



## Influence of Academic Activities on Research Productivity of University Lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria

**Abubakar Adam Dahir. (Cln)<sup>1</sup>**  
Averdforever@gmail.com  
+23409067073587

**Aliyu Ahmed Abdallah, (Cln)<sup>1</sup>**  
Senatorialiyuyakudima@gmail.com  
+23432538714

**Amina Ado (Cln)<sup>1</sup>**  
aaado@yumsuk.edu.ng  
+23409037220130.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Library and Information Sciences, Northwest University, Kano.

### Abstract

*This study examined the influence of academic activities on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria. A total of 346 copies of a questionnaire were administered to lecturers across selected universities, out of which 323 were duly completed and returned, representing a 93.4% response rate. The study adopted a survey research design and employed both descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. Findings revealed that heavy teaching workload (72%) and administrative responsibilities (70%) were major hindrances to research productivity, while student supervision (64%), participation in conferences and workshops (78%), and access to ICT and electronic resources (66%) served as facilitators. In terms of research output, 57.9% of lecturers published at least one journal article annually, though only 22% published three or more. Research grants remained a challenge, as only 15.2% had secured external funding, while 35.3% accessed institutional grants. Correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship between academic activities and research productivity ( $r = 0.46$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Regression analysis further showed that facilitating factors significantly enhanced research productivity ( $\beta = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), while hindering factors reduced it ( $\beta = -0.43$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The model explained 38% of the variance in research productivity ( $R^2 = 0.38$ ). The study concludes that academic activities play a dual role, simultaneously facilitating and constraining*

*research productivity depending on institutional support. It recommends policies aimed at reducing excessive teaching and administrative loads while enhancing access to ICT, mentorship, and research funding.*

**Keywords:** Academic activities; Research productivity; University lecturers; Teaching workload; ICT resources; Research grants; Kano State; Nigeria.

### Introduction

Research productivity, often measured by publications in peer-reviewed journals, conference papers, and other scholarly outputs, remains a critical determinant of academic reputation and institutional ranking in higher education (Uwizeye *et al.*, 2021). In developing countries such as Nigeria, research productivity among university lecturers has been reported to be generally low compared to global standards, largely due to limited funding, heavy teaching loads, and poor access to research facilities (Ladipo *et al.*, 2022). These challenges are particularly evident in Northern Nigeria, where lecturers often face institutional and infrastructural constraints that limit their ability to engage fully in scholarly work (Nwokedi and Mohammed, 2023).

Academic activities, including teaching, student supervision, community service, and administrative responsibilities, constitute the core of lecturers' responsibilities. However, the extent to which these activities enhance or hinder research productivity



remains an area of active debate. Studies in Nigerian universities have shown that increased teaching and administrative workload negatively affects lecturers' capacity to publish and participate in research collaborations (Okon and Samuel, 2024). On the other hand, engagement with academic activities such as attending conferences, mentoring students, and utilizing electronic information resources has been found to significantly enhance scholarly output (Owolabi and Lawal, 2025).

In Kano State universities, research productivity is particularly influenced by lecturers' ability to balance these competing academic activities with available institutional support. Understanding the influence of academic activities on research productivity is therefore crucial for policy reforms, institutional planning, and professional development initiatives aimed at strengthening the research culture of universities in the region.

### Statement of the problem

Research productivity remains a major benchmark for assessing the effectiveness of university lecturers, yet it continues to be a challenge in Nigerian higher education. Despite the central role of academic activities such as teaching, supervision, publication, and community service, many lecturers in Nigerian universities struggle to maintain consistent research output. Empirical evidence shows that institutional constraints such as inadequate funding, lack of research infrastructure, and excessive workload significantly hinder lecturers' research productivity (Ladipo *et al.*, 2022).

In Kano State universities, lecturers are expected to balance multiple academic responsibilities, often with limited institutional support. Heavy teaching schedules, administrative duties, and community service commitments consume substantial time and energy, leaving limited opportunities for sustained engagement in research. While academic activities are intended to support both teaching and scholarly output, the reality suggests that they may sometimes serve as competing demands, undermining lecturers' capacity to publish and contribute to knowledge.

Recent findings further reveal that where lecturers have access to electronic resources and supportive academic environments, their research productivity tends to improve significantly (Owolabi and Lawal, 2025).

The problem, therefore, lies in the unclear relationship between academic activities and research productivity among university lecturers in Kano State. It remains uncertain whether these activities facilitate or hinder research output, and to what extent institutional factors exacerbate or mitigate this influence. Addressing this problem is vital for developing strategies to enhance the research culture and global competitiveness of universities in the region.

### Research Objectives

1. To examine the influence of academic activities on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria.
2. To determine the extent to which academic activities facilitate or hinder research output among university lecturers in Kano State.

### Hypotheses

H<sub>01</sub>: Academic activities have no significant influence on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria.

H<sub>11</sub>: Academic activities have a significant influence on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria.

### Review of Related Literature

Academic activities in universities encompass the triad of teaching, research, and community service. In the Nigerian higher education system, lecturers are required to balance these roles alongside administrative duties. Teaching includes delivering lectures, supervising students, and assessing performance, while research entails producing scholarly works, securing grants, and attending academic conferences. Community service involves professional contributions to society and institutional development. According to Ladipo *et*



*al.* (2022), academic activities form the core of lecturers' responsibilities, but when not properly balanced, they can place undue strain on research engagement. Similarly, Nwokedi and Mohammed (2023) assert that the intensity of teaching and administrative assignments in Northern Nigerian universities often undermines lecturers' research capacity.

Research productivity refers to the measurable output of scholarly work, often indicated by publications in peer-reviewed journals, conference presentations, book chapters, and patents. Uwizeye *et al.* (2021) describe research productivity as a key benchmark for evaluating the academic performance of universities globally. In Nigeria, research output remains relatively low due to infrastructural deficits, limited funding, and low incentives for scholarly publishing (Okon and Samuel, 2024). Moreover, studies have shown that the use of digital tools, access to electronic resources, and international collaborations significantly improve research productivity (Owolabi and Lawal, 2025; Chiemekwe *et al.*, 2023).

The relationship between academic activities and research productivity is complex. On one hand, certain academic responsibilities provide opportunities for scholarly development. For instance, supervision of postgraduate students can generate co-authored publications, while participation in conferences and workshops enhances knowledge sharing and collaborative research (Oni and Adekunle, 2022). On the other hand, excessive teaching and administrative workload can negatively affect lecturers' capacity to conduct research. Okon and Samuel (2024) found that high workload significantly reduced lecturers' ability to engage in meaningful research in Nigerian universities.

In Kano State, lecturers face unique challenges related to balancing these activities with research. Nwokedi and Mohammed (2023) highlight that limited access to research grants and infrastructural facilities further compounds the problem. However, recent studies suggest that where lecturers are supported through digital literacy training and access to virtual resources,

their productivity improves considerably (Owolabi and Lawal, 2025; Adeyemi, 2023). This implies that institutional support moderates the influence of academic activities on research output.

## Empirical Studies

Several empirical studies confirm the mixed effects of academic activities on research productivity. A systematic review across African universities revealed that funding, workload, and institutional support are consistent determinants of research output (Uwizeye *et al.*, 2021). Ladipo *et al.* (2022) reported that lecturers in Nigerian federal universities with better access to institutional resources recorded higher productivity compared to those in resource-constrained settings. Similarly, Owolabi and Lawal (2025) established that effective utilization of electronic information resources significantly improved lecturers' scholarly output.

In a study focusing on knowledge-sharing practices, Oni and Adekunle (2022) found that lecturers who actively engaged in seminars, workshops, and collaborative activities had higher publication rates than their counterparts. Conversely, Okon and Samuel (2024) observed that lecturers burdened with large teaching loads published fewer papers. Taken together, these studies demonstrate that while academic activities can serve as enablers of research productivity, they can also act as barriers if not effectively managed within supportive institutional environments.

## Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design to investigate the influence of academic activities on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised lecturers from selected universities in the state, and a total of 346 copies of a structured questionnaire were administered by the researcher with the assistance of one trained research assistant. Out of these, 323 copies were correctly completed, returned, and found useful for analysis,



representing a high response rate. The questionnaire sought information on academic activities and indicators of research productivity. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were employed to summarize responses to the research questions, while inferential statistics including Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis were applied to test the hypotheses and determine the

extent to which academic activities influence research productivity. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version XX) was used for data coding and analysis, and all hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

### Result/ findings

Influence of academic activities on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Academic activities**

Academic Activity Indicator	Agree/Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree/Strongly Disagree (%)
Teaching workload limits research	72	28
Student supervision enhances research	64	36
Administrative duties hinder research	70	30
Conferences/workshops improve productivity	78	22
Community service supports visibility	55	45
ICT/e-resources support research	66	34

The results in Table 3 show that academic activities among lecturers in universities in Kano State exert both facilitating and constraining influences on research productivity. A majority of respondents (72%) agreed that heavy teaching

workload limits their engagement in research, while 70% also affirmed that administrative responsibilities hinder their productivity. These findings suggest that excessive teaching and non-academic duties reduce the time available for scholarly writing and publications. On the positive side, 64% of lecturers indicated that supervising undergraduate and postgraduate students enhances their research, reflecting how

supervision can stimulate collaborative publications and research experience. Similarly, a high proportion (78%) reported that participation in conferences and workshops improves their productivity, emphasizing the importance of professional exposure, networking, and knowledge sharing. Access to ICT and electronic resources was also recognized by 66% of respondents as an important support for research activities. However, perceptions of community service were mixed, with 55% agreeing that it supports research visibility while 45% disagreed, indicating that while community engagement may provide opportunities to showcase research, it can also be a distraction from core academic pursuits. Overall, the evidence shows that while conferences, supervision, and ICT access facilitate research, teaching and administrative workloads remain significant obstacles to research productivity.



**Table 4: Extent to which academic activities facilitate or hinder research output among university lecturers in Kano State.**

Research Output Indicator	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Publishes $\geq 1$ journal article annually	187	57.9
Publishes $\geq 3$ journal articles annually	71	22.0
Presented conference papers in last 3 years	142	44.0
Published book chapters/books (last 5 years)	101	31.3
Secured external research grants	49	15.2
Secured institutional research grants	114	35.3
Engaged in collaborative research	155	48.0
Work cited internationally	97	30.0
Work cited mainly locally	178	55.1

The results in Table 4 reveal that research productivity among university lecturers in Kano State is moderate but uneven across different indicators. A little over half of the respondents (57.9%) reported publishing at least one journal article annually, while only 22% published three or more articles in a year, indicating that consistent high-level publication output is limited to a smaller group of lecturers. Conference participation is also moderate, with 44% presenting papers in the last three years, suggesting some engagement in academic discourse but with room for improvement. Book publishing remains relatively low, as only 31.3% had authored or co-authored book chapters or

books in the past five years. In terms of funding, research grants are a major challenge, with only 15.2% securing external grants and 35.3% accessing institutional ones, showing a heavy reliance on limited internal funding opportunities. Collaboration was reported by 48% of respondents, reflecting that almost half of the lecturers engage in joint research projects, though mostly at local levels. Research visibility is also modest, as 55.1% indicated their work was cited mainly locally, while only 30% reported international citations. Overall, the findings highlight that while lecturers are contributing to research through journal publications, conferences, and collaborations, challenges remain in achieving higher publication volumes, attracting external grants, and gaining international recognition for their work.

**Table 5: Academic activities have no significant influence on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria**

Variable	r	p-value	Interpretation
Academic Activities $\leftrightarrow$ Research Productivity	0.46	0.001**	Moderate positive correlation (significant)

The result in Table 5 indicates a moderate positive and statistically significant correlation ( $r = 0.46$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between academic activities and research





productivity of university lecturers in Kano State. This finding suggests that lecturers who are more actively engaged in academic activities—such as student supervision, attending conferences, and using ICT resources—tend to

produce more research outputs, including journal publications, conference papers, and collaborative projects. The significance level ( $p < 0.01$ ) confirms that the relationship is not due to chance, meaning academic activities play an important role in shaping research productivity. In practical terms, this implies that enhancing lecturers' participation in academic activities could contribute to improving their research output, provided that the hindrances such as excessive teaching workload and administrative responsibilities are minimized.

**Table 6: Academic activities have a significant influence on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria**

Predictor Variable	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	Remark
Facilitating Factors (mentorship, ICT, support)	0.61	7.22	0.000**	Significant
Hindering Factors (workload, admin duties, poor funding)	–0.43	–5.36	0.000**	Significant

Model  $R^2 = 0.38 \rightarrow$  Academic activities explain 38% of variance in research productivity.

The results in Table 6 show that both facilitating and hindering factors of academic activities significantly influence the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State. Facilitating factors such as mentorship, ICT use, and institutional support had a strong positive effect ( $\beta = 0.61$ ,  $t = 7.22$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that when these supports are available, lecturers' research productivity improves considerably. On the other hand, hindering factors such as heavy workload, administrative duties, and poor funding exerted a significant negative effect ( $\beta = -0.43$ ,  $t = -5.36$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting that these

challenges reduce lecturers' ability to engage effectively in research. The model's coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.38$ ) shows that academic activities collectively explain 38% of the variance in research productivity, meaning that while academic activities are important predictors, other

factors such as personal motivation, collaboration opportunities, and external partnerships also contribute to lecturers' research performance. Overall, the results highlight the dual nature of academic activities: while they can facilitate research when adequately supported, they can equally hinder productivity when workloads and administrative responsibilities are excessive.

## Conclusion

The study examined the influence of academic activities on the research productivity of university lecturers in Kano State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that while certain academic activities such as student supervision, conferences, workshops, and the use of ICT facilities significantly enhance lecturers' research output, factors such as excessive teaching workload, administrative responsibilities, and inadequate funding hinder their productivity. The correlation and regression results confirmed that academic activities have a moderate but significant influence on research productivity, accounting for 38% of the variance. This highlights the dual role of academic engagements: they can



both support and obstruct effective research performance depending on how they are managed. Therefore, fostering supportive academic environments and reducing hindrances are essential for improving lecturers' contributions to knowledge creation and dissemination.

## Recommendations

3. **Reduction of Workload and Administrative Burden**  
University management should review teaching loads and administrative responsibilities of lecturers to ensure a balance between instructional duties and time for research.
4. **Provision of Adequate Institutional Support**  
Access to research grants, mentorship programs, ICT infrastructure, and well-equipped libraries should be expanded to strengthen lecturers' research capacity.
5. **Encouragement of Professional Development**  
Lecturers should be encouraged and supported to attend conferences, workshops, and training programs, both locally and internationally, to improve their research competencies and visibility.
6. **Strengthening Collaborative Research**  
Universities should establish formal frameworks for interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration to boost the quality and impact of lecturers' research productivity.

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