ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS: THEIR INFLUENCE ON PUBLICATION OUTPUT AMONG LIBRARIANS IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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The influence of academic qualifications on publication output among librarians in 24 Nigerian universities from 1985-1993 was determined with a sample of 202 (out of 278 selected). Regarding their publication output, a one way analysis of variance statistics (ANOVA) was used to compare librarians having different academic qualifications. The results of empirical analysis indicate that librarian's academic qualifications have positive influence on the quantity of publications produced. Other outside factors such as, underfunding of education, high inflation rate and poor living and working conditions influence their publication output. Obtaining higher degree by librarians to enhance high publication productivity is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1948-1989, some Nigerian universities had already classified their librarians as academic staff while a few did not. According to Decree No. 16 of 1990, the National Universities Commission (NUC) legislated that librarians in all Nigerian universities would have academic status. By this Decree the National Universities Commission was empowered to play a supervisory role in both federal and state universities. One of the clear implications of the new ambiguous academic status conferred on librarians was that librarians in Nigerian universities have to publish or perish like their teaching counterparts - university lecturers before they are elevated or promoted.

Publication output enhances their status or rank and salary position in the university environment. It also brings national and international visibility of authors to a wider reading public. Several research studies [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] have indicated the justification for librarians to publish.

It is an old saying that the library building represents 5%, the book collection 20%, while the staff represents 75% of budget to make a good library [7]. A new trend in library research is about the world of work for librarians concerning professional services and development and accurate deployment of professional staff. Apart from performing professional duties, the librarians are expected to publish a certain number of papers before promotion.

It seems that the influence of academic qualifications in librarianship could elicit assessment of publication output among librarians in Nigerian universities. With the recent focus on specialization in academic or university environment, there has been increasing interest in examining a specific form of deviation, particularly qualification in publication output [9].

Olsgaard and Olsgaard [9] observe that the stock in trade in librarianship is communication and transfer of knowledge, yet, little is known about the communication of ideas within the profession. The authors conclude that librarianship is sadly behind the disciplines of economics, psychology, and the sciences in determining the bibliometric nature of the professional literature.

Writing in support of librarians to write and publish, Redmond et al [10] had earlier argued that librarians working in university libraries, irrespective of their academic qualifications should see themselves as being involved in two information cycles - a publication cycle which involves the production of new knowledge, its formalization and its storage and use; and a demand cycle - providing information to library users clients. By so doing, these scholars observed that by taking active part in the publication cycle, librarians could compete with their teaching counterparts in the university environment [10 p.13]. The present study seeks to find out the influence of academic qualifications on publication output among Nigerian
University libraries in Nigeria and other parts of the world are the nerve centres of higher institutions of learning, teaching and research. As such, there is urgent need to find out the influence of the various academic qualifications on the quantity of publications produced by their librarians. The result could aid in recruitment and transfer exercises within the university library. In any case, the primary duties of university librarians are not only to acquire and disseminate information to clients or users but also, to contribute in extending the frontiers of knowledge by publishing significant research like their teaching counterparts.

Bloomfield [3] studied the writing habits of librarians in United States of America by counting the citation works indexed in Library Literature. His research findings show that librarians with doctorate degree, whether in library science or in some other field, write on an average of one publication per year. Persons holding a master's degree in library science write on an average of 0.05 publications per year. Authors selected at random from Library Literature published 0.20 items per year. His overall research findings which focused on the influence of academic qualification on publication output could be summarized as follows:

(a) "the estimated average librarians' rate of publication per year is 0.05 items;
(b) the writing activity of all librarians who hold doctorate degree is exceptionally high - averaging 18.6% for library science doctorate and 27% for non-library science doctorate; and
(c) the average annual publication rate of the MLS degree holders surveyed was one publication per fifteen years."

Similarly, Watson [11] who studied publication activity of librarians from ten large university libraries in the United States of America came out with the following findings:

(a) "almost 60% of all articles published are by the authors who have a subject master's degree, a Ph.D. or another higher degree;
(b) a relatively small percentage of the staff of each university library publishes in a given year. The range is from an average of 3.6% to 11.4% with the average for all staff at 7.2%; and
(c) the annual publication rate of the Ph.D. degree holders surveyed is more in relation to their numbers".

Miller [12] from a survey of seventy-two university libraries and forty-four library schools measured and evaluated the entry of subject Ph.D. into librarianship during the past three years and observed that the number of subject Ph.D.s enrolling in library schools was increasing rapidly; job opportunities for subject Ph.D.s in librarianship were very good; and that subject Ph.D.s were generally employed in choice positions.

Rayman and Goudy [13] argued that "for all librarians working in university libraries, irrespective of their academic qualifications, the task to publish will be a difficult exercise". Similarly, Mitchell and Swieszkowski [14] also held the same view about librarians in university libraries. In the absence of a local empirical study to counter Rayman and Goudy’s [13] assertion, this paper examines the influence of the various academic qualifications on publication output among librarians in Nigerian universities. For the purpose of the study, the following hypotheses were made and tested:

1. There is no significant difference in academic qualifications of librarians' academic publication output in Nigerian university libraries.
2. There is no significant difference in academic qualifications of librarians' work related publication output in Nigerian university libraries.

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of clarity, publication output survey statistics were categorised into two dimensions, namely, academic publication output - journal articles, books, accepted or published conference/workshop papers, and work related publication output - abstracts, indexes, bibliographies and in-house publications accepted or published by the librarian. Such academic and work related publication outputs were assumed to have had local, national and international book/serial numbers of ISBN or ISSN. A stratified random sampling method was used to select 278 librarians working in 24 (out of the 35) universities in Nigeria. All the universities were categorised into five groups consisting of (a) federal universities (conventional), (b) universities of agriculture, (c) state universities, (d) state universities of technology, and (e) federal universities of technology. Their names of status were used as a major criterion for
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categorising them to a group and the asterisked ones as shown in the Appendix were randomly selected for the study.

Furthermore, a simple random sampling method was used to select universities from each of the five groups for the study. However, the geographical location of universities was taken into consideration during selection. The essence of these two sampling methods was to ensure equal probability of being selected. Finally, all the librarians found in the sampled universities were surveyed through questionnaire irrespective of sex, age, status and academic qualifications.

202 librarians filled and returned their questionnaires correctly representing 72.66% response rate which was adequate for empirical analysis.

Table 1
Classification by academic qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Academic qualifications</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>BLS; BA; B.Sc., HND</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>MLS; MA; M.Sc., M.Phil</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>72.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three major academic qualifications were identified and used for the study. The results obtained from the respondents show that the highest number of librarians - 147 (72.77%) had Masters; followed by 37 (18.34%) with Bachelors; and 13 (6.43%) with Ph.D. degree in library science while 5 librarians refused to disclose their academic qualifications (Table 1).

The respondents were requested to check on following six point scale to express their level of publication output within the past eight years - 1985-1993.

(1) None; (2) 1-3; (3) 4-7; (4) 8-11; (5) 12-15; (6) 16 and above number of publications.

Quantitative values were given to the responses in the questionnaire as indicated above and the means of responses were computed for each publication output dimension. For the three categories of academic qualifications identified among librarians in Nigerian universities, the one way analysis of variance statistics (ANOVA) was used to compare the difference of the mean scores of the academic qualifications with regard to their publication output. Furthermore, the mean and standard deviation scores of the publication output dimensions were computed and used in determining the study results. The calculated F-value ratio was used to really determine the academic qualification which had the greatest influence on publication productivity. The two null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In testing hypothesis 1, a one way analysis of variance statistics (ANOVA) was used to compare librarians with three different academic qualifications regarding their academic publication output dimension in Nigerian universities (Table 2).
Table 2
Analysis of Variance:
Influence of academic qualifications on academic publication output

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Academic qualifications</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BLS; B.A.; B.Sc.; HND</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.4444</td>
<td>1.9920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MLS; M.A.; M.Sc.; M.Phil.</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>4.9699</td>
<td>2.0595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.4167</td>
<td>3.7769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>181</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>81.1766</td>
<td>40.5883</td>
<td>8.4432*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>855.6853</td>
<td>4.8072</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>963.8619</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p > 0.05; df = 2,178; Critical F = 3.04

The result of analysis of variance (Table 2) shows that the calculated F value of 8.4432 is greater than the critical F value of 3.04 at 2,178 degree of freedom. This means that the librarians with academic qualifications have positive or significant influence on their academic publication output (*p > 0.05; df = 2,178; F = 8.4432). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in academic qualifications on librarian's academic publication output in Nigerian university libraries is rejected. Furthermore, the results on Table 2 show that librarians with doctorate degrees produced the highest academic publications (mean = 7.4167) followed by master's degree holders (mean = 4.9699 and the lowest is first degree holders (mean = 4.4444). In short, first and second degree holders are significantly different with the doctorate degree holders at 0.05 level.

In testing hypothesis 2, a one way analysis of variance statistics (ANOVA) was used to compare librarians with three different academic qualifications regarding their work related publication output dimension in Nigerian university libraries. The result of analysis of variance (Table 3) shows that the calculated F value of 0.1926 is less than the critical F value of 3.14 at 2,68 degree of freedom. This means that the academic qualification which a librarian has, does not significantly influence his work related publication output. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in academic qualification on librarians' work related publication output in Nigerian universities is accepted. The result on Table 3 also shows that librarians with the highest work related publications are master's degree holders (mean = 5.2157) followed by first degree holders (mean = 5.2000) and doctorate degree holders had the lowest work related publications (mean = 4.8000). Finally, the result indicates that no two groups are significantly different at the 0.05 level.
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Table 3
Analysis of Variance:
Influence of academic qualifications on work related publication output

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Academic qualifications</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>BLS: BA: B.Sc.: HND</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.2000</td>
<td>1.6987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>MLS: MA: MSc: M.Phil</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5.2157</td>
<td>1.3611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8000</td>
<td>1.3038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7923</td>
<td>0.3961</td>
<td>0.1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>139.8275</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.0563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>140.6197</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 2.68; Critical F = 3.14

DISCUSSION

The study results have shown that librarians' academic qualifications have positive influence on the quantity of publications produced. This study results are similar with results of earlier studies as indicated in the literature by Bloomfield [3], Miller [12] and Watson [11].

Bloomfield [3] from a study of the writing habits of librarians concluded that 'the writing activity of all librarians who hold the doctorate degree is exceptionally high'. This conclusion was noted to be valid with this study result. It could be explained that such a doctorate degree holder must have been properly groomed in the art of writing and conducting research. Secondly, it may be that they may have been well experienced both in his professional duties and theoretical orientations which the doctorate programme may have exposed them to. Thirdly, doctorate degree candidate may have been a matured student and by the time he completes the programme, he may have acquired and developed good writing styles for research publications. One can now appreciate why those with doctorate degrees produced more academic publications than those with first and second degrees holders in the study.

Furthermore, this results could be explained by the fact that before some one obtains a doctorate degree, he must have worked diligently, usually beyond the demands made by an average student. It appears that the selection criteria for doctorate degree candidates is tough and only meant for hard working and diligent students who intend to perfect their research skills.

The significant trend of this research study shows that first and second degree holders produced more work related publications than doctorate degree holders. Probably, those with doctorate do not see such publications as really academic or intellectually challenging in nature, hence, that showed little or no interest in them.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

With the study results, it could be concluded that librarians' academic qualifications have positive
influence on the quantity of publications produced. The results obtained show that higher degree attainment especially the doctorate induces or propels librarians to publish more academic publications than work related publication output. Staff development programmes to the doctoral level should be given top priority in Nigerian university libraries to enhance publication productivity.

It appears that Nigerian workers respond positively to monetary rewards as incentives to improve their productivity. Consequently, those librarians who publish the required number of papers should not be mandated to stay beyond two years before promotion.

Librarians, irrespective of academic qualifications should be encouraged to go on research and sabbatical leave periods whenever they are due. The study results show that 116 (57.4%) librarians have never gone on research leave. Also, 164 (81.2%) librarians have never gone on sabbatical leave too. Both the research and sabbatical leave periods could be made compulsory because during these periods, they could carry out studies which could be properly researched into and published.

It appears that there are other factors outside the university environment which may influence publication output of librarians such as personal lack of interest for research/publishing, psychological, non-institutional factors, e.g. high rejection rate of manuscripts sent out for publication and lack of working facilities and poor working and living conditions caused by under funding of education. Librarians, irrespective of academic qualifications acquired, need high wages and comfortable living conditions as well as good incentives/social system which could enhance research and publishing.

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APPENDIX

ALL THE NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES AND THE ONES SAMPLED (*) FOR THE STUDY

GROUP A: FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES (CONVENTIONAL)

1. *Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
3. *Bayero University, Kano
4. *University of Benin, Benin City
5. *University of Calabar, Calabar
6. *University of Ibadan, Ibadan
7. *University of Ilorin, Ilorin
8. *University of Jos, Jos
9. *University of Lagos, Lagos
10. University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri
11. *Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Ife
12. *University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt
13. Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto
14. *University of Nigeria, Nsukka
15. University of Uyo, Uyo.

GROUP B: FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES OF AGRICULTURE

16. *University of Agriculture, Abeokuta
17. University of Agriculture, Makurdi
18. *University of Agriculture, Umudike

GROUP C: FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES OF TECHNOLOGY

19. *Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi
20. Federal University of Technology, Akure
21. *Federal University of Technology, Owerri
22. *Federal University of Technology, Minna
23. Federal University of Technology, Yola

GROUP D: STATE UNIVERSITIES

24. *Edo State University, Ekpoma
25. *Abia State University, Ogbomoso
26. *Lagos State University, Ojo-Logo
27. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
28. *Ogun State University, Ago Iwoye
29. *Ondo State University, Ado Ekiti
30. Delta State University, Abraka
31. Kano State University, Kano
32. Benue State University, Makurdi

GROUP E: STATE UNIVERSITIES OF TECHNOLOGY

33. Enugu State University of Technology, Enugu
34. *Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho
35. *Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt.