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Secretariat:

*Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria*

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FUND ACCESSIBILITY ON RESEARCH AND OUTPUT OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, NIGERIA

ISUKU, E. J., AND BELLO, A. O

Abstract

The problem in accessing funds for research by most university academics in Nigeria has imposed serious limitations to the growth of quality research output in the country. Thus, this study investigated the influence of fund accessibility on the research output of academic staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted study. The population comprised the entire academic staff of University of Ibadan. A total of 320 academic staff were sampled via the simple random technique. Data were collected through self designed questionnaire and checklist. Questionnaire was used to measure the extent to which fund accessibility influence research output while checklist was used to show the six years (2011-2016) trend in research funding and the of fund accessibility in the University. The collected data were analyzed using level descriptive statistics (Frequency counts and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson Correlation). The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that there is significant positive relationship between research fund accessibility and research output in the University of Ibadan. The stringent conditions attached to research grant, difficulty in the retirement process for the grant and inadequate information have made it difficult for university lecturers to access research grant. This invariably has negative impact on the output of research (reduction in the research output). The study therefore recommends that university-based research grants be made readily, frequently, made and easily accessible to lecturers in the university for research output hat will enhance national social and economic development.

Keywords: Funding, Accessibility, Research output, Universities, Academic Staff,

Introduction

The circumstances of human or man existence – living with many unknown and undiscovered facts appear to have endowed man with the natural tendency to be inquisitive and always trying to search for solutions to perplexing problems and answers to unanswered questions. This search can be generally regarded as research. Research is a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data. (Fawole, Egbokhare, Ibitola, Odejide and Olayinka 2006) viewed research as a form of inquiry that involves seeking of evidence to increase knowledge. It involves systematic process for recognizing a need for information, acquiring

and validating that information and deriving conclusions from it. It is investigation and experimentation aimed at discovery, interpretations and application of scientific data. Research with experimental development is a creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to device new applications. They added that research may be conducted as collaborative research, contract research, sponsored research or consultancy research. Collaborative Research is jointly developed by two or more individuals, institutions or organizations. Contract research involves request made by industry or government agency for a specified research project to be carried out, with identified aims and objectives. The research project is often undertaken on the basis of a competitive bid for funds from industry or agency. It is anticipated that the research will result in a deliverable product or report of commercial importance. Sponsored Research is a mode of research in which granting agencies advertise a call for applications and the applications are normally peer reviewed. Sponsored research projects are either basic or strategic but are normally concerned with commercial outcomes. Consultancy research on its own involves buying the skill and expertise of specialists as well as infrastructure to work on a specified project.

Dambazau (2015) also stressed that the core functions or the building blocks of the universities are training, research, innovation, and community service, and these are fundamental to the existence of universities all over the world. In training, Universities create and produce human resources through the transmission and inculcation of information, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, with the aim of empowering people to become producers of goods and services for the consumers both in the domestic and international markets. They also by implication expand and multiply knowledge and skills to produce goods and services that would solve our problems. A university's core function of innovation becomes a reality when it becomes a centre for creating and testing ideas, methods, processes and even products in form of goods and services. Innovation here, does not dwell on originality alone, but also includes borrowing ideas, copying products, and transferring technology from the more advanced nations. Onwujekwe (2016) stated that it is important to entrench a research culture because it enhances the global visibility of the university, ranking of the university global visibility and ranking of individual staff members of the University, teaching and other academic activities. It also attracts income to the university and the individual researchers, world class faculty to the university, and keeps staff and students busy. Research outputs are essential for evidence-based decision making and for economic development. Imhonopi and Urim (2014) were of the view that research output within academia is a creativity-birther, problem-solving human activity based on the rigorous application of intellectual resources aimed at investigating a phenomenon or phenomena with the goal to arrive at testable, independent and

relevant outcomes useful for academic study, social transformation and/or industrial utility. One of the indexes for measuring research output is the number and quality of published works by academics in local and international journals, and by the extensive distribution of active serial titles emanating from the universities, which contribute to the generation, dissemination, and application of scientific or management knowledge for development within a country. Okafor (2011) viewed research output as the quantity of research in terms of publication output and supervision of students that an academic is able to carry out within a defined period. In other words, research output is a quantitative and measurable means by which academics contribute new knowledge to the existing body of knowledge. Going by this definition of research output, he added that academics of Nigerian universities during the 1960s to the mid 1980s (described as the "research boom" period) who had volumes of journal and textbook publications to their credit were certainly research productive. During this period, Nigerians became more widely known for their research, the products of which they strived to showcase on the international intellectual scene. Considering the challenges that confront Nigeria today, the education system needs to be transformed if Nigeria is to achieve a wider transformation of her economy and society. Bogoro (2015) posited that there is no doubt that science and technology has been, and will remain, the most critical inputs to development processes, particularly in the face of increasingly globalized, knowledge driven economies. Therefore, deliberate investment in research and development (R&D) is key to the generation of knowledge. Also, The National Policy on Education (2004) placed emphasis on research as an integral part of Nigeria's national planning. The level of investment by governments in innovative research and development and education determine the global competitiveness of their nations. Massive and qualitative human capital development with emphasis on technology and product development are factors responsible for the sustainable economic development of the more advanced nations of the world, with Israel and the so-called Asian Tiger Nations as easily the best references in progressive transformation in the last half century. In spite of this, not much attention is paid to education in Nigeria. According to UNESCO, the minimum standard for funding of education in every country in the World is at 26% of the GDP or annual budget of each country so as to be able to achieve its objectives. It is on record that Nigeria is yet to meet this minimum budgetary allocation to education as defined by UNESCO.

Matthew (2016) observed that there is no doubting the fact that the catching up process for a country like Nigeria in the globalized economies can only be enhanced by the development of a solid framework for the development and integration of science and technology into national development strategies. To achieve this, therefore, a deliberate investment in research and development (R&D) remains the most potent strategy to join the train of knowledge-intensive

development agenda. Newman (2014) added that investment in research will drive economic growth, increase human capital, lead to the development of pro-poor products and technologies and provide evidence to inform policies and practice. This suggests that the development processes, and associated catching-up processes, can be better understood by analyzing technology and processes of technological learning. That is why the University lecturers are today being asked to increase their research output and productivity, in order to meet the ever changing demands on the 21st century. Governments expect universities to become more efficient in the area of research because knowledge generated by research is the basis of sustainable development, which requires that knowledge be placed at the service of development, be converted into applications, and be shared to ensure widespread benefits. Isuku and Emunemu (2012), Emetarom and Emunemu (2010) were of opinion that there is no gainsaying the fact that the level of development to be attained by African countries hinges on the level of their research activities. The rate of growth of an economy is usually determined not only by the technical correlates, but also by the ability of the citizens to be scientifically literate and active. National development, and a sustainable one, is expectedly the ultimate target of every responsive and productive government all over the world.

Despite the importance of research in the overall development of the economics of nations and the global community, research output has lagged behind the training accomplishments of Nigerian higher educational institutions. There is a low level of research output and a contraction in participation in research activities in Universities. The number and quality of published works by academics in local and international journals, and by the extensive distribution of active serial titles emanating from the universities, which contribute to the generation, dissemination, and application of scientific or management knowledge for development within a country is reducing drastically. It is on the basis of this that this study intended to investigate the influence of fund accessibility on the research output of University of Ibadan.

Statement of Problem

In spite of the low financial allocation to education in Nigeria, one issue that is noticeable is the fact that it has been very difficult for the fund allocated to Universities to be accessed as and when due. In most cases, financial allocation to Nigerian Universities only appears on paper but proved difficult to be accessed thus making it difficult for Universities to perform their roles in terms of quality teaching and research. Universities are among the most important institutions for the development of science and technology (S&T), and they consume a significant amount of national resources devoted to research. Funding is unquestionably the most critical factor in university research. Hence, this study intended to investigate the influence of fund accessibility on the research output of University of Ibadan.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in order to achieve the purpose of the study.

- 1) What is the trend in research funding in the University of Ibadan?
- 2) What is the level of research fund accessibility in the University of Ibadan?
- 3) To what extent does fund accessibility influence research output in the University Ibadan?

Hypothesis

This hypothesis was formulated to guide the study

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between fund accessibility and research output in the University of Ibadan.

Methodology

The research survey research design was adopted while the population comprised all the academic staff of University of Ibadan. 320 academic staff were randomly selected to serve as respondents. Data were collected through self designed questionnaire and checklist. Questionnaire was used to measure the extent to which fund accessibility influence research output while checklist was used to show the six years (2011-2016) trend in research funding and the level of fund accessibility in the University. The research instruments were administered to the sampled respondents at their respective offices with the aid of two research assistants and collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson Correlation). The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the trend in research funding in the University of Ibadan?

Table 1: Trend in Research Funding in the University of Ibadan.

Name of Institution	Year						Total
	2011 Amount (₦)	2012 Amount (₦)	2013 Amount (₦)	2014 Amount (₦)	2015 Amount (₦)	2016 Amount (₦)	
University of Ibadan	-	35,422,530 (39.5%)	-	40,457,130 (45%)	13,808,050 (15.4%)	-	89,687,710 (100%)

Source: Researcher field work obtained from Bursary Department of the University of Ibadan