

Education for Librarianship in Turkey

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Throughout history man has always been indulged in various activities in order to make a living. It is very hard to label these activities as professions. There needs to be an educational standard for an activity to be named as a profession. The major element for having a job is to get trained in that particular subject.

Librarianship has developed as an occupation in the last quarter of the 19th century in the world, whereas librarianship as a subject at university level in Turkey has developed in the mid-20th century. As a practise, it has been carried out in different types of libraries. Nobody can deny the role of libraries in improving and developing society. Because of this, the education of librarians is extremely important.

There are four types of education and training programs for librarians in Turkey. These are: 1) Librarianship Courses; 2) Intensive Training; 3) In-service Training; and 4) University Level Education for Librarianship.

1. Librarianship Courses

The need for professional librarians and educating them was first put forward in 1924. The education for librarianship and the need of librarians in Turkey has first come up in 1924. John Dewey, an American educator, was invited to Turkey to prepare a report called "Report on Education in Turkey" (Dewey, 1952) in which he pointed out the following opinions about libraries:

To establish mobile libraries, to train librarians, to set up libraries in schools and to open them for the use of public, to assign teachers to these libraries and to send at least one of them abroad to be trained as librarians.

As a result Fehmi Ethem Karatay was sent to Paris in 1925. After he finished his studies there he returned home and started a course for librarians and library managers in Istanbul which lasted for seven and a half months (Artukoğlu, 1979: 3). About 30 librarians attended this course in which the following subjects were taught: management, cataloging, and bibliography. After the course, the lecture notes were published as a book which became one of the first published sources in Turkish librarianship literature.

The second course for librarians started in Ankara ten years after the first one. Josef Stummvoll who has been invited to set up a library for the Graduate Institute of Agriculture in Ankara (Yüksek Ziraat Enstitüsü) and later became the head of this library, opened a course in the Institute in 1936. This course was attended by several librarians and as many as forty interested people. The course lasted for three months and the attendees were given a certificate in the end. It was a pity that this course was not repeated like the previous one.

The first continuous course at university level was started six years after the Stummvoll's by Adnan Ötügen who founded the Turkish National Library. Ötügen, after finishing his studies of librarianship in Germany, returned to Turkey and applied to the dean of the Faculty of Letters, to educate librarians. After the positive reply from the Dean's Office, they prepared a bye-law to determine the subjects to be taught and the qualifications of the attendees. After the management accepted the regulation, the course began in 1942 with the

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research assistants and the faculty librarians. After the first year, the course carried on in two groups, A and B. University or High School graduates were allowed to attend the group A course whereas the Secondary School graduates could attend the group B course only (Ötüken, 1957: 5).

The group A applicants were taught the following subjects ; theoretical and applied librarianship, the Ottoman Turkish, bibliography, archival science and practical reading in Turkish texts. Neither archives text nor old Turkish text wasn't taught to group B students. Ottoman Turkish was optional (Ötüken, 1957: 11).

The librarianship course, which continued in the same manner until 1952, was added as an elective course by the decision of the Academic Committee of the Faculty of Letters. The aim of this decision, which was also accepted by the University Senate, was to teach students how to organize libraries scientifically and equip them with the managerial skills.

Aside from these long-term courses, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of National Education also arranged short-term courses for public and children's libraries and the school libraries, respectively, especially during the summer months. These courses were organized for the employees who worked in school libraries but did not have professional qualifications. The teachers from the departments of librarianship and privileged directors taught these courses.

2. Librarianship Courses for Secondary School and Undergraduate Students

First lectures on this subject were delivered by Ruşen Alaylıoğlu two hours a week in the Gazi Education Institute to the students of pedagogy and literature (Ersoy, 1965: 51). Apart from these lectures, after 1960, studies of librarianship were taught in some secondary schools. In the last few years, the Ministry of Education has decided to include library studies in the curriculum as an elective for all secondary school students. In a very few of these schools, this course is taught by professional librarians. In most schools literature teachers usually teach library studies, the usefulness of which is open to discussion.

3. In-service Training

In-service training is organized for the employees of various libraries. Such training aims to educate employees without qualifications as well as those who have degrees of librarianship. Among the courses offered were library studies (for unqualified employees) and technological changes (for degree-holders). Courses were usually taught by library managers and specialists.

4. University Level Education for Librarianship

Education for librarianship at university level as we mentioned above began in 1952 in the Faculty of Letters, Department of Turkish Language and Literature as an elective course. This continued two years. The Institute of librarianship was founded in 1954. Emily Dean, the manager of the American Library in Ankara, and the Ford Foundation helped a great deal to set up the Institute. Lectures were taught by Adnan Ötüken in the first term (Artukoğlu, 1979: 5). The Ford Foundation tried to find teachers for the Institute and a number of teachers worked here at various times until 1961. In the year 1960, the Institute became a chair and the Fulbright provided support to find instructors between the years 1961-1964. In 1964, the chair was organized as the Department of Librarianship. From then on, the Turkish professors run the Department. The Department of Librarianship of the

Faculty of Language, History - Geography had only one programme (Librarianship) until 1988. By the Higher Education Council decision in 1988, two more programmes, Archives, and Documentation and Information were opened. These three programmes share the same facilities. Many courses are in common in all three programmes as they are taught by a few instructors.

The second Department of Librarianship was opened in 1964 in the Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters. First students of this Department were accepted in 1964 with the help of Professor Rudolf Juchhoff, chair, and Assistant Meral Şenöz (Alpay) who also took part during the foundation of the Department (Baysal, 1987: 7). Professor Juchhoff remained as the Head of the Department until his death. Studies were carried on by Turkish teachers after his death. With the Higher Education Council's decision, Documentation and Information programme was opened. Both programmes (of Librarianship, and Documentation and Information) have many courses in common and they experience problems similar to those of the Department of Librarianship of Ankara University (i.e., lack of space, limited facilities).

The third Department of Librarianship in Turkey was founded in 1972 in Ankara at Hacettepe University within the Faculty of Letters. The Department accepted only graduate students (i.e., master's) in its first two years. In 1974, it decided to accept undergraduate students as well, thus offering both bachelor's and master's degrees in librarianship. Professor İlhan Kum was the founding chair of the department and he served in this capacity until his retirement. Like the other two departments, the Department of Librarianship at Hacettepe University opened two more programmes (Archives, and Documentation and Information). It experiences similar problems and the courses offered in the first two years of all three programmes are in common.

The courses offered at the Department of Librarianship affiliated with three universities are similar. Basic courses in which main programmes are directly concerned are the followings: Computer, The History of Information, Cataloging and Classification, Research Methods, Reference Services, Ottoman Turkish, Public and Children's Libraries, Library Administration, Professional English, and Information Networks. In addition to such theoretical courses, students also take practica and work in libraries as part of their degree programmes.

Apart from these three departments named "department of librarianship", "Departments of Archives" were opened in Istanbul and Marmara Universities in 1988-1989. These departments offer courses on "Archival Sciences" involving both modern and Ottoman archives. Students also take practica and work in archives.

As library, documentation and information and archival sciences gain significance nowadays, education for librarianship and information studies has also improved to a certain extent. The importance that is attached to getting professional education in Turkey is the basis of establishing the fourth department of librarianship. The plans for opening a department within the Atatürk University have been finalized and teaching staff are sought. After the recruitment of professors and instructors, they are planning to accept students.

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