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# Prospects of Distance Learning in Library and Information Science: A Case Study of SDLCE, Kakatiya University

M MADHU SUDHAN

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*Distance learning is a boon for the learners who have been deprived of educational opportunities due to various reasons. Though, the idea of Distance Learning is a noble one, as far as extension of professional programmes and training are concerned, its effectiveness or quality may be questionable primarily because, of the very nature of these disciplines (i.e., the professional subjects) and problems is involved in extension of professional programmes. The perceived problems of the programmes are: marketability of products turned out and opportunities available to make a career in the Library and Information Science. The study assesses the prospects of distance Learning Programmes in Library and Information Science offered by Distance Educational Programmes in general and the programmes offered by the School of Distance Learning and Continuing Education (SDLCE), Kakatiya University (KU) Warangal, in particular for their improvement. The study covers the prospects of both Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLISc) and Certificate in Library and information Science (CLISc) offered by SDLCE, KU It also deals with the prospects and career of the students through the aspects of enrollment, academic achievement or success, failure, drop outs, employment opportunities and career advancement etc. The study is basically a case study. The primary sources of data viz. the records of the SDLCE and examination branch of KU were used/consulted. A brief survey was conducted to find out the employment status and career advancement aspects. From the data collected, the study draws certain inferences and suggest necessary steps for improvement of the distance education programmes. It concludes with the changing social environment needs, changing methods and modes of education. However, if the change does not yield any results and is not good, then it is of no use.*

## 0 Introduction

Distance Learning is a boon for the learners who have been deprived of educational opportunities due to various reasons. As a matter of fact, Distance Learning is valuable for inservice persons, women, handicapped and those who cannot pursue the conventional educational programmes by attending the classes regularly. Though, the idea of Distance Learning is a noble one but as far as its extension to professional programmes and training are concerned, its effectiveness or quality may be questionable primarily because of the very nature of these disciplines (eg Library and Information Science). The perceived problems of the programmes are; marketability of products turned out and opportunities available to make a career in Library and Information Science (LIS).

However, if the distance learning programmes in the Library and Information Science are limited to working librarians and library professionals only, the marketability and other problems associated with the programmes may not be of serious concern. In view of this, there need not be any apprehension regarding the prospects and employment

opportunities of these distance learners. However, in case of the existance of programmes, which do not stipulate such restriction, in other words, if the programmes are open to all i.e. both working and non-working fresh graduates, the prospects of the programmes and the products have to be assessed, in order to have an effective feedback of the programmes for its continuity and improvement. The School of Distance Learning and Continuing Education, (SDLCE), Kakatiya University, Warangal offers its distance learning programmes in Library and Information Science to all. Though there is 25 per cent reservation for working librarians, but this 25 per cent seats will be declared open in the absence of applications of working librarians.

In view of the above, the present study is taken up to assess the prospects of Distance Learning Programmes in Library and Information Science offered by the SDLCE, Kakatiya University.

The study is very essential in view of the present crisis related to:

1. Proliferation of programmes and qualified persons in the field. Of course "there is considerable demand for

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