

*A bibliometric study of research articles related  
to Humanities and Social Sciences in selected refereed  
journals published by Universities of Sri Lanka*

**Mr.S.Navaneethakrishnan**

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## Abstract

One of the key areas for the enhancement of development of Sri Lankan higher education sector is weighing and improving the research productivity and visibility of research publications of the universities. There is a demand for more bibliometric research in Sri Lanka to show the current status of research output of the country. Existing literature reveals that even variety of bibliometric research studies done to date in the world and particularly in Sri Lanka, the amount of investigation on the Humanities and Social sciences discipline is considerably smaller than in science and technology. The present study could enable to bridge the research gap of bibliometric research on the Humanities and Social sciences discipline in Sri Lanka. The principal objective of this research is to study the bibliometric characteristics of research articles related to HSS in selected refereed journals published by Universities in Sri Lanka. The research method of this study was bibliometric analytical method that adopts detailed analysis of secondary data using a range of bibliometric laws and scientometric tools, techniques and formulas along with statistical techniques. A total of 1903 records of articles published in 21 refereed journals of selected Sri Lankan universities and authored by 1056 authors during the period 1968 – 2012 (inclusive) were analyzed in this study. Findings of the analysis reveal distributions of research articles vary in terms of year, journal, language, affiliation, length, subject category and county wise contributions. Growth of research articles is increased with positive indicators in cumulated number of research articles, accumulated growth, and average growth rate. The trend of the relative growth rate of number of articles showed a reduction in the number of publication over the considered period of time. Doubling time for publication of all research output of entire study period also showed a decreasing trend. The growth of actual number of articles and expected number of articles calculated based on exponential growth rate are merely related in an increasing trend. Analysis of growth of publication output of individual universities reveals most of the universities have exponential growth in predicted output. Analysis of chronological growth trend of research articles of individual core journals does not indicate any definite growth pattern in the growth of output of publications. Exponential growth trend of each important subject categories show increasing growth. Majority of the contributions are single authored. In recent times degree of collaboration was progressively increased. Author productivity varied between the observed percentage and expected percentage of authors as predicted by Lotka. Among the productive authors Peris is in the top position. Among the productive Universities University of Kelaniya leads others. 'Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities' is ranked at the first position. The relationship between the journal zones was not fit into Bradford's distribution. Most of the journals have highest contributions in the subject area of History. Rank and frequency of words are not always relative and multiplication of them is not equal to a constant, there Zipf's Law was not satisfied. Suggestions based on the findings are discussed in this study and it paves the way for new researchers by forecasting new research topics related to this study.

**Keywords:** *Bibliometrics; Humanities; Social Sciences; Higher education; Sri Lanka;*