A COMPARISON OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION PATTERNS AND OUTPUT AMONG ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA BETWEEN 1990 TO 2006

BY

Grace C. Sitienei

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Grace C. Sitienei
Grace C. Sitienei

DECLARATION

I wish to declare that this thesis, “A Comparison of Research and Publication Patterns and Output among Academic Librarians in Eastern and Southern Africa between 1990 to 2006”, is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources used in this work have been acknowledged by citations.

……………………………………………………….

Grace C. Sitienei

……………………………………………..                           ……………………………

Supervisor                                                                                    Date
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my son Ira Kiprop, my father and mum, George and Elizabeth Sitienei, and my brother Benard Kitur for their support and patience while I was away from them.
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And finally, to my fellow Kenyans at the University of Zululand for their ideas and moral support.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD-ROM</td>
<td>Compact Disc Read Only Memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;RL</td>
<td>College &amp; Research Librarianship</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSIR</td>
<td>Council for Scientific and Industrial Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRSC</td>
<td>Human Science Research Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAL</td>
<td>Journal of Academic Librarianship</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIS</td>
<td>Library and Information Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>LISTA</td>
<td>Library and Information Science Technology Abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Medical Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPAC</td>
<td>Online Public Access Catalogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUT</td>
<td>Open University of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Relative performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI</td>
<td>Science Citation Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSCI</td>
<td>Social Sciences Citation Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI</td>
<td>Selective Dissemination of Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SABINET</td>
<td>Southern Africa Bibliographic Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Socialist Soviet Republics</td>
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<tr>
<td>WORLDCAT</td>
<td>World Catalogue Database</td>
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ABSTRACT

Different categories of people who may be scholars, lectures, students, retirees, housewives, politicians, administrators etc. use the library to access the information they require to pass exams, make decisions or read for leisure. Academic libraries are most important to all scholars and students who pass through a university. For these libraries to continue striving and provide effective services, research is required to improve on areas that are not viable to users. The professional academic librarian is mandated to provide guidance on how these services can be improved in order to make the library useful to all. This cannot be possible if the academic librarians only concentrate on shelving, acquisition, classification, cataloguing, charging and discharging and processing of information materials. The role of academic librarians has continued and will continue to change as time goes on. Many academic librarians provide research assistance to their users and other vital services to facilitate the completion of their client’s research. However, it is significant to note that academic librarians must engage in research and publish, in order to improve services and attract more users to the library. Payne and Payne (2004: 9) highlights that there are two main reasons why people carry out research. One among others is because there is an intellectual challenge and the urge to fill a gap in our knowledge, or believe that current accepted theories should be tested. A second reason is that we want to change the world.

Academic librarians need to be provided with incentives such as funding, promotions, and time out in order to entice them to carry out research. This study was carried out with an idea that academic librarians should carry out research and publish, for development and for the improvement of library services. Academic librarians holding a bachelors degree and above, who were working in public universities in Eastern and Southern Africa were targeted for the study. The purpose of this research was to compare the research and publication patterns of academic librarians working in Eastern and Southern Africa from 1990 to 2006. Six objectives were formulated in order to achieve this purpose.
The research was purely carried out online, 866 academic librarians names were retrieved from a total of 47 Public university libraries WebPages, via the universities websites. These names were used as access points to retrieve data from the two online databases (i.e. LISTA and WORLDCAT).

Bibliometrics was used as research method, Microsoft Excel software was also employed for the purpose of data analysis and presentation of the collected data. Findings indicated that Southern Africa was the most prolific region with 194 (74.00%) of the publications emanating from there. South Africa was the most productive country in Southern Africa with 111(42.21%) publications. Tanzania was the most productive country in Eastern Africa with 31 (11.41%). Muswazi and Pienaar were the most prolific academic librarians with 11(3.97%) publications each. Most productive academic library was from Southern Africa, which was Botswana with 31 (11.41%) publications. Majority of the academic librarians from both regions contributed to one publication. The study was concluded with the following observation being made: Overall South Africa emerged the most prolific country in both regions; majority of the countries from both regions were not consistent in their publication production; there was a continuous rises and drops in research publication from 1990 to 2006; and academic librarians preferred publishing articles than any other publications, many academic librarians did not engage in research and academic librarians, from the two regions prefer publishing individually. The study further recommended several studies that needed to be carried out in Africa and other parts of the world in order to fill and clarify gaps that emanated from the study.