

## Analysis of final year DVM research projects submitted to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, UDUS (1994-2004)

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### Abstract

This study analyzed the intellectual output of the undergraduate final year students' research projects submitted to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, from 1994 to 2004. The findings of the study show that a total of 194 research projects were produced within the period under study. The highest number of research projects 25 (12.89%) were produced in 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 academic sessions. The most researched area was Veterinary Parasitology 44 (22.7%), while the highest researched Animal species was poultry 29 (22.7%). Furthermore, Sokoto was the most concentrated geographical area of study 80 (80%). It is recommended that heavily concentrated areas as identified in this study be de-emphasized while future researches should be on the less researched areas.

*Key words:* Research, Bibliography, Bibliometrics

### Introduction

This study is primarily on the intellectual output of the students of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. It is aimed at studying the subject distribution as well as the type of animal species researched on by the final year students of the faculty from 1994 to 2004. However, the year 1994/1995 was excluded because of the non-availability of research projects in the library. The essence of this study is to guide prospective final year students and researchers in the choice of research topics as this will help in saving their time. It will also help students and their lecturers in eliminating duplication of research efforts as well as identifying the need to explore virgin areas in their researches.

Previous studies on undergraduate research projects appeared to be rather scanty. The reason being that such research projects are unpublished sources of information and are only available in the institutions where they were submitted for degree awards. Furthermore, many writers do not attach much value to such sources of information and provide preliminary studies that could help improve resources development and by extension national development.

Afolabi (1999) analyzed the intellectual influence of postgraduate dissertations in library and information science of selected universities in Nigeria from 1972-1992. His findings revealed that university of Ibadan produced the highest dissertations (79.3%), followed by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, with (17.39%). University of Ibadan also had the highest number of Masters' dissertations (73.49%) and Doctoral theses (81.2%). Momoh (1996) studied the final year undergraduate library science projects of the university of Maiduguri from 1981-1999. The findings of his study showed that 1986 recorded the highest number of projects submitted to the department of library science. Furthermore, library history was the most researched subject area with (30.2%) while the type of library studied most was the academic library with (42.7%).

Similarly, Obajemu (2004) undertook a study of the intellectual output of students' projects submitted to the department of physiotherapy, College of Medicine, University of Lagos from 1980 to 2000. The findings of the study show that a total of 302 projects were produced within the period of study. Of these figures, one hundred and sixteen different subjects were identified out of which Hemiplegia ranked the highest with 25 (21.5%) followed by Osteoarthritis with 17

(14.6%), Cerebrovascular disorder 14 (12.1%), Low back pain 14 (12.1%) and Fractures 12 (10.35%). The least disorder was tetanus with 10 (8.6%).

Obokoh (1985) examined the characteristics of bibliographic citations in first degree research projects on education submitted to the faculty of Education, university of Port-Harcourt between 1981 and 1983. Part of his findings was that majority of the students rarely used scholarly Journals but showed preference for monographs because they are of the view that books are more appropriate and easier to consult than journals.

Omekwu (1998) in his study examined the author and journal citation pattern of an agricultural communication at the department of Agricultural Extension Services, University of Ibadan. The bibliographic references of 37 theses were studied. The result showed a very significant difference in the citation of Nigerian and non-Nigerian authors. Non-Nigerian authors were cited more than Nigerian authors. Similar studies were conducted by the same author on Postgraduate dissertations and Undergraduate projects of the same department in 2002. Obajemu (1999) also examined the productivity of articles on various diseases as published in four selected newspapers between January and June, 1996. He revealed that within the period of study, a total of 220 articles were published and the most productive in terms of subject distribution was meningitis which recorded 50 (22.72%) articles.

The literature reviewed above showed the various patterns of bibliographic studies carried out by professional librarians aimed at highlighting the importance of unpublished documents in the various libraries in Nigeria.

#### *Brief History of the Faculty*

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, took off in the 1984/85 academic session as a fifth Veterinary Faculty in Nigeria to cater for the training of Veterinarians that will provide veterinary manpower for the Livestock-endowed states in the then North-western part of Nigeria i.e. Sokoto, Kwara and other environs (Garba and Daneji, 2000) The Faculty was accorded full accreditation by the Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN) in 1994 for the training of Veterinary Doctors. Since then, the Faculty has trained over 300 Veterinary Doctors (DVM) and presently, it has well over three hundred and sixty (360) students (UDUS, 2005).

One of the compulsory courses for all final year undergraduate students in the faculty is Research Methods (VSC 6211). It carries 4 credit units taken during the 2nd semester of the final year. It is normally based on a topic allocated to the student on any aspect of veterinary medicine and approved by the supervisor in the respective department.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is to, among other things; analyze the final year undergraduate student's research project of the faculty in order to identify the following: 1) the total number of research projects per year/session, 2) the subjects covered by the research, 3) the subject(s) not adequately covered, 4) the Animal species most researched on, 5) the geographical area most concentrated upon, i.e. study area.

The extent of coverage of each of these areas is to be determined numerically and interpreted in percentages. The findings of the study will possibly identify the gaps in terms of subject, animal specie and geographical area by previous studies. This will assist potential final year students of the faculty to identify topics within such areas. It will also assist the faculty staff in de-emphasizing areas already researched upon. Furthermore, this study will be of interest and of tremendous benefit to librarians, practitioners and educationist in the various institutions of learning in Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

The data for this study was sourced from the list of approved final year undergraduate (DVM) research projects complied each academic year by the faculty and the copies of project deposited at the Medical/Veterinary library at the City Campus of the University.

The projects were physically examined and the bibliographic details such as the author, title and the year submitted were carefully transcribed on preliminary cataloguing slips. Sear's list of subject Headings (12th ed.) and the library of Congress Classification Scheme were used to determine the subjects of the research projects. Professionals in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine were consulted in identifying the animal species. A current map of the thirty-six states of Nigeria was also used to determine the geographical areas covered by some studies.

### **Analysis of Data**

The data derived from the examination of the research projects were quantified, processed and presented in figures and percentages. The results were presented in tables 1-4 below:

The distribution of projects by academic sessions is shown in Table 1 above, a total of 194 final year research projects were produced during the ten year period covered by the study. 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 academic sessions recorded the highest number of projects produced with 25 (12.89%) each.

Table 2 presents the subject distribution of the student's research projects produced in the Faculty and are ranked in order of decreasing productivity to a minimum of 5 frequencies. The study revealed that 11 subjects were identified. The most productive was Veterinary Parasitology with 44 (22.7%) followed by Veterinary Public Health with 31 (16.0%). Veterinary pharmacology had 23 (11.86%), Animal production and Veterinary Medicine had 20 (10.30%) each. Veterinary Microbiology and Theriogenology had 13 (6.70%) respectively. The least subject area was Veterinary Pathology with 5 (2.5%).

Table 3 shows the distribution of the projects according to the species of the animal researched upon. Out of the one hundred and ninety four (194) research projects submitted within the period of study, only one hundred and twenty eight (128) were on animals. The balances of sixty six (66) were on other aspects of Veterinary Medicine. The arrangement was ranked by decreasing order of productivity to a minimum of 3 frequencies. The animal species studied most was Poultry with 29 (22.7%) followed by Camel 21 (16.45), Sheep 17 (13%), Goat 16 (12.5%) and Cattle 14 (10.95%). The least were Swine and Equine with 3 (2.3%) each.

Table 4 depicts the distribution of the students research projects based on geographical areas of study. Of the One hundred and ninety four (194) research projects submitted, only One hundred (100) had geographical area linkages. The remaining ninety four (94) had no such relationship. The results in table 4 shows that Sokoto, was the most dominant with 80% followed by Zaria, 10% and Kano, 40%. The remaining areas such as Kaduna, Zuru, Minna, Owerri, Mafara and Chad Basin had 1% each.

Table 1  
Distribution of Projects by Year/Session

Session	Frequency	Percentage
1993/1994	21	10.82%
1994/1995	---	0%
1995/1996	19	9.79%
1996/1997	21	10.82%
1997/1998	20	10.3%
1998/1999	13	6.7%
1999/2000	15	7.73%
2000/2001	17	8.76%
2001/2002	25	12.89%
2002/2003	25	12.89%
2003/2004	18	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>

n = 194

Table 2  
Distribution of Projects by Subject

Subject	Frequency	Percentage
Veterinary Parasitology	44	22.7%
Veterinary Public Health	31	16.0%
Veterinary Pharmacology	23	11.86%
Animal Production	20	10.30%
Veterinary Medicine	20	10.30%
Veterinary Microbiology	13	6.70%
Theriogenology	13	6.70%
Veterinary Physiology	10	5.15%
Veterinary Surgery	6	3.09%
Veterinary Pathology	5	2.57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>

n = 194

Table 3  
Distribution of Animal Species

Animal species	Frequency	Percentage
Poultry	29	22.7%
Camel	21	16.4%
Sheep	17	13%
Goat	16	12.5%
Cattle	14	10.9%
Rabbit	12	9.4%
Rat	8	6.3%
Dog	5	4%
Swine	3	2.3%
Equine	3	2.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>

n = 194

Table 4  
Distribution by Geographical (Study) Area

Geographical area	Frequency	Percentage
Sokoto	80	80%
Zaria	10	10%
Kano	4	4%
Kaduna	1	1%
Zuru	1	1%
Minna	1	1%
Owerri	1	1%
Mafara	1	1%
Chad basin	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

n = 194

## Discussion

This study analyzed the intellectual contributions of the students of the faculty of veterinary medicine, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. The result of the study showed that a total of 194 final year research projects were produced from 1994 to 2004. Eleven subject areas were identified to have been worked on within the period under study.

Furthermore, nine different species of animals were found to have been covered by the various student researchers, while nine geographical areas were covered by some of the studies.

Table 1 reveals that 194 research projects were produced during the ten periods by this study. The fluctuation in the number of projects submitted from year, as evident from the table may be attributed to fluctuations in students-intake into the programme or due to the inability of some of the weak students to scale through the rigorous training of the faculty to its logical conclusion.

Table 2 shows that veterinary parasitology was the most researched area. This further confirms the findings of (Mabera, 2003) in his evaluation of veterinary collection in Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto Medical Library where he reported that of the 22 theses and dissertations in the library, veterinary parasitology had the highest number of theses with seven titles. This implies that majority of students are more interested in this aspect of veterinary medicine. This could be attributed to the simple fact that studies on this aspect of veterinary medicine is one of the simplest particularly in terms of data collection (specimens) and time of completion when compared to areas like Surgery, Physiology, Anatomy and Pathology. Also, in Africa, parasitic diseases are very important to be researched on in view of the poor personal and environmental hygiene levels of majority of the rural people.

The distribution by animal species (Table 3) revealed that students showed more interest in poultry. This situation is not surprising considering the fact that poultry production in this part of the country has not been fully developed and there seems to be less studies in this area hence, the rush by students to explore it. Another possible reason for this rush may be linked to the fact that there are more staff and specialists on poultry on ground in the faculty than in other areas like Camel, Rabbit, and Dog and swine species.

Table 4 represents the distribution of the geographical area covered by the projects. The table revealed that Sokoto had the highest score, probably because majority of the students tend to conduct their researches within the geographical location of their institutions for convenience and economic reasons, hence the high concentration on Sokoto. Secondly, students from other parts of the

country who might wish to conduct their researches in their states of origin are often deterred by accommodation and transportation problems, thus, they fall back on the local area. Only a few from long distances such as Imo, Niger, Borno and Kano (as shown in the table) chose topics relating to their geographical area.

## Conclusion

This study revealed that 194 final year undergraduate DVM research projects were submitted to the faculty of veterinary medicine, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto 1994-2004.

The analysis was by academic year, subjects, animal species and geographical area. It has been found that the highest of projects were submitted in 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 academic sessions and the most researched subject area was Veterinary Parasitology. Poultry was the most studied animal species while the most concentrated geographical area of study was Sokoto.

Therefore, a study of this kind should not be ignored. It should be taken seriously in an academic setting so as to assist students in the choice of research topics. It saves their precious time and perhaps eliminates or reduces the tendency of duplication of research efforts by students.

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