

PUBLICATION OUTPUT OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

The study aimed at examining the publication output of academic librarians in Delta State University Library, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun in Delta State of Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey method. The population of the study was made up of seventeen (17) academic librarians from Delta State University Library, Abraka and nine (19) academic librarians from Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun, totaling twenty six (26) academic librarians. Questionnaire was used in gathering data for the study. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using simple percentage and mean. The study revealed the following: that librarians under study published more of their papers in international journals than local journals, librarians publish their publications as article in journals and chapters in textbooks, academic librarians publish purposely to earn promotion and for self esteem. Heavy workload, low rating of journal titles, and high publication charges are some of the problems militating against the publication output of the academic librarians. Consequently, the study recommended among others that work schedules of academic librarians should be reduced to enable them have sufficient time for research like other teaching staff in their institutions, management of libraries should provide adequate list of reputable journal titles in which academic librarians can publish their work, research grant should be made available to academic librarians to ease their research productivity and publication output; and academic librarians should be encouraged to attend conferences and seminars/workshops regularly for self development and improved services.

Keywords: Publication, Output, Academic, Librarians, Libraries, University

Introduction

Placing librarians on academic position in universities is a universal fact and practice. It started in the United States in the 1940s and extended to Britain and Canada through the 1980s, after a series of agitations by librarians in those countries. This has brought up many unforeseen developments and new challenges needing solutions. A body of literature emerged and is still growing as the ramifications of the position have continued to be investigated. The literature of the past shows a different view on the issues of intellectual status, ranging from execution, attitudes of teaching ability, publications and higher degrees, gains, tasks and pains (Onohwakpor & Tiemo, 2006).

Ogbomo (2010) is of the view that the publication requirement for academic librarians vary among diverse higher institutions. Studies have described exceptionality of academic libraries and their academic publication as factors for such variation. In general, such studies look at a mass publication from librarians who are employed at a wide range of colleges and universities.

Another useful approach is a complete study of the publication of librarians in a specific organization. This thin focus is mostly appropriate when looking at trends in publication because

the type of college or university in which a faculty member works has been shown to be a key factor in influencing his or her publication patterns. The aim of this study is to look into the difficulties faced in research by academic librarians and how the findings can help them in their journal article production for promotion, advance services and personal improvement or advancement (Ifijieh, 2017).

Research publications are channels through which academic librarians add their quota to existing body of knowledge. These channels could be in form of books, articles in peer reviewed journals, scientific reports, conference papers and events, chapter(s) in books, training and patent right, and supervision of students. In other words, these publications output are indicators of research output of academics and they are used to grade academic institutions. As a result of the academic status accorded librarians, and the importance attached to research and publications in universities in Nigeria, academic librarians have established the certainty of carrying out research and publishing their output in learned/highly regarded outlets like their teaching counterparts. Not waking up to this reality is to perish in the academic deep-blue sea, considering the popular slogan of (publish or perish). The credit and progress of librarians rest deeply on the amount and eminence of their research output. In Nigeria today, one of the main parameters used for assessing librarians for promotion is the number and excellence of research papers published in highly recognised journals and conference proceedings (Okonedo-Adegbaye, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

The paper is on publication output of academic librarians in university libraries in Delta State. Scholarly publication in the advancement and progress of academic librarians cannot be overstated. Academic librarians can only earn promotion based on their publication output and gain self recognition among their colleagues. It has been observed that librarians in Delta State University, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Effurun, Delta State are not well grounded in their publication output; and this is the basis for this study.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

- What are the publication channels used by academic librarians in Delta State to publish their research papers?
- What types of journals are preferred by the academic librarians?
- What motivates the academic librarians for research and publication?
- What are the challenges faced by the academic librarians in their publication output?

Objectives of the study

The primary aim of the study is to investigate the publication output of academic librarians in Delta State University Library, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun in Delta State of Nigeria. This will be achieved by focusing on the following objectives:

1. To determine the publication channels used by the academic librarians in Delta State to publish their research papers.
2. To determine the journals preferred by the academic librarians.
3. To determine the librarians' motivation for research and publication.
4. To determine the challenges encountered by academic the librarians in their publication output.

Literature Review

A steady concern in the faculty has been whether librarians will be able to set up records of research and publication that meet their institutions' general promotion and tenure criteria. A lot of scholars dispute that requiring academic librarians to set aside part of the time for their daily duties to meet research expectation is inappropriate. This paper does not study this argument, but it deliberates on the following problem. Is there evidence that librarians with faculty status will be less likely to meet tenure requirements than other faculty? Some of the difficulties of managing efficient and effective library services are likely to be better addressed through discoveries made from systematic, well-made research. Research also promotes growth and recognition for librarians. In addition, librarians who often do research are thought to be more attuned to change and have more successful dealings with other faculty than those who do not do research. (Ibegbulam & Eze, 2016). The vital aim of doing research is to publish the results and thereby communicate the new information to peer primarily and to humanity at large. In so doing, the researcher gains personal recognition and has the chance of improving on his/her profession at the same time. A case in point, is when a librarian stands to deliver a paper before his or her peers during a conference or when he/she gets needs for reprints of articles or sees his/her work being cited. In such situations, there is a certain sense of achievement in spite of the effort it took to get to that point (Idiodi, 2010).

According to Baro & Ebhomeya ((2012) research tends to be valued over teaching and service in many higher educational institutions. For example, in Australia, faculty members generally want to research and dispense the result of their research.

Ifijeh (2017) states that the contribution of academic knowledge to economic and social development of societies is widely emphasized. This respect has raised awareness to the role of higher learning institution such as universities in publication outputs and their significance to society. Universities have the tasks to teach and carry out research for academic and economic development. Librarian publication output research contributed to the success of Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) such as Education for All (EFA) goals and extended access to secondary, vocational and higher education by 2015. The MDGs are established set of goals that can be achieved if all actors work equally and do their part. New developments in universities seem to recommend capitalist approach replica of academic publication. The major feature of this model is said to be recognized by the universities that have the function not only to provide teaching and perform research, but also to add openly to social and economic growth of the society.

The opening point for measuring research output is publications. In those days when ideas are spread by word of mouth, a speech or tutorial or even casual discussion could have a great impact in the field of educational economists, but today, it is not possible to reach a wide audience/viewers adequately without published research. The subject now is how to describe a publication. Approximately all publication-based rankings go no further than journal and books with US studies being more likely to focus only on referred journals (Okozie, 2016). Chiemeké, Longe, Longe and Shaibu (2009) stated that one guide for measuring publication output is the number and excellence of published works in international journals and a large amount of active chronological titles coming from the universities.

Also, publication outputs of librarians are considered to play important roles in the appraisal of academic and educational development of any society chiefly in emergent countries where information creation and sharing have been measured very low. The fortification and allocation of these publication outputs, to a very large extent, add to the international status of the institution where the librarian works (Ezeani & Ezema ,2011).

Idiodi (2010) went further to state that, research output resembles a type of input-output process in which the inputs consist of individual and financial resources, while outputs are of a more comprehensive nature; some are tangible, such as journal publications, patents and conference presentations, while others are intangible in nature like gaining personal knowledge, doing consulting activities and so on. However, the activity most often used to assess the result of a research is the publication of the resulting article in a specific journal, which is the form par excellence to discuss research result to the research public. It is through this means that academics and librarians gain the recognition of their peers, a decisive factor for further funding for researches and career development.

Due to the fact that the shift of information is central to the task of librarians, it is lucid that librarians are also concerned in the methods of information transfer and academic communication within their own vocation. Descriptions of the publication uniqueness of scholars in Library and Information Science (LIS) have formed a considerable body of literature in recent years. Mapping the individuality of librarian authors helps to describe the dynamics and vitality of the discipline, distinguish research-oriented persons and institutions, and the propensity and techniques. These studies of authors and publication sources also serve as benchmarks of research output for the profession (Joswick, 1999).

In the same vein, Ifijeh (2017) opined that quality research and theoretical papers available in typical and famous journals give integrity to authors, especially young writers who are yet to make a mark in their areas of study. Extremely ranked journals, mostly those with impact factors from known indexing bodies, improve the veracity of authors. Such authors are seen as brilliant, hard-working and real contributors to their fields of knowledge.

Ogbomo (2010) also stated that in spite of the gains of publications to librarians, they do not carry out suitable research and publication. Among the reasons for low publication output by librarians, is their failure to value the reasons for publication, its restraint and how it might be productively used. Lack of attention also stands as obstacle to publication output.

Methodology

The descriptive survey method was used for the study. Academic librarians from Delta State University Library, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun formed the population of the study. Questionnaire was used to collect data for the study which was divided into two sections.

Demographic variables of the respondents

Part I: The items included in this part were respondents' gender , age , educational qualification, years of experience and academic status.

Part II: The items include in this part elicited information on the publication output of the academic librarians in Delta State University Library, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library Effurun in Delta State of Nigeria. Simple percentage and mean were used in analysing the data.

Table 1: Academic Qualifications

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
BLS/B.Sc	7	26.9
MLS/M.Sc	10	38.4
Ph.D	9	34.6

The presentation in the Table 1 above, is the respondents' educational qualifications. The result shows that majority of the respondents are MLS/ M.Sc holders.

Table 2: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	34.6
Female	17	65.4

Table 2 indicates that 9 (34.6%) of the respondents are male, while 17(65.4%) of them are female.

Table 3: Age Distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage
30-49	17	65.4
50-59	7	26.9
60-69	2	7.69

Table 3 above shows that 17(65.4%) of the respondents are between ages 30-49 years old, and only 7(26.9%) are between 50-59 years old.

Table 4: Work Experience

Working Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	7	26.9
6-10 years	2	7.69
16-20	10	38.4
Over 20 years	7	26.9

The presentation Table 4 is the result of the years of experience of the respondents. The result shows that 10(38.4) of the respondents had sixteen to twenty years working experience.

Table 5: Academic Position

Academic position	Frequency	Percentage
Assistant Librarian	1	3.84
Librarian 11	2	7.69
Librarian 1	9	34.6
Senior Librarian	1	3.84
Deputy Librarian	3	11.5

Table 5 above indicated that 9(34.6%) of the respondents are Librarian I.
 Research Question 1: What are the publication channels used by academic librarians to publish their research papers?

Table 6: Channels that Librarians Use to Publish their Papers

Channels	Mean(X)Scores	Decision
Textbooks	2.92	Accepted
Article in journals	3.76	Accepted
Chapters in edited books	3.61	Accepted
Monographs	3.30	Accepted
Conference proceedings	2.88	Accepted
Technical reports	3.15	Accepted

The Table 6 is a reflection of the channels that librarians use to publish their research papers. Majority of the respondents agreed that all the items listed on the channels librarians use to publish their research papers were affirmative, because all the items had mean scores above 2.50 criteria set for assenting of mean.

Research Question 2: Which journals are preferred by academic librarians?

Table 7: Preferred Journals

Journals	Mean (X) Scores	Decision
International journals	4.69	Accepted
Local journals	3.26	Accepted

Table 6 shows the mean score of the international and local journals. It could be seen from the table that academic librarians publish more of their papers in international journals. The librarians prefer international journals to local ones.

Research Question 3: What are the factors that motivate librarians to publish?

Table 8: Librarians' Motivation for Research and Publication

Librarians' motivation for research and publication	Mean (X)Scores	Decision
For promotion and self esteem	3.46	Accepted
For salary improvement	2.53	Accepted
Meeting job demands	2.96	Accepted
Finding better jobs	2.80	Accepted
For professional growth	3.11	Accepted
Contributing to knowledge	3	Accepted
To contribute to better library services	3.11	Accepted
To build a professional reputation	2.88	Accepted

Table 8, shows that a greater percentage of the respondents agreed that librarians are motivated for research and publication. The greatest reason for the motivation, which is “for promotion and self esteem” had the highest mean of 3.46; this was followed by “for professional growth and “to contribute to better library services” with the mean score of 3.11” each ; “contributing to knowledge” had the mean score of 3; While “meeting job demands” had the mean of 2.96; “to build a professional reputation” had the mean of 2.88; “finding better jobs” had the mean of 2.80; and finally, “salary improvement” had the mean of 2.53”. All the eight items had the mean score of above 2.50 criteria set for affirmative of mean, and were all acknowledged as reasons that motivate librarians for research and publication.

Research Question 4: How are journals rated by appraisal and promotion committee for promotion?

Table 9: Rating of Journals by Appraisal and Promotion Committee

Rating of Journals	Mean (X) Scores	Decision
Low rating of journal titles retards promotion of academic librarians	4.69	Accepted
High rating of journal titles enhances promotion of academic librarians	3.19	Accepted

Table 9 above shows the result of rating of journals by appraisal and promotion committee. “Low rating of journal titles retards promotion of academic librarians” had the mean score of 4.69, while “High rating of journal titles enhances promotion of academic librarians” had the mean score of 3.19. All the items were established by the respondents as ways of rating journal titles by appraisal and promotion committee. Thus, all the mean scores were acknowledged as they are all above 2.50 which was used as cut-off point.

Research Question 5: What are the challenges associated with publication output of academic librarians?

Table 10: Challenges to Publication Outputs

Challenges	Mean (X) Scores	Decision
Heavy work load	3.15	Accepted
Lack of research orientation	3.30	Accepted
Time constraints	3.42	Accepted
High publication charges	3.38	Accepted
Rejection of manuscript by journal outfits/ publishers	3.38	Accepted
Uneasy process of submitting manuscripts to journal outfits/ publishers	3.30	Accepted

Table 10 presents the results of challenges to publication output. The table shows that time constraints had the highest mean of 3.42. “High publication charges” and “rejection of manuscript by journal outfits/ publishers” had the mean of 3.38 respectively. Others are “uneasy process of submitting manuscripts to journal outfits/ publishers” and “lack of research orientation” which had the mean of 3.30 respectively, while “heavy work load” had the mean of 3.15. As a matter of fact, all the challenges listed were accepted as obstacles to publication output.

Findings

The following are the research findings:

- Librarians publish more in international journals than local journals.
- Librarians publish most of their works as articles in journals and chapters in textbooks because they are the most acceptable to appraisal and promotion committees.

- Most librarians are motivated for research and publication output by promotion. Only a few publish for self esteem.
- Low rating of journal articles by appraisal and promotion committee stands as hindrance to the promotion of academic librarians.
- Time constraints, heavy work load, lack of research orientation, high publication charges, manuscript rejection by journals/publishers and uneasy process of submitting manuscripts to journal outfits/publishers are problems militating against publication output of academic librarians.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study were discussed according to the sub-headings highlighted below, and they include channels that librarians use to publish their research papers; preferred journals (international or local); what motivate librarians for research and challenges associated with publication of academic librarians.

Publication Channels for Academic Librarians

The study revealed that academic librarians published their papers mostly as articles in journals and as chapters in edited books because they are the most acceptable to appraisal and promotion committees for the promotion of academic librarians. This could be due to the value and respect people have for scholarly published journals and edited books than other academic publications. This finding corroborates those of Okonedo-Adegbaye (2015) that publication output of librarians was high within the period of 2009-2014. When grading the publications by types, it was revealed that articles in learned journals scored highest, followed by conference proceedings and chapters in books. The study is also in line with the findings of Ogbomo (2010) who reported that librarians regularly publish in referred and non-referred journals in the Library and Information Science (LIS) field.

International/ Local Journals

The study shows that respondents prefer to publish their papers in international journals probably because review and appraisal committees attach more value to international journals than local journals. This is in line with study of Chiemeké, Longe, Longe & Shaibu (2009) that one index for assessing research publication output is the number and excellence of published works by librarians in international journals and by the world distribution of active serial titles coming from the universities which add to the creation and distribution function of technical information for expansion in Nigeria and worldwide.

Motivation for Research and Publication

The study indicated that most librarians are motivated for research and publication output by promotion requirement.. Only few published for self esteem. It is very important for librarians to engage in research because it adds to career development and individual recognition among colleagues. Above all, academic librarians can only earn promotion based on their publication output (although promotion period and work attitude are also considered). The study is in line with that of Okonedo (2015) which says that a good number of the librarians embark on research in order for them to be promoted to the next rank in their work place. The study also supports the findings of Ibegbulam and Eze (2016); Okezie (2016) and Idiodi (2010) that the desire to get promotion and to increase one's self recognition among others, provoke the librarians to write and

publish, while joint effort and attendance at conferences among other factors, contribute to high publication output. A researcher gains individual reputation and has the chance of enhancing his/her career at the same period. Also, publications enhance the development and respect for librarians, and librarians who carry out research have a more powerful rapport with their faculty counterparts.

Challenges Associated with Publication Output of Academic Librarians

From the study, it could be deduced that time constraint and heavy work load are the major problems associated with the publication output of academic librarians. In addition, all other items listed in the table were also acknowledged as problems militating against publication output of academic librarians in Delta State University Library, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun. Since research and publication demands time, the result indicates that publication output of the academic librarians would be badly affected. The study is in line with the findings of Baro and Ebhomeya (2012) that, long daily working hours, heavy workload, inadequate number of local journals, and high publication fee are some of the major problems militating against the publication output of academic librarians in Nigeria. The study also collaborate the findings of Okonedo-Adegbaye (2015) and Ibegbulam and Eze (2016) that majority of the librarians are faced with time constraints in their publication effort and tight work schedule affects research and publication.

Conclusion

It is clear from the study that academic librarians in Delta State University Library, Abraka and Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library Effurun, engage in research publication output mainly for promotion in their work place and for self esteem. The study also revealed some of the problems facing academic librarians in their quest for more publication output. The study concludes that academic librarians should grab the lead in research and publication in learned international journals, since publications help in the promotion of librarians who carry out research than those who do not.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Work schedules of academic librarians should be reduce to enable them have sufficient time for research like other teaching staff in their institution since their promotion is based on the same criteria.
2. Management of library should provide adequate list of journal titles in which academic librarians can publish their recognised and acceptable work.
3. Research grant should be made available to academic librarians to ease their research productivity and publication output.
4. Academic librarians should be encouraged to attend conferences and seminars/workshops regularly for self development and improved services.

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