

ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY AMONG ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

Patience Oyilonye Onu

R. I. Echezona (Prof)

University of Abuja, Abuja

Helen Emmanuel (PhD)

University of Abuja, Abuja

and

Yusuf Ayodeji Ajani

Abstract

This study assessed the level of research productivity among academic librarians in federal universities in North-Central Nigeria. The study was motivated by the growing importance of research productivity as a major indicator of academic performance, professional relevance, and career advancement within higher education institutions. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 130 academic librarians in seven federal universities located within North-Central Nigeria, while 119 valid responses were retrieved and used for the analysis, representing a response rate of 91.5%. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics including; frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The findings revealed that academic librarians possessed a positive attitude toward research with a grand mean score of 4.05. The study further established a relatively high level of research productivity among the respondents, particularly in journal publications, conference participation, seminars, workshops, and collaborative research activities. Collaborative research and participation in professional development programmes emerged as prominent areas of scholarly engagement among the librarians. However, the study identified several factors constraining optimal research productivity, including heavy workload, inadequate funding, limited institutional support, lack of mentorship, and poor access to research grants. The study concludes that although academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria demonstrate strong interest and active engagement in research activities, institutional and structural challenges continue to limit sustainable scholarly productivity. The study recommends improved institutional support, increased research funding,

mentorship programmes, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing research productivity among academic librarians in Nigerian universities.

Keywords: Research productivity, academic librarians, scholarly communication, collaborative research, North-Central Nigeria.

Introduction

Research productivity has become one of the most important indicators of academic performance within contemporary higher education systems. Universities are increasingly expected to contribute not only to teaching and learning but also to knowledge generation, innovation, and societal development through research. Consequently, the quantity and quality of scholarly outputs produced by academic staff have become major criteria for measuring institutional effectiveness, academic excellence, and global competitiveness. Research outputs such as journal articles, conference papers, books, technical reports, and collaborative projects are widely used to evaluate academic contributions and determine promotion, recognition, and funding opportunities within universities.

Within the university environment, academic librarians occupy a unique position as facilitators of information access, research support, scholarly communication, and knowledge management. Traditionally, librarians were primarily responsible for organizing, preserving, and disseminating information resources. However, the evolving nature of academic librarianship has expanded these responsibilities to include active participation in research and scholarly publishing. As members of the academic community, librarians are increasingly expected to contribute to knowledge creation through research activities that support evidence-based practice, professional development, and the advancement of Library and Information Science. Brew, Boud, Lucas, and Crawford (2021) observed that research productivity has become a critical determinant of professional relevance and academic visibility across higher education institutions worldwide.

The increasing emphasis on research productivity has generated considerable interest among researchers and policymakers seeking to understand the factors that influence scholarly output among academic staff. For academic librarians, research productivity serves several important purposes. It contributes to professional growth, enhances promotion prospects, strengthens institutional reputation, and facilitates the development of innovative library services. Research engagement also enables librarians to

identify emerging information needs, evaluate service effectiveness, and develop solutions that improve access to information resources. According to Quadri and Idowu (2021), active involvement in research enhances librarians' professional competence and increases their contributions to institutional knowledge production.

Despite the recognized importance of research productivity, evidence suggests that academic librarians often encounter numerous challenges that limit sustained engagement in research activities. Factors such as heavy workload, inadequate research funding, limited institutional support, insufficient mentorship opportunities, poor access to research grants, and infrastructural constraints have been reported as major barriers to scholarly productivity among librarians. Ibegwam and Oluwasemilore (2022) noted that many librarians in developing countries experience difficulties in balancing professional responsibilities with research expectations, thereby affecting their research output and publication performance.

In Nigeria, research productivity has assumed greater significance due to promotion requirements, accreditation standards, and increasing pressure on universities to improve their research rankings and visibility. Academic librarians in federal universities are expected to contribute meaningfully to institutional research output while simultaneously performing professional and administrative duties. Although previous studies have examined factors such as information and communication technology competencies, institutional support, funding opportunities, and professional development as determinants of research productivity, limited empirical attention has been devoted specifically to assessing the actual level of research productivity among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria. Consequently, there is inadequate evidence regarding the extent of librarians' participation in scholarly activities such as journal publication, conference presentations, collaborative research, and professional development programmes within the region.

Given this gap in existing literature, this study was undertaken to assess the level of research productivity among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria. The study provides empirical evidence on librarians' attitudes towards research, their publication output, participation in scholarly activities, involvement in collaborative research, and the factors influencing their research productivity. Findings from the study are expected to

contribute to policy formulation and the development of strategies aimed at enhancing research productivity among academic librarians in Nigerian universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the attitude of academic librarians towards research in North-Central Nigeria?
2. What is the level of journal publication output among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria?
3. To what extent do academic librarians participate in conference presentations, seminars, and workshops in North-Central Nigeria?
4. What is the level of involvement of academic librarians in collaborative research activities in North-Central Nigeria?
5. What factors influence research productivity among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria?

Literature Review

Concept of Research Productivity

Research productivity is widely recognized as a fundamental measure of academic performance and scholarly contribution within higher education institutions. It reflects the extent to which academics engage in knowledge creation, dissemination, and application through various forms of scholarly output. In the university system, research productivity serves as an important criterion for evaluating professional competence, academic relevance, institutional visibility, and career advancement. Scholarly outputs commonly used to assess research productivity include journal articles, conference papers, books, book chapters, technical reports, and other forms of academic publications. Tijani and Adetoro (2020) as well as Ahmed and Musa (2021) observed that research productivity constitutes a major indicator of both individual and institutional performance in contemporary academic environments.

The concept of research productivity extends beyond the mere quantity of publications to encompass the quality, visibility, and impact of scholarly contributions.

Contemporary approaches to research evaluation increasingly emphasize citation impact, h-index scores, collaborative networks, and the relevance of research outputs to societal and professional needs. Consequently, productive researchers are not only expected to publish regularly but also to generate work that contributes meaningfully to knowledge development and professional practice. Okonedo and Popoola (2022) noted that modern assessment of research productivity incorporates both output volume and scholarly influence, reflecting the growing emphasis on research quality and impact.

Within the field of librarianship, research productivity represents an essential component of professional development and evidence-based practice. Academic librarians are increasingly expected to complement their traditional responsibilities with active participation in research activities that contribute to the advancement of Library and Information Science. Through research, librarians generate new knowledge, evaluate library services, develop innovative information solutions, and contribute to scholarly communication within their institutions. Onuoha and Ogbuiyi (2020) argued that active involvement in research enhances librarians' capacity to support teaching, learning, and knowledge management within universities.

Despite its importance, research productivity among academic librarians is often influenced by institutional, professional, and personal factors that either facilitate or constrain scholarly engagement. Challenges such as inadequate funding, excessive workload, limited mentorship opportunities, and insufficient institutional support have been reported as significant barriers to sustained research activities among librarians. Nevertheless, improving research productivity remains crucial for strengthening professional practice, enhancing institutional reputation, and promoting national knowledge development. Therefore, research productivity should be viewed as a multidimensional construct that encompasses scholarly output, academic impact, professional contribution, and the capacity to generate knowledge that addresses societal and institutional needs.

Indicators of Research Productivity among Academic Librarians

Research productivity among academic librarians can be assessed through a variety of scholarly and professional activities that demonstrate engagement in knowledge creation and dissemination. Traditionally, research productivity has been measured through

tangible outputs such as journal articles, conference papers, books, book chapters, monographs, and technical reports. These outputs provide evidence of scholarly engagement and are commonly used by universities and professional bodies to evaluate academic performance. The frequency and quality of such publications often determine promotion opportunities, professional recognition, and academic standing. According to Tijani and Adetoro (2020), publication output remains one of the most widely accepted indicators of research productivity within academic institutions.

In contemporary academic environments, the assessment of research productivity has expanded beyond publication counts to include broader measures of scholarly contribution and impact. Increasing attention is now given to citation metrics, research visibility, grant acquisition, and participation in collaborative research projects. These indicators provide additional evidence of the relevance, influence, and utilization of research findings within the academic community and beyond. Okonedo and Popoola (2022) observed that citation-based indicators and collaborative research networks have become increasingly important in evaluating the overall impact of scholarly work.

Conference participation, seminar attendance, and workshop involvement also constitute important indicators of research productivity among academic librarians. These professional platforms provide opportunities for presenting research findings, exchanging ideas, building academic networks, and acquiring new research skills. Active participation in conferences and scholarly meetings often facilitates future collaborations and enhances researchers' visibility within their disciplines. Ezeani and Ogbodo (2019) noted that conference presentations and professional development activities contribute significantly to the dissemination and refinement of scholarly work.

Another important dimension of research productivity is collaborative research engagement. Collaboration enables researchers to pool expertise, share resources, and address complex research problems more effectively. Academic librarians increasingly participate in interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research partnerships that contribute to knowledge production and innovation. Joint authorship of publications, collaborative grant applications, and multidisciplinary projects have therefore become valuable indicators of scholarly productivity. Consequently, a comprehensive assessment of research productivity among academic librarians should incorporate both traditional publication

outputs and broader indicators that reflect scholarly impact, collaboration, professional engagement, and contribution to institutional development.

Factors Influencing Research Productivity among Academic Librarians

Research productivity among academic librarians is influenced by a combination of institutional, professional, technological, and individual factors. Among these, institutional support remains one of the most significant determinants of scholarly output. Universities that provide research grants, sponsorship opportunities, research leave, and supportive policies are more likely to foster active research engagement among their academic staff. The availability of such support mechanisms creates an enabling environment that encourages librarians to undertake research and disseminate their findings through scholarly publications. Haliso, Iwu-James, Soyemi, and Madukoma (2021) emphasized that institutional support plays a critical role in enhancing research productivity among librarians.

Mentorship is another important factor that influences research productivity. Effective mentoring relationships provide opportunities for less experienced researchers to acquire research skills, improve academic writing competencies, and gain confidence in scholarly publishing. Through guidance and professional support, mentors help emerging researchers navigate the challenges associated with conducting and publishing research. Oso and Olaniyi (2024) reported that mentorship programmes significantly enhance research participation and publication output among early-career librarians.

Technological competence and access to information resources also play a vital role in determining research productivity. The increasing digitization of scholarly communication requires researchers to possess adequate information and communication technology skills for accessing electronic resources, retrieving literature, managing data, and disseminating research findings. Librarians who possess strong technological competencies are generally better positioned to engage effectively in research activities. Bankole, Sulaiman, Saliu, and Mahammuod (2024) found that ICT competencies and effective information retrieval skills positively influence research engagement among librarians in Nigerian universities.

Despite the availability of various enabling factors, several challenges continue to constrain research productivity among academic librarians. Heavy workload, inadequate

funding, poor internet connectivity, limited access to research grants, and insufficient institutional encouragement often reduce opportunities for sustained scholarly engagement. These constraints may affect both the quantity and quality of research outputs produced by librarians. Therefore, improving research productivity requires a holistic approach that addresses institutional barriers while simultaneously strengthening individual research capacity, technological competence, and professional support systems.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Normative Theory of Science propounded by Robert K. Merton and the Theory of Planned Behaviour developed by Icek Ajzen. The Normative Theory of Science explains the social norms and values that guide the conduct of researchers within the scientific community. According to the theory, scientific activities are governed by principles such as communalism, universalism, disinterestedness, and organized skepticism, which collectively promote the generation, dissemination, and validation of knowledge. These norms encourage researchers to contribute to scholarly discourse through publication, collaboration, and the open sharing of research findings. Within the context of academic librarianship, the theory underscores the expectation that librarians should actively engage in research and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in Library and Information Science through scholarly publications and professional research activities.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour explains how attitudes, social influences, and perceived behavioural control shape an individual's intention to perform a particular behaviour. The theory posits that behaviour is influenced by attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In relation to research productivity, librarians are more likely to participate in research activities when they possess positive attitudes towards research, perceive support from colleagues and institutional authorities, and believe they have the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities to conduct research successfully. Consequently, favourable perceptions and supportive research environments are expected to enhance librarians' commitment to scholarly engagement and publication activities.

The relevance of these theories to the present study lies in their complementary explanation of research productivity among academic librarians. While the Normative

Theory of Science emphasizes the professional obligation of librarians to contribute to knowledge creation and scholarly communication, the Theory of Planned Behaviour explains how individual attitudes and institutional conditions influence actual participation in research activities. Together, the theories provide a useful framework for understanding the attitudes of academic librarians towards research, their level of scholarly engagement, and the factors that facilitate or constrain research productivity in federal universities in North-Central Nigeria.

Research Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to assess the level of research productivity among academic librarians in federal universities in North-Central Nigeria. The population comprised 130 academic librarians from seven federal universities within the region, namely Yakubu Gowon University (formerly University of Abuja), Federal University Lokoja, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, Federal University Lafia, Federal University of Technology Minna, University of Jos, and University of Ilorin. Given the manageable population size, total enumeration was employed to ensure that all members of the population were included in the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to elicit information on respondents' attitudes towards research, publication output, participation in scholarly activities, involvement in collaborative research, and factors influencing research productivity.

The instrument was validated by experts in Library and Information Science and Measurement and Evaluation, while a pilot test conducted among 30 librarians at Nasarawa State University yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.80, indicating satisfactory reliability. Of the 130 questionnaires administered, 119 were correctly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 91.5%. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics comprising frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation, with a criterion mean of 2.50 adopted for decision-making. Ethical principles such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were strictly observed throughout the study, and all information obtained from respondents was used solely for academic purposes.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics comprising frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard

deviation were used to analyse the data. A criterion mean of 2.50 was adopted for decision-making on a 5-point Likert scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA).

Table 1: Population and Response Rate Across Sampled Universities

University	Population	Responses Received	Rate (%)
Yakubu Gowon University, Abuja	9	8	88.9
Federal University Lokoja	14	13	92.9
Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi	13	12	92.3
Federal University of Lafia (FULAFIA)	10	9	90.0
Federal University of Technology, Minna	26	24	92.3
University of Jos (UNIJOS)	31	28	90.3
University of Ilorin (UNILORIN)	27	25	92.6
Total	130	119	91.5

Note. Field Survey, 2025.

Table 1 shows that questionnaires were administered to all 130 academic librarians who serve as the population of the study across the seven sampled universities. Of these, 119 completed questionnaires were retrieved and validated for analysis, yielding an overall response rate of 91.5%. Response rates across individual institutions ranged from 88.9% to 92.9%. This high level of participation provides a reliable empirical basis for the study findings.

Research Question One: What is the attitude of academic librarians towards research in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 2: Attitude of Academic Librarians towards Research

S/N	Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	I consider research important for professional growth	3 (2.5)	5 (4.2)	10 (8.4)	48 (40.3)	53 (44.5)	4.20 (0.86)	Positive
2	I enjoy engaging in research activities	5 (4.2)	8 (6.7)	14 (11.8)	50 (42.0)	42 (35.3)	3.97 (0.94)	Positive
3	Research enhances my professional competence	4 (3.4)	7 (5.9)	12 (10.1)	51 (42.9)	45 (37.8)	4.06 (0.89)	Positive
4	I am motivated to publish scholarly articles	6 (5.0)	9 (7.6)	15 (12.6)	49 (41.2)	40 (33.6)	3.91 (0.97)	Positive

5	I consider research a necessary requirement in librarianship	4 (3.4)	6 (5.0)	11 (9.2)	52 (43.7)	46 (38.7)	4.09 (0.87)	Positive
	Grand Mean						4.05 (0.91)	Positive

The findings presented in Table 2 revealed that academic librarians demonstrated a positive attitude towards research, with a grand mean score of 4.05. The respondents agreed that research is important for professional growth (Mean = 4.20), enhances professional competence (Mean = 4.06), constitutes a necessary requirement in librarianship (Mean = 4.09), and motivates scholarly publishing (Mean = 3.91). These findings indicate that academic librarians recognize the importance of research as a critical component of professional development, academic relevance, and career advancement within the university system.

The positive attitude towards research observed in this study suggests that academic librarians are increasingly embracing scholarly activities as part of their professional responsibilities. This finding may be attributed to the growing emphasis placed on research productivity as a criterion for promotion, recognition, and career progression within Nigerian universities. The finding corroborates Aina and Mbah (2021), who reported that academic librarians generally exhibit favourable attitudes towards research and scholarly communication. Similarly, Quadri and Idowu (2021) found that positive perceptions of research significantly enhance librarians' willingness to engage in publication and collaborative scholarly activities. The implication is that positive attitudes towards research provide a strong foundation for increased scholarly productivity among academic librarians.

Research Question Two: What is the level of journal publication output among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 3: Level of Journal Publication Output among Academic Librarians

S/N	Items	Very Low (%)	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)	Very High (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	Publication in local journals	8 (6.7)	14 (11.8)	21 (17.6)	46 (38.7)	30 (25.2)	3.64 (1.06)	High
2	Publication in international journals	12 (10.1)	18 (15.1)	26 (21.8)	39 (32.8)	24 (20.2)	3.26 (1.18)	Moderate
3	Frequency of annual publications	10 (8.4)	16 (13.4)	25 (21.0)	42 (35.3)	26 (21.8)	3.49 (1.12)	High
4	Publication in peer-reviewed journals	7 (5.9)	13 (10.9)	20 (16.8)	48 (40.3)	31 (26.1)	3.70 (1.03)	High

Grand Mean

3.52
(1.10) High

The findings in Table 3 revealed that academic librarians demonstrated a relatively high level of journal publication output, with a grand mean score of 3.52. The respondents reported high levels of publication in local journals (Mean = 3.64), peer-reviewed journals (Mean = 3.70), and annual publication frequency (Mean = 3.49). However, publication in international journals recorded a moderate mean score of 3.26. These findings suggest that academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria are actively engaged in scholarly publishing, particularly within local and peer-reviewed publication outlets.

The relatively high publication output recorded in this study reflects increasing scholarly engagement among academic librarians and demonstrates their contribution to knowledge creation within the field of Library and Information Science. The prominence of local and peer-reviewed journal publications may be associated with institutional requirements for promotion and professional advancement. However, the comparatively moderate level of international journal publication may reflect challenges such as publication costs, limited access to international research networks, and inadequate institutional sponsorship. The finding is consistent with Makinde, Salaam, and Daramola (2020), who reported active participation of Nigerian academic librarians in research and publication despite existing institutional constraints. The result also supports the position of Ugochukwu-Smooth and Nwabueze (2023), who argued that continuous professional development and institutional support significantly enhance librarians' research productivity and scholarly visibility.

Research Question Three: To what extent do academic librarians participate in conference presentations, seminars, and workshops in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 4: Participation in Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops

S/N	Items	Very Low (%)	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)	Very High (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	Participation in local conferences	5 (4.2)	10 (8.4)	18 (15.1)	50 (42.0)	36 (30.3)	3.86 (0.98)	High
2	Participation in international conferences	18 (15.1)	22 (18.5)	28 (23.5)	31 (26.1)	20 (16.8)	3.11 (1.27)	Moderate
3	Attendance at seminars and workshops	4 (3.4)	8 (6.7)	16 (13.4)	52 (43.7)	39 (32.8)	3.96 (0.91)	High
4	Presentation of papers at conferences	7 (5.9)	13 (10.9)	21 (17.6)	46 (38.7)	32 (26.9)	3.70 (1.04)	High

Grand Mean

3.66
(1.05)

High

The findings presented in Table 4 showed that academic librarians actively participated in conferences, seminars, and workshops, with a grand mean score of 3.66. Attendance at seminars and workshops recorded the highest mean score (Mean = 3.96), followed by participation in local conferences (Mean = 3.86) and presentation of papers at conferences (Mean = 3.70). Participation in international conferences recorded a moderate mean score of 3.11. These findings indicate that academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria are actively involved in professional development activities and scholarly engagements that enhance knowledge sharing and research dissemination.

The high level of participation in conferences, seminars, and workshops demonstrates the commitment of academic librarians to continuous professional development and scholarly interaction. Such engagements provide opportunities for researchers to disseminate findings, acquire new skills, establish professional networks, and remain current with developments in their field. The moderate participation in international conferences may be attributed to financial limitations, inadequate sponsorship opportunities, and logistical challenges associated with international travel. This finding supports Makinde, Salaam, and Daramola (2020), who reported that professional development activities significantly contribute to research productivity among academic librarians. The result also agrees with Ugochukwu-Smooth and Nwabueze (2023), who observed that participation in conferences and training programmes enhances scholarly visibility and research effectiveness among librarians.

Research Question Four: What is the level of involvement of academic librarians in collaborative research activities in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 5: Level of Involvement in Collaborative Research Activities

S/N	Items	Very Low (%)	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)	Very High (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	Collaboration with colleagues within the institution	6 (5.0)	9 (7.6)	17 (14.3)	50 (42.0)	37 (31.1)	3.87 (0.98)	High
2	Collaboration with researchers outside the institution	12 (10.1)	18 (15.1)	24 (20.2)	40 (33.6)	25 (21.0)	3.40 (1.18)	Moderate
3	Participation in interdisciplinary research	9 (7.6)	15 (12.6)	22 (18.5)	44 (37.0)	29 (24.4)	3.58 (1.10)	High
4	Joint authorship of scholarly	7 (5.9)	12	18	49	33	3.75	High

publications	(10.1)	(15.1)	(41.2)	(27.7)	(1.01)	
Grand Mean					3.65	High
					(1.07)	

The findings in Table 5 revealed that academic librarians demonstrated a high level of involvement in collaborative research activities, with a grand mean score of 3.65. Collaboration with colleagues within the institution recorded the highest mean score (Mean = 3.87), followed by joint authorship of scholarly publications (Mean = 3.75) and participation in interdisciplinary research activities (Mean = 3.58). Collaboration with researchers outside the institution recorded a moderate mean score of 3.40. The findings suggest that academic librarians actively engage in collaborative research efforts, particularly within their immediate institutional environments.

The prominence of collaborative research among the respondents reflects the increasing recognition of teamwork and knowledge sharing in contemporary scholarly activities. Research collaboration enables librarians to combine expertise, share resources, improve research quality, and increase publication output. The relatively lower level of collaboration with researchers outside their institutions may indicate limitations in research networking opportunities, funding support, and access to wider academic partnerships. This finding is consistent with Iwu-James and Haliso (2023), who found that collaborative research patterns positively influence research productivity among academic librarians. The result further supports Akintunde and Omeluzor (2023), who emphasized that research collaboration enhances scholarly visibility, innovation, and professional growth within academic librarianship.

Research Question Five: What factors influence research productivity among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 6: Factors Influencing Research Productivity among Academic Librarians

S/N	Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	Heavy workload affects my research productivity	4 (3.4)	7 (5.9)	11 (9.2)	50 (42.0)	47 (39.5)	4.08 (0.88)	Agreed
2	Inadequate funding limits my research activities	3 (2.5)	6 (5.0)	10 (8.4)	52 (43.7)	48 (40.3)	4.14 (0.84)	Agreed
3	Limited institutional support affects research engagement	5 (4.2)	8 (6.7)	14 (11.8)	49 (41.2)	43 (36.1)	3.98 (0.93)	Agreed
4	Lack of mentorship affects my research productivity	6 (5.0)	9 (7.6)	15 (12.6)	47 (39.5)	42 (35.3)	3.92 (0.98)	Agreed
5	Poor access to research grants limits publication output	4 (3.4)	7 (5.9)	12 (10.1)	51 (42.9)	45 (37.8)	4.06 (0.89)	Agreed

Grand Mean	4.04 (0.90)	Agreed
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The findings presented in Table 6 revealed that several factors significantly influence research productivity among academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria, with a grand mean score of 4.04. The respondents agreed that inadequate funding (Mean = 4.14), heavy workload (Mean = 4.08), poor access to research grants (Mean = 4.06), limited institutional support (Mean = 3.98), and lack of mentorship (Mean = 3.92) constitute major challenges affecting their research productivity. Among these factors, inadequate funding emerged as the most critical constraint to scholarly engagement and publication output.

The findings suggest that although academic librarians possess positive attitudes towards research and demonstrate appreciable involvement in scholarly activities, institutional and structural barriers continue to hinder optimal research productivity. Financial constraints may limit access to research resources, conference participation, data collection, and publication opportunities. Similarly, excessive workload and inadequate institutional support may reduce the time and motivation required for sustained research engagement. These findings corroborate the studies of Ibegwam and Oluwasemilore (2022) and Quadri and Idowu (2021), who identified inadequate funding, workload pressures, and weak institutional support as major impediments to research productivity among librarians in developing countries. The implication is that addressing these challenges through improved funding, mentorship programmes, supportive policies, and enhanced institutional commitment will significantly strengthen research productivity and scholarly contributions among academic librarians in Nigerian universities.

Recommendations

1. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:
2. University management and library administrators should provide increased research funding, grants, and sponsorship opportunities to support academic librarians' research activities, conference participation, and scholarly publications.
3. Academic libraries should establish structured mentorship programmes that pair experienced researchers with early-career librarians to enhance research skills, academic writing competence, and publication output.

4. Universities should implement policies aimed at reducing excessive workload and creating dedicated time for research activities in order to improve librarians' capacity for sustained scholarly engagement.
5. Academic librarians should be encouraged to expand collaborative research efforts beyond their institutions through participation in interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research networks that enhance knowledge sharing and scholarly visibility.
6. Professional library associations and university authorities should strengthen institutional support mechanisms through regular capacity-building programmes, research workshops, and training initiatives designed to foster a sustainable research culture among academic librarians.

Conclusion

This study assessed the level of research productivity among academic librarians in federal universities in North-Central Nigeria. The findings revealed that academic librarians possess positive attitudes towards research and demonstrate appreciable levels of scholarly engagement through journal publications, participation in conferences, seminars and workshops, as well as involvement in collaborative research activities. These findings indicate that academic librarians increasingly recognize research as an important component of professional development, academic relevance, and career advancement within the university system.

Despite the encouraging level of scholarly engagement observed, the study identified several institutional and structural challenges that continue to constrain optimal research productivity. Inadequate funding, heavy workload, limited institutional support, poor access to research grants, and lack of mentorship emerged as major barriers affecting librarians' research performance. The study therefore concludes that while academic librarians in North-Central Nigeria are actively contributing to knowledge creation and scholarly communication, improving institutional support systems and creating a more enabling research environment remain essential for sustaining and enhancing research productivity within Nigerian universities.

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