



**BOLOGNA PROCESS OF LIBRARY AND  
INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION IN SAARC  
COUNTRIES: A PROPOSAL.**

**\*Dr. A.K. Baradol**

Professor and Chairman  
Department of Library and Information Science  
Mangalore University  
Mangalore, Karnataka, India

**Meeting:**

**86. Education and Training**

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*WORLD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CONGRESS: 75TH IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE AND COUNCIL*  
23-27 August 2009, Milan, Italy  
<http://www.ifla.org/annual-conference/ifla75/index.htm>

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**Abstract:**

*The paper provides a brief description of Library and Information Science (LIS) education in SAARC countries. It deals briefly the similarities, differences and common problems of LIS education in SAARC countries and European countries where Bologna Process has been accepted. It covers the structure of the LIS education programmes. It explains the quality of LIS education. The paper briefly mentions about the efforts done for restructuring of LIS education through seminars and conferences. The efforts of Indian University Grants Commission (UGC) regarding the introduction of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) have been highlighted. It proposes to introduce the Bologna Process of LIS education among SAARC countries. It discusses the introduction of qualifications framework of three cycles viz., bachelor, master and doctorate. The acceptance of curricular framework has been suggested. Paper recommends the creation of awareness about the Bologna Process of LIS education.*

## **Introduction**

For the purpose of co-operation among themselves different countries together have formed the associations and organizations. These are American, Asian, African and European organizations. Some are regional and some are local. All these organizations have specific programmes/policies as mentioned in their charters. South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) is one such organization established in Asia. The SAARC countries have diverse Library and Information Science (LIS) education structures. The aim of this paper is to make a proposal to structure it and recommend for bringing them to the international standards. Through this paper an attempt is made to create awareness about Bologna Process of LIS education among SAARC countries. The proposal is intended to be submitted to the SAARC secretariat. The data for this paper was collected through the published literature and prospectuses of LIS courses, university websites and personal contacts.

### **Scope of the paper:**

The scope of the paper is Library and Information Science (LIS) education among SAARC countries. The SAARC now comprises eight countries viz., Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Paper focuses on LIS education conducted by the universities and colleges. The paper does not provide the list of LIS courses because it is changing every year. Paper also does not include the eligibility criteria for admission to programmes conducted at the university level.

### **Justification for name SAARC LIS Education Area.**

The SAARC as an organization which has gained some recognition and is known internationally. The name is important when it comes to international recognition and hence the name SAARC countries LIS Education Area. The SAARC is interested in institutionalization of students' academics, teachers and youth exchange programmes. The SAARC (2009) has been undertaking some activities through its Technical Committee (TC) on Education, Cultural and Sports. Among other things it is also concerned with education. Short term activities in the field of education include modernization of curriculum, planning and management of education.

### **SAARC Documentation Centre:**

The SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC) has been established as one of the regional centers of SAARC. The SDC acts mainly as a coordinating agency, dealing with programme, planning, management and budgetary control. Most of the activities of SDC are carried out by subcontracting either to National Focal Points (NFPs) or appropriate agency in member states. In order to effectively implement the programmes of SDC, the NFPs have been established. The functioning of the SDC-NFPs is administered by a coordinator in each NFP. For the benefit of the LIS professionals the SDC

conducts short term programmes at different countries within it. These programmes are meant for in-service LIS professionals as a part of continuing education programmes. Among SAARC countries such short term programmes are conducted by the professional associations like Indian Association of Special libraries and Information Centers (IASLIC). Such programmes are beyond the scope of this paper and hence are not dealt.

### **An Account of LIS education in SAARC countries:**

More than 120 LIS departments in the universities and higher education institutions in SAARC countries area offer a great variety of LIS education including Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Post Graduate degree and Doctorate programmes mostly for the domestic students with some exceptions. The following is only a brief discussion and does not aim to provide an exhaustive account of LIS education. The LIS education in India is conducted by the universities, colleges, institutions and boards at different levels. More than 100 universities offer the LIS education in India. In some universities it is offered as two years programme, and in few universities it is offered as one year Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLISc.) programme and one year Master of Library and Information Science (MLISc.) programme. The eligibility for admission to two years Master's course/one year Bachelor's course is a pass in Bachelors' degree. Most of the universities offer Master's and Doctoral (Ph.D.) programme in LIS. There is uniformity among the LIS courses regarding the duration of the course and eligibility for admission etc. The LIS course/paper is offered by the universities at the degree colleges as one of the two/three optionals. It is studied along with other one/two optionals for the three years Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree course. The eligibility for admission to this course is a pass in Pre-University Course (PUC). The titles and the number of courses/papers to be studied for LIS programmes varies from university to university. The core concepts which librarians and information scientists are expected to know are being taught in almost all programme.

Post-Doctoral (D. Litt.) programme in Library and Information Science is also being offered in some universities. It is by submission of thesis. The eligibility for admission to D.Litt. programme is the Doctorate (Ph.D.) degree in Library and Information Science. It is a part time programme. The Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, India has a provision for D.Litt.programme. Many other universities also have the provisions but not many professionals have registered for D.Litt. programme.

The syllabi of LIS programmes at university level are being revised and updated normally after every three years. There are exceptions where the syllabi have not been revised even after a three years period. The revision of syllabi has been suggested by the Indian University Grant Commission (UGC). The syllabi of the LIS programmes conducted by the universities in the SAARC countries are being updated. The Indian UGC allots the grants to

the universities for the five year plan period. Every time before sanctioning the plan grants the revision of syllabus is asked.

In SAARC countries the LIS education is being conducted since the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Kanwal (2007) says, "In Pakistan presently eight universities have been offering regular programmes in Library and Information Science Education". In Bangladesh, the LIS education is being provided through three universities. In Sri Lanka it is offered by two universities, where as in Nepal one university offers. The library associations of different countries also offer LIS education through short term programmes and award Certificate/Diploma titles for those. The three SAARC countries viz., Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan do not conduct any LIS education programmes. They depend on other countries for LIS education. Singh and Wijetunge (2006) have said that, "LIS education system in the South Asian countries has more similarities than differences".

A large number of open universities and distance education directorates of the universities in India offer LIS education through correspondence programmes. They provide LIS education through annual examination system. They find it difficult to adopt semester system due to shortage of staff and various other problems.

### **Similarities, differences and Common Problems:**

Among SAARC countries the Bologna Process of Library and Information Science (LIS) is not implemented. There are differences among SAARC countries and European Union (EU) LIS education systems. There are no similarities except some courses like 'Information Management' and 'Information Technology'. The titles of courses also vary. The similarities and the differences could not be listed because the Bologna Process of LIS education among SAARC countries is yet to be adopted. The rate of literacy is more in countries where Bologna Process has been adopted compared to SAARC countries. The SAARC countries are all developing countries where as countries in Europe are developed. This difference matters in the LIS education system. There is e-learning support for LIS education in UK and some universities in India.

The common problem is the variety found in LIS programmes among SAARC countries. Although there are agencies to check the quality of LIS education as a part of overall institutional quality the quality is compromised. The resources are limited in many universities. The library classification schemes, cataloguing rules are not taught using latest editions, instead the earlier editions are used for teaching. There are not enough full time teachers to handle the courses in some universities. In few universities the computer laboratories are inadequate. A large number of students are admitted to the LIS programmes offered though distance education by open universities where limited number of theory/practical classes known as contact hours are conducted. Most of the SAARC

countries LIS schools face the inadequate financial resources which lead to inadequate infrastructure. This is not avoidable as a whole.

These are no qualifications frameworks in SAARC countries. The first i.e. Bachelor's degree programme is of three years duration. The second i.e. Master's programme is of two years duration. In Sri Lanka it is of one year duration. The Bachelor's degree, Post Graduate i.e. Master's degree and Doctorate (Ph.D.) degree are not called as first, second, third cycle respectively. The mobility of students from one country to another is not found.

Even after Bologna declaration in Europe the LIS education has been facing some challenges. Virkus (2007) says, "It was recognized that in spite of their valuable differences, European HE system are facing many common challenges. Thus, the Declaration reflects a search for common European answer to common European problems. The Bologna Process aims at creating convergence and, thus, is not a path towards 'standardization' or 'uniformisation' of European HE. Principles of autonomy and diversity are highly respected in the Bologna Process: a common space for HE should be achieved within the framework of diversity of cultures, language and educational systems." Even after the adoption of Bologna Process of LIS education it is likely there would be some problems for some years in SAARC countries.

### **Structure of the programmes:**

The Bachelor's LIS education is expected to be offered to a large number of students through degree collages. In this the student has to choose LIS courses/papers along with other courses i.e. history, political science and sociology, etc. The students who complete the Bachelor's education with LIS courses/papers would be eligible to be admitted to the Master's programme.

The SAARC countries insists a degree with 15 years i.e. (10+2-3), (11+1+3) or (11+2+2) education pattern for enrolling to its Post Graduate programmes and +2 or equivalent pattern of education for Graduate programmes. Some universities conduct the admission/entrance test for admission to the Master's degree and Doctoral (Ph.D.) programme where as some universities do not conduct. The structure of the LIS education programmes varies from one university to another in SAARC countries. Some universities have the four theory courses and two practices for each semester of 16 weeks duration, some universities have dissertation for Master's programme where as some do not have it. The internal assessment marks varies from university to university. It is 20 marks for each course in some universities, 30 marks in some universities and 50 marks in some. The maximum marks for end semester examination per course also varies, it is either for 80 marks, 70 marks or 50 marks.

For understanding the differences in structures of LIS education between Europe and SAARC countries mention of two countries from Europe is made here. Germany has four levels of LIS education. Georgy (2008) says, “1<sup>st</sup> level: Apprentiship of three years, to the employee of media and information services, in German, 2<sup>nd</sup> level: Undergraduate, 3<sup>rd</sup> level: Graduate, 4<sup>th</sup> level: Postgraduate: Doctorate only at universities. This type of LIS education is not found among SAARC countries. Germany is in transition to shift to Bologna Process. Georgy (2008) says, “The former 4- or 5- years Diploma programmes in Germany will be step-by- step substituted by a normally 3- year Bachelor programme until 2010. In addition, a new normally 2-year Master programme is to be introduced”. This shows that Germany has diverse LIS education structures and is in transition stage.

While discussing the LIS education structure in Britain Love (2006) says, “Continuous study towards completion is the norm, but most of programmes have interior exit points, so that credits or lesser qualifications can be gained and carried forward.” This type of interior exit points is not found in SAARC countries. There are some similarities in European universities and universities in SAARC countries. The research (Ph.D.) & M.Phil. Degrees are part time as well as full time in Europe and SAARC countries.

### **Exchange of LIS professionals within SAARC countries:**

A few LIS students from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have completed their Doctorate (Ph.D.) degrees in India. The Sri Lankan and Bangladesh LIS qualifications were recognized as equivalent to the Master’s degrees of Indian universities. Within SAARC countries there is no programme of exchange of students from one country to another country. Although there are stray incidents of some LIS teachers having visited SAARC countries for teaching, there are no regular programmes of exchange of LIS teachers.

### **Quality Assurance:**

To assess the quality in higher education in India the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established at Bangalore as an autonomous institution in 1994 by the Indian University Grants Commission (UGC). The main task of the NAAC (2009) is to assess the colleges and universities for the quality and accredit them. Till now it has accredited 3492 colleges and 140 universities. The assessment would be done keeping the following seven criteria. They are:

1. Curricular Aspects
2. Teaching, Learning and Evaluation
3. Research, Consultancy and Extension
4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources
5. Student Support and Progression
6. Governance and Leadership
7. Innovative Practices.

At present the department/programme wise accreditation is not done by NAAC. There are University Grants Commissions (UGC) in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Pakistan has higher education council which is concerned with the quality.

Many professionals through their writings have felt that the quality of LIS education in SAARC countries is not satisfactory. To quote Singh and Wijetunge (2006), "In fact, LIS education in majority of the departments in South Asia is in shambles". Islam and Chowdhury (2006) while discussing the LIS education in Bangladesh have said that, "... the quality of LIS professionals is not up to the mark...". While discussing the quality assurance in LIS higher education in Pakistan Kanwal (2007) has said that, "there are serious quality issues regarding faculty, curriculum development, infrastructure, assessment, etc., in these programs". While discussing the LIS education in India Varalakshmi (2007) has observed that, "to upgrade and maintain institutional quality, every department, college or institution should be strictly accredited". Satija (2006) has said, "Quality became the first casualty of the mindless growth and increased intake of library schools". The opinion expressed by the professionals is a clear indication of the quality of LIS education.

The government of India has appointed the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) during 2005. Its objective is to transform India in to knowledge society. The NKC is convinced about the over-regulated nature of higher education. The changes in higher education system have been recommended by the NKC. To quote National Knowledge Commission (NKC) (2006), "The present regulatory system in higher education is flawed in some important respects. The barriers to entry are too high. The system of authorizing entry is cumbersome. There is a multiplicity of regulator agencies where mandates are both confusing and overlapping. The system as hole is over regulated but under governed. We believe that there is a clear need to establish an independent regulatory authority for higher education (IRAHE)". India has realized the need of access to higher education to all the marginalized groups. At present it is not in a position to provide the access to all .The creation of SAARC Higher Education Area would help achieve the goal of access to all those who want to persue.

### **Efforts done for Restructuring through seminars/conferences in India:**

India has the largest higher education system in the world. To restructure and bring in the quality many attempts have been done by the LIS professionals. Many seminars/conferences on LIS education have been held in India and the professionals have discussed its restructuring. The following are noteworthy. A seminar on LIS education was held at the University of Delhi, Delhi (India) during 1977. There was a seminar on 'Relevance of LIS education to the changing needs of the country' at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (India) in 1981. Another seminar was held at University of Kerala, Trivandrum (India) during 1986. The Indian Association of Teachers of Library and Information Science (IATLIS) National

Seminar on 'Changing Dimensions of LIS education' was held at Andhra University, Vishakapattanam (India) during 2001. There was an IATLIS seminar on 'Quality education in LIS' at Bishop Heber College, Trichy (India) during 2005. The professionals at all these seminars/conferences and other seminars on LIS education have expressed their concerns over the restructuring of the LIS education.

### **Choice Base Credit System (CBCS):**

'Credit' means the unit by which the course work is measured. In credit system of education in some universities especially where it is provided through distance mode the credit comprise all learning activities. They include the reading and comprehending the print-materials, watching video, attending counseling, teleconferencing, writing assignments, presenting seminars, appearing the theory and practical examinations, submission of projects etc. Completion of any LIS programme requires successful completion of all the prescribed units. These vary from university to university. In credit system the student has a freedom of completing the programme in more number of years than the stipulated duration of the programmes. The student can decide how many courses can be pursued in a year. This provides flexibility in the completion of the programme. This facility is available in Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, (India) for one year Master's programme in LIS. Although the credit system is followed in some universities in India this type of flexibility does not exist. The credit system does not reveal the actual marks and decreases the sense of failure that a student might poses.

The total number of credits per semester varies from one university to another, it ranges between 25-32 credits. The Master's programme in LIS shall carry certain number of credits. These represents the weightage of the course and are a function of teaching, learning and evaluation strategies such as number of contact hours, the course content, teaching methodology, learning expectations, etc., In Mangalore University, India it is proposed to have 25 credits per semester. For four semester i.e. for the 2 year MLISc. programmes there will be 100 credits. For Master's programme the credits shall be based on the number of instructional hours per week. It would be 1 credit per hour of instruction in theory and 1 credit for 2 hours of practical or project work. The students are assessed on the basis of internal assessment and end semester examinations. Marks secured in the examination are to be computed in to Grade Points (GP) (for instance 7 Grade Points for marks in the range of 66 to 70). The Grade Point Weights (GPW) shall than be calculated as the product of the Grade Points earned in the course and the credits for the course. The total GPW for a semester is obtained by adding GPW of all the courses of the semester. Finally the Grade Point Average (GPA) shall then be computed by dividing the total GPW of all the courses of study by the total Credits for the semester.



The LIS education programmes in some universities are structured on credit based semester scheme. The relative merit of the courses of study and activities are quantified in terms of credits. There is no choice of any course from non-library science programmes in this. There is another system viz. Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) (Semester Pattern). In this the choice based courses are normally restricted to 10-15% of the total courses, usually one course per semester. The choice based courses are offered as per the choice of the students, they are not thrust on them.

The CBCS (Semester Pattern) LIS education makes the product of a university on par with global practices in terms of academic standards. To achieve internationalization of LIS education possible it is imperative that the LIS schools should follow the CBCS (Semester Pattern) so that the mobility of their products from one institution to another would become possible.

Thorat (2009) has said that, the Indian UGC has suggested introducing the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) for all the programmes in higher education in all the universities. It will facilitate inter-institution transferability of students after completion of a semester. The CBCS will also facilitate part-completion of an academic programme in the institution of enrolment and part-completion in another institution. The directive issued by the Indian UGC, would help student pursue the studies in two/three universities/institutions. Two universities in Karnataka, India viz., Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta, Shimoga and Karnatak University, Dharwad have been offering the LIS programmes on the pattern of CBCS. The Mangalore University, Mangalore, India has planned to introduce the CBCS for LIS programme. Some universities in SAARC countries have introduced the credit system and some are yet to switch over to the CBCS pattern for LIS education. The transfer of credits earned by students at a programme to other programme would help LIS students immensely. This is a student's centered learning path. To quote Thorat (2009), "... a student from one university can take one or two courses in another university and the credits secured would be transferred to the parent university". This is still in the proposal stage, but it is likely that it would go through.

### **Curricular aspect (What is taught):**

As we all are aware the information is all pervasive in the present society. Its development depends upon the information services provided with the use of information communication technologies. Keeping this in mind the curriculum for LIS programmes are designed. The information access, processing, organization and dissemination are core components of the Master's programme. In the Bachelor's programme the conventional library services/activities are taught. For Bachelor's and Master's programmes together the courses taught are following: Foundations of Library and Information Science, Information Sources, Information Communication Technology, Information Processing-Classification,

Information Processing-Cataloguing, Management of Libraries and Information Centers, Research Methodology, Management Information System, Digital Libraries, Web Designing, Metadata, Knowledge Management, Conservation and Preservation of Information Resources, etc. In each programme different components are covered under different courses which are unitized. Depending on the programme the intensity of the component varies. For Master's programme there are core courses and non-core courses. In the core courses the management of libraries and information centers, information processing-classification, cataloging and indexing, information sources and services and information technology are taught. In the non-core courses the different information system, of viz., public library system, health library system, industrial library system information marketing, etc. are taught. Each university in SAARC countries is autonomous and hence the title of courses of different programmes varies. There are soft courses like communication skills etc., which are offered by the other post graduate departments in the universities which are chosen by the library and information science students.

### **Curricular Frameworks:**

Curriculum contents are innovated whenever there is a professional development. This might result in frustration among the students/teachers. The curriculum frameworks eliminate the frustration. According to Curry and Temple (1992), a curriculum framework is "a document (usually developed at the state level) that suggests the best thinking about the knowledge, skills, and processes students should know and understand about a particular discipline, and that provides a structure within which to organize the other important curricular components of the instructional system". Among the SAARC countries there are no curricular frameworks for LIS courses. The courses conducted by LIS departments in the universities and other educational institutions are without any curricular frameworks. The curriculum frameworks for LIS education are proposed to be developed. The Indian Ministry of Human Resources Development has initiated a step in this direction. A committee for the 'Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education in India has been appointed under the chairmanship of Prof. Yashpal. The committee in its report has proposed curricular reform. To quote Yashpal (2009), "This autonomy should also be available to the students who should be allowed to take courses of their choice in relaxed manner from different universities and they be awarded a degree on the basis of the credits they have earned". The Indian UGC (2007) has identified the issues and proposed action plan strategy to develop. It is to ensure horizontal mobility of students between universities. This is a step in the right direction. This step is towards the implementation of Bologna Process. The curricular framework provides guidance to LIS teachers while developing an instructional program relevant for their students. It assists them while they plan their lessons by describing the skills students need to use.

## **Qualifications Framework:**

The qualifications framework is more systematic way of classifying the qualifications. It is done by a hierarchy of levels. In Europe there is European Qualifications Framework. Every country also has its own framework of qualifications. To quote Qualifications and Curriculum Authority of UK (2009), National qualification frameworks sets out the levels against which a qualification can be recognized ... ." The recognition of qualification for various purposes becomes easy by this. In some countries these are called as credit and qualification frameworks. To quote, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (2009), "The qualifications framework describes the courses and programmes that lead to qualifications. It allows individuals to make the most of the opportunities to transfer credit points between qualifications". To quote from the Wikieducator (2009), "The demand for evolving a National Qualifications Framework for India is very high. It is being actively discussed at different venues. UGC's Higher Education Information System Project, launched in 2004, among other things, aims at a National Qualifications Framework". The Indian University Grants Commission (UGC) has set up a task force to standardize knowledge and skills imparted through the educational institutions in 2006. The UGC is yet to release the document pertaining to this. The SAARC countries where LIS education is available have a qualifications system but have no qualifications framework. The qualifications frameworks are beneficial to students. It has to be framed and accepted as a voluntary measure by different countries. Since it is a voluntary framework there are no legal problems. Each qualification has credit points; hence it is easier to compare a particular qualification with another. There would be a National Qualifications Framework for each country. It would be compatible with SAARC qualifications framework. This is on the lines of qualifications framework of Bologna Process in Europe. The SAARC Qualifications Framework will relate different SAARC countries national qualification system to a common SAARC reference framework.

## **Bologna Process:**

In India the Manipal University (2009) was the first to establish collaborative arrangements with foreign universities at degree level in Medicine, Management and Engineering. The collaborative program is called the twinning programme. In Engineering the students pursue the first two years' study of a degree program in Manipal, India and the last two years in U.K or Australia. The degree is awarded by the foreign university. With the developments and the use of instant communication such as Satellite TV and Internet, the distance between the countries has disappeared. This makes the collaboration possible with other universities any where in the world. The students of Manipal University have been admitted to numerous other universities in foreign countries with transfer of credits. If it is possible for the Manipal University for the Medicine, Management and Engineering the collaborative programmes can be conducted for LIS within the SAARC countries area.

The Bologna Process has become reality among European countries by developing into European Higher Education Area (EHEA). One of the core elements of Bologna Process (2009) are the mobility of staff, students and graduates, creation of opportunities for personal growth, developing international co-operation between individuals and institutions and enhance the quality of higher education. No such attempt has been made among SAARC countries. The implementation of Bologna Process is possible for the different disciplines, i.e., for Library and Information Science (LIS), Journalism, Management Education, etc. Once if there is an acceptance for the Bologna Process at different disciplines it's acceptance by all the disciplines would be easy. If it is implemented for entire higher education simultaneously i.e. for all the disciplines there is a likelihood of opposition from different stakeholders. Hence the Bologna Process is recommended for LIS discipline only.

The acceptance and implementation of Bologna Process would bring academic recognition to the LIS courses conducted by the participating countries. The SAARC countries area has a rich cultural heritage. The SAARC countries LIS Education Area would be based on an institutional autonomy. The academic autonomy and freedom of institutions would be maintained. The process would facilitate mobility of students and staff. It would also help in increasing the employability.

The word 'cycle' is used to denote each of the three main stages associated with the LIS education process. Most SAARC countries have Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate LIS education programmes. The primary objective of the implementation of Bologna Process among SAARC countries is to restructure LIS education along three cycles i.e. Bachelor (first), Master (second), Doctorate (Ph.D.) (third). This is proposed to be done by converging diverse LIS education structures in SAARC countries. The eligibility for admission to the first cycle (Bachelor) would be a pass in +2 programme, for second cycle (Master) it would be the pass in the first cycle (Bachelor). The eligibility for admission to the third cycle (Doctorate) would be a pass in the second cycle (Master). The first (bachelor) cycle will be of three years duration and second (master) cycle will be of two years duration, where as the third (Doctorate) cycle will be of three/four years duration. This would bring the LIS degrees to the international standards. Each cycle of LIS education are relevant to the labour market.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on the study the following recommendations have been made:

- Awareness regarding the Bologna Process be created through publication and distribution of booklets in SAARC countries.
- A separate LIS Qualifications Framework for each country in SAARC should be developed.
- LIS Qualifications Framework common for SAARC countries should be developed.

- The LIS Curricular Framework should be developed and adopted in a five year period.
- The assessment and accreditation of the LIS education programmes in SAARC countries should to be taken up.
- All the SAARC countries should speed up the implementation of Bologna Process of LIS education.
- The concerned ministries/bodies/agencies in different SAARC countries should fix the time schedule of implementation of Bologna Process.

### **Conclusion:**

The proposed Bologna Process of LIS education in SAARC countries would provide with an improved quality knowledge base. This would help the overall development of libraries and information centers in SAARC countries; it will be a strong and developed region. This would be a win-win situation for all SAARC countries. In the early years of its implementation the focus could be on introducing and consolidating the first (Bachelor) and second (Master) cycles. The third cycle (Doctoral/Ph.D.) could be implemented after reviewing the process and progress of the first two cycles. In future when SAARC countries adopt and absorb the Bologna Process of LIS education this would result in the convergence between the South East Asian, European and American system. There may be resistance at the beginning for implementation of Bologna Process in LIS education in SAARC countries. It is hoped that after two/three years the resistance would decrease, hence a trial can be given for its implementation. Staff mobility among different countries would be difficult but it could be attempted. It would be a voluntary participation of SAARC countries. There will not be any treaty for this. For switching over from the present Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate degrees to the three cycles viz., first, second and third respectively the universities do not need much money.

If the Bologna Process is accepted for LIS education the mobility of students from one country to another country within SAARC countries area would be possible. This would result in the emergence of SAARC LIS Education Area. The Bologna Process of LIS education would lead to the internationalization. It compels the universities and institutions among SAARC countries to maintain quality in LIS education. This would attract students from non-SAARC countries to SAARC countries. People can not only come to study but also can take-up employments without much difficulty. The acceptance of Bologna Process for LIS education in SAARC countries would enhance its worldwide attraction and competitions. This would result in the employability of the graduates more than the present.

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