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## **I&LS education in Saudi Arabia and its future prospects: An analytical descriptive study.**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper aims at presenting an overview of ***I&LS education in the Saudi Arabia***. It should also provide a description of its current situation as well as exploring its future, especially while many of LIS Academic departments have changed their names from LIBRARY AND INFORMATION to ***information science, information studies or Information Management***. In fact, many others are in the same process. This paper will also explore opinions of leaders of those Depts., regarding where they are heading when changing their affiliations. Some have moved from colleges of Arts or Social Sciences to Computer & Information colleges, while some think to move to Administration Colleges. Third dimension is going to check up on the subjects that those Departments will concentrate on. Some of them have chosen to concentrate on Knowledge management, or information management. Some think that digital archiving is needed highly in work market. Coordination between Departments is highly needed so that they don't end up as a copy of each other. Paper at hand shall study situation using descriptive method with many tools in order to answer research queries. Study concludes with exploring opinions of faculty members of those I&LS Depts. On the degree that those Departments are accomplishing to help Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision.

Study found that Information & Library Sciences Academic Departments in Saudi Arabia support Country's 2030 Vision by providing country with bachelor, master and Ph.D. graduates in a very important specialty. Study also found that traditional stereotypes of "library" field is considered one of the most challenges that face these Depts., which require them to change their names, develop their plans and enhance their image within academic arena and in country as a whole. Students joining departments lack English and in IT skills which make tasks more difficult to enhance quality of products. University respect to these Depts. is considered another challenge that these Depts. have to face, as well as scarcity of jobs for graduates. In regards to coordination responsibility between

departments, participants in study think that Association for Library & Information as well as Under Secretary of Education Ministry are proposed. Study found that changes of names are encouraged by respondents.

Study recommends that a national strategy for these Depts. is needed so that overlapping get minimized when reshaping of these Depts. is undertaken. Coordination between these Depts. is recommended also to cover all needed areas for the Nation, and to avoid being a copy of each other. A study of jobs market is recommended so that education plans take this into consideration. LIS Depts. are encouraged to join IFLA, AFLI, SLA/AGC and iSchools.

**Key Words:** I&LS education, Higher education in Saudi Arabia; Saudi Arabian 2030 vision.