total	Total %
Personal Management	Human Resource	2	2.47	13	24.53	15	13.63
Communication	Communication Skills	21	25.93	20	37.74	21	19.09
	Information & Communication Technology Skills	2	2.47	15	28.3	17	15.45
	Communication Skills in English and Hindi	7	8.64	3	5.66	10	9.09
	Total	32	39.51	51	96.23	63	57.26

In all the 110 job requirements, 13.63% asked for Personal Management skills, 19.09% required Communication Skills, while Communication Skills in English and Hindi is required in 9.09% of the job. Along with Information Communication Technology skills, Personal Management and Communication is required for 57.26% of the job which is more than half of the job. Therefore, the skills given in table 5 deserve higher priorities in the curriculum content of the post-graduate courses.

The content count of Job Requirements content is shown in table 6 is the content count of Job Requirements mentioned in the advertisement of both Corporate and University libraries taken together. Human Resource is mentioned in 13.63% of the total 110 job advertisements whereas, 19.9% mentioned Communication Skills. Communication Skills in English and Hindi figured in 09.09% of the total advertisements.

TABLE 6 JOB REQUIREMENT CONTENT

Broad Subject Categories	Job Requirements	Total	% (n=110*)
Personal Management	Human Resource	15	13.63
Communication	Communication Skills	21	19.09
	Information & Communication Technology	17	15.45
	Communication Skills in English and Hindi	10	09.09
*Total no. of job advertisement = 110			

A comparative view of the Course Content and Job Requirements show in table 7 do not reflect a perfect match. Information & Communication Technology and Communication Skills in English and Hindi which usually forms a part of Communication skills required for the job advertised are left out intentionally in the Course Content for

the sake of an objective analysis because communication skills in English and Hindi did not figure in all the course content. Though Information & Communication Technology figures along with Communication Skills, it could not be treated as part of the Communication Skills.

TABLE 7 JOB REQUIREMENT V/S COURSE CONTENT

Broad Subject Categories	Content	Job Requirements Count	% (n=247*)	Course Content Count	% (n=8858**)
Personal Management	Human Resource	15	6.07	44	0.49
Communication	Communication Skills	21	8.50	39	0.44
	Information & Communication Technology	17	6.88	9	X
	Communication Skills in English and Hindi	10	4.05	X	X
*Total no. of job requirements content counted = 247					
** Total content count of 55 Post –graduate curriculum = 8858					

Job requirements are often very brief without much elaboration. The brief statements seen in the Job Requirements are often vague. For instance, Human Resource is not elaborated to explain which aspects of human resource management is focus. However, it is assumed that the job requirements asking knowledge of human resource management would include Personality Development and similar other contents seen in the post-graduate course content. Based upon this assumption, a comparison is drawn on

the basis of the total Job Requirement (n=247) and Course Contents (n=8858). Out of the total 247 content counts of Job Requirements the percentage of jobs asking for Personal Management is 6.07% while only 0.49% of the total 8858 course content is about Personal Management. On the basis of these percentages, it can be said that jobs requirements of corporate and university libraries are asking for Personal Management skills more frequently than it appears in the

post-graduate course contents. Inferences can be drawn to the fact that the weightage given to Personal Management in Job Requirements and Course Content do not match. Similar tendency is seen in Communication Skills as well. The Job Requirements accounted for 6.07% of Communication Skills while Course Contents accounted for 0.49%. However, it may be mentioned that owing to the vast area of subject coverage in post-graduate courses the percentage counted on the basis of the total count is often small. Absolute comparison could have been drawn with Job Requirement content sample as large as the total Course Contents.

V.CONCLUSION

The analysis clearly indicated that when job requirements are specified, the potential employers do not necessarily stick to the subject domain of the profession. With such liberty it would always remain that the course content of the profession and the job requirements of the employers will always be a mismatch simply because the job requirements are never elaborated. On the other hand, the post-graduate course contents clearly emphasis on Personality Development with most of its facets. Some sort of similarity is seen in the Communication skills which is again vague owing to the over generalization of contents in the Job Requirements. The content elaboration of Communication over Personal Management shows that pragmatic aspects are given importance in the Job Requirements. Similar studies with larger Job Requirement sample can be conducted to see the extent to which the job requirements are different from the course content of post-graduate studies in the universities.

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