

Research support for academics: Case studies of two Vietnamese Universities

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Abstract

Academics in Vietnamese universities are under increasing pressure with regard to improved research outcomes, including publications. This article reports on the findings of a research project which focused on two universities, Vietnam National University of Social Sciences and Humanities (VNU-HCM) in Ho Chi Minh City, and Hanoi University, in order to gain a rich understanding of the current state of play, the role of libraries in providing research support, and the constraints within which the various stakeholders operate. The main findings from the interviews suggest that, although researchers recognise the importance of the libraries in

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providing research support for students, when it comes to staff research they undervalue the roles and the activities, resources, services offered by libraries. In general they look elsewhere for support and resources. The research also identified a number of specific suggestions for the types of research activities that would prove useful.

Introduction

With the introduction of quality assurance and accreditation requirements for Vietnamese universities, academics are under increasing pressure with regard to teaching workloads and improved research outcomes, for example, in the number and quality of research publications (Ninh, 2013). This article considers the ways in which academic libraries might be able to assist researchers, and in particular focuses on aspects related to Information Literacy (IL). Although there are now moves to develop improved IL programs for students, research indicates that there are many impediments to their success, including issues related to librarian-faculty collaboration, staff capacity, the availability of academic information resources, teaching and learning methods, and foreign language barriers (Diep & Nahl, 2011). These issues also relate to the IL skills of the academics themselves. In addition, disparities between countries in terms of research culture, infrastructure and capacity, mean that the needs of researchers and librarians in the developing world are not only poorly understood, but also context specific (Webber, 2010). In developing countries access to resources, effective use of those resources, and links between academics and librarians cannot be assumed.

This article reports on the findings of the project Information literacy for research: Vietnam. The project focused on two universities, Vietnam National University of Social Sciences and Humanities (VNU-HCM) in Ho Chi Minh City, and Hanoi University, to gain a rich understanding of the current state of play and the constraints within which the various stakeholders operate.

It aimed, within the context of Vietnamese research practice and organisational culture, to:

- provide in-depth information on researcher needs, skill levels, awareness of resources and trends in scholarly communication;
- provide more in-depth information on librarian skill levels, current and planned programs; and the problems they face in managing research resources and related infrastructure;
- identify ways of facilitating closer cooperation between researchers and library staff.

Background

There is a wealth of LIS literature that discusses the progressive roles of librarians in teaching information literacy and educational activities provided to students (see for example, Kay & Ahmadpour, 2015), but recently there has been an increase in studies investigating the research support services provided by libraries to academics in universities worldwide. A recent survey of faculty and academic librarians in the USA found that 84% of faculty considered library support for faculty research (as opposed to support for student research) to be ‘Essential/Very Essential’ making it the top priority for faculty – despite the fact that it was only the 6th-ranked priority for librarians. The form that such research support could take varies. Provision of access to research publications was considered a priority, with other activities

mentioned including ‘Coordination of research data services’ and ‘Managing research grants’ (Library Journal Research and Gale Cengage Learning, 2015). Others have suggested activities including: mediating in the publishing process, disseminating publications, preserving research materials, sharing and curating data, or generating bibliometric reports (Robinson-Garcia & Torres-Salinas, 2011).

Such emerging activities, however, imply not only the involvement and skills of librarians to work in research but also an understanding of researcher needs, research skills and contextual challenges. In a study of university library research services in Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and Ireland, Corral, Kennan, and Afzal (2013) identified gaps in the subject knowledge and skills that librarians and information specialists needed to improve, including academic culture and practice, research policy, and evaluation. Moniarou-Papaconstantinou (2015) emphasises the need to build robust collaboration with partners across institutions, including academics, students and technology experts. She argues that digital technology and communication networks offer librarians opportunities to be involved in research teams to develop research services and enhance scholarly communication activities. Cox and Pinfield (2014) identified further challenges including a skills gap, resourcing issues and the need for cultural change.

In Vietnam, the emergence of library research support services has made little progress. Most current studies investigate library challenges in teaching information literacy and collaboration with faculties in educational activities. These investigations provide useful contextual information in understanding Vietnam’s academic environment, knowledge and

qualifications of librarians, issues related to infrastructure, facilities, resources and budget to support library activities. The following sections review issues that are relevant to this research.

One of the biggest concerns that most authors raise is the lack of institutional support and development strategies for libraries' involvement in academic activities (Pham, 2008; Murray & Welch, 2009; Thull & Hansen, 2009; Diep, 2011; Wang, 2011; Saunders, 2012; Pham & Tanner, 2015). Diep's (2011) doctoral study of the information literacy education at four universities in Vietnam argued that the lack of university leadership and understanding of the importance of information literacy in education resulted in a low level of interest and inadequate collaboration among key stakeholders such as heads of faculties or departments, academics and librarians. Consequently, the success of information literacy training in universities has been impeded since it has not been integrated in a systematic way within the curriculum.

Another inherent challenge to libraries' educational and research support initiatives is the lack of collaboration between librarians and academics. Pham and Tanner (2014) found that this relationship constraint was caused by various factors related to social structures, cultural differences, organisational structures, and personal characteristics. From a socio-cultural perspective, the traditional view of librarianship and long lasting stereotypes about librarians have influenced the public perceptions of their role in academia (Walter, 2008; Julien & Pecoskie, 2009; Bewick & Corral, 2010; Bury, 2011; Huynh, Huynh, & Hoang, 2011; Nguyen, 2011; Saunders, 2012). Such inadequate public appreciation creates a lack of awareness of the changing roles of librarians today, thus causing the low appreciation of their capacity in handling intellectual content. In addition, academic and librarian groups expressed certain differences in

their own work cultures that consequently generated misunderstandings and frustration between both groups (Pham & Tanner, 2014).

From an organisational perspective, the current rigid and hierarchical structures of Vietnamese universities presents structural disadvantages that could inhibit the potential outcomes of collaborative efforts made by academics and librarians. There has been a lack of adequate research promotion policies and the limited funding for research activities in universities. Heavy teaching workloads, passive teaching methods, rigid curriculum, and low motivation have been reported as common issues for academics in many universities (Denison & Robinson, 2004; Pham, 2007; Diep & Nahl, 2011; Huynh, Huynh, & Hoang, 2011; Nguyen, Dorner, & Gorman, 2011; Pham & Tanner, 2014). Le (2015) gave an example of how challenging it was for most young lecturers who needed to teach hundreds of lecture hours in a year apart from producing the required volume of research output.

Working in current organisational environments, academics also face challenges of poor conditions and a lack resources and training, which affects the quality of their research products. Nguyen (2009) and Tran (2014) underscore three reasons for the absence of valuable research in Vietnam: a lack of new ideas; limited knowledge of research methodologies; and a shortage of research skills. Nguyen further asserts that the lack of research expertise and the extremely poor information resources that researchers can access in Vietnam are one of the biggest obstacles. Such scarcity of scholarly resources results in limited knowledge of current research that leads to problems of duplicated work and low research values. Although library professionals have made various attempts to gain access to more academic papers, this generally requires subscriptions

that libraries are unable to afford. Robinson (2006) and Hossain (2015) called for an increase in the Vietnamese government's funding for the development of libraries, particularly for acquiring sources of academic materials.

There have been other attempts to improve access to resources. For example, INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications) an Oxford-based NGO, through PERII (Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information) and its successor SRKS (Strengthening Research and Knowledge Systems), is engaged in high-level projects to create an enabling environment for research communication. Such projects focus on a combination of infrastructure development at the national level, e.g. consortia-based access to e-journals. They aim to bring developing world researchers into a mainstream publishing paradigm at a time when the nature of research and IL for research is dramatically shifting (PERII, 2013). INASP has organised workshops in developing countries, including Vietnam, named 'Working together to support research' (INASP, 2011). However, the key challenges of how to transform such knowledge into library practice in Vietnamese contexts with specific social, educational, technological and cultural characteristics remain.

An understanding of the role of traditional journals and access to them remain fundamental to scholarly communication, and is indeed a focus of official policy. However, contemporary researchers work within an increasingly complex information framework, which includes new means of communicating and sharing research results, moves to open access, new measures of research impact, new forms of research output including datasets, and the growth of digital repositories. Given the ongoing transformation of scholarly communication, IL training

requires an increased emphasis on issues such as resource evaluation, information management and authority (Spiranec & Mihaela Banek Zorica, 2012).

Along with limited government funding, Vietnamese university libraries face an inherent challenge in the lack of qualified library staff who would be able to work professionally. An evaluation of the PERII scheme (PERII, 2013) found that the training of librarians needs to be upgraded to help them adapt to a rapidly changing environment. Welch and Murray (2010) expressed serious concern with regard to librarianship qualifications. They found most library schools still use out-dated curriculum and traditional teaching practices. The lack of a standard policy for innovation in the content of information and librarianship training has resulted in significant variation in library practices (Hossain 2015). This directly affects the quality of library activities, service standards, and the position of librarians in academia. Diep (2011) points out that Vietnamese librarians encountered challenges related to the limited knowledge of current librarianship and subject knowledge that constrains their ability to work effectively with academics. In addition, Dinh (2011) argues that Vietnamese public library resources are underused and users might not be aware of the potential contribution from this public source of information to assist their research. The inadequate utilisation of current resources indicates a need for libraries to better publicise available resources while improving their own skill levels, their understanding of researchers' needs, and their awareness of the available resources.

In summary, there are a range of potentially significant issues identified in the literature that could impact on the ability of librarians to provide research support. These can be grouped around three themes: a lack of suitable resources combined with a lack of awareness of what is

available; inadequate research literacy skills on the part of researchers and librarians; and poor levels of faculty-library collaboration.

Thus, elucidating information concerning skills levels of librarians and identifying the challenges faced in providing research support services to academics is an urgent need. This research project is an attempt to provide a picture of the current situation in the context of two Vietnamese universities, and to identify the gaps between library services and researchers' needs. Its findings should be useful for university offices and libraries when developing strategies to improve research skills for both librarians and researchers, and in increasing the relevance of library research support services.

Methodology

The research was a qualitative study based on interviews with academics, librarians and management staff at two universities: Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCM), and Hanoi University (Vietnam). The two universities are among the top multidisciplinary universities in Vietnam.

VNU-HCM is the largest higher education institution in Vietnam with more than 51,000 students. It consists of six member universities, a number of schools, centres and a research institute. The university's mission is to become Vietnam's premier institution, to provide human resources with high quality professional knowledge and skills, to promote research and technology transfer and application, and to create important research outcomes. The universities are administered, managed and supervised based on the higher education system model with high

autonomy and self-responsibility, designed to provide an encouraging environment for science, academic and research development. Multi-disciplinary academic programs from bachelor degrees to doctoral degrees are offered by the member universities, from Technology, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities, Law and Economics. The University Library Network, composed of the Central Library and seven university library members, has been developed to serve the needs of learning, teaching and research. The network provides users sharing resources, including print and online databases, with space, technology applications and facilities as well as research and learning skills guidance. Although the services and resources that the libraries provide have been significantly improved in recent years, the library network still needs to innovate and to develop and transform its resources, facilities and services to assist the VNU-HCM in meeting its mission. However, one of its challenges is to effectively undertake initiatives in partnership with faculties, staff and students to strengthen research and education.

Hanoi University is one of the top multidisciplinary higher education institutions in northern Vietnam. The university has 13 faculties providing undergraduate and postgraduate courses in multiple subjects including Information Technology, International studies, Business Management and Tourism, and Foreign Language Studies (English, French, German, Italy, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, Korea and Chinese) to nearly 20,000 students. The university has developed teaching and research partnerships with many universities around the world. The majority of academics and university leaders have graduated from Australia, the USA, and European countries. Their styles of teaching and research culture have been markedly influenced by the Western education styles. Academics and library staff of the university have

been working in different collaborative teaching and research initiatives. The university library has built strong partnerships with some faculties through co-teaching information literacy education programs to all full-time students and by running skills development workshops for staff to enhance their digital literacy skills. Although there have been significant changes in the library structure in recent years, aimed at improving library performance and collaboration with all faculties of the university, the library has faced challenges related to the lack of budget for purchasing course materials and electronic resources to support teaching and research activities. The limited availability of resource materials has had a negative impact on the role of the library in supporting faculties, and consequently limited opportunities for improved collaboration.

Interviews with librarians and academic staff at VNU-HCM and Hanoi University were conducted between October and December 2015. Those interviewed fell into three categories: librarians, lecturers and senior university staff. Each was asked a slightly different set of questions focusing on the type of support that is currently provided for researchers and the ways in which the libraries might be able to support research.

Altogether, 37 people were interviewed, including:

- VNU-HCM: 12 academics from 7 faculties, 3 university library managers from the three member universities and 1 senior member of the University staff.
- Hanoi University: 9 academics from 4 faculties, 4 librarians and 1 senior member of the University staff.

Two sets of questions were developed to act as the basis for the interviews (see Appendix), with the interviews being transcribed and translated for further analysis.

A two day workshop to present the initial results and to obtain feedback and additional data was held at VNU-HCM on April 25-26. The workshop was attended by approximately 30 people. The majority were library staff, academics from the LIS Faculty and with a small number attending from other academic libraries. A one day workshop was held at Hanoi University the following day, attracting nearly 100 academics and librarians from universities in Hanoi.

Research Findings

The findings covered a number of issues, as described below. With some exceptions, the results are remarkably consistent between the two universities.

Existing research support

Although the libraries provide basic support for academics, the general opinion is that more support is needed. Activities already provided include:

- Instruction in relation to use of a library building, facilities and collections/ resources
- Instruction for using databases and online resources, including search, evaluating and selecting information.
- Instruction in the use of specific software packages such as Refworks, EndNote or Prezi
- Acquiring and providing information resources for researchers (seen as the main focus of libraries)
- Delivering services such as providing bibliographic information about information resources (e.g. a list of free databases), helping researchers to collect data, and providing information on request.

At VNU-HCM in-classroom training and face-to-face consultation is provided online in the use of resources, social media, marketing and email. These are popular activities, but although training in some software packages is offered, most researchers reported that they

prefer to acquire such skills by teaching themselves, when studying overseas, or through sharing ideas with their colleagues.

Similar results were reported at Hanoi University, where a wide range of courses are offered either by the university or the library. These include sessions on SPSS, questionnaire design, Endnote, and quantitative data analysis. Zopim and a Facebook page, Hanulib, are both used to allow people who have participated in training to provide feedback on the training or to ask questions relating to the training after a course has finished. Staff at Hanoi University Library have also identified a need for NVivo classes and would like to be able to offer sessions in copyright, email, use of online resources, the backing up online materials, and using online survey tools such as Google Forms and Survey Monkey. Although courses are based on need and they are organised on an ad hoc basis with no systematic attempt to reach all types of users, training sessions on how to use Endnote and SPSS gained high appreciation from academics and opened new opportunities for collaboration. As a result, in recent years, there have been a number of collaborative research projects between librarians and academics. For example, library staff collaborated with academics from the IT faculty to develop library software for managing research outputs and digitised collections for the whole university. The outcome of this project was an institutional repository managing and disseminating materials in digital forms such as research projects, theses, or publications. Another research project involved library staff and two academics from the English faculty in the outcomes of information literacy programs for first year students. This research aimed to assess the quality of the current library training programs and identified gaps between students' skills and information needs and the current

library teaching content. As at VNU-HCM, only a limited number of researchers participate, due to a range of factors including: lack of time, obtaining research skills from the other sources, researchers not being aware of the programs, and the perception that the training is too basic for researcher needs.

Attitudes to services provided

At VNU-HCM, all researchers stated that they obtain research skills by other means, such as self-learning, when studying overseas, through colleagues or supervisors, or through workshops organised by the University Research and Project Management Office. Some library staff agreed, stating that library services and resources were not good enough to attract researchers and meet their research needs. At VNU-HCM, the opinion was that most librarians do not have specialised knowledge in other subject disciplines and research skills, which limits their ability to provide research training and support. Similar opinions were expressed at Hanoi University, where a lack of skills in foreign languages was also emphasised. It was considered that collaboration or liaison with the faculties is not as effective as it could be due to factors such as: lack of specialised knowledge, lack of information searching skills, time, and lack of communication or interpersonal skills. At Hanoi University, appreciation of the library and its staff appears to have improved over recent years with researchers being generally supportive of the library providing these sorts of courses. However, it was commented that more work is required and there was a need to overcome problems such as conflicts with teaching schedules which make it difficult for researchers to participate.

In general, however, it appears that researchers underestimate the library's information resources, services, staff research skills and knowledge, and library activities, with many commenting that the library services are at too basic a level, being more suited for students. One researcher questioned the role of the library in providing research support:

Providing research skills' courses does not seem to be a part of the library mandate.

Researchers tend to rely on the other sources to find information and gaining or improving their research skills. However, academics who have studied abroad were found to have a different understanding of the role of the library and its staff, acknowledging that they could usefully get involved in a wider range of activities if they had the resources.

Library/academic liaison strategies

The results were similar at both universities. Some libraries assigned or are planning to assign staff to liaise with specific faculties; however, they seem to deal mostly with the selection of resources for teaching and, to a lesser extent, research.

There are difficulties in making staff and students aware of library capabilities. In part this relates to some of the teaching methods used, particularly where there is no emphasis on finding additional resources. At Hanoi University, more postgraduate students than academics approach librarians for research support services. Some suggested that librarians need a better strategy for promoting what they can do, and that lecturers do not see the role of the library as being to support them. There needs to be support and encouragement at the university level for better collaboration.

Despite an acknowledgement that there needs to be good liaison between librarians and academics, and individual success stories, ongoing problems were reported at both universities due to a variety of reasons including: a lack of time on the part of academics, negative views on the library's role, different levels of research expertise and understanding, a lack of communication, and a lack of support funding.

Resource issues

Focusing on improving the quality of library collections and information resources and diversifying library services to support research development were identified as priorities for most libraries.

All researchers commented that they benefit from the libraries through access to library collections and resources; however, all reported a lack of relevant material in terms of quantity and quality, especially specialised reference materials. Some also commented that accessing the collections would be easier if, for example, integrated access to all resources could be provided.

Typical comments included:

Because the materials in the Library are limited so I seldom use this source.

The library does not have databases for each specialisation or it has only the cheap and free access databases. There is a lack of important databases.

Access to online resources, particularly foreign databases, is limited. Subscriptions are expensive and there are few users, which results in an ongoing conflict. On the one hand, the

libraries do not have enough financial support to subscribe to databases, or they have to cancel the subscriptions, following which researchers or lecturers complain that they do not have quality information resources for reference and doing research. On the other hand, there is too little usage of the databases that have been subscribed to, and so there is insufficient justification to persuade the university management to commit the necessary funds. For example, Hanoi University had a subscription to Proquest, but had to discontinue the service. The library now uses its funds to subscribe to more journals including science journals in English and other languages, as requested by faculties. However, there are still few academics using these resources.

Researchers prefer to search for scholarly articles on the Internet (Google Scholar was mentioned frequently), and then to ask overseas friends and colleagues for help in obtaining articles they want to access, or sometimes the library, particularly with regard to open access sources.

As one researcher commented:

I use the databases of the Central Library, National University to find materials for my researches. They are able to provide good amount of material in Vietnamese as well in foreign language. In cases where I need more materials that the current library materials are not enough, I could ask my college from overseas to help. They would find and provide them to me. This is also very important channel for me.

Clearly, both libraries lack sufficient funding to offer a full range of up-to-date resources, and this will continue for some time. In particular, both libraries reported having limited access to digital resources – they still work primarily with print. There is a need for stronger digital resource management software and stronger investment in digital resources. This situation can lead to problems in the ways that libraries market their information resources and services to meet researcher needs, and it also impacts on the culture and context of doing research in Vietnam.

While in general participants in the VNU-HCM workshop agreed with the findings reported from the interviews, there was a significant questioning on those that related to the availability of resources and their ability to provide research support to academics, as opposed to students, commenting that the views of the researchers were subjective and did not reflect the ability of the library to support staff in their research activities. There was also significant level of disagreement with the statement that “Universities do not have equipment/ facilities to support managing research data, researchers have to manage by themselves”.

Publishing strategies

The findings in this area were similar at both universities. In almost all cases, researchers said that they develop their own publishing strategies without assistance from the library. This included strategies in areas such as obtaining and improving English academic writing skills, finding journals for publishing, and complying with the publications’ requirements. Researchers usually establish or join in a research team or group, share ideas and data in this group, and collaborate in conducting research and publishing.

The researchers interviewed were experienced researchers, who stated that they had publishing strategies in place and that they did not need library assistance. While the effectiveness of those strategies were not queried, the question remains as to whether the library could usefully assist new researchers in developing their strategies.

When asked how to identify a good journal in their area of specialisation, one researcher said that they looked for a journal with an ISSN as a measure of quality. Another said that the best strategy is to select an English language journal indexed by ISI or SCI (for IT), then international conferences and reputable workshops.

There was also strong interest in publishing in Open Access journals, but a number of problems were mentioned, including there being a limited number in each field, the low profile or quality of many of these journals, the fact that in some journals the author has to pay fees, and that some publishers abuse the process.

Research Data Archives

Both VNU-HCM and Hanoi University have systems in place to manage databases of research outputs at the respective universities; however, while VNU-HCM can handle full text material, at Hanoi University access to the full text is not yet available.

There are currently no systems at the institutional level at either university for the management of research data. VNU-HCM has a strategy to establish a shared data centre which will apply informatics management technology to manage data and help managers making decisions. The Science- Technology Division has a software to manage research data and output, but in terms of bibliographic information.

So, at both universities, researchers are expected to manage their own research data, using whatever resources are available for example their PC, mobile storage devices, online storage or cloud based; however, some researchers, especially those working in the natural sciences, also keep or record data in notebooks. Sharing data is almost exclusively within the research group.

One researcher mentioned problems in managing personal information resources such as copies of articles, on a PC. The same researcher said that he needed better skills in using digital libraries and finding and sharing information.

Discussion

In summary, the main findings from the interviews are:

- The libraries have inadequate collections.
- Collaboration is desirable but difficult to achieve.
- Most researchers think that the library cannot provide much support for research, and are more suited to providing support for students.
- Most researchers prefer to use their own strategies for activities such as finding scholarly materials to support research and publishing strategies.
- Despite undervaluing the role of the library, most researchers actually do need more support for their research activities.
- There are currently no institutional level facilities to assist with managing research data – individual researchers must manage it themselves.

The data shows that researchers need to obtain a wide range of skills in relation to conducting research and developing research publishing strategies. Although researchers recognise the importance of the libraries in providing research support for students, when it comes to staff research they undervalue the roles and the activities, resources and services

offered by the libraries, and library staff skills and knowledge. In general they look elsewhere for support and resources.

In addition to the need to address the issues described above, the research also identified a number of specific suggestions for the types of research activities that would prove useful.

Some of the specific needs mentioned were:

- Providing help with developing research topics, undertaking needs assessments or market research.
- Joining or establishing research teams or groups.
- Seeking grants or funding.
- Improving skills in searching and accessing research databases.
- Selecting journals or publishers for publishing research outputs.
- Gaining knowledge about publishing practices.
- Providing help with English for publishing research on international journals or publications.
- Identifying other ways of sharing research.
- Providing access to improved storage facilities.
- Improving research standards, including citation and reference standards, and publications' standards.

Not all of these tasks can or should be provided by the library. Many are more suited to centralised provision through the Universities and Research and Project management offices, for example, organising workshops or training on academic writing in English, and providing training in research methods, design and management

Activities suitable for libraries are those that require a detailed knowledge of how the scholarly record is organised – including how to contribute to it and to access it - rather than advanced discipline-specific knowledge. From that perspective, suitable activities for libraries include:

- Offering access to quality databases.
- Improving the quality of information resources.
- Improving marketing and collaboration.
- Providing integrated access to services and resources.
- Providing advice on engaging with the scholarly record, for example advice on publishing strategies.

Conclusion

The research identified several strategies that could provide a way forward for academic libraries in Vietnam, and which may well have more general applicability. However, there remain issues in how libraries can find an approach to overcome challenges and difficulties; for example in the context of a lack of funding, library spaces, facilities and staff skills, and barriers in the organisational hierarchy of management and functions. Whatever the strategy adopted it is clear that it must involve collaboration with the university offices, the provision of additional services for researchers, improvements in library staff research skills and knowledge, and ways of overcoming the barriers of organisational, cultural and social attitudes.

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Appendix

Questions for researchers/ lecturers

- Can you tell me about research requirements from your university/ the Ministry of Education and Training?
- Do you help students to develop their research skills? If yes, how?
- As a lecturer at a university, is it mandatory for you to have publications?
- What motivates you to conduct a research? / Why do you conduct research?
- If yes (for the above questions), please tell me how do you prepare your works for publications?
- Do you have your publishing strategy? (How do you select journals /publishers? e.g. national and/or international journals, languages, journal ranking/impact, open/close access)
- How do you manage your information/ resources? Which software tool do you use for publishing and managing bibliographies on your computer?
- Where and how do you usually find quality information resources to support you research? How do your search for literature?
- How do you store, manage and share your research data? (e.g. which tools)
- Where do you usually seek for support to obtain information resources and increase your research skills?

- How do you think about the library role in supporting researchers in terms of providing information resources, research and information skills?
- What are difficulties in conducting research in Vietnam?
- Can you tell me about research requirements with lecturers/ researchers at your university/ and from the Ministry of Education and Training?
- How does the university support researchers/ lecturers to conduct research and publish their works, and improve their research skills?
- What are difficulties in conducting research in Vietnam?
- How do you think about the library role in supporting researchers in terms of providing information resources, research and information skills?
- How does the university support the library to obtain quality resources and improve its facilities and equipment to support research development as well as to manage research data?
- What are your university strategies/ policies to manage and share research data?

Questions for librarians / library managers

- Can you please tell me about the library policies/ strategies to support university research development programs and researchers?
- What are resources, programs and services the library has developed to support research development programs/ researchers?
- Does the library (do library staff) collaborate with researchers effectively to support research development? And how?
- What are difficulties in building collaborative relationships between library staff and researchers/ liaise with researchers?
- Which are factors which influence the library/ library staff to support and collaborate with researchers?