RESEARCH ARTICLE

LECTURERS' RESEARCH IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HOCHIMINH CITY, VIETNAM

Bui Ha Phuong

Faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hochiminh city, Vietnam

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Purpose – This paper aims to provide an overall picture of the research status of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science and suggest some solutions for enhancing the quality of lecturers' research status..

Design/methodology/approach –A question are questionnaire was distributed to all lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hochiminh city. Content analysis was also used in term of quantitative approach. Scanning, skimming the research outputs' titles and subjects from 2011 to 2013 was to gather data and Microsoft Excel was used to analyze data.

Findings – The paper analyzes the research status of lecturers at different aspects such as research motivation, types of research outputs, research scopes/ topics, some advantages as well as obstacles in research of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science.

Originality/value –This paper provides an overall evaluation of lecturers' research status and suggests that scientific research plays an extreme important role for making a perfect capacity of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science. This would be a great contribution to improve the lecturers' quality in academic activities.

INTRODUCTION

Lecturers' are an important factor makes the quality of education. Recognizing the role of lecturers, many leaders, managers have policies, strategies, plans with different solutions for developing and improving the quality of lecturers. There are many ways to solve this status such as providing the chances with lecturers at learning different training courses to improve their qualifications, visiting many facilities in Vietnam and abroad, exchanging experiences between faculty and other facilities where train Library and Information Science, practicing and working in some libraries, information center, etc…

It is the fact that the qualification of lecturers includes teaching capacity, scientific research capacity and community serving capacity. Clearly speaking, every lecturer in Library and Information is one elite and concrete combination by three capacities. These capacities would build the qualified image of lecturers.

First, the teaching ability of lecturers is evaluated through the education qualification. In fact, this capacity defines lecturers be recognized whether a lecturer or not. However, in reality, there are many various ways to improve the teaching ability such as practical experiences, number of working years, skills for solving problems, etc... The teaching ability is one of compulsory requirements for every lecturer. In the educational environment, they should be equipped four essential basic groups of knowledge, include profession, curriculum, teaching and learning skills, educational environment and education

system in field of Library and Information as well as in general. These knowledge were calculated by learning, experiencing from the reality.

Next, ability of community serving is also one of many requirements for evaluating a lecturer. Taking part in academic and social activities of lecturers includes inside university's activities such as being a member academic councils, enhancing the curriculum; other organizations, groups outside the university. However, in the reality, this capacity still has many limitations and shortage of interest.

Furthermore, the ability of research is another crucial factor for evaluating lecturers and it is also a role of lecturers. In order to evaluate this ability, it is very important to base on the results of research which were created and conducted, including theses, books, research papers, research reports, writings of conferences, etc… Before carrying out the research, every lecturers should be people who contact to the reality, recognize the current problems, and then find out the solutions for solving problems, propose the trends of development trends. In theory and practice, achievements of research will be meaningful to lecturers' research activities. This leads other requirement to lecturers is that they must have good writing skill, presentation skills and critical thinking to present their research results through evaluating by the scientific council, publishing on professional journals.

It is found that although the research skill is important for lecturers, there are many limitations in research activity of lecturers in the faculty of Library and Information Science,

---

* Corresponding author: **Bui Ha Phuong**

Faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hochiminh city, Vietnam

university of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hochiminh city. Therefore, finding the solutions would contribute to improve the research quality of lecturers.

This paper focuses on analyzing lecturers' research including motivations of research, types of research outputs and advantages as well as difficulties of lecturers' research activities. As a result, some recommendations contribute to improve the lecturers' research capacity and quality at the faculty of Library and Information Science.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In literature history about the research status in Library and Information Science, there are some papers which related to research in general as well as research trends, research skills. Wen-Yau Cathy Lin, Ka Meng Lio(2011) determined the changes of research in Library and Information Science in Taiwan between 2001 and 2010. The authors focused on the research status and trends of Library and Information Science, which including the support of government to the field, the collaborative authorship. The statistics of research outputs presented the diversity of topics, types of research and several other problems.

Another paper was conducted by Telke Sudhakar Bhaurao (2012) analyzed the recent trends in Library and Information Science. There was a detail analysis the recent progress in Library and Information, including process of knowledge acquisition, internet, information literacy and management.
Brian Hemmings and Doug Hill (2009) discussed the developments of research expertise in lecturers in general. The results of paper are that there was a unifying model with some facets, including selective affinity, maximal grip, and at the edge of chaos. This model could be applied in many fields as well as field of Library and Information Science.

Moira Hulme, Kevin Lowden and Dely Elliot (2009) were conducted with 18 teacher researchers in the first tranche of Schools of Ambition. The paper considered four problems which were participation of teachers' perceptions of research, teachers' motivations for becoming involved, drives and barriers to research and challenges of promoting collaborative enquiry.

Every paper contains many different aspects which conducted by librarians, graduate students and other professionals in many geographic areas. However, in Vietnam, there has not any paper which provides an overall picture about the research status of lecturers, especially in the field of Library and Information Science. Thus, it could be said that the lecturers' research status in the faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Social Sciences and Humanities is new one which should be investigated fully and overall.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This paper aims to conduct the following objectives

- To provide the overall picture of research status of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science
- To find out the research achievements of lecturers
- To analyze the advantages and obstacles that lecturers encountered in research activities
- Then, to propose some solutions for enhancing the research status of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science in Hochiminh city

Findings

The study was carried among the lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hochiminh city. A total of 9 questionnaires were distributed to all lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science and 100% responded back. The overall response rate of the survey was 100%. Besides, content analysis was used in term of quantitative approach through scanning, skimming the research outputs' titles and subjects from 2011 to 2013. Then, using Microsoft Excel was to analyze data.

In education, lecturers in general, lecturers at Library and Information Science in particular have great contributions which decide directly the quality of training librarians in the future.

The overall picture of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science

Table 1 Profile of respondents

Qualification				Ages			
Doctoral degree		Master degree		Under 30		Above 30	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
3	33	6	67	6	67	3	33

According to the statistics of November 2013 (table 1), there are 9 lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information. It is clear to see from this table; approximately 67% of lecturers are master while 33% of lecturers had doctoral degree. Besides, most of lecturers are younger than 30 years old (67%).

Table 2 Working years

Working years			
Under 5 years		Above 5 years	
Number	%	Number	%
5	55.6	4	44.4

Number of working years plays an important role in research for lecturers. This helps them create new research achievements which could apply in the reality. Other prominent thing is shown in the table 2 is that there is a limitation of teaching years (more than half of lecturers are under 5 years of teaching).

The research status of lecturers

The motivation of carrying out research

Analyzing the questionnaires for all lecturers provides a view of lecturers' motivations of research, including improving academic achievements, satisfying the compulsory requirements for evaluating lecturers yearly of the university, satisfying their scientific passion, conducting as a main role of lecturers and saving the lives.

Table 3 Lecturers' motivations of research

Motivation of research	Number	Percentage
Academic achievements	7	63
Compulsory requirements	4	36
Role of lecturers	9	100
Professional passion	6	54
Income	7	63
Total		**100**

The table 3 shows that 100% of lecturers agreed that the scientific research is the role of lecturers of lecturers meanwhile 36% of respondents conducted research as a compulsory requirement. This requirement also is one of criteria for evaluating and ranking the lecturers at the end of

each semester. There was the same percentage in lecturers' motivations of research including academic achievements and income (63%).

Types of research outputs

The tables 4 show that research outputs of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science from 2011 to 2013.

Table 4 Number of research outputs(Theses and books, textbooks)

Years	Thesis		Books, textbooks	
	Chief author	Co-author	Chief author	Co-author
2011	1	0	1	0
2012	1	0	3	0
2013	2	3	2	0
Total	4	3	6	0

It is found from table 4 that among the types of research outputs from the table 4, lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science preferred writing research papers for publications, especially on some domestic journals such as Journal of National Library of Vietnam, Journal of Information and Documentation than international journal. The interview result to all lecturers shows that most of young lecturers have shortage of English skill (60% of lecturers). This is one of the main reasons which make them have obstacles for writing a paper for an international journal. Other side is that some of them said that they worrying about publishing on the international journal was a big difficulty. Only one lecturer had reason of paying highly for paper processing fees. These reasons made limitations of publishing on international journals.

According to the survey by questionnaires, the content of books related closely to the subject which the lecturers were teaching. These books are used in teaching and learning in Library and Information Science. Every lecturer has their own books without corporation with other lecturers. This leads the status that most of young lecturers (under 30 years old) whose have master degree, have no any published book.

Information Science conducted from 2011 to 2013. In general, research outputs were covered with many different topics of research. It is also revealed that among these subjects, there are many research outputs related to Skill training for students. This takes the highest percentage among other subjects (7.1%), followed by 5.68% of research outputs discussed on Information technology application in Library and Information Science. Many subjects also are subjects which are concerned by lecturers, such as Users' information seeking behavior (4.97%), Librarian skills (4.26%). There is an equal number of research outputs are Collection development, Lecturers training, Library evaluation (3.55%) whilst Digital library and School library have little concern of lecturers (only 0.71%).

Table 6 Scopes of research outputs

Research scopes	Number	Percentage (%)
Collection development	5	3.55
Digital library	1	0.71
Hospital library	4	2.84
Information retrieval	3	2.13
Information technology application in LIS	8	5.68
Interlibrary corporation	3	2.13
Lecturers training	5	3.55
Library evaluation	5	3.55
Librarian skills	6	4.26
Library standards	4	2.84
Role of library and librarians	3	2.13
Role of library	3	2.13
School library	1	0.71
Skill training for students	10	7.1
Subject headings	3	2.13
Users' information seeking behavior	7	4.97
Total	**71**	**100%**

Some advantages and disadvantages in research of lecturers at the faculty of Library and Information Science

This above status could be explained by results of survey about advantages which the lecturers have in research activities. The first advantage is that the university has encouragement policy for lecturers to conduct research through financial support for taking part in international and national conferences, for

Table 5 Number of research outputs (Journal articles, conference papers, bulletin, and report)

Years	Journal articles		Conference papers	Bulletin	Report
	Domestic	International			
2011	4	1	0	0	2
2012	7	1	7	4	4
2013	13	2	3	4	6
Total	24	4	10	8	12

The table 5 shows that most of research outputs are published on the domestic journal (24 papers) while research outputs of international journal has a very small number of papers (4 papers). This could be explained by the limitation of lecturers' English skills, especially in young lecturers. Besides, at the faculty of Library and Information Science, writing report is one compulsory mission of young lecturers which conducts annually. Therefore, it is easy to explain the high number of reports in this survey (12 reports)

There are many subjects in Library and Information field which conducted by lecturers. Most of lecturers had research outputs related to the subjects which they teach at the faculty. Some research outputs were results of graduate theses or new issues in research. This leads to the diversity of research outputs. It is shown clearly in the following table 6.

The table 6illustrates that among total of 71 research outputs were created by the lecturers at the faculty of Library and

processing fees the papers which publish on international journals, for exchanging academically between the university and other foreign organizations. In these days, there is a rewarding policy for the lecturers whose have bee published research outputs. Furthermore, the university enhances in connecting, forming the research groups related to theses, seeking actively theses resources, etc…

However, there are also some disadvantages for this status of lecturers' research. Firstly, the awareness of lecturers has many limitations. In fact, they have not evaluated highly the role and effect of research activities in their responsibility, especially in young lecturers. This leads to the status that they are not active to focus on research seriously (36% of respondents). Sometimes, they conduct research as a compulsory requirement of the faculty as well as university.

Therefore, the quality of their research outputs isnot evaluated highly.

Besides, economic conditions of lecturers also is one of reasons why affect their research activities. Because the salary policy of the university is not really satisfied the lecturers' requirements, most of lecturers spend a lot of time on teaching and working part time outside of the faculty in order to ensure their essential needs of life (54% of respondents). Thus, they have little time for research.

Moreover, 45% of respondents explained that the research capacity is also one of disadvantages for research such as synthetizing data, writing skill, etc… while English skills for reading foreign materials are also the remarkable obstacle for them to research in Library and Information Science at the faculty (18% of respondents).

One more disadvantage is that publishing on the international journals makes a lot of difficulties such as the long time of publishing (27%), high processing fees of some journals (9%), shortage of finance for research from university and personal ability (9%).

Table 7 Advantages of lecturers' research

Advantages	Number of respondents	Percentage
Support finance policy of university	5	45
Reward policy for research outputs	6	54
Updated scientific information	6	54
Active research of lecturers	3	27
Total	**9**	**100**

Table 8 Disadvantages of lecturers' research

Disadvantages	Number of respondents	Percentage
Inactive attitude at research	4	36
Having no time to research	6	54
Shortage of research capacity	5	45
Limited English skills	2	18
Inconvenient process of publish	3	27
Highly fees of paper processing	1	9
Shortage of finance support policy	1	9
Total	9	100

SOLUTIONS

- Mastering the research methods of Library and Information is one of the important requirements for lecturers' research activity. The lecturers should master methods of research in general and in Library and Information Science such as different ways for gathering information, data, evidence, analyzing data effectively and then creasing the qualified outputs.

- Starting with the simple research and developing research skills steps by steps in high level would help lecturers get acquainted to research activities. Coordinating in research would be a reasonable way for lecturers who begin research. Working with the experienced researchers whoare the good supervisors would bring to the lecturers many valuable experiences in research.

This would make bases for lecturers to conduct research independently.

- Establishing the set of evaluation for research outputs will base on many ways, in which peer review, citation rates, etc… This is meaningful for evaluating the quality of research outputs. These ways of evaluations belong to the types of research outputs. Then, lecturers could consider and conduct research suitably.

- Building the reasonable policy for lecturers to research is a necessary solution and would be conducted by universities, faculties where they work. This policy includes research funds and spiritual support which will make good conditions for them to concentrate on the research activity. Besides, the lecturers also should take advantages for conducting research regularly and effectively.

CONCLUSION

Scientific research is very crucial for every field, and research in Library and Information science has no exception with the society's progresses. It is more important for the lecturers, whom have great contributions for training future qualified librarians and academic achievements of Library and Information science. However, the research activities of lecturers are only effective and highly qualified with suitable solutions. There are many solutions for improving the research skills and quality of research, including enhancing lecturers' attitude about the role of research in their career, professional works, mastering the research skills for lecturers by themselves and colleagues, establishing the set of evaluation for research outputs, having suitable policy for developing research activities of lecturers in Library and Information Science. These solutions would create great research outputs which would have high qualityand practical value for science.

References

1. Brian Hemmings and Doug Hill. 2009.The development of lecturer research expertise:Towards a unifying model,Issues in Educational Research, Vol 9 No 1, pp. 14-24.
2. Moira Hulme, Kevin Lowden and Dely Elliot. 2009.Teacher as researchers: initial experiences within the Scottish "Schools of Ambition,Journal of Teacher Education and Teachers' Work, Vol.1, Issue 1,pp.18-28.
3. Wen-Yau Cathy Lin, Ka Meng Lio. 2011.Research status and trends of Library And Information Science in Taiwan, 2001–2010", Asia Pacific Conference Library & Information Education & Practice, pp. 530-538
4. Telke Sudhakar Bhaurao. 2010. Recent trends in Library and Information science", International Referred Research Journal, Vol. II, Issue 20.

****