

Making of a Career in Library & Information Services: Neither by 'Chance nor Choice' alone but on a blend with 'Challenge'

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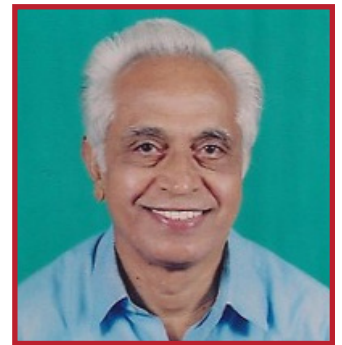
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The intimation card for interview for admission to B.Lib.Sc. course from the Department of Library Science, Mysore University, reached me in mid-1968 at my Vellore address redirected from Mysore, as I was working there at CMC Hospital, VRA Project as Statistician cum Medical Records Officer.

I hardly had any time to present myself for the interview, being scheduled for the same day afternoon at the Mysore University library. Immediately after getting the intimation, I informed over trunk call to my parents to request Sri Suresh Chandramy, a friend and former colleague at Mysore Medical College to immediately go over to the venue and explain the situation and to know whether I stand a chance to attend the interview at a later date. He obliged and went to the Library, met the VC and Chairman of the Selection Committee, Professor D Javare Gowda. He assured him that I would get the first chance in the waiting list from among the dropouts who normally opt out to join other PG courses. He also advised that I should meet the Professor & HOD for admission formalities.

Next week, I came from Vellore, met Professor P K Patil who welcomed and asked me immediately to complete the admission formalities at the Gangotri Administrative office, which I promptly did. Among our 1968-69 B.Lib.Sc. batch of around twenty students,

some were deputed from their Institutions & Govt. departments. Some were seniors with some work experiences like me. Most of others were students and freshers from their Degree or PG courses. During the



introductory session with all the teachers and library staff, each one of us got the feel that Library science & Library profession are emerging as Mother Science of other Sciences & Mother Profession of other Professions. Outcome of this introduction left an indelible impression in the minds of all of us that it is this challenge that has brought us to this Pedagogy of the scholastic learners and privileged teaching community.

During the course of our training programmes, all of us did discover that the Library Science course is not like any other academic course but based on a conglomeration of subjects based on ontological, logical and eclectic principles & cannons besides its subject analytics, knowledge mapping and data documenting facets- - all embedding in gurukula tutorial system, ultimate being mastering the art & science of searching for books and information stacked in the huge repository of systematically stored and arranged contents of textual wisdom

contained in book formats; wrapped in sections of printed pages firmly stitched hard & soft along with allied & kindled reading materials; searching tools & browsing devices to reach out to readers on their known or unknown query, deploying the analytical techniques and technological skills; stuck in self-imposed time limit to fetch them sourcing amidst the big & ever growing intellectual resource; finally culminating in the altar of the incoming cruel & boundless competitive knowledge economy.

Added to our traditional class room learning was an imperative tandem system too super imposed with field visits to a wide variety of libraries at local, regional & national levels. This gave us deep insight to explore all types of library systems pertaining to public, academic, specialised and contact library systems which imbibed in each of us the techniques of acquisition, processing, circulation, maintenance and curative functions based on different contexts for varied target groups and captive audiences.

At the end of our training, after the exams were over and on the announcement of the results in 1969, we all gathered again in the classroom and practical hall at our Library, brooding over the outgoing year and dreaming on the incomings. Ruminating over the training and the enlightenment bestowed on us by our teachers and other sister disciplines at Gangotri and our library community, we apprehended challenges ahead amidst abundant opportunities both for our higher professional education and for advancement of career prospects with bright perspectives. We could comprehend opportunities ahead as librarians and information service providers, information marketing professionals, and library professional trainers too; not by subjecting ourselves either to

the mercies of ‘chance & choice’ alone but meeting ‘challenges’ too with a judicious blend of all these three ingredients.

Needless to narrate again and again how happy each of us are, who had fanned out to our different

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career destinations, some at local, some others at state and national, some even more challenging ones serving in international organisations, all these fifty years of our “golden period” to congregate at our Alma Mater refreshingly to” Meet and Greet” each other.

Looking back at our ‘more travelled logical library routes’ of our yester-years, we are awestruck gazing at ‘widely traversed logistical paths at technological parks’ of our young information scientists. We all wish them all the best in their pursuit of instant information services to GeNext information seekers and library users. True to our Indian tradition and culture, may we, the students of BLib’68 batch remember, revere and offer our humble”pranaams” to the three of the many noble souls of our Motherland?

1. Professor S R Ranganathan: Who sharpened the scientific techniques & management tool for library system for Librarians & Information Scientists with a deep modular pile of foundation for Informatics, IT and ITE S structures for programming information storage, dissemination and retrieval for popular and professional consumption, with no bounds at local, national and global arena.

2. Professor B S Kesavan: Who built up our national library system from ground zero at Calcutta (Kolkata) reaching out to literary treasures of all of our linguistic repository, indexing them in our national bibliography volumes and depositing them in their respective State Central Libraries across our nation from Rameswaram to Himalayas.

3. Professor K S Deshpande: Whose imprint is etched at all the university libraries of Karnataka with a unique distinction of restructuring & rejuvenating library administration and founding of Library Science Departments for training of Librarians at the University Libraries of Karnataka in the less ploughed fields of our higher education campuses.

With a library you are free, not confined by temporary political climates. It is the most democratic of institutions because no one – but no one at all – can tell you what to read and when and how.

Doris Lessing

A good library will never be too neat, or too dusty, because somebody will always be in it, taking books off the shelves and staying up late reading them.

Lemony Snicket

Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always open.

Laura Bush