# Researching the Experiences of Internationally Educated LIS Professionals in the North American Job Market

## Implications for Education Quality Assessment

© Keren Dali, Ph.D. School of Library & Information Studies, University of Alberta

# Q1. To What End?

# International Guidelines: To What End?

- Enabling international collaboration
  - Leveling the playing field among different countries in certain areas (e.g., technology; information literacy)

- *Determining the comparability and transferability of international LIS education
  - Developing a system for the recognition of international LIS credentials to help immigrant LIS professionals re-integrate into the labor market of the host country
  - Shifting from "quality assessment" to "increasing comparability and transferability" of education

# Q2. How?

- Dali, Keren and Juris Dilevko. "Smoothing the Transition: Retraining Centers in Canada for Immigrant Librarians from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union." *Slavic and East European Information Resources (SEEIR)* 8, no. 1 (2007): 77-102.

- Dali, Keren and Juris Dilevko. "The Evaluation of International Credentials and the Hiring of Internationally Trained Librarians in Canadian Academic and Public Libraries." *International Information and Library Review (II&LR)* 41, no. 3 (2009): 146-62.

- Slides 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, & 18 are based on the above articles

# The Survey of Canadian Library Managers

- Gain insight into how Canadian academic and public libraries deal with two interlinked issues:
  - recognizing international LIS credentials and
  - hiring internationally educated librarians

- 41 academic & public libraries in Canada invited to participate
  - 18 responses (43.9% response rate)

# Table 3. Canadian Library Managers' Evaluation of the Degree of Fit between LIS graduate-level Education Offered in Selected Countries and LIS Standards (Q14, N=18)

Table 3 Canadian library managers' evaluation of the degree of fit between LIS graduate-level education offered in selected countries and ALA standards (Q14, Appendix A; N = 18).

| Country | Very close to ALA standards (%) | Moderately close to ALA standards (%) | Very much below ALA standards (%) | Cannot judge (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| China, Taiwan | — | 2 (11.1%) | 1 (5.6%) | 15 (83.3%) |
| India | 1 (5.6%) | — | 3 (16.7%) | 14 (77.8%) |
| Pakistan | — | — | 2 (11.1%) | 16 (88.9%) |
| France | 2 (11.1%) | 1 (5.6%) | — | 15 (83.3%) |
| Israel | 3 (16.7%) | — | — | 15 (83.3%) |
| Ukraine | — | 1 (5.6%) | 1 (5.6%) | 16 (88.9%) |
| Hong Kong (Hong Kong SAR) | 1 (5.6%) | 2 (11.1%) | — | 15 (83.3%) |
| United Kingdom | 11 (61.1%) | — | — | 7 (38.9%) |
| Romania | — | — | 1 (5.6%) | 17 (94.4%) |
| Russia | — | 1 (5.6%) | 1 (5.6%) | 16 (88.9%) |
| Philippines | — | — | — | 18 (100%) |
| Iran | — | 1 (5.6%) | 1 (5.6%) | 16 (88.9%) |

Answers such as "no knowledge" or "no answer" were included in the category of "Cannot judge".
Some percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding.

# What can be learned?

There is a need for a comprehensive, easily updatable, and current database about LIS education and credentials around the world

## Table 4. Canadian Library Managers' Evaluation of the Competencies of Internationally Trained Librarians (Q16, N=16)

| Competency description | Rating level 1 and 2 = "very few / few gaps" = "easy to bridge" | Rating level 3 = "some gaps" = "possible to bridge" | Rating levels 4 and 5 = "numerous gaps" = "difficult to bridge" |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. Philosophical foundation of the LIS profession (values, attitudes, etc.) | **10 (62.5%)** | 5 (31.3%)` | 1 (6.3%) |
| II. Subject-specific knowledge (disciplinary) | **12 (75%)** | 4 (25%) | |
| III. General knowledge (e.g., world history, literature) | **10 (62.5%)** | 6(37.5%) | — |
| IV. Library-specific skills (e.g., searching, reference interviewing) | **8 (50%)** | **6 (37.5%)** | 2 (12.5%) |
| V. General skills (analytical, critical thinking, creativity) | **12 (75%)** | 3 (18.8%) | 1 (6.3%) |

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|---|---|---|---|
| VI. LIS-specific knowledge (e.g., knowledge of Canadian library system) | 4 (25%) | 8 (50%) | 4 (25%) |
| VII. Understanding Canadian library culture | 2 (12.5%) | 6 (37.5%) | 8 (50%) |
| VIII. Official language mastery | 4 (25%) | 7 (43.8%) | 5 (31.3%) |
| IX. Canada-specific knowledge (e.g., Canadian history, culture) | 1 (6.3%) | 6 (37.5%) | 9 (56.3%) |
| Total | 63 (43.8%) | 51 (35.4%) | 30 (20.8%) |

# What can be learned?

Major areas of education and practice in which the comparability and transferability of education is expected to be low and will require 'bridging'

# Curriculum Building Blocks

1. Missions, values, codes of ethics, professional attitudes
2. Presence or absence of formal accreditation processes and the nature of these processes
3. General education/knowledge (history, social sciences, literature)
4. World languages and communication skills
5. Subject-specific knowledge (e.g., psychology, biology, engineering, art history)
6. Technology skills
7. LIS-specific knowledge (granular subdivision by areas of knowledge and practice required)
8. Country-specific contextual knowledge (in the case of practicing outside of the country wherein education has been acquired)

# Design and Approaches

- **Regional** approach
  - Focusing on a large group of professionals from a specific region that has similar systems of higher education (e.g., Russia; China)

- **Personalized** approach
  - Incorporating individual study plans into bridging education

# Delivery and Funding

- **Modes of delivery**
  - In-person vs. online; full-time vs. part-time; one geographic location vs. multiple locations

- **Funding**
  - Ideally – by government; no tuition fees OR low tuition + options for financial aid
  - Example: "Bridging Project for Internationally Educated Teachers", Faculty of Education, U of Alberta, Canada
    - "Tuition and fees (up to a pre-determined maximum amount) for the required Bridging Project and teacher certification courses will be covered through a grant to the Faculty of Education from the government of Alberta (Alberta Education). See Appendix B for potential sources of additional funding for individuals."

# What can be learned?

- Modes of delivery
- Sources of funding
- Areas to focus on
- Gaps and strengths

# Partners

1. IFLA
2. National & Provincial/State Associations
3. LIS departments
4. Independent Credentials Evaluation Organizations (e.g., World Education Services)
5. Information Services The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC)

# Thank you.

## Questions?