Bibliometric Analysis of Papers Presented at the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) National Conference / AGM, 2007-2013

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Abstract

One of the major objectives of the Nigerian Library Association has been to promote and encourage bibliographical study, research and library co-operations. To achieve these, the Association organizes Annual Conferences/AGMs, where members are encouraged to contribute to knowledge through the presentation of well researched conference papers revolving around the annual conference theme. Data for the analysis were collected from the table of contents of the conference proceedings. The research adopted a bibliometric method of data analysis for conference papers presented between 2007- 2013. From the analysis, this study found out that there were a total of 7 conferences/AGMs held within the period under review, with 94 papers presented at the conference/AGMs and a total of 179 authors were involved in paper presentations. Majority of the papers were found to cover such issues relating to ICT/library automation (16 or 17.02%); information and library services provision (16 or 17.02%); library education and types of libraries with 14 or 14.9% respectively. The study recommends amongst others that the leadership of NLA and the Local Organizing Committees should sensitize librarians to contribute to knowledge through paper presentations.

Keywords: Bibliometrics, Bibliographical studies, Nigerian Library Association.

Introduction

The Nigerian Library Association (NLA) was established in 1962 to bring together all Nigerian practicing and intending librarians, book vendors, publishers and friends of the library (Eke, 2011). One of the major objectives of the NLA has been to promote and encourage bibliographical study, research and library co-operations. To achieve these, the NLA organizes Annual Conferences/General Meetings, where members are encouraged to contribute to knowledge through the presentation of well researched conference papers revolving around the Annual Conference themes. NLA started as a division of the West African Library Association (WALA). WALA was established in 1954 as an off-shoot of a UNESCO Seminar on the Development of Public Libraries in Africa held in Ibadan in 1953. With the political independence from colonial rule of Anglophone West African countries in the late 1950s, WALA national divisions transformed into National Library Associations of their respective countries, thus giving birth to the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) in 1962 (Okojie, 2007). According to the Association's website fhttp://www.nla-ng.org/abotus.htmD. the objectives of NLA are:

a. Unite persons interested in libraries, librarianship and information services;
b. Safeguard and promote the professional interests of librarians;
c. Promote the establishment and development of libraries and information centres;
d. Watch legislations affecting libraries and assist in the promotion of such legislation, as may be considered necessary for the establishment, regulation and management of libraries within Nigeria;
e. Promote and encourage bibliographical study, research and library cooperation and
f. Do all lawful things as are incidental and conducive to the attainment of the above objectives.

In line with its first and fifth objectives, the NLA organizes Annual Conferences/AGMs and each Annual Conference usually has a theme and librarians are expected to research and present conference papers, which must usually revolve around the annual theme. Since inception of the association in 1962, a total number of 52 conferences have taken place and each conference records a large number of attendees and conference paper presenters. Papers presented at these conferences have looked at various issues and themes covering all aspects of library and information science activities in practice, education and services, yet there has been no bibliometric study of them. This study therefore, focuses on the bibliometric analysis of all the papers presented at the NLA Conferences/AGMs from2007-2013.

Objectives of the Study

This study which has been focused on the bibiliometric analysis of papers presented at the Conferences/AGMs of the NLA was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To find out the cumulative number of papers presented from 2007 to 2013 and their distribution by year.
2. To identify the total number of authors, who contributed to knowledge through the NLA conference papers and sources they consulted.
3. To determine the subject coverage of the papers presented according to years.
4. To ascertain the level of collaboration among authors that presented papers at the NLA conferences.
5. To ascertain institutional or other affiliations of authors that presented papers at the NLA conferences.

Literature Review

The application of quantitative techniques to libraries was until recently known as "statistical bibliography" (Pritchard, 1969). Ranganathan suggested as early as 1948 at the ASLIB conference in Leamington Spa, that it is necessary for librarians to develop "librametry" on the lines of biometry, econometry and psychometry, since many of the matters connected with library works and services involve large numbers (Ravichandra- Rao, 2003). Bibliometrics is the statistical analysis of texts and information. In a research environment, a common example of bibliometrics is the use of citation analysis to determine how many times a researcher's work has been cited in key literature. The term bibliometrics was coined by Alan Pritchard in a paper published in 1969, titled "statistical Bibliography or Bibliometrics He defined the term as "the application of mathematics and statistical methods to books and other media of communication (Broadus,1987) provides a more comprehensive definition of bibliometrics as put forward by the American Library Association. According to him, bibliometrics is the use of statistical tools in the analysis of body of literature; reveals the historical tools and the historical development of subject fields and patterns of authorship, publication and use.

According to Ravichandra-Rao (2003), in every aspect, bibliometrics involves the application of quantitative techniques, mathematics or statistics to study a body of publications whether books, bibliography or even archival records (Uhegbu, 2009). Citation analysis and content analysis are commonly used in bibliographic methods. While bibliographic methods are most often used in the field of Library and Information Science, bibliometrics have wide applications in other areas. Many research fields use bibliometric methods to explore the impact of a set of researches, or the impact of a particular paper (Beilis, 2009). Today, bibliometrics are now used in quantitative research assessment exercises of academic output which is starting to threaten practice-based research. The government of the United Kingdom is considering using bibliometrics as a possible auxiliary tool in its Research Excellence Framework, a process which will assess the quality of the research output of UK universities and on the basis of the assessment results for allocating research funding (Henderson, Shurville & Femstorm, 2009).

According to Uhegbu (2009), bibliometric studies could be carried out in the areas of statistical aspect of language, word or the frequency of use of phrases either in the natural language texts or as indexes in both print and electronic media; characteristics of authors by revealing their level of productivity in terms of the number of publications of such authors; collaborative works or other means of knowledge communication; characteristics of the sources of publications in terms of how they are distributed in journals, in a discipline or other publications in a discipline; the frequency of citation of publications (citation analysis) by showing their distribution by authors, types of papers where they appear, institutions that use them, journals where they are

cited or citations as the case may be; use of library statistics or recorded information such as library circulation records or statistics, in-house books and use of journal and data bases among users or staff; growth of subject literature and concomitant growth of new concepts. Increasingly, bibliometrics are being used as a means of research impact or research influence.

Bibliometric is the analyses of quantitative data to describe publication patterns within a field of research. Such information can be used to evaluate the influence/performance of a researcher and to provide a comparison between researchers. More broadly, the results could also help to determine the university rankings and might have an impact on university funding (Aina & Ajiferuke, 2002).

Many scholars have conducted bibliometric analyses on print and electronic journals. The studies cut across all fields such as science and technology, social sciences, health, library and information science, agriculture among others. Using bibliometric studies for instance, Inazu (2012) conducted bibliometric analysis of Nigerbiblios Journal (2005-2010). The study reported that a total of 64 articles were published from 2005-2010. The study further reveals that single authors were 45 and more than two authors were 19, while the 2005 volume of the journal had no two authors. On sources of information resources cited, majority of the authors cited journals (227), followed by books with (155) citations. Regarding collaboration of authors from same institution (CASI) and collaboration of authors from different institutions (CADI), the study revealed that a total of 11 authors teamed up from same institutions and 7 from different institutions. On the ranking of LIS journals cited,
African Journal of Library, Archival and Information Science came first with 17 points, followed by Nigerbiblios, with 11 points, while Nigerian Libraries came third with 10 points. Others that ranked among the first ten are: IFLA Journal, Lagos Librarian, Library Review, Nigerian Library and Information Science Review, Bomo Library, Archival and Information Science Journal, Gateway Library Journal and International Information and Library Review. Warraich & Ahmed (2011) studied the research trends of the Pakistan LIS sector, using the Pakistan Journal of Library and Information Science (PJLIS) from 1995-2010. The analysis indicated that a total of 111 articles were published and most of the papers were from single authors. The journal also attracted twelve foreign authors, showing that the journal has gained international acceptance and circulation. Be this as it may, the bibliometric study of the NLA Conference/AGM papers from 2007 - 2013 will be an added impetus to the growing interest in the bibliometric studies locally and internationally.

Methods

Bibliometric analysis was used to study the bibliographic features of papers presented in NLA national conferences/AGM from 2007 - 2013. The number of papers was collected from the table of contents of conference proceedings/compendium from the 7 conferences. The number of authors was gotten from the list of contributors' page and the table of content page, which also has the name of authors. The authorship details on the title page provided data on the level of collaborations among authors and the institutional affiliations of authors. However, institutional affiliations of authors were not found in few cases, which were categorized as "unknown". In order to access data on the types of sources cited, the reference page of papers were scrutinized. To ascertain the conference with the highest and lowest paper presentations, data was equally gotten from the table of contents and the main text. The reference pages of proceedings also provided data on the sources of works cited. The quantitative data gathered were subsequently presented and analyzed using frequency tables, percentages and averages.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Papers Presented

Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2007	9	9.57
2008	10	10.64
2009	9	9.57
2010	12	12.77
2011	21	22.34
2012	19	20.21
2013	14	14.89
Total	94	100

Table 1 shows the distribution of papers presented from 2007 - 2013 into years. From the analysis, a total of 94 papers were presented in 7 years. The table shows that in 2007 and 2009,9 papers which represent 9.57% were presented. In 2008, 10 papers or 10.64% were recorded, 2010, 12(12.77%), 2011, 21(22.34%), while 2012 and 2013 had 19(20.21%) and 14(14.89%) respectively.

Table 2: Distribution of Authors

Year	Authors	Percentage (%)
2007	13	7.26
2008	17	9.50
2009	17	9.50
2010	24	13.41
2011	38	21.23
2012	40	22.35
2013	30	16.76
Total	179	100

Table 2 shows the number of authors involved in the 94 papers presented over 7 years at NLA national conferences. From the table, a total of 179 authors were involved in the paper presentations. The table further reveals that 13(7.26%) of authors presented papers in 2007, 17(9.50%) in 2008, 17(9.50%) in 2009 and 24(13.41%) in 2010. In 2011, 38 authors representing 21.23% presented papers, while the distribution for 2012 was 40(22.35%). 2013 had 30 authors representing 16.76%.

Table 3: Authorship Pattern:

Year	Single Author	Two Authors	More than Two Authors	Total
2007	5	4	0	9
2008	4	5	1	10
2009	4	2	3	9
2010	2	7	3	12
2011	5	11	5	21
2012	1	9	9	19
2013	3	7	4	14
Total	24	45	25	94
%	25.53	47.87	26.60	100

Table 3 reveals the authorship pattern of papers presented at NLA national conferences within the years under review. From the analyses, single authorship 24(25.53%), two authors were 45(47.87%), while papers presented by more than two authors stood at 25(26.60%).

Table 4: Distribution of Subject Coverage of Papers 2007 to 2013

Subject Areas	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Library Education	14	14.90
Staff Development	3	3.19
Types of Libraries	14	14.9
ICT/Library Automation	16	17.02
Services provision	16	17.02
Bibliographic control	0	0
Library Administration	4	4.26
Career Development	13	13.83
Others	14	14.90
Total	94	100

Table 4 shows the distribution of subject coverage of papers presented within the period under review. From the table, the papers were categorized according to the following subject areas: library education; staff development; ICT and library automation; Library and Information services provision; bibliographic control (cataloguing and classification); library management; career development and others. From the table, a total of 14 papers each representing 14.90% of the total papers were presented in the area of library education and types of libraries. 3(3.19%) papers were presented on staff development. ICT and library automation had 16 papers representing 17.02%; library and information services provision attracted 18 papers or 17.02%. No paper was presented in the area of bibliographic control (cataloguing and classification). 4 papers representing 4.26% were presented on library administration, while career development attracted

13 papers or 13.83%. However, 14 papers (14.90%) were uncategorized.

Table 5: Collaboration of Authors in Same Institution (CASI) and Collaboration of Authors in Different Institutions (CADI)

Year	CASI	%	CADI	%	Unknown	%
2007	3	7.1	1	4.4	0	0
2008	4	9.5	0	0	2	40
2009	4	9.5	0	0	1	20
2010	6	14.3	4	17.4	0	0
2011	9	21.4	7	30.4	0	0
2012	10	23.8	8	34.8	0	0
2013	6	14.3	3	13.0	2	40
Total	42	100	23	100	5	100

Table 5 shows the number of Collaboration of Authors in Same Institution (CASI) and Collaboration of Authors in Different Institutions (CADI) from 2007 to 2013 on papers presented at NLA national conferences. A total of 42 authors teamed up from same institutions, 23 from different institutions, while 5 were unknown. Though the authors for the 5 papers had collaboration, from the proceedings, their institutions were not indicated, making it difficult to determine whether the authors are from the same institution or different institutions.

9Table 6: Grouping of Institutional Affiliation of Authors 2007 to 2013

Institutions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Academic Library	102	56.98
National Library	1	0.56
Public Libraries	8	4.47
Special/Research Library	13	7.26
School Library	0	0
Library School	37	20.67
Others/Unknown	18	10.06
Total	179	100

Table 6 shows the grouping of institutional affiliations of authors/conference visibility. The study grouped authors' affiliated institutions into: academic library, public library; special library; library school, national library and school library. However, provision was made for authors whose institutions were not indicated in the conference proceedings. Analysis from the table shows that authors from academic libraries presented a total of 102(56.98%) papers, which was the highest, followed by authors from Library Schools with 37 papers, representing 20.67% of the total papers presented. The lowest came from national library with 1 paper, representing 0.56%, public libraries, research/specials libraries had 8(4.47%) and 13(7.26%) papers respectively. No paper was presented from school libraries. However, 18 papers representing 10.06% came from those whose institutional affiliations were not identified from the conference proceedings.

Table 7: Distribution of Types of Sources Cited:

Sources	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	%
Books	12	25	40	29	57	51	33	247	16.5
Journals	26	17	23	63	140	121	102	492	32.8
Reference	0	0	3	3	7	6	3	22	1.5
Conference proceedings	10	11	5	5	46	32	29	138	9.2
Web Resources	20	22	25	56	158	117	56	454	30.3
Others	12	13	13	10	44	25	28	145	9.7
Total	80	88	109	166	452	352	251	1498	100

Table 7 reveals the sources of information materials cited by authors within the period under review. Sources here include books, journals, reference sources, conference proceedings and web resources. Other sources such as reports, newspapers, magazines, bulletins, theses/dissertations were grouped as “others”. A total of 1498 sources were cited. From the table, journals were the highest cited sources with 492 citations representing 32.8%, followed by web resources with 454 (30.3%) citations. The lowest citation came from reference sources with 22(1.5%) citations.

Discussion

The research is a bibiliometric analysis of papers presented at the NLA National Conferences/AGMs from 2007 - 2013. From the analysis, a total of 94 papers were presented in 7 years. 2012 conference saw the highest number of paper presentations, while the least number of papers were presented in 2007 and 2009. From the analyses, an average of 13 papers was presented in each conference. However, there has been no consistent pattern on the number of papers presented within the period under review as there were fluctuations in publications. The reduction of publications from 21 in 2011 to 19 in 2012 and to 14 in 2013 is an indication that many librarians who attend NLA conferences/AGM hardly present papers. It shows that attendance to NLA Conferences/AGM is more of a meeting than real academic exercise.

One hundred and seventy- nine authors were involved in the paper presentations within the years under review. There was average of 2 authors per paper. It is encouraging that the number of authors that take part in presenting papers increased from year to year. From 2007,13 authors were involved, increased to 17 in 2009 and 40 in 2012. This is an eloquent testimony that many librarians are beginning to appreciate the desirability of writing quality papers at NLA Conferences.

For authorship pattern of papers, single authorship 24(25.53%), two authors were 45(47.87%), while papers presented by more than two authors stood at 25(26.60%). The result shows that librarians are realizing the importance of collaboration in writing. For example, in the 2012 national conference, only a single paper was presented by a single author out of the 19 papers presented. 9 papers were co-authored, while another 9 papers were authored by more than two authors. Ranganathan's theory that a library is a growing organism has come to play out here among librarians with the level of their collaboration in writing papers, showing that librarians want to learn, share and develop among themselves for the growth of the profession.

Analysis of subject coverage of papers presented within the period under review reveals that paper presenters have shown more interest in ICT/library automation and information services provision with 16 papers each. This may not be unconnected with the present trend in information provision, using ICT. The diversity of subject areas covered by the papers presented is academically delightful. It shows the diversity of interests of librarians in the profession. It also shows that library and information science is growing in leaps and bounds, especially when viewed against the backdrop of the number of papers that covered issues relating to ICT/library automation. It is however worrisome, that librarians are yet to appreciate the relevance of cataloguing and classification in bibliographic control as no paper was presented on them for the last 7 years at NLA Conferences. Again, the fewness of publications (3) on staff development shows how less attractive issues relating to staff development are to librarians.

Practicing librarians from academic libraries have continued to remain the engine house of paper presentations at the NLA Conferences in the last 7 years. Surprisingly library and information science educators with only 37 presentations do not gladden the heart. By the nature of the occupation, publication is their trade mark. Yet they seem not to be too interested in presenting papers at the NLA Conferences. However, librarians working in school libraries should rise up to the occasion by ensuring that they become visible at NLA Conferences through paper presentations.

A total of 1498 sources were cited. Journals were the highest cited sources with 492 citations representing 32.8%, followed by web resources with 454(30.3%) citations. The lowest citation came from reference sources with 22(1.5%) citations. The analysis indicates that there is a gradual shift in the resources librarians consult during writing of conference papers from book centered citations to journals and web resources.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Paper presenters should always provide full details of their institutional affiliations.
2. The leadership of NLA and the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) should sensitize librarians to make more contribution to knowledge through paper presentations.
3. Collaboration across institutions should be encouraged.
4. Librarians should show more interest to staff development and training.
5. Librarians in both the National Library and School Libraries should ensure conference visibility through and contribute to knowledge through paper presentations at NLA conference.

Conclusion

This study has provided librarians and other

information professionals an insight into the nature, content and spread of conference papers presented at the various NLA national conference/AGMs from 2007-2013. It is heartwarming to note the quantum of papers cutting across the various issues and themes in library and information science such as library education, types of libraries, ICT/library automation, career issues and the like. Various kinds of resources involving books, journals, web resources were cited by authors of the conference papers. However, it is disheartening to note that many librarians, especially those of library and information science educators have not been adequately visible in paper presentations at the NLA national conference/AGM. Librarians who work in academic libraries are the most visible at the NLA conference/AGM. It is the belief of this paper that with the level of awareness and appreciation of librarians on the need to contribute to knowledge through presentation of papers at NLA national conference/AGM, the paucity of literature in issues relating to library and information science will soon be overcome.

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