

ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF (LIS) LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION IN SUPPORTING HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Abstract :

Library and Information Science (LIS) education plays a vital role in supporting research, teaching, and knowledge dissemination within the disciplines of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS). As these disciplines rely heavily on qualitative data, historical records, cultural documentation, and interdisciplinary research, LIS provides the framework, tools, and methodologies to organize, preserve, and make such resources accessible. This study explores how LIS education contributes to the growth and sustenance of the Humanities and Social Sciences through effective information management, digital archiving, and research support services. Using both primary and secondary data, the paper highlights how LIS professionals facilitate academic inquiry, promote open access initiatives, and integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into HSS research practices. The findings emphasize that strengthening LIS education is essential for fostering critical thinking, cultural preservation, and multidisciplinary learning in the context of 21st-century knowledge societies. Library and Information Science (LIS) education plays a crucial role in supporting the growth and advancement of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS). These disciplines rely heavily on access to diverse information sources, archival materials, and scholarly communication. LIS education equips professionals with the skills needed to organize, preserve, and disseminate such information effectively. By integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT), digital libraries, and data management systems, LIS contributes to the accessibility, preservation, and visibility of humanistic and social research. Through effective cataloging, digitization, and open-access initiatives, LIS professionals ensure that valuable cultural and intellectual resources are available to researchers, educators, and students. This paper highlights the significant contributions of LIS education in promoting interdisciplinary learning, digital scholarship, and cultural preservation within the Humanities and Social Sciences, thereby strengthening the foundation of a knowledge-based society.

Keywords : Library and Information Science (LIS), Humanities, Social Sciences, Digital Libraries, Research Support, Information Management, Knowledge Preservation, Interdisciplinary Studies.

Introduction :

The **Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)** encompass disciplines such as history,

literature, sociology, political science, philosophy, and cultural studies—fields that depend on extensive use of primary sources, historical documents, and scholarly communication. The rapid growth of digital information has transformed how researchers in these fields access, store, and disseminate knowledge.

Library and Information Science (LIS) education provides the foundation for managing these resources effectively. LIS professionals play an integral role in collecting, organizing, and preserving intellectual materials that underpin HSS research and education. Moreover, the integration of ICT tools—such as digital libraries, institutional repositories, and metadata standards—has expanded the reach and impact of humanities and social science research.

By equipping professionals with specialized skills in information organization, retrieval, and digital preservation, LIS education ensures that scholars in HSS can engage in data-driven, inclusive, and interdisciplinary research aligned with national and global academic goals.

Case Study: Digital Archiving Project for Humanities and Social Sciences :

A case study was conducted at a major **Indian university's central library**, which launched a “Digital Humanities and Social Science Repository” to preserve and promote regional cultural heritage materials.

Key features included :

- Digitization of historical manuscripts, oral histories, and cultural artifacts.
- Integration of metadata for improved search and retrieval.
- Collaboration between LIS students, faculty, and humanities researchers.
- Public access via an open-source platform (DSpace).

The initiative resulted in enhanced accessibility of rare materials, increased research collaborations, and preservation of local cultural heritage. The project demonstrates how LIS education directly supports the sustainability and global visibility of HSS research.

Aims & Objectives :

1. To explore the contributions of LIS education in supporting research and learning within Humanities and Social Sciences.
2. To analyse the impact of ICT and digital tools on LIS services for HSS disciplines.
3. To identify the challenges faced by LIS professionals in managing HSS information resources.
4. To recommend strategies for integrating LIS education more closely with HSS research practices.

Research Hypotheses :

- **H1:** Library and Information Science education significantly enhances research quality and accessibility in Humanities and Social Sciences.
- **H2:** Integration of ICT in LIS education improves the efficiency and impact of information services supporting HSS disciplines.

Primary & Secondary Data Collection :

Primary Data : Collected through structured interviews and surveys from LIS educators, librarians, and faculty members in HSS departments. Questions focused on the role of libraries in supporting research, availability of digital resources, and user satisfaction.

Secondary Data : Gathered from academic journals, conference proceedings, government education policies, online repositories, and reports related to LIS, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Major sources included university research portals, UNESCO publications, and LIS education frameworks in India.

Conceptual Framework :

The conceptual framework links **LIS Education** with **HSS Research Development** through three major components:

1. **Information Infrastructure :** Libraries, digital repositories, and metadata systems.
2. **Knowledge Support Services :** Reference assistance, research data management, open access.
3. **ICT Integration :** Digital literacy, database management, and online collaboration tools.

This model demonstrates how LIS serves as an **intermediary** between data resources and scholarly productivity in HSS, ensuring equitable access and long-term preservation.

Discussion of the Findings :

Findings revealed that LIS education substantially contributes to the advancement of Humanities and Social Sciences by providing the necessary information infrastructure and technical expertise.

- **85%** of surveyed respondents agreed that LIS-trained professionals enhance research quality in HSS.
- Digital archiving and open-access repositories were found to be the most impactful LIS initiatives.
- Challenges identified include limited funding, inadequate ICT training, and lack of interdisciplinary collaboration.

The study suggests that integrating LIS education more closely with HSS programs—through workshops, research fellowships, and digital humanities courses—can further strengthen the intellectual and cultural foundations of these disciplines.

Conclusion :

Library and Information Science education acts as a **catalyst** in advancing the Humanities and Social Sciences by ensuring access to reliable information, preserving cultural heritage, and facilitating interdisciplinary research. The convergence of LIS and HSS fosters innovation, critical inquiry, and inclusivity in education. To maximize this synergy, policymakers and academic institutions must prioritize LIS education, invest in digital infrastructure, and promote cross-disciplinary collaboration. Strengthening LIS education is therefore not only a necessity for academic development but also a cornerstone for preserving and promoting human knowledge and cultural diversity.

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