

MAPPING GENDER DISPARITIES IN INDIAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine publication patterns and gender disparities in Indian LIS research. The primary aim of the study is to ascertain the characteristics of authorship patterns in LIS literature and to analyse the research output of male and female authors. Additional efforts are undertaken to ascertain the correlation between authors' research production and professional engagement. The articles are analysed via the lens of authors' gender, and the impact of gender has been evaluated at both individual and collaborative levels. The study's findings revealed that male authors published the majority of articles (71.26%), while female authors authored only 28.74%. Furthermore, male authors are more productive when they work both independently and together with other male authors. Despite having fewer female writers overall, the average female participation per manuscript is 1.72, which is higher than the male average of 1.44, implying greater collaboration among female authors. There is a significant gender gap in Indian library and information science research, according to the findings of the study.

Keywords: Gender Disparity; Research Productivity; LIS Research; India;

INTRODUCTION

The field of librarianship was thought to be a discipline or career that was primarily controlled by women for a considerable amount of time (Larivière et al., 2013). According to the findings of the study, however, the research scenario implies differently. There have been a number of studies that have revealed that male authors publish more than their female counterparts (Okiy, 2003; Olsgaard and Olsgaard 2000), which suggests that women researchers are falling behind in some way. Researchers, teachers, and the academic community at large all benefit from scholarly articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Academic performance is commonly evaluated by researchers based on their publication histories; these records might have an effect on researchers' salaries and employment status (Youk & Park, 2019; Parabhoi et al., 2022).

Equitable representation is crucial in scholarly communication, just like in other areas. The profession of librarianship has traditionally been dominated by women (80%+), although the representation of female authors has been substantially lower (20-40%) (Olsgaard & Olsgaard, 1980). The disparity in representation between professionals and scholarly scholars has historically harmed equity in library and information science (LIS) (Lund and Shamsi, 2021). The lack of diversity among library and information science (LIS) faculty and staff has long been a black eye for the field's commitment to equity. While there have been some studies looking at gender representation in LIS journals, they have been somewhat small and have only looked at trends within a particular publication over a short time frame. There is a

lack of data on whether or not the number of female authors published in library and information science journals has increased over the past few decades. This would be helpful in motivating current and future editors of these journals, as well as established scholars, to reach out to promising female researchers in the field (Lund and Shamsi, 2021; Vinay and Sampath Kumar, 2022).

While those publishing library literature do not have the same resources as Nature the problems laid out in this article editorial are not different from those found in LIS literature. And unlike STEM fields, women dominate LIS and should be well represented in the published literature of the field. As the academy and publishing entities acknowledge the need for representation within the larger discussion of diversity and who is writing and therefore being represented in the literature, understanding who is writing and publishing is key because the dominant voices build, shape, and control the narrative. While this study examines women and men who are publishing in LIS, there are as result of, being excluded from the profession. Asking and understanding all these questions is essential in further addressing the connections between LIS literature, authorship, and academic librarians (Monroe-Gulick et al., 2024).

Numerous research in India have also addressed gender inequality. The study by Kaw and Ahmad (2013) illustrates the impact of conflict on women in the scientific domain. There are substantial disparities in research productivity based on gender. (Sampath Kumar et al. 2018; Vinay et al., 2019; Kumara & Kumar, 2025) examine the gender differences in research production within the field of Library and Information Science in India. The study indicates a lower participation of females in LIS research relative to males. While the majority of studies have concentrated on gender inequality in academia, recent studies have examined the influence of gender on the academic performance of researchers. This research study aims to examine gender disparities in authorship patterns in Indian Library and Information Science (LIS) research across multiple disciplines.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have been carried out by various researchers, professional and gender disparity in library and information science research. Shivakumara and Sampath Kumar (2025) examined gender differences in research production within Indian Library and Information Science (LIS) publications, analysing 2,404 papers authored by 4,583 individuals from 10 selected Indian LIS journals spanning 2014 to 2023. The analysis disclosed a notable gender imbalance in Indian LIS research, with male authors constituting 71.81% of contributions and predominating first authorship positions (69.3%). Collaborative authoring patterns were predominantly male, characterised by male-only and male-majority teams. This study underscores the enduring gender disparity in Indian LIS scholarship and offers significant insights into authorship patterns, institutional productivity, and regional representation.

Monroe-Gulick et al. (2024) found that women's and men's publishing rates in library and information science (LIS) are unequal when compared to the profession overall. It also found that LIS publications vary by subject and journal. The percentage of women publishing in the selected LIS journals did not rise despite subject shifts during the time under review. This study adds to the growing body of evidence that underrepresented voices in library and information science (LIS) need additional investigation into the root causes of gender disparities in publishing.

The study "Gender Influence on Authorship Pattern: A Case Study," conducted by Deo & Hangsing (2023), indicated that men occupying first and final author positions account for the

majority of research articles and citations, showing that male authors are more influential than their female counterparts. The study findings offered a comprehensive picture of the present condition of women in library and information science research and underscored areas necessitating enhancement.

According to Shah et al. (2023), the research productivity of male and female scholars in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS) is almost equal. On the other hand, male authors are more likely to obtain citations, which means their study is more impactful. Both sexes exhibit gender-based patterns of collaboration, with the preference for same-gender co-authorship being clear. Males are more likely to be involved in partnerships with a global scope, whereas females are more likely to be involved in relationships with a national perspective. It is interesting to see that female researchers are more likely to secure research funding, but male authors are more likely to self-cite. Furthermore, there are regional variations; female researchers outperform their male counterparts in non-European nations, while male supremacy is still prevalent in European and cross-cultural settings.

Vinay and Sampath Kumar (2022) investigated the selected Indian LIS journals' authorship patterns and the gender gap in publishing productivity. According to the study's findings, female authors are less productive than male authors when looking at article productivity per author. The percentage of articles written by women was 27.34% from 2012 to 2021, while the percentage written by men was 72.65%. According to the results, there is a significant number of female authors who appear both first and last.

Lund and Shamsi (2021) analysed the percentage of women serving as first authors in prominent library and information science (LIS) journals from 1981 to 2020. The study findings revealed a notable increase in the percentage of women writers within LIS publications, predominantly confined to library science journals, while information science journals lagged considerably. The representation of women authors, approximately 60%, remains significantly lower than the general representation of women in librarianship, which is around 80%. These data indicate that substantial progress is required to reduce the gender disparity in authorship within leading LIS publications.

Few studies have looked at how gender affects researchers' academic performance, even though most studies have concentrated on gender differences in academia. Gender differences exist in various fields, as is shown by a survey of the literature. However, research identifying gender diversity has been under-researched by Indian LIS academics. This study aimed to address that knowledge gap by comparing the research output of male and female authors in the field of library and information science (LIS).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the nature of authorship patterns in Indian LIS scholarly literature.
- To examine the relationship between the research productivity and professional engagement of authors.
- To identify the gender disparity in Indian LIS scholarly literature.
- To know the most prolific author in Indian LIS research

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The scope of the analysis is limited to ten significant LIS publications published in India between 2015 to 2024:

	Title of the Journal	Abbreviation
1	Annals of library and information studies	ALIS
2	DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology	DJLIT
3	Gyankosh: The Journal of Library and Information Management	GJLIM
4	International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology	IJIDT
5	Journal of Indian Library Association	JILA
6	KELPRO Bulletin	KELPRO
7	Library Herald	LH
8	Pearl: A Journal of Library and Information Science	Pearl
9	Journal of Information and Knowledge	JK
10	World Digital Libraries is an international Journal	WDL

The above potential journals were chosen for the study because they have a strong heritage of scholarly publication in the Indian LIS subject. Furthermore, several of these journals are listed in the Scopus, Web of Science, Indian Citation Index, and UGC Care lists. Only 3179 research articles were considered for the study; the remaining review articles, case studies, and technical papers, among others, were excluded. The authors' gender was examined, and the influence of gender was assessed at both the individual and collaborative levels. The biographical notes at the conclusion of each article, as well as the writers' data on the first page, were the primary sources of information about the author's gender, affiliation, university, and country. The relevant information was taken from the articles and saved in a separate file for later study. To meet the stated research objectives, data on the number of articles, authorship patterns, and author productivity are gathered. Furthermore, the professional status of authors was investigated in four categories: LIS teachers, LIS professionals, research scholars, and others (technicians, postgraduate students, managers, directors, scientists, etc.)

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Distribution of Types of Articles Published during 2015-2024

Document Type	Articles	Authors	Male	Female
Research Paper	3179 (94.08)	6443	4591	1852
Editorial	71 (2.10)	88	82	6
Book Review	56 (1.65)	59	50	9
Review Paper	30 (0.88)	61	41	20
Short Communication	15 (0.44)	20	16	4
Others	13 (0.38)	15	13	2
Invited Paper	4 (0.11)	6	5	1
News	3 (0.08)	3	3	-
Letter to the Editor	2 (0.05)	2	2	-
Report	2 (0.05)	3	3	-
Addenda	1 (0.02)	3	3	-
Bibliography	1 (0.02)	2	2	-
Biopic Review	1 (0.02)	1	1	-

Errata	1 (0.02)	2	2	-
Total	3379	6708	4814 (71.76)	1894 (28.23)

Note: The number within the parenthesis indicates the percentage

Table 1 illustrates a detailed breakdown of document categories alongside gender-specific contributions in Indian Library and Information Science literature from 2015 to 2024. The research indicates substantial patterns in publication behavior and considerable gender differences. The data unequivocally indicates that research papers constitute an overwhelming majority (94.08%) of the entire output. This dominance highlights the research-oriented character of Indian LIS research, where alternative academic contributions, including editorial articles (2.10%), book reviews (1.65%), and others (0.89%), represent only a negligible portion. The data clearly demonstrates a significant discrepancy in the gender distribution of authors. Male authors represent 71.76% of total authorship, while female authors account for 28.23%. This inequality clearly illustrates the underrepresentation of female authors in Library and Information Science studies in India.

Table 2 Year-wise Contribution of Male and Female Authors

Year	Articles	Authors	Male	AMPP	Female	AFPP
2015	314	559	417	1.33	142	2.21
2016	331	665	476	1.44	189	1.75
2017	334	626	458	1.38	168	1.98
2018	327	641	458	1.40	183	1.79
2019	306	572	406	1.33	166	1.84
2020	302	624	454	1.50	170	1.78
2021	345	734	523	1.52	211	1.64
2022	310	675	478	1.54	197	1.57
2023	286	633	441	1.54	192	1.49
2024	324	714	480	1.48	234	1.38
Total	3179	6443	4591	1.44	1852	1.72

There were 6,443 authors who contributed to 3,179 publications published between 2015 and 2024, as shown in the table. A noticeable gender disparity exists, with male authors accounting for 71.26% and female authors for 28.74%. Research activity peaks in 2021, as does the number of articles published and the number of authors. Female authorship shows a slow but steady rise, reaching a peak in 2024, even while male involvement stays constantly higher. Despite having fewer female authors overall, the average female participation per manuscript is 1.72, which is higher than the male average of 1.44, indicating more collaboration among the female writers. In general, the data shows that men are more numerous, while the number of women participating is on the rise.

Table 3: Journal-wise Distribution of Male and Female Authors

Name of the Journal	Male	Female	Total
ALIS	439	185	624
DESIDOC	788	347	1135
GJLIM	162	65	227
IJDT	643	234	877
JILA	489	201	690
KELPRO	254	130	384

LH	458	211	669
Pearl	505	205	710
JIK	689	233	922
WDL	164	41	205
Total	4591	1852	6443

The gender gap in journal authorship is starkly illustrated by Table 3. There is a clear masculine preponderance among the 6,443 authors, with 4,591 (71.3% of the total) being male and 1,852 (28.7%) being female. There isn't a single journal that deviates from this pattern; in fact, the gender gap persists across the board. This tendency is further supported by high-output journals like DESIDOC, JIK, and IJDT, where male contributions far outweigh female contributions. The disparity is still there, even in publications that publish less frequently. As a whole, the results show that women are grossly underrepresented in LIS research. The need for more equitable and inclusive academic involvement is underscored by the fact that women continue to contribute at a far lower percentage across all journals.

Table 4: Journal-wise authorship pattern cross-tabulated by gender

Name of the Journal		Male	Female	M & M	M & F	F & F	F & M
ALIS	304	73	17	119	36	28	31
DESIDOC	499	74	30	195	72	45	83
GJLIM	122	34	15	33	12	5	23
IJDT	406	83	24	164	48	27	60
JILA	353	69	26	124	39	24	71
KELPRO	204	25	20	78	14	23	44
LH	335	65	34	114	36	24	62
Pearl	384	97	33	129	48	26	51
JIK	470	117	24	183	55	28	63
WDL	102	26	7	45	7	8	9
Total	3179	663 (20.85)	230 (7.23)	1184 (37.24)	367 (11.54)	238 (7.48)	497 (15.63)

Note: The number within the parenthesis indicates the percentage

** M& M: Male & Male, M& F: Male & Female, F&F: Female and Female, F& M: Female & Male

Table 4 illustrates the various combinations of gender-specific authorship patterns among LIS researchers. Two combinations pertain to an author's work at the individual level, whereas four combinations denote the participation of authors in groups. The table illustrates that the majority of papers are authored by male-male pairs (37.24%), followed by male-only writers (20.85%) and female-male collaborations (15.63%). The study demonstrates that male authors exhibit more productivity in LIS research, both individually and collaboratively. The study indicates that the research output of female authors is diminished whether they operate individually or collaborate exclusively with other female authors in Library and Information Science research in India.

Table 5: Cross-tabulation of author professional engagement and gender

Designation	Total Number of Authors	Male	Female
LIS Teachers	2074 (32.18)	1596 (76.95)	478 (23.04)
LIS Professionals *	2194 (34.05)	1624 (74.02)	570 (25.97)

Research Scholar	1148 (17.81)	642 (55.92)	506 (44.07)
Others**	900 (13.96)	659 (73.22)	241 (26.77)
Unidentified	127 (1.97)	70 (55.11)	57 (44.88)
Total	6443 (100)	4591 (71.25)	1852 (28.74)

Note: The number within the parenthesis indicates the percentage

* Librarian, Deputy Librarian, Assistant Librarian, and Library and Information Assistants

** Technical officers, PG students, Managers, Directors, etc.

A significant gender gap exists in the field of Library and Information Science, as shown in Table 5. Males make up 71.25% of the 6,443 authors, while females account for just 28.74%. Among LIS Teachers (74.95%) and LIS professionals (74.02%), male authors predominate across all main categories. At the entry level, female engagement is higher, as evidenced by a more balanced distribution of research scholars, with 55.92% male and 44.07% female. But this equilibrium is not sustained in positions of more professional authority. In LIS, males still hold most of the positions of power, while female representation is on the rise, especially in academic research.

Table 6: Top 10 Most Prolific Authors Indian LIS Research

Sl. No.	Name of the Author	Gender	No. of Articles	Rank
1	Gupta B M	Male	84	1
2	Dhawan S M	Male	49	2
3	Ashok Kumar	Male	48	3
4	Manoj Kumar Verma	Male	42	4
5	Ritu Gupta	Female	34	5
6	Margam Madhusudhan	Male	31	6
7	Garg K C	Male	26	7
8	Harinarayana N S	Male	24	8
9	Jivesh Bansal	Male	24	8
10	Singh K P	Male	24	8
11	Parthasarathi Mukhopadhyay	Male	23	9
12	Gururaj S Hadagali	Male	22	10

Table 6 represents the list of prolific authors having contributed a maximum of papers to the selected LIS Emerald journals for the study during the period 2015-2024. It is found that Gupta B M emerged as the most prolific author among the 6443 authors who published 84 articles in Indian LIS journals, followed by Dhawan S M (49 articles), and Ashok Kumar (48), respectively securing 2nd and 3rd Place. Of the ten most prolific authors, only one female author is in the list.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study unequivocally demonstrates that Indian Library and Information Science (LIS) research is predominantly research-focused, with research papers constituting the overwhelming majority (94.08%) of publications. Alternative formats, such as editorials and book reviews, offer minimal contributions, reflecting a lack of diversity in intellectual communication. A strong and persistent gender disparity is apparent in the data. Male authors constitute over 71% of contributions across publications, journals, and professional positions. This dominance is seen in both solo and joint efforts, particularly in male–male authorship, which constitutes the biggest proportion of publications.

Nonetheless, there are incremental positive developments. Female authorship, albeit currently at approximately 28%, is progressively rising and has reached its zenith in recent years. Female writers exhibit elevated levels of collaboration, with a higher average participation per manuscript than their male counterparts. The gender gap is narrower at the entrance level among research scholars, indicating enhanced access and engagement for women in the initial phase.

Nevertheless, the disparity increases in elevated roles such as LIS Teachers and LIS Professionals, where male predominance persists. The scarcity of women among the most productive authors (just one in the top ten) underscores the disparity in research productivity and acknowledgement. The study reveals a pronounced and enduring gender disparity in Indian LIS research, characterised by a predominance of male authors in terms of productivity, collaboration, and professional positions. Despite a progressive increase in female participation, it remains markedly lower and less prominent at elevated levels.

Achieving genuine balance necessitates concentrated efforts, encompassing institutional support, equitable opportunities, mentorship, and the promotion of women's participation in leadership roles within research. Enhancing these domains will facilitate the transformation of increasing female participation into significant and enduring contributions. Despite observable progress, gender equality in LIS research remains unfulfilled and necessitates ongoing and systematic endeavours.

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