

I-Schools and the Present Worldwide Trend and the Indian Scenario



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INTRODUCTION

An I-School or Information School is one of the important names in the present age. It is treated as oxygen for several organizations, Institutions and sectors such as Health, Government, Academia, business and commerce for solid and sophisticated Information and Technological Solution. Owing to the extreme importance of information, several academic units around the world have established Information Schools (I-Schools) on the line of IT schools or B- schools. This is treated as a healthy and sophisticated academic innovation in the field of information, knowledge, computing and technologies where some schools have been merged into a big academic unit or school. USA is a pioneer in this regard where several information schools such as Information studies, Computer science, Management Science, Knowledge Management have been merged (Cohen, 2004; Paul, b, Kumar, 2012).

BACKGROUND AND ORIGIN OF I-SCHOOLS

I-Schools gained popularity during 1990's when Internet reached the common people and other commercial ventures. It is in this time the explosion of information has lead the development of healthy information management approach. Earlier evolution of I-Schools provided such knowledge as Library Science, Communication Science, Mass-Communication, Computer Science and Information Technology. But the interdisciplinary research lead to a closer interaction among these departments and subjects and ultimately a new academic unit called I-Schools or Information Science Schools or Information Schools evolved. I-Schools

gained popularity during 1900 -2000. In this period so many new I-Schools emerged not only in USA but also in Europe, and African countries, though the trend was much less in Australia and Asian countries including India. I-Schools in some universities evolved as new academic and research units. However in some of the universities it was established by merging the related disciplines with computing and/or information. I-Schools today has gained a separate recognition in the academic world due to its significant role and incredible benefits (Paul, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

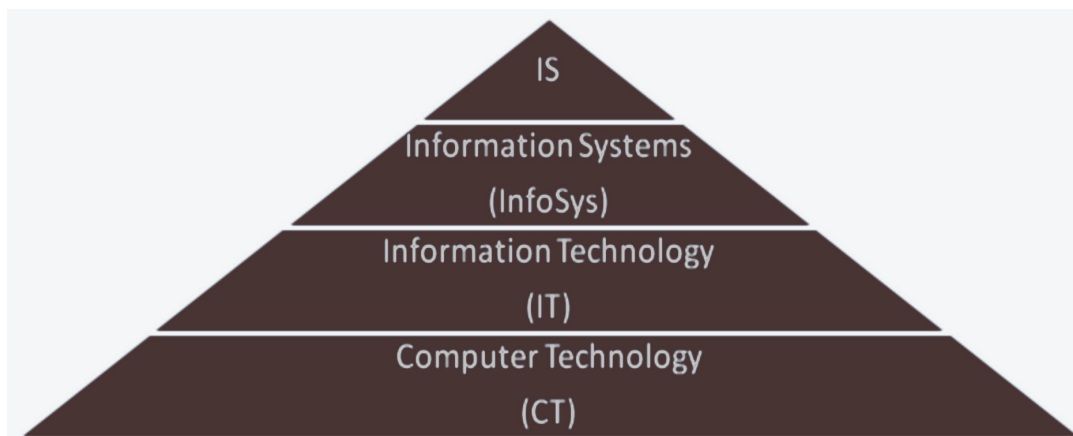
To conduct this study various tools and techniques have been used, out of which review of literature played an important role. Web Review plays an important role to find out running courses in the field of Information Science and other information and related departments. To assess educational situation and make SWOT analysis of this field, some websites were searched; these are official websites of UGC; AICTE; Government of India. The MSc- Information Science curriculum, Courses and programme structure of more than 600+ educational institutes have been assessed during this study and the main link of UGC, AICTE and MHRD have been used to find out the latest of Education Information in India.

FEATURES OF I-SCHOOLS

I-Schools or Information Schools are the academic units which are dedicated to the information solution through academic and research outputs. It is primarily

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Figure 1. From smaller and broader periphery of information and technology related field



responsible for the collection, selection, organization, processing, management and dissemination of information with the help of Technologies. The main difference between IT Schools and I-Schools is that, IT Schools provide Technological Manpower and solution such as database, Networking, Software, Hardware and Core Computing, Multimedia and image processing, whereas I-Schools are responsible for the Information solution or knowledge Management solution with the help of Technologies such as Database Management, Networking Technology, Multimedia Technology, Communication Technology and Web Technology. Thus I-Schools are dedicated to information solution powered by technologies (Paul, 2012). I-Schools are also responsible for Information and technological application in society, commerce, health and governance. Thus I-Schools deal much more with societies and believe in interaction between Information, Technology and Society Where as IT Schools deal just about application rather than societal approach. LIS schools deal with information solution in library and similar foundations, I-Schools deal and works with several domains and institutions (Figure 1) (Vickery, & Vickery, 1987; Paul, 2012).

I-SCHOOLS AND I-PROGRAMMES: EXISTING AND POSIBILITIES

I-Schools offer so many programs but majority of them are in Applied Science. The flagship program in most of the academic units is Information Science and the

degree as MS/MSc (Information Science) (Cohen & Malgorzata, 2006; Paul, 2012).

However apart from these, I-Schools offer some specialized information programs also such as

- MSc/MS/BSc/BS – Information Science (Human Computer Interaction)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Usability Engineering)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Digital Repository)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Communication Systems)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Database System)

However some Universities also offer domain-based Information Programs such as Telecommunication Technology, Communication Systems, Multimedia Systems, with full fledged BS/MS degree. Information Schools also offer domain based Information Programs as full fledged academic degree with specialization in Information related programs (Though Information Schools not at all offer conventional IT program such as Computer Science, IT, Computing, Software Engineering and so on.) The programs are as follows:-

- BSc/BS/MSc/MS – Information Science
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Geoinformatics)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Medical Informatics)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Bio- Informatics)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Music-Informatics)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Library Management)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Chemo Informatics)
- MSc/MS/BSc/BS (Quantum Informatics)

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