FREQUENCY OF CITATION OF FOREIGN AND INDIGENOUSAUTHORS IN POSTGRADUATE THESES IN NIGERIA:IMPLICATION FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH ANDNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By
Edward, Alexander
Department of Mass Communication
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.
edwardalexander 14@yahoo. com
aedward@ctbu.edu.ng

Abstract
This paper examined the current state of indigenization of research contents and scholarly ideas within Nigeria's academic frontiers. For this purpose, 200 purposively selected Masters and Postgraduate Diploma theses from 12 departments, in the faculties of Social Sciences, Arts, Education and Sciences in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria were content analyzed. Indepth interviews were conducted with 12 Senior Lecturers in the selected departments. Using tables of frequency, the study revealed that out of the 3,450 references found in 200 content analyzed postgraduate theses, 2001 (58%) were references from foreign sources while 1,449 (42%) were from indigenous sources. This shows a considerable lopsidedness of (16%) in favour of foreign authors. The follow-up interviews conducted with Lecturers in the selected departments revealed that the promotional policy that places major preference' on journal publications over books as well as lack of adequate documentations of indigenous journal and book publications on the internet is responsible for the lopsidedness. The paper therefore, recommends that book publications authored by Nigerian lecturers should be given adequate rating in promotional exercises. Also, centres for internet documentation of indigenous journal and book publications should be established to encourage deposition of indigenous knowledge for the benefit of indigenous research across the country,

Keywords: Nigeria, Indigenization, Research, Referencing, Postgraduate Theses

Introduction

Motivation for this study titled "Frequency of Citation of Foreign and Indigenous Authors in Postgraduate Theses: Implication for Academic Research and National Development" came from the comments of Prof. Umaru Pate of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Maiduguri during a recent external defense of 3 postgraduate students in the Department of Mass Communication, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The comment was on the need for students at postgraduate levels to do indepth exploration of relevant research works by indigenous scholars, for their theses/projects as a way of promoting and building local knowledge base. An intellectual sense can adequately be made of this comment because research as a discipline can be more beneficial if its continuous discourses have indigenous facts and flavour especially when its application is directed at the local populace. Additional credence for the above can also be found in the opinion of Sawyer (2004:216) who said:

> Every society needs to insure the existence of viable indigenous knowledge systems i.e. local institutions, structures and cadres which, in combination, are able to access knowledge from all sources - external and home-grown, traditional and modern - synthetize it, adopt it, and generally make it usable by local communities and agencies under local conditions.

To Sawyer, societies should not just create a viable indigenous knowledge systems but should, through research, recreate and update such home-grown knowledge base, with an intention of making it adoptable for the benefits of the local communities under local conditions. Also, if research, according to Wimmer & Dominick (2006:2) is about *"an attempt to discover something"* aimed at solving certain problems, relating to a specific population within a specific societal sphere, then the process of discovering such solutions ought to draw a good level of input from past local discourses in related fields of study or research.

For the purpose of research, generally and for the demand of graduate research work, particularly, researchers are expected to do an overview of what others have done in their area of study. This is done with the aim of avoiding repetition but aligning such studies within the research chain of discourse. It is only when this alignment is properly done that a researcher's work can be seen to be adding to the body of knowledge, which is a basic demand of any research exercise. To add to the body of academic knowledge also demands that a researcher should first see himself fulfilling the problem-solving need of his immediate environment in direct relation to the populace. This can be realized through equitable reliance on both local content-oriented research materials and those of external origin.

The fact also that research, according to Obeka (2011:14) *"is a systematic process of identifying problems specifically with the aim of amassing sufficient accurate data for solving them,"* requires that research processes that rely more on foreign generated processes of problem solving may not accurately fit into the problem solving process of an alien community. For instance, a mass media study of the perception of a phenomenon by a particular group in the United Kingdom may not be accurately relevant when issues of perception of the same phenomenon among Nigerians is being discussed or studied. This is because the two communities are exposed to different cultural, social, political, economic factors which play meaningful part in perception studies.

If also research, according to Anikweze (2009:1), *is a logical way of finding solutions to an identified problem",* then solutions for such identified problems should begin from indigenous and localized relevant knowledge to the foreign ones. This also supports the primary process of research - starting from the known to the unknown.

Relationship between Research and National Development

What exactly is the relationship between citation frequency of foreign and indigenous authors in academic research and national development? To answer this question, it is important to note that the world today is technologically driven. These technologies did not emerge from a vacuum. Technological breakthroughs have always been products of research, research-testing and innovations. Research also does not occur effortlessly or in a vacuum. It relies heavily on the knowledge base of the society in question. It therefore goes that development as a product of technological innovations relies on research which is a product of sole or mixture of knowledge systems.

So, if today, after over 60 years of tertiary education in Nigeria, citations and references in postgraduate research works are still dominated by foreign references, then something must be amiss. This is why this study intends to empirically unveil the true situation for a possible solution. In fact, Sawyerr (2004:217) sums up completely the very close relationship between university research base and national development when he said: "*The strength of African Universities and research institutions is a key condition for its development, and their weakness is an index of, as well as a contributor to its poverty".*

This means that the strength or weakness of a nation's indigenous knowledge base as reflected in the capacity and potentials of its universities and research institutions has a direct implication for its short and long term development.

It is important to note at this juncture that this paper, is not in any way advocating a research driven development based on indigenous knowledge alone. It is not also despising the rich potentials inherent in foreign research circles. It simply aims at exploring and encouraging the possibility of using, if not more, but not less, homegrown research contents and references as target solutions for identified problems of the indigenous people. A better picture of the danger inherent in predominant externally-driven research content is clearly painted economically in the words of Raphele (2004:25):

In more economic terms, medical curricular in African medical and nursing schools are starting to reflect "expert"[1] demand. Raising academic standards is a good thing in and of itself, but standards that are purely externally-driven have costs. The costs, in this case, seem to be born by the poor people of Africa.

What this paper additionally attempts to explore, is a system that supports brain circulation and not brain drain as posited by Doss, Evenson and Ruther (2004:6). It is pertinent to note that brain circulation has been greatly encouraged by the global use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet. This has offered to the research world the opportunity for brain circulation towards academic and research breakthrough which hitherto should affect, positively the economy, politics, culture, religions and social life of people in both developing and developed nations. While this opportunity offered by the world wide web of information is being harnessed, however, care must be taken by the developing nations not to over rely on externally driven knowledge ideas. Relying more on externally-driven research ideas for African nations simply means producing knowledge with its insufficient resources only for such

knowledge expertise to be lost to the developed economies who are ever ready, willing and able to pay more to drain Africa of its best brains.

Problem Statement and Significance

With Nigeria's over 60 years of University education, research works today, especially by postgraduate students, should rely more on literatures with indigenous authorship. Consultations and citations should, by now, have more of local content than foreign references. Or at least, there should be balance in frequency of both local and foreign citations. The solutions to lopsidedness that may eventually result from this study and how to further indigenize research content and scholarship within Nigeria's academic frontier and by extension, the West-Africa sub region, is what this paper attempts to deal with.

In addition, this study will reveal the true state of Nigeria's tertiary research system. It will reveal whether the country's research frontiers is still under heavy colonial influence or there is a balance in circulation of ideas between local and foreign content which in a way determines standards of academic research knowledge. It will proffer solutions to lopsidedness that may be unhealthy for the nation's research system, which ought to reflect its culture, economy and politics. In fact, the result of this study may provoke some pro-active measures towards encouraging more indigenous publications and documentations for the overall benefit of the nation's academic research culture.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to determine the citation frequency of foreign and indigenous authors by Nigerian postgraduate students. Reasons for trends that may emerge and possible solutions were also unveiled using these research questions.

1. What is the frequency rate in citation and references of indigenous and foreign authors in postgraduate research theses?
2. If focal authors are not receiving adequate citations and referencing, what is responsible for the trend and what solution(s) can be proffered?

Theoretical Framework

One major challenge of life is the existence of conflict between manandhisneighour. This conflict cuts across cultural, economic, religious and racial boundaries. This, therefore, provides the guiding theoretical framework for this study which falls within the ambit of critical and cultural theory of the general social theory of the press.

According to McQuail (2005:115). "A socially based critical concern with the rise of mass culture goes back at least to the mid nineteenth century, and in the mid twentieth century as expressed in the works of Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall." These belong to a school of thought that says contradictions, tension and conflict are inevitable aspects of the social order and can never be eliminated (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008). How such contradictions, tensions and conflicts are studied becomes the interest of the critical cultural theorists.

According to Baran and Davis, as cited by Folarin (2005:31) "Critical Theories are primarily concerned with conflicts of interests in the society and the ways communication tends to perpetuate domination of one group over another." This explains the conflict of dominance in the citation of indigenous and foreign authors in postgraduate theses which this study tries to look

into. The outcome of this study will reveal ways through which foreign and indigenous citations interact and provide an explanation for the existence of conflicts of dominance in knowledge and research which also is responsible for conflicts arising from political and economic dominance of few nations over others. This also accounts for knowledge-driven differences in development across the globe.

Research Methodology

To answer the research questions, 200 copies of Masters (M.A/M.Sc) and Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) theses/projects were purposively selected from 12departments that cut across four faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria using the non-probability sampling of availability and convenience. These research theses were content analyzed to determine the frequency of citations and referencing with regard to indigenous and foreign authors. The choice to make the study cut across four different faculties - Social Sciences, Arts, Education and Sciences is to ensure that the topic under investigation is tested across disciplines as there may be emerging difference in data from discipline to discipline which is very important for the general appraisal of this study. Theses selected for analysis are those submitted in various departments within the last 10 years-2001 and 2011.

The choice of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria is hinged on the fact that it is one of the universities specifically mandated by the National Universities Commission (NUC) to place more preference on production of Masters and Doctoral students in Nigeria. The cosmopolitan nature of ABU, Zaria coupled with reasons of accessibility and cost effectiveness also accounts for its choice for this study. It is hoped that samples drawn from ABU, Zaria, as described above, would be a fair representative of postgraduate research works in similar institutions across the country. This hope lies in the assertion of Wimmer and Dominick (2006:9) that *"proponents of using available samples claim that if a phenomenon, characteristics and trail does exist, then it should exist in any sample."*

Data Presentation and Findings

Tables 1 to 3 below are data generated from the content analysis. In presenting these data, the identified references were also categorized into three different types -Journal, Book and Internet sources.

Table 1: Total foreign and indigenous references across discipline

Faculties	**No. of These**	**Journal Reference**	**Book Reference**	**internet Source;**	**Total Ref. From Faculties**
Social Sciences	50	440	360	115	915
Arts	50	470	485	145	1,100
Education	50	335	400	125	860
Basic Sciences	50	215	242	118	575
Total from Sources	**200**	**1,460**	**1,487**	**503**	**3,450**

Table 2: Total Indigenous References across Discipline

Faculties	No. of Theses	Journal References	Book References	Internet Sources	Total Ref. from Faculties
Social Sciences	50	211	127	25	368
Arts	50	238	198	59	495
Education	50	140	170	46	356
Basic Sciences	50	109	91	35	230
Total from Sources	**200**	**698**	**586**	**165**	**1,449(42%)**

Table 3: Total Foreign References across discipline

Faculties	No. of Theses	Journal References	Book References	Internet Sources	Total Ref. from Faculties
Social Sciences	50	229	233	90	368
Arts	50	232	287	86	495
Education	50	195	230	79	356
Basic Sciences	50	106	151	83	230
Total from Sources	**200**	**762**	**901**	**340**	**2001 (58%)**

To answer research question 2, interviews were conducted with 3 lecturers each from the selected faculties. The selection of the lecturers is also based on availability and convenience mode of non-probability sampling. These lecturers are those directly involved in supervision/assessment of Masters/Postgraduate Diploma theses in and outside the university as internal or external examiners.

Tables 1 to 3 as presented above give a conclusion that foreign references are more than the indigenous ones in the 200 graduate theses from which data were collected. In percentage, foreign references accounts for 58% (2,001 units) of the total 3,450 references identified in the 200 graduate theses sampled while indigenous authors account for 42% (1,449units). This is a direct answer to Research Question one of this study which says, "What is the frequency rate in citation and references of indigenous and foreign authors in postgraduate research theses?" From the presented data, there is a somelopsidedness of 554 (16%) in favour of foreign authors in postgraduate thesis sampled. This result, in the opinion of the researcher, is unfavourable for Nigeria's indigenous research system which ought to be the central actor in the drive towards national development.

The above result holds therefore, that Nigeria's research frontier is still dominated by foreign influence which tends to answer questions on why the nation's economy is still very much foreign and import dependent. This assertion borrows an inference from Ramphele (2004:31) which says, *"the university is at the heart of innovation and its effectiveness as an actor in*

development depends on the ability to adapt to the rapidly changing global knowledge society." If therefore universities are at the heart of innovation, and according to Evenson (2004:152) *"knowledge is produced in the universities and other research institutions, knowledge is also mastered in universities, and other higher education programs..., knowledge is converted to technology by act of invention, invention are "reduced to practice " by innovative activities",* then Nigerian universities in general must be positioned adequately to play their role as drivers of development. This is achievable when there is commensurate mixture of foreign and indigenous research knowledge aimed at securing a better future for the nation.

One striking reason for the lopsidedness as can be seen from Tables 2 and 3 above, came from references and citations in book and internet sources. While foreign references from book source stands at 901 (Approximately 45% of total foreign references), the indigenous references from book sources stand at only 586 (Approximately 40.5% of total indigenous references). This shows a difference of 315 units of references when compared with the total units of foreign references. Also, references from internet sources contributed a considerable margin of 338 units of foreign references as against 165 indigenous ones. This accounts for 173 units of the total differential margin. The book and internet sources put together account for a differential margin of 488 units (Approximately 88.5% of the total differential margin of 552 units of references). Attempt to find out why book and internet sources accounts for the above approximated 88.5% of the total differential margin would lead us to answering Research Question two of this study which is: "If local authors are not receiving adequate citations and referencing, what is responsible for the trend and what solution can be proffered?"

To answer this research question, out of the 12 lecturers interviewed, 10 opined that the lopsidedness, with specific reference to differences arising from book sources is due to the promotional policy that places more value on journal publications against books in all disciplines. 2 lecturers out of the 12 interviewed respondents say graduate student are not painstaking enough to explore local content in their literature reviews hence they resort to citation of foreign authors at the expense of their local counterparts.

All the 12 interviewed respondents allude to the fact that the internet is under utilized by Nigerian authors in the aspect of making their publications either in book or journal forms available on the internet for students to have access to.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From this study on "Frequency of Citation of Foreign and Indigenous Authors in Postgraduate Theses: Implications in Academic Research for National Development," the following conclusions emerge:

Foreign references out-number its local counterparts with 16% of the total references in postgraduate theses used to investigate the phenomenon. While foreign authors account for 58%, the indigenous authors accounts for 42% of the total references. This, in the opinion of the researcher does not fulfill adequate expectations from over 60 years of university education in Nigeria. It shows a foreign-dominated knowledge and research system as in the case of the nation's economy.

The value chain of a typical university lecturer in Nigeria has been predominantly tied to workplace upgrade instead of, in addition, ensuring good quality and quantity of intellectual deposit in book form which should be an indigenous reservoir of knowledge from which up-and-

coming researchers can draw inspiration for ground breaking innovations for national development.
The great opportunities for research and brain circulation offered by globalization through the internet are not being adequately harnessed by Nigeria's university research frontier, This accounts for the scant availability of journal articles and books authored by Nigerian academics on the internet.

From the above conclusion, the following recommendations suffice:

1. Centres for documentation of publications by Nigerian authors, either in book or journal forms, should be established on the campuses of universities across the country. Such documentations should be uploaded on the internet so that researchers can have access to them either for free or for affordable costs.
2. There is an urgent need to remove the bias against book publication for purposes of promotion or upgrade of Nigerian lecturers. To ensure that individually authored books are of high academic standard and quality, such books meant for upgrade purposes should, as a matter of compulsion, be submitted to a committee of peer-reviewers who will assess them for quality and relevance before being used commensurately with journal publications for upgrade and promotion. By so doing, lecturers would be motivated to put their indigenous intellectual deposits in book form for the indigenous researchers to use for the problem-solving need of the local people.

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