

THE ROLE OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (LIS) EDUCATION IN SUPPORTING HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES: BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE, ACCESS, AND RESEARCH

Prof. Arvind S. Pazare

Librarian

Bharatiya Mahavidyalaya, Morshi.

Mob.No. - 9767337723

Email Id - aspazare@gmail.com**Dr. Sanjay M. Salwe**

Librarian

Shri Ramrao Sarnaik College of social work,
Washim.

Mob.No. - 98813888873

Email Id - sanjusalwe76@gmail.com

Abstract :

Library and Information Science (LIS) education plays a pivotal role in supporting the academic and research needs of the humanities and social sciences. As these disciplines undergo transformations in the digital age—through digitization, open access, and interdisciplinary collaboration—LIS professionals are increasingly responsible for managing, preserving, and facilitating access to relevant knowledge resources. This paper explores how LIS education equips professionals to serve the evolving demands of humanities and social sciences, fostering critical information literacy, curating specialized collections, and supporting interdisciplinary research. It also examines the alignment of LIS education with emerging frameworks like NEP 2020, and how LIS can strengthen the infrastructure of liberal arts and social inquiry in academic and public settings.

Keywords : LIS Education, Humanities, Social Sciences, Information Literacy, Research Support, Digital Humanities, Knowledge Curation, NEP 2020

Introduction :

The Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) encompass a diverse range of disciplines—including history, philosophy, sociology, political science, literature, psychology, anthropology, and cultural studies—that seek to understand human behaviour, society, and cultural values. Unlike natural sciences, which often prioritize quantitative methods, HSS disciplines emphasize qualitative research, critical interpretation, and contextual understanding. They rely on historical documents, manuscripts, oral traditions, and cultural artifacts to explore the complexities of human experience.

In contemporary scholarship, HSS increasingly intersects with technology through the emerging field of Digital Humanities, which leverages computational tools, digital archives, and visualization techniques to expand research capabilities. Library and Information Science (LIS) education plays a pivotal role in this ecosystem by equipping information professionals

with the knowledge and skills to organize, preserve, and provide access to scholarly resources. By supporting digital curation, metadata standards, research services, and interdisciplinary collaboration, LIS enables HSS scholars to conduct rigorous research, engage with historical and cultural materials, and contribute to knowledge creation. This synergy between HSS and LIS is further reinforced by initiatives like India's NEP 2020, which emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, digital empowerment, and the promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), highlighting the critical role of libraries and information professionals in shaping the future of humanities and social sciences research.

In this context, Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals play a pivotal role. They act as mediators between vast information systems and the end users—students, teachers, and researchers—ensuring that reliable, relevant, and organized knowledge is accessible. By curating collections, managing archives, facilitating digital access, and teaching information literacy, LIS professionals bridge the gap between raw information and meaningful understanding. Their expertise is essential for empowering HSS scholars to explore, analyze, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective fields. While Library and Information Science (LIS) education has traditionally emphasized cataloging, classification, archiving, and digital resource management, its specific role in supporting the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) remains relatively underexplored. HSS disciplines depend heavily on curated sources, historical documents, cultural artifacts, and interpretive methodologies that require more than just access—they demand contextualization and critical mediation. In this regard, LIS professionals act not only as custodians of information but also as active facilitators who help scholars navigate complex repositories, evaluate sources, and adopt emerging digital tools for research. Recognizing and strengthening the intersections between LIS and HSS can therefore enrich both fields, fostering deeper engagement with cultural heritage and advancing interdisciplinary knowledge creation.

This paper examines the ways in which Library and Information Science (LIS) education can and does support the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) by preparing professionals skilled in knowledge organization, digital tools, critical literacy, and research facilitation. As HSS disciplines increasingly rely on both traditional resources—such as manuscripts, archives, and historical records—and modern digital platforms, the role of LIS professionals has expanded beyond preservation and access. They are now integral to enabling interdisciplinary research, guiding scholars in navigating complex information ecosystems, and fostering critical engagement with sources. By integrating competencies such as metadata creation, digital archiving, information literacy instruction, and the use of specialized databases, LIS education equips professionals to act as vital partners in advancing HSS scholarship.

Needs of Humanities and Social Sciences :

The Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) represent a broad set of disciplines—such as history, philosophy, sociology, political science, literature, psychology, anthropology, and

cultural studies—that focus on human behaviour, values, and societies. Their nature can be understood through the following dimensions:

Emphasis on Qualitative Research :

Unlike the natural sciences, which often rely on quantitative, experimental, and statistical methods, HSS disciplines prioritize qualitative approaches. Research in these fields involves interpretation, critical analysis, and contextual understanding rather than controlled experimentation. Examples include oral history projects, ethnographic studies, critical theory analyses, and case studies that provide rich, descriptive insights into human experiences.

Use of Historical Documents, Manuscripts, and Cultural Records :

A significant portion of HSS scholarship depends on primary sources such as archival materials, rare manuscripts, personal letters, government records, cultural artifacts, newspapers, and oral traditions. These resources are valued not only for the information they contain but also for the cultural, historical, and social contexts they reflect. For example, historians may study colonial records, while literature scholars examine early manuscripts or first editions to trace textual variations.

Textual Analysis and Interpretation :

Texts whether literary works, policy documents, religious scriptures, or philosophical treatises form the core of HSS research. Scholars use critical theories (e.g., feminist, postcolonial, or structuralist perspectives) to interpret meaning, uncover hidden assumptions, and situate texts in cultural or historical contexts. This interpretive orientation highlights the subjective, pluralistic, and contested nature of knowledge in HSS.

Interdisciplinary Orientation :

Modern HSS research increasingly crosses disciplinary boundaries. For example, sociologists may borrow theories from psychology, or historians may apply economic models to understand social change. Interdisciplinarity enriches scholarship by integrating perspectives, methods, and analytical tools from multiple fields.

Digital Humanities and Emerging Methods :

With advances in technology, the field of *Digital Humanities* has emerged, combining computational tools with traditional humanistic inquiry. Projects may involve digitizing archives, using text mining to analyze large corpora, employing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for historical mapping, or visualizing cultural data. These methods allow HSS scholars to ask new questions, analyze large-scale patterns, and democratize access to cultural heritage.

LIS Education: Curriculum and Competencies :

Library and Information Science (LIS) education provides the professional foundation for information specialists, preparing them to manage, organize, preserve, and disseminate knowledge across disciplines. In the context of supporting Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), LIS curricula are designed to cultivate both **core information management skills** and **specialized competencies** that align with the needs of researchers, educators, and students in these fields.

Core Areas Supporting HSS :

Information Organization : Cataloging, classification, metadata standards tailored for humanities archives (e.g., Dublin Core, TEI).

Reference and Research Services : Training in bibliographic instruction and subject-specific research support.

Digital Curation and Archiving : Skills in digitization, digital preservation, and managing online repositories.

User-Centered Services : Needs assessment for HSS scholars, including personalized research assistance and embedded librarianship.

Information Ethics and Access : Awareness of copyright, open access, and knowledge equity, essential for humanities scholarship.

Specialized Electives and Interdisciplinary Integration : LIS programs now offer courses in Digital Humanities, Scholarly Communication, Data Management, and Cultural Heritage Informatics, bridging LIS with HSS more directly.

Digital Humanities and LIS :

Digital Humanities (DH) is an interdisciplinary field that applies digital tools, computational methods, and information technologies to traditional humanities research. It combines the interpretive, qualitative approaches of disciplines such as history, literature, philosophy, and cultural studies with the analytical power of digital tools. DH enables large-scale analysis, visualization, and dissemination of cultural and historical resources in ways that traditional methods alone cannot.

Role of LIS in Digital Humanities :

Library and Information Science (LIS) plays a central role in enabling and sustaining DH projects:

Digital Curation and Preservation : LIS professionals manage the digitization, metadata creation, and long-term preservation of digital collections. Ensures that fragile historical documents or cultural artifacts are both protected and accessible.

Metadata and Standards : Applying specialized schemas like **TEI (Text Encoding Initiative)** for textual resources, **EAD (Encoded Archival Description)** for archives, or **VRA Core** for visual arts. LIS expertise ensures consistency and interoperability across DH projects.

Research Support and Information Literacy : Librarians teach scholars how to use digital tools, evaluate online resources, and understand data ethics. They help researchers adopt DH methodologies in ways that align with scholarly rigor.

Digital Repositories and Platforms : LIS professionals design and manage institutional repositories, online archives, and databases that serve as the backbone of DH projects.

Collaboration in Interdisciplinary Projects : LIS professionals often act as project managers, data specialists, or knowledge curators in DH research teams that bring together historians, linguists, computer scientists, and designers.

LIS in Research and Scholarly Communication : Library and Information Science (LIS) plays a crucial role in advancing research and scholarly communication by supporting the **creation, dissemination, evaluation, and preservation** of knowledge. In the context of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), LIS professionals act as facilitators who bridge the gap between researchers, publishing systems, and the broader academic community.

LIS Education and NEP 2020: Opportunities for HSS Support :

The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** emphasizes an inclusive, flexible, and multidisciplinary approach to education, focusing on preparing students for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. It brings significant opportunities for integrating **Library and Information Science (LIS)** practices into the **Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)** domain, making the field more dynamic, accessible, and adaptable. LIS professionals can play a critical role in enriching the educational experience of students and faculty within the Humanities and Social Sciences, ensuring the availability of a diverse range of resources, enhancing research practices, and supporting the development of critical and analytical thinking.

- **Promoting Interdisciplinary Learning in Humanities and Social Sciences**
- Supporting Research and Critical Thinking
- Digitization and Access to Scholarly Resources
- Promoting Social Justice and Inclusivity
- Curriculum Development Support
- Enhancing Student Engagement and Learning Methods
- Supporting Lifelong Learning and Continuous Professional Development
- Fostering Research Ethics and Scholarly Communication
- Building Digital Literacy for Humanities and Social Sciences

The NEP 2020 provides a unique opportunity for Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals to support the growth and transformation of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) education in India. Curating interdisciplinary resources, supporting digital literacy, encouraging research, and fostering critical thinking, LIS professionals can play a crucial role in achieving the objectives of the NEP. They can help ensure that the education system remains dynamic, inclusive, and relevant to the needs of a diverse student body, ultimately contributing to the development of well-rounded, informed, and socially-conscious individuals.

Conclusion :

Library and Information Science (LIS) education plays a vital role in advancing the Humanities and Social Sciences by equipping professionals with the expertise to organize, preserve, and facilitate access to diverse knowledge resources. By integrating digital tools, information literacy, and specialized research support, LIS professionals enable HSS scholars to navigate complex information landscapes, engage in interdisciplinary research, and critically interpret historical and cultural materials. With the implementation of NEP 2020, LIS education has an expanded mandate to support holistic, multilingual, and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)-oriented learning. Strengthening the synergy between LIS and HSS not only enhances academic and research outcomes but also safeguards and promotes India's rich cultural and intellectual heritage for current and future generations. LIS education holds significant potential in enriching humanities and social sciences by equipping information professionals with the skills to manage, interpret, and disseminate knowledge effectively. The NEP 2020 pushes Indian education toward more holistic and multidisciplinary goals, LIS must align its pedagogy to proactively support the evolving needs of HSS. Strengthening this partnership can ensure not only better information access and research support but also the preservation and promotion of India's diverse cultural and intellectual heritage.

References :

- **Asher, A., & Miller, A. (2016).** *Engagement, Access, and Learning: The Role of Libraries in Supporting Humanities and Social Sciences Research.* *College & Research Libraries*, 77(6), 787–802.
- **Bawden, D., & Robinson, L. (2012).** *Introduction to Information Science.* London: Facet Publishing.
- Bhardwaj, R. K. (2017). Information literacy literature in the social sciences and humanities: a bibliometric study. *Information and learning science*, 118(1/2), 67-89.
- **Brophy, P. (2008).** *Information and the Digital Library: The Case of Humanities and Social Sciences.* London: Facet Publishing.
- Christine L. Borgman (2007). *Scholarship in the Digital Age: Information, Infrastructure, and the Internet.*
- **Digital Library Federation (DLF). (2021).** *Libraries, Archives, and Museums: A Collaborative Approach to Supporting Humanities and Social Sciences Research.*
- **Hider, P., & Pymm, B. (2013).** *Training Librarians to Support Social Sciences Research: An Australian Perspective. Proceedings of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress*, 79(1), 102–112.
- Jayamma, K. V., Mahesh, G. T., & Kotur, M. (2023). Role of libraries in implementing the new education policy 2020 in higher education in India. *Asian Journal of Information Science and Technology*, 13(2), 66-71.
- Katre, D. (2011). Digital preservation: Converging and diverging factors of libraries, archives and museums—an Indian perspective. *IFLA journal*, 37(3), 195-203.



- Malekabadizadeh, Fatemeh, Shokraneh, Farhad (2009), The Role of Library and Information Science Education in National Development, *Library philosophy and practices* (e-journal) <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac> Accessed on 25.09.2025.
- National Education Policy 2020. Ministry of Education, Government of India.