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Perception of LIS Faculty Members and Students Regarding the LIS Curriculum in Sindh, Pakistan

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Abstract
The adequacy of Library and Information Science (LIS) curriculum within Sindh, Pakistan in meeting practical and technological demands is critically examined in this research. According to the findings students and faculty reported minimal hands-on training, obsolete content and poor ICT integration however to follow global LIS developments, internships, field trips and digital tool training are suggested thus these improvements would elevate digital-era graduate employability and professional readiness.

Keywords: LIS Curriculum, Practical Skills, Digital Literacy, Internships, Curriculum Reform.

Introduction

The quality of Library and Information Science (LIS) courses is crucial as digital transformation and information technology change librarianship norms but the relevance and responsiveness of LIS education to practical and technological demands has been questioned in Pakistan (Malik and Ameen, 2021). According to Ali (2022) despite worldwide movements toward experiential, ICT-integrated learning and local curricula appeared rigid and theoretically weighted in Sindh therefore this research critically examines views of students and faculty members of the current LIS curriculum via survey to explore the adequacy, weaknesses and required modifications to meet 21st-century LIS competencies.

Literature Review

An overview of the literature on Library and Information Science (LIS) education shows that the field is going through both challenges and changes. In many developing countries, including Pakistan, LIS programs are still based on outdated and rigid curricula, while globally, universities are moving quickly to adapt to new technologies and professional requirements. With the changing face of information, the contemporary LIS practitioner should have the traditional skills and knowledge as well as the current digital competencies that reflect the digitally shifting workforce. According to Malik and Ameen (2021), the authors indicated a mismatch between the current market conditions and the LIS programs that are practiced in Pakistan. According to Ali (2022),

LIS curriculum in Sindh is still excessively theoretical and fails to keep up with the global trends in the area of integration of information and communications technology (ICT). Shastri and Chudasma (2021) stated that professionals should have digital archiving, AI, and cloud computing competencies. Similarly, Rahmanova (2025) has noted that lots of LIS programs around the globe are integrating the full ICT teaching and offering learners a chance to work with digital devices. Also, Iqbal and Salman (2022) suggested the idea of teaching information literacy, digital curation, and user services with the help of digital tools in a comprehensive way. Together, these articles support the urge to LIS training especially in Pakistan to keep pace, as soon as possible, with the international standards and the changing world technology.

Statement of Problem

Because Sindh's Library and Information Science curriculum lacks sufficient hands-on training and technological integration, graduates are currently ill-prepared to work in libraries. Furthermore, its lack of alignment with global best practices hinders professional readiness and necessitates immediate revisions to incorporate internships, experiential learning, and digital skills pertinent to library and information science in the twenty-first century.

Research Objectives

- To explore how LIS students and faculty members perceive the adequacy of the current LIS curriculum in addressing the practical and technological needs of the profession
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current LIS curriculum in Sindh and evaluate its alignment with modern trends and technological advancements
- To reveal the specific modifications or improvements suggested by LIS students and faculty members for enhancing the LIS curriculum in Sindh

Research Questions

- How do LIS students and faculty members perceive the current LIS curriculum in Sindh, and does it meet the practical and technological needs of the profession?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current LIS curriculum, and how well does it align with modern trends and technological advancements?
- What improvements do students and faculty members suggest for enhancing LIS education in Sindh?

Research Methodology

The research design used in this study was a quantitative survey research design to collect data among the LIS students and faculty members in Sindh. The survey instrument consisted of structured questions focusing on three main areas: (a) adequacy of the current curriculum in meeting practical and technological needs, (b) perceived strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, and (c) suggested modifications for improvement. Responses were analysed to identify patterns and differences between students and faculty perceptions. Key findings, including the percentage of respondents who supported adequacy and the distribution of suggested improvements, were graphically represented by figures. Descriptive analysis was used in the study to interpret the findings in light of pertinent literature.

Results and Findings

Low Practical and Technological Adequacy

According to the findings in Figure 01, only **54.4% of respondents** agreed that the current LIS curriculum ***"fully or mostly"*** meets the practical and technological needs of the profession, but majority of faculty supported the adequacy instead of students.

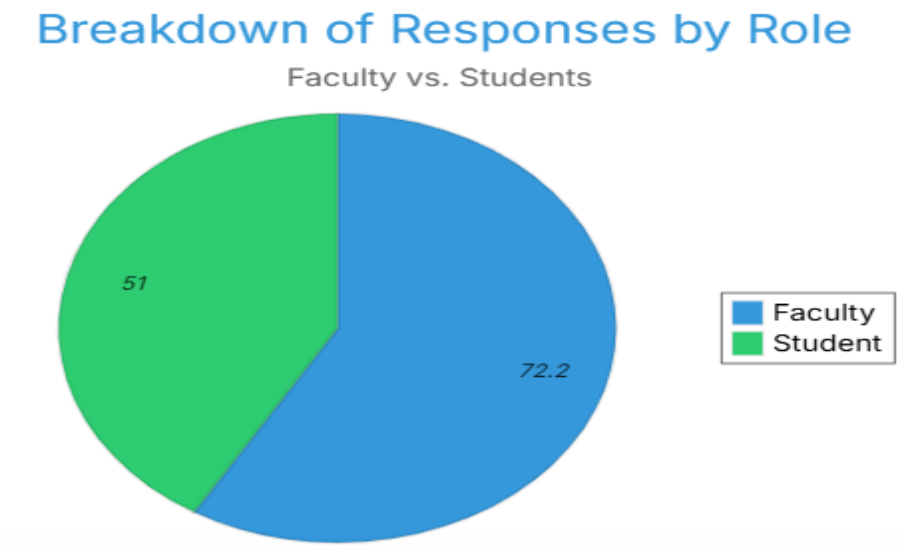

Figure 01: Breakdown of Adequacy Response- Meeting the Needs by Roles

The findings revealed that majority of the faculty members, from the overall respondents believe that current LIS curriculum of Sindh adequately aligns with the practical and technological demands of the profession. This prospect reflected a gap between academic instruction and professional expectations because as per Shastri and Chudasma (2021) in the age of fast digital transformation, librarianship requires expertise in digital archiving and future technologies like AI and cloud computing. Besides this, Rahmanova (2025) further added that ICT skills and hands-on digital tool experience are being added to international LIS curriculum but the inadequacy in the Sindh LIS curriculum highlighted misalignment with worldwide best practices, leaving graduates unprepared for modern LIS roles.

Strength and Weaknesses of Current Curriculum

The respondents agreed that weaknesses of the current LIS curriculum of Sindh undermines the strengths in the modern context because **86% of the respondents** added that "*There is insufficient practical or hands-on training*" serving as the ultimate weakness of the current curriculum. The belief that LIS curriculum's weaknesses in Sindh, the lack of practical or hands-on training undermine its strengths because LIS students need practical training in information literacy digital curation and user services to apply theoretical knowledge (Iqbal and Salman, 2022). However, the theoretical content and lack of actual learning hindered workplace technology and environment adaptation for students as Pérez et al. (2020) affirmed that labs, workshops and practice-based modules are key to international LIS programmes. Hence this imbalance in the Sindh curriculum risks generating conceptually informed but operationally ineffective graduates who cannot contribute to modern libraries, due to the absence of practical flexibility

Suggested Modifications or Improvements

The findings of the survey reveal that practical modifications and improvements are needed to overcome the weaknesses within the curriculum, among the recommendations **39.7%** of respondents endorsed "*internships in libraries & information centres,*" ***29.4%*** *favoured* "*field visits*" while **26.4%** opted for "*hands-on software or digital tools*" training (Figure 02).

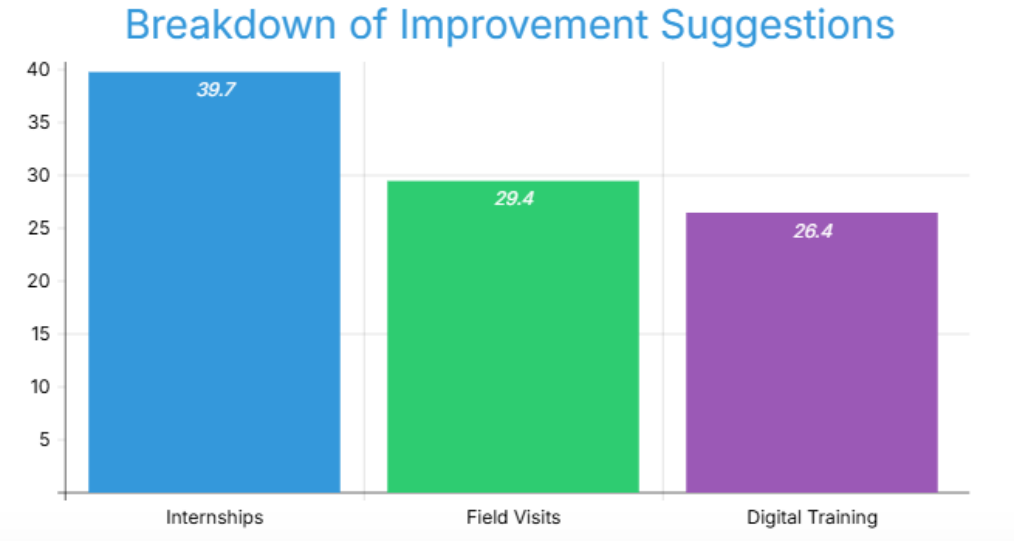

Figure 02: Breakdown of Suggested Improvements

Internships, field visits and hands-on training in software and digital technologies are suggested by respondents as crucial experiential learning components for professional preparedness because Bairagi and Dr Shalini (2024) already cited that these changes follow global LIS education trends toward student-centred and experiential pedagogy. According to Alam and Yesmin (2024) field activities and internships expose students to real-world library operations, problem-solving and flexibility in varied information situations. Similarly, Rahmanova (2025) added that modern librarians must handle digital cataloguing systems, e-resources and data repositories, hence digital technologies must be integrated into the curriculum. Therefore, these recommendations are major changes needed to update the Sindh LIS curriculum for the 21st century because with strategic implementation they would elevate LIS program reputation and employability with library and information infrastructure.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlighted that LIS curriculum of Sindh is out of sync with modern information world under which the curriculum reforms should include hands-on training, internships and digital literacy, due to the current lack of practical and technological adequacy. However, addressing these deficiencies is essential for creating industry-ready graduates and keeping LIS discipline of Sindh contemporary, competitive and responsive to local and global information management needs within a digital environment.

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