We are living in a knowledge era where new requirements and challenges have emerged for different organizations and professional groups. Today, organizations are continuously facing a number of worldwide developments, such as the increasing complication of technologies. As a result, some professions have evolved greatly over the past two decades, particularly in the fields that deal with information technologies. Such phenomena have also affected libraries and the profession of librarianship in general. As a consequence of the knowledge era, libraries are facing challenges of improving their workforce which needs a review of the competencies for librarians.

This poster illustrated the effect of environment factors on the demands of competencies for three stakeholders (employers, job seekers, and education and training organizations) and for LIS educators, students, and Library and Information Professionals (LIPs) as other groups those involving in competencies debates. This poster is a modification of the model that presented by Griffiths (1983) in “Competency Requirements for Library and Information Science Professionals” (Fig. 1).
Fig. 1. Current Communication Channels for Information Concerning Demand for Competencies (Griffiths, 1983)
As shown in Fig. 2, the pressures on the LIS profession arise from changes coming up in the environment in which libraries operate. The environmental pressures are many and wide-ranging, including Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Developments, Political...
Developments, Economic Developments, and Social Developments (Singh & Pinki, 2008; Singh & Pinki, 2009; Gallacher, 1999). There is a consensus among many authorities working in the field that the rapid growth of the ICT is the main cause of changing the profession perspective in the world (Ameen, 2011; Bhatt; 2011; Ramzan & Singh, 2010; Thompson; 2009). One can also say that all these developments are under the umbrella of the ICT. These developments concerning the changes demand for new and up-to-date competencies.

In this regard, therefore, there are two questions in the profession as a whole: first, what competencies are required for the field? Although some LIS associations and researchers have determined general sets of competencies, these cannot be prescribed for all situations across the world. According to Gutsche (2010: 30), “There is no definitive competency construction that will fit all types and sizes of library”. Similarly in an article produced by WebJunction et al. (2010: 6) it has explicitly been highlighted that “There is no one-size-fits-all for competencies”. Hence, "although several studies, to some extent, have contributed to the development of some competency frameworks, the transferability of these frameworks to some other contexts need further research" (Peyvand Robti and Singh, 2013: 117). It is notable that, since the competencies are changeable over time, competencies must evolve in accordance with the changing workplace environment. The study on competencies should thus be replicated in a few years to identify the changing competencies and to keep LIS education and training programs current.

Determining the competencies that should be taught in educational institutions and training programs is another question that requires to be answered on a continuous basis. Moreover, identifying the important elements to be included in the preparation of librarians and improving
existing LIS curricula to respond to changes and needs of the workplace are challenges for researchers.

References


