Dietary management of finger millet

Millets in general are a good source of nutrients, including fibre and have been a part of the Indian diet in several states. Thanks to green revolution, millet production and consumption have gone down drastically. Therefore, it is necessary to increase millet production and its use as in traditional diets which would be culturally accepted. In this context, the objective of the paper published in *Current Science*[1] is commendable. However, the communication has several flaws. In the first instance, the sample size seems to be very small (n = 13). For intervention studies, such as this, the sample size should be much larger. No information is provided on the patient characters such as body weight, age, sex, BMI, waist circumference, duration of the disease, and drug consumption and their schedule. Random blood glucose is not the correct tool for such studies. Fasting and postprandial blood glucose estimation should have been done. Malted cereals elicit higher glycemic response due to the presence of easily digestible oligosaccharides formed during malting process[2]. The study design is neither clear nor the statistics used relevant. The tables are confusing. Paired t test should have been used to compare the mean difference before and after the intervention. The authors themselves have stated that the results are not significant.

When food intervention studies are conducted, adequate number of subjects/patients with good design and appropriate statistical power need to be considered in order to control several confounding factors before arriving at valid conclusions since such studies can have far-reaching consequences.

1. Pradhan, A., Nag, S. K. and Patil, S. K., *Curr. Sci.*, 2010, **98**(6), 763–765.
2. Sumathi, A., Vishwanatha, S., Malleshi, N. G. and Venkat Rao, S., *Int. J. Food Sci. Nutr.*, 1997, **48**, 103–107.

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Metamorphosis of libraries and librarianship induced by technology and private publishers

The challenges posed by technology and private publishers to the traditional library system and librarianship are among the issues discussed in the editorial[1]. These issues acquire special significance in the wake of ongoing forces of 'LPGs', i.e. liberalization, privatization and globalization. These three forces have a tendency to reinforce one another. Liberalization facilitates trans-national economic transactions. Privatization has severely limited the leverage of public bodies including governments. Information and communication technology has globalized almost the entire world. Hence, it is no wonder that traditional library system and librarianship have increasingly come under the inexorable pressure from private publishers with technology muscle.

Private publishers are slowly trying to monopolize access to information. In the meanwhile, open sources are also counteracting the monopolizing tendencies of private publishers. Given the circumstances, degradation of traditional library system and librarianship is hard to stop. Library and information science (LIS) professionals will have to shift their focus from librarianship to informetrics and scientometrics. Among the newly emerging duties of LIS professionals would be marketing of information, knowledge management, knowledge evaluation, content analysis, digitization of information, etc.

With the advent of technology, the younger generation is consuming information in a different way. Libraries and bookshops are no longer indispensable. They spend more time on Google, My Space, Facebook, author websites, Yahoo and MSN. An odd 320 million households have acquired broadband access by 2007 worldwide. Digital publishing (e-books, e-papers, online research papers, etc.) is evolving into a big business. New gizmos (iPods, PDAs, e-readers, etc.) facilitating 'anywhere reading' have received considerable impetus. Sony Reader, Sony's pint-sized e-book reader broke open the e-book market. The Chinese government has decided to supply 165 million students with e-reader to avoid all the physical costs associated with textbooks.

Digitization of book publishing through content online helps the publisher to reach out to a wider clientele across geographies. The advantages of this are many. People have options of reading/buying books. Globally, digital publishing is a US$ 430 billion industry. In the West, digitization has witnessed a revolutionary growth. Microsoft and the British Library announced a partnership to digitize 25 million pages from 100,000 out-of-copyright books in the British Library's collection in 2006. India has been a major beneficiary of digitization in terms of outsourcing.

The Indian publishing industry grew by over 15% during the fiscal year 2009–10. Of the total titles produced in India, 45% are in English, making India the third largest producer of books in the language after US and Britain. Bookstore discovery facilitates virtual marketing and gives publishers full control over how much of their content is made available to browse through online. It inte-

grates seamlessly into the clients' existing websites and allows them to retain their current shipping cart and payment process. Such technology helps maximize print and non-print sales.

Traditional libraries and librarianship are losing their significance for several reasons. These include: (i) libraries have become white elephants, (ii) budgetary constraints, (iii) too much manpower required for maintaining print resources, (iv) technology has been developed enough to convert traditional libraries into digital libraries, (v) Easier accessibility, rendering librarians redundant, (vi) space constraints, and (vii) preservation and maintaining printed volumes becoming difficult.

The traditional libraries may henceforth be maintained more as archival sources than as general-purpose libraries. Science community has to be more active so that constraints posed by private publishers can be significantly overcome. Review mechanism of journals from public institutions need to be adequately strengthened for the sake of public libraries and academic institutions insulating them from the challenges posed by private publishers.

It is curious that Balaram does not hesitate to refer to the impact of journals even while being highly critical of scientometrics. And another odd thing is that he singles out librarians in India for 'dabbling in the arena of scientometrics', overlooking their substantial contributions to scientometric studies published in journals of standing, like *Scientometrics* (Springer).

1. Balaram, P., *Curr. Sci.*, 2010, **98**, 879–880.

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Resettlement of weaver birds (*Ploceus philippinus*) in Ousteri Lake

Puducherry is situated on the Coromandal Coast between 11°52′N, 79°45′E and 11°59′N, 79°52′E. Ousteri Lake is located towards north at a distance of 10 km from Puducherry town (Puducherry–Villupuram road). The wetland covers an area of about 390 ha (lies in both Tamil Nadu and Puducherry) with a wide range of aquatic species and is mainly a bird sanctuary. The vegetation ranges from small herbs to trees, which supports migratory avifauna as well as native birds during summer and winter. The study area experiences mean annual temperature of 30.0°C and mean annual rainfall of about 1311–1172 mm. The mean number of annual rainy days is 55 and the mean monthly temperature ranges from 21.3°C to 30.2°C. The climate is tropical dissymmetric with the bulk of the rainfall during northeast monsoon (October–December).

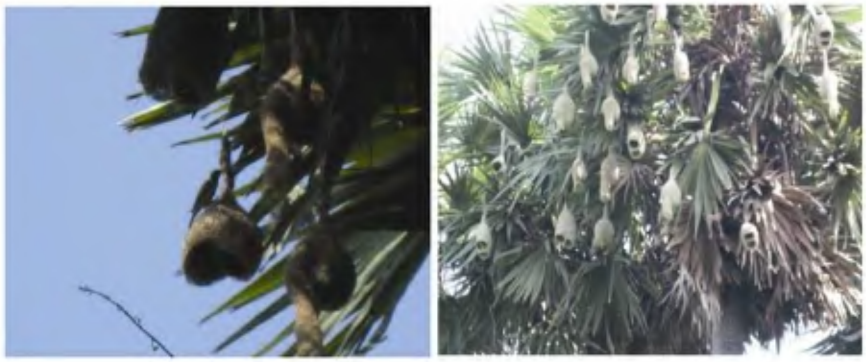

Figure 1. Weaver birds resettled in some palm trees in Ousteri Lake riparian.

The Government of Puducherry is taking various steps to protect the lake biodiversity, especially the birds. During 2009–10, the government stopped issuing leases to extract toddy from palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) trees in the lake riparian area. During the leasing period, the weaver birds had completely disappeared from the lake riparian. The lake riparian is abundant with palm trees growing along with other natural vegetation. Now, that toddy extraction has been stopped, the weaver birds (*Ploceus philippinus*) have begun to resettle in their original habitat on the palm (*B. flabellifer*) trees. This action is bound to enrich the native biodiversity status of the lake.

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