

Gender Related Challenges of Librarians to Scholarly Communications Publishing in Academic Libraries, Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore gender based challenges affecting librarians in academic libraries on their scholarly communication publishing effort. A librarian in an academic environment has the responsibility to make available, organize and disseminate relevant information in the midst of data flood as well as contribute new knowledge. This study therefore discusses the gender related challenges of scholarly communication publishing by librarians in academic libraries. The area of this study is Delta State, Nigeria. Delta State is made up of 3(three) senatorial districts, and there are four government owned universities in the State, which are: Delta State University, Abraka; University of Delta, Agbor (formerly College of Education, Agbor); Delta State University of Science and Technology, Ozoro (formerly Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro) and Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, (formerly Delta State University, Anwai Campus). The population of the study consisted of librarians from the selected government owned universities in Delta State. The study employed descriptive survey design and a total of 90 librarians from 4 academic libraries in Delta State was used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire and of the 90 questionnaire administered 79 was successfully retrieved. The data obtained from the retrieved questionnaire was analyzed using frequency count, percentage, mean and t-test. The findings and recommendation were highlighted. The study reveals that male librarians have published a little more than females, with a mean of 1.94. The study reveals that female librarians in academic libraries in Delta States are faced with various challenges in their publication effort which includes caring for children, household work, and pregnancy. Recommendations were made for the study.

KEYWORDS: Gender, Challenges, Librarians, Scholarly Communications, Publishing and Academic Libraries.

INTRODUCTION

In 2003, Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) defined scholarly communication as "the system through which research and other scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly

community, and preserved for future use. The system includes both formal means of communication, such as publication in peer-reviewed journals, and informal channels, such as electronic listeners." Scholarly communication is frequently defined or depicted as a lifecycle documenting the steps involved in the creation, publication, dissemination and discovery of a piece of scholarly research.

There are several actors or stakeholders present at the various stages in this lifecycle, including researchers, funders, peer reviewers, publishers, and, of course, libraries. Historically, the role of libraries in the scholarly communication lifecycle was confined to information consumer - they collected and organized scholarly resources for discovery and use by others. However, technological innovation in production and dissemination of scholarship, challenges to traditional publishing practices concerning business models and intellectual property management, and efforts to increase access to scholarship have presented opportunities for libraries to leverage their services and expertise to advocate for and bring about positive change.

The ways in which libraries have innovated their services and programs and tapped into their collective expertise to become less of a mere consumer of scholarly resources and instead a prominent actor and information producer in the scholarly communication lifecycle include:

- adoption of collection development policies and reprioritization of collection development budgets to strategically support open scholarship and positively respond to economic challenges of traditional scholarly publishing
- development of tools or schema to assist in the evaluation of both subscription and open access journals
- assistance to researchers with maximizing the impact of their research by supporting systems of researcher identification and promoting the use of altmetrics
- development and hosting of local publishing platforms
- utilization of the right of fair use, and advocating others to do the same, in order to promote preservation, access, use and discovery of materials in research and instruction
- education of authors on their intellectual property rights and assisting with the interpretation and amendment of publication contracts
- advocacy for open access to scholarship
- facilitation of compliance with funder public access mandates
- development and management of institutional repositories for the purpose of collecting, showcasing and maximizing discovery of institutional research output

Furthermore, since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been discussions among librarians, faculty members, and heads of universities regarding the way by which academic libraries are expected to function in the technological era; many of these discussions call for a re-examination of the needs of library users. According to Barclay (2007), a world of digital information has the potential to make the library seem superfluous, especially in scientific and technological fields. Hence, modern libraries must contend with ever-shrinking budgets on one hand, and with increasingly higher technological demands on the other. It is, therefore, essential for librarians to understand that, as technology develops and changes, information searching practices and needs change as well, which alters the expectations of modern library users. For instance, one important demand from the modern library

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is to provide maximal accessibility to online materials, a function considered significantly more essential than the physical presence of the library or of printed material (Saunders, 2015)

One of the main issues of academia is gender scholarly communication, namely, the connections among scholars, which increase the awareness of one scholar to the work and ideas of another, and which have always been considered a fundamental aspect of scholarly and scientific. Scholarly communication is understood as the system through which research and other scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly community, and preserved for future use, and it promotes a shared system of research and scholarship (Association of College & Research Libraries, 2015). In its broader sense, scholarly communication refers to both the formal and informal connections among scholars and disciplines (Bhaskar, 2009). The study of scholarly communication regards the information needs of gender scholars and scholarly groups.

Gender issue has been one of the most sensitive issues in the world today. All that is being heard is gender equality, emancipation and liberation, and this has not been restricted to one profession but cuts across all spheres of life. The issue of gender is not attributed to a particular part of the world, but it is consciously considered or handled in various countries and spheres of the society. The question here examines if there is gender difference in the scholarly output of Librarians. Are there different expectations for scholarship either personal, or institutional for men or women? Women often claim, that what their female counterpart can do, a woman can do much better. This study tends to review scholarly work on gender research productivity with special emphasis on quantity. Who contributes more, male or female?

Gender differences in the institutional rewards, such as tenure and salary, remain even when publishing productivity is controlled. African societies are male biased and so male academic, seeking ways to improve their professional and society status has become aggressive in publishing for the purpose of career advancement (Rose and Fischer, 1995). While not calling for the publication of substandard articles, encouragement should however be given to females (Atinmo and Jimba, 2002). After the Beijing conference on gender issues of international interest and discourse, African women will advance this discourse when they make aggressive effort to record their experience in various media format. Their contribution will provide a holistic understanding of the theory and practices of the profession on the African continent (Atinmo and Jimba, 2002). Measuring the domain of an area is through the analysis of the scholarly activity or professional communication in the field represented in journal literature. Gender is a demographic determination of publication output. Indeed, there is a lot of evidence in published literature on gender difference in publication output among scholars. A Descriptive survey by Atinmo and Jimba (2002) on Gender and Authorship pattern in African Librarianship confirmed male dominance in publishing, using questionnaire for data collection showed that out of the 18 authors, 63(53.4 percent) were male, while 55 (46.6%) were females. The study revealed that males publish more in order to advance in their career than females.

Okiy (2003) in her study on comparative analysis of the characteristic of authors in four Nigerian librarianship journals avers prevalence of male authors.

Garland (1990) posits that among the faculty of America library Association accredited library schools, men had 1,569 articles against 1,273 articles for women, for five years period of study. These studies have shown male dominance in publishing and are in consonance with the opinion of some authors that women generally received fewer resources and recognition than men for comparable productivity. Based on the backdrop this paper is set to investigate challenges affecting librarians in academic libraries on their scholarly communication publishing effort.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A librarian in an academic environment has the responsibility to make available, organize and disseminate relevant information in the midst of data flood as well as contribute new knowledge. The demand for the creation of new knowledge and effective publishing by librarians has no gender preference. Librarianship is a profession for both males and females and just like all other academic professions, librarians whether male or female are expected to engaged in rigorous scholarly publishing. In time past males librarians had dominance in almost every spheres of endeavor including scholarly publishing in spite of the demanding role of the librarianship profession and taking up headship roles in the family, however female librarians are not left out of the enormous role of the librarianship profession, in addition to this is having to create a balance between the dual role of family life and their professional work. The expectations for scholarship publishing are the same for males and females in any institution however, women are the opinion that they can be as good as the males. In the light of this, the study intends to discuss the gender scholarly publishing effort of librarians in the face of challenges.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. Determine gender difference to the scholarly publishing effort of librarians in academic libraries.
2. Identify the gender related challenges of librarians to scholarly publishing in academic libraries.

Research Question

1. Is there any gender difference to the scholarly publishing effort of librarians in academic libraries?
2. What are the gender related challenges of librarians to scholarly publishing in academic libraries?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the mean of male and female librarian's scholarly publishing in academic libraries.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive survey design to ascertain the scholarly publishing efforts of librarians in academic libraries in Delta State. The area of this study is Delta State, Nigeria. Delta State is made up of 3(three) senatorial districts, and there are four universities in State, which are: Delta State University, Abraka; University of Delta, Agbor (formerly College of Education, Agbor); Delta State University of Science and Technology, Ozoro (formerly Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro) and Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, (formerly Delta State University, Anwai Campus). The population of this study consisted of 90 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 objective of the study. A total of 90 copies of questionnaire were distributed but 79 were successfully retrieved, which was used to

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analyze the data. The data obtained was analyzed using simple percentage and frequencies and mean to answer the research questions, t-test of statistical techniques was used to test the formulated hypotheses and the calculated t-test values were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender Difference to the Scholarly Publishing of Librarians

A number of research focuses on gender issues in scholarly publishing in the academic environment. A study by Davarpanah and Moghadam (2012) showed that women are more active in the areas of chemistry, clinical medicine, general social sciences, psychology etc. The study found that women accounted for 13% of the articles indexed in ISI database during the study period. The women first authored papers received more citations as compared to male first authored papers during the period of study. Afonja and Ojeomagha (2014) in their investigations of the level of research productivity and academic leadership in Nigerian Universities reported that there was a significant difference in research productivity of male and female academics in Nigerian universities. While not calling for the publication of substandard articles, encouragement should however be given to females (Atinmo and Jimba, 2002). After the Beijing conference on gender issues of international interest and discourse, African women will advance this discourse when they make aggressive effort to record their experience in various media format. Their contribution will provide a holistic understanding of the theory and practices of the profession on the African continent (Atinmo and Jimba, 2002). Measuring the domain of an area is through the analysis of the scholarly activity or professional communication in the field represented in journal literature. Gender is a demographic determination of publication output. Indeed, there is a lot of evidence in published literature on gender difference in publication output among scholars. A Descriptive survey by Atinmo and Jimba (2002) on Gender and Authorship pattern in African Librarianship confirmed male dominance in publishing, using questionnaire for data collection showed that out of the 18 authors, 63(53.4 percent) were male, while 55 (46.6%) were females. The study revealed that males publish more in order to advance in their career than females.

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Gender Related Challenges of Librarians to Scholarly publishing:

Gender issues tend to play out in almost every phase of existence, the work environment, religious environment and even the academic environment is not left of this trend. The librarianship profession has however experience their own share of gender pitfalls. Over time men tend to dominate at all angles.

According to Long and Fox (1995) who posited that women generally receive fewer resources and recognition than men for comparable productivity. Women cited the daily routine of domestic duties and extra demands and emotional strain that accompanies home caring responsibilities as one of the issues that causes their low research productivity (Olorunsola and Ibegbulam, 2003). Lariviere et al. (2011) analyzed the relationship between gender and research funding, productivity and impact at universities in the province of Quebec, Canada. The study showed that

females after the age of about 38 receive less funding for research than the males, and consequently less productive and at a slight disadvantage in scholarly impact.

Oni (2009) carried out a descriptive survey on the publication output of librarians in university libraries in Edo and Delta state using questionnaire for data collection with 55 respondents which showed that 13(23.6%) males and 10(18.2%) females have published between 1-5 articles with male dominating in percentage. The study also showed that 11(20.0%) males and 7(12.7%) females have published between 6-10 articles with males having the highest percentage. It also revealed that 5(9.0%) males are yet to publish and 9(16.4%) females are also yet to publish. This reveals that males have been publishing more than females.

A descriptive survey by Idiodi (2010) on constraints on the research productivity of librarians in selected university libraries in Nigeria using questionnaire for data collection with 114 respondents showed that 64% of respondent found it difficult to allocate adequate time for research which is common with the female librarians because of their dual responsibility of home and work. The study revealed that time was one of the major challenges faced by librarian in their publication effort. Also the study showed that 78.1% of the respondents agree that inadequate finance is a constraint on their research productivity. The study revealed that lack of funds pose as problem to the publication effort of librarians. This study revealed that lack of time and lack of funds is also a challenge to librarians' publication output.

DISCUSSION OF RESULT AND FINDINGS

Research Question 1: Is there any gender difference to the scholarly publishing effort of librarians in academic libraries Delta State?

Table 1: Description Statistics of Gender Scholarly Publishing of Librarians

Gender	No	No Publications	Means Publication	Standard Deviation
Male	31	272 (43%)	8.77	7.71
Female	48	328 (52%)	6.83	7.94
Total	79	600 (100%)	7.59	7.84

As shown in table 1, 31 male librarians had a total publication of 272 representing 43% while 48 females had a total publication of 328 representing 52% of the total publications. The mean for the total publication output of males was 8.77, 272 publications by male librarians divided by 31 males librarians while the mean for the total publication of females was 6.83, 328 publications by female librarians divided by 48 females librarians. Analysis based on percentage, which did not take cognizance of the difference in the number of males and females, shows that the females have more publication than the males. However, using mean in analyzing their research productivity, which took the unequal sample sizes of gender (31 males against 48 females) into consideration, males were shown to have greater mean publication as indicated by a mean difference of 1.94.) That is 8.77 mean score for male scholarly publishing minus (-) 6.83 mean score for female scholarly. The mean calculation show scholarly publishing being in favour of male librarians.

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Research Question 2: What are the gender related challenges of librarians to scholarly publishing in academic libraries Delta State?

Table 2: Mean Responses to Gender Related Challenges of Librarians to Scholarly Publishing

Gender Related Challenges	Male	Female	Total
	Mean	Mean	Mean total
Caring for spouse	2.13	2.27	4.40
Caring for children	2.40	2.91	5.31
Caring for aged parents	2.23	2.31	4.54
Household work (chores)	2.35	3.00	5.35
Pregnancy challenges	2.08	3.65	5.73
Health issues	2.73	2.81	5.54

Table 2 shows that female pregnancy, household work (chores), caring for children and health issues with a mean score of 3.65, 3.00, 2.91 and 2.81 were endorsed by female librarians as the challenges they are faced with that slows down their scholarly publishing efforts. While the males endorsed health issues as the major challenge they are confronted with which affects their scholarly publishing effort, with a mean score of 2.73. Male and female librarians did not consider caring for spouse as a challenge as shown by a mean response of 2.13 and 2.27 respectively. Another challenges that was not endorsed by both gender as its mean is below 2.50 is caring for aged parents with a mean response of 2.23 and 2.31 respectively. This shows that female librarians have more challenges that seems to affect their scholarly publishing efforts.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean of scholarly publishing of male and female librarians in academic libraries.

Table 3: t-test Analysis to Scholarly Publishing of Librarians Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Df	t-cal	P-value
Male	31	8.77	7.71			
Female	48	6.83	7.94	83	.94	0.05

The independent samples t-test shows that there is no significant difference in the mean research productivity of male and female librarians, t-value (Df =83) = .94 and P-value > 0.05. This shows that the mean research productivity of male librarians (Mean = 8.77) was not significantly greater than female librarians (Mean = 6.83). The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

Gender Difference to Scholarly Publishing of Librarians

The study reveals that male librarians have published a little more than females, with a mean of 1.94. The findings are in consonance with Terry (1996) who found out that there was low publication by female librarians because of the dual role of demands of home and career. Okiy (2003) also observed that male librarians published a little more than females.

Gender Related Challenges of Librarians to Scholarly Publishing:

The study reveals that female librarians in academic libraries in Delta States are faced with various challenges in their publication effort which includes caring for children, household work, and pregnancy. This is in agreement with Garland (1990) who posited that among the faculty of America Library Association accredited library schools, men had 1,569 articles against 1,273 articles for women, for five years period of study. These studies have shown male dominance in publishing and are in consonance with the opinion of some authors that women generally received fewer resources and recognition than men despite their dual role of home care and work responsibility.

Implication of the study

From the findings of this study it has been established that female librarians engage in their scholarly publishing like their male counterparts in academic libraries in Delta State. Male librarians however, were observed to have published just a little higher than female librarians. This implies that scholarly publishing is a necessity to both male and female librarians to meet up with their academic status criteria and for career success and neither of the gender have performed below expectation.

It was also established from the study that the challenges of the dual role of home and official work responsibilities confronting female librarians and health issues confront both genders pose as limitation to their scholarly publishing effort. This implies that the lesser the challenges male and female librarians are confronted with, the better qualitative and quantitative scholarly publishing they will have.

Established also is that there is no significant difference in the scholarly publishing between male and female librarians.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study it could be concluded that male and female librarians have been involved in scholarly publishing to meet up with the academic status and have contributed tremendously to the increase in new knowledge. Female librarians in academic libraries have indicated pregnancy, household work (chores), caring for children, and health issues as some of the challenges they are faced with in their scholarly publishing effort. Male librarians considered health issues to be a factor that could affect their scholarly publishing effort. There is no significant difference in the mean scholarly publishing of male and female librarians in academic libraries in Delta state, which is gender has no significant influence on the scholarly publishing effort of librarians and Delta states.

1. It is recommended that as a result of the dual role of home and official work responsibilities of female librarians they should be given sufficient time such as “annual leave” and “release time” to engage in scholarly publishing, as sufficient time given would be an motivating factor for females librarians to engage in scholarly publishing.
2. Also it is recommended that management of academic institutions give incentives or financial support to staff to encourage their scholarly publishing activities.
3. Health facilities should be a priority of both the government and management of academic institutions in other to cater for the welfare of staff, as only a healthy mind and body can make positive contribution to the academic environment and the society at large.

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