

Librarian by Choice

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I had completed MA and had an offer to teach in one of the colleges in Dharward. Filled with excitement, I was all set to start my career. Then came a turning point in my life. One fine evening in early 1965, my beloved guru and philosopher, Prof. Syed Iqbal Khadri (Late) from the Department of Journalism, Maharaja college told me about the launch of a new course and advised me to pursue the same. With lot of curiosity when I enquired further details about the course, I was surprised to hear from him that it was pertaining to Library Management. I had never heard about this course and I could barely sleep that night thinking about my career. "Do you think you have to really pursue

guru Prof. Iqbal Khadri (Late).

I surpassed my ambiguity and started this new journey with renewed energy, but there was disappointment right in the beginning with classes not



commencing as per the original schedule. I learnt that the classes were postponed due to the delay in the arrival of Prof. P K Patil from US.

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a course to learn how to arrange books in a library" is what one of my friends commented when I discussed the matter with him the next morning. Most of my other friends were also skeptical about me joining the new course. Coming from a humble middle class background and perhaps being the first post graduate of my family, I had no one in my family to guide me. It was a tough choice between a teaching job in hand and a new unknown turf to explore. I finally took the decision to join the course basically for two reasons: one, my eternal love towards books; two my respect to my beloved

The classes finally started in the University Library which was situated in the Maharaja College Campus. "Whatever happens in life, happens for good" was my mother's frequent advice, but I realized the true meaning of this after attending Prof. Patil's classes. His vast knowledge, patience to ensure that everyone understands every bit of his lecture and his pursuit towards academic rigour created a great interest in the subject to all the twenty members of the first batch of B.Lib.Sc. University of Mysore.

Subsequently Prof. Subramanyam was appointed and the professionalism demonstrated by him in his classes further augmented our interest in the subject. Cataloguing, classification gradually became enjoyable topics of discussion both in the



classroom and also outside the classroom during the tea and lunch breaks.

I believe one of the milestones in the history of MyDLIS was the appointment of Prof. K S Deshpande as the University Librarian. While the other professors helped us understand conceptual frameworks in an impeccable manner, the true practical learning commenced with Prof. Deshpande's sessions. The herculean task of shifting the library from the Maharaja College campus to the present library building was taken up under the able leadership of Prof. Deshpande. Besides library science, we learnt many management lessons from Prof. Deshpande. What is probably called today as "Management by example" was demonstrated by Prof. Deshpande during those days. Rolling up his sleeves he was the frontrunner in every task of shifting of the library, be it packing of books, loading it into the vehicle and for that matter cleaning the books. The inauguration of the new library building was to be done by the then President of India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The team of twenty students along the faculty and staff toiled for several months to ensure that the event is memorable in the history of University of Mysore. The department gave us a golden opportunity to meet the President of India which is unforgettable.

Even before we could come out of the hangover of meeting the President, we were told about the study tour to a few prominent libraries in Bangalore, Madras, Pune and Bombay. Prof. Deshpande's dedication and professionalism was any way admirable but during this tour we were also exposed to his other qualities. His love and care towards his students is something which I do not think I am capable to express in words.

This tour also gave us an opportunity to meet Prof. S R Ranganathan at DRTC. Prof. Deshpande was also instrumental in inviting many prominent library professionals like Prof. B S Kesavan to address the students in the department.

Another important phase of our course was the internship. I was among the few fortunate students who got an internship for almost six months. This opportunity facilitated me in understanding the nitty-gritties of different sections of the library and aided in the holistic understanding of the

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library management. My learning during this phase, particularly the inputs that I got from beloved Prof. Deshpande is something that helped me in getting an edge over my peers during my short stint at University of Hawaii, USA for pursuing a Diploma in Documentation.

Now, when I look back at my career which spanned across four decades serving institutions like Yuvaraja College, Sahyadri college, ARAMCO Saudi Arabia, thirty years at St. Philomenas College and a few years with Farooqia Dental College after my retirement, I feel whatever little I have achieved in my professional life is only because of the great learning during the B.Lib.Sc. course and above all the values that were inculcated in me during my association with my beloved gurus, specially Prof. Patil and Prof. Deshpande. I owe my professional success to my Alma Mater, MyDLIS and my gurus. I pray to almighty for the prosperity of this great institution. Long live MyDLIS!