

Full Length Research

RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF LIBRARIANS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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The study discusses the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries. The academic status conferred on librarians in academic institutions necessitated the criteria of research and publishing in renowned journal for career advancement, promotion and professional visibility. Meeting up with the research and publishing criteria is compulsory for librarians if they are to climb up the academic ladder. However, this study looks into the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries, preferred media (electronic or print) through which librarians publish, gender difference in the research productivity of librarians, and the challenges peculiar to gender encountered in their research productivity effort. Librarians are faced with demanding responsibility of publishing alongside administrative duties. This study therefore discusses the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta state. A total of 106 librarians drawn from 12 academic libraries in Anambra and Delta State constituted the population of the study, however out of the 106 copies of questionnaire distributed 85 copies were returned. The number of respondent was 85 representing (80.2%). The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The data obtained from questionnaire were analyzed using frequency count, simple percentage mean and t- test. The findings of the study revealed that librarians in spite of their demanding job activities have published impressively to meet academic status requirement; librarians have a good number (79.9%) of their research work published in print media; The publishing of works in Journals have sufficiently been utilized by librarians; There is no obvious difference in terms of male and female (gender) research productivity of librarians; The challenges peculiar to male and female (gender) librarians that affect their research productivity were also included in the study.

KEYWORDS: Research Productivity, Librarians, Academic libraries, University, Publications.

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INTRODUCTION

It is an undisputed fact that research productivity have become widely used for librarian's career advancement, promotion and professional visibility. Presently, librarians in many academic institutions world-wide are subject to the same promotion criteria as their teaching counterparts. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Appointment Committee (2007) states that neither administrative responsibility, professional degrees, titles nor skills qualify members of the academic community for academic status, but their teaching and research roles. Therefore, the functions of the librarian as participant in the teaching and research role is the essential criteria for their academic status.

According to Sitienei (2006), an academic librarian make unique and vital contributions to higher education by: bearing responsibility for developing college, polytechnic and university library collections; for instructing students both – formally in the classroom and informally in the library; advising faculties and scholars on the use of library collections; providing a variety of information services to college or university community; through research into information process, adds to the sum total of knowledge in the field of the library practices and information science; through membership and participation in the library association; works to improve the practice of academic librarianship; performing teaching and research roles.

It is obvious that the role of the librarian in any educational institution is very vital, they should not be relegated to the background because librarians have a part to play in the development of the institutions educational program. Furthermore the demanding roles of librarians in handling the present information explosion, information technology progression and rendering efficient and effective library services to support quality teaching and research will invariably birth quality academic performances. Therefore, such responsibilities required that they be granted academic status and all the benefits that goes with it.

A decree mandating the National University Commission to accord academic status to librarians with all its benefits. However, the benefits were accompanied with more responsibilities or requirements. The requirement needed to qualify for the benefits of the new status includes Bachelor's degree; Advanced degree (master PhD degree compulsory); in addition to these is research and publishing in recognized professional journals (Ochai & Nedosa, 2004).

A number of authors are of the view that librarians should be involved in publishing. Oni (2009) posits that publishing will enhance library services and the librarian's position within the academic environment. As an academic staff, librarians are privilege to be involved in two processes for building academic power which is through research function and providing knowledge for practical application (Martin, 2007), and for librarians to fully enjoy the benefits of the academic status, they should work hard to meet up with the publication criteria. This necessitated this study to assess the research productivity of librarians in spite of their numerous duties.

Statement of Problem

The concept of research productivity in the academic arena cannot be overemphasized, because the librarians with academic status are without doubt contributors to the growth of knowledge, advancement of the academic community and their profession. In time past librarians did not have to research and publish like their teaching counterparts, however the academic status conferred on them made it mandatory to research, publish or perish, notwithstanding, the demanding roles of eight (8) working hours and five (5) days a week nature of their job. To this end, this study discusses how effective librarians in academic libraries could be in their research productivity. It is in this regard that the study attempts to assess the research productivity of librarian in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta State in the face of so many administrative responsibilities and academic status requirement.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study focuses on the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States; while the specific objective is to:

1. Determine the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States.
2. Identify the preferred media (electronic or print) through which librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States publish their works.

Scope of the Study

The study focused on the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States. The scope of the study is to; determine the research productivity of librarians; identify the preferred media (electronic or print) through which librarians publish.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States?
2. What preferred media (electronic or print) do librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States publish more?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States.
2. There is no significant difference in the preferred media (electronic or print) through which librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States publish.

Review of Related Literature

Librarian's Research Productivity

Mitchell and Reichel (1999) opined that some writers are of the view that librarians should not be judged by faculty performance criteria because librarians were not trained as educationist like their teaching counterparts. Oni (2009) expressed the views that it is pertinent to note here that some librarians are not comfortable with the issue of publications; librarians complained about too much emphasis on publication. There was an over-emphasis on publications to the detriment of quality services to client in these institution libraries. Martins (2007) expressed views that a large numbers of academics decry great emphasis on the publication. Oni (2009) argued that what should be paramount should be devotion to quality library service at all times and not publishing.

However, a number of authors are of the view that librarians should be involved in research and publication. Hence Dahiru and Benson (2006) posit that, to effectively plan their roles as academics, librarians are expected to teach, conduct research, and disseminate their findings as well as carry out administrative duties. Oni (2009) stressed that there is need for librarians to publish, as research and publishing is part of their job. The author supported publication for assessing librarian's career advancement and observed that those who write did so because they had something to say about libraries and librarianship. He went further to state that the majority of librarians who did not write are of the opinion that too much has already been written about the profession. Stover (1996) believes that it is vital for academic librarian to be involved in publishing in order to support the scholarly communication process.

Aina (1991) carried out a bibliometric analysis of library and information science research paper published in three international journals in Africa, out of 33 research articles Nigeria authors constitute 19(57.6)% of all the authors. The study showed that academic librarians are publishing in foreign and local journals. It also revealed that a good percent of librarians have published to qualify them for promotion.

A study on content and authorship patterns in Africa librarianship journals by Buttlar (1991) where 75 articles were documented showed that academic librarians published above 61% of all the articles while their faculty counterparts published 21%. This study revealed that librarians in academic institutions have been publishing articles in well recognized journals, which showed that they did not neglect their publication responsibility. These findings are supported by Atinmo and Jimbo (2002) who avers a complete dominance of the publication arena by librarians working in academic libraries. These authors further posit that it was not surprising that library and information specialist in academic libraries dominated authorship.

Preferred Media of Librarian's Research Productivity

Publishing is the process of production and dissemination of literature or information, the activity of making information available for public view (Jason, 2000). The author went further to add that in some cases authors may be their own publisher meaning the originator and developers of content and also provides the media to deliver and display its content. Culler and Lamb (2003) posited that in academics, publishing a paper is an academic work that is usually published in an academic journal, and this journal could either be in print or electronic format. Librarians in the quest to advance in their career and contribution to knowledge could publish in any convenient format that best suits their users.

This also applied to all academics irrespective of their field of discipline. Andre (2000) posits that publishing academic journals and textbook is a large part of an international industry. Publishing of academic work could be done through the print or electronic format. A number of studies have been carried out on the format preferred for publishing; and according to Sathe and Grady (2001) some respondents preferred electronic journal for publishing with reasons such as ease of access from home, ease of printing, and ease of searching using search engine. However, some other respondents preferred print journal for aesthetic (high quality text) reasons. The most cited reason for preferring print include the ease with which print can be read, it is easier to access with lesser cost. There is no doubt that publishing and distribution of research literature was facilitated by printing press, hence Jason (2000) avers that the development of printing press presented a revolution for communicating the latest hypothesis and research result to the academic community.

However, Milne (1999) observes that print publication remained the most important means of information dissemination to librarian and other academics alike. The reason for this observation is because of the fact that electronic publishing in Africa and Nigeria in particular only recently started gaining ground. Hence there is need for librarian to maintain print publishing alongside electronic publishing, which is recognized by the peer group evaluation committee.

More so, some scholars are of the opinion that print is fast losing its grip when talking of academic publishing. In the midst of preferences and controversies, (Okerson and O' Donnel, 1995) posited that print and web publishing empower us to break this multigenerational transmission process, and this is the reason why scholars would want to publish in print or electronic journals that best suit their interest. In this 21st century, emphasis tend to be placed on electronic publishing because of the digital application involved. Also, Culler and Lamb (2003) opined that academic publishing is undergoing major changes emerging from the transition from the print to the electronic format.

Hence, Stover (1996) posits that it is important for librarians to be involved in electronic publishing for a number of reasons. To support the scholar communication process as electronic publishing is a powerful symbol of our enfranchised role. Librarians irrespective of their status should be involved in electronic publishing not only print publishing. Also electronic publishing gives librarians a higher profile on campus, because of the changing nature of higher education and the changing role of librarians. Librarians have a measure of expertise in the arena of organizing and providing access to information and electronic publishing is one good way of sharing professional skills with academic community. Electronic publishing provides unique access to scholarly information because of its hypertext structure, and its universal appeal. Librarians should no doubt be involved with this exciting new technology in publishing. However, the research effort should be communicated to information seekers through which ever means is most convenient. Stover, (1996) posits that librarian can bring scholarly information to the print and the internet in a number of different ways.

Publications come in different media, print or electronic depending on the interest of the author; however the 21st century has brought about the application of information communication technology (ICT) which has increased the use of electronic media in research and publication processes. Oni (2009) carried out a study on publication output of librarians in some Nigerian universities in Edo and Delta state, using descriptive survey and questionnaire for data collection and the study showed that out of 87 respondent 41 (47.1%) respondents publish in print journals, while 20 (23.0%) respondents publish in electronic journals. The study also shows that 11 (12.6%) respondents have not published in print textbooks as well as e - books and 15 (17.2%) respondents have not published in chapters in a book. This reveals that majority of respondents publish in journals (print) and journals (electronic) and have less publications in books (print), chapters in book print) and e-books. This study shows that publication output of librarians in academic libraries in Edo and Delta state is mostly done in journals.

Also Schloman (2001) carried out a study on scholarly publishing by the nursing faculty in tertiary institutions in Nigeria using descriptive survey and questionnaire to collect data on the use of both print and electronic journals and confirmed that out of 45 respondents 65% of the -respondents used print journal frequently and only about 35% of respondents used electronic journals. This study shows that print journal is mostly used in their publishing effort. The study looked into the use of Journals in the Nursing faculty and scholarly publishing with print journal as the most used media of publishing, but places importance on the use of e- publishing.

However, Roger (2001) carried out a descriptive survey on the use of media of publication by information users in faculties in Ohio university college United States and observed that faculty use of electronic journals increased by 17.7% while print use decreased by 8.7%. This study showed that in this era of information communication technology, the use of e-journal has greatly increased because a good number of information users access information through the internet.

These findings are in conformity with the study of Milne (1999) who observed that e- journal publications remain the most used means of publication. However, some authors are of the view that academic publishing is undergoing major changes emerging from the transition from the print to the electronic format. However librarians in their quest to advance in their career and promotion and to contribute to knowledge should publish in print as well as electronics format, what is paramount is that the work is subject to peer review or experts in the same field.

The literature related to the subject of this study is reviewed under the following sub-headings;

Theoretical Framework - Social Exchange Theory (SET)

In this article, one theory was used to model the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries. The Social Exchange Theory (SET) propounded by Mclure-Wasko and Faraj (2005) was used to depict academic librarian's research productivity based on the perceived benefits against the cost of research and publication. The theory put forward related theories explaining social behavior as a process of exchange between two or more individuals within a community who are in a position to influence each other. Studies in the related field of knowledge management successfully utilize social exchange theory in order to explain open information sharing behavior in professional environment

In the academic environment, academics could be more inclined to participate in sharing their research work if they perceive that it may lead to a social or professional reward or benefit in the form of increased readership, research impact and citation rates, feelings of altruism toward the academic community and public, enhanced status, peer respect and career advancement.

Based on this assumption, this theory suggests that the benefits (extrinsic and intrinsic) associated with sharing or publishing one's academic work stand as motivating factors for librarians to publish.

Applying social exchange theory to this paper emphasizes librarians sharing their researched information in order to access the benefits of publishing or scholarly communication rather than being restricted by the cost concerns and challenges that accompany publishing. The theory considers the relationships between costs of sharing or publishing and the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of publishing. The goal is to isolate the factors that deter librarians from publishing and boost the factors and social mechanisms that foster librarians drive to research and publish.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive survey design to investigate the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States. The area covered in this study includes academic libraries located in Anambra and Delta States. The population of this study consisted of 106 librarians. In this study, the researcher used the entire population because the population under study is not large. The research instrument employed for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument was designed by the researcher in line with the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was had section A and B, section A handled the Bio data of respondent and section B handled the research questions. The research instrument (questionnaire) was first administered to 5 librarians in the University of Benin library. Data was collected through the administration of questionnaires. The researcher personally administered some of the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher employed the services of a library in each of the academic libraries to assist in administering and collection of the questionnaire. A total of 106 copies of questionnaire were distributed but 85 were successfully retrieved, which was used to analyze the data. The data obtained was analyzed using simple percentage and frequencies to answer the research questions. Simple percentage and frequency was used to analyze the research questions 1 and 2, while mean was used to analyze research question 3 to assess the mean difference as relating to gender research productivity of librarians. A four point rating scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree), SA, A D, and SD (4, 3, 2 and 1) was used for analyzing research question 4 with a rating scale point of 2.50 response and above as strongly agree and below 2.50 response as disagree. t- test of statistical technique was used to test the formulated hypotheses and calculated t-test values were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1: What is the research productivity of librarians in academic librarians in Anambra and Delta state?

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on the Research Productivity of Librarians by State

	State No of Pub	Frequency of Pub	Percent
Anambra			
	0.00	7	23.3
	2.00	2	6.7
	3.00	3	10.0
	5.00	1	3.3
	9.00	1	3.3
	10.00	1	3.3
	12.00	3	10.0
	14.00	2	6.7
	15.00	3	10.0
	16.00	1	3.3
	18.00	1	3.3
	21.00	1	3.3
	23.00	1	3.3
	25.00	1	3.3
	26.00	1	3.3
	40.00	1	3.3
Total	315	30	100.0
Delta	0.00	7	12.7
	1.00	3	5.5
	2.00	9	16.4
	3.00	8	14.5
	4.00	6	10.9
	5.00	6	10.9
	6.00	3	5.5
	7.00	1	1.8
	8.00	1	1.8
	9.00	2	3.6
	11.00	1	1.8
	12.00	1	1.8
	13.00	2	3.6
	16.00	1	1.8
	17.00	1	1.8
	18.00	1	1.8
	24.00	1	1.8
	25.00	1	1.8
Total	299	55	100.0
Grand total	614	85	100.00

Summary of Table 1

Number of Publication by State	No of Lib	Mean of Pub	Standard Deviation	No of mean of standard						
				0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-	
Anambra 315 (51%)	30	10.50	9.97	13	2	8	2	3	2	
Delta 299 (49%)	55	5.77	5.75	39	7	4	3	2	1	
Total (100%)	614	85	7.22	7.84	52	9	12	5	5	2

Table shows that the total number of research productivity by librarians in academic libraries in Anambra State was 315, where 13(43.3%) of respondents have published between 0.00-5.00 publications, 2(6.6%) of respondents have published between 6.00-10.00 publications, 8(26.7%) respondents have published between 11.00-15.00 publications, 2(6.6%) of respondents have published between 16.00-20.00 publications, 3(9.9%) respondents have published between 21.00-25.00 publications, while 2(6.6%) of respondents have published 26 and above a-publications. The highest research productivity in Anambra state was 40.00 with a mean of 10.50. For librarians in academic libraries in Delta State, their total number of research productivity was 299, where 39 (70.9%) of respondents have published Between 0.00-5.00 publications, 7(12.7%) of respondents have published between 6.00-10.00 publications, 4(7.2%) respondents have published between 11.00-15.00 publications, 3(5.4%) of respondents have published between 16.00-20.00 publications, 2(3.6%) of respondents have published between 21.00-25.00 publications, 1(0.1%) respondents have published 26 and above publications. The - highest publication output in delta state was 26.00 with a mean of 5.44.

This reveals that librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta states have a good number of publications to justify their academic status.

Research Question 2: What preferred media (electronic or print) do librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States publish more?

Table 2. Preferred Media (electronic or print) of Research Productivity of Librarians

Media of Publication	State Anambra	Delta	Total
Journal (Print)	127(40.2%)	119(39.7%)	246(39.9%)
Journal (Electronic)	41(13.0%)	34(11.0%)	75(12.2%)
Book (Print)	17(5.4%)	11(3.7%)	28(4.5%)
Book (Electronic)	2(0.9%)	1(0.1%)	3(0.6%)
Chapter in a book (Print)	37(11.7%)	38(14.0%)	76(12.2%)
Chapter in a book (Electronic)	12(3.8%)	2(0.7%)	14(2.3%)
Conference Proceedings (Print)	28(8.9%)	59(18.7%)	87(14.1%)
Conference Proceedings (Electronic)	2(0.6%)	3(1.0%)	5(0.8%)
Research Report (Print)	14(4.4%)	18(6.0)	32(5.2%)
Research Report (Electronic)	9(2.9%)	2(0.7%)	11(1.8%)
Abstract Report (Print)	4(1.3%)	4(1.4%)	8(1.3%)
Abstract Report (Electronic)	11(3.5%)	2(0.7%)	13(2.1%)
Index (Print)	8(2.8%)	5(2.0%)	13(2.4%)
Index (Electronics)	2(0.6%)	1(0.3%)	3(0.5%)
Total	315(100.0%)	299(100.0%)	614(100%)

Table 2 shows the response of librarians on the preferred media in which they publish their work in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States with 246 (39.9%) publications in journal (print). When compared on the basis of state, in Anambra state 127 (40.2%) publications were in Journal (print) while in Delta state 119 (39.7%) publications were in journal (print).

The next three preferred media through which librarians publish were; conference proceeding, (Print), chapters in book (print) and journal (electronic) with 87 representing 14.1%, 76 representing 12.3% and 75 representing 12.2%

respectively. The publications in conference proceedings (print), chapters in book (print) and Journal (electronic) analysis based on state also showed similar trend. This revealed that a greater proportion of librarians preferred to published their works in Journal (print) followed by conference proceedings (print), chapter in book (print) and journal (electronic).

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference in the research productivity of librarians in academic libraries based on location (Anambra and Delta States).

Table 5. t-test Analysis of Librarians; Research Productivity Based on State

State	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Df	t-cal	P-value
Anambra	30	10.50	9.97	83	2.97	0.05
Delta	55	5.44	5.75			

Using independent samples t-test, there is a significant difference in the mean research productivity of librarians in Anambra State and Delta States, t-value (Df = 83) = 2.97) and P-value <0.05. This shows that the mean research productivity of librarians in Anambra (Mean = 10.50) was significantly greater than that of librarians from Delta State (Mean=5.44). The null hypothesis of no significant difference was not accepted.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference in the research productivity of librarians based on the preferred media (electronic or print) of publication.

Table 6. T-test Analysis of Librarians Preferred Media (Electronic or print) of Research Productivity

Preferred Media	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Df	t-cal	P-value
Print	490	5.76	2.93	96	2.78	0.05
Electronic s	124	1.44	3.15			

Using independent samples t-test, there is a significant difference in the mean research productivity of librarians in Anambra State and Delta States, t-value (Df =96) = 2.78) and P-value <0.05. This shows that the mean of print media research productivity of librarians from both states (Mean = 5.76) was significantly greater than that of the mean of electronic media research productivity of both states (Mean = 1.44). The null hypothesis of no significant difference was not accepted.

Discussion of Results and Findings

The discussion of results is presented under the following subheading; librarians research productivity; preferred media (electronic and print) of librarians' research productivity; gender difference in the research productivity of librarians and challenges peculiar to male and female (gender) librarians research productivity.

Librarians research productivity

The study revealed that of librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States have to a great extent researched and published to defend the academic status conferred on them. Librarians have been seen to research and publish for appointment, promotion and to maintain academic status. This finding is in line with that of Aina (1991) who found out that academic librarian are doing their best to meet up with the publication requirement and that a good percent of librarians have researched and published to qualify them for promotion.

Preferred Media of Librarians Research productivity

The study revealed that librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States publish more articles through print media and in journals, conference proceedings and chapter in a book format. It shows that print media is more in use than electronic media, likewise the use of journals publication format than other types of publications formats. This is in agreement with Buckley (1999) who posits that electronic publications is playing a complimentary role to print publication. Also Milne (1999) who observed that print publication remained the most important means of information dissemination by librarians and other academics alike.

Implication of the Study

1. From the findings of this study it has been established that librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta State have researched and published satisfactorily to meet up with the academic status criteria of “publish or perish” and for their career advancement. This implies that research productivity is important to librarians and is part of their job to maintain their academic status.
2. It is also established that librarians in academic libraries in Anambra and Delta publish more in print media than electronic media and in journals format than other types of publication format. This implies that librarians in academic institutions do not under rate the place of print in publishing even in this present era of information communication technology and also high value is placed on publishing in academic journals.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, it could be concluded that the status accorded librarians in academic libraries is deserved as they have been seen to have researched and published to a great extent to maintain academic status, appointment and promotion. The use of print media and journal is more. However, the following recommendations were made based on the findings from this study;

1. Librarians in Academic Libraries in Anambra and Delta State should continue to express their research and publishing skills as they have been doing to increase their professional visibility, career promotion and advancement and also to gain international recognition.
2. Librarians in Academic libraries in Anambra and Delta States should embrace research and publishing more through electronic media and other formats like chapter in a book (electronic), e-books and prepare abstract and indexes; this will increase their professional worth among peers.
3. Work schedules challenges should be structured by the management of the institution in such a way that librarians have free time such as the stipulated 26 days annual research leave to carry out research and publication.

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