Dissertations of African University College of Communications: A Bibliometric Study

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Abstract

This study shows a bibliometric analysis of undergraduate dissertations submitted by students of the School of Communications of the African University College of Communications during the 2011/2012 academic year to the Sam Quaicoe library. A total number of 44 dissertations were submitted during the study period. The analysis cover mainly the areas of research, number of dissertations by course, year-wise distribution of references, bibliographical forms of citations, etc. The result showed 38.6 % of the dissertations cited between 11 and 20 references. Study reveals that most of the studies (40.9%) were conducted in the field of Publicity or Public Relations.

Keywords: Bibliometrics, information source, citation, reference, dissertations.

Introduction

Bibliometrics is the analysis of a set of publications which has the features of bibliographic indicators such as citations, keywords, the author(s) and the place of publication. Pritchard[1] indicates that, bibliometrics is the application of mathematical and statistical methods to books and other media. The study of bibliometrics helps to improve scientific documentations.

Wilson[2] outlines the methods of bibliometrics which are used to investigate an increasing range of topics, including: statistical analysis on the use of words and phrases in text databases as well as the extent to which individuals, research groups or institutions are published or cited in literature.

Early studies of Bibliometrics as indicated by Salton and Bergmark[3] sought to identify the principal subject areas in disciplines. According to Goodrum et al.[4], A number of authors have also analyse specific subject areas as well as computer supported works.

According to the website of AUCC[5], the "African University College of Communications is a private tertiary institution dedicated to the study of Media and Communication as well as Business Administration. The AUCC was established in 2001 by Hon. Kojo Yankah, former editor of Ghana's widest circulation newspaper, the Daily Graphic, nine years director of the Ghana Institute of Journalism, seven years Minister of State, and eight years Member of Parliament of the Republic of Ghana".

The vision of AUCC is "To become Africa's best centre for Journalism, Communication Information Technology and Business, Information Technology and Business Management studies, providing opportunities for advanced learning and professional and practical application for the rapid growth and development of the continent of Africa".

The website further reveals that the "Sam Quaicoe Library, is the main library of the African University College of Communications located on the ground floor of the AUCC campus main building. The library's collections include academic books and journals, CD's, tapes and impressive holdings of rare books, prints and archives. The library also offers access to extensive electronic resources.

The Library is the nerve centre for academic work in the University. All academic related functions such as teaching, research and learning find their support-base in the library where all types of documents including dissertations are organised for easy access to members of the University community.

Literature Review: According to Zhao[6], the study of bibliometrics has been used in a number of research activities that includes Library and Information Science (LIS), Sociology, history of science, business, management and research policy. He further argues that bibliometrics is quite strong in research as seen from bibliometric maps of Information Science literature, but very weak in education as seen from Information Science course offerings.

Bibliometrics as indicated by Hazarika, Goswami, and Das[7] is used to show the pattern of bibliographic information such as publication, authorship citation and coverage of academic literature in terms of geographic, subject, organization and other related parameters.

In relation to its usage, there are several ways that bibliometrics could be employed. Thanuskodi[8] opined that bibliometric

analysis can be used in respect to taken a macro-view of research output. Historically, studies have shown the productivities and research impact of bibliometrics. The research output performance of social scientists on social science subjects analysis by Thanuskodi[9] covered mainly the frequency of articles, its authorship pattern as well as subject wise distribution of articles. The number of references in articles, forms of documents cited and distribution of cited journals by year were also analysed.

Bibliographical details analysis by Jeyshankar, Ramesh Babu and Rajendrea[10] was able to investigate authorship pattern, highly prolific authors and preferred journals by scientists. Zafrunnisha and Reddy[11] were also able to present a study on the citations of PhD theses in psychology, submitted to Sri Venkaeswara University, Tirupati through bibliometrics study. Moreso, Nandi and Bandyopadhyay[12] analysed research productivity in zoology literature pattern and nature of collaboration among the zoology scholars by analyzing 236 theses and 719 thesis articles submitted by the scholars of the zoology department at the University of Burdwan.

In their study of authorship patterns, Perianes-Rodriguez, Omelda-Gomez and Moya-Anegon[13] opined that," Detection and identification of communities with factor analysis is a useful tool for experts in bibliometric and scientometric studies. Likewise the networks obtained are a useful framework for decision making." The result could help in library resource management and planning strategies for documentation service to the user community of that particular literary discipline.

Objectives of the Study: i. To analyse dissertations of AUCC students. ii. To identify departmental distribution and subject coverage of dissertations. iii. To assess the distribution of references in dissertations and average number of references and iv. To find out the ranking and supervision pattern of supervisors.
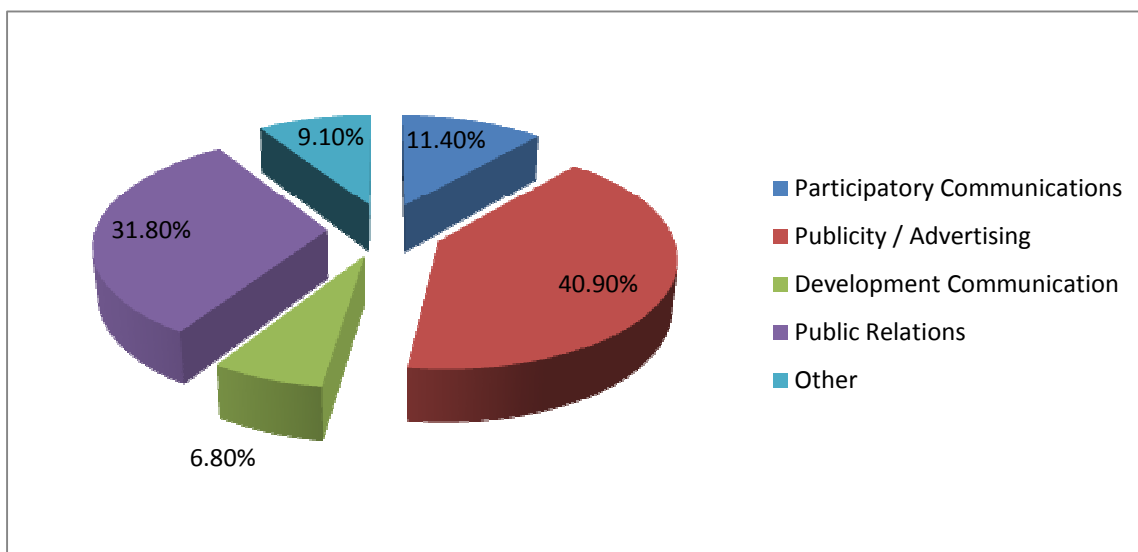
Methodology

Forty-four undergraduate dissertations were submitted by School of Communications' students of the African University College of Communications (AUCC) to the Sam Quaicoe library of during the 2011/2012 academic year. The information and details of the study scholar, guide, publication details, and references were manually collected by physical verification of the dissertations. The collected data were analysed after they have been entered into Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Gender distribution: Table 1 shows the gender distribution of students that submitted dissertations to the Sam Quaicoe library during the 2011/2012 academic year. A total number of 17 (38.6%) males submitted dissertations to the library and 61.4% females did same.

Table-1
Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	38.6
Female	27	61.4
Total	44	100

Areas of Research: Figure 1 attests to the fact that, 40.9% constituting the highest proportion of dissertations were in the subject of Publicity and Advertising, whereas, the least proportion of 6.8% were in the subject of Development Communications.

Figure-1
Subject areas of research

Distribution of dissertations by course offering: Table 2 above shows that 45.5% of the dissertations submitted were from students who studied Strategic Communication. Visual Communication students submitted 3 dissertations to the library.

Table-2
Number of dissertations by Course of Study

Course	Frequency	Percentage
Strategic Communication	20	45.5
Journalism	15	34.1
Development Communication	6	13.6
Visual Communication	3	6.8
Total	44	100

Distribution of references in dissertations: Table 3 has data on the distribution of citations in dissertations. It was found that, seventeen dissertations (38.6%) had 11 to 20 citations. Two dissertations had more than 40 references.

Table-3
Number of citations in dissertations

No. of references	Frequency	Percentage
1-10	11	25
11-20	17	38.6
21-30	11	25
31-40	3	6.8
40+	2	4.6
Total	44	100

AUCC Research Supervisors: Supervisors that guided students' dissertations during the 2011/2012 academic year are indicated in table 4. Mr. Osei Piesie-Anto guided 9(20.5%) dissertations. He is followed by Dr. Andrew Birikorang and Mr. Ato Amoaning Annang who guided 7 dissertations each.

Table-4
Research Supervisors of AUCC

Supervisor	Frequency	Rank	Percentag
Mr. Osei Piesie-Anto	9	1	20.5
Dr. Andrew Birikorang	7	2	15.9
Mr. Ato Amoaning-Anan	7	3	15.9
Prof. Reginald Jackson	6	4	13.5
Nana Esselfi-Conduah	5	5	11.5
Dr. Augustina Amakye	4	6	9.1
Mr. Bernard Otabil	3	7	6.8
Dr. Kabu Okai Davies	2	8	4.5
Mr. Philip Kwaku Kankam	1	9	2.3

Year-wise Distribution of References: Figure 2 shows the year-wise distribution of references in dissertations. Majority of the references (274) were works published before the year 2000. One hundred and forty-nine references cited in the dissertations were works published in the year 2012. Twenty-four works published in the year 2002 were cited in the dissertations.
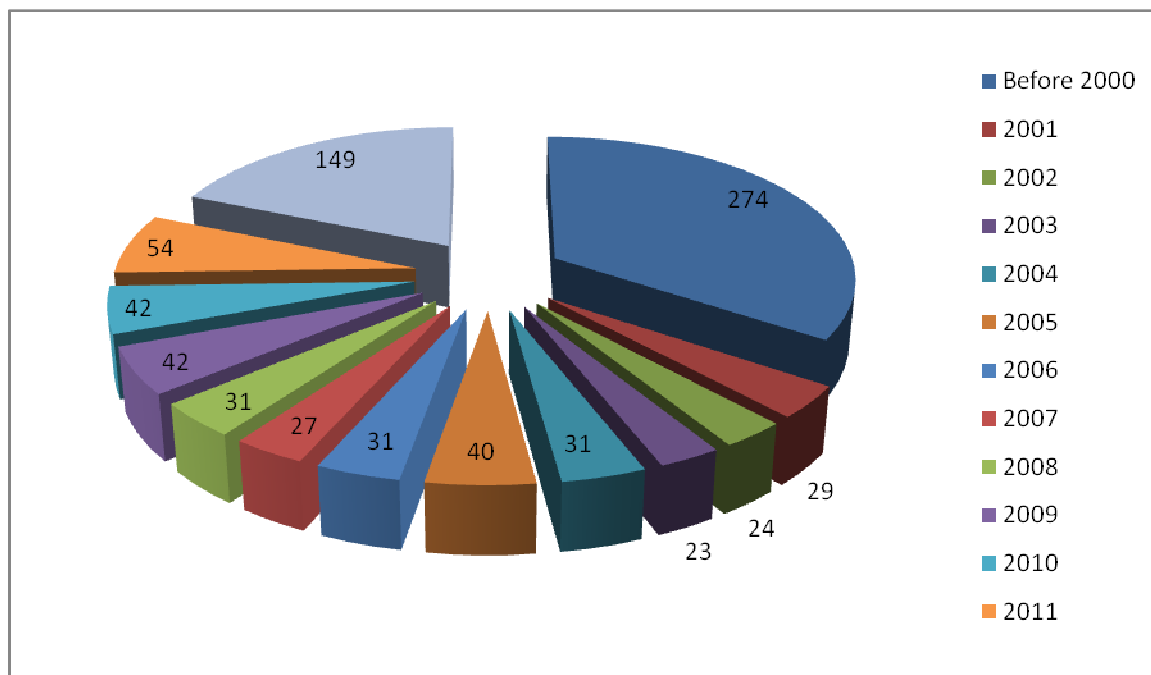

Figure 2
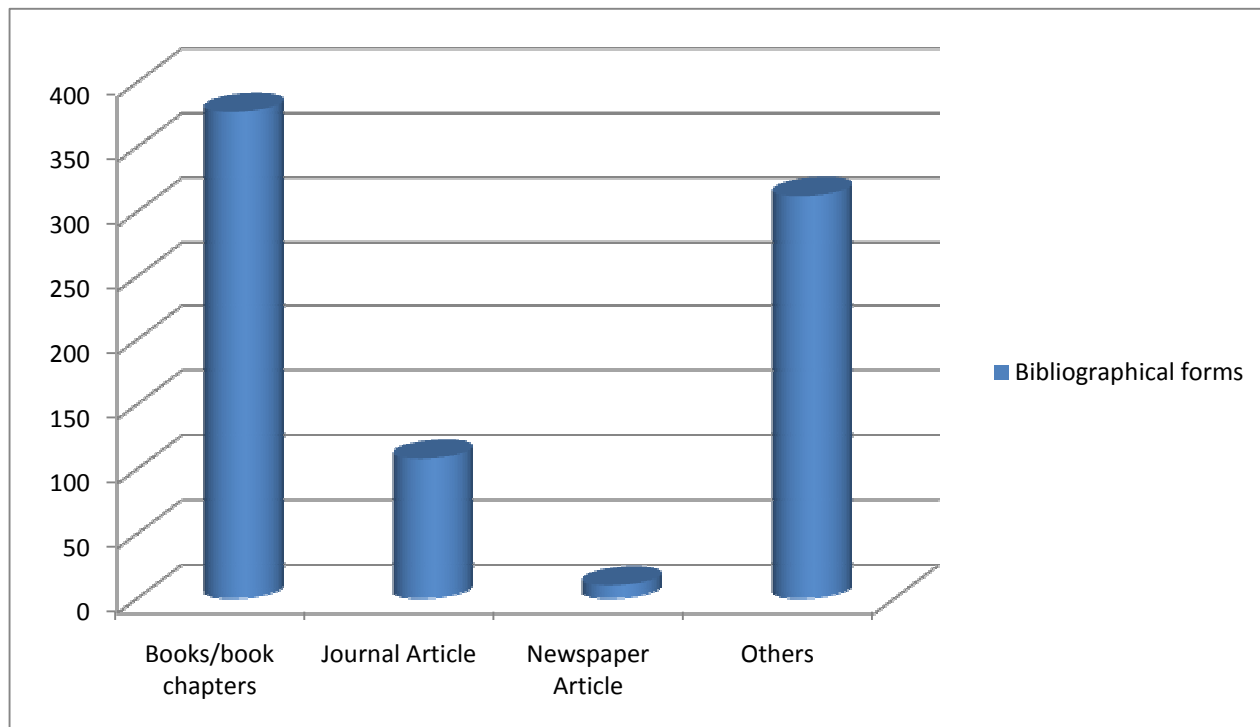**Year-wise Distribution of References**

Figure-3
Bibliographical forms of citations

Bibliographical forms of citations: Figure 3 shows the bibliographic form-wise distribution of research publications students cited in their dissertations. It is evident that students preferred reference source is books/book chapters. A total number of 377 books/book chapters were cited. Ten newspaper articles were also cited.

Conclusion

Sridevi[14] describes bibliometric analysis as a literature that employs "various statistical tools, contributions, citation analysis for journal of research articles". The benefits of bibliometric techniques are many. These techniques are used for a number of purposes such as determination of scientific indicators, selection of journals for libraries and predicting the potential of a particular field. The Sam Quaicoe library had received 44 dissertations during the period of study. The study reveals that the highest numbers of dissertations (45.5%) were submitted by the department of Strategic Communication. Majority of the students preferred books or book chapters as the source of information providing the highest number of citations (377). The study also revealed that majority of the references cited (274) by the students were works published before the year 2000.

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