A Portrait of a Mentor–Librarian K. S. Deshpande (1924-2018)

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Krishna Deshpande, a mentor-librarian,passed away in Dharwad on 4th August 2018. A glorious period in the history of Library and Information Science (LIS) profession has come to an end. The LIS profession is mourning the demise of one of the leading exponents of the field. He was actively involved in Library Profession, both nationally as well as internationally. He was editor of two reputed journals of Library Science-*Timeless Fellowship* and *Journal of Library Development*. He has authored more than 15 Books/Monographs, over 100 scholarly papers, several reviews and notes. He visited USA and other countries and lectured at the Universities of those countries.

He had the privilege of drafting the architectural plan and organizing the University of Mysore Library, Bangalore University Library, Karnataka University Library, Dharwad, Gulbarga University Library and University of Agriculture Sciences Library, Dharwad. He prepared the Library Development Plan of the Goa Public Library and Goa Public Library Act at the invitation of the Government of Goa State. He established the Department of Library Science in Karnatak University. It is rated as one of the best Library Science schools in India. His contribution in the field of LIS will always be remembered.

A tribute to K. S. Deshpande,who was a blend of a great librarian and a teacher par excellence.

My tribute to Prof. Deshpande, who taught me at the Department of LIS, Karnatak University,Dharwad, is also an attempt to understand the thin

interface between the teaching and practicing librarianship. Deshpande's writing and teaching were the result of practical experience as a Librarian. He often used to tell us during occasional conversations that he, as a Librarian, owed much to his profession. He used to tell us that Library is a Laboratory; what he used to practise there, he used to teach in the class room.

What interests me in Prof. Deshpande is his extraordinary career as a mentor-librarian.He used to refer librarians as “Professor of Books”, “Professor of Professors”. He gave much importance to ethics of librarianship. He was having a wide circle of scholar-teachers flourishing at Dharwad in those days.

The list of these dignitaries included D. R. Bendre (The great poet was addressed as “Bendre Master”),Prof. V. K. Gokak, ShamBha Joshi, Patil Puttappa, Prof.Rghavendra Rao, Prof. M M Kalburgi and other prominent intellectuals of Dharwad. Deshpande's association with *Karnataka VidhyaVardaka Sangha* brought many such contemporary scholars together, and this enriched his public contact.

Prof. K. S. Deshpande was very dry and monotonous when he taught us “Library Organization”, but was quite lively when he used to mix his content with his knowledge of English and Sanskrit Literature. The learner in him never ceased to exist until his last breath. He taught us that to be a teacher is to be a learner forever. His presence has been everything to us.

Sir, you have been a friend, a counsellor, a mentor, a guide and an educator. You have shown us by setting an example of the way to lead our lives as we continue to tread the path shown by you. Your scholarly teaching showed us that to be a teacher is to lead the life of a scholar, for the teacher cannot come into being without the scholar. You have given us your love, affection and care.

Sir, we owe a lot to you.