

asis&t

Association for Information Science and Technology

SALAAM NAMSTE AYUBOWAN

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ASIS&T SOUTH ASIA CHAPTER



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Association for Information Science and Technology

south asia chapter

Message from the Chair

Happy new year 2025 to all members!

With enthusiasm the new chapter officers' team has started activities slowly. Under the careful guidance of chapter advisers the novice office bearers are picking steps to execute regular chapter activities. The team has already conducted two monthly meetings and jotted a series of activities to be carried out in present term. Social media accounts namely Facebook page and X, formerly Twitter created again to disseminate chapter information and updates. Members are requested to follow the new Facebook page and X account and help us to reach more members. Chapter endorsed the students' road rally organized by the Dept of ISLM, Dhaka University on the occasion of National Library Day on 5th February. Thanks to members who joined the event and made footprints of this chapter.

A webinar on Open Science is scheduled in the first week of March. More updates and registration links will be shared shortly. Keep an eye on the chapter's webpage and social media pages.

I invite all members to spread the word about this chapter and actively participate in chapter activities. Also an appeal to identify interested professionals and students especially from Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldives to join this chapter and make a strong professional network. An anonymous donor fund is available to sponsor students' memberships. As free membership drives are still active for Tier II countries, current LIS students from Maldives may take the benefit of it. Need your support and involvement to move forward together!

Sourav Debnath
Chair
ASIS&T SA Chapter

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Know your 2024-25 Team



Md. Atikuzzaman
Chair-Elec



Sakeena Alikhan
Secretary



Sourav Debnath
Chair



Satyam Kumar
Treasurer



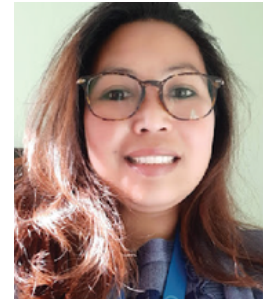
Sameer Sahu
Webmaster



Syamili C.
Communications Officer



Jannatul Islam Muna
Membership Officer



Reshma Dangol
Past-Chair



Naresh Agarwal
Chapter Advisor



Md. Anwarul Islam
Chapter Advisor



Bhakti Gala
Chapter Advisor

Turning the Mic Around: A Candid Conversation with Shalini Urs

This interview holds a special place as it flips the script—turning the spotlight on Shalini Urs! As the founder of India's first iSchool and the powerhouse behind InfoFire, the fireside chat podcast series from Information Matters, Dr. Urs has spent decades shaping the future of the discipline. Usually, she's the one asking the questions, guiding experts from around the world through thought-provoking conversations. But this time, the tables are turned!

Syamili C, Newsletter Officer for the ASIS&T South Asia Chapter, is in conversation with Shalini Urs. From career-defining moments to the lessons she would share with her younger self, this interview captures the wisdom of someone who has not only witnessed the transformation of the field but actively driven it forward.

So, here it is 10 questions, 10 answers—a candid, insightful, and inspiring chat with Shalini Urs. Let's get into it!



Q1 You've been an information science researcher for over four decades and have witnessed its evolution, particularly in South Asia. How do you view the growth and transformation of the field in this region? What changes in research and practice excite you most?

Throughout my career, I have witnessed and actively contributed to the remarkable evolution of Information Science (IS). Initially, the field was rooted in book-centric identities and processes, reflecting an era when libraries primarily managed physical texts. Over time, the focus shifted to an information-centric approach, emphasizing knowledge organization and retrieval. Today, we are in a data-centric paradigm, leveraging vast amounts of data to extract meaningful insights.

Although formally emerged as a discipline in the 1970s and 1980s, its origins trace back to Britain in the 1950s, with Farradane credited for coining the term. In a recent article published in the *Journal of Information and Knowledge* (2023), I explored its historical roots and evolution.

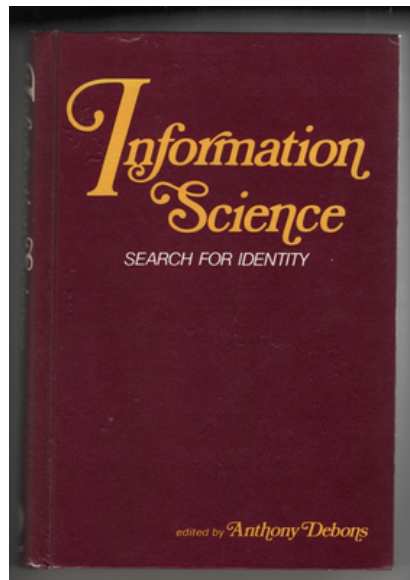
My understanding of the field has been shaped by the works of Nicholas Belkin, whom I recently interviewed for an *InfoFire* episode, and Anthony Debons, whose book *Information Science: Search for Identity* (1974) profoundly influenced me. This influence deepened further when I attended Debons' Foundations of Information Science course at the International Graduate Summer School, College of Librarianship, Aberystwyth, Wales, in 1981. I had the privilege of meeting Debons again at the first iConference in 2005 at Penn State University, coinciding with the iSchool movement.

My doctoral research on Relevance in Information Communication provided me with a comprehensive perspective on the field's transformation from the 1970s to the present. As a Library and Information Science student in 1974, I vividly recall Professor Raghavan enthusiastically informing our class that MEDLARS was now available online, introducing us to the concept of online searching an astonishing revelation in a pre-internet era. And in 1979, I undertook a two-month on-the-job training in Israel, specializing in online searching.

Reflecting on this journey, from a time when accessing information required specialized tools to today's reality where AI-driven search engines provide instant knowledge, highlights the extraordinary advancements in Information Science. From Gutenberg's printing press to Google's dominance and the rise of Generative AI, each shift has redefined the way we interact with information.

South Asia has played a crucial role in shaping the theoretical foundations of Information Science, particularly through contributions to library and information science (LIS) and computer science. Among the most influential figures is S.R. Ranganathan, whose pioneering laws, theories, canons, postulates, and principles laid the foundation for the field's theoretical framework. His work continues to inspire and guide the evolution of Information Science today.

South Asia joined the digital library movement quite early, establishing several pioneering digital libraries that have



significantly expanded access to scholarly and cultural resources. These efforts have not only preserved knowledge but also made it widely accessible, fostering new research opportunities. Open-access initiatives and government-backed digital repositories are making research more accessible, while indigenous knowledge systems are being integrated into digital frameworks, preserving cultural heritage in innovative ways.

On the research front, the region has also seen significant advancements in areas such as user studies, digital libraries, open access movement and Scientometrics studies. I understand India contributed approximately about 5% of the research literature in the information field.

South Asia is no longer just a contributor to the theoretical underpinnings of Information Science but is actively shaping its future through innovation, digital transformation, and policy-driven research.

Q2: You've interviewed some of the most influential minds in our field through the *InfoFire: Fireside Podcast*. Has there been an interview that completely changed your perspective or left a lasting impression on you?

Selecting a single favorite among the extraordinary individuals I've had the privilege to converse with is nearly impossible, as each discussion has been profoundly enlightening. Rather than highlighting one, I would emphasize the immense intellectual and personal enrichment these conversations have provided.

Engaging with luminaries such as **Vint Cerf, the "Father of the Internet"; Narayana Murthy, a key architect of India's IT revolution; Ricardo Baeza-Yates, a leading expert on Large Language Models; Tony Hey, a pioneer in eScience; Mark Maybury, former Executive Director of MITRE Corporation; Jean-Claude Guédon, a champion of Open Access; and most recently, Deshpande,** whose humility is truly inspiring, has been transformative. Each interaction has imparted invaluable lessons—the importance of both depth and breadth of knowledge, the relentless pursuit of excellence, meticulous attention to detail, and unwavering dedication.

These dialogues have not only expanded my understanding but have also reinforced the idea that true pioneers combine intellectual rigor with humility, curiosity, and a commitment to making a lasting impact.

Q3: What inspired the creation of the “InfoFire” forum, and how do you believe platforms like *InfoFire* and *Information Matters* shape the way we learn, connect, and evolve as a society?

Information Matters (IM) is a digital-only translational forum launched by ASIS&T three years ago. It serves as a communication platform that bridges the field of information science with the broader public, extending discussions beyond the scholarly community to address relevant issues in the information landscape and its wider impact.

In 2021, I was invited by the Editor-in-Chief of *Information Matters*, Chirag Shah, to join the editorial board as an Associate Editor. I conceived the idea of a fireside chat series because I have always believed that formal academic publications often fail to capture the personal touch of scientists and scholars. My vision was to interweave personal and professional journeys with the evolution of a specific topic or domain, creating a hybrid academic-interview format that blends structured discourse with the spontaneity of conversation.



This genre goes beyond conventional academic publications by bridging biography and scholarship. It highlights not only research contributions but also the life experiences, inspirations, and intellectual trajectories that shape a scholar’s work. Unlike formal research papers that focus solely on findings, these conversations reveal the human element—the struggles, breakthroughs, and defining moments behind knowledge creation. I also aimed to create a new multimedia academic narrative—one that combines the depth of a formal academic piece with the engaging, free-flowing nature of an interview. By structuring discussions around a central theme or research area, yet allowing for organic storytelling, this format captures the evolution of ideas and fields over time. It documents not just what was discovered, but how those discoveries unfolded, tracing intellectual progress within personal experiences and historical shifts. Biographies have always inspired me, as I believe that it is not just

principles but people who drive progress in any field, no matter how big or small their contributions. This belief led to the creation and evolution of the *InfoFire* podcast series over the past few years. Aligned with the mission of *Information Matters*, the *InfoFire* series broadens the reach of ideas and ideologies within the field of Information Science, fostering greater public appreciation and understanding of its significance. At the end of the day, it’s all about information and it matters.

Q4: The ASIS&T South Asia Chapter is growing fast. What role do you think platforms like *InfoFire* and *Fireside Podcast* play in shaping scholarly and professional communities in the region?

Information Matters (IM) and *InfoFire (IF)* offer a unique approach to professional communication. They combine

the rigor of research with a flexibility that traditional scientific journals lack. IM serves as an ideal platform for young professionals testing their abilities in the realm of professional communication—an excellent starting point for their journeys. For seasoned scholars, it provides a space to share their experiences and perspectives. IM is a perfect avenue for launching publications or reflecting on the issues that truly matter. I've observed many young information science professionals, particularly those in multidisciplinary fields from across the globe, including South Asia, using IM to publish their work. Another key benefit is that for practicing professionals, IM offers a distinctive publishing platform that bypasses the rigid structures of scholarly journals while still reaching a broad audience. It serves as both a launchpad for new ideas and a storyboard for sharing valuable insights and stories. The young South Asian information community will find IM to be an effective and meaningful channel for growth and empowerment, providing them with valuable opportunities to strengthen their professional presence and contribute to the global discourse.

Q5: AI is transforming the way we seek, store, and share information. From your vantage point, how do you see AI reshaping the future of knowledge dissemination?

AI is transforming every aspect of our lives, reshaping entire fields—from healthcare to manufacturing and everyday activities. It has also raised profound existential questions: Are we, as Homo sapiens, still in control, or are we gradually losing our agency? While these concerns are valid, I choose to focus on the positive potential of AI as a powerful tool.

The true strength of AI lies in its ability to process vast amounts of data in nanoseconds, recognize patterns, and generate insights. Additionally, it continuously improves by learning from past mistakes, making it an ever-evolving force. This capability positions AI as a game-changer, offering solutions to complex challenges across disciplines and industries.

At its core, intelligence whether human or artificial is about processing information, recognizing patterns, connecting the right dots, and deriving meaningful insights. Just as the Internet revolutionized information storage and access, AI is poised to transform the landscape once again. In my view, as with past technological revolutions, AI will empower those who learn to leverage it effectively, providing skilled professionals with an even more powerful assistant. Let us embrace AI wisely and responsibly.

“My recommendation to information professionals: Enhance your human intelligence with the aid of AI and excel in whatever you do.”

Q6: Do you think AI will ever become a competent interviewer? Would InfoFire ever consider an AI-driven host?

AI certainly has the potential to become a competent interviewer, particularly in structured environments or when handling well-defined questions. It can process large amounts of data, recognize patterns in responses, and even simulate empathy and active listening based on learned patterns. However, the nuances of human interaction, such as intuition, emotional intelligence, and spontaneity, are still areas where AI falls short compared to human interviewers.

As for *InfoFire*, while AI-driven hosts could be an interesting experiment in certain contexts—particularly for automated content delivery or data-driven discussions—the essence of the platform relies on authentic human connections and insightful conversations. AI might complement the hosting process, but I believe the true value of *InfoFire* lies in the dynamic exchange between humans. Thus, while AI could assist, I would imagine that a human touch will always be central to the forum's experience.

Based on the experience with chatbots deployed by various companies and websites to handle queries, they often fail to respond intelligently even to frequently asked questions. Therefore, I would be cautious about deploying AI for InfoFire, at least in the near future. While I agree that the speed at which ChatGPT can search and reason through a point exceeds human capabilities, its ability to generalize and abstract based on just a few datapoints—without full context—is a limitation



IMAGE CREDIT: AI-GENERATED ILLUSTRATION USING DALL·E

Q7: With AI's growing influence, do you think traditional modes of storytelling and scholarly communication are under threat, or are we simply evolving into a new era?

My answer would be a resounding “yes.” AI's growing influence does not pose a threat to traditional modes of storytelling and scholarly communication but rather signals the evolution of these practices. As with any technological advancement, we adapt, using AI as a tool to enhance our creativity and productivity. Human ingenuity will continue to steer AI in ways that complement and amplify our t

traditional methods, enabling us to create richer stories and more impactful scholarship. For example, when I began writing as a master's student, I relied on tools like dictionaries and thesauruses to improve my work. Over time, I transitioned from using the Oxford English Dictionary to Microsoft Word's spell check, then Google, Grammarly, and now ChatGPT. While the tools evolved, the core process of generating ideas and crafting narratives remained the same. AI is simply another tool to help us improve and expand the way we communicate.

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If I may offer an analogy (though some might consider it far-fetched), it's akin to the invention of photography, when some people thought painters and painting would become obsolete. However, human creativity—imperfections and all—remains what makes art unique and valuable. AI, including generative AI, is undoubtedly a powerful force of creative disruption, particularly in content creation, and it does pose a threat. However, humans have the capability to harness this force, turning it into a powerful tool—our own magical genie—and creating more meaningful and magical content, whether text or multimedia.

Q8: If you had to do a Fireside Podcast episode on your own career journey, what would the title be?

“The Perils and Plight of a Pioneering Mind: A Journey Through Digital Frontiers”

I pioneered several initiatives, that contributed to the advancement of Information Science and digital libraries in India. In 2000, I launched the *Vidyanidhi Digital Library*, kickstarting the digital library movement in the country. I also played a key role in bringing the *ICADL (International Conference on Asian Digital Libraries)* series to India in 2001, fostering international collaboration in digital scholarship.

In 2005, I established *India's first iSchool, the International School of Information Management (ISiM)*, introducing an interdisciplinary approach to information studies. Around the same time, I also initiated a new conference series, the *InfoVision Academia-Industry Knowledge Summit*, to bridge the gap between academic research and industry practices.

Prior to ISiM, in the late 1990s, I was instrumental in launching the Master of Information Management (MIM) program at the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Mysore—one of the earliest programs of its kind in India.

While the journey has been exciting and enriching, it has also been fraught with challenges—the plight and perils of pioneering.

Q9: If you could interview any historical figure (alive or dead) about information science, who would it be and why?

If I could wish for any person to interview for my *InfoFire*, it would unquestionably be S.R. Ranganathan. **I cannot think of anyone else who could rival his impact. Why? Well, where does one even begin? Ranganathan was a genius, a visionary, a philanthropist, and so much more.** He was a relentless workaholic, known for his unwavering commitment and integrity. No adjective or superlative can truly encapsulate the magnitude of a man like Ranganathan. Ranganathan was the epitome of a Karmayogi—someone whose work was his devotion. His intellectual contributions were immense, and he demonstrated that "practice without theory will be mere craft." A mathematician by training, he brought scientific rigor to every facet of library science. He single-handedly elevated librarianship from a practice-based profession to a recognized science. By some estimates, he authored over 1,200 research papers and more than 50 books—53 or 55, depending on the count. He was a scholar extraordinaire.



DR. S. R. RANGANATHAN

Ranganathan embodied the notion that "theory and practice" are two sides of the same coin. His work, whether in research, development, or the application of tools, processes, and techniques, showed how theory and practice are inseparable.

His contributions—spanning the entirety of librarianship—proved that theory and practice are two faces of the same coin.

As Jesse Shera aptly noted, "Ranganathan was a 'One-Man Library Movement.'" His contributions were so vast that they could be described as prodigious, astronomical, or even immeasurable. Sir Maurice Gwyer, former Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, once described Ranganathan as the "prince among librarians."

Ranganathan was a figure who could be likened to Shakespeare's description of Julius Caesar: "He doth bestride the world of libraries and library science like a Colossus." Please don't mistake me—just as Shakespeare continued, we, the proud inheritors of his legacy, merely walk beneath his towering presence and look up in awe.

He was a polymath—there was no corner of Library Science, from classification and cataloguing to library administration, reference services, and documentation, that he did not contribute to, both theoretically and practically.

While many of us specialize in one aspect of a field, Ranganathan was no mere mortal. As K.G.B. Bakewell rightly called him, he was “one of the immortals of library science.” He immortalized every aspect of libraries and library science.

Q10: If you could sit down with your younger self, what advice would you give her? What lessons from your journey would you share with young researchers who are feeling overwhelmed by the fast pace of change in the information landscape today?

I would tell my younger self to embrace change and uncertainty. The information landscape evolves rapidly and staying adaptable and open-minded is key. I would remind her that the journey is as important as the destination—taking risks and making mistakes often lead to the greatest lessons. To young researchers feeling overwhelmed by change, I'd encourage them to focus on building core skills like critical thinking, collaboration, and a passion for learning.

While tools and technologies change, these fundamental skills will always guide them. Resilience is key. Technology evolves quickly, but those who are adaptable and curious will find their place in this ever-changing landscape.

My advice: Don't compete—excel. Focus on finding your passion and capabilities. Have the courage to experiment and be the change. Once you've made a choice, stick to it and be happy. Reflect on your journey—taking time to pause can provide clarity and help you stay true to your passions and goals.

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Remember, every change or crisis also presents an opportunity for innovation and a new paradigm. Be an 'Infomaniac'—read, read more, and keep learning. Build your skillsets to confront uncertainties and navigate change.

References:

- Urs, S. R. (2023). Reimagining and Recalibrating Information Studies: iSchools, the Way Forward. *Journal of Information and Knowledge*, 60(1), 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.17821/srels/2023/v60i1/170903>
- Urs, S. (2023, October 3). Whither information science? Fireside chat with Nick Belkin, a pioneer of the cognitive paradigm. *Information Matters*, Vol. 3, Issue 10.
- <https://informationmatters.org/2023/10/whither-information-science-fireside-chat-with-nick-belkin-a-pioneer-of-the-cognitive-paradigm/>

Syamili C., the interviewer, is the Communication Officer of the ASIS&T South Asia Chapter.





Learning and Networking at the Mortenson Center: An Exciting Experience

MUHAMMAD SAJID MIRZA,
PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN,
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN.

In June 2024, The Mortenson Center for International Library conducted a professional development program on the theme, "Transforming Libraries: New Roles and Impact," provided me an opportunity for deep dive into current issues and trends in the library and information science field. The program was comprised on interactive discussions, talks, lectures, workshops and field visits.

Upon my arrival on May 31, 2024, after a long 27-hour journey from Islamabad to University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, I was greeted warmly by Dr. Peggy Nzomo, Senior Associate, International Library Initiatives Specialist at Mortenson Center. As one of the twelve Mortenson Center Associates for 2024, I had the honor to be a part of 2024 cohort from eleven other countries, including Azerbaijan, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, the Philippines, Qatar, South Korea, Serbia, and the United Arab Emirates.

After taking a day to rest at fellows residence i.e. Newman Hall, we attended a formal welcome dinner at the residence of our host Professor Dr. Barbara J. Ford, the former Director of the Mortenson Center (2003-2014) and past President of both ALA and ACRL. This gathering was an opportunity to interact with the Mortenson Center's team and fellow associates along with delicious food.

The program officially kicked off on June 3 with a continental breakfast, followed by an introductory session led by Dr. Clara Chu, the Director of the Mortenson Center. During this session, each associate shared an overview of their libraries and professional background. We also received training on blogging and using WordPress to document our experiences throughout the program at the blogging website

(<https://associates.web.illinois.edu/>).

In the afternoon, Dr. Peggy led a DiSC Assessment to help us explore our leadership styles, followed by an insightful discussion on "Managing Innovation – No Innovator is an Island." On next day, a workshop on Everything DiSC Workplace was led by Shirley Stellbrink. Developed by Wiley, this assessment and learning tool aims to improve workplace relationships, communication, and teamwork. It categorizes behavioral preferences into four main styles: Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness. The assessment helps individuals understand their style and how it influences their interactions in a professional setting. The session included multiple interactive activities. The day ended with a yoga exercise named Asahi, led by Lisa Renee Kemplain and Carol. These exercises are very light and can be done anywhere, such as the workplace or on an airplane.

On third day, Shirley continued and talked about transformative leadership and change management. She pointed out that endings, neutral phases, and new beginnings are three steps of transition. Ending takes about three weeks from disengagement, neutral takes an average of five weeks, and new beginnings take months. In the afternoon session, Celenia Graves and David Ward talked about AI Literacy/AI & Libraries and discussed how this new technology works to handle images, text, and sounds. The UIUC Library AI Strategy and the use of AI in library research were also discussed. During the break, the Center organized a Library Buddies Lunch to provide an opportunity for learning and networking with library and information professionals working at UIUC libraries and archives.

I met my buddy, Scott W. Schwartz, the Director and Archivist for Music and Fine Arts for the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We shared our professional experiences and discussed topics of mutual interest.



Fourth day of the first week, started with an important topic, "Data Management with AI Tools," facilitated by Laila Hussein and Amina Malik. In the afternoon, Clara talked about change management, stating that there are four ways to know if you are ready for change: change awareness, change agility, change reaction, and change mechanism. She also discussed the 8 steps for leading change by Kotler. These sessions were particularly enlightening as they highlighted the evolving roles of librarians in today's digital age. On this day, the Center hosted lunch along with a talk with Barbara and Amani Ayad (Co-Founder at UNESCO Center for Global Citizenship – UCGC) on effective presentations and professional networking tips at Newman Hall. Field tours of the Grainger Engineering & Information Center (GELIC) & IDEA Lab, Urbana Free Public Library, and the Main Library of UIUC were also organized to expose the associates to resources, services, and facilities in academic and public libraries in the United States.

(will be continued)

Do generation Z students read? Reading habits of the students of Dhaka University



Reading is essential for intellectual and personal growth in shaping critical thinking, better communication, and lifelong learning. However, reading habits are changing in today's digital era, particularly among Generation Z (Gen Z) who were born between 1996-2012. As they grown up in a digital-driven world where digital platforms provide easy access to information, at this point how Gen Z engages with reading is crucial for policymakers and libraries. In Bangladesh, we have seen very little research exists on the reading habits of Gen Z students.

There are several challenges affect reading habits in Bangladesh such as limited access to books, financial constraints etc. So, this study aimed to examine the reading preferences, challenges, and motivations of Generation Z students, providing insights into how libraries and institutions can foster a stronger reading culture.

This research employed a quantitative approach, distributing 500 questionnaires to Dhaka University students, with a 70% response rate. The study examined reading preferences, self- assessment as readers, and challenges faced while reading. Results indicated that many students still prefer printed books, and fiction is the most popular genre, and most students prefer reading at home. However, time constraints and academic workload limit their ability to read for leisure.

The study also found gender differences in reading engagement, with female students showing higher reading participation than males.

The findings have significant implications for policy makers, libraries and educational institutions. Since fiction is a favorite genre, libraries should expand their fiction collections habits.

Read the full Paper:

Islam, M.A. and Muna, J.I. (2024), "Do generation Z students read? Reading habits of the students of Dhaka University", *Library Management*, Vol. 45 No. 8/9, pp. 597-612.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/LM>

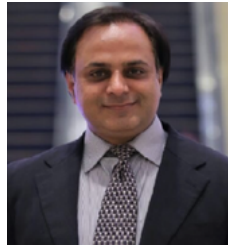
while maintaining academic resources. Digital platforms, including e-books and audiobooks, should be integrated into library services to meet the needs of digital readers.

To promote active reading, universities and libraries should organize book clubs, reading challenges, and literary discussions. Mobile-friendly reading initiatives, such as digital book

recommendations and online reading communities, can engage students who primarily use smartphones for reading. Additionally, integrating diverse reading materials into academic curricula can encourage students to read beyond textbooks.

This study highlights the importance of developing a reading culture in Bangladesh, particularly among Gen Z students. By addressing reading challenges and expanding access to diverse reading materials, libraries and educational institutions can foster lifelong reading.

My Journey with South ASIS&T Asian Chapter as Newsletter Editor



MUHAMMAD TARIQ

Past Newsletter Editor
South Asia Chapter
Chair – SIG-EduLearn

Serving as the Newsletter Officer was a highly enriching experience, allowing me to engage with a dynamic network of professionals and researchers across the region. The role not only strengthened my editorial and communication skills but also provided a platform for continuous learning and knowledge exchange. Collaborating with esteemed colleagues and curating valuable content for the community was both fulfilling and inspiring.

While the experience was immensely rewarding, it also came with its challenges. One of the key issues we faced was the unavailability of relevant content at times, which required proactive outreach to contributors and careful planning to maintain the newsletter's quality and consistency. Additionally, there were occasional technical difficulties, such as uploading content to the web platform,

which sometimes delayed publication. Overcoming these challenges required effective coordination, adaptability, and the collective effort of the ASIS&T South Asia Chapter team. Despite these hurdles, the role provided excellent networking opportunities, fostering meaningful collaborations and professional growth. The insights gained from interacting with experts in the field and staying updated on emerging trends in information science were invaluable.

Moving forward, I believe streamlining content collection, enhancing the web publication process, and encouraging wider participation from chapter members will further strengthen the newsletter's impact. I look forward to supporting the chapter's continued success and contributing in any way I can.

Stepping Across Borders: My Journey as a New ASIS&T Member

ANNA POORANI V.,
RESEARCH ASSISTANT,
DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION
SCIENCE,
PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY.



The year had just begun, and the day seemed like any other. As I sifted through my emails, one subject line caught my eye: "Welcome to ASIS&T – Membership Confirmation." A surge of excitement washed over me as I realized This was the beginning of a new chapter in my professional journey, one that promised growth, learning, and invaluable connections.

As a Researcher in Library and Information Science. For a while, I've been looking for a professional home where I can connect with like-minded individuals, expand my knowledge, and contribute to the field. But I hesitated. I wasn't sure if it would really be worth the high investment. What finally pushed me to join was a colleague's recommendation on ASIS&T, Mr. Subaveerapandiyan, who spoke highly of the ASIS&T's value and impact. He emphasized ASIS&T's networking opportunities to the professional development resources and encouraged me to explore its Mentorships, Scholarships, and the fee waiver program that extends to early professionals hailing from developing nations. I came to the conclusion that the potential benefits far outweighed any concerns I had.

From the outset, I was impressed by the ease of the application process, the informative website, immediately gave me a sense of direction and purpose as I navigated through its sections and the welcoming atmosphere from a diverse network of scholars and practitioners exuded a sense of openness and support, While the South Asia Chapter particularly offered a regional perspective, fostering discussions on local issues and opportunities pertinent to the South Asian context while linking us to global trends. It was clear that ASIS&T provided the ideal platform.

The sense of community, the wealth of resources, and the opportunities for growth have exceeded my expectations. My journey with ASIS&T has just begun, and I am eager to explore further possibilities within ASIS&T, where knowledge sharing and professional development go hand in hand. I look forward to learning, growing, and making meaningful contributions alongside my colleagues in this ever-evolving field of information science. I'm excited for what the future holds and await a long and fruitful association with you all!

Webinar on 'AI and Health Information Literacy'

The Institute for Information Literacy at Purdue (IILP) 2024 Grant Awardees from South Asia is going to host a webinar on the selected project 'AI and Health Information Literacy: A study exploring the perceived usefulness, and readiness among women in South Asia'. Members of the South Asia Chapter from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, and Pakistan have received Purdue Institute of Information Literacy (IIL) research grants of \$4,000.

Open Science and How Creative Commons Licenses Can Make Your Research More Accessible

Making your research outputs open has many advantages including increasing their reach. Yet, it may seem that working openly incurs a cost that many can't bear. In this talk, Dr. Monica Granados from Creative Commons will give an overview of copyright, how Creative Commons licenses to share research outputs and how someone can make work open absolutely free of charge.



Funding: Institute of Information Literacy at Purdue, Purdue University

International Webinar 'AI and Health Information Literacy'

Project: AI and Health Information Literacy: A study exploring the perceived usefulness, and readiness among women in South Asia.

- ✓ 25th of February 2025 (Tuesday)
- ✓ On Zoom
- ✓ Time (GMT+6)
- ✓ 8 PM (Bangladesh)
- ✓ 7:30 PM (India)
- ✓ 7:00 PM (Pakistan)
- ✓ 7:00 PM (Maldives)

Summary | **Webinar Speaker**

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques is rapidly changing the processing of and access to health information. Opportunities include faster and more user-friendly access to information, summarization, translation and processing of data and information for diverse purposes and user groups including clinicians and patients. AI shows also considerable promise, for example, in providing support for decision-making in diagnostics and healthcare. There are, however, multiple obstacles and open questions on the way to realizing the envisioned opportunities. A key question understands how different AI techniques work in relation to health information and data, essentially developing an adequate level of literacy in the nexus of the two. Instead of merely developing a critical understanding of the outputs generated by diverse fast evolving AI algorithms, the major question is to understand what AI does to health information, informing and setting informed about health. While the public debate on healthcare AI use might give an impression that the major issues relate to privacy and limited technical reliability of AI-based outputs, there are more fundamental systemic and practical questions relating to who should be health information literate and how, how to measure and describe health information literacy, how to trust and whom, and who should have the responsibility. The webinar draws from a long-line of information behavior and literacy research in the nexus of health information and digital technologies, including work on AI and process documentation to make remarks on the implications of the use of AI techniques on health information practices and health information literacy. The presentation suggests that one of the most critical questions might be how and where to resist the 'complexness' of AI, how to keep mastering health information as deeply complex and difficult issue that is navigable only with considerable effort, and how to integrate AI in facilitating relevant aspects of that still complex and demanding exercise.



Isto Huvila
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Isto Huvila holds the chair in information studies at the Department of ALM (Archival Studies, Library and Information Studies and Museums and Cultural Heritage Studies) at Uppsala University in Sweden and is docent (adjunct professor) in information management at Information Studies, Abo Akademi University in Turku, Finland. His primary areas of research include information and knowledge management, information work, knowledge organization, documentation, research data, and social and participatory information practices. He has a more than decade long experience of working conducting research on patient use of digital health records, health information behavior and digital technologies.



Thursday, March 6, 2025
(10:00 AM - 11:00 AM)
(EST)



Presenter

Dr. Monica Granados is the Director of Open Science where she leads CC's Open Science Portfolio working with researchers, librarians, consortia, policy makers, and other stakeholders in scholarly communication to equip them with education and training about our licences so that they can implement open science practices and increase access to knowledge within their communities.

Register Here:

<https://www.asist.org/meetings-events/webinars/creativecommonslicense030625/>



Event News

ASIS&T SA & ISLM,
University of Dhaka,
Bangladesh



Anwarul Islam
Chapter Advisor
University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

National Library Day Observed in Bangladesh

On February 5th, the Department of Information Science and Library Management (ISLM) at the University of Dhaka observed National Library Day 2025. The celebration began with a rally at 10:00 AM, inaugurated by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) of the University of Dhaka, Professor Dr. Mamun Ahmed. The event was attended by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Professor Dr. Mohammad Siddiqur Rahman Khan, the Chairman of the ISLM Department, faculty members, and students. The rally, showcasing various themes, slogans, and festoons, passed through different parts of the university campus. Following the rally, a seminar was organized, with Pro-Vice Chancellor (Administration) Professor Dr. Sayema Haque Bidisha, joining as the chief guest and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts as the special guest.

The panel discussion featured Professor Dr. M. Nasiruddin Munshi and Mr. Kazi Abdul Majed, Vice President of the Library Association of Bangladesh, who shared their views on strengthening libraries. Dr. Md. Anwarul Islam, Professor, ISLM Department, and Advisor to ASIS&T South Asia Chapter, delivered the keynote paper titled “*Enriching Libraries, Enriching Minds: A National Commitment.*” He emphasized transforming libraries into community hubs, promoting reading habits, and designing services based on community needs. The seminar was convened by Professor Dr. Md. Shiful Islam, presided over by Professor Dr. Roknuzzaman, and anchored by Associate Professor Mashiat Tabassum.

The seminar was organized in collaboration with the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) South Asia Chapter. The chapter advisor and members engaged informally with attendees, providing insights into ASIS&T and its initiatives. A PVC banner showcased various ASIS&T activities and highlighted the benefits of membership. As a token of appreciation, souvenirs were presented to faculty members. Additionally, the ASIS&T logo was prominently featured on colorful t-shirts worn by all participants during National Library Day.





ASIS&T South Asia Members Shine at the 2024 Emerald South Asia LIS Research Fund Awards

THE ASIS&T SOUTH ASIA CHAPTER PROUDLY CELEBRATES THE REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF ITS MEMBERS WHO MADE A MARK AT THE 2024 EMERALD SOUTH ASIA LIS RESEARCH FUND AWARDS.

Research Grant Awarded Project:

Assessing the Impact of CATMELK: A Custom GPT-Based Cataloging Tool on Efficiency, Accuracy, and Resource Utilization in Sri Lankan Libraries



R.C.G. Gamage,

National Institute of Library and Information
Sciences,
University of Colombo,
Sri Lanka



Priyanwada Wanigasooriya,

Department of Library and Information
Science, University of Kelaniya,
Sri Lanka

🏆 Honourable Mention:

From Margin to Mainstream: The Role of Digital Inclusion in Mitigating Social Exclusion Among Youth in Marginalized Communities in Sri Lanka



Sakeena Alikhan,

Senior Assistant Librarian,
Main Library, University of Colombo,
Sri Lanka



M.M. Alikhan, Senior Lecturer,

Department of Geography, University
of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka



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