

Research Information Dissemination through the Conversion of Thesis and Research Reports into Publishable Articles by Teaching Staff

¹Kutsanedzie F*, ²Ameko, E., ²Achio, S.
¹Accra Polytechnic Research and Innovation Centre
²Science Laboratory Technology Department
*fkutsanedzie@apoly.edu.gh

Abstract: Theses and research reports of academic staff in various tertiary institutions are normally deposited on shelves in university libraries year in year out. However, the essence of these rigorous academic works is tailored toward solving identified problems. A three day Workshop was held for lecturers to learn and convert their theses and research reports into publishable articles for onward submission to peer reviewed journals for subsequent review and publication. Sixty (60) lecturers registered for the workshop by submitting softcopies of their respective theses and research reports. They were conducted through the Workshop by two facilitators who presented three topics on the subject: things to consider when converting theses and research reports to publishable articles; selecting journals for article publications; and tailoring theses and research reports to the format of the selected journals. The latter topic was done with working examples to enable the participants acquire the requisite skills. The participants were made to select a peer review journal per each of their formatted articles, and allowed to follow up the steps in converting their respective copies presented. The theses and research reports that were converted to papers were submitted to editors of the respective journals selected. At the close of the Workshop about ninety (90) articles were submitted to various journals for review and subsequent publication.

Keywords: *Workshop, research publications, information dissemination, articles, peer review*

1. Introduction

Research is one of the core functions of tertiary institutions in Ghana, and as such a duty for all lecturers in tertiary institutions in Ghana and beyond. Lecturers apart from carrying their individual research works are mandated to supervise the research projects of their respective students in the final year. Once the researches are carried out, the results churned out are expected to be disseminated to the targeted clientele to be utilized to solve the imminent developmental challenges in their immediate environ, in the country, sub region and beyond. So many research projects are produced annually by students under the supervision of lecturers. However, these are kept on shelves in libraries and cannot be accessed by the ultimate consumers of these pieces of information. According to Ogunrombi (1997), despite their value as original research, master and doctoral theses have traditionally been considered grey literature, due to their physical inaccessibility. However, some institutions such as Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) store them in their institutional Dspace, thus making it accessible to all and sundry. Statistics indicate that theses that are made available in this way are more widely used and cited in ongoing research. Ogunniyi et al. (2011) indicated that there are many kinds of serials such as newspaper, magazines, newsletters, accessions, journals, indexes, abstract, reports proceedings and transactions of societies etc. Out of them all, journals are the most important to researchers because much of articles therein are products of research which may never appear in other publications. According to Ogunrombi (1997) serial publications form the backbone of any academic library because of their informational value. Olanlokun and Salisu (1988) revealed that journals are accorded prominence in the library because they provide the latest information in a discipline and if people want to be current in their field they have to read relevant journals.

Chamberlin (1999) revealed that if even one chooses to write one's thesis in the manuscript style, resulting chapters might still require significant revision if they need to be shortened and formatted later for a particular journal, and written with a broader audience in mind than one's dissertation committee. Lecturers in every tertiary institution are expected to have at least a master's degree coupled with not less than three

years pool of experience. By virtue of the required qualification for lecturers employed to lecture in the tertiary institutions, it is expected that all of them should have their respective theses and research reports in their fields. However, most of these theses have not been converted into publishable articles for publication in peer-reviewed journals. This may be due to the fact that more emphasis is placed on teaching and less on publishing, or rather they lack the requisite skills needed in converting their theses into publishable standards.

Problem Statement: Though all lecturers of Accra Polytechnic have at least master's degree, most of their theses and research reports have not been published in peer reviewed journals which maybe due to the lack of skills in the art of converting their theses into publishable standards, and overemphasis placed on teaching at the expense of research activities.

Objectives of the Study: The study seeks to organize a three day workshop aimed at helping lecturers convert their theses and research reports to publishable standards. At the end of the Workshop is expected that lecturers submit articles prepared from their theses for publication in selected peer – reviewed journals; and also acquire the requisite skills to help them for their subsequent publication endeavours.

Justification of the Study: Large amount of money goes into research activities and the essence of these researches cannot be realized if its findings are not disseminated to the ultimate users of the findings. Theses of most lecturers that contained useful information are often not published and therefore wasted. Lecturers in various tertiary institutions as academics are not only mandated to teach but also to contribute to knowledge in their respective fields of qualification and lecture. The publication of researcher articles in peer-reviewed journals is a way of disseminating knowledge beyond the lecture halls. Publishing in journals does not only make lecturers contribute to knowledge but also keep them abreast of current trends in their respective fields, because of the literature reviewed while writing their research articles for publication. The conversion of thesis or research reports to publishable articles is therefore very relevant not only towards broadening of their knowledge but also tied to their promotion.

2. Methodology

Venue and Facility: In order to organize the 3-days Workshop on converting of thesis and research reports into publishable standards, a refurbished auditorium at Accra Polytechnic was used as the venue with full wireless internet connectivity provided by Vodafone – an internet service provider. A projector was installed and used for the presentation of the workshop materials.

Design and Administration of Workshop Forms: A registration form was designed and administered to lecturers to be filled and submitted by a stipulated deadline to the Research and Innovation Centre prior to the Workshop. The forms designed also indicated requirements for the Workshop as follows: all participants were to attend the Workshop with their personal laptops; participants were to submit softcopies of their theses and research reports; and also indicate their willingness and ability to prepare and submit article (s) to selected journals for peer review and subsequent publication at the close of the Workshop.

Workshop Materials: Workshop materials were sent to the registered participants via their emails provided on their registration forms. The materials included power point presentation to be made at the Workshop on the following topics: review of aspects involved in research article publication; selection of journals for publication; overview of formats of selected journals; tailoring of research projects to the format of a selected journal – working examples of a project report / thesis to a research article. In addition, samples of article acceptance letters from publishers as well as templates of various selected journals were sent to them.

Method adopted: The completed registration forms administered, and the softcopies of the participants' theses and research reports that were returned to the Research and Innovation Centre. The information on the forms were extracted, collated and used for the planning of the Workshop. An attendance register was kept for the Workshop. In order to keep the lecturers at the venue for the Workshop, snack and lunch was given during all the three days. The workshop commenced at 9: 00 am and closed at 4:30 pm daily. Four presentations were made by two facilitators with participants allowed to ask questions at the end of each of

the presentations. The last presentation which was practice-based dwelt on tailoring of research projects to the format of selected journals: working examples of a project report / thesis converted into a research article. This was made interactively as much as possible. The participants were told to follow the facilitator instructively in a stepwise fashion using soft copies of their respective works: select a journal; download the author's guide; download the template; structure your title; write an introduction to the work, state the problem statement and objectives of the paper; structure the methodology; present the results and do discussion; structure the conclusion and recommendation; and structure the references according to the format required by the selected journal. The facilitators moved around and addressed questions that begged of variability in the formats of the selected journals. For the second and third days of the Workshop, participants worked on formatting their works according to their selected journals' specifications.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Statistics of Attendees at the Workshop on converting of Thesis and Research Reports into Publishable Standards

Department	Male	Female
Civil Engineering	1	1
Hotel Catering and Institutional Management	1	3
Fashion Design	1	6
Science Laboratory Technology	5	1
Accountancy	9	0
Mechanical Engineering	1	0
Statistics and Mathematics	4	2
Marketing	1	0
Purchasing and Supply	5	1
Secretary and Management	2	3
Liberal Studies	1	1
Computer Science	2	1
Building Technology	0	1
Furniture	1	0
Total	34	20

At the end of the three day Workshop organized, the articles prepared and submitted for peer reviewing for publication by the participants in their respective selected journals are captured in table1. Most of the participants were able to convert their theses into publishable standards. However, those lecturers who completed their theses about five years and beyond prior to the Workshop were required per the instruction guide of some journals to update to their literature because they were obsolete. This made some of the participants unable to send their articles by the close of the Workshop. It is a common belief that if work is not published in a timely manner, it is unlikely to be published at all. Also, in order for a journal to accept an article from authors, it is required that authors follow strictly the format and writing style of the prospective journal. This is confirmed by that one needed to tailor the writing and formatting style of the dissertation towards specific journal requirements in order to get them published (Rudestam and Newton, 1992; Luey, 2004). There was also a general problem on summarizing the theses and projects reports according to the number of pages required by the journals. It afforded the participants the opportunity to learn how to summarize their findings with clarity and brevity. It presented a huge task as participants struggled to reduced sometimes between 150 – 120 page theses and research reports to 12 – 14 pages maximally in order to avoid incurring extra charges in U.S \$50 per page or sometimes per word. For this, Chamberlin (1999) noted that the process of converting dissertations to publishable articles teaches graduate students not only to summarize research findings in a succinct manner, but also how to communicate to a broader audience than faculty and committee members.

Access to research output by scientists and researchers is of vital importance in any given geographical region, including the African continent which is challenged with so many developmental needs; so urgent are Africa's needs that the effective dissemination of this knowledge is to a certain extent a matter of life and death (Onyancha and Jacobs, 2009). Though many masters theses and doctorate dissertations are produced

yearly, students of these are not compelled to publish them before they graduate with their respective degrees in most Africa universities, thus the research outputs which is needed to help confront some of the developmental challenges of the continent persist. Though it is the expectation that if all these research outputs are disseminated and made available through publication, many of the continents problems are likely to be confronted, Onyancha and Jacobs (2009) indicated the use of foreign-based research outputs to inform decision making processes in the African continent is a common practice. African research knowledge is either locked inside international publications that are too expensive for African university libraries and scholars, or published in local journals that are relegated to the second rank by a global system that does not value them.

Most tertiary institutions in Africa do not disseminate findings from research projects and theses of their students via publication and this is confirmed in a study by Gray (2006) that the university system across sub-Saharan Africa does not generate publications or disseminate research findings effectively enough to reach the audiences that need to make use of development-focused research from within the continent. It therefore makes organizing workshops such as done very cogent in helping get the research outputs which would not have found their way to the public for utilization published. This is also confirmed by Cunha (2000) that when a thesis is defended, it moves to the condition of scientific literature, serving as a source of knowledge to other scholars. Its importance is that new ideas and findings are not limited to their holders only; they are widely disseminated to play the role assigned to them in the construction and development of science. Most of the research reports and theses' titles that have been converted to publishable standards and submitted to different journals for publication identified problems that largely face the researchers' immediate environs that needed to be tackled. Rey (1978) highlights that production of scientific information and its communication form part of a complex system, which operation is essential to the development of scientific knowledge. It thus suggests that without the dissemination of the information contained in these theses and research reports development of scientific knowledge geared towards development would elude us as a people and a nation.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Though there was initial internet connectivity problem, it became stabilized at the later part of the Workshop. As of the last day of the Workshop, close to forty (40) written articles were submitted by participants to various journals with most of them receiving acknowledgement of receipt of their articles by the editors of the respective journals. It is the view of the authors that when such workshops are organized for academics in various tertiary institutions to build their capacity as well as help them to convert their theses and research projects into publishable forms for publication in peer reviewed journals. When lecturers are equipped with these skills, it will have a reciprocal effect on students in terms of them getting their project works published for dissemination of the knowledge. When theses are published, the knowledge generated by students and lecturers would not be kept perpetually on library shelves. There was a general call by the participants for frequent organizing of such workshops because of the immense benefit as regard the knowledge acquired and the practical skills acquired by participants over the three days period.

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APPENDIX

Table 2: Papers that Received Acceptance for Publication in various Journals

No.	Title of Research Papers	Name of Journals
1	Evaluating of procurement Processes and its Operational Performance in the Public Sector of Ghana: A case study of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital and Kumasi Polytechnic	International Journal for science Technology and Education
2	Assessing the Role of Outsourcing in a Financial Institution: the Case Study of Prudential Bank Limited (Ghana)	International Journal for science Technology and Education
3	Improving Productivity at the currency Processing Centre (Bank of Ghana) through Six Sigma	International Journal for science Technology and Education
4	The relationship between loan default and Repayment Schedule in Microfinance Institution in Ghana: A Case Study of Sinapi Aba Trust	International Journal for science Technology and Education
5	Management of Government Funded Construction Projects in Ghana: Stakeholders' Perspective of Causes of Delays in Construction of Public Buildings	International Journal for science Technology and Education
6	Entrepreneurship Promotion for Sustainable Development in Ghana	Journal of Economic and Sustainable Development
7	An Exploratory Study of Entrepreneurial Leadership Development of Accra Polytechnic Student	Journal of Education and Practice
8	Stock Market Capitalization and Economic Growth	Research Journal of Finance and Accounting
9	A Risk-Based Assessment of ECOBANK Ghana Limited	Research Journal of Finance and Accounting
10	An Evaluating of the Risk Profile of the Banking Industry in Ghana and its Implication on the National Economy	International Journal of Economic , Finance and Management Science
11	Determining Factor Affecting Corruption: A cross Country Analysis	International Journal of Economic , Business and Finance
12	Alternative way of Managing Plastic Waste on Compuses	International Journal of Development and Sustainability
13	Novel Photovoltaic Module's Model using Matlab and Simpowersystem	International Journal of Computer Applications (IJCA)
14	Business process Reengineering (BPR) in the Financial Service Sector: A Case Study Ghana Commercial Bank (GCB) Limited	European Journal of Business and Management
15	Challenges of Single Ordained Women Ministers in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana	Canadian Social Science

16	Evaluating the Accra Polytechnic Examination System for Total Quality Management Principles	International Institute for Science, Technology and Education
17	Overview Facility Management Financing in the Construction Industry In Accra , Ghana	Research Journal of Finance and Accounting
18	The Impact of Innovation of the Construction Industry in Ghana	Journal of Civil and Environment Research
19	The management of Health and Safety of Construction Site in Accra	Journal of Civil and Environment Research
20	Evaluating the success Factors of Partnering in the building Construction Industry in Accra Metropolis	Industrial Engineering Letters
21	Divisional Performance Evaluation Tools Employed by Indigenous Ghanaian Banks	Research Journal of Finance and Accounting
22	The love of Beads among the Ghanaian	The International Institute for Science
23	Reflections on the Impact of Competency Based-Training (CBT) Pedagogy on Fashion Design Education at Accra Polytechnic	The International Institute for Science
24	Optimizing Acceptability of Fresh Moringa Oleifera Beverage	Journal of Food Science and Quality Management
25	Characterization of Fresh Moringa Oleifera Beverage	Journal of Food Science and Quality Management
26	Risks Associated with Geophagia	Canadian Journal of Pure and Applied Science
27	Discriminant Analysis of Discrimination Against people with Disability	Research on humanities and Social Science
28	Determinants of Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in Smoked Meat	International Journal of Nutrition and Food Science
29	Scottish Entrepreneurship Education	Journal of Education and Practice
30	Phenotypic Determination and Antimicrobial Resistance Profile of Extended Spectrum Beta-lactamases in Escherichia coli and Klebsiella pneumonia in Accra, Ghana	Journal of Natural Science Research
31	The Reliability of using Vitek 2 compact System to Detect Extended-Spectrum Beta lactamase-producing Isolate in Escherichia coli and Klebsiella pneumonia in Accra, Ghana	Advance in life Science and Technology
32	Phenotypic characterization of Ampc beta-lactamase among Cefoxitin Resistant Escherichia coli and Klebsiella pneumonia Isolate in Accra, Ghana	Journal of Biology, Agriculture and healthcare
33	Bank and Customer Service Delivery: Attracting and Retaining Customers in Ghanaian Banking Sector	European Journal of Business and Management
34	Celebrity Endorsement and consumer Buying Behavior, Enhancing the Promotion function of Marketing in the Central Business Area of Accra	European Journal of Business and Management
35	Customer Retention in the Ghanaian Mobile Telecommunication Industry	European Journal of Business and Social Science
36	Supply chain Cost Identification as a Means of Cost Reduction Strategy- A case Study of Ghana Supply company Limited	European Journal of Business and Management
37	Assessing the Alignment between Students of the Department of Secretaryship/Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies of Accra Polytechnic	European Journal of Business and Management
38	Medical Waste Disposal Practices in Some Hospitals and Clinical Laboratories in the Accra Metropolis	Civil and Environmental Research
39	The Potency of some Brands of Anti-Diabetic Medicine- Metformin Hydrochloride BP 500mg Tablet on the Ghanaian Market	Chemistry and Material Research
40	Personal Values: A Preceptual lens for investigation spousal perception of Marital Conflict among Ghanaian dual Career Couples	America Journal of Applied Psychology

41	Structured Query language Injection (SQLI) Attack: Detection and Prevention Techniques in Web Application Technology	International Journal of computer Application
42	Towards a Perspective of Web Application vulnerabilities and Security Threats	International Journal of computer Application
43	Towards a Perspective of Computing Related Programmes Offered by Public Tertiary Institution in Ghana	International Journal of Computer Science and Telecommunications
44	Quality Assessment of Aqueous Herbal/ Medicinal Products Sold on the Ghanaian Market	Food Science and Quality Management
45	Connecting the world of Learning and work: The Role of the World of Work Programmes	Educational Research International
46	Competency Based Training: Quality Delivery for Technical and vocational Education and Training	Educational Research International
47	Effect of human Resource Management Practices on the Performance of Small and Medium Hotels of Osu Klottey Sub Metropolitan Assembly of Greater Accra	International Journal of Business Management
48	Using demonstration Methods to Enhance the Performance of First year High National Diploma (HND) Secretaryship Studies of Accra Polytechnic in Typewriting	Journal of Education and practice
49	Effect of Recruitment and Selection practice on the Performance of Small and Medium Hotels of Osu Klottey Sub-Metropolitan Assembly of Greater Accra	Developing Country Studies
50	A comparative study of impact of Ghanaian Public Procurement Processes before and after the Enactment in 2003 – A case study of Accra Polytechnic	European Journal of Business and Management
51	Automated Business Name Reservation and Registration System – A case Study of Registrar General's Department, Ghana	International Journal of Computer Application
52	Semi-Automatic Car Anti-Theft Design using a ATmega168 Microcontroller	International Journal of Computer Application
53	Design of a Fast and Autonomous Complex Line Tracker and Fully Controlled Robot by limit Switches	International Journal of Computer Application
54	Performance Analysis of Femtocell in an Indoor Cellular Network	International Computer Networks and Wireless Communications
55	The Evaluation of Banks in Ghana using Financing Ratios: the Case study of Barclays Bank, GCB ADB	IISTE
56	Water source and Water Demands Assessments for Bonwire	Civil and Environment Research of the IISTE
57	A Critical Analysis on Advertising Banks Products and Services in Ghana	International Journal of Marketing Studies
58	Assessing the Impact of Effective Institutional Capacity on Advocacy for Microfinance Firm- Case study of Northern Ghana	International Business Research
59	Assessing Rural Banks Effectiveness in Ghana	International Business Research
60	Polytechnics as Institutions for Intraregional Collaboration for Skills Development in Africa	Journal of Education and Vocation Research
61	Measuring Poverty: The Methodological Debate	IISTE
62	Evaluating Venture Capital Financing Using Principal Components Analysis	IISTE