

RELEVANCE OF GREY LITERATURE AND USAGE AMONG RESEARCH SCIENTISTS IN NEW BUSSA ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT: *Grey literature is an important information resource in the scientific, technical and public policies and practices. Researchers apply some level of trust to the information they access and use based on the quality associated with it, including the time and access to the information or our ability to understand the content can also influence what they choose. It is a known fact that researchers placed their trust more on information published in journals that uses peer-review process, but in some places, some professionals may not have access to peer-review journals or the time to search through scientific texts; in such circumstance, they are more likely to turn to other relevant sources that they also trust such as reports, conference proceedings, newsletters, government white papers, survey reports, doctoral theses and dissertations and host of other grey literature documents. In this study, a survey was carried out to elicit information from 100 research scientists in the study area. 80 questionnaires out of 100 were completed and returned. The variables were on the relevance, usage/user's satisfaction, frequency of usage and resource availability, electronic circulation of grey literature to scientists for the purpose of awareness creation and timely delivery of information to end users. Result of the study revealed that scientists are aware of the relevance of grey literature to research; carrying useful information on any topic, easy to consult with useful information content on regular basis Electronic circulation of information in grey literature to scientists was however recommended for current information service/delivery.*

KEYWORDS: Grey literature, usage of grey literature, research scientists

INTRODUCTION

The term grey literature is generally understood to have been coined by Charles P. Auger, a researcher. In his book titled "Use of Reports Literature", and published in 1975. The documents contain intelligent reports and notes on atomic research which were produced in large quantities by the allied forces during the World War II. The vast documents produced then were on the increase, posing difficulties in presenting them to the librarian to organize. There were also great ambiguity between temporary characteristics and durability of these reports, which had a growing impact on scientific researches. However, Auger acknowledge the great advantages of these reports over other means of information dissemination which includes greater speed, greater flexibility of detailed content which outweighed their challenges. He also believed that a report is a half-published communication medium which is complex compared to scientific journal, he

produced a guide to European community in 1989, in which the term “**grey literature**” was first used in a publications. Though the concept of grey literature is difficult to define, researchers and information professionals uses the term to describe and discuss this distinct and essential group of information resources.

Luxembourg was discussed and approve at the third international conference on grey literature, define grey literature in 1979 when he defined grey literature as that which is produced on all levels of governments, academics, business and industry in print and electronic format which is not controlled by commercial publishers. This prescript was generally accepted.

In 2004 at the sixth a conference in New York expanded this concept and ascertains that grey literature is not found in traditional scholarly journal publications. This expansion by Luxembourg proved that grey literature is unique primary/tertiary information sources that can stand alone in the information circle. The uniqueness of grey literature does not require their inclusion in the scholar peer-review journal or any other conventional sources before usage. They are unique in their production, their producers as well as their information content. This definition is more encompassing because it states the type of document, the producers, purpose of their creation and production, availability and the need for their capture, storage and preservation by libraries and information centers for the purpose of information service and delivery.

They are unpublished research work or published in a non-conventional format. They are termed primary research report which emanates from the report of an initial investigation like Theses and dissertations, conference proceedings, research notes, annual/technical reports, government policy documents and a host of others. Grey literature are not usually found in pdf format but the information content of this document is still of high quality. In our daily research/academic, activity, we use/consult grey literature at the initial point of conducting an investigation. Thus they are unique information sources because, the result of such investigation are usually authentic and unbiased.

Farace and Schopfel (2010) opined that the existing definition of grey literature were predominantly economic based, and that in the new research environment, with new communication channels, suggested that grey literature should be applied a new concept. The concept defined grey literature as a “manifest document type produced on all level of government, academic, business and industry in print and electronic formats that are protected by intellectual property rights, of sufficient quantity to be collected and preserved by the library holding or institutional repositories, but not controlled by commercial publishers. Rucinski (2015). In his submission in a presentation titled “The elephant in the room: towards a definition of grey literature”, focused on a “vast body of documents” with continuity in increasing quality. With increased research and technology, grey literature is been churned out by different organizations and bodies. This indicates the difference challenges it poses to the librarian as having a great impact on scientific research. Though the challenges of the reports generally, they still hold a

number of advantages over other information sources. Such advantages includes: great speed, great flexibility and the opportunity to provide details where necessary.

Julian and James 2021 in their handbook, define grey literature “as literature that is not formally produced in sources such as books or journal articles” such as government reports, conference proceedings, graduate dissertations, unpublished clinical trials and more.

In classification, grey literature are important sources; unique and more current and timely to researchers in their information quest than the commercial or peer-review journal. These information sources are essentially found in library and information Science units of both academic and research institutions libraries and government organizations for current information provision and dissemination in multiple document types.

Objectives of the study

This study was carried out to:

- To determine the availability and usage of grey literature among researchers in the study area;
- Determine the relevance of grey literature among researchers;
- To create awareness of the documents in the library and information centers.

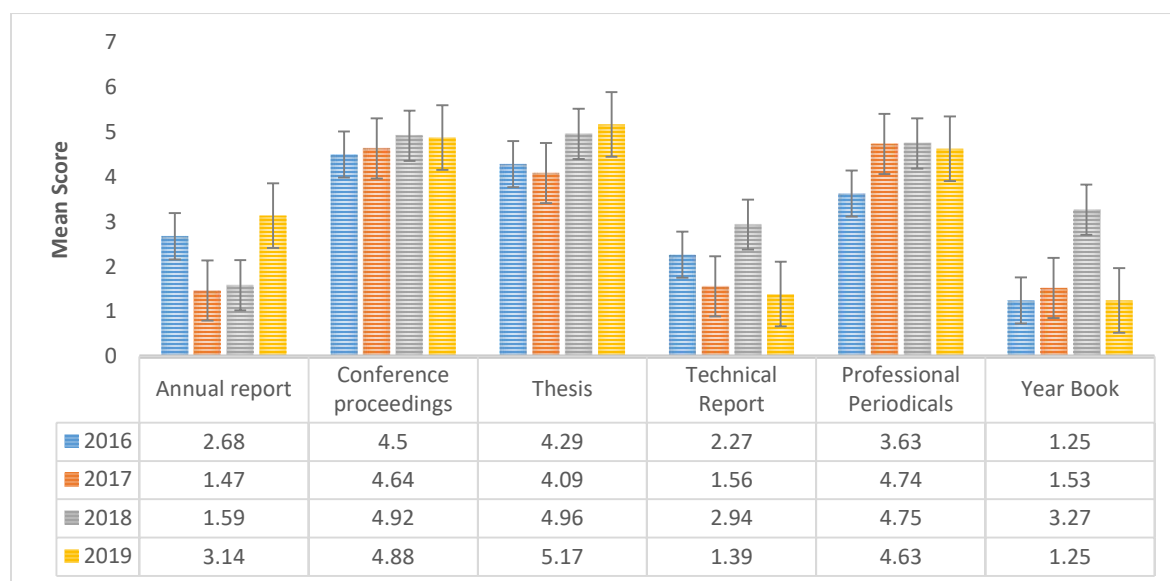
METHODOLOGY

A survey method was adopted for this study primarily because it was a suitable and efficient way of studying large populations. It allows only a sample population to be used to represent the entire population. The target population for this study was research scientists of the New Bussa Environment. 100 research scientists from National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research and Federal College of Freshwater Fisheries and Technology were randomly selected. A well-structured questionnaire was administered on the respondents and 80 out of 100 were completed and returned. The data collected were classified, analysed by using the simple percentage (%) and frequency counts as well as the arithmetic mean and also histogram and pie chart were run.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis and the discussion “Relevance of grey literature and usage among research scientists in New Bussa environment.

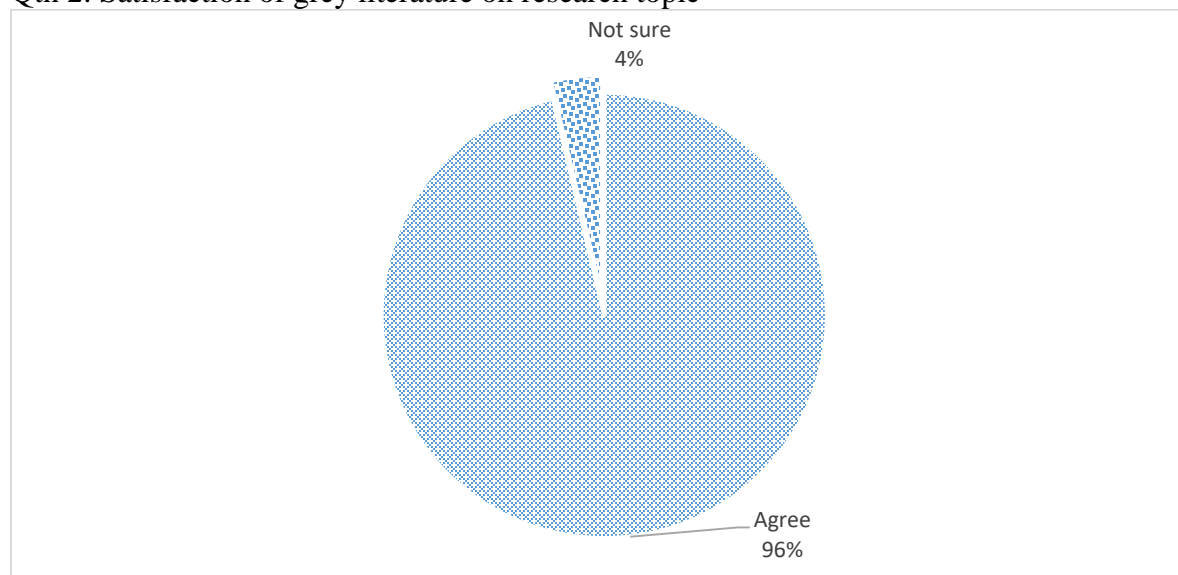
Qt. 1 Consultation of grey literature



Note: Ranking was between 1-6.

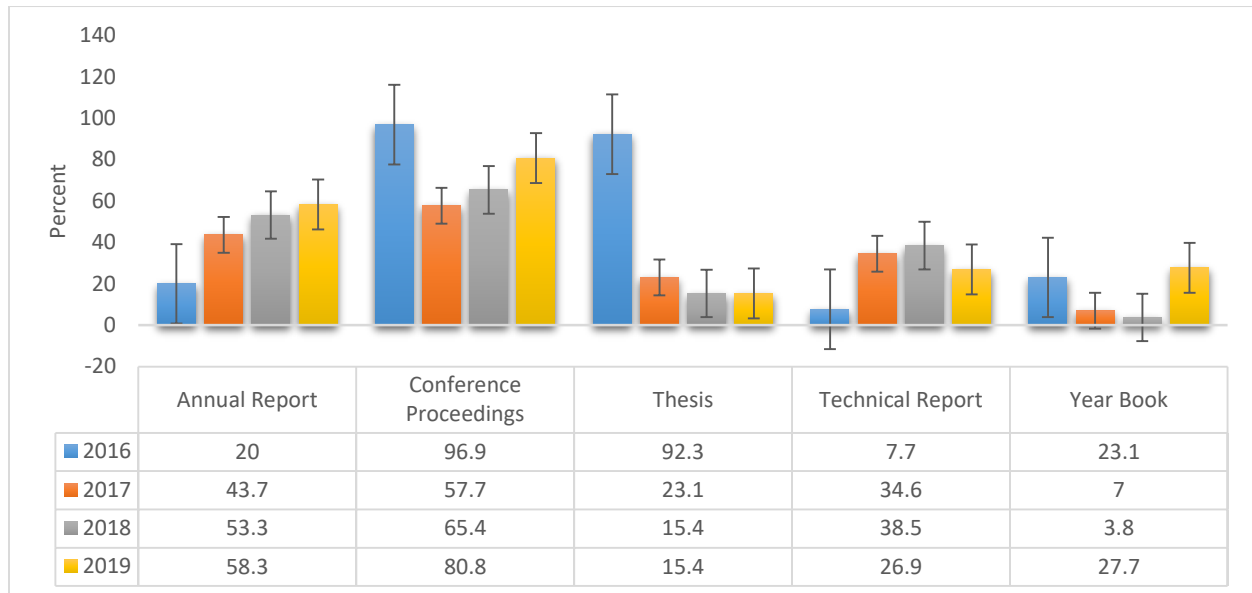
The result shows that in 2016 and 2017 majority of research scientists consulted conference proceedings with mean score of (4.5) and (4.64) respectively while in 2018 and 2019 they consulted more of thesis with mean score (4.98), (5.17) respectively.

Qtn 2: Satisfaction of grey literature on research topic



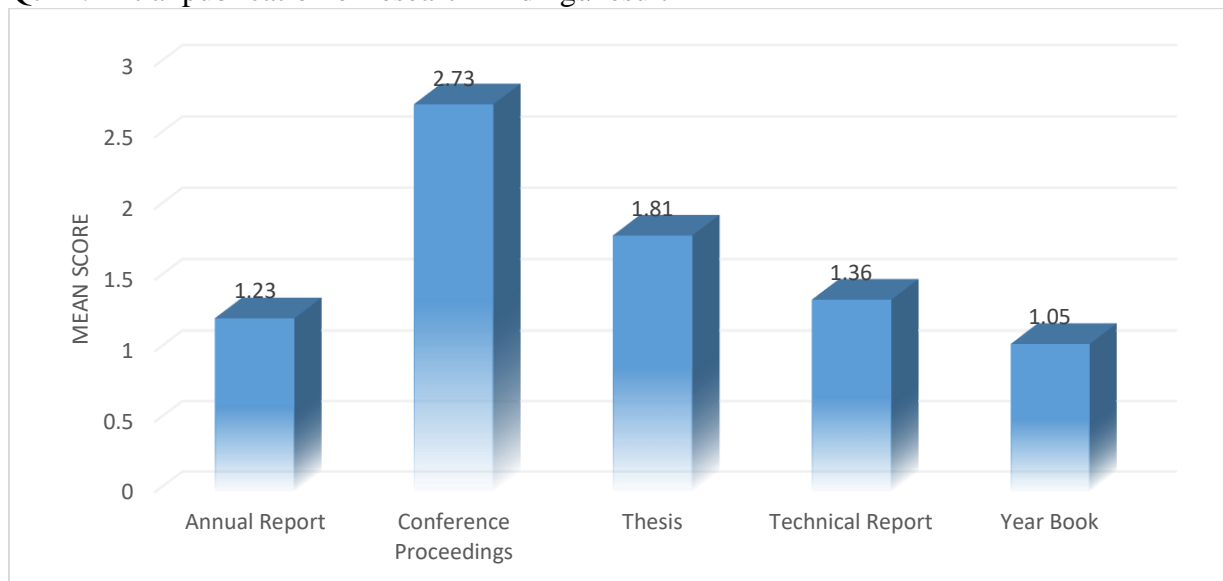
The result above shows that most of the research scientists (96%) satisfied with the information they acquired from grey literature.

Qtn 3: Publication of research scientist in grey literature



The result shows that majority of research scientist published their work in conference proceedings (96.9%) out of grey literature available in 2016 in their library as well as 2017 (57.7%), 2018 (65.4%) and 2019 (80.8%).

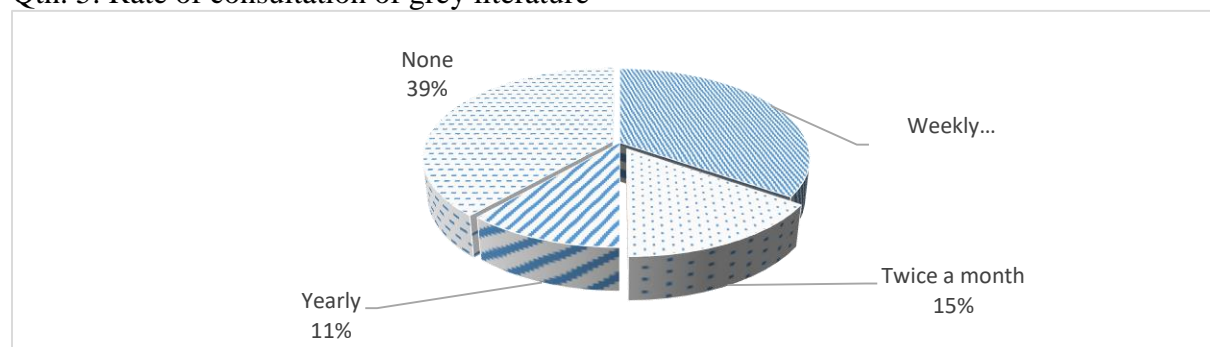
Qtn 4: Initial publication of research findings/result



Note: 1-1.49=No, 1.5-2.49=Sometimes and 2.5-3=Always

The result shows that majority of the research scientists published their initial work in conference proceedings with mean score (2.73).

Qtn. 5: Rate of consultation of grey literature



The above result shows that most of scientists (39%) did not consult grey literature yearly, monthly and weekly

Qtn. 6, 7 and 9

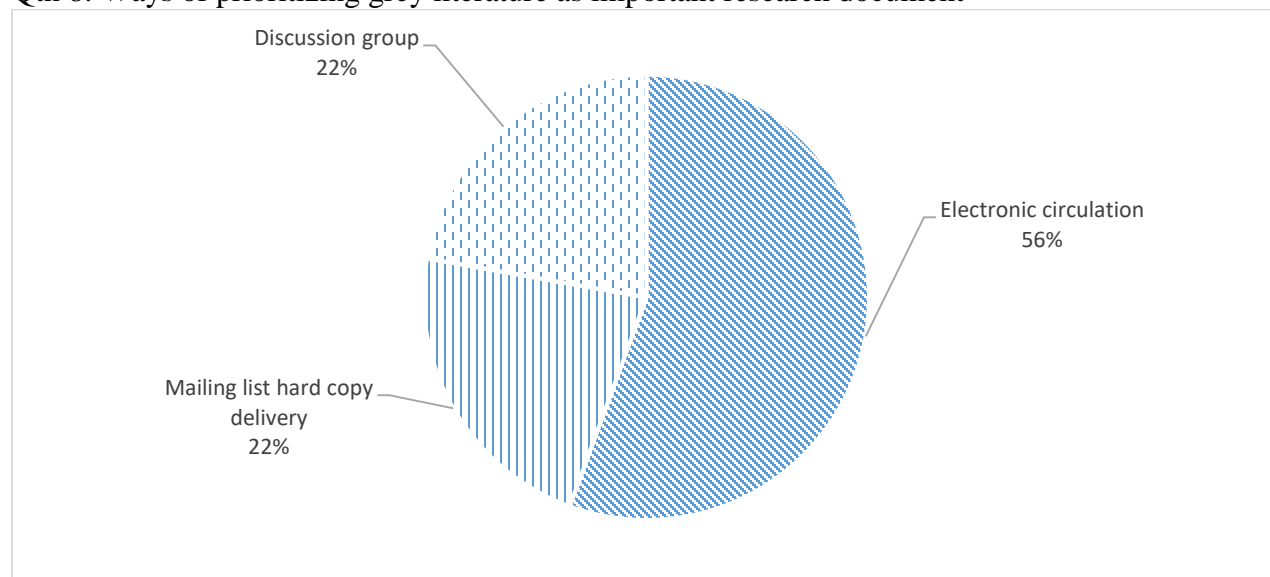
Table 1: Access to grey literature in the library

The result on the access to grey literature is presented in Table 1. The result shows that majority (91.1 %) agreed to the availability of grey literature in the library while 72.7 % affirmed that the materials are current; thus, signifying its usefulness in research and article writings. This result agrees with Perez (2017) that gray literature is a rich resource of evidence applicable in systematic reviews. However, 57.8 % noted that the available grey literature is published in non-commercial format; hence, limiting its reach to wider academic audiences. Though, this is one of the characteristics of grey literature (Benzies *et al.* 2006; Conn *et al.* 2003) by providing data that not available within commercially published literature. Furthermore, as indicated in figure 6, electronic circulation (56 %) was noted as one the ways of prioritizing grey literature as an important research document.

Variable	Percent
Availability of grey literature in Library	
Yes	91.1
No	8.9
Total	100
Is grey literature current or retrospective to information need?	
Agree	72.7
Disagree	27.3
Total	100
Is grey literature published in non-commercial format by institutions and professional bodies?	
Agree	
Disagree	57.8
Undecided	8.9
Total	33.3
	100

The table above show that most of the research scientists agreed (57.8%) that grey literature is published in non-commercial format by the institution and professional bodies.

Qtn 8: Ways of prioritizing grey literature as important research document



The result above shows that majority of research scientists agreed that electronic circulation of grey literature (56%) will make it an important documents in information services and dissemination across the institution.

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