



**BARRIERS TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE RESEARCH: A STUDY
AMONG RESEARCH SCHOLARS**

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the barriers related to Library and Information Science. A structured questionnaire was designed and directly administered to the LIS Research Scholars who are currently involved in the Research in the Universities/Colleges of Tamil Nadu (India). A total of 124 questionnaires were distributed and 109 respondents have replied. The majority of common barriers faced by the respondents are 'High Expenditure', 'Lack of Statistical Skills', and 'Inadequate of infrastructures' and 'Poor response in data collection'. The study is also recommended that the Universities/Colleges offered the research programmes should consider to reduce the expenditure in terms of fee structures for the research and also the schools/departments which offer the research programme should redesign the syllabus to include the skills required to carry out the research. Further, it is emphasized that the LIS professionals should encourage and support the research scholars by means of providing the required data for the research.

Keywords: Barriers to Research; Library Science; Information Science; Research in LIS; LIS Professionals; Research Scholars; NET/SET.

1 INTRODUCTION

Research refers to the systematic method used to identify area, to determine research problem, to formulate research questions, objectives or hypothesis, to collect data, to analyze data and reach certain conclusions towards the concerned problem. The research in librarianship is introduced in many universities in Tamil Nadu (India). LIS professionals are also largely involved in the research activities. LIS researchers and research students need to be familiar with the strategies and techniques they are likely to encounter, and possibly select, as they go about their research.

The problem is that LIS is a very broad discipline and use a wide variety of strategies and techniques. “Research is not a process that is the responsibility of others; research is a way of knowing, a way of making better practical decisions that is the responsibility of each of us” (SWISHER, 1986). He also noted that librarians can make better decisions about how to achieve library effectiveness if they have knowledge of the research process and, as individuals, they can more effectively consume the professional research literature. It is further pointed out by (BASKER, 1985) that librarians may need assistance in identifying ideas for research, mentoring by an experienced researcher, financial support, time to do research, rewards for completing research in a timely fashion, assistance in matching research projects with personal development, and encouragement to apply the results of the research.

The objective of study was to identify the various research barriers of Library and Information Science.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study was carried out by (GOODALL, 1998) found some of the major barriers for the research that are lack of skills, lack of time, lack of resources ,pressure of other works, the low priority awarded to research activities, lack of confidences and lack of motivation and incentives.

A study found the barriers like lack of time and financial resources for the research and highlighted additional factors such as isolation, greater support from the officials (MCNICOL, 2004).

Anunobi and Emerole (2008) mentioned that the major constraints for the research are time, poor research skills, lack of found, inadequate literature to support to the research.

It is further identified by Powell *et al.* (2002) and Avemariautulu (2005) highlighted that lack of writing skills and identification of research problems are the main barriers to the research.

Sedikadiwa (2005) observed that lack of fund is the part of the research and publications.

Moahi (2008) indicated that lack of time and inadequate research skills are the hindrances of the research.

4 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted among LIS Research Scholars who are presently pursuing M.Phil. and Ph.D. research programmes under fulltime and part-time schemes in various Universities/Colleges in Tamil Nadu (India).

A well-structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data from the respondents. It was divided into two parts namely 'Personal Information' and 'Barriers to Research'.

A total of 124 questionnaires were distributed and 109 research scholars have responded (87.90%).

The National Eligibility Test (NET) or State Eligibility Test (SET) is an essential qualification for appointment of College Librarian/Assistant Librarian in Colleges/Universities in India and those candidates are also largely pursuing research in Library and Information Science. Hence, researchers have also considered them as important respondents and collected the data for the study.

Thus collected data were analyzed by *software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS).

5 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Demographic Information

The study was analyzed to find out the barriers to the LIS research. The data were collected from the Research Scholars of LIS who are presently involved in the research. The demographic information pertaining to the study is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information.

S. No	Description	Nos.	%	Total	
1.	Designation	Librarian	69	63.3%	109 (100%)
		Assistant Librarian	19	17.4%	
		Library Assistant	08	07.3%	
		Research Scholars	13	11.9%	
2.	Gender	Male	78	71.6%	109 (100%)
		Female	31	28.4%	
3.	Research Schemes	Full Time	15	14.6%	109 (100%)
		Part-Time	88	85.4%	
4.	Research Programme	M.Phil.	32	29.4%	109 (100%)
		PhD.	77	70.6%	
5.	UGC Exam	NET/SET	25	22.9%	109 (100%)
		Non-NET/SET	84	77.1%	

It is found from Table 1 that majority of research scholars are working as Librarian 69 (63.3%), followed by Assistant Librarian 19 (17.4%), Library Assistant 8 (7.3%), and Research Scholars 13 (11.9%) in universities and colleges. It is further found that 78 (71.6%) of respondents are male and 31 (28.4%) are female. The majority of research scholars 88 (85.4%) are doing research under part-time scheme whereas only 15 (14.6%) are doing research under full time scheme. It is further observed that 77 (70.6%) of respondents are pursuing PhD and 32 (29.45%) are doing M.Phil. The study is also included NET/SET passed research scholars as respondents and found that majority 84 (77.1%) of respondents are not passed in the NET/SET exams.

5.2 Barriers of LIS Research

The study was analyzed to find out the Barriers of LIS Research. Ten major barriers which are pertaining to the LIS research were identified and ascertained on Likert's five point scale such as 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Undecided', 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' and the same is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Barriers of LIS Research.

S. No	Description	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	Mean	Rank
1.	Lack of Infrastructure Facilities	9 8.3%	39 35.8%	18 16.5%	36 33%	7 6.4%	2.93	4
2.	Lack of Awareness of Resources	12 11%	39 35.8%	14 12.8%	39 35.8%	5 4.6%	2.87	5
3.	Inadequate of Resource	19 17.4%	40 36.7%	14 12.8%	31 28.4%	5 4.6%	2.66	8
4.	Lack of Computer Skills	18 16.5%	48 44.0%	18 16.5%	24 22%	1 .9%	2.46	9
5.	Lack of Statistical Skills	9 8.3%	36 33%	18 16.5%	37 33.9%	9 8.3%	3.00	3
6.	Lack of Report Writing Skills	15 13.8%	42 38.5%	6 5.5%	38 34.9%	8 7.3%	2.83	6
7.	Lack of Support from the Research Guide	29 26.6%	41 37.6%	14 12.8%	20 18.3%	5 4.6%	2.36	10
8.	It involves High Expenditure	8 7.3%	33 30.3%	14 12.8%	45 41.3%	9 8.3%	3.12	2
9.	Poor Response in Data Collection	10 9.2%	30 27.5%	17 15.6%	39 35.8%	13 11.9%	3.13	1
10.	Lack of Communication from the University/College	9 8.3%	52 47.7%	15 13.8%	28 25.7%	5 4.6%	2.70	7

Legend: SD= Strongly Disagree; DA= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A=Agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

The respondents were asked to indicate the barriers to the research. It is revealed from Table 2 that majority of 13 (11.9%, Mean 3.13, Rank 1) of the respondents strongly agreed that "Poor response in Data Collection" is the major problem for the research, followed by "High Expenditure" 9 (8.3%, Mean 3.12, Rank 2), "Lack of Statistical Skills" 9 (8.3%, Mean 3.00, Rank 3), "Lack of Infrastructure facilities" 7 (6.4%, Mean 2.93, Rank 4). It is further strongly agreed that "Lack of Awareness of Resources" 5 (4.6%, Mean 2.87, Rank 5) is another barrier for the research and only less number of research scholars are strongly agreed that

“Inadequate of Resources” 5 (4.6%, Mean 2.66, Rank 6), Lack of Computer Skills 1 (.9%, Mean 2.46, Rank 9) are also their barriers for the research.

5.3 Barriers of LIS Research by Gender

The Research barriers are further ascertained by the gender and the same is given in Table 3.

Table 3: Barriers of LIS Research vs Gender.

S. No	Description	Male n=78					Female n=31				
		SD	DA	UD	A	SA	SD	DA	UD	A	SA
1.	Lack of Infrastructure Facilities	4 5.1%	32 41%	10 12.8%	30 38.5%	2 2.6%	5 16.1%	7 22.6%	8 25.8%	6 19.4%	5 16.1%
2.	Lack of Awareness of Resources	6 7.7%	27 34.6%	14 17.9%	29 37.2%	2 2.6%	6 19.4%	12 38.7%	0 .0%	10 32.3%	3 9.7%
3.	Inadequate of Resource	11 14.1%	27 34.6%	10 12.8%	26 33.3%	4 5.1%	8 25.8%	13 41.9%	4 12.9%	5 16.1%	1 3.2%
4.	Lack of Computer Skills	12 15.4%	31 39.7%	15 19.2%	20 25.6%	0 .0%	6 19.4%	17 54.8%	3 9.7%	4 12.9%	1 3.2%
5.	Lack of Statistical Skills	5 6.4%	27 34.6%	13 16.7%	32 41%	1 1.3%	4 12.9%	9 29.0%	5 16.1%	5 16.1%	8 25.8%
6.	Lack of Report Writing Skills	5 6.4%	33 42.3%	6 7.7%	27 34.6%	7 9%	10 32.3%	9 29.0%	0 .0%	11 35.5%	1 3.2%
7.	Lack of Support from the Research Guide	19 24.4%	29 37.2%	13 16.7%	15 19.2%	2 2.6%	10 32.3%	12 38.7%	1 3.2%	5 16.1%	3 9.7%
8.	It involves High Expenditure	2 2.6%	22 28.2%	12 15.4%	34 43.6%	8 10.3%	6 19.4%	11 35.5%	2 6.5%	11 35.5%	1 3.2%
9.	Poor Response in Data Collection	4 5.1%	18 23.1%	14 17.9%	34 43.6%	8 10.3%	6 19.4%	12 38.7%	3 9.7%	5 16.1%	5 16.1%
10.	Lack of Communication from the University/College	3 3.8%	37 47.4%	13 16.7%	25 32.1%	0 .0%	6 19.4%	15 48.4%	2 6.5%	3 9.7%	5 16.1%

Legend: SD= Strongly Disagree; DA= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

The respondents were asked to indicate the barrier to their research. It is revealed from 3 that majority of male 34 (43.6%) are agreed that “High Expenditure” and “Poor response in collecting data” are the main barriers for the research scholars of LIS profession whereas majority of female respondents 11 (35.5%) are agreed “Lack of Report writing Skills” and “High Expenditure” are the main barriers for their research.

It is also observed that 32 (41%), 30 (38.5%) of male respondents are agreed that “Lack of Statistical Skills”, “Inadequate of Infrastructure facilities” are obstacles for the research respectively and 10 (32.3%) and 6 (19.4%) of female respondents are agreed that “Lack of Infrastructures” and “Lack of Awareness of Resources” are also the barriers for their research respectively.

A good number male respondents 29 (37.2%) and 26 (33.3%) are also agreed that “Lack of Awareness of Resources” and “Inadequate Resources” are their hindrances in the research respectively and 5 (16.1%) of female respondents are agreed that “Inadequate of Resources”, “Lack of Statistical Skills”, and “Lack of support from the Research guide”, “Poor response in data collection” are also obstacles for their research each.

5.4 Barriers of LIS Research by NET/SET and Non-NET/SET Research Scholars

The study is also analyzed find the barriers faced by the research scholars who have passed NET/SET exams and the same is given in Table 4.

Table 4: Barriers of LIS Research vs NET/SET & Non-NET/SET Research Scholars.

S.No	Description	NET/SET Research Scholars n=25					Non-NET/SET Research Scholars n=84				
		SD	DA	UD	A	SA	SD	DA	UD	A	SA
1.	Lack of Infrastructure Facilities	6 24%	11 44%	3 12%	3 12%	2 8%	3 3.6%	28 33.3%	15 17.9%	33 39.3%	5 6.0%
2.	Lack of Awareness of Resources	5 20%	7 28%	1 4%	11 44%	1 4%	7 8.3%	32 38.1%	13 15.5%	28 33.3%	4 4.8%
3.	Inadequate of Resource	8 32%	9 36%	2 8%	6 24%	0 .0%	11 13.1%	31 36.9%	12 14.3%	25 29.8%	5 6%
4.	Lack of Computer Skills	8 32%	8 32%	0 .0%	9 36%	0 .0%	10 11.9%	40 47.6%	18 21.4%	15 17.9%	1 1.2%
5.	Lack of Statistical Skills	4 16%	7 28%	0 .0%	12 48%	2 8%	5 6%	29 34.5%	18 21.4%	25 29.8%	7 8.3%
6.	Lack of Report Writing Skills	7 28%	9 36%	0 .0%	9 36%	0 .0%	8 9.5%	33 39.3%	6 7.1%	29 34.5%	8 9.5%
7.	Lack of Support from the Research Guide	11 44%	9 36%	1 4%	4 16%	0 .0%	18 21.4%	32 38.1%	13 15.5%	16 19%	5 6%
8.	It involves High Expenditure	3 12%	6 24%	4 16%	10 40%	2 8%	5 6%	27 32.1%	10 11.9%	35 41.7%	7 8.3%
9.	Poor response in Data Collection	6 24%	7 28%	2 8%	5 20%	5 20%	4 4.8%	23 27.4%	15 17.9%	34 40.5%	8 9.5%
10.	Lack of Communication from the University/College	6 24%	9 36%	2 8%	6 24%	2 8%	3 3.6%	43 51.2%	13 15.5%	22 26.2%	3 3.6%

Legend: SD= Strongly Disagree; DA= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

The respondents were asked to indicate the barriers to research. It is revealed from Table 4 that the majority of NET/SET passed Research Scholars agreed that “Lack of Statistical Skills” 12 (48%), “Lack of Awareness of Resources” 11 (44%), High Expenditure 10 (40%) are the main barriers for their research whereas majority of Non-NET/SET passed Research Scholars are also agreed that “High Expenditure” 35 (41.7%), “Poor response in data collection” 34 (40.5%), “Lack infrastructures” 33 (39.3%) are the main barriers for the research.

A good number of NET/SET 9 (36%) and Non-NET/SET 25 (29.8%) Research Scholars are agreed that “Lack of Report writing Skills” is one of their barriers in respect of research. It is further agreed by only less number of NET/SET 4 (16%) and Non-NET/ SET 16 (19%) Research Scholars that “Lack of support from the research guide” is another barrier for the research.

5.5 Barriers of LIS Research by Designation

The study is also ascertained the barriers faced by the research scholars who are presently working as Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Library Assistant under part-time scheme and Research Scholars who are doing research under full time scheme and the same is given in Table 5.

Table 5: Barriers of LIS Research vs Designation.

S. No	Description	Librarian n=69					Assistant Librarian n=19					Library Assistant n=8					Research Scholars n=13				
		SD	DA	UD	A	SA	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	SD	DA	UD	A	SA
1.	Lack of Infrastructure Facilities	7 10.1%	27 39.1%	13 18.8 %	17 24.6%	5 7.2%	0 .0%	4 21.1 %	1 5.3%	14 73.7%	0 .0%	0 .0%	4 50%	3 37.5 %	0 .0%	1 12.5 %	2 15.4%	4 30.8 %	1 7.7%	5 38.5 %	1 7.7%
2.	Lack of Awareness of Resources	10 14.5%	25 36.2%	9 13%	23 33.3%	2 2.9%	0 .0%	7 36.8 %	2 10.5%	10 52.6%	0 .0%	0 .0%	2 25%	2 25%	2 25%	2 25%	2 15.4%	5 38.5 %	1 7.7%	4 30.8 %	1 7.7%
3.	Inadequate of Resource	13 18.8%	27 39.1%	8 11.6 %	18 26.1%	3 4.3%	2 10.5%	8 42.1 %	4 21.1%	5 26.3%	0 .0%	2 25.0 %	1 12.5 %	0 .0%	4 50%	1 12.5 %	2 15.4%	4 30.8 %	2 15.4 %	4 30.8 %	1 7.7%
4.	Lack of Computer Skills	13 18.8%	30 43.5%	10 14.5 %	16 23.2%	0 .0%	1 5.3%	8 42.1 %	4 21.1%	6 31.6%	0 .0%	2 25 %	2 25%	3 37.5 %	1 12.5 %	0 .0%	2 15.4%	8 61.5 %	1 7.7%	1 7.7%	1 7.7%
5.	Lack of Statistical Skills	8 11.6%	21 30.4%	10 14.5 %	25 36.2%	5 7.2%	0 .0%	10 52.6 %	4 21.1%	5 26.3%	0 .0%	1 12.5 %	2 25%	2 25%	2 25%	1 12.5 %	0 .0%	3 23.1 %	2 15.4 %	5 38.5 %	3 23.1 %
6.	Lack of Report Writing Skills	12 17.4%	27 39.1%	4 5.8%	23 33.3%	3 4.3%	0 .0%	7 36.8 %	1 5.3%	9 47.4%	2 10.5 %	1 12.5 %	2 25.0 %	1 12.5 %	3 37.5 %	1 12.5 %	2 15.4%	6 46.2 %	0 .0%	3 23.1 %	2 15.4 %
7.	Lack of Support from the Research Guide	22 31.9%	27 39.1%	8 11.6 %	11 15.9%	1 1.4%	2 10.5%	6 31.6 %	1 5.3%	8 42.1%	2 10.5 %	2 25 %	2 25%	3 37.5 %	0 .0%	1 12.5 %	3 23.1%	6 46.2 %	2 15.4 %	1 7.7%	1 7.7%
8.	It involves High Expenditure	5 7.2%	23 33.3%	12 17.4 %	24 34.8%	5 7.2%	0 .0%	8 42.1 %	1 5.3%	8 42.1%	2 10.5 %	1 12.5 %	1 12.5 %	0 .0%	5 62.5 %	1 12.5 %	2 15.4%	1 7.7%	1 7.7%	8 61.5 %	1 7.7%
9.	Poor response in Data Collection	9 13.0%	19 27.5%	9 13.0 %	25 36.2%	7 10.1 %	0 .0%	8 42.1 %	3 15.8%	6 31.6%	2 10.5 %	1 12.5 %	0 .0%	2 25.0 %	4 50%	1 12.5 %	0 .0%	3 23.1 %	3 23.1 %	4 30.8 %	3 23.1 %
10.	Lack of Communication from the University/College	8 11.6%	30 43.5%	10 14.5 %	18 26.1%	3 4.3%	0 .0%	10 52.6 %	1 5.3%	8 42.1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	3 37.5 %	4 50%	0 .0%	1 12.5 %	1 7.7%	9 69.2 %	0 .0%	2 15.4 %	1 7.7%

Note: SD= Strongly Disagree; DA= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

The respondents were asked to indicate the barriers related to their research. It is revealed from Table 5 that the majority of Librarians 25 (36.2%) are agreed that the barriers such as “Lack of Statistical Skills”, “Poor response in data collection” 25 (36.2%), followed “High Expenditure” 24 (34.8%), “Lack of Awareness of Resources” 23 (33.3%), Lack of Report writing Skills “23 (33.3%) whereas majority of Assistant Librarians 14 (73.7%) are agreed that “Inadequate of Infrastructures”, 14 (73.7%), “Lack of Awareness of Resources” 10 (52.6%), “Lack of Report writing Skills” 9 (47.4%) as their barriers for the research.

It is further agreed by the Library Assistants that “High Expenditure” 5 (62.5%), “Inadequate of Resources” 4 (50%), “Poor response in data Collection” 4 (50%) whereas majority of Research Scholars are agreed that “High Expenditure” 8 (61.5%), “Inadequate of Infrastructures” 5 (38.5%), “Lack of Statistical Skills” 5 (38.5%), “Lack of Awareness of Resources” 4 (30.8%), “Poor response in data collection” 4 (30.8%).

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Research Scholars in LIS are facing a number of obstacles in pursuing the research. It is recommended the followings based on the present study:

- Many of the research scholars have indicated some of the major barriers that lack of statistical skills, poor response in the data collection and lack awareness of resources related to the research. In order to overcome these barriers the research guides and Schools/Department of Library and Information Science should redesign the syllabus to upgrade their skills required for the research activities.
- It is indicated by many of the research scholars that poor response in respect of data collection is existing. In order to solve the problem, the LIS professionals should encourage and support the research scholars by providing the necessary data for the research.

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