

Challenges to Career Progression of Women LIS Professionals in Telangana – A Study

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ABSTRACT

Women's career options are often constrained by the traditional stereotypes where men are thought fit to join the technical and scientific jobs and women are suitable for service-oriented professions like teaching, nursing and librarianship, though it was felt that this profession would be very right for women in India. Statistics reveal that Women representation in LIS jobs are less compared to men. This study explores the impediments to the career progression of Women LIS Professionals in the State of Telangana by analysing the data from 292 women LIS professionals working in all types of libraries including Academic, Special and Public Libraries.

KEYWORDS: Academic, Career Progression , Career Interruptions, Attitudinal Barriers, Demographic analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Majority women talent in India chose women friendly occupations due to their family responsibilities. Several push and pull factors constrain women from reaching the top-level or superior positions. Career choice of women is impacted by traditional stereotypes where men are thought fit to join the technical and scientific jobs and women are suitable for service-oriented professions like teaching, nursing and librarianship. Though it was felt that library jobs are suitable for women because women are endowed with qualities of patience, sympathy and perseverance, the enrolment statistics now available show that librarianship is still not a female intensive profession in India (Kalpana Dasgupta, 1997)¹ This study explores the impediments to the career progression of Women LIS Professionals in the State of Telangana by analysing the data from 292 women LIS professionals working in academic libraries including University, Degree College, Junior and Engineering College Libraries.

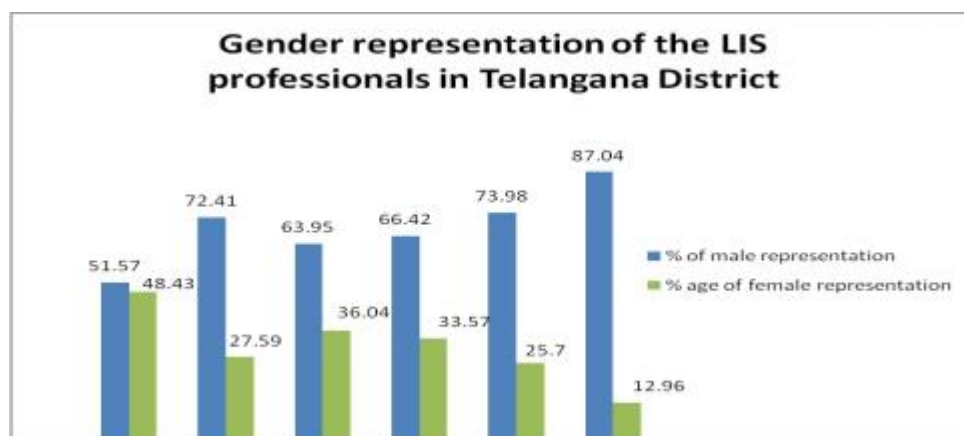
The State of Telangana is formed as 29th State in India in the year 2014 as a result of bifurcation from the erstwhile combined State of Andhra Pradesh with . Hyderabad as the Capital City. Telangana comprised of 10 districts initially and was expanded to 33 districts.

Telangana has a well-established system of Education with 25 Universities (State, Central and Private), 1073 Government and Private Degree Colleges and 178 Engineering Colleges. Apart from these the State has 2963 Government and Private Junior Colleges. The State has a huge network of 41337 Government, Corporate and Private Schools. Libraries are functional in all these Universities, colleges and schools. An overall survey of these University and college libraries reveals that most of the library positions are lying vacant irrespective of the type of library. For instance, it is found that in 405 Government Junior College libraries in Telangana, 279 posts are vacant and in 133 degree college libraries, 85 posts are vacant. Similarly, 150 library positions are vacant in 25 University Libraries.(Table N0:1)

Table No: 1 Gender wise Representation of LIS Professionals in Telangana

Type of Library	Total Institutions	Vacant Positions approximately	Present Employees	Male	% age	Female	% age
School Libraries (Govt, Private, Welfare Schools etc)	41337	28000 9500 No Posts	731	377	51.57	354	48.43
Junior College Libraries (Govt, Private)	2963	643 1340 No Posts	464	336	72.41	128	27.59
Degree Colleges(Govt, Private)	1073	643	430	275	63.95	155	36.04
Engineering colleges(AICTE)	178	---	414	275	66.42	139	33.57
University Libraries(State, Central, Private, Deemed)	25	150	319	236	73.98	82	25.70
Public Libraries	670	400	270	235	87.04	35	12.96
Total	46246		2628	1779		908	

Figure-1: Gender representation of LIS Professionals in Telangana



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Gender-wise analysis of LIS professionals in University Libraries reveals that only 25.70% constitute women while 73.98% are men. In Degree College libraries, women constitute only 36.04% and majority (63.95%) employees are men. In Junior College Libraries also women representation is only 27.59%. In Public Libraries women representation is far less at merely 12.96%. The situation in school libraries has slightly improved due to the latest recruitment (04/2023.5.4.23).

The low representation of women in LIS profession and only handful of them reaching the senior level positions; dearth of research studies on these aspects prompted the researcher to delve further to study the challenges on the career progression of women LIS professionals in Telangana.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the study is to explore the challenges women encounter in their career progression and to reach top most leadership roles.

- ✓ The specific objectives of the study are to –
- ✓ Present demographic analysis of the study respondents
- ✓ Study the impact of Individual, Organizational and Attitudinal barriers on career progression of the respondents
- ✓ Find out measures for enhanced career progression of women LIS Professionals based on the findings of the study

HYPOTHESES

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between Years of Experience and Work-life Balance reported by Women LIS Professionals

H₀₂: There is no significant variation in the Organizational Barriers such as recognition, representation in committees, gender discrimination and sexual harassment at workplace, reported by the respondents by their Age.

H₀₃: Women are constrained by family responsibilities including Child rearing, work-life balance and other cultural barriers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of factors such as family support, work-life balance, career interruptions due to pregnancy and child birth, lack of confidence and other factors impact career choice and career progression of women. Women's careers are moulded by traditional, social and cultural values prevalent in the society. It can be observed that across the globe in both developed and developing countries, very few libraries are headed by women professionals. The percentage of women leaders is very less compared to that of men.

Study by **Murtaza Ashiq, Shafiq Ur Rehman, Sadaf Rafiq (2021)²** explored the women academic library leadership in Pakistan and found that organizational challenges, family responsibilities, and gender discrimination were the major barriers that hindered their career progression. An Important mile stone in the study of gender issues in LIS Profession is the establishment of COSWL by American Library Association in 1976 (**Bertram Cara, 2021³**) Studies revealed that women are more often seen in school and public libraries while men were more prominently featured in academic and special libraries where pay and prestige were in greater quantities. These findings

illuminate the difficulty women faced in climbing to the top ranks of the profession, and even when they reach the top, women faced challenges in holding their own against their male counterparts despite their best efforts. Research Study by **Rutledge Lorelei B (2020)**⁴ explored how women academic librarians in management positions described their career progression compared to those who are not in management positions. Study revealed that many women reported disinterest in taking up management positions. The reasons for this disinterest are – women not interested in managing conflicts arising in top level positions; avoid added burden or stress related responsibilities; interest in caring for family etc. Apart from these, lack of organizational support, training; lack of compensation or corresponding increase in pay are some other reasons cited by the study respondents for their disinterest in management positions.

Dhanyasree, A.R. & Mini Devi, B. (2019)⁵ examined the factors influencing the career advancement activities of women library professionals in two universities i.e. Kerala University and Mahatma Gandhi University in India. The study concluded that professional factors & ICT positively influenced the women library professionals in their career advancement activities. Gender discrimination is the main obstacle faced in career progression activities.

Sen, Barbara, and Emma, Hadfield(2009)⁶ studied women's career progression in U.K. academic libraries. This study investigated women's success in academic libraries, and identified career paths and potential barriers to career progression. Results show that good management appears unrelated to gender. A mix of skills is essential, people skills being most important. The glass ceiling should no longer exist. Formal succession planning practices are not evident; however, efforts are made to ensure women develop professionally. Mentors, role models and networking are important to increase confidence and encourage career progression. Women still lack confidence in their ability, and aspirations can be closely linked to family choices. Barriers still exist for women, including children, mobility, and a culture of long hours.

Dasgupta , Kalpana (1997)⁷ one of the successful women librarians who worked as Director, central secretariat Library, Department of Culture shared her experiences and observations on women in managerial library positions in India. Author outlines the reasons why women opted for Librarianship as their career. Firstly, women preferred librarianship because of the academic environment where they do not have to teach on a regular basis. Security in the work place, lack of mobility are some other reasons. As women's income is seen as supplementary income to the family, women are themselves satisfied in the middle level positions as they can conveniently attend to their family responsibilities. In spite of the parity in pay scales and promotions laid down by the Indian Government, only a handful of women could raise to the managerial positions in the libraries because of their inherent shy nature, lack of training in facing the interview boards and lack of confidence levels. Author argues that women are not suitable for managerial positions is a myth and given proper support system, they can prove their abilities and contribute to the development of the profession.

Literature survey reveals that there are very few studies emanating from India on the Career Progression of Women LIS professionals. Gender discrimination at work place, career interruptions, family responsibilities and low confidence levels of women, disinterestedness of women in taking up leadership positions slacken the pace of career progress of women LIS Professionals.

METHODOLOGY

Present study adopted an exploratory research design. Data for the study is collected from 292 women LIS Professionals working in University, Degree, Junior and Engineering College Libraries in Telangana. Convenience Sampling is used. Data is collected using online structured questionnaire coupled with and personal visits and mailed questionnaire. Data is also collected using personal and telephonic interviews.

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

I. Demographic Details

Table No.2 reveals that 42.12% respondents are in the age group of 31-40 years and 84.59% are married. Data reveals very low representation of SC (21.24%) and ST (16.44%) Females in LIS Jobs. Designation-wise analysis reveals that 60.62% have ‘Librarian’ designation. Most (63.01%) of the respondents are working in Time Scale positions. Only 21.92% occupy permanent positions. Majority (30.48%) respondents have 11-15 years of work experience. Most of the respondents (79.45%) have MLISC. Qualification. However, only 2.73% respondents have Doctorate Degrees. Majority of the respondents (51.37%) are working in middle level management positions and only 16.78% are in top level management positions (Table 2)

Table No. 2 – Demographic Data of the Respondents

Age-group	Total	%
=< 20 years	-	-
21-30 years	18	6.17
31-40 years	123	42.12
41-50 years	121	41.44
51-60 years	30	10.27
Marital Status		
Divorced	10	3.42
Married	247	84.59
Unmarried	32	10.96
Widowed	3	1.03
Social Category		
OBC	76	26.02
OC	106	36.30
SC	62	21.24
ST	48	16.44
Designation		
Librarian	177	60.62
Assistant Professors	5	1.71
Assistant Librarian	51	17.47
Library Assistant	30	10.27
Professional Assistants/Junior	4	1.37
Technical Officer/ Assistant	5	1.71

Others(Book Bearer, Junior Assistant,, Sr Assistant, Trainee Attenders)	20	6.85
Status of Employment		
Permanent	64	21.92
Temporary (contract, outsourcing)64	44	15.06
Time Scale	184	63.01
Work Experience		
No Prior Experience	5	1.71
1-5 years	69	23.63
6-10 years	57	19.52
11-15 years	89	30.48
16-20 years	45	15.41
21-25 years	11	3.77
Above 25 years	16	5.48
Education		
B.A. /B.Sc./B.Com (Graduation)	292	100
M.A./M.Com/M.Sc	257	88.01
BLISC	212	72.60
MLISC	232	79.45
M.Phil	12	4.10
Ph.D.	8	2.73
PGDLAN/PGDM	37	12.67
Level Of Management		
Top Level	49	16.78
Middle Level	150	51.37
Lower Level	93	31.85
Total	292	100

II. Challenges And Barriers To Career Progression

Working Women irrespective of their field or area of work, face a number of challenges that hinder their career progression. Women play dual roles discharging responsibilities at home and work place. Therefore, family support is very much required in achieving work-life balance without which career progression will take a back seat. Apart from these, gender stereotypes, gender discrimination also affect career progression of women. Cultural influences also mould women into nurturing and service roles and very often women consider themselves weak compared to men. Apart from these several other reasons also impact career progress of women professionals. This study explores the barriers that impact career progress of women LIS professionals in Telangana .For the convenience of the study, the term ‘Barriers’ is used synonymously with ‘Challenges’

In general, the barriers encountered by women in their careers can be categorized as –

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- Individual Barriers – Career Interruptions, Child rearing, Family Support, work-life balance, lack of access to education and Cultural barriers are categorized under this category
- Organizational Barriers – Recognition, Representation in Committees, Training, Gender Discrimination at workplace, Sexual Harassment at workplace are taken under this category
- Attitudinal Barriers – Self-efficacy and confidence levels

Individual Barriers

Career Interruptions and Other Individual Barriers

Career interruptions happen to both male and female employees which may cause delayed promotions and adversely affect career growth. There may be several reasons for career interruptions – unemployment, injury or accidents etc. Especially for women, career interruptions may happen due to child birth, child rearing and home and work life balance. Studies revealed that women who join the workplace after career break often face a downward trajectory in careers. Studies also found that women prefer to remain in lower-level positions, less prestigious occupations and care-oriented professions with lower pay in order to balance work and family responsibilities (Wang,2019)⁸. The responses of women LIS professionals about career interruptions is presented in Table No3

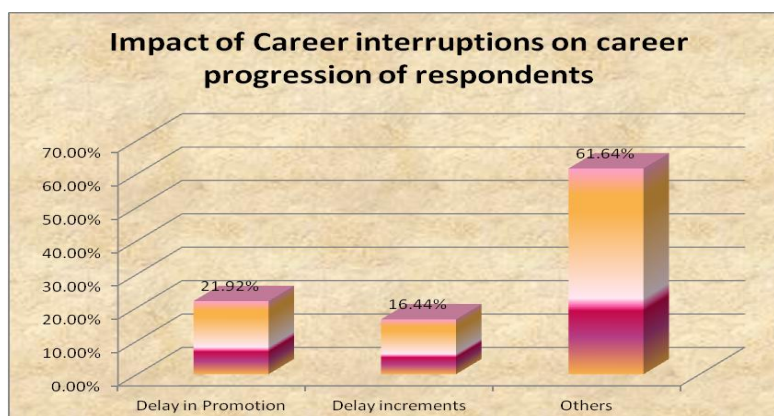
Table No.3- Career Interruptions of the Respondents

Career Interruptions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
YES	100	34.25
NO	192	65.75
	292	100

From the table, it is evident that only 34.25% respondents expressed that they faced problems in their career progression due to career interruptions. Out of 100 respondents who faced career interruptions, 22% reported that they suffered delay in promotions; 16% said that their increments were delayed and other 62% did not specify the type of hindrance they faced (Figure-2)



Figure 2: Reasons for Career Interruptions of the Respondents



Apart from career interruptions, women often face multiple challenges due to their family responsibilities, dual roles and cultural restrictions imposed on them. A Study of the impact of individual barriers in career progression of women is presented in Table No.4

Table No.4- Individual Barriers in Career Progression of the Respondents

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career interruptions	292	2	5	3.36	.949
Child rearing	292	2	5	3.45	.891
Work life balance	292	2	5	3.55	.986
Lack of access to education	292	2	5	3.62	.907
Cultural	292	1	5	3.24	1.324
Valid N (list wise)	292				

Table No.3 reveals that ‘lack of educational opportunities and training compared to men’ is ranked in the first position with a mean score of 3.62. Striking a balance between work and family life is ranked as the second most important barrier in the career progression of the respondents with an average score of 3.55 followed by ‘Child birth and child rearing practices’ in the third position with an average score of 3.45.

Family Support and career progression

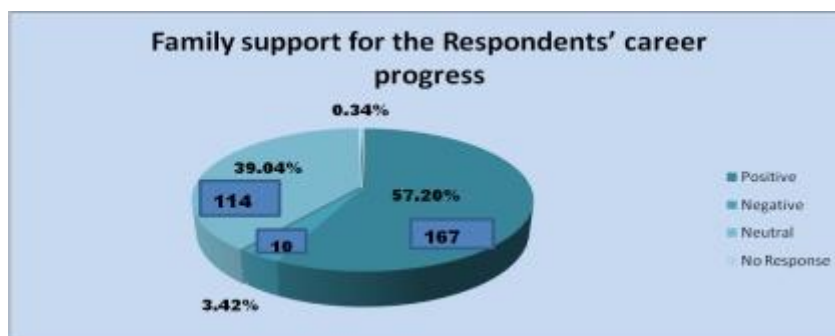
Family commitments and the pressure to balance work and family act as the biggest hindrances to the aspirations of working women to advance in their career (Desai, 1996; Rosser, 2004)¹⁰. Lack of family support leads to lower career satisfaction and advancement.

Table No.5- Family support for the Respondents’ career progress

Support	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Positive	167	57.2
Negative	10	3.42
Neutral	114	39.04
No Response	1	0.34
Total	292	100

As can be seen from the analysis presented in Table-5, just above half (57.2%) said that they received positive support from the family in discharging their work life responsibilities. Nearly 39% respondents were neutral indicating that family is neither supportive nor an impediment to their work life. The respondents who stated family impacted negatively on their work life is very less amounting to 3.4% of the respondents.

Figure 3: Family support and Career Progression of the Respondents



Work-Life Balance

Researcher asked the respondents as to what extent they are able to strike a balance between work and family life. Responses to this question are analysed and presented in Table-6. Twenty (20.6%) percent respondents said they are able to manage the dual responsibilities to the ‘Full Extent’ and 19.2% respondents felt that to a ‘Large Extent, Less than half (36.4%) respondents opined that e they are able to strike a balance between the two to ‘Some Extent’. However, it is to be noted that considerable percent of the respondents (16.5%) expressed that it is not ‘up to the mark’ and 7.2% said they are not able to strike a balance between family and work life.

Table No.6-Extent of Work-life Balance achieved by the Respondents

Work-life Balance	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Full Extent	60	20.6	20.6	20.6
Large Extent	56	19.2	19.2	39.9
Some Extent	106	36.4	36.4	76.3
Not Up to the mark	48	16.5	16.5	92.8
Not at all	22	7.2	7.2	100.0
Total	292	100.0	100.0	

Organizational Barriers

Absence of structural mechanisms to ensure equal participation of women in all formal and informal networks of the organization, lack of effective management training for female professionals and inadequate appraisal systems also hinder women’s progress in the work place. The analysis of Organizational Barriers women LIS professionals face are presented in Table No.6.

Table No. 7- Respondents’ opinion on Organizational Barriers

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	St Deviation
Recognition-		1	5	2.63	1.497
Representation in Committees	292	1	5	2.77	1.529
Training	292	1	5	2.75	1.470

Gender discrimination at workplace	292	1	5	3.51	1.340
Sexual Harassment at workplace	292	1	5	3.05	1.272
Valid N (listwise)	292				

A comparison of the means of the statements reveals that ‘Gender Discrimination at workplace’ stands in the first position with a mean score of 3.51 and ‘Sexual Harassment’ stands in the second place with a mean score of 3.05. Lack of women representation in various committees in the organization is ranked in the third position with a mean score of 2.77 followed by lack of training (2.75) and recognition (2.63) in the fourth and fifth positions respectively. Results suggest that the respective organizations should adopt gender sensitive approaches and measures to ensure security for women at the workplace and avoid gender discrimination and gender stereotyping.

Attitudinal Barriers

Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura, self-efficacy is people’s beliefs about their abilities. In other words, Self-efficacy is the beliefs and perceptions of one’s own capabilities. Self-efficacy can help people to cope with mental stress and shape their attitude towards behaviour. Self efficacy can foster attitudes that are consistent with behaviour. Thus, People who have a sense of self-efficacy return to normalcy from difficult condition or failures. They approach things in terms of how to handle them rather than worrying about their mistakes. Self-efficacy thus plays a major role in performing every day jobs and facing challenges.

Low self-efficacy can make women their own worst enemy. “On self-efficacy scales, men tend to over inflate their actual capabilities while women are much more modest in their assessments,” said Carlson.

Studies show that women with high self-efficacy are less affected by the traditional female stereotypes. On the other hand, women with low self-efficacy are negatively affected by the stereotypes. They face difficulty in meeting the challenges and goals which reduce their self-motivation. They are hence subjected to job related stress.

To know how women LIS professionals perceive their suitability to top level library positions, a set of questions were put forward by the researcher and the respondents are asked to rate these statements on a five-point scale. The analysis is presented in Table No.8

From table 8, it can be seen that “Teaching, Nursing and Library Jobs are well suited for women is ranked in the first position with average score of (23.46) followed by ‘Top level positions require good networking and hence not suitable for women’ with an average score of (21.03) in the second position and ‘Men are better Managers than women with an average score of (21.09)’. ‘Top level positions involve politics hence not suitable for women (20.79)’ for fourth position.

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Table No.8- Statements pertaining to self-efficacy of the respondents

	5	4	3	2	1	Total Score	Average	Rank
Men are better managers than women	36(180)	13(52)	37(111)	67(134)	139(139)	616	21.09	III
Top Managerial positions are not suited to women	30(150)	14(56)	38(114)	60(120)	150(150)	590	20.20	V
Women are emotional hence not suitable for managerial positions	24(120)	15(60)	34(102)	62(124)	157(157)	563	19.28	VII
Women do not want to take risk like men	26(130)	21(84)	34(102)	59(118)	152(152)	586	22.06	VI
It is good to have men as superior than women	20(100)	13(52)	39(117)	58(116)	162(162)	547	18.73	VIII
Teaching, Nursing and library jobs are well suited for women	43(215)	44(176)	52(156)	29(87)	124(124)	685	23.46	I
Top level positions require good networking. Hence not suitable for women	37(185)	13(52)	41(123)	53(159)	148(148)	614	21.03	II
Top level positions involve politics. Hence not suitable for women	32(160)	20(80)	31(93)	65(195)	144(144)	607	20.79	IV

Lack of past performance accomplishments, insufficient vicarious learning opportunities and the absence of verbal persuasion and encouragement from others in society such as teachers, parents, mentors of counsellors can affect career self-efficacy negatively (Betz & Hackett, 1981)¹⁴.

The results of the present study indicate how strongly women are affected by the stereotypes. Throughout their life, women believed that men are more strong and capable and possessed leadership qualities. They also believed women fit well in the social and service oriented jobs and men are more suitable for leadership positions. Respondents believed that women are not good at networking and hence are not suitable for leadership positions. Literature reveals that the leadership self-efficacy levels can be enhanced to make women realize their capabilities and perform well in the leadership positions.

The results of the present study – women do not want to take risks in the profession, lack of networking skills and men are better managers than women indicate low confidence levels of respondents. Network in refer to the development and use of career relevant contacts, especially with high-ranking officials. Exchange of valuable strategic information concerning new positions, ongoing projects and managerial decisions takes place through these networks. Study reveals that women have limited opportunities to connect with high-ranking individuals and develop social networks. Limited access to such networks would reduce the chances of getting promoted and lead to a perception of glass ceiling (Brass, 1985)¹⁵.

Confidence Levels

The researcher further explored to know in which of the tasks, the respondents can more confidently discharge. The results are presented in Table No.8

Table No.9 - Confidence levels of the respondents about various tasks

5= Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Neutral; 2=Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree

Sl.No	Task	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Average %	Rank
1	Taking Decisions at Home	58(290)	107(428)	109(327)	11(22)	7(7)	1074	36.78	VIII
2	Taking decisions at Work	73(365)	142(568)	69(207)	5(10)	3(3)	1153	39.48	V
3	Helping the Users	90(450)	131(524)	67(201)	4(8)	-	1185	40.58	IV
4	Communicating with Management	107(535)	116(464)	66(198)	3(6)	-	1401	48.97	I
5	Dealing with Superiors	78(390)	130(520)	75(150)	5(10)	4(4)	1049	35.92	IX
6	Dealing with Subordinates	80(400)	117(468)	82(245)	10(20)	3(3)	1137	38.93	VII
7	Using Computers at work	108(540)	108(432)	64 (192)	10(20)	22)	1186	40.61	III
8	Negotiating with Vendors	45(225)	90(360)	105(315)	35(70)		987	33.80	X
9	Teaching Assignments	43(215)	88(352)	103(309)	30(60)	28(28)	964	33.01	XI
10	Maintenance of Records	109(545)	103(412)	71(213)	9(18)	-	1188	40.68	II
11	Leadership Skills	102(510)	87(348)	92(276)	5(10)	6(6)	1150	39.38	VI

In the work front, respondents opined that they are more confident in – communicating with the management (47.44) followed by Maintenance of Records (40.68) and Using computers at work (40.61). Respondents need to improve their skills in dealing with users, subordinates, superiors, leadership skills and taking decisions at home.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

H₀1: There is no significant difference between Years of Experience and Work-life Balance reported by Women LIS Professionals

CHI SQUARE Test is used to test this Null Hypothesis. The chi-square values are presented in the following Table.

Table No. 10 : Chi-Square values for Hypothesis-1

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	49.284 ^a	24	.002
Likelihood Ratio	49.917	24	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	.698	1	.403
N of Valid Cases	290		

The Chi-square value is 49.284 and its significance value is 0.002 at 95% Confidence level. Since the value is less than 0.05, the Hypothesis is rejected. That means there is significant difference between the number of years of experience and Work-life Balance achieved by the respondents.

As seniority increases, the family life also will stabilize. When children become independent, women are likely to lessen their family burden and also experience will make women adjust and become more accommodative to their responsibilities at home and in the work front.

H₀2: There is no significant variation in the Organizational Barriers reported by the respondents by their Age.

Table No. 11 : Chi-Square values for Hypothesis-2

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.132	12	.020
Likelihood Ratio	24.483	12	.017
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.861	1	.015
N of Valid Cases	291		

The Chi-square value is 24.132 and its significance value is 0.020 at 95% Confidence level. Since the value is less than 0.05, the Hypothesis is rejected. That means there is significant difference between the Age and Organizational Barriers reported by the respondents.

H₀3: Findings presented in Table No.4 suggest that Women are constrained by family responsibilities including Child rearing, work-life balance and other cultural barriers. Thus Hypothesis **H₀3** is accepted.

FINDINGS

Findings of the study are summarized as follows:

Analysis reveals that women constitute less than one fourths (24.33%) of the total employees. In Government Degree College libraries it is still less with only 16.67% women working in Libraries. In Junior College Libraries also women representation is only 27.77%.

Majority (42.12%) respondents are in the age group of 31-40 years and 84.59% are married. There is very low representation of SC (21.24%) and ST (16.44%) Females in LIS Jobs. While most women have Post Graduate and MLISC. Qualifications, the percentage of women possessing Ph.D. Qualification is only 2.73%. Majority of the

respondents (51.37%) are working in middle level management positions and only 16.78% are in top level management positions.

Less than one quarter of the respondents 21.93% are holding permanent positions while 63.01% are working on Time-Scale basis.

More than one fourth respondents i.e., 34.25% respondents faced career interruptions. Nearly 22% suffered delay in promotions; 16% were subjected to delay in increments.

Lack of educational opportunities and training compared to men, Striking a balance between work and family life followed by 'Child birth and child rearing practices'-respectively are ranked as the most three important individual barriers to career progression.

More than half of the respondents (57.2%) received positive support from their family in discharging their work life responsibilities. Nearly 39% respondents were neutral and only 3.4% stated negative family support.

Twenty percent respondents can manage work-life balance to the 'Full Extent', and another 19.2% respondents responded to a 'Large Extent' followed by 36.4% responding that they are able to strike a balance between the two to 'Some Extent'. Considerable percent of the respondents (16.5%) expressed that it is not 'up to the mark' and 7.2% said they are not able to strike a balance between family and work life.

'Gender Discrimination', 'Sexual Harassment' at workplace' followed by Lack of women representation in various committees, Lack of recognition and Training are the major organizational barriers reported by women.

Respondents exhibited low levels of self-efficacy. This shows that women are influenced by gender stereotypes and are not interested in building networks or relationship that are crucial for career progression.

Test of Hypotheses-1 revealed that there is significant difference between the experience of the respondents and the work-life balance achieved by them as indicated by the chi-square value. Test of Hypotheses-2 indicated that there is significant variation between the Age of the respondents and the organizational barriers reported by them as indicated by the chi-square values. Hypothesis-3 is accepted because findings in Table-4 confirm that women are constrained by individual barriers that include family responsibilities and other cultural barriers.

Study also finds that the confidence levels of women LIS professionals in building leadership skills, communication with vendors, taking decisions at home and work are low.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results, it is apparent that the position of women LIS professionals needs improvement not only in terms of representation in numbers but also enhancement in their self efficacy and attitude towards their careers. The following suggestions are made based on the study.

- Improve the representation of women in leadership positions by adopting gender equality practices in the recruitment and promotional processes.
- Provide appropriate training and motivation to women LIS professionals to promote Leadership Self-Efficacy skills
- Organizations should build appropriate structures to avoid gender discrimination, gender stereotyping and sexual harassment at workplace
- Organizations should create effective structures and mechanisms to support women professionals to achieve work-life balance.

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