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Perspective Paper

She Research Network in India (SheRNI): A Review

Snehasish Paul[1], Rohit Singh[1], Jasbir Singh[2], Dheeraj Sharma[3]

[1]Student of PG Diploma in Digital Library and Database Management, IGNCA, New Delhi, INDIA.
[2]Assistant Professor, Kalanidhi Division, IGNCA, New Delhi, INDIA.
[3]Project Assistant, Kalanidhi Division, IGNCA, New Delhi, INDIA.

ABSTRACT

SheRNI is a web-based Research Information Management (RIM) service that showcases the research contributions of learned Indian women. It is an Initiative of the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre. The paper outlines a critical analysis of the leading role played by SheRNI in empowering the female fraternity within academics and research through collaboration, knowledge sharing and resource access to resources among women professionals in STEM and other broad fields of discipline. SheRNI would fill that void and become the most important platform for Research Information Management (RIM) in the country; SheRNI is a leading interdisciplinary database that connects women scientists, researchers and faculty with interdisciplinary collaboration and network opportunities, serving the global research community. The initiative aims to help deepen knowledge democracy by clustering open-access publishing and sharing women's research contributions. It points to the possible future course SheRNI empowers women professionals from India to excel in their domain and proactively contribute to making a positive difference in helping to create an inclusive research ecosystem.

Keywords: SheRNI, Vidwan, Women Empowerment, Collaboration, Gender equality.

Correspondence:
Mr. Snehasish Paul
Student of PG Diploma in Digital Library & Database Management, IGNCA, New Delhi, INDIA.
Email: snehasishpaulas98@gmail.com
ORCID- 0009-0003-2730-5314

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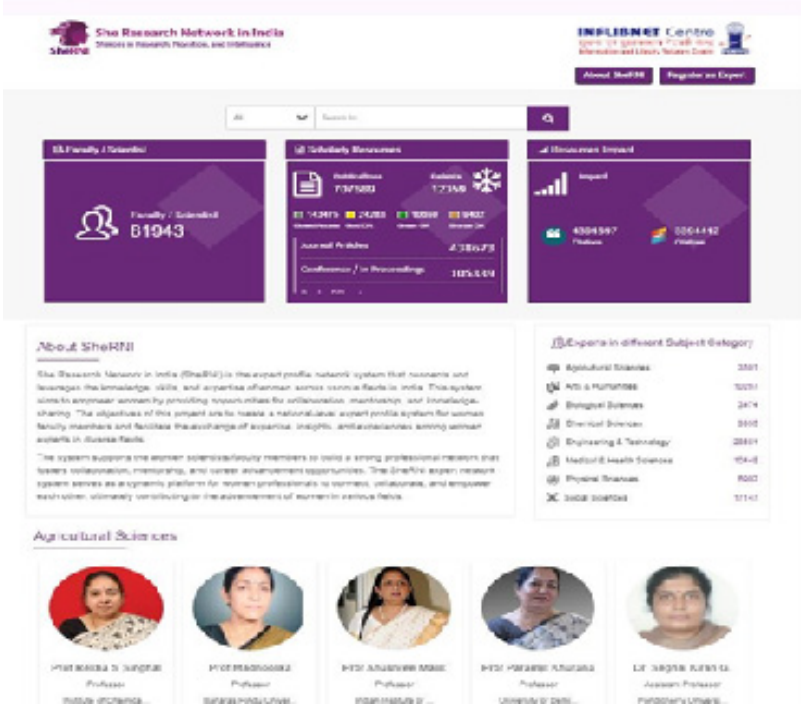

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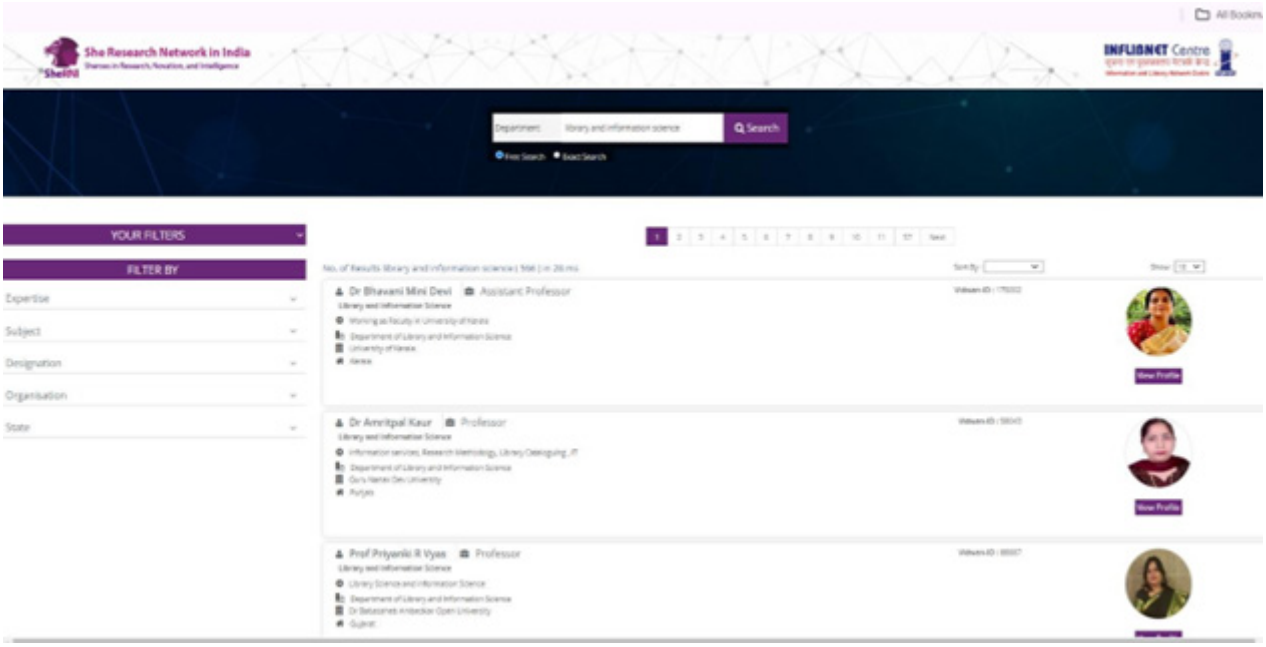

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INTRODUCTION

The SheRNI is an online platform for Research Information Management (RIM) holding the scholarly output of women in India developed by INFLIFNET on International Women's Day 08th March 2024. The aim is further to empower women in academia and research by facilitating a way through which they can enhance their collaboration, share knowledge and access resources. The "SheRNI: Women Experts' Database and National Research Network" database, which SheRNI hosts, offers an all- inclusive view of women scientists, researchers and faculty members in its database and across the country. The portal invites the participation of academic institutions, Research and Development (R&D) organizations and individual women professionals to help them link up with each other to foster collaboration and growth in interdisciplinary research. These are organized through online webinars, workshops, teach-a-thons and mentoring to boost research skills for women in STEM and other professions. Offered free as software-as-a-service to harness the power of cutting-edge technologies by INFLIBNET, SheRNI improves the gender inclusivity of research and brings notice to the achievements of women that are often lost at a national scale. In other words, SheRNI must enable Indian professional women so they can succeed in and make a difference in their respective areas of work, thus contributing to the positive change in the research environment toward inclusivity. (Sab *et al.*, 2019).

Role of INFLIBNET

INFLIBNET is an autonomous Inter-University Centre of the University Grants Commission set up in 1991. It is designed to act as a national knowledge network interlinking academic and research establishments in India. Among some of the important initiatives of INFLIBNET are Shodhganga (a digital repository of Indian theses and dissertations) and UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, which provides access to e-resources. It has developed SOUL (an acronym for Software for University Libraries) as an in-house product with features that meet the specific needs of modern university libraries. The major help extended by INFLIBNET is to strengthen the research and education base of the country by providing resource sharing and open access, making scholarly content easily available to all. (Kathuria and Kaur, 2023).

The objectives of SheRNI

To give Indian women scientists and researchers a specialized platform to present their accomplishments and research.

To make it easier for people to access a variety of research materials, particularly those written by female academics, such as publications, citations and Altmetrics mentions.

To encourage cooperation and knowledge exchange among Indian women scholars working in a range of academic fields and institutions.

To encourage and emphasize the effect and research achievements made by women scholars in the nation.

Establishing a network of support for women in academic and research fields might help address any gender imbalances and hurdles that they experience. (*UGC Launches SheRNI, to Connect, Support Women Scientists and Faculty Members-Telangana Today*, n.d.).

Table 1: Experts in different Subject Categories in the SheRNI Database.

Subject Category	Number of Experts
Agricultural Sciences.	3,591
Arts and Humanities.	10,267
Biological Sciences.	3,474
Chemical Sciences.	3,355
Engineering and Technology.	28,681
Medical and Health Sciences.	10,448
Physical Sciences.	6,902
Social Sciences.	17,147

Main characteristics and advantages

An analysis of SheRNI database of INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network Centre):

Faculty/Scientist: The database contains information about 81,943 faculty/scientists.

Scholarly Resources

Publications: The database has 707,689 publications.

Patents: The database has 12,359 patents.

Journal Articles: The database has 438,673 journal articles.

Conference/In Proceedings: The database has 105,339 conference/in-proceedings documents.

Books/Chapters: The database contains 35,186 books and book chapters.

Other: The database contains 128,491 "Other" scholarly resources.

The other likely involves a different kind of material from research and does not squarely fit into the categories of publication, patent, journal article, or conference proceeding. In addition, research support material could refer to research reports, policy documents, technical manuals and datasets, or any other kind of specialist or non-traditional research output. These indicate a large number contained in this category, giving an implication that the SheRNI database has transcended the normal bibliographic details in its objective to capture a variety of research artifacts and knowledge resources from the women experts on the network. ("UGC Launches SheRNI for Women Scientists, Faculty Members," 2024).

The expansiveness of SheRNI activity, which deals with the documentation and showcasing of women's research expertise and intellectual contributions in India, is indeed reflected in this approach to scholarly sources: books, book chapters and miscellaneous. It reflects an inclusive and holistic effort to empower women researchers and professionals across various fields.

Table 1 represents the distribution of experts in the different database categories of SheRNI (She Research Network in India). As may be seen, it widely covers academic and research disciplines; such a detailed network justifies the width of expertise. Engineering and Technology, Social Sciences and Medical and Health Sciences, in that order, emerged as the broad subject categories with the highest number of experts. Reflective of the strengths and areas under priority in research within the Indian Higher Education and Research Ecosystem.

Open Access (OA) Publications;

Closed Access: 143,475 publications;

Gold OA: 24,283 publications;

Green OA: 10,659 publications;

Bronze OA: 9,402 publications.

Resources Impact

Impact: The total citations for the publications in the database are 4,391,897.

Citations: The total citations for the publications in the database are 3,394,412.

SheRNI is a complete repository to maintain information related to research, which includes information about faculty/scientists, publications, patents, citation metrics, etc., in a centralized place. The information on open-access publications and impact factors of the research resources could throw proper light on the research scenario in India. Such data has great value for researchers, policymakers and research administrators and throws ample light upon the research scenario of India today and its areas of strength, along with probable improvement, to provide further support for strengthening ecosystems of research and innovation development. (Sab, 2023).

Breadth of Expertise

These databases include scientists from the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) community and researchers from other disciplines, including Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences. This would, therefore, represent across disciplines in a network the expertise from many domains to deal with the complex research challenge and enhance cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Subject Specialization

The database has the highest number of experts for Engineering and Technology (28,681), followed by Social Sciences (17,147) and Medical and Health Sciences (10,448). The very distribution probably reveals the research strengths and priorities within the Indian higher education and research ecosystem.

Balanced Representation

The involvement of expert women in such areas as Agricultural Sciences and Physical Sciences reflects the approach of a rounded and inclusive method in capturing Indian women's research expertise in these areas. The scope of this diversity within the SheRNI network may be such that synergies can be capitalized upon and knowledge exchanged across different disciplines.

Potential Areas of Focus

It can be fairly implied from the above discussion that the relatively larger number of experts in fields like Engineering and Technology, Medical and Health Sciences and Social Sciences may be representative within the SheRNI network of special focus, priority, or emphasis within those areas.

This information can guide the development of particular initiatives, collaborations and support structures aiming to strengthen the presence of women in this specific field. This will enable SheRNI to understand the dispersion of the experts for the subject categories, which would help to link up these efforts strategically to harness interdisciplinary collaboration for driving more innovations across the different academic and research continuum fields in India.

Effects of SheRNI on Women's Academic Participation and Research Outcomes

Empowering Women Researchers

The SheRNI Expert Profile System, totaling 81,943 faculty/scientist registrations, offers a robust, wide-reaching platform to profile the expertise of its women researchers and make it accessible for the benefit of peers and potential partners. In so doing, both of these will enhance their visibility and networking opportunities a great deal, thereby enhancing women's increased recognition, collaboration and career development within the academy.

Enhancing Research Impact

This gives the women researchers an opportunity to be on pace with the latest developments in their area, with over 707,000 free access to their publications and 438,000 journal articles among an extensive range of research resources. The significant 4.39 million citations depict the important research contributions brought by women's research. This would inspire and motivate more women to take up research in active mode.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

As a result, SheRNI is interdisciplinary, with a tapestry that hosts cross-pollination of ideas, representing collaboration and work in many disciplines, from Agricultural Sciences to the Social Sciences. It can be brought to the level of knowledge that innovatory research approaches can raise the tackling of complex problems in many scientific areas.

Promoting Open Access

Her concentration on open-access publishing, together with giving much detail about types of open-access formats, is in tandem with the direction of opening up access and visibility to research information. This focus on open access could contribute to the democratization of knowledge and point out women's research as one of the tools to impact society positively.

Future Developments and Expansions for SheRNI

Internationalization and Global Partnerships

The horizon of SheRNI should be widened enough to have interactions with women researchers and professionals all around the world for the exchange of expertise and mutual collaborations. Among the collaborations, initiatives or research networks of a similar kind in different countries can provide platforms through which cross-cultural learning takes place.

Integration with Educational Institutions

SheRNI can partner with educational institutions such as universities and research institutions so that its scope is extended to be felt and seen among the female members of academia. For example, student and faculty profiles will be integrated, together with the scientific repositories and mentorship programs.

Diversifying Content and Services

Expanding the content and services offered by SheRNI beyond research resources can enhance its value proposition. Availability of educational resources, career development information, leadership and personal development workshop programs and much more is highly recommended for women in academia.

Leveraging Emerging Technologies

This was especially true when an eye had to be cast on integrating emerging technologies in the likes of artificial intelligence, machine learning and data analytics into the fold. These technologies could be of great value in offering personalized recommendations, automatic extraction of knowledge and even predictive analysis for women researchers in their academic and professional activities.

Outreach and Advocacy

Even this could be a way of more actively reaching out and advocating the program to show and maybe highlight to more people the necessity for women's role in research. This must be an effort to resonate its reverberation and voice louder with policymakers, funders and professional organizations toward an even more inclusive and just research ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

The She Research Network in India (SheRNI) holds immense potential to drive positive change in academia and research outcomes, particularly for women researchers. Through its empowerment initiatives, collaborative features and emphasis on open access, SheRNI can implant advancements in various fields of study while promoting gender inclusivity. Moving forward, focusing on internationalization, institutional integration, diversified content and leveraging emerging technologies will further enhance SheRNI's effectiveness and reach. To fully realize its potential, concerted efforts from stakeholders including the Ministry of Human Resource Development, UGC and academic institutions are crucial. Their collective commitment will ensure SheRNI's widespread adoption and impact, ultimately fostering a more vibrant and inclusive research ecosystem in India.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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