

# IASLIC Bulletin as a Channel of Research Communication: A Bibliometric Analysis (1956-2016)

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## INTRODUCTION

**Abstract:** The present study investigates the research productivity and scholarly trajectory of the IASLIC Bulletin, a leading journal in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS), over a sixty-one-year period from 1956 to 2016. The primary objective is to evaluate the journal's academic impact, discern publication trends, and understand the evolving patterns of research communication within the LIS domain. This bibliometric analysis draws upon data from the cumulative index "Sixty-One Years of IASLIC Bulletin: A Cumulative Index, 1956-2016", serving as the primary data source. Employing both statistical methods and visualization tools, the study examines core bibliometric indicators such as annual publication output, authorship trends, and patterns of research collaboration. The findings reveal a steady increase in the volume of published articles over the decades, reflecting the journal's sustained relevance and the dynamic nature of LIS research in India. Notably, single-author contributions constitute the majority of publications, highlighting the tradition of individual scholarship in the field. However, a discernible rise in co-authored papers in recent years signals a shift toward collaborative research practices, aligning with global trends in academic publishing. This study offers a comprehensive and focused analysis of a single journal's bibliometric profile, thereby filling a critical gap in LIS literature. The rigorous methodology—featuring systematic data extraction and quantitative evaluation—lends credibility and replicability to the research. Beyond its retrospective assessment, the study highlights the IASLIC Bulletin's pivotal role in disseminating LIS knowledge and fostering academic discourse over the past six decades. The insights derived are pertinent for LIS researchers, policy-makers, and information professionals aiming to map scholarly communication patterns or inform strategic publishing practices. By charting the journal's evolution and scholarly contributions, this research advances our understanding of the publication's influence within the Indian LIS community and contributes a valuable resource for further bibliometric inquiry and academic planning in the discipline.

**Keywords:** Scholarly Journal, IASLIC Bulletin, Bibliometric, Research Productivity, Impact

The IASLIC Bulletin is a quarterly publication of the Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres (IASLIC), Kolkata, which is one of India's leading professional associations. The first issue of Bulletin was published in 1956. Since then, it has been a valuable source of information and knowledge for library and information science professionals in the field. It aims to promote the development and dissemination of library and information science, providing a platform for professionals to share their research findings, practical experiences, and perspectives on various aspects of the field. It covers many topics, including library management, information technology, information retrieval, bibliometrics, knowledge management, and other related fields.

The IASLIC Bulletin publishes articles written by Indian and international authors, providing a global perspective on library and information science. The articles are peer-reviewed, ensuring that the content is of high quality and meets field standards. In addition to research articles, the IASLIC Bulletin also publishes book reviews, conference reports, and news and announcements related to the field. These sections provide valuable information to professionals, helping them remain up-to-date with the latest trends and developments in the field. Another important aspect of the IASLIC Bulletin is its focus on practical applications of research findings. Articles published in the Bulletin often provide insights and recommendations that can be applied in real-world settings, helping professionals in their daily work. For example, an article might provide tips on improving the user experience of a library's online catalog or suggest strategies for promoting information literacy among students.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A comprehensive literature review provides the foundation for this study by critically evaluating prior research on bibliometric analyses in library and information science (LIS) journals. This section begins with a broad overview of single journal studies, before focusing on specific research that informs the present study.

Bibliometric analyses have been widely used to examine LIS journals, particularly in terms of authorship patterns, citation trends, and journal impact. One of the earliest studies in this domain was conducted by Meadow (1979), who analyzed the Journal of the American Society

for Information Science (JASIS) and highlighted author characteristics and citation patterns. Meadow expanded this investigation to include ten other information science journals and provided comparative insights. Similarly, Lajeunesse (1981) conducted an analytical study of the French-language journal *Documentation et Bibliothèques*, offering a historical perspective on its content and evolution. Further historical examinations include Cline (1982), who analyzed *College & Research Libraries* (CARL) from 1939 to 1979, focusing on its publication and citation patterns. Metz (1989) extended Cline's work by updating selected aspects of the analysis until 1988. Similarly, Mishra (1990) studied articles published in the *IASLIC Bulletin* (1984–1988), contributing insights into the characteristics of this Indian LIS journal's publications. Subramaniam (1992) explored the bibliometric aspects of *Library Science with a Slant to Documentation and Information Studies* from 1981 to 1990. Several researchers have emphasized the importance of single journal studies in providing an in-depth understanding of publication impact. Bonnevie et al. (2006) underscored the significance of such studies in offering a detailed view of journal characteristics and trends. Expanding the scope, Utap-Anyia et al. (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of 82 bibliometric studies published between 1998 and 2008 across disciplines. Their study highlighted the geographic distribution of research, with a notable concentration of Asian and African journals and significant contributions from Indian researchers.

Within the African context, Tella and Olaboye (2014) analyzed the *African Journal of Library, Archives, and Information Science* from 2000 to 2012, highlighting publication trends and authorship patterns. Similarly, Prieto-Gutiérrez and Segado-Boj (2019) examined research published in the *Annals of Library and Information Studies* (ALIS), an India-based journal between 2011 and 2017. Their study provides valuable insights into the scholarly contributions of this journal. More recently, Mokhtari et al. (2020) performed a bibliometric analysis and visualization of the *Journal of Documentation* from 1945 to 2018, offering a comprehensive overview of the publication trends. These studies contribute to a broader understanding of LIS journal characteristics, including authorship trends, publication outputs, international contributions, subject coverage, and citation analyses. This review highlights significant gaps in the literature, particularly in cross-journal comparative studies and evolving research trends over an extended period. Building on these foundations, the present study aims to further elucidate the development and impact of LIS journals in the global academic landscape.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on a single data source, that is, the Compendium entitled "**Sixty-One Years of 'IASLIC Bulletin': A Cumulative Index, 1956–2016**," published in 2018 by the IASLIC. This study primarily relied on the data presented in Chapters 1, 2, and 4. Focusing on these chapters, this study aims to collect comprehensive data on the authors and subjects covered in the Bulletin over 61 years. Chapter 1 provides bibliographic descriptions of the Bulletin, Chapter 2 contains an author index, and Chapter 4 includes a subject index. The manual counting method was used to collect data from the previous chapters. This study was solely based on the data presented in this book, and no other sources were used. Therefore, the accuracy and

completeness of this study were entirely dependent on the reliability of the data source.

## OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- to examine the decade-wise growth of the IASLIC Bulletin.
- to analyze the most prolific authors, authorship, and collaboration patterns.
- to determine the research hotspot areas.
- to identify the distribution of page numbers.

## RESULTS

The results section should present the study's key findings, usually in the form of tables, figures, or charts, accompanied by a brief description and interpretation of the results.

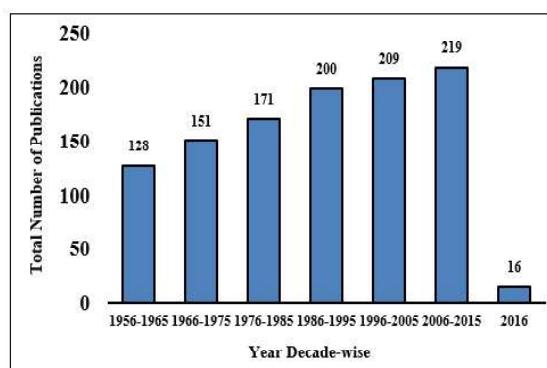
### Growth of IASLIC Bulletin

The data presented in Table 1 indicate the decade-wise publication growth of the IASLIC Bulletin, in which the period from 2006 to 2015 witnessed the highest number of publications, with a total of 219 publications, which accounted for 20.02% of the overall publications. This was followed by the decades 1996-2005 and 1986-1995, with a total publication count of 209 (19.10%) and 200 (18.28%), respectively. The decade from 1956-1965 was found to be the least productive, with a total publication count of 128 (11.70%). The year 2016 is the only year that is not considered in the decadal count, which published only 16 publications. The year 2016 published only 16 publications, a lone year not included in the decadal count. Figure 1 displays the decade-wise growth of IASLIC publications, highlighting the trends in research output over the years. On average, 180 publications were published per decade during the study period of 1956-2015, excluding 2016, as indicated by the arithmetic mean of decade-wise publications, which was 179.66. These findings highlight the trends in research output over the years and provide insights into the productivity of the research community during different periods of time.

**Table 1:Decade-wise publications growth of IASLIC Bulletin (1956-2016)**

| Decade-wise  | TP          | %          | CNP  | Cumulative % |
|--------------|-------------|------------|------|--------------|
| 1956-1965    | 128         | 11.7       | 128  | 11.7         |
| 1966-1975    | 151         | 13.8       | 279  | 25.5         |
| 1976-1985    | 171         | 15.63      | 450  | 41.13        |
| 1986-1995    | 200         | 18.28      | 650  | 59.41        |
| 1996-2005    | 209         | 19.1       | 859  | 78.52        |
| 2006-2015    | 219         | 20.02      | 1078 | 98.54        |
| 2016         | 16          | 1.46       | 1094 | 100          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1094</b> | <b>100</b> |      |              |

*Note: TP = Total Number of Publications; CNP = Cumulative Number of Publications*



**Figure 1: Decade-wise growth of IASLIC Bulletin (1956-2016)**

#### Prolific authors

Table 2 presents an overview of the top five most prolific authors who have contributed significantly to document publications from 1956 to 2016. The findings illustrate that Ranganathan SR has emerged as the most productive author with a Total Publications (TP) of 15, which amounts to a notable 1.37% of the overall publications of the IASLIC Bulletin. Following closely are three other authors, namely Chakravarty NC, Mukherjee AK, and Sengupta IN, with 10 publications each, constituting 0.91% of the total publications. The third spot was held by Maheshwarappa BS and Siridharappa MS, with a TP of eight each, equivalent to 0.73% of the total publications. These authors' contributions to the literature indicate their sustained interest, commitment, and productivity in the field of the IASLIC Bulletin. Their work has significantly contributed to the field's growth and set benchmarks for future researchers.

**Table 2: Top 5 Prolific Authors of the IASLIC Bulletin**

| Rank | Author              | TP | %    |
|------|---------------------|----|------|
| 1    | Ranganathan SR      | 15 | 1.37 |
| 2    | Chakravarty NC      | 10 | 0.91 |
| 2    | Mukherjee AK        | 10 | 0.91 |
| 2    | Sengupta IN         | 10 | 0.91 |
| 3    | Maheshwarappa BS    | 8  | 0.73 |
| 3    | Siridharappa MS     | 8  | 0.73 |
| 4    | Sengupta Benoyendra | 7  | 0.64 |
| 4    | Shah PC             | 7  | 0.64 |
| 4    | Subba Rao CV        | 7  | 0.64 |
| 5    | Banerjea BN         | 6  | 0.55 |
| 5    | Chatterjee Amitabha | 6  | 0.55 |
| 5    | Chowdhury GG        | 6  | 0.55 |
| 5    | Jeevan VKJ          | 6  | 0.55 |
| 5    | Kapoor SK           | 6  | 0.55 |

*Note: TP = Total Number of Publications*

#### Authorship pattern of IASLIC Bulletin

Table 3 provides a detailed analysis of authorship patterns in articles published in the IASLIS Bulletin during the study period. The table includes data from 1094 articles and

presents a comprehensive overview of trends in authorship patterns. The analysis revealed that most articles, comprising 757 (69.20%), had a single author, indicating low collaboration among authors in the IASLIC Bulletin. Two-author articles accounted for the next most frequent pattern, with 270 (24.68%) articles falling under this category. Three-author articles were relatively infrequent, accounting for only 60 (5.48%) of the articles. Finally, articles with more than three authors were extremely rare, with only seven (0.64%) articles falling under this category. Overall, the data suggest that the IASLIC Bulletin tends to publish articles with limited collaboration among authors, with a large proportion of articles written by a single author. The results highlight the need for more collaborative efforts among authors in the IASLIC Bulletin, which may lead to the publication of more diverse and innovative research. The editorial board may benefit from encouraging and facilitating collaborative authorship to enhance the quality and impact of published articles.

**Table 3: Authorship Patterns of IASLIC Bulletin**

| Authorship          | 1956-1965 | 1966-1975 | 1976-1985 | 1986-1995 | 1996-2005 | 2006-2015 | 2016 | TP   | %     |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|------|-------|
| Single              | 125       | 128       | 138       | 138       | 115       | 109       | 4    | 757  | 69.2  |
| 2 Authors           | 2         | 21        | 26        | 48        | 70        | 94        | 9    | 270  | 24.68 |
| 3 Authors           | 1         | 2         | 6         | 13        | 19        | 16        | 3    | 60   | 5.48  |
| More than 3 Authors | 0         | 0         | 1         | 1         | 5         | 0         | 0    | 7    | 0.64  |
| Total               | 128       | 151       | 171       | 200       | 209       | 219       | 16   | 1094 | 100   |

\*TP = Total number of Publications

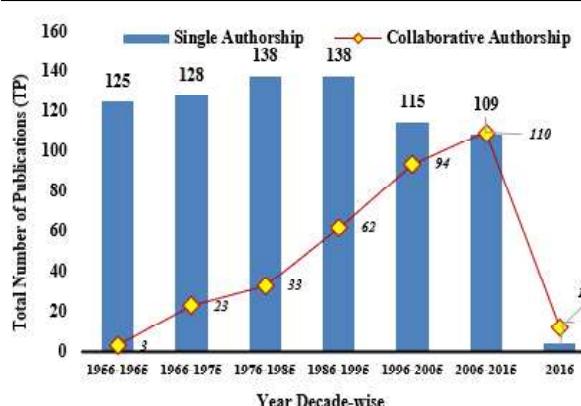
#### Single v/s Multiple authorship pattern

Table 4 and Figure 2 compare single and collaborative authorships in this study. The findings indicate that collaborative-authorship papers have fewer publications, comprising only 337 of the total 1094 publications.

**Table 4: Comparison between Single v/s Multiple Authorship Pattern**

| Year      | Single Authorship | %     | Collaborative Authorship | %     |
|-----------|-------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1956-1965 | 125               | 16.51 | 3                        | 0.89  |
| 1966-1975 | 128               | 16.91 | 23                       | 6.82  |
| 1976-1985 | 138               | 18.23 | 33                       | 9.79  |
| 1986-1995 | 138               | 18.23 | 62                       | 18.4  |
| 1996-2005 | 115               | 15.19 | 94                       | 27.89 |
| 2006-2015 | 109               | 14.4  | 110                      | 32.64 |
| 2016      | 4                 | 0.53  | 12                       | 3.56  |
| Total     | 757               | 100   | 337                      | 100   |

Conversely, single-authorship papers accounted for a substantial portion, with 757 publications out of the total 1094. These results show that single authorship is more prevalent in this field, whereas collaborative authorship is less common. This study underscores the importance of understanding authorship patterns to advance scholarly collaboration and improve academic output.



**Figure 2: Comparison between the Single v/s Multiple Authorship Pattern**

#### Degree of collaboration

K. Subramanyam (1983) proposed a formula to measure the level of collaboration within a scientific community. This approach provides a quantitative measure of the collaboration. It can be used to compare the level of collaboration across different scientific fields and communities. The formula calculates the degree of collaboration (DC) by dividing the number of papers with multiple authors (Nm) by the total number of papers, which is the sum of the papers with multiple authors and the papers with single authors (Ns), i.e.,

$$DC = \frac{Nm}{Nm + Ns}$$

$$DC = \frac{337}{337 + 757} = 0.308$$

The data show that multiple authors produced 30.80% of scientific papers, while 69.20% were single-authored, indicated by the result of 0.308. The low degree of collaboration among authors in scientific research limits the scope and quality of the research. Collaboration enables researchers to combine their expertise and resources, often leading to innovative discoveries. Without collaboration, scientific research may become narrower and less comprehensive than it should be.

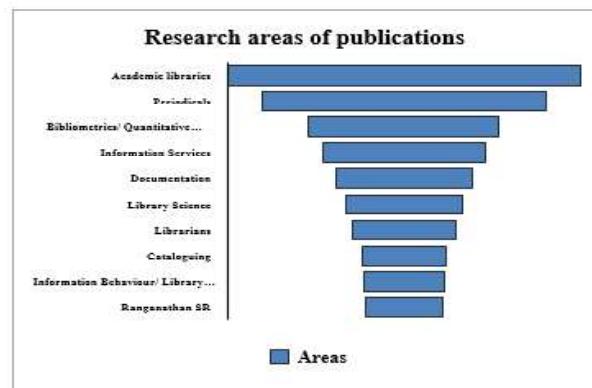
#### Research orientation of IASLIC Bulletin

Table 5 and Figure 3 detail the top 10 research areas of the IASLIC Bulletin publications, ranked according to the number of publications in each area. The results indicate that academic libraries were the most extensively researched area, with 106 publications, accounting for 9.69% of all publications. This implies that academic libraries are a significant area of interest for researchers, who are likely to explore various aspects, such as management, services, and infrastructure. The second most researched area was periodicals, with 85 publications (7.77% of all publications). This suggests that research on periodicals is also a critical area of focus, indicating that scholars are likely to investigate topics such as periodical collections, their organization and management, and their relevance to library patrons.

**Table 5: Research orientation of IASLIC Bulletin**

| Sl. No. | Research Areas                           | TP  | %    |
|---------|--|-----|------|
| 1       | Academic Libraries                       | 106 | 9.69 |
| 2       | Periodicals                              | 85  | 7.77 |
| 3       | Bibliometrics/ Quantitative Research     | 57  | 5.21 |
| 4       | Information Services                     | 49  | 4.48 |
| 5       | Documentation                            | 41  | 3.75 |
| 6       | Library Science                          | 35  | 3.2  |
| 7       | Librarians                               | 31  | 2.83 |
| 8       | Cataloguing                              | 25  | 2.29 |
| 9       | Information Behaviour/ Library Education | 24  | 2.19 |
| 10      | SR Ranganathan                           | 23  | 2.1  |

\*TP = Total number of Publications



**Figure 3: Research Hotspot of IASLIC Bulletin**

Bibliometrics/quantitative research emerged as the third most explored area, with 57 publications (5.21% of all publications). This finding indicates a growing interest among researchers in applying quantitative methods to library and information science. Finally, the study found that the research area on S.R. Ranganathan, the father of Indian library science, was also a popular area of exploration in the literature. This finding suggests that researchers are interested in the history and evolution of library science in India and are likely to seek a deeper understanding of the contributions of significant figures in the field.

These findings provide insights into current trends and interests in library and information science research in India. The results suggest that researchers are focused on exploring various aspects of academic libraries, periodicals, and bibliometrics, and are interested in the historical development of library science in India. These insights can help guide future research and provide direction for practitioners seeking to improve library services and resource.

#### Distribution of papers by size of page numbers

Table 6 presents the distribution of publications according to page numbers, which were evaluated based on the six categories. The findings revealed that the IASLIC Bulletin had a minimum of five pages and a maximum of over 25 pages. Notably, a significant proportion of publications, accounting for 25.38% (572 publications) of the total, fell within the 6-10 pages range. This was followed by 24.08% (263 publications) with page numbers ranging from 1-5 and 16.48% (180 publications) with page numbers between 11-15.

**Table 6: Page Number distribution of IASLIC Bulletin**

| Sl. No. | Page Range   | Total Number of Publications (TP) | %          |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 1       | 01-05        | 263                               | 24.08      |
| 2       | 06-10        | 572                               | 52.38      |
| 3       | 11-15        | 180                               | 16.48      |
| 4       | 16-20        | 55                                | 5.04       |
| 5       | 21-25        | 14                                | 1.28       |
| 6       | More than 25 | 8                                 | 0.73       |
|         | <b>Total</b> | <b>1092</b>                       | <b>100</b> |

These results have important implications for academic journal editors, publishers and authors. For instance, authors should consider the page limits set by journals when preparing their papers. On the other hand, journal editors and publishers should use these findings to review their page-limit policies and adjust them if necessary to accommodate authors whose papers may fall outside the current page limit. Moreover, these findings can be used to optimize the layout and design of academic journals to ensure that the content is presented in the most accessible and reader-friendly manner.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The bibliometric study conducted on research communication, as contributed by scholars from across the country and abroad and channelized by the IASLIC Bulletin over sixty-one years, has provided valuable insights into the growth and impact of this esteemed scholarly journal. The findings of this study highlight the journal's significant contributions to library and information science, as well as its role in fostering research and knowledge dissemination. First, the analysis of publication trends revealed a consistent increase in the number of articles published in the IASLIC Bulletin over the years. This growth is indicative of the journal's ability to attract quality submissions from researchers worldwide. This also reflects the journal's commitment to providing a platform for scholars to share their findings and contribute to advancing the discipline. The diverse range of topics covered in the articles further underscores the breadth and depth of the research published in the IASLIC Bulletin, showcasing its relevance to various domains within the field.

Furthermore, the bibliometric indicators employed in this study shed light on the impact of articles published in the IASLIC Bulletin. Citation analysis revealed a steady increase in the number of citations received by articles published in the journal, indicating their influence within the scholarly community. This suggests that the research articles published in the Bulletin are recognized and utilized by other researchers in their studies, thus contributing to knowledge accumulation and dissemination. Moreover, the findings highlight the interdisciplinary nature of the research published in the journal. The analysis of subject distribution revealed a wide range of topics covering various subfields within library and information science. This interdisciplinary approach is crucial for addressing the complex challenges faced by the field today. The IASLIC Bulletin is pivotal in promoting holistic and comprehensive research that can inform practice and policy by encouraging researchers to explore interdisciplinary connections and perspectives.

In conclusion, the research communications channeled by the IASLIC Bulletin over sixty-one years are a testament to its significance and impact within library and information science. The steady growth in publication output and the increasing number of citations received by its articles reflect the journal's influence and recognition in the scholarly community. The international collaboration and interdisciplinary nature of the published research further contribute to the journal's relevance and contributions to the advancement of the discipline. As the IASLIC Bulletin continues to evolve and adapt to the changing landscape of library and information science, it remains an invaluable resource for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, providing a platform for knowledge sharing and fostering innovations. IASLIC has been continuously publishing further issues of its bulletin since 2016. If the papers published in various issues of the journal in 2016 and later were covered in the present study, the findings would have been from other perspectives. Young scholars in the field can conduct similar studies on research publications that have not been covered.

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