

INFORMATION LITERACY AS CORRELATE OF PUBLICATION OUTPUT OF LIBRARIANS IN TWO STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH ZONE OF NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The nature of librarians as academic staff in any institution of higher learning demands that they publish regularly for them to move to the next level in their academic work. Observation and studies had shown that with the influx of information, some librarians find it difficult to publish and they remain in a particular position for a long period of time. Hence, this research work investigated information literacy as correlate of publication output of librarians in Niger Delta University Amasoma, Bayelsa State and Delta State University, Abraka in Nigeria. Three research questions guided this study in line with the here objectives of the study. The correlational survey was adopted for this study. Questionnaire was the instrument used in collecting data. The population for the study was made up of 30 librarians in Niger Delta University Bayelsa and Delta State University, Abraka. The entire population was used because of its small size. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean, standard deviation. The study found that the publication output of the librarians was low; Librarians possessed information literacy skills; Information Literacy Skills influenced publication output of librarians positively. It was recommended that librarians should not just possess skills to access information for other purposes but they should focus more on how to publish. They should seek to acquire knowledge on new search skills which could be achieved with the interest of individuals on skills acquisitions and the help of the institutions and university librarians on organizing or sponsoring librarians for training and workshops

Key words: Information literacy, Publication Output, Librarians, University Libraries, Nigeria

Introduction

The major aim of any higher institution of learning is to ensure that knowledge is transmitted through publications that could help in the development of mind and knowledge. Higher institutions of learning are more emphatic on the quality and quantity of publications which could be appearing in a journal, conference

proceedings, chapter in a book etc. (Popoola, 2008). The emphasis on publications in universities is as a result of its importance to knowledge advancement. Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem (2015) noted that publication in any University is very important because of its ability of knowledge creation, knowledge dissemination, recognition given to lecturers through the quality and quantity of research work produced and published. In other words, new knowledge are passed to the university and others through qualitative publications. Okpe, Simisaye and Otuza (2013).

(According to Okiki (2011) publication output means to measure the number of quality articles published in a journal in a higher institution of learning. Achieving this goal tend towards the use of information resources for without it the goal will not be actualize. Lack of access to information resources hinders publications. According to Bazley 2003 as cited in Hemmings and Kay (2010) that poor or limited access to information resources hinders publication output of lecturers. Okiki and Mabawoku (2013) asserted that the real challenge of our time is not producing or storing information but gaining access and using information resources effectively most especially with the influx of information. That is to say, with the influx of information, there is need for information literacy.

The American Library Association (2005) defined information literacy as a set of required skills needed by users to know that there is need for information and the competency to locate, evaluate, and use the information needed effectively. ALA explained further that information literacy is a concept that can influence accessibility and use of electronic information resources in research activities in an institution. Otunla (2013) defined Information literacy as the competence in locating, evaluating, and using information effectively for a range of purposes. The abundance of information is not enough to build the information society but what is more important is to acquire skills to effectively use information.

Pejova (2002) emphasised that inadequate information literacy in developing countries (Nigeria) lead to the underutilization of technological related resources that are made available for use, thus resulting in a waste of resources and thereby affecting publication output. Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem (2015) also stated that the decline in publication output of lecturers in Nigeria is as a result of lack of modern method of research and lack of access to adequate information resources. This is an indication that when the skill to access these modern information resources are not found in a researcher it bring down the output of publication.

It is obvious that information literacy has influence on the publication output of lecturers because influxes of information in this present age need to be exploited in order for lecturers to upgrade their publication which will benefit them in terms of promotion and also benefit the society at large.

Objectives of the study were to find out:

This study is specifically guided by the following objectives

1. Information literacy skills of librarians
2. Information literacy skills of librarian
3. How information literacy skill influence the publication output of librarians

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this study

1. What are the information literacy skills possessed by librarians?
2. What is the publication output of librarians?
3. How does information literacy influence publication output of librarians?

Literature Review

Publication Output

Publication output is a way in which a researcher contributes recent facts or information in a particular field of study which is a body of knowledge already in existence in form of books or chapters in a book, journals technical reports (Okpe, Simisaye & Otuza, 2013). Contributing to the body of knowledge brings about the productivity of the researcher or lecturer in a publication in any format that could serve as a way of disseminating knowledge that has already been researched into. Whitmire (2003) defined publication output as the number of publications in referred or non-referred journals, books published, reviewed books, presentation of papers in conferences and grants received at a particular period of time. Okiki (2011) affirmed that numerical count is one of the major ways to determine the quantity of publications. The level of publication output which is the quantity and quality of publication output is revealed in the number of publications and where the journal is published at a given time. Salaran (2010) asserted that the publication output of an institution is on the productivity of an individual appearing in any format. Salaran gave the index of research publication in five ways indicating the format at which they could appear. They are the number of single author books, the number of multi-author books, the number of referred journal articles, edited books, and chapters books. Ani (2013) posited that publication output is communicated in form of journal articles, books, technical reports, seminars/workshops and other types of publications. The quantity or quality of publication could appear in a local or international journal for recognition. In a study by Hemming s and Kay (nd) on Lecturer self-efficacy and research skills, it was found that 47 lecturers had no publications in their first six years while the second category comprised 78 lecturers who had been active publishers in the same time-frame. According to Okiki that the publication output of lecturers within three years in the various textbooks, chapters in books, single authored works, co-authored works, patents and certified inventions, monographs, articles in learned journals, technical reports,

conference proceedings, scientific peer reviewed bulletins in terms of quality and quantity of research output was low.

Although, Nigerian academics were rated the best in sub-Saharan Africa up to, the late 1980s before it thereafter declined. Publication outputs are mainly achieved when researchers are skilled in accessing information resources. In other words, information literacy skill is very important in the search for information.

According to Idiode (2005), information literacy is freely connected to both information behavior and critical thinking. Information literacy according to Idiode is not only to achieve personal and economic development but also an important part of pursuing lifelong learning. According to Ojeniyi and Adetimirini (2016) observed that the value placed on technology, made it important and necessary to be familiar with it most especially in the labour market. In the society at large, individuals who are skilled can easily access information. Ojeniyi and Adetimirini (2016) emphasizes that even in the institutions of learning or educational industry, information literacy skill contribute to the scholarly work of lecturers and students. Accessing and utilizing the growing range of information both hard copy and e-resources, one needs to acquire and practice the skills necessary to exploit them. Secker (2008) also explained that information literacy is very necessary most especially with the availability of the number of information resources online.

Okiki and Mabawouku (2013) emphasized on some of the information literacy skills possessed by researchers to be ability to know when information is needed, ability to differentiate between reliable information from unreliable information, ability to use precise terms in search for information, making comparison and evaluation from information resources obtained, locating and accessing information, organizing, applying and communicating information to others and also synthesizing and building on existing knowledge (Okiki & Mabawouku 2013). However, with these literacy skills required of researchers, observation have shown that some researchers in African Universities still have low levels of information literacy (Madu & Dike, 2012).

High level of information literacy enable users to exploit the advantages of technology to the fullest as information literacy skills have been described as skills that a researcher needs to carry out good publication output (Madu & Dike, 2012). Okiki and Mabawouku (2013) affirmed that lecturers in universities have the opportunity to focus on seeking for information by asking questions, developing a research programme, and sharing the knowledge with others in order to develop professionalism. It therefore means that there is need to possess information literacy skill which will help in accessing and using electronic information resources for publication output. Hence Islam and Tsuji, (2010) opined that Information literacy skills are the instrument for lifelong learning and it is expected that university teachers acquire these skills in order to carry out their researches and

teaching effectively. Information literacy is a skill they must possess in order to publish qualitative and quantitative research output.

A study carried out by Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem (2015) on the level of information literacy of lecturers, it revealed that out of 158 lecturers used as sample for the study, Lecturer 1, had a mean of 63.33 which is moderate according to the decision rules in the study. Senior lecturers had a mean of 59.74 which is still moderate, lecturers in the rank of readers had a means score of 75.37, which is high according to the decision rule, which means that they had high proficiency in information literacy skills. The lecturers in the professorial cadre have a mean of 58.50 which is moderate, and it implies that most people in this cadre are moderately skilled in information literacy. Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem, further explained that the academic staff with high information literacy skills often found it easier to publish their research work than those with lower skills. Boakye (2015) further supported those lecturers who have skills in retrieving information finds it easy to write quality proposal, publish in a scholarly and referred journal, present papers at seminars, workshops and conferences. Adekunjo, Ebohon and Hamzat (2013) study on Impact of Information and Communication Technology on Research Output of Scientist in Two Selected Nigerian Agricultural Research Institutes showed that all the respondents agreed that their acquisition of ICT skills in recent times had remarkably enhanced their research efforts. In the same vein, 100% of respondents agreed that they had found information literacy skills very useful in the improvement of their research, while 59(49%) agreed that the Institutes have invested so much on staff training for the acquisition of ICT skills which revealed that the application of ICT and staff training through information literacy programmes had remarkably enhanced research outputs of the scientists in the Institutes. From all indications the possession of information literacy skill is very paramount in making significant contributions to research work as most of the present-day research works require the researcher's versatility in computer and library usage.

Methods

The correlational survey was adopted for this study. The population for the study was made up of 30 Librarians from two Universities, Niger Delta university Amasoma, Bayelsa and Delta State University, Abraka. The researcher studied the entire population because of its small size. The researcher used questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, mean and pearson product correlation coefficient).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research question One. What are the information literacy skills possessed by librarians?

Table 1. Information Literacy skills possessed by Librarians?

S/N	Information literacy skills	Mean	SD
1	Ability to recognize need for information	3.3333	.91987
2	Ability to distinguish potential information resources	3.0000	1.20894
3	Ability to construct strategies for locating information	2.7778	1.36814
4	Ability to compare and evaluate information from different sources	3.1111	1.08604
5	Ability to locate and access information resources	3.1111	1.21950
6	Ability to organize, apply and communicate information	3.0000	1.17670
7	Ability to synthesize and build on existing information	2.8519	1.23113

As shown in Table 1, the information literacy skills possessed by the respondents were ability to recognize need for information (3.33); distinguish potential information resources (3.00); construct strategies for locating information (2.78); compare and evaluate information from different sources (3.11); locate and access information resources (3.11); organize, apply and communicate information (3.00) and ability to synthesize and build on existing information (2.85). This is an indication that the librarians possessed information literacy skills. This is in line with the study of Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem (2015) that most lecturers had a means score of 75.37, which is high according to the decision rule, which means that they had high proficiency in information literacy skills. In other word, most librarians in higher institutions of learning possessed information literacy skills.

Research question Two. What is the publication output of librarians?

Table 2. Publication output of Librarians

S/N	Level of Publication	High (%)	Medium (%)	Low (%)
1.	Textbooks	11.1	18.5	25.9
2.	Chapters in books	11.1	11.1	37.0
3	Single authored work	7.4	25.9	40.7
4.	Co-authored work	3.7	29.6	33.3
5.	Patent and certified invention	7.4	22.1	22.2
6.	Monographs	7.4	18.5	22.2
7.	Occasional papers	3.7	40.7	25.9
8.	Articles in learned journals	11.1	14.8	55.6
9.	Technical Reports	3.7	44.4	29.6
10.	Scientific peer-reviewed bulletin	3.7	3.7	29.6
11.	Conference proceedings	14.8	3.7	33.3

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondent had a low publication output for textbooks, chapters in books, single authored works, co-authored works, patents and certified inventions, monographs, articles in learned journals, scientific-peer-reviewed bulletins and conference proceedings. For occasional papers and technical reports, there was a medium level of output by the respondents. This therefore shows that the publication output of the respondents was low. This finding is in agreement with the view of Okiki that the publication output of lecturers within three years in the various sources was low. Although, Nigerian academics were rated the best in sub-Saharan Africa up to, the late 1980s before it thereafter declined. Though, there have been decline in publication output of librarian, it is expected that with the influx of information, there ought to be an increase in publication output of librarian but the situation remains the same. This could be that most librarians attention is deviated from how to grow in the profession.

Research question Three. How does information literacy influence publication output of librarians?

Table 3. Influence of Information Literacy on Publication Output

		Publication Level	Information Literacy
Pearson Correlation	Publication Level	1.000	.326
	Information Literacy	.326	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Publication Level	.	.048
	Information Literacy	.048	.
N	Publication Level	27	27
	Information Literacy	27	27

Using a Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the relationship between information literacy and publication output of librarians, (N =27; 0.326, $p < 0.05$), Table 3 shows that there was a positive significant relationship between information literacy and publication output of librarians. Information Literacy therefore influences publication output of librarians positively. That is, when librarians have knowledge on how to access information resources as related to their publication, it enable them publish as it is expected of them. Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem, emphasized that the academic staff with high information literacy skills often found it easier to publish their research work than those with lower skills. Also, Boakye (2015) supported that those academic staff who have skills in retrieving information finds it easier to write quality proposal, publish in a scholarly and referred journal, present papers at seminars, workshops and conferences. Thus, librarians are to possess information literacy skills since it has a positive influence on publication output.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Publication output is a major factor to be considered in terms of promoting librarians in any library. The findings in this study had shown that the level of publication of librarians in some of the publications sampled was low. The skills possessed in order to access information resources were also possessed by librarians. The study had also revealed that there was a significant relationship between information literacy and publication output of librarians. In other words, information literacy skill is a major factor that can influence publication output of librarians. Though librarians possess information literacy skills as found in this study, they do not publish as it is expected. This could be that librarians only possess skills to access information generally and not related to their publications. Also, neglect or laziness on the need to publish could be other factors leading to low publication of librarians. Therefore, librarians should always be involved in training on recent skills relating to publications and be zealous to learn and publish. Based on the findings in this study, the researcher therefore recommends that:

Librarians should not just possess skills to access information for other purposes but they should focus more on how to publish. That is, librarians should possess skills needed to access online information resources that will aid their publications, and also seek to acquire knowledge on new search skills. This can be achieved with the interest of individuals on skills acquisitions and the help of the institutions and university librarians in organizing or sponsoring librarians for training and workshops.

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