Citation Index Analysis and Research Output of Academic Administrators in Private Universities in Benin-City, Nigeria

By

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Abstract

This study investigates the citation index and research output of academic administrators in private universities in Benin City, Nigeria, specifically Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University. Recognizing the critical role of research in institutional ranking, visibility, and academic progression, the study focuses on administrators who are both academics and university leaders. A total of 40 administrators (20 from each university) were selected, occupying comparable positions in both institutions. Using a descriptive and comparative methodology, data were retrieved from Google Scholar and ResearchGate in October 2024, analyzing total publications, h-index, i10-index, citation count, and research interest score. Findings reveal that Wellspring University shows higher volume of research output on Google Scholar, while Benson Idahosa University demonstrates concentrated impact among a few administrators, particularly on ResearchGate. Citation discrepancies were noted when compared with Edurank figures. Vice-Chancellors and Deans generally recorded higher citation metrics than Heads of Departments, though many administrators had missing or low metrics, indicating uneven research engagement. The study recommends structured research groups, annual publication targets, incentives, standardized profiles, and publication support to improve research visibility and impact.

Keywords: Citation Index; Citation Analysis; Research Output; Google Scholar; ResearchGate;

Introduction

The core objectives for the establishment of universities are teaching and learning, research, and community engagement and service. Research output of faculty is very essential as it contributes to national development and influences the national and global ranking of universities. Consequently, many universities encourage lecturers to contribute to the body of knowledge through research activities and publications in reputable journals. Publishing is a major criterion for promotion of academic staff in Nigeria and other developing countries. The popular phrase "publish or perish" reflects the importance attached to research publications in the academic community. This pressure has, however, pushed some lecturers and researchers to pursue frivolous means of meeting publication requirements by submitting sub-standard articles to predatory journals, which are largely for-profit outlets.

The number of predatory journals has continued to increase due to the patronage they receive from desperate academic staff, with some publishers even spamming researchers' emails to solicit manuscripts (Beall, 2017). Although such staff may accumulate the required number of publications, their actual contribution to knowledge may be minimal if these outlets are not indexed in quality academic databases. Research productivity is often measured by the extent to which publications are used by other scholars through citations (Adeyemi, 2021). In essence, quality of research output is more important than quantity, yet measuring quality remains difficult. Several platforms and metrics are therefore used to assess research impact, including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Scival (Scopus), and Web of Science. Among these, Google Scholar's h-index and ResearchGate metrics are the most widely used and are adopted for this study.

University staff consist of academic and non-academic personnel occupying various positions. Academic staff members frequently perform administrative duties such as heading departments and faculties, serving as deans, directors of units and programs, university librarians, and vice-chancellors. These academic administrators play crucial roles in the effective management of academic programs, staff, students, and resources. By virtue of their status, they are also expected to engage in research, which remains a prerequisite for promotion and appointment into many administrative offices. In this study, academic administrators refer to staff on the academic cadre who simultaneously hold administrative responsibilities, as distinct from non-academic administrators who are not required to be research productive.

Recent Edurank rankings placed Benson Idahosa University 55th and Wellspring University 80th out of 157 Nigerian universities. The ranking reported 413 publications and 1,358 citations for Benson Idahosa University, and 85 publications with 163 citations for Wellspring University. These figures are considerably lower than those of the University of Ibadan, ranked first with 29,977 publications and 321,578 citations. However, such aggregated data may not accurately represent the research output of lecturers and administrators in these institutions, which may affect their ranking.

Against this backdrop, this study investigates the Citation Index Analysis and Research Output of Academic Administrators in Private Universities in Benin City, Nigeria. Academic administrators are selected because they are expected to be the main drivers of research activities, and studying all lecturers would be impracticable. The study focuses on Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University and is limited to data retrieved from Google Scholar and ResearchGate as at October 2024. On this premise, the study seeks to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the research output of academic administrators in Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University?
2. What is the citation index of academic administrators in the universities?
3. How does the research output differ between Google Scholar and ResearchGate?
4. How does the citation index differ between Google Scholar and ResearchGate?

Literature Review

Research Productivity of Academic Administrators

Research productivity is expected by all academic staff working in a university as it form the basis for their appointment, promotion and even for retaining tenure of staff, it also forms one of the criteria used to rank universities across the world. It is therefore expected that academic staff should continually engage in research activities which encompass publication of books, journal articles, conference attendance and presentations, attainment of research grants and all other scholarly activities. Swart (2022) accentuated that researcher's reputation is influenced by the quantity and quality of his or her publications and that these publications are often considered for selection and promotion in academic institutions. In fact, as is usually the case in academia, a researcher's publications are considered more important by an institution than is the actual teaching of the researcher. Swart further stated that records of these publications are usually kept by an academic in a resume or on an online platform, such as LinkedIn, Google Scholar or ResearchGate. Both Google Scholar and ResearchGate provide specific metrics that are related to a researcher's publications, such as the total number of citations, the h-Index, and the ResearchGate Score (RGS).

Similarly, Singh and Singh (2019) bared that various metrics, quantitative and qualitative have been devised over the years to measure the research impact of the authors. These author level metrics are also being applied to the affiliation institutes to measure their research impact as well. A citation metric, h-index has made its way into many popular citation databases like Scopus, Google Scholar, etc. they further stated that academic advancement in Universities is often measured by research output of lecturers in the institution. University ranking bodies like World Universities (ARWU), also known as Shanghai Ranking, QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, Edurank, National Universities Commission and so on often use citation index as part of the ranking parameters. This ranking helps universities in certain ways which include getting funds from various agencies for research and development, increased student enrollment by making the university a preferred choice. To this end, universities rely on their faculty to publish quality research work. Some faculty on the other hand have devised unethical ways in ensuring their work count as quality through unnecessary self-citation, publishing conference paper instead of journal articles to avoid the rigors of peer-review since the citation of any research material counts on the various academic database platforms.

In the same vein, Sadeghi-Bazargani et al. (2019) mentioned that analyzing scientific performance of institutions, universities and researchers has become an inevitable and important priority and the result of scientometric analysis can be used for policymaking on research budgeting and promotion. Moreover, the results could prove useful for ranking universities and institutions. Rama (2020) suggested that there is a need to identify the author impact factor and publication productivity factor so as to know the actual research contributions of particular author and institutes. Thus, metrics like author impact factor and publication productivity factor may be considered while awarding the research scholars and ranking institutions for its individual research output and impact.

Citation Metrics and Research Visibility

H-index which was invented by a physicist named Jorge Hirsch at the University of California is a numerical metric of how influential and productive a researcher is. H-index is considered the best numerical indicator that measures researchers' professional productivity by showing how many of the researchers' publication has been cited in other publications and by other researchers (Kpolovie, 2018). Several platforms like Research Gate, Scopus, Publish or Perish, Google scholar and so on has since adopted the h-index as a metric for measuring researchers influence and productivity. The i10 index which is the number of researchers' work that has been cited up to 10 times by other researchers is another indicator that shows the quality of work published by researchers.

Meanwhile, van der Aalst et al. (2023) disclosed that the easiest way to evaluate productivity and impact is to simply count the number of published papers and the number of citations. Clearly, this is very naïve because it is possible to publish many papers that are incremental or of low quality. Counting the total number of citations is also problematic because a researcher may be an ''accidental co-author'' of a high-cited paper. This does not say much about the contribution of the author, and citations tend to follow a power-law distribution (i.e., just a few papers attract most of the citations). To address the limitations of simply counting papers and citations, the scientific community has created journal and conference rankings, and metrics like the well-known Hirsch index. Furthermore, when it comes to research output, the sum of the research outputs of the institution's researchers matters. When it comes to reputation, both current staff and earlier students and staff matter. This shows that hiring and retaining the best researchers is vital for universities. On benefits of having research profiles by researchers on various platforms, Hohunskyi et al. (2016) determined that the use of profiles by scientists in Google Scholar, ORCID, Mendeley, Academia, ResearchGate increases the visibility of publications in the information space and has a positive effect on increasing citation rates.

Platform-based differences in bibliometrics

Google scholar is commonly used by researchers in Nigeria to showcase their research output and productivity especially as the accreditation body the National Universities Commission (NUC) and other ranking bodies like Edurank will always encourage and advice lecturers to update their Google scholar page. Google scholar which started operation in November 2004 is a searchable database that focuses on scholarly publications like journal articles, it permits scholars to search for articles, access articles, cross-reference articles with other articles, and keep up with current articles as they are released (Swart, 2022). Google Scholar is effective in identifying highly cited document as this is evident in a study by Martin-Martin et al. (2017) who sought to find out if Google scholar could be used as a viable tool for bibliometric analysis and the result showed that that there was a strong correlation between a document's citations and where it appeared in the search results which proves that Google scholar is reliable.

Research gate on the other hand is another publication database for scholars and researchers. It began operation in May 2008 with an advantage of being a social network for researchers. It allows users to share their research publications, find collaborators, access job boards and to ask and answer questions in real-time (Swart, 2022). Another benefit of Research gate is that it allows

users to upload preprint and other research materials which gives room for early impact and ability to view all current research output.

Dorgu, and Orluwene (2019) in their comparison of h-index; citation index of African researchers and world h-index; citation index recommended that institutions make it compulsory for faculty members to open Google scholar citation account. The researchers also reiterated the benefits institutions will derive from opening an institutional Google scholar account as it enables cumulative research index like number of citations, h-index, and i10-index of all researchers. It helps in institutional growth and future planning, to get and apply for funded research and grant, for students' placement, collaborative research, industry collaboration and International recognition. Similarly, it was noted by Kpolovie and Dorgu (2019) that citation impact indicators are also used to reward individuals for their distinguished contribution to the knowledge base. Nobel Prize Organizations, for example, select recipients of prizes on the basis of their remarkable achievements in literature, physics, chemistry and physiology or medicine. This decision is mainly based on the number of citations in high impact journals of their ground-breaking research in respective fields.

Recent bibliometric studies continue to emphasize that citation counts and research visibility differ substantially across academic profiling platforms. Martín-Martínet et al., (2018) demonstrated that Google Scholar offers broader citation coverage than ResearchGate, largely because it indexes a wider range of scholarly materials such as theses, preprints, conference proceedings, and institutional repositories. Their findings confirm the reliability of Google Scholar as a tool for evaluating institutional research performance, supporting earlier arguments by Swart (2022) and van der Aalst et al. (2023) that comprehensive indexing produces more accurate representations of academic productivity. Likewise, Ortega (2020) noted that ResearchGate metrics depend heavily on user participation and the uploading of full-text articles, which may create apparent citation advantages for more active researchers. These insights are particularly relevant to the present study, which observes that differences in citation and publication counts between Benson Idahosa University and Wellspring University may reflect varying degrees of engagement with the two platforms rather than true disparities in research quality.

Despite the growing body of literature on research productivity, citation metrics, and platform-based bibliometric variations, most existing studies have concentrated predominantly on teaching and research faculty within public or large research-intensive universities, with limited attention given to academic administrators who simultaneously occupy managerial and scholarly roles. Furthermore, while several scholars have examined citation patterns and research visibility across platforms such as Google Scholar and ResearchGate, these analyses are rarely situated within the context of private universities in Nigeria, and even less within specific institutional settings. Prior studies also tend to assess either institutional research output or individual researcher performance in isolation, without systematically comparing how different academic profiling platforms portray the research productivity of university administrators. Consequently, there remains a clear conceptual gap regarding how citation indices and research output of academic administrators in private universities are distributed and represented across Google Scholar and ResearchGate. This study therefore seeks to address this gap by conducting a citation index analysis and evaluation of research output of academic administrators in selected private universities in Benin City, Nigeria,

thereby providing empirical evidence that can inform institutional policy, research management strategies, and benchmarking practices.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive comparative method to compare the citation and research output of academic administrators in two private universities in Benin-city. The category of administrators that formed part of the population were selected using purposive sampling technique. A total number of forty administrators were selected for this study. twenty each from the universities under study. The twenty administrators that were selected have their positions present in the two universities. The citation index and research output were searched and reviewed using data obtained from Research Gate and Google scholar. These platforms were used because they are the commonly used platforms to track research output and citation index in this part of the world and because the content are open access and data can be easily accessible in comparison to Scopus and Web of Science with restricted access to author profile. Data gathered include the total number of research output, the h-index, i10 index and research interest score of every academic administrators in the universities. Only publicly available data were used and no personal identifiers was misused.

Results

Research Output of Academic Administrators in the Universities
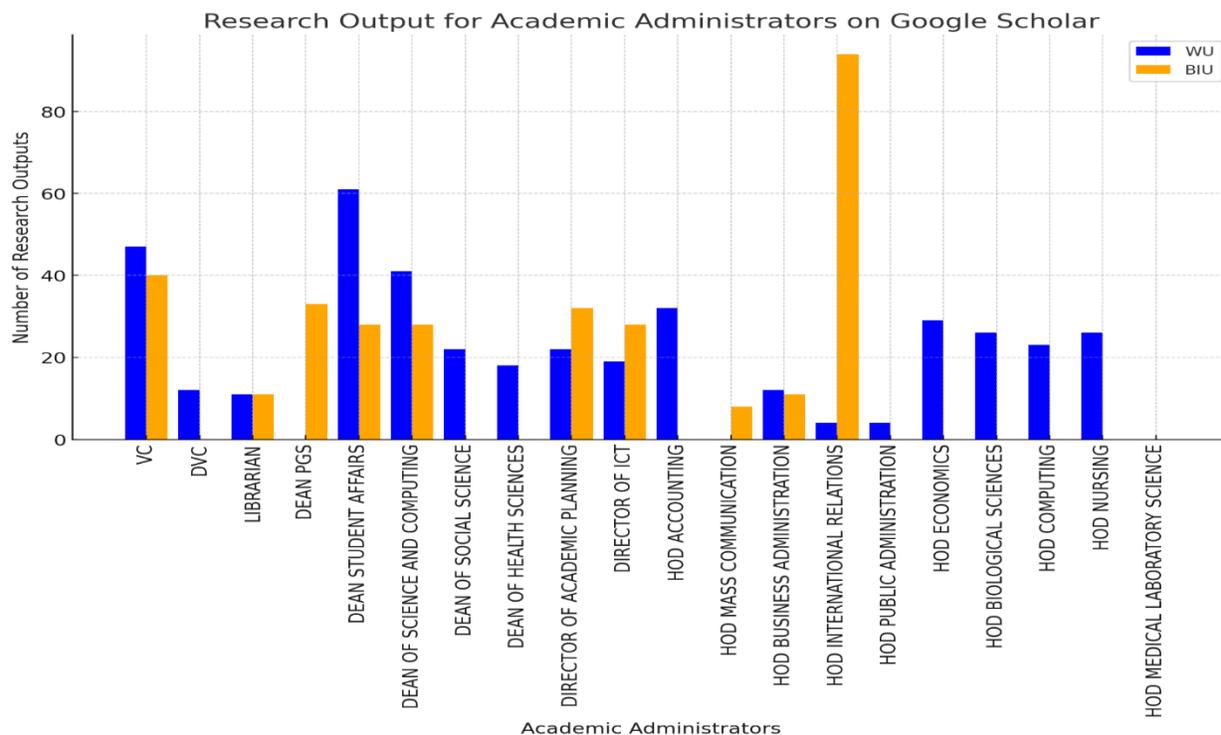

Figure 1: Research Output of Academic Administrators on Google Scholar

The chart indicates that the Dean of Student Affairs at Wellspring University has the highest research output among Wellspring administrators, with 61 publications on Google Scholar.

However, the Head of the Department of International Relations at Benson Idahosa University holds the highest overall research output, with 94 publications.

Additionally, several positions at Benson Idahosa University, including the Heads of Departments for Public Administration, Economics, Biological Sciences, Computing, and Nursing Science, have no recorded research output on Google Scholar.
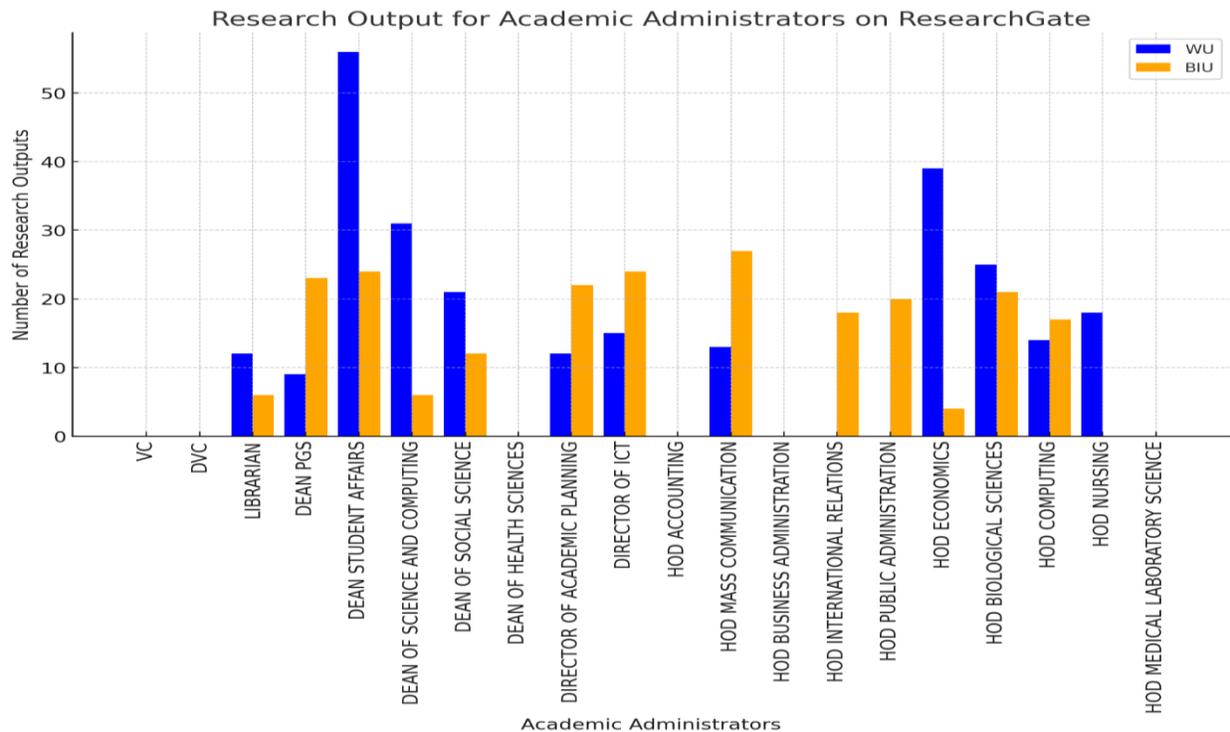

Figure 2: Research Output of Academic Administrators on ResearchGate

The Dean of Student Affairs at Wellspring University continues to demonstrate high research productivity on ResearchGate, with 56 publications recorded. Additionally, the Head of the Economics Department at Wellspring University shows an increase in research output, with 39 publications on ResearchGate, compared to 29 on Google Scholar. Notably, the Vice-Chancellors from both universities do not have their research records available on ResearchGate. Some positions at Benson Idahosa University, such as the Heads of the Departments of Mass Communication (27) and Public Administration (20), exhibit higher research output on ResearchGate compared to their Google Scholar presence (8 and 0 publications, respectively). Overall, Benson Idahosa University administrators display a more evenly distributed research output on ResearchGate, whereas on Google Scholar, several administrators have little to no presence.
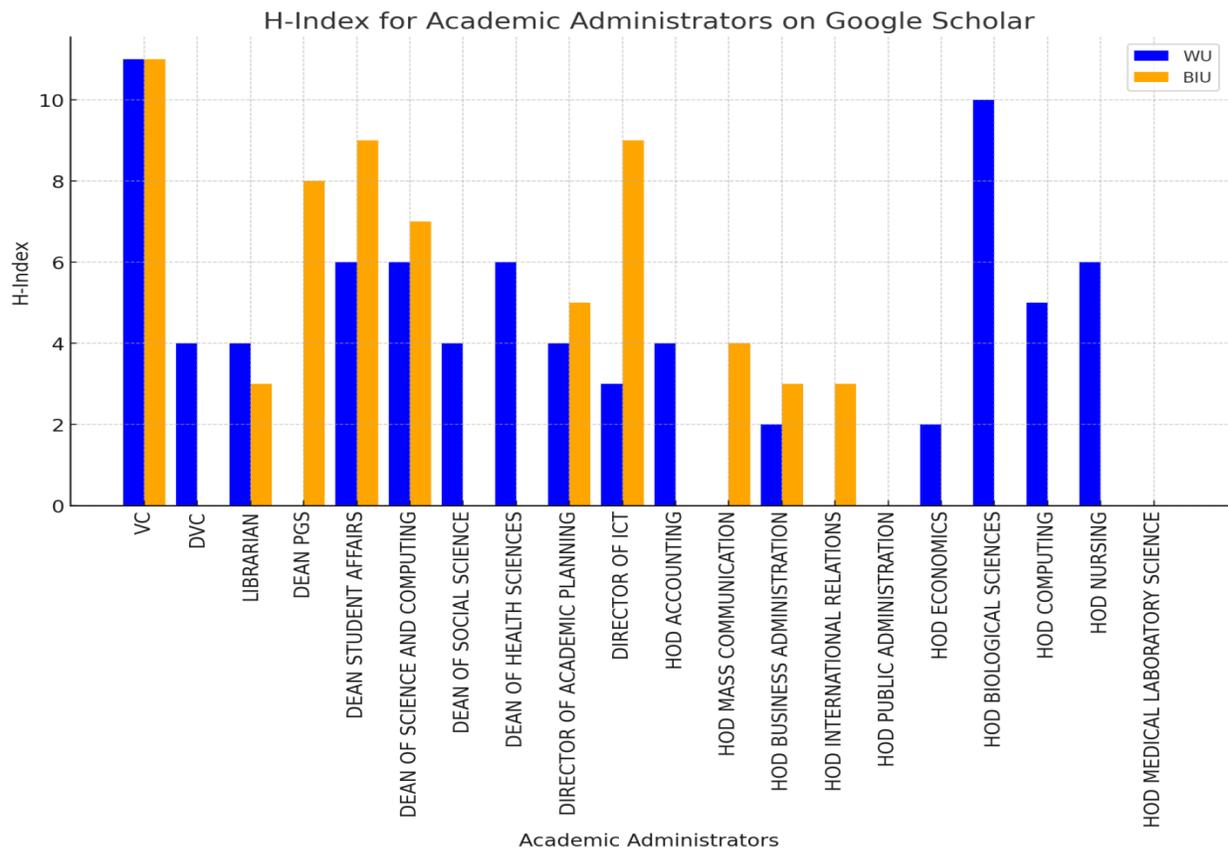
Figure 3: H-Index distribution for academic administrators on Google Scholar for both WU and BIU.

The Vice-Chancellors of Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University hold the highest H-index of 11. They are followed by the Head of the Biological Sciences Department at Wellspring University, who has an H-index of 10. At Benson Idahosa University, the Dean of Student Affairs and the Director of ICT also demonstrate relatively high H-indices of 9 each. In contrast, the lowest reported H-index values belong to the Head of the International Relations Department (WU) and the Head of the Public Administration Department (WU), both with an H-index of 0, indicating no recorded impact on Google Scholar. Additionally, several positions at Benson Idahosa University lack recorded H-index values, whereas Wellspring University generally has more reported data.
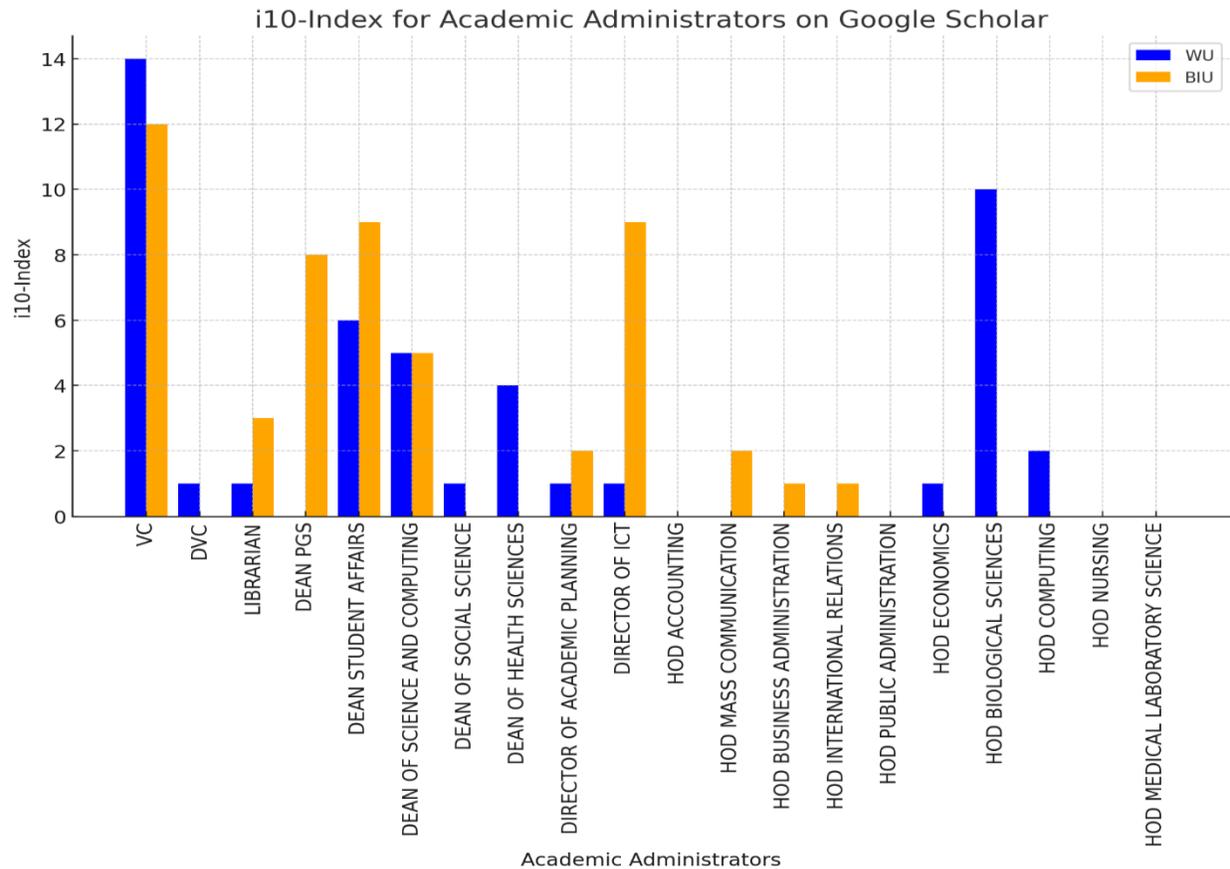
Figure 4: i10-Index distribution for academic administrators on Google Scholar for both WU and BIU.

The Vice-Chancellors of Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University have the highest i10-Index, with 14 and 12, respectively. They are followed by the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at Wellspring University, who holds an i10-Index of 10. At Benson Idahosa University, both the Dean of Student Affairs and the Director of ICT have i10-Index values of 9, indicating a strong research impact. However, several positions at Benson Idahosa University have missing or very low i10-Index values. At Wellspring University, the Heads of Departments for Accounting, International Relations, Public Administration, and Nursing Science all have an i10-Index of 0, meaning they do not have any publications with at least ten citations. Overall, the i10-Index trend aligns with previous research output patterns, where Vice-Chancellors, Deans, and Directors tend to have the highest scores.
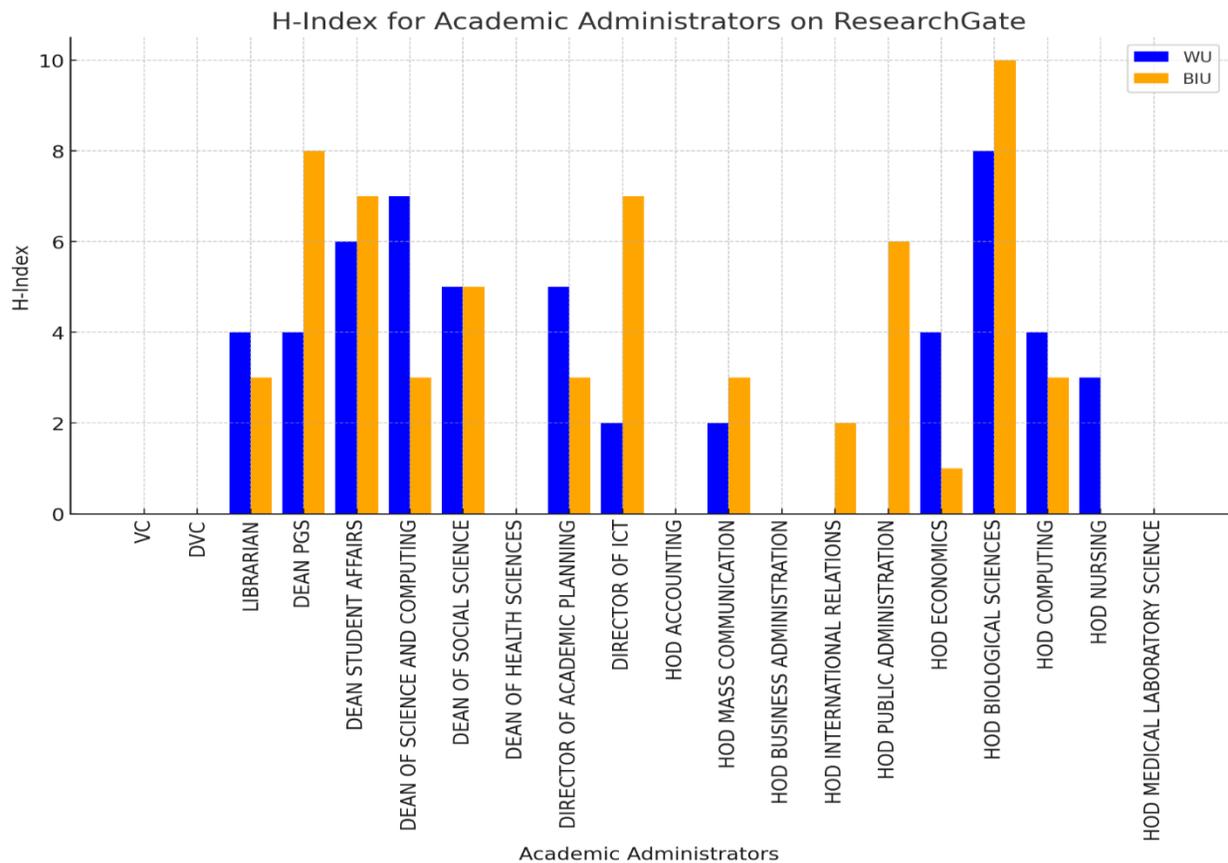
Figure 5: H-Index Distribution of Academic Administrators on ResearchGate (WU & BIU)

The Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at Benson Idahosa University has the highest H-Index on ResearchGate, with a score of 10. This is followed closely by the Head of Biological Sciences at Wellspring University and the Dean of Postgraduate School at Benson Idahosa University, both of whom have an H-Index of 8. Other administrators also demonstrate notable research impact on ResearchGate. The Dean of Science and Computing at Wellspring University, the Director of ICT at Benson Idahosa University, and the Dean of Student Affairs at Benson Idahosa University each have an H-Index of 7, reflecting a strong research presence. The Dean of Student Affairs at Wellspring University and the Head of the Department of Public Administration at Benson Idahosa University follow closely with an H-Index of 6.

Despite these strong performances, many positions at both Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University have low or missing H-Index values, particularly at the HOD level. However, certain positions, such as the Head of the Department of Public Administration at Benson Idahosa University, with an H-Index of 6, and the Head of the Department of Mass Communication at Benson Idahosa University, with an H-Index of 3, exhibit more research activity on ResearchGate than on Google Scholar.
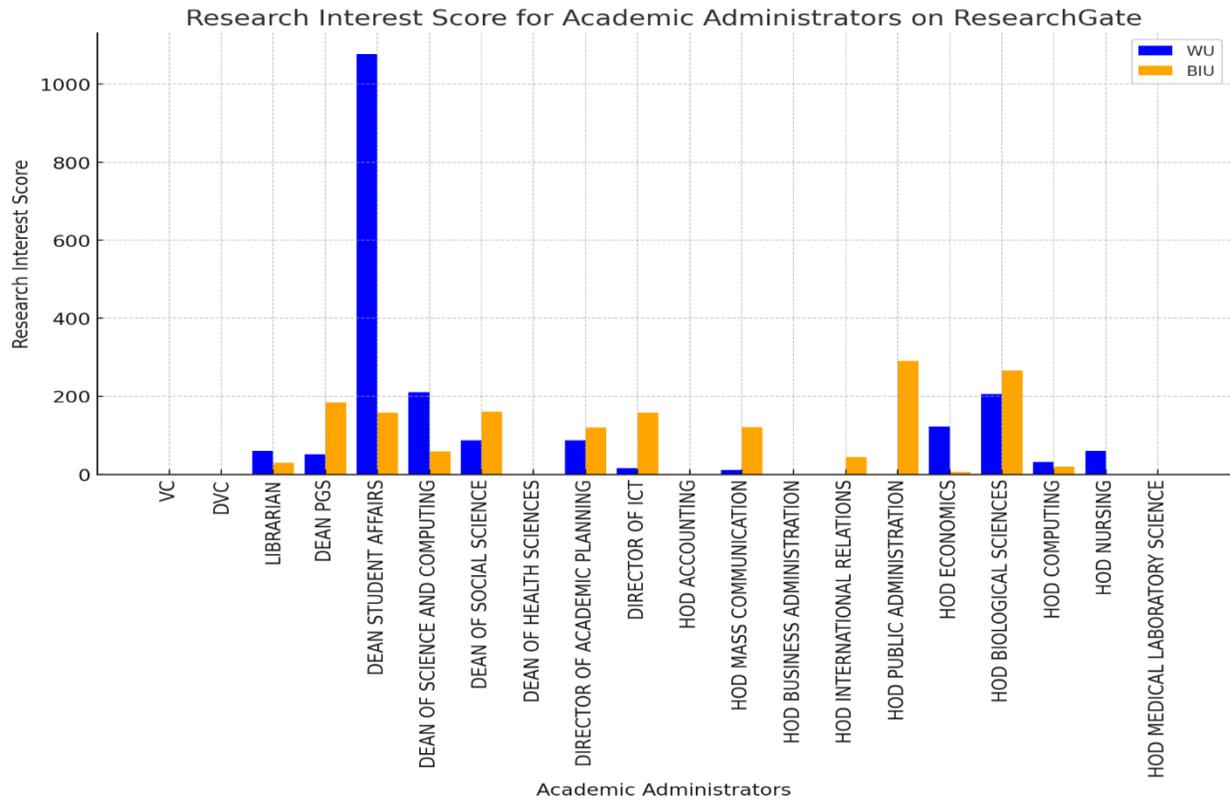
Figure 6: Research Interest Score Distribution of Academic Administrators on ResearchGate

The Dean of Student Affairs at Wellspring University has the highest Research Interest Score on ResearchGate, with an impressive 1078, standing out significantly among all administrators. This is followed by the Head of the Department of Public Administration at Benson Idahosa University, who has a Research Interest Score of 290.1. Other administrators with notable research interest scores include the Heads of the Department of Biological Sciences, with 266.1 at Benson Idahosa University and 205.4 at Wellspring University. Additionally, the Dean of Postgraduate School at Benson Idahosa University has a score of 183, while the Dean of Social Science at Benson Idahosa University and the Director of ICT at Benson Idahosa University have scores of 160.3 and 157.8, respectively. Despite these strong individual performances, many positions at Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University have low or missing research interest scores, particularly at the HOD level, indicating limited engagement or visibility on ResearchGate.
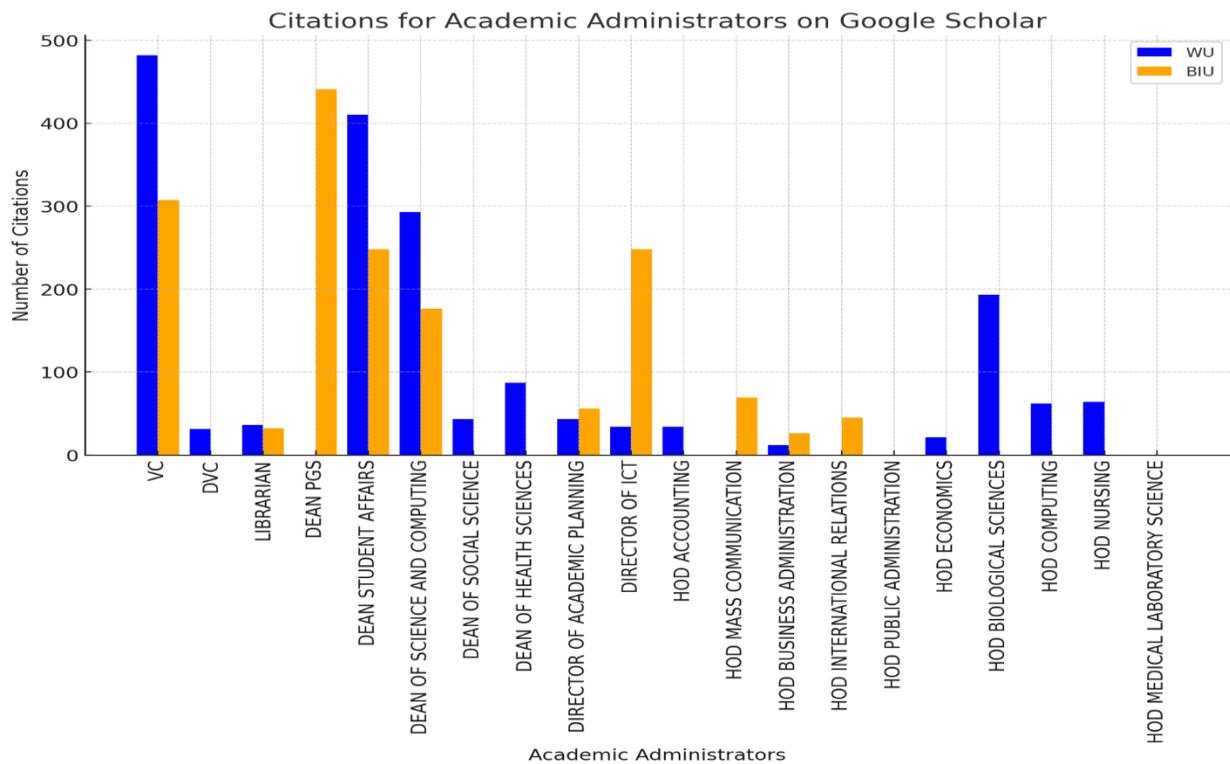
Figure 7: Citation count distribution for academic administrators on Google Scholar for both WU and BIU.

The Vice-Chancellor of Wellspring University has the highest number of citations on Google Scholar, with a total of 482 citations. This is followed closely by the Dean of Postgraduate School at Benson Idahosa University, who has 441 citations, and the Dean of Student Affairs at Wellspring University, with 410 citations.

Other administrators with significant citation counts include the Vice-Chancellor of Benson Idahosa University, who has 307 citations, and the Dean of Science and Computing at Wellspring University, with 293 citations. Additionally, both the Dean of Student Affairs and the Director of ICT at Benson Idahosa University have 248 citations each. The Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at Wellspring University has 193 citations, while the Dean of Science and Computing at Benson Idahosa University has 176 citations.

Despite these strong performances, several positions at both Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University have low or missing citation counts, with the majority of positions still under 100 citations, particularly at the HOD level.
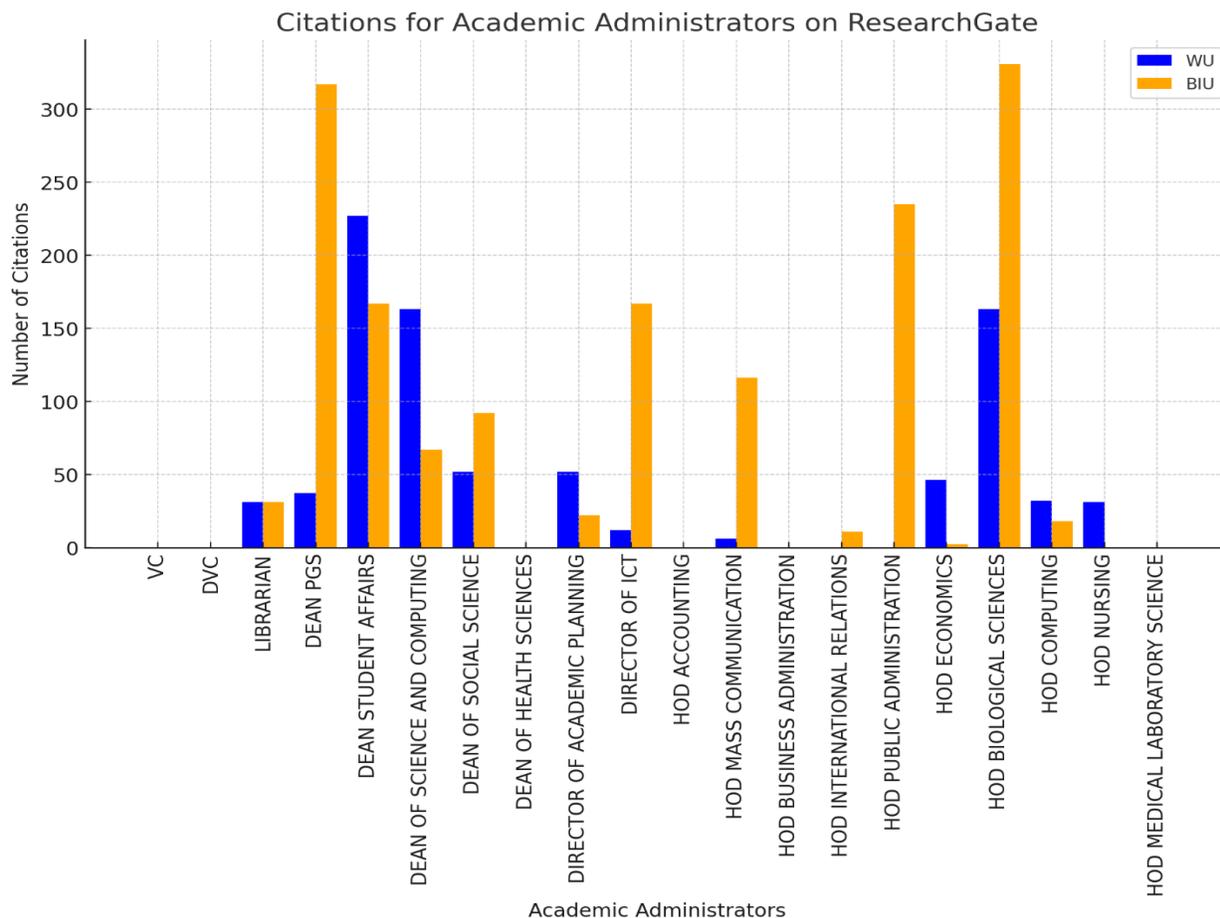
Figure 8: Citation count distribution for academic administrators on ResearchGate for both WU and BIU.

The Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at Benson Idahosa University has the highest citation count on ResearchGate, with 331 citations. This is followed by the Dean of Postgraduate School at Benson Idahosa University, who has 317 citations, and the Head of the Department of Public Administration at Benson Idahosa University, with 235 citations. Among administrators at Wellspring University, the Dean of Student Affairs holds the highest citation count on ResearchGate, with 227 citations. This is followed by the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences and the Dean of Science and Computing, both of whom have 163 citations.

Other administrators with notable citation records include the Dean of Student Affairs at Benson Idahosa University and the Director of ICT at Benson Idahosa University, each with 167 citations, as well as the Head of the Department of Mass Communication at Benson Idahosa University, with 116 citations. Despite these notable performances, several positions at both Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University have low or missing citation counts, particularly at the HOD level.

Discussion of findings

Research Output of Academic Administrators in Universities

The study findings indicate that Wellspring University has a stronger research presence on Google Scholar, particularly in terms of publication volume and citation counts. Research output at Wellspring University appears to have a direct correlation with citation impact, suggesting that a broader range of administrators contribute to scholarly publications. In contrast, Benson Idahosa University's research impact is concentrated among a smaller group of high-impact individuals, meaning that only a few administrators produce research with significant scholarly influence. Additionally, some BIU administrators perform better on ResearchGate than on Google Scholar, which may be attributed to greater adoption of ResearchGate among the institution's researchers compared to Google Scholar. The observed pattern in which Wellspring University demonstrates stronger research visibility on Google Scholar compared to Benson Idahosa University aligns with findings by Martín-Martín, Orduna-Malea, and López-Cózar (2018), who reported that Google Scholar generally provides broader citation coverage and higher citation counts than ResearchGate, largely due to its wider inclusion of document types and greater adoption among academics. This supports the notion that institutional visibility on Google Scholar can significantly enhance perceived research impact. However, the concentration of research influence among a few administrators at Benson Idahosa University reflects the typical skewness of citation distributions noted by Bornmann and Leydesdorff (2017), who found that a small proportion of researchers often account for a majority of citations. This suggests that differences in research impact between the two institutions may partly result from uneven distributions of scholarly productivity rather than overall institutional capacity.

Citation Index of Academic Administrators in Universities

At the time of this study, Wellspring University had a total of 1,845 citations on Google Scholar, significantly surpassing the 163 citations reported by Edurank in 2023. This discrepancy suggests possible methodological limitations of Edurank's university ranking. A similar pattern was observed for Benson Idahosa University, which recorded 1,648 citations, compared to the 1,358 citations reported by the ranking body. It is important to note that this study focused only on academic administrators rather than the entire faculty, suggesting that Edurank may have underreported the actual citation figures used in their rankings.

On ResearchGate, Benson Idahosa University recorded a higher number of citations (1,576) compared to Wellspring University (852). This discrepancy may be influenced by institutional policies on the adoption and usage of ResearchGate, as neither Vice-Chancellor from both universities is present on the platform. In terms of H-Index scores, Wellspring University administrators generally rank higher than their Benson Idahosa University counterparts. Additionally, most administrators tend to have higher H-Index scores on Google Scholar than on ResearchGate. However, Benson Idahosa University demonstrates research strength in specific areas on ResearchGate, particularly in Biological Sciences, the Dean of Postgraduate School, and Public Administration, where administrators record high citation counts.

The discrepancies between the citation counts obtained in this study and those reported by Edurank raise valid concerns about the reliability of third-party university ranking metrics. Similar

inconsistencies between institutional self-reported or Google Scholar data and ranking platforms have been documented in recent research. For example, Ochsner, Hug, and Daniel (2023) observed that bibliometric indicators used by ranking systems often fail to accurately represent actual research performance due to limitations in data coverage and methodology. This supports the present finding that Edurank may have underreported citation figures for both Wellspring and Benson Idahosa Universities. Furthermore, the variation between ResearchGate and Google Scholar citation counts aligns with the findings of Martín-Martín, Orduna-Malea, and López-Cózar (2018), who noted that differences in platform adoption, institutional policy, and researcher engagement significantly influence measured impact. The higher H-Index scores recorded on Google Scholar among administrators also reinforce evidence that Google Scholar provides broader and more stable coverage for academic evaluation compared to ResearchGate.

Comparison of Research Output of Academic Administrators in Universities

Overall, Google Scholar records higher research output than ResearchGate for most academic administrators across both institutions. Wellspring University leads in total research output on Google Scholar, with a combined 409 publications, compared to 313 publications from Benson Idahosa University administrators. On ResearchGate, the research output between Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University is more balanced, though Wellspring University still maintains a higher overall research output, with 265 publications, compared to 224 from Benson Idahosa University.

The finding that Google Scholar records higher research output than ResearchGate for most academic administrators across both institutions is consistent with existing evidence on platform coverage and data scope. Recent bibliometric analyses confirm that Google Scholar typically indexes a broader range of scholarly materials including conference proceedings, theses, and institutional repositories, resulting in higher publication and citation counts compared to ResearchGate (Martín-Martín, Orduna-Malea, & López-Cózar, 2018). This broader indexing likely explains why Wellspring University demonstrates greater total research output on Google Scholar than Benson Idahosa University. However, the relatively balanced publication numbers observed on ResearchGate reflect differences in researcher engagement and institutional adoption of the platform. Ortega (2020) similarly found that ResearchGate visibility depends more on user activity and self-archiving practices than on total research production. Consequently, Wellspring's stronger output across both platforms suggests a higher level of institutional participation in research dissemination, while the near parity on ResearchGate highlights the influence of individual researcher behavior on digital scholarly visibility.

Comparison of Citation Index of Academic Administrators in Universities

In general, citation counts on Google Scholar tend to be higher than those on ResearchGate, making Google Scholar a more comprehensive platform for indexing citations across various sources. However, some academic administrators have higher citation counts on ResearchGate than on Google Scholar. For example, the Director of Academic Planning at Wellspring University has 52 citations on ResearchGate, compared to 43 on Google Scholar. Similarly, the Head of the Department of Mass Communication at Benson Idahosa University has 116 citations on ResearchGate, compared to 69 on Google Scholar, while the Head of the Department of

Economics at Wellspring University records 46 citations on ResearchGate, more than 21 on Google Scholar.

Furthermore, the difference that was revealed may be attributed to the fact that ResearchGate allows researchers to upload preprints and even hardcopy research articles, increasing visibility and citation potential on the platform. Despite these variations, some administrators maintain strong citation records across both platforms. Notable examples include the Dean of Postgraduate School at Benson Idahosa University (441 citations on Google Scholar, 317 on ResearchGate), the Dean of Student Affairs at Wellspring University (410 citations on Google Scholar, 227 on ResearchGate), and the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at Wellspring University (193 citations on Google Scholar, 163 on ResearchGate).

The higher citation counts observed on Google Scholar compared to ResearchGate align with prior research demonstrating Google Scholar's broader indexing capacity and more comprehensive citation coverage. Martín-Martín, Orduna-Malea, and López-Cózar (2018) found that Google Scholar consistently records higher citation metrics than other platforms because it includes a wider variety of scholarly outputs, such as theses, reports, and conference papers. Nonetheless, the cases in which certain administrators record higher citation counts on ResearchGate highlight an important nuance also noted in Ortega's (2020) analysis that ResearchGate's metrics are strongly influenced by researcher engagement and the uploading of full-text articles or preprints. This feature can temporarily enhance citation visibility for active users. Therefore, while Google Scholar remains the more comprehensive citation source overall, the higher citation counts for specific individuals on ResearchGate likely reflect differential levels of researcher participation and self-archiving practices rather than fundamental differences in scholarly impact.

Conclusion

Overall, this study provides useful insights into the research productivity of academic administrators at Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University. The findings highlight institutional research strengths and weaknesses, emphasizing the need for strategic improvements in research outputs, visibility, impact and collaboration. The study indicates that both Wellspring University and Benson Idahosa University have a higher research output and citation index than previously reported by Edurank in 2023. While Wellspring University demonstrates greater research output, faculty members are encouraged to prioritize publishing in high-impact journals to enhance their research visibility and global reach. Similarly, faculty members at Benson Idahosa University are advised to increase their research output to align with their strong citation numbers, thereby enhancing the university's institutional ranking. By implementing these recommendations, WU and BIU can significantly strengthen their research impact, increase global visibility, and improve their academic standing in national and international rankings.

Recommendations

Institutional Policy: Based on the findings, Wellspring University demonstrates higher research output, though its impact varies across departments. In contrast, Benson Idahosa University has strong research influence in specific areas but a lower overall publication volume. To address these disparities, both universities should promote collaboration between high and low performing researchers to enhance publication output. This can be achieved by establishing structured research

groups within the university. Additionally, annual research productivity goals should be set for faculty, including minimum publication requirements. To further incentivize research engagement, the universities should recognize and reward faculty members with high research output and citation impact through funding incentives and institutional grants.

Faculty capacity building: The findings also highlight that several BIU administrators have high citation counts despite a lower publication volume, whereas Wellspring University administrators produce more research but do not always achieve high citation impact. To address this, all faculty members should be encouraged to optimize and update their research profiles on Google Scholar and ResearchGate. Additionally, standardized name formats should be maintained across research platforms to prevent citation discrepancies caused by name variations. Faculty should also be encouraged to publish in reputable open-access journals to improve readership and citation potential. Furthermore, the universities should develop an institutional repository where faculty can archive their research for wider accessibility.

Research visibility and dissemination: To further improve research visibility, faculty members should be encouraged to submit their work to indexed journals such as Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and AJOL. The universities should also consider offering publication fee assistance for high-impact, peer-reviewed journals. Training sessions should be provided to help faculty members leverage social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and Facebook to promote their research output. Lastly, both universities should focus on retaining and recruiting research-oriented faculty members to strengthen their institutional research profile and global impact.

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