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TRENDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PUBLICATIONS IN NIGERIA: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The author investigated trends in English Language publications in Nigeria, using a bibliometric analysis method. The first 50 articles uploaded using Google Scholar database were analysed to find out trends in authorship, the type of journals where the articles were published in, the branch/area of English related to the publications, the methods of research used by the authors, and the source of data for their publications. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of research is used in this study; and the Multicriteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) is used to group the publications into desired variables. Frequency Tables are used for statistical analysis. Result shows that the number of articles published by sole authors do not differ much from those published by more than one author (48% and 52% respectively); articles published in English-specific journals are much less than the ones published in multi-disciplinary journals (14% and 86% respectively); all the reviewed articles are in the area of English Language, and none of them is in the area of Literature (100% and 0% respectively); authors used more of Quantitative Research method (54%), than Qualitative research method (38%), or Mix method (8%); and sources of data for the publications were more of students/workers then only literature review (74% and 26% respectively). Conclusions are drawn from the above findings to guide young/future researchers in the discipline of English language towards prolific writing and publication.

Key Words: English Language Publications, Bibliometric Analysis, Nigeria.

Introduction

Many young researchers in the area of English Language (and very likely in many other areas of studies) would be wondering how some authors succeed in publishing their articles in reputable journals, while others do not. Some may be undecided on whether it is better for them to carry out research and publish the findings all alone or whether it is better to team up with other researchers and publish the findings with them. This question often arises, bearing in mind that some institutions reward sole-authorship during appraisals for promotion while others encourage multiple authorship. Some authors get their works published in multi-disciplinary journals while others prefer only subject-specific journals. It would be interesting to know in which area of English (Language or Literature) many articles appear published. The research methods (quantitative or qualitative) employed by many authors would be interesting to know. Finally, it would also be interesting to know the participants/respondents used in the published studies or their source of data. The above questions may bring some young researchers to uncomfortable decision-taking moments. The present research aims at throwing some light on these questions, as far as publications in the area of English language in Nigeria, are concerned.

The theoretical framework guiding this research is the Multicriteria decision analysis (MCDA). MCDA represents one of the most frequently used decision-making frameworks (Belton & Stewart, 2002; Figueira, Greco, & Ehrgott, 2005). MCDA is often described as a process utilizing a set of qualitative and quantitative approaches that simultaneously and explicitly take into account multiple and often conflicting factors (Baltussen & Niessen, 2006). The use of MCDA is rapidly increasing because of its potential for improving the quality of decisions by making the decision process more explicit, rational and efficient than traditional deliberative processes (Oliveira, Fontes, & Pereira 2013).

Bibliometric analysis is statistical evaluation of published scientific articles, books, or the chapters of a book, and it is often an effectual way to measure the influence of publication in the scientific community (Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015; Mao, Wang & Ho, 2010). Some authors have conducted bibliometric analysis of publications in some other areas of studies. For example, bibliometric analysis of publications have been conducted in the areas of European educational research (Aman & Botte, 2017), health care (Adunlin, Diaby, & Xiao, 2015), psychology (Krampen, Eye, & Schui, 2011), membrane biological reactor for wastewater treatment and reuse (Li, Zhang, Liu, & Huang, 2016), 'problematic' dominance of 'Web of Science' journals in academic human geography (Derudder, 2011), Taiwan's criminological 'footprint' (Hebenton, & Jou, 2013), rebirth of European publishing (Attenborough, 1990), and elementary language arts (Graham & National Council of Teachers of English, 2000). However, none of the above-mentioned authors did a bibliometric analysis of English language publications coming from Nigeria. Therefore, conducting a bibliometric analysis of English language research publications from Nigeria and reporting the publication trends, are the focus of the present study.

Method

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of research are used in this study. The Multicriteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) is used to group the publications into desired variables and Frequency Tables are used for statistical analysis.

Source of Data

The author used Google Scholar database to search for research-based publications in the area of English language in Nigeria. The first latest 50 publications found were used for the analysis. The search was conducted on 31st July 20202.

Procedure

The author read through all the 50 publications and tabulated them using the following columns: Author(s) and year of publication, the type of journal the article was published in (English specific or multi-disciplinary), area of English the publication falls into (e.g. Language or Literature), the research method used by the author(s), and the type of participants in the study or source of data.

Coding and Statistics

For each publication, single authorship was coded as 0, while multiple authorship (more than one author) was coded as 1; English specific journal was coded as 0, while Multi-disciplinary journal was coded as 1; Language as the area of English was coded as 0, while Literature as the area of English was coded 1; if the method used is Quantitative, it was coded as 0, if it is qualitative, it was coded as 1, and if it is Mixed Method (Quantitative and Qualitative) it is coded 2; where students/workers were used as participants or source of data, it was coded as 0, where Literature Review was used, it was coded as 1. Frequency statistics was then used for data analysis.

Result

Table 1 shows the result of the Bibliometric Analysis of the publications.

Table 1: Bibliometric Analysis of the publications.

S/N	AUTHORS NAME/YEAR	TYPE OF JOURNAL	AREA IN ENGLISH	METHOD USED	TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS / SOURCE OF DATA
1	Oguguo, S. U. O. & Uboh, V. U. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary School Students
2	Ogunnaike, J. & Adenuga, F. T. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
3	Njoku, J. C.	Multi	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review

	(2020).	Disciplinary			
4	Olutayo, B. & Adetayo, T. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary School Students
5	Nwokoro, C. V., Onwubuariri, C., Ubelejit-Nte, A. A., Enobakhare, E. O. & Uchem, O. J. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
6	Bida, I. (2020).	English-Specific	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
7	Ajaps, C. I. (2020)	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Tertiary Institution Students
8	Odiaka, S. I. (2020).	English-Specific	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
9	Nwaiwu, C. O. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Tertiary Institution Students
10	Anja, A. & Anka S. S. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Primary School Students
11	Akinkurolere, S. O. & Usman, B. J. (2019).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Tertiary Institution Students
12	Oko, O. L. (2019).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative & Qualitative (Mixed)	Secondary School Students
13	Ugwu, E. O. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
14	Azeez, F. A. & Odinko, M. N. (2020).	Multi Discilpinary	Language	Quantitative &Qualitative	Tertiary Institution Students
15	Tukur, H. A.	Multi	Language	Quantitative	Secondary School

	(2020).	Disciplinary			Students
16	Gusen, J. N. & Dang, P. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Primary School Students
17	Araromi, M. O. & Olakunle, A. S. (2020).	Multi Disciplinary	Language (Grammar)	Quantitative	Secondary School Students
18	Falola, V. O. & Jolayemi, S. B. (2020)	Multi Disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary School Students
19	Sabe, C. Z. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
20	Okeke, F. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language (communication skills)	Quantitative	Tertiary institution students
21	Atoyebi, A. O. & Adesina, T. R. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary schools
22	Olufunmilayo, D. C. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary schools
23	Sadiq, R. A. & Hamisu, L. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Secondary schools
24	Iliyas, R. A. & Bagudu, A. A. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Tertiary institution students
25	Milaham, S. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary schools students
26	Uwen, G. O. & Ukam, E. I. U. (2019).	English-specific	Language	Mixed	Literature Review
27	Ogunyemi, K. O & Olagbaju, O. O. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary school students
28	Wappa, J. P. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Secondary school students
29	Bhuvaneswari, V. & Christopher, G. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature reviews

30	Olufunmilayo, D. C. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary school students
31	Okeke, N. U. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
32	Agwu, S. N. & Mbah, A. O. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language (visual)	Quantitative	Secondary schools students
33	Opara, I. M. & Umunna, I. H. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary schools students
34	Ceyhun, K. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Tertiary institution students
35	Ogwudile, C. & Ezenwa, C. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
36	Ahman, A., Isah, M. K. & Abubakar, M. (2020).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary school students
37	Akujiobi, O. S. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Qualitative	Literature Review
38	Akanya, J. & Omachonu, C. G. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary school students
39	Adetuyi, C. A. (2019)	Multi disciplinary	language	Quantitative	Tertiary institution students
40	Dalamu, T. (2019).	English-Specific	Language (morphology)	Quantitative	Tele communication workers
41	Zulfikar, T., Dahliana, S. & Sari, R, A. (2019).	English-Specific	Language	Mixed	Tertiary institution students
42	Ardo, M. B. (2018).	Multi disciplinary	Language (in communication)	Qualitative	Primary school pupils
43	Ibrahim, A. W., Yana, H. I. & Yinusa, S. (2018).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Tertiary institution students
44	Timothy, A. E. (2018).	Multi discipline	Language	Qualitative	Secondary school students

45	Uloku, O. P. O. (2018).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Tertiary institution students
46	Filade, B. A., Oyinola, C. A., Anwanane, B. B. & Oluwabunmi, O. P. (2019).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary school students
47	Ibrahim, A. W. (2018).	English-Specific	Language	Quantitative	Tertiary institution
48	Umar, A. M. (2018).	Multi Disciplinary	Language (Syntactic)	Qualitative	Literature Review
49	Shu'aibu, L. & Sarki, Z. M. (2017).	English-Specific	Language	Qualitative	House of Assembly workers
50	Musa, A. K. J. & Nwachukwu, K. I (2016).	Multi disciplinary	Language	Quantitative	Secondary school students

Table 2 shows the Frequency Distribution of the trends of publications as shown in Table 1.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of the Trends of Publications.

Variable	**Trends**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Author(s)	Sole author	24	48.0
	More than one author	26	52.0
Type of Journal	English-specific	7	14.0
	Multi-Disciplinary	43	86.0
Area of Specialisation in English	Language	50	100.0
	Literature	0	0.0
Research Method	Quantitative	27	54.0

used	Qualitative	19	38.0
	Mix (Quantitative & Qualitative)	4	8.0
Source of Data used	Students/workers	37	74.0
	Literature Review	13	26.0

Table 2 shows that the number of articles published by sole authors do not differ much from those published by more than one author (48% and 52% respectively). The articles published in English-specific journals are much less than the ones published in multi-disciplinary journals (14% and 86% respectively). All the reviewed articles are in the area of English Language, and none of them is in the area of Literature (100% and 0% respectively). The authors of the articles used more of Quantitative Research method (54%), than Qualitative research method (38%), or Mix (combination of Quantitative and Qualitative) method (8%). Finally, the sources of data for the publications were more of students or workers (human respondents) then only literature review (74% and 26% respectively).

Discussion

The bibliometric analysis of the articles reviewed indicates that whether an article has a sole author or multiple authors do not really matter as far as its acceptability in reputable journals is concerned. However, the issue of whether a multiple-authored article will be given the same weighting/scores as a sole-authored article during assessment for promotion/awards is another matter altogether. The question is left for the different institutions or Assessment Boards to answer.

Articles published in English-specific journals are much less than the ones published in multi-disciplinary journals. This finding encourages young researchers who are under pressure to 'publish or perish' not to limit their search for journals only to English-

specific journals. They should also look for journals that are broad-based or multi-disciplinary.

It is surprising to note all the articles (the first 50) found using Google Scholar database are all in the area of Language, (and none in the area of Literature). This raises some questions: Are articles written in the area of Literature published in journals that are not visible in Google Scholar database? If one is to increase the number of articles (e.g. to 100) for this study, would one find some that are in the area of Literature? If one is to use other database (like Ebscohost), would one get some articles in the area of Literature? These and many more are questions which future researchers in the area of bibliometric analysis of publications in the area of English language in Nigeria may want to address.

More than half of the authors of the publications used Quantitative Method during their study, followed by those that used Qualitative Method, and then by those that used Mixed or Triangulation method. This finding suggests that studies that follow the Quantitative Method of research find acceptability in journals more than those that use Qualitative Method, or Mixed Method. Although there are arguments in feavour of use of Quantitative Method (Dean & Voss, 1999), and some others in feavour of use of Qualitative Method (Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz, Morrow & Ponterotto, 2017), and some are even in feavour of using Mixed Method (Todd, Nerlich, McKeown & Clarke, 2004), the finding in this study suggests the use of Quantitative Method over the use of other methods. The issue of objectivity in research which is associated more with Quantitative Method than the Qualitative Method by many authors/reviewers/editors may explain the result.

The result of this study suggests publications that use human subjects as participants or source of data (students or workers) get acceptable in journals more than those that used only literature review. The question of objectivity in research which is raised above may also explain this finding.

This study, however, has some limitations. While searching for publications in the subject area of English Language in Nigeria, it limited itself only to Google Scholar database. Many other database, like Ebscohost, could also be used. Only the first 50 articles that were found were used for the study. Other authors may want to increase the number to 100 or more; although that would make the Table on Bibliometric Analysis of the publications lengthier and cumbersome. The literature search was done just once. One may consider searching over a period of time. Future authors are advised to take the limitations into consideration.

Conclusion

From this study, the author concludes that sole authorship or multiple-authorship do not really matter as far as acceptability for publication in journals are concerned. Articles in English language are more published in multi-disciplinary journals than in English-specific journals. Surprisingly, all the articles found during the literature search (using Google Scholar database) are all in the area of Language (and none in the area of Literature). More than half of the authors of the publications used Quantitative Method for their study; others used Qualitative Method or Mixed Method. Finally, the majority of the authors used human subjects (students/workers) as source of data (and not literature review).

Recommendations

From the above findings, the author recommends the following:

1. Future/young researchers should not shy away from wanting to collaborate with others in their research endeavors. Sole-authorship or multiple authorship does not determine the acceptability of their article for publication.
2. Future authors should consider multi-disciplinary journals for publication of their articles, and not just English-Specific journals.

3. Although the literature search brought out only articles in the area of Language, those in the area of Literature should look into ways of increasing the quality of their research and make their publications visible in such database as Google Scholar. They should try to publish in journals that are electronically visible.
4. The same applies to those who use Qualitative or Mixed Method of research; they should try to improve on the quality of their publications and publish in journals that are electronically visible.

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