Research output in Irish H.E. academic libraries 2000-2015

Terry O’Brien & Kieran Cronin
Waterford Institute of Technology Libraries
Do academic librarians in Irish Higher Education publish?

“very few Irish academic librarians publish in the peer-reviewed literature”

“develop a culture of writing among librarians”

Fallon (2009)
Research output in 21 Irish HE libraries

- Review
- Quantify
- Analysis
- Culture, motivations, barriers, why not ...
- Peer-reviewed
- Core LIS publications
Mixed method approach

Online survey / questionnaire

Response rate 28%

Content Analysis
+ literature search
+ scoping

90-100 articles met parameters
Some parameters

- Only written or co-authored by staff from H.E.
- Self-efficacy
- Broad definition of a written paper and what constituted a core LIS journal
- Collaborations, cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional included
- Solo (59%) Co-authored (41%)
- Gender
- Professional / non-professional

Predictors for publishing

“Level of educational attainment and years’ library experience are more meaningful factors”
93 papers

➔ In general terms, modest growth since 2008
➔ 44% categorized as Open Access - increases to 65% since 2013, definite upward trend
➔ ½ of 10 most published in journals are OA publications
15 journals published in just once
85% of all papers published in just 15 titles

29 journals
What are we writing about?

A wide variety of themes and topics ....

- Information literacy
- eResources, eBooks, open source, resources
- Information seeking/searching behaviour
- Collections (special, cataloguing, bibliographic, metadata, physical)
- Leadership, management, change
- Writing, publishing
- Staffing
Methods

“... predisposition toward papers of empirical, evidential or case-study type ...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodologies most used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case studies (including pilot studies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective, opinion, guidelines, program, report, project management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those librarians that write, do so ...

Collaboratively with other librarians

Mostly with internal colleagues

Rarely outside their sector

Seldom outside LIS
Sample Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff number totals</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University total staff</td>
<td>534.5 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IoT total staff</td>
<td>216.5 (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IoT &amp; University</td>
<td>751 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondent had a research paper published in an academic journal

Yes, 50
No, 160
Submitted, not published, 2

75.5%
Profile of respondents that published (1)

**Age**

- Under 26: 1, (2%)
- 26-35: 6, (12%)
- 36-45: 24, (48%)
- 46-55: 13, (26%)
- 56-65: 6, (12%)

**Highest level of academic attainment**

- Level 4: 1, (2%)
- Level 8: 3, (6%)
- Level 9: 41, (82%)
- Level 10: 5, (10%)
Respondents who published

- Total papers published
  - Over 5 (5, 10%)
  - 5 (4, 8%)
  - 4 (3, 6%)
  - 3 (6, 12%)
  - 2 (7, 14%)
  - 1 (24, 48%)

- Yearly publications
  - Pre 2010: 12, (24%)
  - 2010: 5, (10%)
  - 2011: 1, (2%)
  - 2012: 3, (6%)
  - 2013: 4, (8%)
  - 2014: 13, (26%)
  - 2015: 10, (20%)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total (@50)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborated with another researcher(s) / colleague on an academic paper between 2000-2015</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode of Collaboration</td>
<td>Internally with a library research colleague</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internally in your academic institute with another researcher</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Externally with another academic library researcher</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Externally with another academic institute with other researcher</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MLIS students joint research project</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for collaboration (Top 5)</td>
<td>Joint research / project driven</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Combine expertise</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asked by colleague</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balance / different perspective</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share the workload</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Top Reasons given by respondents for not submitting for publication

1. Time constraints  33, (21%)
2. Lack of confidence  18, (11%)
3. Not doing any research  17, (11%)
4. Existing work load  15, (9%)
5. Lack of interest  11, (7%)
## Motivations for publication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivations for publication</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Blank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career progression</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research interest</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like to write</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional membership</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importance of the role of academic writing in the library profession

Scale:

1 = very important

5 = totally unimportant

1
2
3
4
5

28%
29%
13%
4%
4.5%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention to publish during 2016</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Having previously published a paper</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely yes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Not</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Paper as a basis for future research”

➢ Baseline for other + future studies (other libraries, other outputs)
➢ Nascent growth, but concentrated
➢ OA growing model of scholarly communication
➢ Motivations, predictors, barriers
➢ Career progression a factor
➢ Confidence dominant predictor
➢ Scope for other aspects of LIS research, ‘manifold opportunities