

Women in Research Methods

Interview with Dr. Shruti Sardeshmukh

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(Interviewed by Victoria R. Creed, Ph.D. candidate at Oklahoma State University on 9/25/2025)

1. *What initiated your interest in research methodology—whether qualitative, quantitative, or both—and how has that shaped your scholarly path?*

It has to be curiosity. So my interest in research methods came from curiosity. So, because I came from career in technology, I know how, like, little, small little details actually shape the big picture. Because you need to know where the bugs are in your program, so similarly, you need to know how little details in your in your research design and methodology are answering the big questions, and where are the flaws are lacune in there. Because if you don't know them, how can you rigorously say what you're saying is?

So, when I did my PhD at RPI, um, in United States, I was introduced to a really good set of quantitative research methods. I had to take courses offered by various faculty, so I did courses offered by a psychology faculty, economics faculty, and also some of the engineering faculty. So, this gave me a really multidisciplinary view of how methods get applied in different disciplines. And I loved every bit of it. It just clicked, and I took to it, like, a duck to water.

2. *Can you speak to the necessity of rigorous methods within management research and academia more broadly?*

So, rigorous methods are like the foundation, or like the load-bearing walls in a house. If you don't have that right, all the stuff that you say around it is going to collapse. So, you need good quality research methods because it gives you that research credibility. You can actually trust your results.

Then you need to have your findings to be reliable, so that people can replicate them, and that's so important in research.

And the third thing is if your research is actually useful and applicable, you have to have solid methods. Because that's what's going to be able to turn your ideas into real-world insight, which is going to actually matter in theory and practice.

3. *Sometimes it's difficult to explain academic work to those outside the field. What role does methodology play in translating findings for broader audiences?*

Now, epistemological sounds like a big word, but it's really knowing how we know what we know and how we can trust our findings. So, methodology is that is that way of communicating how you can trust your findings.

So, it has to be transparent, it has to be rigorous, and they're not just technical details. In some ways, think about them as markers of your academic honesty.

So, you can think about these methods details are the foundation that you and others can use to verify and build upon. So that clarity actually makes it easier to translate the result to your broader audience.

It's not just knowing the results, but how you came to it, the integrity of the process behind it is really important. And you have to be convinced that it matters, and then you'll be able to convince to others that it actually matters.

4. *How would you encourage early scholars who are interested in research methods? What specific opportunities, resources, or collaborations might you point them toward? Are these resources accessible for international scholars?*

The first thing is curiosity and open mind that's within yourself. It's less about mastering everything and thinking about it as just one of the checklists or to-do lists, and more about discovering how all these methodological tools that fit your research questions. And there are going to be multiple methodological tools which answer different questions in different ways.

And then there are amazing resources out there. Um, so CARMA I'm a big fan of CARMA. I have been taking CARMA lessons for, I don't know, probably more than 15 years. Then the RM division at the Academy. It provides such a strong, welcoming community, and their PDWs and their sessions. So, use those and create your supportive networks and talk to other people. Because you might not be great at one tool, but you can collaborate with others, and work with others that build skills. It actually makes that journey a lot of fun.

And what I also want to say, that early career scholars is not just the only people who should be interested in methods. It's a journey. An academic journey is about curiosity. Right? So, I think early career scholars and those who are established can also be interested in research methods and build their portfolio and their toolbox as they go along.

CARMA has a global program. They have specific resources for PhD students. And if you are a member of the Academy, some of these come to you. You can also have your university come be a member of CARMA, and you get access to this amazing set of resources.

There are several online events as well. I live in Australia. So many times, some of these events are middle of the night, but, you know, as PhD students, we thrive on late nights, right? So that's not too bad, but do be open-minded, and do look out for resources. Be curious and ask questions.

5. *What advice would you give to scholars who find methodological issues intimidating or overwhelming?*

So, the advice is not to be scared of methods. When you're doing a PhD, or you're learning something new, it is going to be awkward at first, but you just have to keep working at it, and persist, and it's like learning a language. You're going to be awkward, you might have an accent initially, but once you get the hang of it, it's only going to get better.

Then the second thing is, you don't have to know everything and do everything. So, start off by focusing on the tools that are going to fit your question.

And the third thing is research is not a solo endeavor. You can collaborate with others, and you can work with others, learn from others, and that makes that feeling of overwhelmedness out of the picture. It's actually a lot more fun, too.

6. *What developments do you foresee being most relevant for the future of research methodology, both qualitative and quantitative?*

I think I would be remiss to say that AI is changing the way people are doing research. I'll start by saying that I am not an expert in AI, but I'm AI curious. I'm learning how it can change the way we do quant research and qual research.

So, what I've found is that AI or ChatGPT has been really, really good at helping me write code. But that said, I also want to caution people about what they are entering into the AI systems. Thinking about their IP, and thinking about the privacy of their data. So do not paste your code, and I think goes to everybody, be very careful about what you're giving to AI, but use it as a tool.

The other thing always is check your work, check your work, and, you know, check your work again. Especially if you're getting AI to do your work.

I'm still finding my way around AI, so... but that's going to actually be going to be really big in terms of research methodology, because it makes certain things incredibly accessible. But also, we have to make sure they are rigorous, credible, reliable, and replicable.

7. *In 2022, Lisa Schurer Lambert and Tina Köhler became the first female co-editors of Organizational Research Methods. Can you reflect on the importance of increased representation in the area of research methods, and how we might continue to encourage it?*

I think it's one of the best things to happen in some ways. I work on gender research. Seeing these role models leading research methods is going to be very, very useful and productive, and we'll have that impact seen through. As we see young research scholars or early career researchers, seeing them as role models and following their footsteps. So, we just have that role model effect going on. But it also makes research methods incredibly accessible for people.

It's okay for girls to like numbers, or it's okay for women to enjoy having those nerdy conversations and there's nothing wrong with that. It is actually breaking some of the gender stereotypes in both qual and quant.

Academia has been, in the past, a domain of men. That's true for many of these high-status, high-quality fields. But that's changing now, and I'm really hopeful that both men and women and people of all genders can actually access research methods. And research methods are equal for everybody, right?

8. *Do you have any final thoughts or advice you would like to share?*

So the only thing I can say is that a PhD doesn't stop your methods journey and it doesn't stop your methods learning. In fact, most of my PhD research training was in quant, but when I moved to Australia, that was a turning point. So, two things happened. I came here as a young assistant professor, or a lecturer in, Australian system. But when I came to Australia, two things happened.

CARMA started offering courses in Melbourne and I really got hooked onto those. I learned new skills, and that's how I got more and more serious about methodology.

And then the other thing that happened was that I also started working with some of my colleagues who do primarily qualitative stuff. And I really enjoyed the depth of my qualitative research. And that's been a joyous journey.