MANPOWER FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION FIELD IN INDIA: A REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT TRENDS IN 1983

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In continuation of the survey reported earlier for the years 1979-82 (January to December) and with the objectives stated therein[1,2], the career opportunities and employment market was assessed for the year 1983 from the advertisements appearing in the two national dailies, the Hindustan Times and the Times of India, and the weekly Employment News. The trends emerge clearly because the reliance was placed on these sources even in the work reported earlier.

During the year 1983, a total of 238 advertisements appeared for 277 vacancies. As compared to the years 1981 and 1982[2] where the average number of vacancies came to 404, the year under reference (1983) registered a lesser number of openings which may partially be due to the fact that towards the tail of a Five Year Plan (the sixth one ends in March 1985), very few openings remain to be filled up. However, it compares well with a total of 551 posts advertised during the years 1979 and 1980[1].

SECTORS OF EMPLOYMENT

The employers include universities, colleges, schools, national institutes and research/training centres, private educational societies, Government of India undertakings, Central Government departments/ministries, industries, publishers, export and other agencies, national and other libraries, CSIR/ICMR/INSDOC etc. which advertised 30, 28, 18, 47, 5, 11, 52, 14, 7, 4, 16 and 25 vacancies respectively. Eight advertisements for 8 vacancies are unspecified. The government departments such as AIR, Doordarshan, defence, railways, transport corporations etc. also have offered openings for library and information science personnel. In fact, currently newer workfields are throwing up opportunities for library and information science personnel.

The openings advertised suggest that the professionals support such work-fields as teaching, research, general library activities, documentation and information and industry. Some are involved in quasi-professional, para-professional and non-professional roles.

Job opportunities in the work-field, academic remained almost the same as in 1979-80 but are lesser than those in 1981-82. In colleges there was a marginal increase in the opening in 1983 as compared to that in 1979-80. As against 37 posts advertised during these two years, 28 jobs are advertised for the colleges in 1983. As against an average of 48 jobs in school libraries during the preceding two years, only 18 jobs are noticed in 1983 registering an appreciable fall in the demand for school libraries.

OCCUPATIONAL TITLES

Jobs under 70 different occupational titles are advertised in 1983 as against 49 in 1979-80 and 83 in 1981-82. In all 137 different occupational titles have been reported during the last 5 years (1979-83). Out of this, 23 titles are common in all these advertisements. The common occupational titles for the year 1979-80 and 1981-82, 1979-80 and 1983, 1981-82 and 1983 are 28, 27 and 33 respectively. Certain occupational titles are para-professional and non-professional in nature and nomenclature.

The survey reveals that same occupational titles does not always mean the same thing. The occupational title ‘librarian’ is mentioned in 79 advertisements for different jobs in small institutions to university libraries in 41 pay-scales ranging from Rs.330-560 to 3006-94-4322 plus
housing allowance of Rs.160/- (No pay-scale is mentioned in 26 out of these 79 advertisements). Similarly, 186 posts in 1979-80 and 265 posts in 1981-82 carried the title 'librarian'. The occupational title in certain cases therefore neither gives a clue of what an incumbent would be required to do nor of his qualifications, pay-scale or status. The national pattern is, however, followed for teaching jobs.

The survey lends support to the earlier recommendation that the occupational titles should be restructured keeping in view the academic field of the professional, the work-field being supported by him, and the content of the occupation regardless of his employment section[2].

**PAY-SCALES**

In all, 257 pay-scales have been differentiated for the posts advertised during 1979-83. In 1983, 84 pay-scales were advertised for various vacancies as against 83 in 1979-80 and 153 in 1981-82. The initial pay-scale varies from Rs.210 to Rs.3161. The starting pay is an odd number in three cases, i.e., Rs.3161, 3006 and 2271. Gross pay is given in one case. The rate of increment varies from Rs. 4 to Rs.150 per annum. As reported earlier[2], some times starting pay is higher but the rate of increment lower. Thirtyeight pay-scales covering 88 advertisements do not mention the rate of increment and the pay-scale span. In other cases, the pay-scale is spread over from 8 years to 20 years. One efficiency bar is specified in 11 pay-scales and two efficiency bars in another 3 cases.

There are 18 pay-scales carrying a basic pay of Rs.1000 or above (the highest being Rs.3161-114-4757) and 30 scales below a basic pay of Rs. 500 p.m. Pay-scale has not been specified in 53 advertisements. In fact the scales for the jobs are often not clearly given and sometimes are subject to "according to qualifications". As reported earlier[2], all the jobs requiring the same qualifications are not equally remunerative. The pay-scales need rationalisation in most of the cases which may be achieved by keeping in view the job requirement, qualifications and the status of the incumbents.

The universities are the best pay masters. Out of 27 advertisements for the jobs with initial pay higher than Rs.1000 p.m., nine are advertised by the universities and three by the Institutes of Technology. British libraries (advertised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations), Government concerns, research institutions and public libraries have advertised 4, 7, 3 and 1 such higher pay-scale jobs respectively.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

The present study suggests that the graduates having a Bachelor’s degree or diploma in library science are in maximum demand. During the year under reference, 106 advertisements require the above qualifications. Bachelor’s degree and M.Lib.Sc., Master’s degree and B.Lib.Sc., Master’s degree and M.Lib.Sc., Ph.D. and M.Lib.Sc., Master’s degree and Associate-ship in documentation from INSDOC or DRTC are specified as job requirement in 12, 31, 10, 3 and 1 advertisements respectively. One advertisement mentions only M.Lib.Sc. without any reference to academic degree whereas in another 4 cases only academic degree is specified without mentioning professional degree or training. The qualifications are not specified in 43 advertisements. The remaining 27 advertisements are for junior posts with qualifications matriculation/higher secondary with some experience in libraries or having certificate course in library science. It is noticed that the qualitative aspect of academic and professional attainments is not given much importance.

Thirtysix advertisements mention the knowledge of some regional or foreign language as a qualification for the job. Out of these advertisements, 11 advertisements require the knowledge of Russian, French or German, 6 Hindi, 9 Marathi/Gujarati, 2 each Malayalam, Arabic/Persian and Tibetan, and one each Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Prakrit, Telugu and Punjabi.

Even in the advertisements from the industrial sector, there are no detailed job specifications. Only one advertisement was very definite and 4 others carried some description. The rest of the jobs specified only academic and professional qualifications and the requisite experience. Except in two cases, the qualifications for the jobs with initial pay higher than Rs.1000 p.m. are properly mentioned. The advertisements by universities are rather specific and clear. Only 2 advertisements from the
colleges mention the required job roles. None of the school jobs carry any description of specific duties. The publishing houses lay emphasis on documentation and library keeping activities.

Only 2 middle level jobs in research institutes demand persons capable of handling information on computers. An advertisement from ICMR advertised participation in international information network such as MEDLAR/MEDLINE as a desirable qualification. Reprographic experience is required in other 4 advertisements.

AGE AND EXPERIENCE

No experience is advertised for 126 vacancies (103 advertisements) and no age is mentioned for 215 vacancies (188 advertisements). Professional experience for \( \frac{1}{2}, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 \) and some years is required in 1, 10, 30, 18, 1, 22, 5, 2, 1, 12 and 32 advertisements respectively.

In 9 out of 27 advertisements for higher pay jobs, no experience is mentioned. The higher pay jobs advertised by the universities require 7 or 10 years experience except for a Reader’s post which is without any experience requirement. For the highest pay-scale (Rs.3161-114-4757) job advertised in 1983, the requirement of M.A. (Second Class) and M.Lib.Sc. (any division) without any experience but in the age group 35-40 years is somewhat intriguing, otherwise it is observed that experience helps a qualified person to get a proper footing.

Age between 21-30 years and 18-25 years is given in 15 and 7 advertisements respectively. Age higher than 45 years is not mentioned in any advertisement. Other age groups advertised are 18-28, 18-30, 18-35, 19-25, 20-30, 21-28, 21-35, 21-45, 35-40, 26, 28, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years in 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 6, 1, 3, 1, 1, 2, 1, 2 and 2 advertisements respectively. Only 7 jobs with initial pay higher than Rs.1000 p.m. mention age requirement and it is usually between 35-40 years. As reported earlier [1], age is usually not attached much significance for the library manpower.

RESERVATION OF JOBS

The posts reserved for SC, ST, ex-servicemen and the physically handicapped are 40, 21, 1, and 1 (i.e. 14.83%, 7.58%, 0.36%, 0.36%) respectively in 1983 as against 3.40% and 1.75% posts reserved in 1979-80 and 11.26% and 3.71% in 1981-82 for SC/ST and other categories respectively. In 4 advertisements, there is no reservation but age relaxation is allowed for SC/ST. No teaching post is reserved.

All the reserved posts are advertised by Government agencies. Nineteen advertisements for SC/ST are by the Staff Selection Commission and none of them carries an initial pay higher than Rs.425 p.m. Except two posts advertised by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission in the pay-scale of Rs.1130-2400, all have initial pay less than Rs.1000. Sixty-six per cent reserved posts are in the pay-scale Rs.330-560, Rs.380-640 and Rs.425-700.

REFERENCES
