

Research Article

Perceived Job Security and Factors Affecting Job Opportunities in the LIS Profession: A Study of Select University Libraries in Uttar Pradesh

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A B S T R A C T

The present study aims to assess employment dynamics in the LIS field, focusing on the relationship between professional experience and designation, perceptions of the job security, and the perceived impact of external factors such as government policies, budget constraints, and technological changes. A well-structured questionnaire has been used for data collection in both online and offline mode using purposive sampling. A sample size of 100 have been taken who are working in the University Library of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi and the University of Lucknow, Lucknow. And, out of which 63 respondents are given responses through printed questionnaire/google form. Further, the analysis made on the basis of collected data.

Keywords: Lis Jobs, Job Trends, Job Security, Factors Affecting Job, Job Opportunities

Introduction

The field of LIS is undergoing a marked transformation shaped by the expanding influence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This shift is redefining the nature of employment in LIS, with a transition from traditional roles toward more technologically-driven functions. However, the rate and extent of this transformation are not uniform across different regions and institutions. While some environments are rapidly adopting new digital practices, others continue to grapple with outdated systems and practices. Challenges such as institutional inertia, limited visibility of job opportunities, and informal job dissemination processes contribute to uncertainties in LIS career pathways, particularly for early-career professionals.

In light of these developments, the present study investigates the employment dynamics within the LIS profession by focusing on three key areas: the association between professional designation and years of experience, perceived job security, and the influence of external factors such as government policy, funding, and technological change on job opportunities. By examining responses from LIS professionals working in university libraries across four prominent institutions in Uttar Pradesh: Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi and the University of Lucknow, Lucknow. This study aims to provide ac-

tionable insights that can inform curriculum reform, skill development, and policy decisions within the LIS employment landscape.

Review of Literature

The available literature on LIS employment and job opportunities reveals a global convergence toward technology-driven roles, yet significant disparities remain across regions. ICT has profoundly redefined LIS job profiles, with increasing emphasis on digital competencies, as highlighted in India and globally.^{1,2} In South Africa, job roles remain static, while Pakistan navigates a shift from traditional to emerging roles amid curriculum misalignments.^{3,4,5} In India, it showed that although LIS education spans a wide spectrum, it often lacks alignment with practical market needs echoed and note the growing gap between graduate output and job availability.^{6,7,8} Further complicating employability are systemic issues such as limited visibility of job opportunities and institutional inertia affecting professional satisfaction.^{9,10,11}

The present study highlights the need for curriculum reform and the integration of ICT skills in LIS education; few studies offer empirical models for bridging the academia-industry gap. Additionally, limited research has explored how informal job dissemination methods impact employment equity, especially for early-career professionals. Future work should investigate scalable policy frameworks and technology-enabled placement systems that ensure both job accessibility and alignment of LIS education with industry demands.

Objectives

The main objectives of the present study are:

- To examine whether a significant association exists between the designation of library practitioners and their years of professional experience.
- To assess the average perceived job security of LIS careers among library professionals.
- To evaluate the extent to which different factors (e.g., government policies, budget constraints, technological advancements, user expectations, and competition) are perceived to affect LIS job opportunities.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

- H_{01} : There is no significant association between designation and experience.
- H_{11} : There is a significant association between designation and experience.

Hypothesis 2

- H_{02} : There is no significant difference between the average perceived job security of LIS careers.
- H_{12} : There is a significant difference between the average perceived job security of LIS careers.

Hypothesis 3

- H_{03} : There is no significant difference in how respondents perceive the impact of different factors on LIS job opportunities.
- H_{13} : There is a significant difference in perceptions among the five factors.

Methodology

The present study is based on the survey to explore the employment trends in LIS field. A well-structured questionnaire has been used for data collection in both online and offline mode. A sample size of 100 have been selected with the help of purposive sampling who are working in the University Library of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi and the University of Lucknow, Lucknow. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed out of which 63 respondents returned the printed questionnaire and filled-out the google form. The data collected by means of questionnaires and google form is analyzed using Microsoft-Excel and is interpreted using Microsoft-Word and represented through tables and graphs.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Here, F denotes Frequency and P denotes Percentage.

Table I.Designation/Experience-wise Distribution

Designation ↓ / Experience →	0-5 Years		5-10 Years		10-15 Years		15-20 Years		20+ Years		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Assistant Librarian	5	55.56%	3	23.08%	2	13.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	10	15.87%
Cataloguer	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	5.88%	1	1.59%
Deputy Librarian/ Deputy Director/ Deputy Manager	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	11.11%	4	23.53%	5	7.94%
Library Assistant/ Library Attendant	0	0.00%	10	76.92%	8	53.33%	3	33.33%	0	0.00%	21	33.33%
Professional Assistant	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	6.67%	3	33.33%	6	35.29%	10	15.87%
Semi-Professional Assistant	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	26.67%	2	22.22%	6	35.29%	12	19.05%
Others	4	44.44%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	6.35%
Total	9	100.00%	13	100.00%	15	100.00%	9	100.00%	17	100.00%	63	100.00%

Table 1 presents a cross-tabulation of library professionals' designations by their years of experience, showing both frequency (F) and percentage (P) distributions across experience categories. Among professionals with 0–5 years of experience (n = 9), the majority are Assistant Librarians (55.56%) and Others (44.44%), indicating entry-level roles dominate this early-career group. In the 5–10 years' experience bracket (n = 13), Library Assistants/Attendants dominate (76.92%), suggesting this role often reflects mid-junior tenure. The 10–15 years group (n = 15) is more diversified: Library Assistants still lead (53.33%), but Semi-Professional Assistants (26.67%) and Assistant Librarians (13.33%) also feature, showing a gradual shift upward in roles. In the 15–20 years category (n = 9), Professional Assistants and Library Assistants are equally represented (33.33% each), and Semi-Professional Assistants make up 22.22%, showing greater role mobility and professional progression. For those with 20+ years of experience (n = 17), Professional Assistants (35.29%), Semi-Professional Assistants (35.29%), and Deputy Librarians/Directors/Managers (23.53%) dominate, indicating that high tenure corresponds with elevated responsibilities. Notably, Cataloguers are absent in all categories except one instance in the 20+ years group, highlighting the rarity of that role. Overall, the largest group in the sample is Library Assistants (33.33%), followed by Semi-Professional Assistants (19.05%) and Assistant Librarians and Professional Assistants (each 15.87%). The data reflect a clear pattern of hierarchical progression with increasing experience and a concentration of senior designations among long-serving professionals.

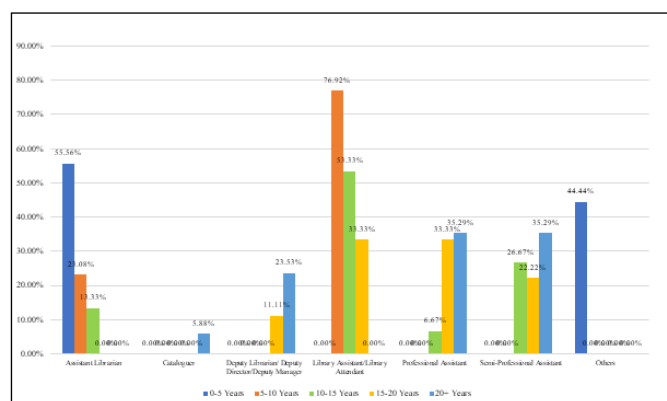


Figure 2.Perceptions of Job Security

Testing of Hypothesis I

- H_{01} : There is no significant association between designation and experience.
- H_{11} : There is a significant association between designation and experience

Table 1.1 Designation/Experience-wise Distribution for Hypothesis H0I and H1I Testing

Designation ↓ / Experience →	0–5 Years	5–10 Years	10–15 Years	15–20 Years	20+ Years	Total
Assistant Librarian	8.92	0.43	0.06	1.43	2.70	13.54
Cataloguer	0.14	0.21	0.24	0.14	1.98	2.71
Deputy Librarian	0.71	1.03	1.19	0.11	5.21	8.25
Library Assistant	3	7.41	1.80	0.00	5.67	17.88
Professional Assistant	1.43	2.06	0.80	1.73	4.04	10.06
Semi-Professional Assistant	1.71	2.48	0.46	0.05	2.36	7.06
Others	20.57	0.83	0.95	0.57	1.08	24.00
Total	36.48	14.45	5.50	4.03	23.04	83.50
Chi-Square Statistic (χ^2) = 83.50	Degree of Freedom = 6			p-value = 1.67×10^{-8} = 0.0000000167		

The hypothesis test examines the association between designation and experience level among library staff. The null hypothesis (H_{01}) states that there is no significant association between an individual's job designation (e.g., Assistant Librarian, Cataloguer, etc.) and their years of professional experience. In contrast, the alternative hypothesis (H_{11}) asserts that there is a significant association; meaning certain designations are more likely to be held by individuals with specific experience levels. Table 1.1 provides a detailed cross-tabulation showing the distribution of designations across different experience brackets, with column totals indicating the overall frequency within each experience level, and row totals showing the total per designation. The statistical output reveals a Chi-square statistic (χ^2) of 83.50, with 6 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 1.67×10^{-8} , which is extremely small (essentially 0).

Since, the p-value is much less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis. This indicates a statistically significant association between designation and experience. In practical terms, this means an individual's professional experience strongly influences and is associated with the designation they hold, confirming that roles in the library system are distributed non-randomly with respect to years of experience.

Table 2. Perceptions of Job Security

Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Neutral (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Total
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	
1	LIS professionals have stable job opportunities with strong demand.	2	13.33%	5	7.14%	18	15.25%	27	12.33%	11	13.41%	63
2	LIS jobs are relatively stable, with consistent employment opportunities.	0	0.00%	6	8.57%	14	11.86%	35	15.98%	8	9.76%	63
3	LIS careers offer stability, but competition and budget constraints can be challenges.	0	0.00%	9	12.86%	17	14.41%	27	12.33%	10	12.20%	63

4	LIS job security depends on factors like institution type, location, and technological advancements.	1	6.67%	3	4.29%	10	8.87%	37	16.89%	12	14.63%	63
5	Job opportunities exist, but professionals must continuously upskill to stay relevant.	0	0.00%	2	2.86%	13	11.02%	28	12.79%	20	24.39%	63
6	LIS jobs are decreasing due to automation, budget cuts, and shifting priorities in institutions.	3	20.00%	15	21.43%	15	12.71%	22	10.05%	8	9.76%	63
7	LIS careers are highly uncertain, with fewer opportunities and increasing competition from other fields.	4	26.67%	16	22.86%	13	11.02%	25	11.42%	5	6.10%	63
8	I don't have enough information or experience to determine job security in LIS.	5	33.33%	14	20.00%	18	15.25%	18	8.22%	8	9.76%	63
Total		15	100.00%	70	100.00%	118	100.00%	219	100.00%	82	100.00%	504

The perception of job security in LIS careers, as reflected in the responses of 63 participants across 8 statements, reveals a nuanced and divided outlook. While a considerable number of respondents express optimism about job stability, such as in statement 2 where 35 participants (15.98%) agree and 8 (9.76%) strongly agree that LIS jobs are relatively stable, this confidence is tempered by significant concerns. For instance, in statement 1, although 27 (12.33%) agree and 11 (13.41%) strongly agree that LIS professionals have stable opportunities, a substantial portion remains neutral (18 responses or 15.25%) or disagrees (7 combined responses or ~20.47%), showing uncertainty or skepticism. Similarly, statement 5 emphasizes the need for continuous upskilling, with 28 agreeing (12.79%) and 20 (24.39%) strongly agreeing—this indicates widespread acknowledgment that staying relevant in LIS careers requires proactive professional development. The challenges of competition and budget constraints are acknowledged in statement 3, where nearly half of participants either agree (27, 12.33%) or strongly agree (10, 12.20%) that such factors impact job stability. Notably, statement 4 underlines the conditional nature of job security, with the highest agreement (37, 16.89%) among all items, and 12 (14.63%) strongly agreeing that factors like location, institution type, and technology influence stability. Yet, pessimistic views are also pronounced: 20% and 21.43% strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, with the idea that LIS jobs aren't decreasing (statement 6), while 26.67% strongly disagreed and 22.86% disagreed with the idea that LIS careers are not highly uncertain (statement 7), highlighting real fears of decline due to automation, competition, and institutional shifts. Lastly, statement 8 reflects lack of awareness or experience, with 33.33% strongly disagreeing and 20% disagreeing with having enough information pointing to either early-career respondents or those outside LIS. Overall, the data reflects a bifurcated perspective: while a portion of respondents see LIS careers as stable with growth potential especially when professionals remain adaptable there remains a significant undercurrent of insecurity tied to external pressures and changing professional landscapes.

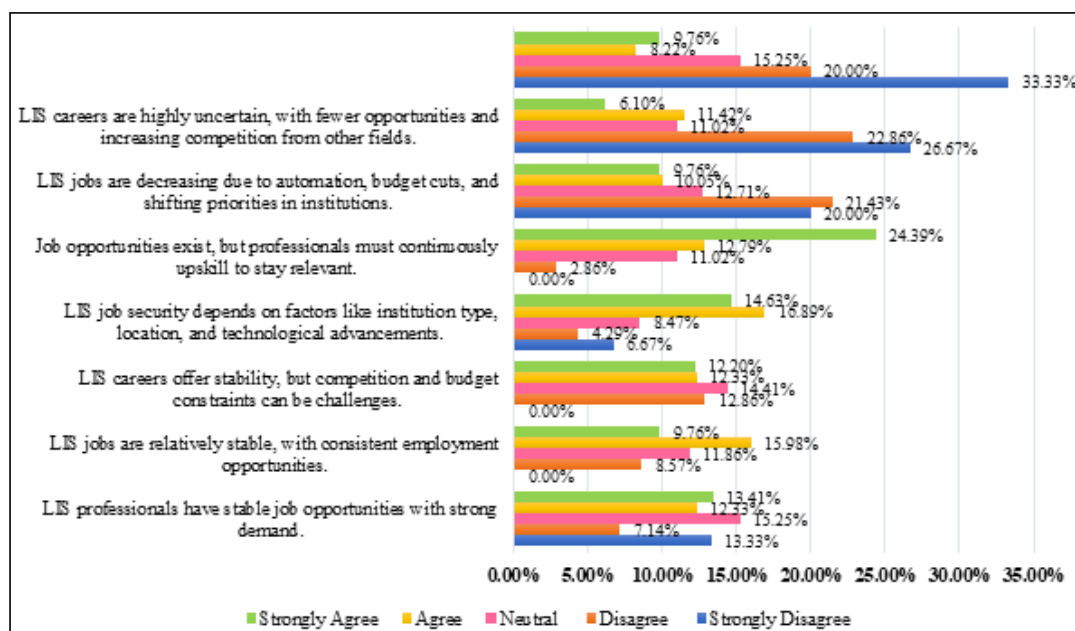


Figure 2. Perceptions of Job Security

Testing of Hypothesis 2

- H_{02} : There is no significant difference between the average perceived job security of LIS careers.
- H_{12} : There is a significant difference between the average perceived job security of LIS careers.

Table 2.1 One-Way Anova Summary Table For Hypothesis H02 And H12

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Statistic	F-Critical
Between Groups	48.77	7	6.9678	7.3608	2.0096
Within Groups	469.52	496	0.9466	-	-
Total	518.29	503	-	-	-

The critical value of F-statistic from the F-distribution table at 0.05 level of significance is given as; $F_{\text{critical}(0.05, 7, 496)} \approx 2.0096$

Here, $F\text{-statistic} > F_{\text{critical}(0.05, 7, 496)}$ i.e. $7.3608 > 2.0096$

Since, $F\text{-statistic} = 7.3608$ which is greater than $F\text{-critical} = 2.0096$, it falls in the rejection region. Hence, we will reject the null hypothesis i.e. H_{02} and accept the alternate hypothesis i.e. H_{12} , which indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the average perceived job security of LIS careers.

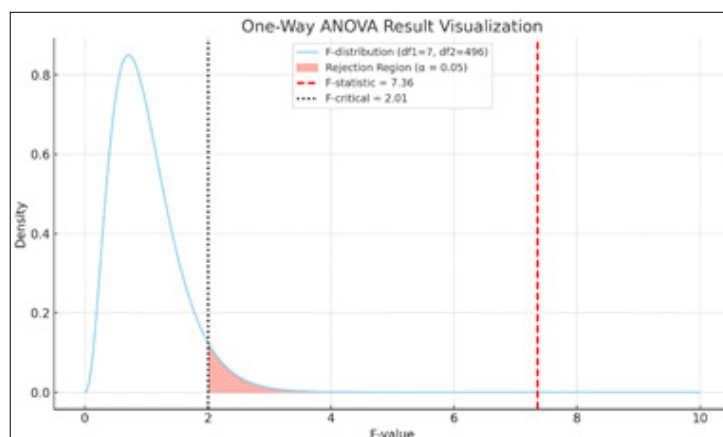


Figure 3. One-way ANOVA Result Visualization

Table 3.Factors Affecting Job Opportunities

Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Dissatisfied (1)		Dissatisfied (2)		Neutral (3)		Satisfied (4)		Strongly Satisfied (5)		Total
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	
1.	Government Policies	4	33.33%	3	9.09%	18	26.09%	19	13.67%	19	30.65%	63
2.	Budget Constraints	2	16.67%	6	18.18%	17	24.64%	26	18.71%	12	19.35%	63
3.	Technological Advancements	1	8.33%	5	15.15%	12	17.39%	37	26.62%	8	12.90%	63
4.	Changing user expectations	2	16.67%	8	24.24%	10	14.49%	29	20.86%	14	22.58%	63
5.	Competition from other fields	3	25.00%	11	33.33%	12	17.39%	28	20.14%	9	14.52%	63
Total		12	100.00%	33	100.00%	69	100.00%	139	100.00%	62	100.00%	315

The data in Table 3 Factors Affecting Job Opportunities presents how 315 respondents perceived five key factors influencing LIS job opportunities across a five-point satisfaction scale. Government Policies elicited the highest polarization, with 33.33% strongly dissatisfied and 30.65% strongly satisfied, indicating a split in opinion. Budget Constraints had relatively balanced responses, with a notable 26 respondents (18.71%) satisfied, while 24.64% remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or moderation in opinion. For Technological Advancements, the largest share of respondents (37 individuals or 26.62%) were satisfied, indicating positive sentiment, and only 1 respondent (8.33%) was strongly dissatisfied, showing overall favorability. Changing User Expectations saw 29 respondents (20.86%) expressing satisfaction, while 24.24% were dissatisfied and 22.58% strongly satisfied, reflecting a mix of concern and optimism. In contrast, Competition from Other Fields had the highest dissatisfaction, with 33.33% dissatisfied and 25% strongly dissatisfied, suggesting this factor is widely seen as a threat. The total responses across all categories were evenly distributed, reinforcing the statistical ANOVA finding that there is no significant difference in perception across these factors. Each factor had exactly 63 respondents, contributing to a grand total of 315 responses, maintaining uniformity in response distribution across the five-point Likert scale.

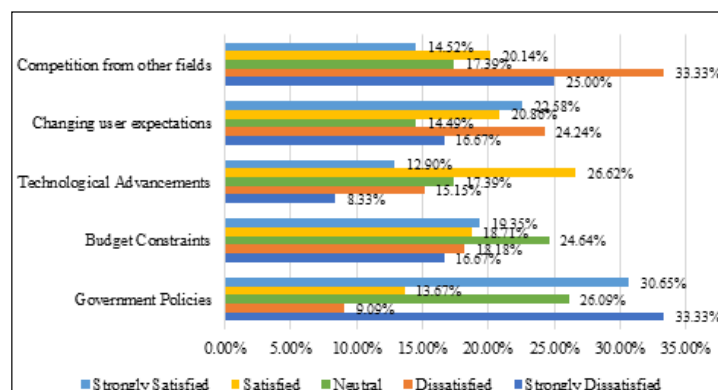


Figure 4.Factors Affecting Job Opportunities

Testing of Hypothesis 3

- H_{03} : There is no significant difference in how respondents perceive the impact of different factors on LIS job opportunities.
- H_{13} : There is a significant difference in how respondents perceive the impact of different factors on LIS job opportunities.

Table 3.1 One-way ANOVA summary Table for Hypothesis H03 and H13

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Statistic	F-Critical
Between Groups	3.35	4	0.8365	0.7860	2.3719
Within Groups	329.94	310	1.0643	-	-
Total	333.29	314	-	-	-

The critical value of F-statistic from the F-distribution table at 0.05 level of significance is given as; $F_{\text{critical}(0.05,4,310)} \approx 2.3719$
Here, $F\text{-statistic} < F_{\text{critical}(0.05,4,310)}$ i.e. $0.7860 < 2.3719$

Since, $F\text{-statistic} = 0.7860$ is less than the $F\text{-critical} = 2.3719$ and lies outside the critical region. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. And, there is a significant difference in how respondents perceive the impact of different factors on LIS job opportunities. This means the differences observed in the perception scores are likely due to chance rather than a real difference in the underlying populations.

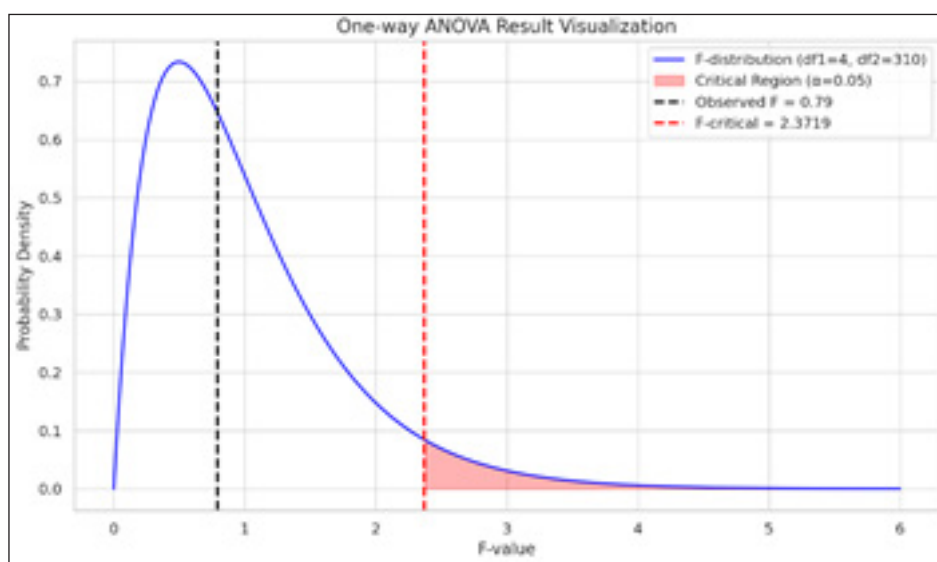


Figure 5. One-way ANOVA Result Visualization

Key Findings

Association Between Designation and Experience

Chi-Square Test Result:

$$\chi^2 = 83.50, df = 6, p\text{-value} = 0.0000000167$$

Decision: Reject H_{01}

There is a statistically significant association between designation and years of professional experience. Higher experience is strongly linked to elevated positions (e.g., Deputy Librarians and Professional Assistants), whereas entry-level roles are more common among those with fewer years in the field.

Perceived Job Security in LIS Careers

One-way ANOVA Result:

- $F = 7.3608$, $F\text{-critical} = 2.0096$
- Decision: Reject H_{02}

- There is a significant difference in how library professionals perceive job security.
- Many agreed LIS jobs offer relative stability, especially when professionals continually upskill.
- However, automation, competition, and budget cuts were commonly cited concerns.
- Statement 4 (job security depends on institution/location/tech) received the highest agreement.

Perceived Impact of Key Factors on LIS Job Opportunities

One-way ANOVA Result:

- $F = 0.7860$, $F\text{-critical} = 2.3719$
- **Decision:** Fail to reject H_{03}
- There is no statistically significant difference in how respondents perceive the impact of government policies, budget constraints, technological advancements, user expectations, and competition on LIS job opportunities. In other words, respondents view all five factors as nearly equally influential.
- Designation Progression: A clear hierarchy is seen junior roles dominate at early career stages, while senior designations align with greater years of service.
- Role Distribution: Library Assistants form the largest proportion of the workforce (33.33%), indicating their critical operational role in university libraries.
- Perception on Upskilling: A strong sentiment emerged that continuous professional development is essential to remain relevant in LIS.

Conclusion

The present study set out to explore key employment dynamics within the field of LIS, focusing on the association between designation and experience, perceptions of job security and the perceived impact of various external factors on LIS job opportunities.

Firstly, the analysis of designation and experience using the Chi-square test yielded a statistically significant result ($\chi^2 = 83.50$, $p < 0.00000002$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{01}). This indicates a strong association between professional designation and years of experience among LIS practitioners. The data clearly suggest a hierarchical progression pattern, where designations such as Deputy Librarian or Professional Assistant are predominantly held by those with longer tenures, while junior roles like Library Assistant are more common among those with fewer years of experience.

Secondly, perceptions of job security were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA. The test produced an F-statistic of 7.3608, exceeding the critical value ($F\text{-critical} = 2.0096$). This result led to the rejection of the second null hypothesis (H_{02}), indicating that there is a statistically significant difference in how respondents perceive the job security of LIS careers. While some respondents expressed confidence in the stability of LIS roles, many highlighted ongoing challenges such as technological disruption, institutional priorities, and the need for continuous upskilling.

Finally, regarding the third objective, an ANOVA test was applied to determine whether respondents perceived the impact of five key factors such as government policies, budget constraints, technological advancements, user expectations, and competition differently in terms of their effect on LIS job opportunities. The analysis revealed an F-value of 0.7860, which is lower than the critical value of 2.3719. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) was not rejected. This suggests that the respondents' perceptions of these influencing factors do not significantly differ, implying a relatively uniform outlook across all five domains.

In conclusion, the study confirms a significant alignment between experience and job designation in the LIS field and highlights meaningful differences in perceptions of job security. However, perceptions regarding the external factors affecting job opportunities appear statistically similar. These findings emphasize the importance of experience in career progression, the need to address growing concerns about job security, and a holistic approach to tackling external pressures in LIS employment trends.

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