Demographic Variables as Correlates of Lecturers Research Productivity in Faculties of Law in Nigerian Universities

Uluocha Anyaogu* and Mabawonku Iyabo**

*Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of Lagos Campus, Akoka, Lagos

**Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
E-mail: uluanyaogu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study examined the demographic variables as correlates of lecturers research productivity in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. The multistage sampling technique was used to select 414 out of 905 lecturers from 16 faculties of Law in 29 federal and state universities across the 6 geo-political zones of Nigeria. A questionnaire was used. Three research questions were answered and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression. Based on multiple regression analysis the result shows that demographic variables such as age, designation, and years of experience have significant positive relationship with research productivity of law lecturers.

Keywords: Demographic variables, research productivity, law lecturers, legal information resources, Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

Universities across the world are considered as producers of new knowledge through research. Hence, the nature of academics is not limited to teaching. According to Marsh and Hattie[1], the major responsibilities of academic staff (law lecturers) in the universities are teaching (transmission of knowledge), research (advancement of knowledge), and community service (application of knowledge). In their research duties, lecturers are expected to create new knowledge, re-order and repackage old relevant knowledge for the benefit of the community. Thus, research productivity shapes the ability of lecturers to meet the challenges of a dynamic and even complex environment[2].

Most of the research work in Nigeria occurs in universities. Indeed, research production has become essential for the success of universities and the prospects of promotion for academics[3,4].

Several variables have been linked with research productivity. Earlier studies primarily focused on analysing the association of productivity with variables such as institutional size, academic status, age, gender, and others. Many studies have incorporated psychological and other latent variables in analysing productivity. There are however demographic variables (such as age, gender, qualification, rank, years of experience and year of promotion) that tend to intervene between the quest for information and accessibility to relevant information available to law lecturers. At the individual level, demographic variables intervene between the acquisition of information and its use[5]. Beyond these demographic variables are the availability, accessibility and utilisation of legal information resources. These variables could affect the research productivity of law lecturers. Thus, for information to be accessed and utilised efficiently and effectively, some demographic variables become relevant[6].

2. AIM

The study tried to answer the following research questions:

(a) What are the demographic variables (such as gender, age, designation, and educational qualification) of law lecturers?

(b) What is the level of research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities?; and

(c) What are the demographic variables that influence research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities?.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between demographic variables and research productivity of

lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Demographic factors relate to the personal characteristics of academic members. Demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status and academic rank have been associated with research productivity. Age has been studied in numerous works, with conflicting results. The literature on age and research productivity using different measures for age (chronological, years of professional experience and years since the receipt of PhD degree) posits that young researchers made more outstanding contributions to knowledge than older ones. Many studies about productivity have indicated that the relationship between career publication and age is not linear, although the overall rate of publication generally declines with age. Teodorescu[7] investigated faculty publication across 10 countries and discovered that age significantly influences research productivity in the US. While Kotrlik[8], et al., in a study using a random sampling of 228 colleges and universities academic members in the US found that age does not significantly affect research. There is relation between age and productivity and this connection holds for both men and women. High age is negatively related to productivity for both men and women. Women are more productive in the age group 50-54, while men are more productive in the age group 45-49[7].

Also significant for most groups (excluding tenured women) is the effect of rank, with faculty at higher ranks reporting higher levels of research productivity. However, Williams[9], et al., did not find ranks to be a significant decider of research productivity. Professors are more productive than associate professors, and since there are fewer women in senior positions, the difference in productivity between ranks has consequences for average productivity between male and female researchers. Tower[10], et al. reached the same conclusions in a more recent large scale study of Australian academics. Bassey[11], et al., noted that research productivity increases social prestige of the academic staff status to the rank of a professor irrespective of his or her gender. Certain studies have confirmed that academic staff at the higher ladder of the professional rank has larger publications than those in the lower rank. Yousef & Jaleh[12] found out that academic rank and age are significant predictors for faculty members' research productivity in Iran. Academic rank, doctorate qualifications, research time and international research collaboration were the strongest factors positively associated with publication productivity, but women typically reported significantly lower levels on each of these factors[13].

The literature revealed that some previous studies have found that demographic variables of lecturers could be measured over a period of time in respect to research productivity. However, it is clear that much research has not been done on the extent to which demographic variables of lecturers in the Faculties of law in Nigerian universities could influence their research productivity. Thus, this work is necessary to fill the gap and to provide a reference point for future studies.

4. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted. The multistage sampling technique was used to select 414 out of 905 lecturers from 16 Faculties of law in 29 federal and state universities across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria, namely, North Central, North East, North West, South East, South West and South South[14].

A questionnaire was used to collect data. The research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviations and variance, while the hypothesis was tested with Pearson correlation coefficient and analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

The names of 16 universities under this study and the breakdown of response received is:

1. University of Uyo (UNIUYO)   18
2. University of Benin (UNIBEN)   35
3. Delta State University (DELSU)   22
4. University of Nigeria (UNN)   32
5. Nnamdi Azikwe University (NAU)   25
6. Anambra State University (ASU)   19
7. University of Lagos (UNILAG)   36
8. University of Ibadan (UI)   13
9. University of Ado Ekiti (UNIAD)   16
10. Benue State University (BSU)   25
11. University of Abuja (UNIABUJA)   30
12. University of Ilorin (UNILORIN)   40
13. University of Maiduguri (UNIMAD)   29
14. Ahmadu Bello University (ABU)   35
15. Usman Dan Fodio University (UDFU)   15
16. Bayero University Kano (BUK)   24
Total   414

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Demographic Variables (Age, Designation, Qualification, Rank, Experience) of Law Lecturers

From the 16 universities studied, male respondents were 352 (85.0 %) and female 62 (14.9 %). Given that the distribution of the questionnaire at each university was done by total enumeration, the results indicated that more males were employed as lecturers in Law faculties in Nigerian universities (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to demographic variables

Gender	No. (%)
Male	352 (85.0)
Female	62 (14.9)
Age	**No. (%)**
< 30 years	4 (0.9)
30 – 39 years	122 (29.4)
40 – 49 years	259 (62.5)
50 and above	29 (7.0)
Educational qualifications	**No. (%)**
LLB/Bachelor Degree	15 (3.6)
LLM/Masters Degree	369 (89.1)
PhD	30 (7.2)
Designation	**No. (%)**
Assistant Lecturer	83 (20.0)
Lecturer II	140 (33.8)
Lecturer I	81 (19.5)
Senior Lecturer	99 (23.9)
Professor	11 (2.6)

For the age distribution of respondents, majority (62.5 %) of the respondents are within the 40-49 age brackets. This result showed that the respondents were within their active academic years. The educational qualification of lecturers under this study was quite varied. PhD, Masters (LLM), and Bachelor degree (LLB) were used to measure the level of educational qualification of respondents. Across the universities, the ratio of Masters degree (LLM) holders were higher than other educational qualifications. Masters degree holders represent 89.1 % of the respondents while PhD and Bachelor degree holders represent 7.2 % and 3.6 % respectively.

There were more respondents in the lecturer Grade 11 category (140 representing 33.8 %) followed by senior lecturers and assistant lecturers with response rate of 99 (23.9 %) and 83 (20.0 %) respectively. While lecturer I and Professor / Associate Professor had a response rate of 81 (19.5 %) and 11 (2.6 %) respectively.

5.2 Research Productivity of Lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian Universities

Research productivity, refers to the output published in chapters in books, co-authored textbooks, occasional papers, monographs, conference papers, articles in learned journals, and international peer-reviewed journals. To determine the level of research productivity of the respondents within the period of 3 years (2009-2011), average score of their productivity was computed (Table 2). The result shows that 258 (62.3%) respondents had articles in learned journals. This result strongly confirms the

Table 2. Research productivity of law lecturers within three-years (2009-2011)

S. No.	Publications	N (%)	Mean	SD
1.	Textbooks	50 (2.9)	0.1208	0.32626
2.	Chapters in books	182 (43.9)	2.4933	1.35976
3.	Co-authored books	34 (8.2)	1.6333	1.21742
4.	Monographs	26 (6.2)	0.4100	0.13100
5.	Occasional papers	20 (4.8)	0.4000	0.13000
6.	Articles in learned journals	258 (62.3)	5.6867	1.58913
7.	Conference proceedings	162 (39.1)	0.3200	0.73567
8.	International peer-reviewed journals	70 (16.9)	0.1667	0.37393

culture of publish or perish that is a popular cliché among academics in Nigerian university settings. 162 (39.1%) had conference proceedings. Also, 182 (43.9%) respondents had chapters in books.

In Nigeria, university regulations state that academic staff members are to be evaluated for promotion every three years. Thus, the analysis establishes the fact that the research productivity of the lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities is higher in journal publications, chapters in books and conference proceedings. However, the research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities is low in textbook publications, monographs, co-authored books and occasional paper (Table 2).

5.3 Relationship between Demographic Variables and Research Productivity of Lecturers

Research productivity of law lecturers were measured in terms of textbook publication, chapters in books, co-authoured books, monographs, occasional papers, articles in learned journals, conference proceedings and international peer-reviewed journals in view of their demographic variables. To test the relationship between each variable and law lecturers research productivity, a sum of the mean scores of each of the components of the demographic variables was computed and correlated with the items in research productivity.

5.3.1 Relationship between Age and Research Productivity

Table 3 shows a Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)=0.17; df=826; (P<0.05) which revealed a significant relationship between age and law lecturers' research productivity.

5.3.2 Relationship between Gender and Research Productivity

Table 4 shows a Pearson Correlation Coefficient

(r) =0.085; df = 826; (P<0.05) calculated, which revealed a significant relationship between gender and law lecturers research productivity.

5.3.3 Relationship between Educational Qualification and Research Productivity

Table 5 shows a Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)=0.011; df=826; (P<0.05) which revealed a non significant relationship between educational qualification and law lecturers' research productivity.

5.3.4 Relationship between Designation and Research Productivity

Table 6 shows a Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)=

Table 3. Relationship between age and research productivity

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	df	r	P
Age	41.74	6.72	414			
				826	0.17	NS*
Research productivity	10.41	4.56	414			

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 4. Relationship between gender and research productivity

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	df	r	P
Gender	1.29	0.45	414			
				826	0.085	S*
Research productivity	10.41	4.56	414			

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 5. Relationship between educational qualification and research productivity

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	df	r	P
Educational qualification	3.62	1.28	414			
				826	0.011	NS*
Research productivity	10.41	4.56	414			

**Correlation is not significant at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed)

0.027; df = 826; (P<0.05) calculated, which revealed a non significant relationship between designation and law lecturers research productivity.

5.3.5 Relationship between Experience and Research Productivity

Table 7 shows a Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)=0.114; df = 826; (P<0.05) calculated, which revealed a significant relationship between years of experience and law lecturers research productivity.

6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Table 8 indicates that there is significant positive correlation between research productivity of lecturers from the Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities and that age (r=0.81), years of experience (r=0.65), geo-political zones (r=0.18), and ownership of university (r=0.39) significantly correlated positively with research productivity, while gender (r=-0.44) and educational qualification (r=-0.12) had negative but significant correlations. It is also indicated that age (r=0.81), years of experience (r=0.65), geo-political zones (r=0.18), and ownership of university (r=0.39) significantly correlated positively with research productivity, while

Table 6. Relationship between years of designation and research productivity

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	df	r	P
Designation	3.62	1.28	414			
				826	0.027	NS*
Research productivity	10.41	4.56	414			

**Correlation is not significant at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 7. Relationship between years of experience and research productivity

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	df	r	P
Years of experience	9.00	6.28	414			
				826	0.114	S*
Research productivity	10.41	4.56	414			

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 8. Summary of the relationships among the demographic variables and research productivity of lecturers

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Research productivity	1							
Zones	0.018	1						
University	0.039	0.835	1					
Gender	-0.044	-0.006	-0.078	1				
Age	0.081	0.013	-0.044	-.032	1			
Educational qualification	-0.012	-0.238	-.0352	-0.143	0.150	1		
Designation/Job cadre	-0.006	-0.023	-0.120	0.011	0.524	0.130	1	
Years of experience	0.065	-0.099	-0.106	0.023	0.584	0.201	0.639	1

N-414 (Multiple Regression Analysis); P< 0.05

gender (r= -0.44) and educational qualification (r= -0.12) had negative but significant correlations. This finding disagrees with some studies that revealed that there was no difference in productivity as a result of gender[7-9]. However, the study agrees with Teodorescu[7] investigated faculty publication across 10 countries and discovered that age significantly influences research productivity in the US.

There existed significant relationship with research productivity and designation of lecturers (*r* =0.027, *p* > .05). The findings agreed with the study of Yousef & Jaleh[12] who found out that academic rank and age are significant predictors for faculty members' research productivity in Iran. However, Williams,[9] *et al.* did not find ranks to be a significant decider of research productivity. This study shows that there is relationship between research productivity of lecturers and their level of educational qualification (*r*=0.011, p >0.05). It also shows that years of experience is significantly related with the level of research productivity of the respondents (*r*=0.114, *p*>0.05). This shows that, the higher the years of experience, the higher the level of research productivity of the respondents.

Research is important for academic development. Conducting research can enhance lecturers knowledge, increase teaching and research effectiveness and the ability to think and communicate. The research has shown that there was significant correlation between the demographic variables like age, designation, years of experience and research productivity of lecturers in the Faculties of law in Nigerian universities. This study therefore has provided information regarding demographic variables that influence research productivity of Law lecturers in Nigerian universities.

REFERENCES

1. Marsh, H.W. & J. Hattie. The relation between research productivity and teaching effectiveness. *J. Higher Edu.*, 2002, **73**(5), 603-41

2. Babbar, S.; Prasad, S. & Tata, J. An empirical assessment of institutional and individual research productivity in international operations management. *Inter.J. Oper. Prod. Manag.*, 2000, **20**(12), 1392-410.

3. Bako, Sabo. University, research and development in Nigeria: Time for a paradigmatic shift. *In* 11th General Assembly of CODESRIA on Rethinking African Development: Beyond Impasse: Towards Alternatives, Maputo, Mozambique, 6-8 December 2005. http://www.codesria.org/IMG/pdf/bako.pdf

4. Aniedi, A.I. & Effiom, D.O. Research mandate of the university: An assessment of junior academic staff participation. *J. Edu. & Sociology*, 2011, **4**(2), 9-14.

5. Wilson, E.; Droogan, J.; Glanville, J.; Watt, I. & Hardman, G. Access to the evidence base from general practice: A survey of general practice staff in Northern and Yorkshire Region. *Quality Health Care,* 2000, **10**, 83-89

6. Akintayo, D.I. Labour education and socio-economic development in Nigeria. *JOLIS,* 2008, **5**(1&2), 192.

7. Teodorescu, D. Correlates of faculty publication productivity: A cross-national analysis. *Higher Education*, 2000, **39**, 201-22.

8. Kotrlik, J.W.; Bartlett, E.J.; Higgins, C.C. & Williams, H.A. Factors associated with research productivity of agricultural education faculty. *J. Agri. Edu.* 2001, **43**(3).

9. Williams, H.; Bartlett, J.; Kotrlik, J. & Higgins, C. An analysis of factors associated with research productivity of human resource development faculty. Proceedings of the Academy of Resource Development, USA. 2001.

10. Tower, G.; Plummer, J. & Ridgewell, B. A multidisciplinary study of gender-based research productivity in the world's best journals. *J. Diversity Manag.*, 2007, **2**(4), 23-32.

11. Bassey, U.; Akuegwu, B.; Udida, L. & Udey, F.U. Academic staff productivity: A study of universities in South-South Zone of Nigeria. *Edu. Res. & Rev.,* 2007, **2**(5), 103-08. http://www.academicjournals.org/ERR (accessed on 21 May 2008)

12. Yousef, H. & Jaleh, B. Study of factors influencing research productivity of agricultural faculty members in Iran. *Higher Education,* 2011*,* **62**(5), 635-47

13. Bentley, P. Gender differences and factors affecting publication productivity among Australian university academics. *Journal of Sociology,* 2012, **48**(1), 85-103

14. National University Commission. List of Nigerian universities and years founded. Vol. 7, Issue 4. http://www.nuc.edu.ng/pages/universities.asp (accessed on November 2011)

About the Author

Ms. Anyaogu Uluocha is a Principal Librarian and the Head of Readers Services Section at Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of Lagos Campus, Akoka, Lagos Nigeria. She holds a Masters in Library and Information Studies (University of Ibadan, 1998). Currently, she is a PhD student at University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Her areas of interest are: Law librarianship, library management and reference services.

Dr Mabawonku Iyabo is presently Professor and Head of Department in University of Ibadan, Nigeria.He

holds a PhD in Library and Information Science. He is a Member, Editorial Board of Nigerian Library and Information Science Review and Nigerian Libraries and is also an Associate Editor with African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science. He has a number of publications in both national and international journals. His areas of interest are: Audio visual media technology, academic and special libraries, oral archives and information and communication technology.