

Ph.D. Dissertation Summary

Title: *Academic Research Capacity Variables and Research Publication in Mainstream Journals among University Lecturers in South–South Nigeria*

Background

Publishing in reputable journals is key to academic visibility, institutional reputation, and national development (Ayeni & Adetayo, 2018; Okebukola, 2021). However, lecturers in South–South Nigeria often struggle to publish in peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus or Web of Science. Recurring challenges include inadequate research funding, frequent rejections, institutional bottlenecks, and personal difficulties such as anxiety, procrastination, and low self-confidence (Anyaegebunam et al., 2023; Asaolu et al., 2020; Onwe et al., 2022; Uleanya & Gamede, 2021). Although interventions such as grants, mentoring, and capacity-building workshops have been introduced (Asiyai, 2013; Umeokafor, 2022), their impact has remained limited.

This study examines three academic research capacity variables: collaborative practices, research self-efficacy, and persistence to publish, and how they relate to lecturers' success in mainstream publishing. It draws from four theoretical strands: Social Capital Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Cumulative Advantage Theory, and Intersectionality Theory. A review of 262 studies revealed only 23 Nigerian-based investigations, with just three from South–South Nigeria. None compared public and private institutions together or examined persistence as a mediating factor using an embedded mixed-methods approach.

Methods

An embedded mixed-methods design was adopted. A total of 4,074 lecturers from federal, state, and private universities in the South–South region was selected for the quantitative phase using multistage and systematic random sampling. For the qualitative phase, 24 lecturers were purposively chosen to reflect variation across gender, academic rank, and institution type. Data collection instruments include a questionnaire for measuring collaboration, self-efficacy, and persistence, a bibliometric review tool for Scopus and WoS data, and a semi-structured interview guide. Quantitative analysis will involve t-tests, correlations, multiple regression, PLS-SEM, and artificial neural networks. Qualitative data will be analysed using thematic and narrative techniques. Ethical clearance will be secured prior to data collection.

Expected findings

The study is expected to reveal that collaboration, high self-efficacy, and persistence are significant predictors of mainstream publishing success. Persistence may play a bridging role between the other two variables and actual publication outcomes. Qualitative responses are likely to reveal personal and institutional obstacles that affect lecturers' publishing efforts, including lack of time, limited mentoring, and low morale. Findings will provide evidence-based recommendations for improving research support systems, building academic capacity, and strengthening Nigeria's position in global knowledge production.

References

Omitted for space reasons.