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ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF ACADEMIC STAFF OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE SCHOOLS IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed the level of research productivity of academic staff in Library and Information Science (LIS) schools in federal universities in Nigeria and identified the challenges affecting their research productivity. The study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised 344 academic staff from 27 LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria, and total enumeration technique was used to include all the respondents in the study. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection, while descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used for data analysis. Out of the 344 questionnaires administered, 298 were properly completed and returned, representing an 86.6% response rate. The findings revealed that the overall level of research productivity among academic staff of LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria was high with a weighted average mean of 2.74. Articles in learned journals and conference proceedings constituted the most common research outputs, while patents and monographs recorded low output levels. The study further revealed that financial constraints, workload, family challenges, low internet bandwidth, lack of mentorship, and time constraint were major challenges affecting research productivity, with a weighted average mean of 4.46. The study concluded that although academic staff in LIS schools demonstrated a relatively high level of research productivity, several institutional and personal challenges continue to hinder optimal research performance. The study recommended increased

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research funding, reduction in workload, improved internet facilities, mentorship programmes, and institutional support mechanisms to enhance research productivity among academic staff in LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria.

Keywords: Level, Research productivity, Academic staff, Library and information science schools, federal universities.

Introduction

Universities are established not only for teaching and community service, but also for the production and dissemination of knowledge through research activities for productivity. Therefore, research productivity has become one of the major indicators used in assessing the effectiveness and relevance of academic staff in universities across the world. Academic staff are therefore expected to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of knowledge through scholarly publications, conference presentations, books, and other academic outputs. This why, in the contemporary knowledge-driven society, research productivity unequivocally plays a vital role in enhancing institutional reputation, improving university rankings, supporting evidence-based practice, and contributing to national development.

In Nigerian universities, Ahmed and Sunday (2019) point out that research productivity serves as a criterion for promotion, tenure, professional recognition, and career advancement among academic staff. The growing emphasis on global competitiveness and knowledge economy has further increased the pressure on lecturers and researchers to publish quality scholarly works in reputable journals. Thus, universities and regulatory agencies such as the National Universities Commission have continued to encourage academic staff to engage actively in research and publication activities.

Library and Information Science (LIS) schools occupy a unique position within the university system because they are responsible for training information professionals who support teaching, learning, and research activities in society. That is why academic staff in LIS schools is expected to demonstrate high research productivity in order to contribute to the development of the discipline, improve professional practice, and address emerging challenges in information management, digital literacy, information technology, and knowledge organization. Therefore, their research outputs also influence curriculum development, policy formulation, and innovation within the field of library and information science. The increasing integration of digital technologies into academic activities has obviously transformed the way research is conducted, disseminated, and accessed. This necessitated that academic staff are now required to possess skills in the use of digital tools, online databases, internet resources, reference management software, and electronic communication platforms to enhance their research activities. Yusuf (2005) emphasize that the effective utilization of these technologies may significantly influence the quantity and quality of research outputs produced by academic staff.

However, despite the recognized importance of research productivity, concerns have continued to emerge regarding the level of scholarly output among academic staff in Nigerian universities. Observations and existing literature suggest that the level of research productivity among academic staff varies considerably. While some academic staff produces substantial scholarly outputs in terms of journal publications, conference papers, books, and collaborative research, others experience low research productivity. This situation has generated concern among stakeholders in higher education because inadequate research output may negatively affect the quality of teaching, institutional reputation, professional development, and national educational growth. In LIS schools, where academic staff are expected to possess strong information and technological skills,

the persistence of low research output raises questions about the extent to which they are effectively engaging in research activities and contributing to the advancement of the profession. It is against this background that this study seeks to assess the research productivity of academic staff in Library and Information Science schools in federal universities in Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The study seeks to;

1. Assess the level of research productivity of academic staff of LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria.
2. Identify the challenges affecting research productivity of academic staff library and information science schools in federal universities in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Universities around the world have been agents of development of their immediate communities and the world at large through research that leads to advancement in knowledge in different areas of human existence. This is because research is the fundamental process of acquisition of knowledge. It is a systematic enquiry to the world of the unknown in every field of human endeavour by experts and professionals in various fields for productivity. According to Gabbay and Soham (2017), conducting research is beneficial to the researcher. Innovative and high impact researches improve the profile of the researcher among their peers and expedite their career progression. Quality research exposes academics to current information and sharing of research results with others. The significance of research in the academia is that it enables academics to

share insight, demonstrate academic scholarship and gain recognition for creative thinking. Therefore, the importance of producing researches is vital.

Research Productivity is the total number of works completed by academic staff in the university and related content over a while. Abioye and Ojo (2020) emphasized that research Productivity is calculated as the number of publications measured by the number of papers published by the academic staff in the last three years. Therefore, measuring research productivity is the primary task of universities to enhance academic staff performance and reflect the critical measures of a faculty's and academic staff productivity, as well as the measure of the individual's or group of authors' productivity. Research productivity plays a major role in defining success in academic circles, as it is related to promotion, tenure and salary of academic staff. The importance of research can be better understood from the fact that universities around the world are ranked based on the quality and quantity of research output.

Despite the importance of research especially in the university, it is some worth gloomy to state that the level of research productivity of academic staff in federal universities in Nigeria is rather low. This is affirmed by Lawal, and Deborah, (2020) who conducted a study on Innovativeness and Research Productivity of Academic Staff in Kaduna State University, Nigeria. The findings revealed low level of research productivity among academic staff in Kaduna State University from 2017 to 2019. Okiki (2013), investigated research productivity of teaching faculty members in Nigerian federal universities. The finding of the study shows that the research productivity of the teaching faculty members in Nigerian federal universities is high in journal publications, conference papers, working papers and occasional papers.

Simisaye, A. O (2019) investigated research productivity of academic staff in research institutes in South-West Nigeria, between 2009-2014. Descriptive research design was adopted, questionnaire was the data instrument used to collect data. Total enumeration method was used to capture 782 academic staff in the twelve (12) research institutes. Findings show that a total 15,477 research output was published by the academic staff and the level of research productivity of the academic staff is low ($\bar{x} = 11.51$; **SD** = 2.36). Olusola, Olubunmi, Deborah and Ikonne (2022), conducted a study on research productivity of lecturers in federal universities in Nigeria: the place of institutional factors. Survey research design was adopted. Findings from the study revealed an average level of research productivity among academic staff in Nigerian universities. Daniel, Oghenetega and Oniovoghai (2022) conducted a study on research productivity of academic staff in federal colleges of education in Nigeria: The way forward. Survey research design was adopted for the study while the Expectancy and Institutional theories provided the framework. The multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 724 as the sample size for the study. Findings from the study revealed an average level of research productivity among academic staff in Nigerian Colleges. Basiru (2018), studied the level of research productivity of academic staff in private universities in south west Nigeria using descriptive survey research design. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 30% academic staff across the ranks in 21 private universities. The findings showed low level of research productivity among academic staff.

Okiki and Mabawonku (2013) conducted a study titled Impact of Information Literacy Skills on Academic Staff Research Productivity in Nigerian Federal Universities. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design involving 1,057 academic staff from federal universities across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. The findings revealed that academic staff possessed high information literacy skills and that these skills significantly enhanced their research productivity.

The study further showed that lecturers are more productive especially in journal publications, conference papers, and technical reports than in textbooks and patents. Ahmad and Ubi (2025) conducted a scientometric study titled Two Decades of Research at the University of Lagos (2004–2023): A Scientometric Analysis of Productivity, Collaboration, and Impact. The study analysed publication records and citation patterns of the University of Lagos over twenty years. The findings showed a steady increase in research productivity, particularly due to international collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and increased open-access publishing. The study established that collaboration significantly improved citation impact and research visibility.

On the other hand, research productivity of academic staff in Nigerian universities is severely constrained by so many challenges. In a study conducted by Simisaye, (2019) on the challenges hindering research productivity of academic staff in research institutes in South-West Nigeria between 2009-2014. The findings discovered inadequate motivation from employers, financial constraints; inadequate information accessibility, inadequate information literacy and family challenges were the challenges affecting research productivity of academic staff in research institutes in South-West Nigeria. Igiri, Okoduwa, Akabuogu, Okoduwa, Enang, Idowu, Abdullai, Onukak, Onuruka, Christopher, Salawu and Onyemachi, (2021), study focused research on the challenges and productivity of researchers in Nigerian academic institutions. Findings revealed that the major challenges hindering research productivity of academics in Nigeria were funding, lack of mentorship, brain drain challenge, lack of training, lack of motivation and non-payment of hazard and publication allowances. A study by Daniel, Oghenetega and Oniovoghai (2022) identifies low internet bandwidth and financial constraints as an impediment to lecturers' research productivity in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. similarly, Okiki (2013) revealed that the barrier to

research productivity by teaching faculty members in the universities include low internet bandwidth and financial constraint.

Gbemi-Ogunleye (2024) studied Institutional factors and academic staff research productivity in selected Nigerian universities. The study identified financial constraints as an impediment to lecturers' research productivity in Nigerian universities. A study by Hiire, Oonyu, Kyaligonza and

Onen (2020), titled Organisational Factors as Antecedents of University Academic Staff Research Productivity examined the influence of organisational variables on lecturers' research productivity in private universities in Uganda. Using a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, the study sampled 210 academic staff from four universities. The results revealed that technological advancement and computer skills significantly enhanced research productivity, whereas inadequate funding and poor human resource support hindered academic output. Hemmings, Rushbrook, and Smith (2007) conducted a study on Academics' views on publishing refereed works: A content analysis. The study identified challenges to included workload, lack of support, and underdeveloped research culture.

Oyeyemi, Ejakpovi, Oyeyemi, Adeniji,(2019) studied research productivity of academics at the Medical College of the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria. The findings revealed teaching load and time constraint as the major challenges for research productivity. In a similar study conducted by Olusola, Olubunmi, Deborah and Ikonne (2022). The study discovered that inadequate time, workload and time constraint were the challenges associated with research productivity. Onayinka, Felabita, Awoniyi, Nweze, Opela (2023), studied hindrance of research productivity among Nigerian university lecturers. The findings revealed that Nigeria lag behind their counterparts in advanced countries in terms of research output due to limited research funding, inadequate infrastructure, lack of mentorship and insufficient recognition and reward. Olabanji (2021) conducted a study on the effect of academics workload on academics productivity in Nigeria. The findings showed that academic workload and family responsibility affect academic productivity.

Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for the study while the target population comprises of 344 academic staff in 27 library and information science schools in federal universities in Nigeria. Total enumeration was used to include all the 344 academic staff in the schools understudy to constitute the sample size for the study. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Descriptive statistics was used to provide answers to the research questions.

Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion of Findings

This presents the study's findings derived from the analysis of the collected data.

Response Rate

The response rate obtained from the administration of the questionnaire is presented below:

Table 1 Response rate

S/N	Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
	Number of Questionnaire Administered	344	100%
	Returned Questionnaire	298	86.6%
	Un-returned Questionnaire	46	13.4%

Source: Field work (2025)

Table 1 represented response rate of the respondents. Out of the 344 questionnaires administered to academic staff of LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria, 298 were properly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 86.6%, while 46 (13.4%) were unreturned.

Table 2: Level of Research productivity of academic staff

S/N	Research Output Type	None	1–2	3–4	More than 5	Mean	SD
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1	Textbooks	189 (63.3%)	70 (23.6%)	32 (10.8%)	7 (2.4%)	2.53	.780
2	Chapters in books	151 (50.7%)	98 (32.9%)	35 (11.7%)	14 (4.7%)	2.71	.852
3	Co-authored textbooks	197 (66.0%)	55 (18.5%)	30 (10.1%)	16 (5.4%)	2.55	.880
4	Patents	259 (86.9%)	21 (7.0%)	13 (4.4%)	5 (1.7%)	2.21	.594
5	Monographs	250 (82.9%)	31 (10.4%)	13 (4.4%)	4 (1.3%)	2.24	.591
6	Articles in learned journals	70 (22.1%)	101 (33.9%)	54 (18.1%)	73 (24.5%)	3.46	1.09
7	Conference proceedings	97 (29.5%)	106 (37.2%)	57 (20%)	38 (13.3%)	3.18	1.00
8	Occasional papers	169 (47.3%)	81 (33.1%)	28 (11.4%)	20 (8.2%)	2.81	.937
9	Technical reports	196 (54.9%)	56 (24.8%)	28 (12.4%)	18 (8.0%)	2.74	.961
10	Scientific peer-reviewed papers	176 (46.3%)	60 (26.4%)	39 (17.2%)	23 (10.1%)	2.92	1.01
Weighted Average =						2.74	0.86

Source: Field work (2025), **Criterion Mean=** 2.50

Table 2 presents respondents level of research output across different publication types. The findings show that the overall weighted average mean is 2.74, which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents generally demonstrated a high level of research output. Among the research output types, articles in learned journals recorded the highest mean score of 3.46 with standard deviation of 1.09, indicating that many respondents published journal articles more frequently than other forms of research output. Similarly, conference proceedings had a relatively high mean of 3.18, showing active participation in academic conferences. On the other hand, patents recorded the lowest mean score of 2.21, followed by monographs with a mean of 2.24. This suggests that respondents produced fewer patents and monographs compared to other research outputs. Overall, the findings imply that respondents were more engage in publishing

journal articles and conference proceedings, while output such as patents, monographs and textbooks were less common.

Table 3 Challenges affecting research productivity

S/N	Statement	SD/D	U	A/SA	M	SD
1	Financial constraint	0 (0%)	2 (.7%)	296 (99.3%)	4.72	.463
2	Workload	0 (0%)	8 (2.7%)	290 (97.3%)	4.57	.546
3	Family challenges	7 (2.4%)	18 (6.0%)	273 (91.7%)	4.41	.739
4	Low internet bandwidth	4 (1.3%)	38 (12.8%)	256 (85.9%)	4.22	.715
5	Lack of mentorship	0 (0%)	15 (5.0%)	283 (95%)	4.42	.588
6	Time constraint	0 (0%)	13 (4.4%)	285 (95.6%)	4.44	.579
Weighted Average =					4.46	0.60

Source: Field work (2025), **Criterion Mean**= 2.50-3.49

Key: **SD/D**= Strongly Disagree/ Disagree. **U**= Undecided, **A/SA**= Agree/ Strongly Agree, **X**= Mean, **SD**= Standard Deviation

Table 3 presents the challenges affecting research productivity among academic staff of LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria. The findings reveal that the overall weighted mean is 4.46 with a standard deviation of 0.60, indicating that the respondents general agreed that the identified challenges significantly affect research productivity. Since the weighted mean is above the criterion mean range of 2.50-3.49, the challenges can be regarded as highly significant. Overall, the findings imply that financial constraint, heavy workload, inadequate time, lack of mentorship, family responsibilities and poor internet connectivity are the major challenges affecting the research productivity of the respondents.

Discussion of Findings

On the level of research productivity of academic staff, the findings of the study revealed that the overall level of research productivity among academic staff of LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria was high. This implies that the respondents were actively involved in research and scholarly publication activities. The study further revealed that articles in learned journals and conference proceedings constituted the most common forms of research outputs among the respondents. This finding may be attributed to the importance attached to journal publications and conference presentations in promotion and career advancement within Nigerian universities.

The finding agrees with Okiki (2013), who found that academic staff in Nigerian federal universities demonstrated high productivity particularly in journal publications and conference papers. The finding is also consistent with the study of Okiki and Mabawonku (2013), which reported that lecturers in Nigerian universities were more productive in journal publications, conference papers, and technical reports. Similarly, Ahmad and Ubi (2025) reported increased research productivity among academics due to collaboration and improved research visibility. However, the finding contradicts the studies of Lawal and Deborah (2020), Simisaye (2019), and Basiru (2018), who reported low levels of research productivity among academic staff in Nigerian universities and research institutes. The contradiction may be due to differences in institutional support, disciplinary focus, period of study, and increasing awareness of publication requirements among academic staff in recent years.

On the challenges affecting research productivity of academic staff, the findings discovered that financial constraints, workload, family challenges, low internet bandwidth, lack of mentorship, and time constraint were the major challenges affecting research productivity among academic

staff of LIS schools in federal universities in Nigeria. Financial constraint emerged as the most significant challenge. This suggests that inadequate funding may limit the ability of academic staff to conduct quality research, attend conferences, subscribe to scholarly databases, and publish in reputable journals. The finding is in line with Oyeyemi, Ejakpovi, Oyeyemi, Adeniji,(2019) and Olusola, Olubunmi, Deborah and Ikonne (2022) who affirm financial constraint, time constraint, and workload, were the major challenges affecting research productivity of academic staff in universities. The finding also agrees with Igiri, Okoduwa, Akabuogu, Okoduwa, Enang, Idowu, Abdullai, Onukak, Onuruka, Christopher, Salawu and Onyemachi, (2021), who reported that inadequate funding, lack of mentorship, and poor motivation, hinder research productivity among academics in Nigeria. Similarly, Daniel, Oghenetega and Oniovoghai (2022), as well as Okiki (2013), identified financial constraints and low internet bandwidth as major impediments to academic research productivity.

The finding further supports the study of Hiire, Oonyu, Kyaligonza and Onen (2020), which revealed that inadequate funding and poor technological support negatively affected lecturers' research productivity. The implication of these findings is that although academic staff in LIS schools are making reasonable contributions to research output, several institutional and personal challenges continue to limit their capacity to achieve higher research productivity. Without adequate support systems, funding opportunities, and conducive research environments, the ability of academic staff to sustain and improve scholarly output may be adversely affected.

Conclusion

The study concluded that academic staff of Library and Information Science schools in federal universities in Nigeria demonstrated a relatively high level of research productivity, particularly

in journal publications and conference proceedings. This indicates that academic staff are actively involved in research activities and scholarly communication within the discipline. However, the study also established that research productivity is still hindered by several challenges such as financial constraints, workload, lack of mentorship, time constraint, family responsibilities, and poor internet connectivity. These challenges have the potential to reduce the effectiveness and consistency of research output among academic staff. Therefore, improving institutional support systems and providing a more conducive research environment are essential for sustaining and enhancing research productivity in LIS schools in Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. Academic staff in LIS schools should be encouraged and supported through research incentives, grants, and recognition programmes to sustain and further improve their research productivity, particularly in areas with low productivity such as patents, monographs and textbook publications.
2. university management should provide adequate funding, improved internet facilities, mentorship programmes, and reduced workload to enhance research productivity among academic staff in LIS school

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