

# RETHINKING MANDATORY IMPACT FACTOR JOURNAL PUBLICATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES AS SYMBOL OF POST-COLONIAL SELF-ENSLAVEMENT

ELIKE IKECHUKWU & NATHAN OGUCHIE

## *Abstract*

*Over the past decade, some Nigerian universities have increasingly mandated Impact Factor (IF) journal publications for faculty promotion, with a preference for Western-edited or IF-ranked journals. This practice, though varying across institutions, results in significant capital outflow and knowledge transfer to the West, perpetuating a scholarly dependency reminiscent of colonial times. This study aims to stimulate discourse on this phenomenon. Utilizing online surveys, the opinions of university faculty are collected regarding mandatory IF journal publication. The investigation delves into several critical dimensions, including decolonial ideologies, economic ramifications, intellectual ownership, scholarly autonomy, and the pursuit of balanced perspectives of intellectual exchange. By exploring these facets, the study seeks to illuminate the complexities of integrating Western-centric publication standards within Nigerian academia. It endeavors to prompt critical reflection and foster debate among scholars concerning the implications of such practices. This examination is imperative for advancing an understanding of the broader dynamics shaping academic evaluation and knowledge dissemination in Nigeria, while also advocating for greater agency and autonomy within the scholarly community.*

*Keywords: impact factor, journal articles, decolonial ideologies*

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, journal impact factor has been one major issue scholars have considered in a bid to make public their research. The Impact Factor (IF) of a journal is defined by the University of Illinois Chicago (2024) as “a measure of the frequency with which the average article in a journal has

*Elike Ikechukwu is a lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, specializing in broadcast production and creative design for media markets and consumers.*

*Nathan Oguchie teaches in the Department of Mass Communication, National Open University, Abuja.*

been cited in a particular year. It is used to measure the importance or rank of a journal by calculating the number of times its articles are cited.

This concept was introduced by Eugene Garfield, an American linguist and businessman who founded the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) in Philadelphia in 1956. The ISI was part of his efforts to articulate a systemic approach to indexing scientific publications, drawing on his previous experience at the Welch Medical Library at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and on his exposure to Shepard's Citations. Garfield, in his work titled *"Citation indexes for science. A new dimension in documentation through association of ideas"* wrote that:

The utility of a citation index in any field must be considered from the point of view of the transmission of ideas. A thorough scientist cannot be satisfied merely with searching the literature through indexes and bibliographies if he is going to establish the history of an idea. He must obviously do a great deal of organized, as well as eclectic, reading. The latter is necessary because it is impossible for any one person (the indexer) to anticipate all the thought processes of a user. Conventional subject indexes are, thereby, limited in their attempt to provide an ideal key to the literature. The same may be said of classification schemes. In tracking down the origins of an idea, the citation index can be of real help. This is well illustrated by an example from my own experience (Garfield E., 2006).

This thought justified his approach to the Impact Factor through the ISI as a system that ranks scientific publications by their degree of citation, thereby emphasizing the relevance of journals or articles among the myriad of circulating publications. ISI faced bankruptcy and was sold in 1992 to Thomson Scientific and Healthcare. The Institute for Scientific Information thereby became Thomson ISI, which became widely known as Thomson Reuters.

About 16 years later, in 2018, Thomson Reuters was acquired by Onex Corporation and Baring Private Equity, the founders of Clarivate, which currently publishes the Journal Citation Report (JCR). So, one can firmly say that the need for an effective model for indexing scientific publications led to the establishment of an enterprise. Therefore, highlighting the business aspect and the presence of financial interests in the concept of journal indexing.

The concept of impact factor has been broadly criticized by scholars. McKiernan, Alperin, & Fleerackers (2019) of the London School of Economics and Political Science stated that "although the Journal Impact Factor was originally developed to help libraries make indexing and purchas-

ing decisions for their journal collections, it has become a proxy for quality—not just of the journals academics publish in, but of the academics themselves. Many now believe that publishing works in high IF journals is an essential step to achieving academic success”. On the aspect of institutional approach to impact factor, especially for assessment and promotion of academic staff, Chukwuemeka, Chekwubechukwu, & Obuteaku (2018) in their study conclude that “its application as measurement index for evaluation of lecturers negates the goal for which it was introduced”. This view is one shared by the outcome of The Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) on December 16, 2012, by the American Society for Cell Biology in San Francisco.

The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment highlighted that the journal impact factor was originally created as a tool to help librarians identify journals to purchase, not as a measure of the scientific quality of research articles. They therefore recommend that journal-based metrics, such as the impact factor, should not be used as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist’s contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions.

Besides these points, some authors in Nigeria have specifically criticized the use of the impact factor as a mandatory requirement for employment or for the assessment of academic staff’s promotion in Nigerian universities. In fact, it has been stated that impact factor journal articles carry more weight in promotion discussions than, for instance, books, monographs, occasional publications (the proceedings of in-house seminars or workshops), or book chapters (Olukoju, 2020).

While the debate over the validity of the impact factor as a measure of a researcher’s scholarly contribution lingers, this study seeks to interrogate its appropriation as a yardstick for the employment or promotion of academic staff in Nigerian universities. This is especially as it took its root in the West, its adoption in Nigerian universities and the broad implications for local journals as well as scholarly practices in Nigeria, as a comparative discourse with the nature of the corrosive impact of neo-colonialism on traditional cultures. To this end, the following constitute the specific objectives of this study:

1. To ascertain if the cost of publishing abroad constitutes a significant volume of capital flight
2. To find out the relationship between journal article relevance and where it is published
3. To evaluate the attitude of Nigerian academics towards local journals

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Impact Factor (IF) is a metric used to evaluate the importance and influence of academic journals. Originally introduced by Eugene Garfield in the 1960s, the IF measures the average number of citations received per paper published in a journal during a specified period. This practice of ranking journals and journal articles is widely seen as a way to rate a journal's value and the scholarly contributions of its authors.

While the Impact Factor (IF) or Journal Impact Factor (JIF) metrics are indexed and published by Clarivate, the offshoot company from Onex Corporation and Baring Private Equity that acquired the intellectual property and science business of Thomson Reuters (PR News Wire, 2016), other journal citation metrics now exist that index journal and article metrics such as CiteScore (CS) and Eigenfactor Score. The Impact Factor or Journal Impact Factor is the yearly mean number of articles published in the previous two years of a particular journal. Released the following year, the calculation accounts for the average number of citations to papers published two years prior to the year being reported to determine the impact factor for that year. This system does not consider citations per article but rather aggregates citations for each article within the journal and uses the average to calculate the Journal Impact Factor. The Journal Impact Factor is published annually as the Journal Citation Report (JCR) by Clarivate. The JCR is integrated with the Web of Science, which makes it accessible. However, the individual citation index per journal article is documented in a JCR repository that is not publicly available. Hence, the JCR Impact Factor is a proprietary value defined and calculated by ISI and cannot be independently verified by external users (Hubbard & McVeigh, 2011).

There are others, such as CiteScore and Eigenfactor. CiteScore is a relatively recent journal evaluation metric by Elsevier. It has gained widespread popularity as an alternative to the Impact Factor of Clarivate's Journal Citation Report. CiteScore is produced based on the citation metrics obtained from the Scopus database. According to Elsevier (2016), CiteScore metrics calculate citations from all documents published in year one to all documents published in the prior three years for a given title. For example, to calculate a 2015 value, CiteScore counts the citations received in 2015 to documents published in 2012, 2013 and 2014. This number is divided by the number of documents indexed on Scopus published in 2012, 2013 and 2014. This is quite different from the Impact Factor metrics which uses a two-year period.

Just as with Impact Factor, Citescore has also received fair criticism from scholars, including concerns about conflicts of interest. Bergstrom & West (2016) noted that Elsevier not only owns the division (Scopus) that produces the CiteScore rankings but also publishes a large fraction of the journals ranked therein. We consider it unlikely that Scopus is actively tampering with citation or article counts to benefit Elsevier publications.

But it does seem worth asking whether the particular choice of metrics benefits Elsevier's publishing interests. Davis (2016) noted that, in sum, the CiteScore indicator does not appear to be a viable alternative to the Impact Factor.

For this reason, other establishments and institutions have made attempts at providing tailored journal metric systems such as the h-Index, Google Scholar Metrics and country based system such as the Chinese Science Citation Database (CSCD), Russian Science Citation Index (RSCI) and Indian Citation Index (ICI) that serve their unique peculiarities and also with less issue concerning access to the raw data as well conflict of interest and other incentives that can be considered to jeopardise the data integrity. However, one common thread is that they intend to provide metrics on journals and their citation frequency to assign values and promote scholarly publication. As Gorin, Koroleva, Gerasimov, and Voronov (2020) noted, implementing the RSCI project had a positive impact on the full spectrum of Russian academic journals, which are increasingly committed to improving their work to continue to be part of the RSCI databases. This shows how a tailored metric system can help overcome challenges in existing systems and promote the spirit of publication among scholars.

Despite several pitfalls, journal metrics systematically promote journal quality and improve the quality of academic output. This is especially true as they develop standardized practices for publication.

## JOURNAL METRICS AND NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

It is noteworthy that, while the concept of journal metrics is a broad subject encompassing all forms of measurement of citations, reach, readership, journal contributions, and the popularity of journals and articles within, this concept has been largely subsumed under the term *Impact Factor* amongst Nigerian scholars. This is largely due to the former *Thomson Reuters Impact Factor system*, now the *Clarivate Impact Factor system*, being one of the first journal metrics introduced to some institutions in Nigeria as a requirement for assessing academic staff for promotion. Notwithstanding, there is significant awareness of other journal metrics, such as CiteScore and SNIP.

Today, the use of citation metrics as a prerequisite for academic staff promotion in some Nigerian universities is gaining wide popularity and acceptance. Adomi & Mordi (2003) noted that all universities emphasize scholarly publication as an important prerequisite for promotion, but some Nigerian universities require academics to have published a specific proportion of their journal articles in foreign journals before they can be promoted to very senior academic ranks.

While it is true that many journals exist locally and abroad, the benefits believed to drive institutional requirements for journal publication are institutional visibility and ratings in various institutional metrics systems. Creamer (1998) in her study had two of her five themes: (3) possible reasons why relatively few faculties publish prolifically, and (5) implications for practice. She noted that faculty publishing productivity is often used as an index of departmental and institutional prestige and is strongly associated with an individual faculty member's reputation, visibility, and advancement within the academic reward structure. Thus, publication can not only advance an individual's career but also enhance an institution's image and bolster the overall reputation of its academics.

In the University of Nigeria as a case in point, Ubachukwu (2017) stated that the use of Impact Factor in the assessment of academic/research staff creative output in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) came into effect in 2006 by the Professor Chiejina-led Committee, adding that the dividend of this decision is already being felt in local, national as well as international academic communities: UNN has remained the number one University in Nigeria based on the 2016 Webometrics Ranking of World Universities.

The University adopted three journal rating metrics, that is, from Thomson Reuters (now Clarivate) Journal Citation Reports (JCR), SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), and Source Normalized Impact Factor per Paper (SNIP). It is important to note that at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, "at least 2, 5, 8 Major Articles in these IF systems are currently being used for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor respectively, and at least 1 for the award of Ph.D." (Ubachukwu, 2023, p. 9).

Numerous scholars have raised concerns over the use of IF for academic staff assessment in Nigeria. Professor Damian Opata, as cited in (Agbo, 2021) described the journals as business-oriented media organizations that do not have corresponding social or knowledge impacts, noting that it was unfortunate that the University of Nigeria was among the tertiary institutions using such publications to access their academic staff.

Okoye (2010, p. 2) noted that it is inappropriate for institutions and committees of experts, and sometimes non-experts, to use IF to evaluate individual scientific achievement for the purpose of promotion, given its flaws. To enumerate some of these flaws, the University of Calgary (2024) stated that a large body of research points to the flaws and inappropriate uses of the impact factor and other research metrics. Adding that citation distributions within journals are highly skewed: for example, one "blockbuster" paper or highly cited item such as a review can artificially inflate the metric; Journal Impact Factors can be manipulated (or "gamed") by editorial policy. For example, editors may encourage prospective authors

to cite other items published in the same journal; and also, the data used to calculate the Journal Impact Factors are neither transparent nor openly available to the public.

Another issue relating to the use of Impact Factor for the assessment of academic staff is that a high-quality article published in a journal not indexed by specific bibliometric systems such as Web of Science and Scopus may not count toward the author's credit. As Padron (2022) aptly notes, journals that receive bibliometric attention are select ones included in publication indexes such as Web of Science or Scopus. If your work was published in a journal that is not included in these indexes, it may not have a JIF or other bibliometric.

Similar views have led some other institutions to make strategic decisions on impact factor. For instance, Staffordshire University (2020) noted that the institution recognizes that research metrics have limitations, particularly in certain disciplinary areas and for certain output types. Moreover, we recognize that misused or misapplied metrics can be detrimental to an individual and the institution. They, however, added that research metrics bring great benefits to the University's research by ensuring that scholars publish their work in appropriate outlets, as well as by enabling analysis and understanding of the reach and impact of their research in and beyond academia.

It is important to note that not all fields are adequately represented within each ranking system. However, according to Ezeh (2014), the interesting thing is that lately in the international fora, it is the voices of those in the physical and medical sciences where the Impact Factor calculation originated that are becoming louder and louder against it.

The mechanisms of impact factor rating are entirely Western and neo-colonial, while its application as a measurement index for the evaluation of lecturers negates the goal for which it was introduced (Chukwuemeka, Chekwubechukwu, & Obuteaku, 2018). For Chukwuemeka, Chekwubechukwu, and Fidelia (2018), publishing in highly rated journals has been the primary prerequisite for hiring, appraising, and promoting academics in higher institutions since the beginning of the 21st century. Lecturers became concerned more with this than with classroom activities. To this end, many have raised concerns over the need for impact factor article publications as a necessary requirement for promotion and employment in Nigerian universities.

EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF IMPACT FACTOR IN NIGERIA  
AS SELF-ENSLAVEMENT WITH HEGEL'S  
MASTER-SLAVE DIALECTIC

Derived from his work titled "Phenomenology of Spirit", Hegel presents the concept of self-consciousness and the foundation of dominance and submission in human relationships that are established through encounters and interactions. Once two people are brought into close encounters by circumstances, at the individual or group level, there often emerges a struggle to first establish self-worth, then to claim superiority and self that must be recognized by the other. Here, the existence of the other serves to validate the dominant one.

As Feilmeier (1992) explained, in this struggle to determine the objective truth of itself, each consciousness seeks to establish the certainty of its being not only for itself but also for the other. In other words, each consciousness is trying to prove its worth to the other as well as to itself. Therefore, although the clash begins as a struggle to the death, the victor spares the vanquished's life so that the loser may serve as an external, objective witness to the winner's power. Out of this life-and-death conflict emerges a master-slave relationship where the victor is master and the vanquished is slave. Through defeat, the loser has become aware that he is not the objective standard of truth in the world; he has achieved self-consciousness. The master, however, has not discovered his limitedness. He continues to see himself as the measure of all things.

This explains the relationship between Nigeria and the West, particularly her former colonial masters and the institutions that represent Western dominance. The Europe-Africa encounter symbolizes a pivotal moment in defining not just a continental supremacy, but one of race and ideology, as well as the perpetuation of economic dominance. According to Abbattista (2011), at an immediate and practical level, conquest, colonization and trade led to modes of domination or coexistence and multifaceted transcultural relationships. Once Europe was able to suppress Africa through wars and ideologies, it was able to establish a new power dynamic of a master-slave relationship, which the slave trade was just a symptom of the ensuing dynamics. Through early interactions, the West established itself as a superior power and the custodian of an objective standard of truth, while Africa, symbolizing other colonized territories such as India, became self-conscious of its place as a perpetual witness to the West's superiority. This also shaped the direction of technological advancement and growth from then on.

The West defines what is important and what is not. This is vividly exemplified in the demonization of all forms of traditional religious institutions that existed before Africa encountered the West. The idea of the *civil man* came to denote all who adopted European ideals, while the Greek word Barbaros was used to refer to those seen as the others, not belonging to the new class of Western civilization.

So, to belong to this superior class, one must acquire the belief, culture, and technology of the West. This leads to a perpetuation of dependence, which, at best, for the African, is an attempt at belongingness, but for the West, it is a perpetuation of economic dominance and a symbolic reminder of the notion of *place*. It is this desire to belong, even decades after ceremonial independence, that leads to the idea of self-enslavement. That is, the concept of a people who have the capacity to be free but choose to remain as slaves for the sake of belongingness, as they depend on the Master for their definition of truth.

In trying to interrogate this concept of master-slave relationship, Hogan (2018) engages in a contrast between Hegel's conceptualization and that of Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks*. He explains that in *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon famously distinguishes the colonial master and slave from the master and slave as depicted in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Phenomenology). According to Fanon, while Hegel's master seeks recognition from the slave, the colonial master seeks only work. Moreover, for Fanon, the Hegelian slave differs from the colonial slave because the former eventually gains self-consciousness and freedom through labor, whereas the latter seeks to be like his master—that is, to be white—and thus is unable to find liberation through labor alone (Hogan, 2018).

This idea is seen in our forms of self-articulation and aspiration, and in our institutions, which are constantly being molded in the image of what is perceived as the Western standard. Very often, this is taken even further beyond the limits, such that we try to be more *white* than the white. This is evident in the use of the Impact Factor (a Western concept of library indexing) to assess academic staff for promotion and assign values to scholars in Nigerian universities. The institutional leadership tends to value what is Western as superior in all respects to what is indigenous, without exploring means to establish standards of values peculiar to us as a people. In *The Wretched*, for example, Fanon (2005) argues that colonized people lack freedom not only because they are socially and economically oppressed, but also because they esteem Western values and do not value themselves (Hogan, 2018).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The role of theory in understanding academic studies is primarily to elucidate the relationships among the variables being studied and to establish deeper meanings for how the propositions underlying these relationships are replicated in real-life situations. Theories help stabilize the construct that empirical studies seek to establish. That is why this study adopted *Dependency Theory*.

Theotonio Dos Santos, one of the founders of dependency theory, as cited in (Farny, 2016), describes dependence as “a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected”. Essentially, this theory divides the world into two: the core and the periphery. At the core are the developed nations like the United States and Europe while at the periphery are countries in Africa and Latin America.

Santos emphasizes the historical dimension of the dependency relationships as an historical condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy, such that it favors some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economies...a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected (Santos, 1971, p. 226). The West is seen as benefiting more, only at the expense of developing nations.

This theory, therefore, explains the dependence of Nigerian universities on the IF system as a means of validating their academic staff and promoting institutional growth, while, in return, a significant amount of valuable research work, as well as the costs of publication, is transferred abroad to IF-rated journals for publication.

While at the institutional level, this might seem true. It is imperative to evaluate scholars' views on this trend, particularly after years of IF adoption, to revisit prevailing perspectives. This is particularly drawn from Fanon, who holds that the Hegelian slave eventually gains self-consciousness and freedom through labor. Thus, encapsulating the idea of decolonization.

Decolonization, for Fanon, creates “new men,” men who are free because they have overcome the domination and dehumanization that is colonialism and because they have learned to govern themselves by values of their own creation (Fanon, 2005, p. 36). In doing so, the colonized break from the slavery represented by white values and embrace a form of mastery that comes from generating values of their own (Hogan, 2018). This is the point at which Nigerian universities can develop standards for evaluating journal quality and metrics for staff assessment that take into account indices specific to the scope of work and research practice.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted survey methods to generate quantitative data. One hundred academic staff were randomly selected from various universities across Nigeria as respondents. The research instrument used in the study

was a questionnaire designed in Google Forms and administered electronically via email and the messaging application WhatsApp.

The responses gathered from the instrument are analyzed and presented below.

## RESULT

Of the 100 links shared, 93 valid responses were collected electronically. As an attempt to provide a sense of the respondents' demographics, the data gathered showed that the majority (74.7%) of respondents have a PhD as their highest academic qualification. This shows that most respondents have attained a high level of scholarship. While 20.9% hold an MSc, an MBA, or similar qualifications, others hold a bachelor's degree.

*Research objective 1: to ascertain if the cost of publishing abroad constitutes a significant amount of capital flight*

The data revealed that while 65.2% of the academics have actually paid to publish their articles in foreign journals, the majority (85.9%) of the total respondents believe it costs a significant amount of money to publish in academic journals outside Nigeria. This shows that the majority of academic staff share the view that the cost of publishing abroad is significantly high. Also, the majority (80.4%) of respondents believe that the cost and publication rates in foreign journals constitute a significant contribution to capital flight from Nigeria.

*Research objective 2: To find out the relationship between journal article relevance and where it is published*

On the issue of relevance of journal article publication and journal location, while some (23.7%) of the respondents hold that their works are often of global import, a significant proportion (41.9%) are of the view that their works are rather of greater value to their local communities than the foreign journals where they are published. This is also as few (15.1%) agreed that they could care less about where their articles are published.

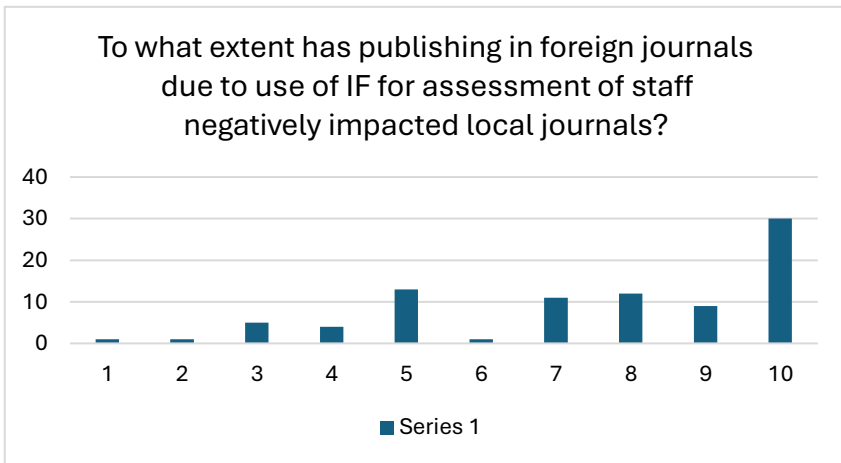
With regards to deciding factors in determining where to publish journal articles, most (45.2%) of the respondents hold that journal impact factor plays a significant role in their decision. Also, the majority (53.8%) say they would prefer to publish in foreign journals based on index citations rather than in a local journal with a wide scholarly readership, regardless of citations.

The data regarding the relationship between the requirement of IF journal articles for assessment and where to publish shows that the major-

ity (61.3%) agree that the requirement of IF journal articles for promotion assessment is the primary reason they publish in foreign journals. That is, this plays a very significant role in their decision of where to publish. These go to show that the impact factor plays a very significant role in determining where journal articles from Nigerian university scholars are published, regardless of subject matter relevance.

*Research objective 3: To evaluate the attitude of Nigerian academics towards local journals*

To establish the impact of the shift to publish in foreign journals on local journals, the data below, which rates the opinions of scholars from 1 – 10 (1 being very low and 10 very high) shows that there is a dominant view among Nigerian scholars that this practice has had a tremendous negative impact on local journals. It shows that the majority agree that there is a very high negative effect.



Beyond the impact on local journals, the majority (65.6%) of respondents believe this shift to consistently publishing abroad is akin to the pillaging of art and natural resources by colonial masters.

While the majority (44.1%) are of the view that prioritizing publication in a foreign journal is self-enslavement, a few (35.5%) disagreed, and others (20.4%) remain undecided on the issue. Also, most (62.4%) of the respondents disagree that foreign journals are always superior to local journals. This is because some (17.2%) remain neutral, and very few (20.5%) agree.

With regard to developing national standards for academic journals and better metrics for assessing academic staff in Nigerian universities, the majority (87.1%) of academic staff are of the view that they would be willing to reconsider publishing in local journals if Nigerian scholars were

able to establish a minimum standard for local journals. Also, the majority (97.8%) think it is important for Nigerian scholars and institutions to develop a journal ranking system that prioritizes metrics specific to the local academic climate rather than relying on IF.

## CONCLUSION

From literature and data gathered in this study, it can be stated that while the use of the impact factor for the assessment of academic staff in Nigerian universities has had the effect of promoting research and institutional visibility, this practice poses a tremendous challenge to the academic system. This is particularly problematic, as it constitutes a significant level of capital flight, leading to the publication of scholarly research in journals where the results make no relevant contribution, and to the death of local journals, which in turn constitute a holistic transfer of local scholarship and research to the West. The implication of which can lead to a monopoly of African thoughts by the West and further our dependence on the developed world for the meaning of life. Thus, advancing the tenets of dependency theory. It also shows that the relationship between Nigerian universities and the Western journal ranking bodies is a symbol of a master-slave relationship, as depicted by Fanon, as opposed to Hegel's Dialectic, as we seem to lack self-consciousness despite our academic work. This is not only because Nigerians are socially and economically oppressed, but also because scholars esteem Western values and do not value local scholarship and publication. Furthermore, it shows that, since our institutions impose this practice on staff, universities are making efforts to emulate those in the Western world through various forms of webometrics without thoughtful consideration of our place and peculiarities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Most research from Nigeria is domiciled in foreign journal webpages, and when a sentence from such work is cited, we refer to it as impact based on citation index. And this has spurred substantial research published in foreign journals to address the need for assessment, leading to significant capital flight. Emphasizing the need to publish locally is important for limiting the extent to which we spend our money abroad to pay for journal article publication.
2. Impact Factor deals primarily with metrics, but not in the way we as Africans are likely to talk about impact. This is especially evi-

dent in problem-solving and addressing significant issues. Nigeria, as a developing country, for instance, is riddled with key developmental challenges; the impact of these challenges can be seen in how specific research has been helpful in solving some of these problems. The idea here is conceptualization. Reorienting ourselves around the meaning of impact will help scholars make better decisions about where to publish, ensuring their findings contribute real value rather than chasing metrics.

3. Just as the current impact factor has helped stimulate a significant amount of research work, a social-impact-based measurement index can instigate more development-oriented studies and valuable research in our societal context. That is, research driven by actions or research stimulated by our unique problems, in which impact can be derived only from the extent to which the studies prove valuable to these issues. This will also likely bridge the gap between industry and researchers, as well as between social and academic institutions. Therefore, it is imperative that scholars in Nigeria work with the relevant institutions to develop local standards. For journal publication and indices for assessment that take into account our specific needs, particularly as a developing nation.

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