

Perception of Scholarly Publishing on Professional Development of Lecturers in Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Professional development is a crucial aspect of career growth and advancement for lecturers. It encompasses the continuous acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and competencies. Scholarly publishing plays a crucial role in advancing knowledge, disseminating research findings, and contributing to the academic community. However, despite the integral role of scholarly publishing in academic research and knowledge dissemination, there is a gap in understanding how lecturers perceive its influence on their professional development. It is against this background that this study examined the perception of scholarly publishing on professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of all lecturers in the selected universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Five (5) research questions were answered. Data analysis was done using the Statistical Products for the Service Solution (SPSS) version 27.0 Software. Findings revealed that the perception of scholarly publishing on professional development of lecturers in selected universities in Kwara State, Nigeria were career advancement, research productivity, knowledge sharing and increased visibility. Also benefits of scholarly publishing on professional development include enhanced professional reputation, staying current with advancements and trends, improved research, writing, and analytical skills, career promotion, and opportunities to collaborate with others. The study concludes that scholarly publishing significantly influences lecturers' enhanced professional reputation, gaining recognition and promotion, enhancing the learning experience for students, and personal growth and satisfaction. Based on the findings, it was

recommended that lecturers should be supported to engage actively in scholarly publishing through reduced teaching loads and access to research support services, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to student learning and personal professional growth.

Keywords: Lecturers, Perception, Professional development, Scholarly publishing, Kwara State Universities, Nigeria.

Introduction

Professional development is a crucial aspect of career growth and personal advancement. It involves ongoing learning and skill enhancement to stay current with industry trends, best practices, and new technologies. This process helps individual improve their performance, advance in their careers, and maintain professional credibility (Parsons, 2022). Professional development involves the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge, skills, and competencies to enhance one's professional capabilities and stay current in one's field (Helens-Hart & Dolechek, 2022). Professional development is a fundamental strategic tool for ensuring institutional quality and aiding change in higher education, as it is essential to the development of lecturers (Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016; Bali & Caines, 2018). Professional development programs are tailored to individual needs, embedded in the workplace, and sustained over time to allow for meaningful learning and application (Smith & Gillespie, 2023). Professional development is viewed as the primary tool for lecturers to expedite change and enhance the quality of teaching and learning in educational institutions.

Professional development is an ongoing process that is vital not only for lecturers' personal growth but also for enhancing students' learning experiences (Zulfikar, Emawati, Dahliana, Akmal & Hidayat, 2022). According to Moonasar and Underwood (2018), professional development is the process of ensuring that individuals have the opportunity to stay current with trends, learn, and regularly develop professional knowledge. Hamid and Soroya (2017) opined that professional development can take many forms, such as formal training programs, conferences, workshops, mentorship opportunities, and self-directed learning. The authors averred that the activities could help them stay current with the latest trends and best practices in areas such as information technology, information organization, information behavior, and the library.

Unarguably, the professional development of lecturers is important, as it guarantees the quality and relevance of the education they provide. According to Donnelly (2016), professional development for lecturers is essential for updating knowledge, refining teaching practices, and fostering a collaborative learning environment. Thus, lecturers engaging in professional development would go a long way in reflecting on their teaching experiences, adapting to new educational challenges, and improving their pedagogical skills (Posigha & Seimode, 2015).

Scholarly publishing evolved from formal publications by scholarly societies to open dissemination through modern platforms, significantly impacting lecturers' career development. It plays a crucial role in advancing knowledge, career advancement, access to grant opportunities, disseminating research findings among scholars, contributing to the academic community, and professional development of individuals and institutions (Klain-Gabbay & Shoham, 2016; Cohen, 2019). Scholarly publishing serves as a cornerstone for academic progress and professional recognition in academia. It allows lecturers to contribute to the body of knowledge, share innovative practices, and stay current with emerging trends.

Scholarly publishing is the system through which research and scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, shared with the scholarly community, and preserved for future use. According to Reed (2018), scholarly publishing encompasses proficiency in crafting research methodologies, appraisal through peer review, disseminating via scholarly mediums such as journal articles, monographs, conference proceedings, and research reports, as well as preserving knowledge through repositories.

Scholarly publishing is the systematic process of creating, producing, and evaluating scholarly content, disseminating it to the academic community, and preserving it for future reference (University of Iowa Libraries, 2020). Scholarly publications may take the form of books, journal articles, book chapters, edited conference proceedings, technical reports, creative writing, or instructional textbooks (Omotesho, 2015). This system encompasses both formal means of communication, such as publication in peer-reviewed journals, and informal channels, such as electronic listservs (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2023).

Perception refers to the recognition and interpretation of sensory information which enables humans to take decisions (Akporhonor & Allannah, 2020). In this study, perception refers to lecturers' view of scholarly publication for professional development. Scholarly publishing provides numerous benefits to researchers and the field of knowledge such as the promotion and dissemination of research findings, professional development opportunities, which are essential for tenure, scholarly recognition, and certification of research quality at academic institutions (Park & Shim, 2011).

Publishing in reputable scholarly journals, especially open access journals, can increase the visibility and impact of research, leading to higher citation rates and greater recognition among peers (Bains, 2017). Publishing research in scholarly journals ensures that the work is preserved and easily accessible to a wider audience, including researchers, students, and practitioners in the field, contributing to the continuous and professional development (Sciendo, 2022). Publishing in peer-reviewed journals is seen as crucial for documenting research findings, facilitating information exchange, and gaining academic recognition. Moreover, technological advancements have significantly transformed scholarly communication, making digital formats the norm, which has facilitated easier dissemination and access to research outputs. Lecturers appreciate the diverse roles that scholarly communication plays in their career advancement such as keeping up-to-date with developments in knowledge and broadening research interests. This multifaceted engagement underscores the importance of scholarly publishing in their professional growth and academic standing (Klain-Gabbay & Shoham, 2018; Majhi, Baral & Maharana, 2018).

The effect of scholarly publishing is a multifaceted phenomenon that plays a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of academic research and knowledge dissemination. However, there exists a significant gap in understanding the perception of lecturers on scholarly publishing for professional development. While scholarly publishing is integral to the academic ecosystem, there is limited research on how educators perceive its influence on teaching, research, and overall academic responsibilities. The unique insights of these educators, who navigate the realms of information organization and dissemination, are crucial to uncovering the benefits, opportunities, and barriers of scholarly publishing. This research aims to address this gap by delving into lecturers' perceptions, shedding light on their experiences, concerns, and recommendations, and ultimately contributing valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on scholarly publishing. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap by examining perceptions of

scholarly publishing and its role in the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. In corollary to this, the study seeks to:

- i. ascertain the perception of scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria;
- ii. identify the factors influencing scholarly publishing for lecturers' professional development in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.
- iii. determine the influence of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria;
- iv. identify the benefits of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria; and
- v. identify the barriers against scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Perception of scholarly publishing for professional development

Lecturers have mixed perceptions towards scholarly publishing for professional development. Many are aware of the benefits of scholarly publishing, such as greater accessibility and long-term preservation of scholarly works (Majhi et al., 2018). Publishing in high-ranking journals could enhance lecturers' visibility and reputation, thereby leading to career advancement opportunities. Okechukwu, Ndubuisi-Okoh, Okoche, and Oladokun (2024) found positive perceptions of scholarly publishing among lecturers in Nigeria. According to Keener (2014), lecturers publish articles in peer-reviewed journals to share their research and contribute to their field.

Eyiolorushe, Okocha and Oguntayo (2017) examined lecturers' perceptions of the quality of scholarly publications and the challenges facing scholarly publishing in Nigeria. They discovered that the locally produced publications undergo thorough editorial reviews, though opinions differed on whether they meet international standards. Okoduwa et al. (2018) investigated lecturers' perceptions of research and publishing. Findings revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed that research and publishing are important for academic and economic development. Malik, Nasim and Tabassum (2015) found that faculty members in higher education view scholarly publishing as an essential aspect of their career progression, as it demonstrates their expertise and contributions to their field.

Hunzicker's (2010) study reported that lecturers perceive scholarly publishing as a means to improve their teaching, research, and service, which are the primary criteria for tenure, promotion, and merit-based salary increases. According to Fink (2013), professional development activities, such as scholarly publishing can foster a sense of community and support among lecturers. Eaton, Osgood, Cigrand and Dunbar (2015) found that lecturers' participation in professional development activities positively affects classroom pedagogy, student learning, and job satisfaction. Also, McKee and Tew (2013) averred that lecturers' professional development improves lecturer's performance and students' success, thereby increasing their visibility in their fields.

Wilkins, Hazzam and Lean (2021) averred that lecturers who engage in scholarly publishing can develop various skills that are essential for their professional growth. These skills include critical thinking, writing, and communication, which are transferable to their teaching and research activities. Vela, Menchaca and Silva (2023) opined that the success of

lecturers in engaging in scholarly publishing largely depends on the support provided by their institutions.

Factors influencing scholarly publishing for professional development

Scholarly publishing involves a complex interplay of factors that influence faculty engagement with the process. Faculty members often rely on librarians for assistance in identifying citations and evaluating the effect of their work, as indicated by findings from the Ithaca S+R faculty survey. Librarians collaborate closely with faculty to support them in various aspects of publishing, including journal selection and assessing scholarly output impact. Strategies such as creating Lib Guides with publishing resources have proven effective in engaging faculty and highlighting the library's role as a valuable publishing support resource (Peekhaus & Proferes, 2015; Vinyard & Colvin, 2018).

Faculty members have shown interest in accessing resources provided by libraries to assess journal quality and navigate the publishing process. Efforts such as providing information guides on publishing resources have increased awareness about predatory publishers and alternative methods for evaluating journal prestige. Research in higher education has established that productivity, scholarship, and collaboration are central to lecturers' work in higher education institutions (Royal, Akers, Lybarger & Zakrajsek, 2014). Today, lecturers' professional development centers on scholarly publishing, and universities provide opportunities for lecturers to engage in original creative research in their disciplines. Mentoring programs encourage experienced lecturers with scholarly publishing skills to share their expertise with those who need assistance in increasing research productivity (Rush & Wheeler, 2011).

Udoh-Uwah and Etim (2018) stated that individual factors play a significant role in a lecturer's decision to engage in scholarly publishing. These factors include their research skills, writing abilities, and motivation to publish. According to Wilkins et al. (2021), lecturers who possess strong research and writing skills are more likely to produce high-quality publications, while those with a strong intrinsic motivation to contribute to their field and advance their careers are more likely to persist in the face of challenges. Yan (2024) indicated that the institutional environment also shapes a lecturer's publishing behavior. Factors such as the availability of research funding, access to research resources, and institutional policies regarding promotion and tenure can either facilitate or hinder scholarly publishing. Institutions that prioritize research and provide adequate support for lecturers are more likely to foster a culture of scholarly publishing (Okechukwu et al., 2024).

Mentorship and collaboration with experienced researchers can significantly influence a lecturer's publishing success. Mentors can provide guidance, feedback, and support throughout the publication process, while collaboration with colleagues can lead to the development of high-quality research projects and publications (Chadha, 2021). Lecturers who have access to mentors and opportunities for collaboration are more likely to engage in scholarly publishing and develop their research skills (Owens & Manolovitz, 2021).

Scholarly publishing and professional development of lecturers

Scholarly publishing plays a crucial role in the professional development of lecturers by facilitating the dissemination of new findings and knowledge within academic communities and the public. It allows for the growth of knowledge within disciplines, leading to new

discoveries and innovations. Scholarly publishing differs from mainstream publishing by focusing on specific subject areas and preferred modes of communication within different disciplines, such as books in the humanities and journal articles in the Health Sciences and STEM fields (Florida Atlantic University Libraries, 2024).

Understanding the publication process is essential for academics to effectively communicate and distribute their work. Authors often transfer their copyright to publishers, limiting their ability to share or use their work for teaching purposes. To address this, authors are increasingly negotiating to retain some rights, particularly for journal articles published by scholarly publishers such as SAGE, Elsevier, and Wiley (Florida Atlantic University Libraries, 2024). Librarians specializing in scholarly communication play a vital role in helping lecturers navigate the scholarly publishing landscape. They provide expertise on alternative publishing models, scholarly visibility, impact, and online dissemination of research (Concordia University, 2020). Additionally, services such as eScholarship provide scholarly publishing platforms that enhance the visibility and impact of academic work (UCI Libraries, 2024).

Majhi et al.'s (2018) study highlights the prevailing perceptions among respondents regarding the quality and potential significance of scholarly publishing in scholarly discourse. Kaba and Said's (2015) study examined and characterized awareness, utilization, and perceptions of OA resources among faculty members at the University of Science and Technology (AAU). The study revealed that faculty members held positive perceptions of scholarly publishing and frequently utilized it.

In academia, both professional advancement and career progression require conducting research and disseminating findings through international peer-reviewed journals, which have become the predominant mode of scholarly publishing globally. Whether in contractual terms or in pursuit of tenure, faculty members are subject to publishing expectations, the fulfillment of which significantly influences their academic employment status (Zarkov, 2019). Okechukwu et al (2024) stated that writing and communication skills, data analysis skills, research methodology skills, time management skills and literature and citation skills are relevant skills necessary by lecturers to enhance scholarly publishing. Research indicates that faculty perceive strong research and publication records as essential for their review, promotion, and tenure process, leading to concerns about the amount and type of publishing expected of them (Niles, Schimanski, McKiernan & Alperin, 2020).

Professional development through scholarly publishing empowers lecturers to be actively engaged in their growth, decision-making processes, shared responsibility for student learning, and professionalism (Vela, 2017). The author identified characteristics of effective professional development, to include being situated in practice, focused on student learning, providing opportunities for building knowledge and skills, fostering professional learning communities, and encouraging collaboration.

Faculty participation in professional development activities leads to innovation in teaching, improved student motivation, learning, and engagement. The effectiveness of continued professional development opportunities provided to faculty is crucial for understanding how participation impacts teaching, research, service, and student learning outcomes. Faculty perceptions of the review, promotion, and tenure process significantly influence their publication decisions, with factors like journal readership, prestige, and peer recognition playing key roles in where they choose to publish their work (Niles et al., 2020; Vela, 2017).

Owolabi, Aderibigbe, Adeshina, Nworu and Owunze (2023) discovered diverse

perspectives regarding scholarly publications, thus suggesting that scholarly publication was perceived as a procedure wherein a researcher conducts a study and undergoes the essential peer review process to have their work published in respected journals, catering to different intellectual communities. Various career paths exist within the realms of science and academia, each characterized by distinct patterns and trajectories, yet all must adhere to ethical standards. Engaging in unethical behaviour, such as publishing in predatory journals, can significantly jeopardize a researcher's career or damage their reputation (D'Alessandro, Miles, Martínez-López, Anaya-Sánchez, Esteban-Millat & Torrez-Meruvia, 2020). The foundation of a researcher's prestige, recognition in the scientific community, and career advancement lies in the quality of their publications (Lambovska & Yordanov, 2020).

Benefits of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers

Scholarly publishing offers numerous advantages for lecturers, enhancing their professional development and contributing to their academic careers. Firstly, it increases visibility and impact by allowing for broader dissemination of knowledge through open access publishing, leading to more citations and recognition (O'Sullivan, 2024; Crampsie, Neville & Henry, 2020; Bonn & Furlough, 2015). Open access channels are particularly effective in enhancing research accessibility, especially for scholars in developing countries, thus expanding the global audience (Woszczyński & Whitman, 2016).

Engaging in scholarly publishing fosters knowledge sharing and innovation by facilitating the spread of new ideas and inspiring further research. This dissemination of new ideas is crucial for the advancement of the field and stimulates further scholarly inquiry and innovation (Bains, 2017). Moreover, scholarly publishing is essential for career advancement, especially for those seeking promotion and tenure. Woszczyński and Whitman (2016) asserted that publishing in high-quality journals, whether open access or subscription-based, enhances acceptance and respect within the academic community, thus contributing to career advancement and professional recognition (Dalton, 2013).

Scholarly publishing improves research productivity by developing essential skills and creating opportunities for collaboration. Lecturers who publish often develop advanced research skills that go beyond what is typically covered in a library degree program. O'Sullivan (2024) and Bains (2017) highlighted that this continuous improvement in research skills benefits both individual lecturers and the broader academic community by promoting knowledge dissemination, innovation, and career advancement opportunities.

The scholarly community can improve the quality of papers and journals through collaborative efforts to overcome hurdles and address challenges. Raitskaya and Tikhonova (2020) emphasized the importance of focusing on researchers' personal development to enhance skills and meet rigorous standards. Implementing comprehensive skill-building programs across educational levels and fostering mentorship and support from experienced members of academia, including journal editorial boards, are crucial for emerging scientific writers.

Engaging in scholarly publishing also fosters resilience and critical reflection, enhancing career advancement, skill development, and ethical fulfillment. It extends research reach to diverse audiences and contributes to teaching and training within the academic community (Maharaj, 2020). Concerns about career advancement and the impact of scholarly publishing on tenure and promotion prospects further highlight the need for increased awareness and acceptance of open-access models (Aulisio, 2014).

Wilkins et al. (2021) emphasize that scholarly publishing serves as a vital avenue for skill enhancement, which is crucial for career progression in academia. Udoh-Uwah and Etim (2018) asserted that professional development activities, such as scholarly publishing, significantly influence lecturers' job effectiveness, particularly in instructional delivery and communication skills.

Barriers against scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers

Several barriers, such as political, religious, and cultural differences, hindered researchers' full participation in scholarly publishing. Therefore, understanding faculty perceptions and engagement with scholarly publishing is crucial, as highlighted by a cohort study focusing on faculty members in LIS schools, which provides insights into their attitudes towards this aspect (Lund et al., 2023; Peekhaus, 2021). Eyiolorunshe et al., (2017) reported that underutilization of scholarly publications, insufficient funding, and a lack of incentives to encourage academic scholarship are the primary challenges.

Pho and Tran (2016) examined obstacles to scholarly publishing among Vietnamese scholars in the Social Sciences and Humanities. Their study revealed several hindrances, including lack of funding, time constraints, language barriers, skills challenges, difficulty in finding appropriate topics. Language proficiency, particularly limited English language skills, is a major barrier that hinders the effective communication of research findings. Lecturers with insufficient English proficiency may struggle to write and publish their work in international journals, thereby limiting their academic reach and influence. (Lund et al., 2023; Myers, 2016).

Furthermore, a lack of awareness among lecturers regarding institutional mandates related to scholarly communication can result in non-compliance with publishing requirements set by their institutions. This non-compliance can negatively affect career progression and professional development (Lund et al., 2023). Understanding and adhering to these mandates is crucial for maintaining academic standards and achieving recognition within the academic community. Concerns about copyright and rights management also act as significant deterrents. Uncertainties regarding the protection of intellectual property and the rights associated with publishing can discourage lecturers from fully engaging in scholarly publishing activities (Myers, 2016). These issues can lead to hesitancy in sharing research findings, further impeding academic dissemination and collaboration.

Communication barriers between faculty members can impact the effectiveness of promoting publishing opportunities. Effective collaboration between these groups is essential for leveraging available resources and support systems that facilitate scholarly publishing (Bonn & Furlough, 2015). When communication is lacking, lecturers may miss out on crucial information and assistance that could aid their publishing efforts.

Smiljkovic, Chevallier, Freycon and Mortamet (2021) and Rai, Kumar, Abraham, Chandra, Kaur and Hasan, (2016) identified several crucial themes affecting scholarly publishing: insufficient time allocated for research activities, limited encouragement to engage in research, inadequate financial backing for research endeavors, deficient research and publishing infrastructure, and insufficient data to facilitate informed decision-making. These factors collectively hinder the ability of lecturers to engage fully in scholarly publishing. Lwoga (2014) highlighted significant obstacles to the utilization of scholarly publishing, including challenges associated with information and communication technology infrastructure, limited awareness and skills, concerns regarding the journal author-pay model, and issues of copyright and

plagiarism.

Lund et al. (2023) shed light on the obstacles faced by researchers worldwide when attempting to publish in top LIS journals. The study emphasized that these challenges are not related to research quality or workload but are instead tied to factors less prevalent in developed countries, such as language proficiency, funding for research equipment and software, organisational support, alignment of research topics, and mentorship and collaboration. These barriers highlight the need for systemic support to enhance the scholarly publishing capabilities of LIS lecturers. Jain, Iyengar, and Vaishya (2020) highlighted the rise in open-access journals that require an article processing charge (APC), which poses a significant obstacle for researchers. This trend has exacerbated challenges associated with publishing in prestigious journals. Even when scholars from developing nations can afford lower APCs, these expenses remain substantial barriers, particularly for early-career professionals.

Lund et al. (2023) stated that the strict criteria set by top journals, including submission and editorial policies and guidelines on English language writing styles, pose significant challenges. These journals often do not offer waivers or discounts to researchers from underdeveloped countries, exacerbating funding limitations. The credibility of the publishing outlet is also crucial, as articles from non-academic or non-professional association journals are often not accepted. Additional barriers include inadequate research funding, limited knowledge of scholarly publishing, and a lack of subscriptions to information resources in research institutions, insufficient opportunities for collaboration, poor internet connectivity, unreliable electricity supply, limited research expertise, and inadequate compensation for research efforts.

Benjamin, Sivaram, Shanmugam, Benjamin and Sivaram (2023) identified various barriers to scholarly publishing reported by faculty members. A significant concern was the lack of hard/print copies of open access journals. Other perceived barriers included the absence of financial rewards for authors, time constraints, increased chances of cheating and plagiarism, insufficient research skills, technological barriers such as internet usage limitations, high publishing costs in open access, the proliferation of unscrupulous publishers, and a lack of awareness about journals and databases available in open access formats. Olsen's research revealed that lecturers who decide to leave a university often report a sense of overall alienation and dissatisfaction, which can be attributed to a lack of support and mentoring opportunities for scholarly publishing. Nagano and Bukovszki (2016) found that doctoral students, who will become future lecturers, face various challenges in publishing their research, including a lack of guidance and resources. Emezie, Chukwu, Nwaohiri, Emerole and Bernard (2024) study indicated that Nigerian universities often lack adequate support structures, such as mentorship programs and writing workshops, to assist lecturers in navigating the scholarly publishing process effectively.

Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey design, which is well-suited for exploring and examining relationships among a large number of participants or a widely dispersed target population. The study's population consisted of 194 lecturers from the Faculty of Education across three selected universities in Kwara State, Nigeria: Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin; Kwara State University, Malete; and the University of Ilorin, Ilorin. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the lecturers, and the Raosoft (2024) sample size calculator recommended a sample size of 130 at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

The primary data collection instrument was a questionnaire titled "Perception of Scholarly

Publishing on Professional Development of Lecturers Questionnaire (PSPPDLQ)." This questionnaire was carefully designed by incorporating elements from previously validated studies and integrating feedback from experts in library and information science research. It consisted of five sections, each addressing key areas: perceptions of scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers; factors influencing scholarly publishing; the influence of scholarly publishing on professional development; the benefits of scholarly publishing for lecturers; and barriers to scholarly publishing for professional development. The questionnaire included 36 items measured on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (SA= 4), Agree (A= 3), Disagree (D= 2), and Strongly Disagree (SD= 1).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, content and construct validity were established through evaluation by three seasoned experts in Library and Information Science (LIS) research, who provided valuable feedback for refining the questionnaire. A total of 130 questionnaires were distributed, and 117 were successfully retrieved, resulting in a response rate of 90%. The data collected were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 24.0. Descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to interpret the findings.

Ethical considerations were a priority throughout the research. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary, and measures were taken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Additionally, the study adhered to copyright regulations in the literature review, ensuring ethical standards and integrity.

Result

This section analyzes the data collected from the field study. It begins by examining the perception of scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers. Following this, it explores the factors influencing scholarly publishing for the professional development of lecturers. It then determines the influence of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers and identifies the benefits of scholarly publishing for their professional growth. Lastly, it addresses the barriers to scholarly publishing for the professional development of lecturers. The section concludes with recommendations to facilitate the perception of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 1 presents lecturers' perceptions of scholarly publishing as a tool for professional development in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings indicate that respondents associate scholarly publishing primarily with career advancement ($\bar{x} = 3.222$, $SD = 0.892$) and research productivity ($\bar{x} = 3.137$, $SD = 0.909$), while knowledge sharing ($\bar{x} = 2.966$, $SD = 0.964$) and increased visibility ($\bar{x} = 2.923$, $SD = 0.939$) are also identified as notable, though comparatively less emphasized, dimensions.

Table 1

Mean and standard deviation scores of Perceptions of scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers

Perceptions	SA	A	D	SD	Mean(\bar{x})	SD
Increased visibility.	35(29.9)	50(42.7)	20(17.1)	12(10.3)	2.923	0.939
Career advancement.	55(47.0)	40(34.2)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.222	0.892

Knowledge sharing.	40(34.2)	45(38.5)	20(17.1)	12(10.3)	2.966	0.964
Research productivity.	50(42.7)	40(34.2)	20(17.1)	7(6.0)	3.137	0.909
Skill development.	32(27.4)	45(38.5)	30(25.6)	10(8.5)	2.846	0.925
Collaboration.	30(25.6)	45(38.5)	30(25.6)	12(10.3)	2.795	0.943
Weighted mean = 2.981						

Table 2 presents the factors influencing scholarly publishing for the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The results indicate that enhanced professional reputation ($\bar{x} = 3.222$, $SD = 0.892$) constitutes the most prominent influence, followed by career advancement ($\bar{x} = 3.179$, $SD = 0.877$), skills and expertise ($\bar{x} = 3.162$, $SD = 0.871$), and motivation ($\bar{x} = 3.137$, $SD = 0.860$).

Table 2

Mean and standard deviation scores of factors influencing scholarly publishing for professional development among lecturers

Factors	SA	A	D	SD	Mean(\bar{x})	SD
Enhanced professional reputation as a lecturer.	55(47.0)	40(34.2)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.222	0.892
Career advancement.	50(42.7)	45(38.5)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.179	0.877
Motivation.	45(38.5)	50(42.7)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.137	0.860
Incentives encourage.	40(34.2)	45(38.5)	20(17.1)	12(10.3)	2.966	0.964
Skills and expertise.	48(41.0)	47(40.2)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.162	0.871
Limited access	30(25.6)	40(34.2)	35(29.9)	12(10.3)	2.752	0.955
Recognition and reward.	25(21.4)	40(34.2)	35(29.9)	17(14.5)	2.624	0.980
Weighted mean = 3.006						

Table 3 reveals the influences of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings show that scholarly publishing most strongly enhances professional reputation ($\bar{x} = 3.231$, $SD = 0.831$), followed by its role in facilitating recognition and promotion ($\bar{x} = 3.222$, $SD = 0.888$), improving students' learning experiences ($\bar{x} = 3.205$, $SD = 0.882$), and fostering personal growth and satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 3.197$, $SD = 0.840$).

Table 3

Mean and standard deviation scores of the influences of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers

Influence of Scholarly Publishing	SA	A	D	SD	Mean(\bar{x})	SD
Enhanced professional reputation.	52(44.4)	45(38.5)	15(12.8)	5(4.3)	3.231	0.831
Improved expertise and credibility.	50(42.7)	42(35.9)	18(15.4)	7(6.0)	3.154	0.893
Gaining recognition and promotion.	55(47.0)	40(34.2)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.222	0.888

Enhanced ability to analyze and contribute to scholarly discourse.	48(41.0)	46(39.3)	17(14.5)	6(5.1)	3.162	0.857
Facilitate networking with other researchers and professionals.	45(38.5)	47(40.2)	20(17.1)	5(4.3)	3.128	0.843
Personal growth and satisfaction.	50(42.7)	45(38.5)	17(14.5)	5(4.3)	3.197	0.840
Enhancing the learning experience for students.	53(45.3)	42(35.9)	15(12.8)	7(6.0)	3.205	0.882
Weighted mean: 3.186						

Table 4 shows the benefits of scholarly publishing for the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The results indicate that scholarly publishing most prominently enhances professional reputation ($\bar{x} = 3.316$, $SD = 0.823$) and facilitates staying current with advancements and emerging trends ($\bar{x} = 3.308$, $SD = 0.862$), while also contributing to the improvement of research, writing, and analytical skills ($\bar{x} = 3.274$, $SD = 0.843$), supporting career promotion ($\bar{x} = 3.265$, $SD = 0.871$), and creating opportunities for collaboration ($\bar{x} = 3.239$, $SD = 0.834$).

Table 4

Mean and standard deviation scores of benefits of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean(\bar{x})	SD
Facilitates networking.	54(46.2)	40(34.2)	17(14.5)	6(5.1)	3.214	0.875
Improves research, writing, and analytical skills.	56(47.9)	43(36.8)	12(10.3)	6(5.1)	3.274	0.843
Helps stay current with advancements and trends.	60(51.3)	40(34.2)	10(8.5)	7(6.0)	3.308	0.862
Promotion in my career.	58(49.6)	38(32.5)	15(12.8)	6(5.1)	3.265	0.871
Enhances professional reputation.	59(50.4)	41(35.0)	12(10.3)	5(4.3)	3.316	0.823
Opportunities to collaborate with others.	53(45.3)	44(37.6)	15(12.8)	5(4.3)	3.239	0.834
Support and resources.	40(34.2)	46(39.3)	22(18.8)	9(7.7)	3.000	0.915
Weighted mean: 3.231						

Table 5 presents the barriers to scholarly publishing for the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings indicate that key constraints include limited access to materials due to inadequate database subscriptions ($\bar{x} = 2.624$, $SD = 1.043$), insufficient support, guidance, and mentorship ($\bar{x} = 2.487$, $SD = 1.076$), as well as fear of rejection ($\bar{x} = 2.487$, $SD = 1.076$).

Table 5

Mean and standard deviation scores of barriers against scholarly publishing for professional development of lecturers

Barriers	SA	A	D	SD	Mean(\bar{x})	SD
Inadequate funding.	30(25.6)	7(6.0)	50(42.7)	30(25.6)	2.316	1.056
Inadequate support, guidance, and mentorship.	35(29.9)	10(8.5)	49(41.9)	23(19.7)	2.487	1.076
Inadequate skills and knowledge.	35(29.9)	12(10.3)	35(29.9)	35(29.9)	2.403	1.108
Inadequate availability of materials to engage in a robust review of literature.	33(28.2)	10(8.5)	36(30.8)	38(32.5)	2.325	1.077
Inadequate accessibility to materials due to limited subscribed databases.	32(27.4)	32(27.4)	30(25.6)	23(19.7)	2.624	1.043
Fear of being rejected.	40(34.2)	7(6.0)	40(34.2)	30(25.6)	2.487	1.076
Weighted mean: 2.50						

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that lecturers' perceptions of scholarly publishing for professional development were career advancement, research productivity, knowledge sharing, and increased visibility. This finding aligns with McKee and Tew (2013), who reported that faculty professional development improves faculty performance and student success, thereby increasing faculty members' visibility in their fields. Malik et al. (2015) found that faculty members in higher education view scholarly publishing as an essential aspect of their career progression, as it demonstrates their expertise and contributions to their field.

The findings of this study revealed that factors influencing scholarly publishing for professional development of the respondents were enhanced professional reputation, career advancement, skills and expertise, and motivation. This result aligns with the findings of Zarkov (2019) who noted that both contractual and tenure-track faculty face publishing expectations that significantly impact their employment. Niles et al. (2020) who reported that faculty perceive strong research and publication records as essential for their review, promotion, and tenure process, leading to concerns about publishing demands. O'Sullivan (2024) who stated that lecturers engaged in publishing often develop advanced research skills beyond typical library degree programs, benefiting individual lecturers and the broader academic community by promoting knowledge dissemination, innovation, and career advancement opportunities.

The study revealed that the influence of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State includes enhanced professional reputation, gaining recognition and promotion, enhancing the learning experience for students, and personal growth and satisfaction. This finding is in tandem with the findings of Vela (2017) who reported that professional development through scholarly publishing empowers lecturers to engage actively in their growth, decision-making processes, and shared responsibility for student learning and professionalism. Woszczyński and Whitman (2016) discovered that publishing in high-quality journals, whether open access or subscription-based, enhances acceptance and respect within the academic community, contributing to career advancement and professional recognition. Lambovska and Yordanov (2020) who found that a researcher's

prestige, recognition in the scientific community, and career advancement are founded on the quality of their publications.

The findings indicated that the benefits of scholarly publishing on the professional development of the respondents include enhanced professional reputation, staying current with advancements and trends, improved research, writing, and analytical skills, career promotion, and opportunities to collaborate with others. This result is in consonance with the findings of Bains (2017) who noted that engaging in scholarly publishing facilitates the spread of new ideas and inspires further research, crucial for advancing the field. Benjamin et al., (2023) who stated that open access scholarly publications offer additional benefits, such as enhancing learning in specific fields, updating research interests, and facilitating timely publication of studies. O'Sullivan (2024) who explained that continuous improvement in research skills benefits both individual lecturers and the broader academic community by promoting knowledge dissemination, innovation, and career advancement opportunities.

In this study, some of the barriers against scholarly publishing for professional development of lecturers in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria were inadequate accessibility to materials due to limited subscribed databases, inadequate support, guidance, and mentorship, and fear of being rejected. This result aligns with the findings of Emezie et al. (2024) which indicated that Nigerian universities often lack adequate support structures, such as mentorship programs and writing workshops, to assist lecturers' in navigating the scholarly publishing process effectively. Lecturers who have access to mentors and opportunities for collaboration are more likely to engage in scholarly publishing and develop their research skills (Owens & Manolovitz, 2021). This result supports Lund et al.'s (2023) findings, which stated that barriers such as inadequate research funding, limited knowledge about scholarly publishing, and lack of subscriptions to information resources in research institutions, insufficient collaboration opportunities, poor internet connection, unreliable electricity supply, limited research expertise, and inadequate compensation for research efforts.

Conclusion

The study on lecturers' perceptions of scholarly publishing and its role in professional development in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria, reveals that while professional development activities are actively pursued and considered important, balancing them with teaching responsibilities poses a challenge. The study established that lecturers' perceptions of scholarly publishing for professional development encompass career advancement, research productivity, knowledge sharing, and increased visibility. The study revealed that the factors influencing scholarly publishing for professional development were enhanced professional reputation, career advancement, skills and expertise, and motivation. Furthermore, the study established that the influence of scholarly publishing on the professional development of lecturers is substantial, contributing to enhanced professional reputation, gaining recognition and promotion, enhancing the learning experience for students, and personal growth and satisfaction. This study recognized that the benefits of scholarly publishing include professional development, such as enhanced professional reputation, staying current with advancements and trends, improved research, writing, and analytical skills, career promotion, and opportunities to collaborate with others. However, significant barriers, such as inadequate access to materials due to limited subscribed databases, inadequate support, guidance, and mentorship, and fear of rejection, hinder effective scholarly publishing for lecturers' professional development.

Addressing these challenges and leveraging the identified benefits could greatly enhance lecturers' professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- University management should encourage and recognize scholarly publishing as a key criterion for career advancement by providing incentives such as promotion points, research grants, and publication awards.
- Universities should create supportive research environments that motivate lecturers to publish by strengthening institutional policies that promote skill development, professional recognition, and academic productivity.
- Lecturers should be supported in actively engaging in scholarly publishing through reduced teaching loads and access to research support services, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to student learning and their personal and professional growth.
- Institutions should invest in continuous research training and collaborative platforms to help lecturers improve their research and writing skills, stay current with academic trends, and enhance opportunities for professional collaboration.
- University authorities should address barriers to scholarly publishing by expanding access to subscribed databases, establishing structured mentorship programs, and providing guidance to help lecturers overcome fear of manuscript rejection.

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