

# ANALYSIS OF JOURNAL CITATIONS IN THESIS/DISSERTATIONS OF POST GRADUATES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, NIGERIA AND THEIR AVAILABILITY IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY: A RE-VISITATION

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## ABSTRACT

A citation analysis of theses/dissertations from Department of Political Science, University of Calabar, Calabar – Nigeria from 2006 – 2010 was undertaken to determine the most cited journals by graduate students and their availability in the University library. There were 343 journal citations and a cumulative citation frequency of 602. A list of 22 journals cited five times and over was drawn. Out of this 9 (40.9%) journal titles are held by the university library. From the list 5 most cited journals were drawn as the core journals to serve the graduate students research needs. The university library has three (60%) out of these five, which are fairly current but with irregular subscription. Electronic (internet) citations has increased from one in the previous study to 104 presently. Library administrators will value the findings of this study as they are relevant for collection development decision making.

**KEY WORDS:** Citation Analysis, Journals Collection Development, Political Science, Postgraduate Students, University Library.

## INTRODUCTION

The library and information science profession services are changing in line with changes going on in the information and communication industry. In earlier times in the profession, the emphasis was placed more on size of the holdings. Then, the larger the collection, the better. At that time libraries were rated more highly based on the number or size of the collection rather than satisfactory services rendered. Nowadays, emphasis has shifted from the 'book' to the 'patron' (library user), that is satisfying the needs of the users. That is why this study is based on actual needs of the library users. In order words, the study is aimed at

finding out what actually the users use and also to make recommendations on collection development based on actual needs of the library users, thereby maximize the use of scarce and inadequate library budgets.

Journals are indispensable in higher education especially postgraduate studies where indepth researches are a prerequisite. As important as journals are, their building and development pose peculiar problems which are familiar to the professionals. Again, there is stiff competition in the information and communication industry. Libraries should therefore strive not to be left behind in the struggle to attract and retain users. This requires the application of marketing strategies just like

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the profit making organizations. There is need to make the library user 'the king' like business organizations do their customers. This is ensured by providing what the users actually want instead of what the library thinks they need.

This study is a re-visitation of an earlier work (Okwueze, 2009) which drew five core journal titles for the Department of Political Science, University of Calabar based on postgraduate students' journal citations in their theses/dissertations from 2000 – 2002. It also revealed non-current journal collection and only one electronic (internet) citation. This present study from 2006 – 2010 is intended to reveal if there are changes or not in both citation patterns and the library services especially journal collection development.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following are the objectives of this study

1. To use citation analysis to determine whether the university library is meeting the needs of the postgraduate students of the department of political science, university of Calabar.
2. To prepare a ranked list of journals based on frequency of use by postgraduate students of the department.
3. To ascertain the availability of cited journal titles in the university library.
4. To determine core journals in the discipline based on postgraduate students' theses/dissertation citations.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study was undertaken in order to analyze the journal citations in theses/dissertations of postgraduates of the Department of Political Science, University of Calabar and their availability in the University Library. The major role of the library is the provision of information resources in different formats to enhance the teaching/learning and research goals of the University. This work is relevant to the library administrators because as a service organization, the library needs to assess its usefulness to the university community. The findings have revealed the library's strengths and weakness and it is hoped that these finding would aid them in taking result

oriented collection development decisions. The study also revealed the low level of postgraduates' literature search skills and it is also hoped that the lecturers would henceforth advise the students appropriately.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study is a survey research. The theses/dissertations from the Department of Political Science, University of Calabar, accepted by the graduate school were examined. The study spanned from 2006 – 2010 and is a re-examination of an earlier work done from 2000 – 2002 in the same department. This study was limited to the theses/dissertations of the Department of Political Science found in the Graduate School (library). This is because the graduate school is the official recipient of all theses and dissertations in the university. A total of 31 theses/dissertations were found (13 were Ph.Ds while 18 were masters). All were used for this study. The analysis was based on citation per work, that is, the number of times a journals title was cited in a thesis/dissertation. The factors analyzed are: Journal titles cited, frequency of citation, ranked order of citation, their availability and coverage in the University of Library. For all theses/dissertations, a list of journal titles cited were made and their frequencies recorded. Entries for each journal citation were recorded in a card. At the end of the exercise, the cards from all the theses/dissertations were arranged in one alphabetical sequence from which an alphabetical list of journal titles cited were made and their frequencies of citation noted. Titles cited less than five times were cut off. The titles cited five times and above were then checked against the library journal holdings using the kardex for their availability in the library and coverage of the available journal titles.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The major function of an academic library is to support the parent body in realizing its objective of promoting learning/teaching and research. Journals are indispensable in any meaningful research endeavour. According to Cutis (2005) journals are essential for research but their increasing costs demand that libraries study their quality, usefulness and suitability to a particular group of users. It is for this reason that citation analyses are sometimes undertaken.

Citation analysis according to Chikate and Pafil (2005) is a way of understanding users information needs. Cutis, again explains that studying references cited by a faculty's publications and or students' theses/dissertations shows the type of sources most commonly used and valued locally in their discipline. Lockett (1989) states that citation analysis measures how often items are cited in references, bibliographies or indexing tools and compares their frequencies of occurrence to the collection holdings. The main aim of this kind of study is to use the finding to develop a core list of journals that should be added to the collection. It is also used as a self-assessment tool of the library's effectiveness. As such, La Bonte (2005) maintains that it is a practical tool to evaluate how a library is meeting the needs of local users. Therefore libraries should be able to supply most of the needs of the users with a small number of journals as stipulated by Bradford's Law of scattering. This law stated that about a third of the articles on a

subject are published in the journals devoted to the subject, a further third appear in a larger number of journals devoted to related subjects, and the remaining third in an ever larger number journals in which such articles would not normally be expected to be published. A Few journal titles carry many articles on a subject more than or equal to the number of other titles in the same field. These few journal titles with high frequencies are often regarded as core journals in the field.

One important factor to be considered in collection development is the interdisciplinary nature of some fields/researches like in political science, economics, public administration, etc. The study of Hurd (1992) found that articles published by chemistry department, 49% of the citations were not from the field of chemistry. The implication of this revelation is that collection development managers should be able to undertake a study that would reveal the exact needs of the library users so they can be served satisfactorily.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1:** Frequency Distribution of Journals Cited in Postgraduate Theses/dissertations in the Department of Political Science, University of Calabar, from 2006 – 2010.

Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Number of Titles
1	231	231
2	351	60
3	414	21
4	450	9
5	490	8
6	514	4
7	542	4
8	550	1
9	577	3
10	577	0
11	577	0
12	589	1
13	602	1
		343

**Table 2:** Frequency Distribution Table of Electronic (Internet) Sources Cited in Postgraduate Theses/dissertations of Department of Political Science, University of Calabar from 2006 - 2010.

S/N	Degree	Frequency
1.	Ph.D	57
2.	Masters	47
		104

Table 1 arranged in ascending order of frequencies revealed that a total of 343 journal titles were cited by the graduate students. Meanwhile a total of 602 citation frequencies of the journal titles were made. Still from table 1, it is also noted that most of the journal titles (231) were cited only once while only one journal title was cited 13 times and another one 12 times. This agrees with Bradford law of scattering which states that there is a limited number of very prolific core journals in a subject field and leaving this core journals, a researcher has to search an increasing number of journals to find the same

number of articles. In other words, as the frequency of citation on a particular subject increased, the number of journals publishing articles on the subject decreased tremendously.

Surprisingly, there is a great rise in electronic (internet) citations from only one (1) in the previous study to one hundred and four (104) in this study (see table 2). This figure is broken down into 57 Ph.D and 47 M.Sc works. This is encouraging and might have been the result of the university's efforts in given both students and staff basic training in computer appreciation through the NUC/AFRIHUB project.

**Table 3: Ranked** Order of Journal Titles Cited Five or More Times in Postgraduate Theses/dissertations of the Department of Political Science, University of Calabar from 2006 – 2010.

S/N	Title	Frequency	Rank order
1.	University of Calabar Institute of Public Policy and Administration Seminar Series	13	1
2.	Calabar Journal of Politics and Administration	12	2
3.	Journal of Conflict Resolution	9	3
4.	Quarterly Journal of Administration	9	3
5.	American Economic Review	9	3
6.	World Development	8	4
7.	Public Administration Review	7	5
8.	Eco-maritime Digest	7	5
9.	International Affairs	7	5
10.	African Asso. Of Pol. Sc. (AAPS) occasional papers	7	5
11.	Journal of Modern African Studies	6	6
12.	Journal of Social Science	6	6
13.	World Politics	6	6
14.	Nigerian Journal of Econ. & Social Studies	6	6
15.	African Agenda	5	7
16.	African Journal of Recovery	5	7
17.	Council for the Dev. of Soc. Research in Africa Bulletin	5	7
18.	African Development	5	7
19.	Key statistics indicator series	5	7
20.	The Economic Journal	5	7
21.	Personnel Journal	5	7
22.	Foreign Affairs	5	7

From Table 3, a total of 22 out of 343 journal titles were cited 5 times and over. The journal title having the highest citation is University of Calabar Institute of Public Policy and Administration Seminar Series. This is a product of the Department of Political Science and its sister Institute of Public Policy and Administration (IPPA). The second highest cited journal is also from University of Calabar. This shows that the students depended more on what was available within the department. They should have widened their search to the University Library and

used the internet more than they did. The table also depicts the interdisciplinary nature of the programmes which cut across economics, administration political science, etc. The library houses a National University Commission (NUC) wireless internet facility which gives free services to the university community. Moreover, there are some electronic databases available in the university library like EBSCO Host, Nigeria virtual library, Teal and many CD-ROMs on various subjects, all there for the student and staff to exploit.

**Table 4:** Journal Titles Cited Five Times and Over And Their Availability and Coverage in the University Library from 2006 – 2010.

S/N	Title	Availability status	Coverage
1.	University of Calabar Institute of Public Policy and Administration Seminar Series	No	-
2.	Calabar Journal of Politics and Administration	Yes	2003-2008
3.	Journal of Conflict Resolution	No	-
4.	Quarterly Journal of Administration	Yes	1999-2004
5.	American Economic Review	Yes	1982, 1991
6.	World Development	No	-
7.	Public Administration Review	No	-
8.	Eco-maritime Digest	No	-
9.	International Affairs	No	-
10.	African Asso. Of Pol. Sc. (AAPS) occasional papers	Yes	1997-2001
11.	Journal of Modern African Studies	No	-
12.	Journal of Social Science	No	-
13.	World Politics	Yes	1974-1996
14.	Nigerian Journal of Econ. & Social Studies	No	-
15.	African Agenda	Yes	2002-2008
16.	African Journal of Recovery	Yes	1999-2005
17.	Council for the Development of Soc. Research in Africa Bulletin	No	-
18.	African Development	Yes	1997-2008
19.	Key statistics indicator series	No	-
20.	The Economic Journal	Yes	1975-1993
21.	Personnel Administration	No	-
22.	Foreign Affairs	No	-

From Table 4, out of the 22 journal titles cited 5 times and above, nine (9) titles are owned by the University library but most of them are not current and some have irregular subscription. This is 40.9% holding which is low. At a time of inadequate budget, it would be unreasonable and unrealistic to recommend the 22 journals for one department. Again, the data could not yield itself to a true zipf's graph that would have enabled the arithmetic determination of the core journals from the citation analysis. For these reasons, it is objective to take the first five most cited as the core journals for this study. Out of these five journals, three (60%) are owned by the university library and are fairly current issues but with irregular subscription. It is believed that these journals in combination with the internet services and databases, the department would be able to undertake and accomplish good research works with much ease.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Information and Communication Technologies revolution has affected every sphere of life. It is no more new often heard or read about industrialized countries and mere theory in the developing world. Even in Nigeria, there are notable changes in the way organizations are run and services rendered, all because of the new technologies and opportunities they offer. As a result, the information industry is engrossed in stiff competition and the library profession cannot afford to allow itself be skimmed out of the industry. Therefore, it behoves the profession to protect itself and permeate the industry by making itself relevant in the new dispensation. It is necessary that it catches, maintains and retains its users for long. This is only possible if it begins a conscious effort of satisfying users'

needs by providing what the readers want rather than what they think the users would want.

For more satisfactory service delivery, the following are recommended:

1. There is the need to maximize the use of the inadequate library budgets. This could be achieved by employing purposeful journal collection development using citation analysis to determine what patrons want and will use, thereby yielding better service which also leads to satisfactory services and patron loyalty.
2. Academic libraries should endeavour to digitize their collections and services. This will pave way for quicker and more exhaustive search of the collection and improve service delivery.
3. University administrations should imbibe the new ICT culture and establish as a matter of urgency, internet facilities in their institutions. They should key into the new government programme of Public Private Partnership for this purpose.
4. Through the course of this study, it was noted that there were no current political science theses/dissertation in the university library. The university management should make it mandatory that their graduate schools should send one copy each of all accepted theses/dissertations to the university library for better dissemination and use.
5. It is also recommended that faculties/departments should establish resource rooms where among other things projects, theses and dissertations originating from the faculties/departments would be housed and made accessible to users. This move will create multiple access points for meeting staff and students' information needs.
6. It has been revealed that many including postgraduate students lack information literacy skills. Therefore a course on information literacy skills is advised for first year students in all levels of admission.

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