Beneath and beyond the slogan "Publish or Perish"

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Abstract
This paper critically looks at the slogan of 'publish or perish' which was coined in the field of academia to warn academicians of the dangers of not publishing regularly. This phrase puts pressure on academicians and scholars to publish regularly in order to remain relevant in the field of academia and to sustain their career progression. The question has always been and still remains relevant; is publication what we need in order for us to witness sustainable development? Should publication of research findings and other reviewed discourses on topical issues be viewed as an end to itself? The paper discusses the aptness of the slogan of 'publish or perish' and the role of publication in the dissemination of knowledge to facilitate development, the negative impact of overemphasizing on publications by academic staff on quality of research, publication and development and how we can go beyond research and publications to spur growth and development in society. Publication which is advocated by the slogan 'publish or perish' is beneficial in a number of ways: It is one of the best ways of disseminating knowledge, published works lives longer than unpublished works, published work benefits the whole society in all spheres of life, it uplifts the academic status of the scholar and institution of affiliation and the spirit of research and publication has been boosted through the slogan. Overemphasis on publications through the slogan has led to a number of negative impacts in research and publication such as; cooked up research and publication, laying more emphasis on publication and not research, 'professional hangers on' in publications, much time devoted on publications while putting less time in teaching, supervision, mentorship and community service, salami slicing, emergency of predatory journals, plagiarism, ghost authors and low quality research and publication among others. The paper concludes that if the current scenario continues, quality research and publication will be a thing of the past and a lot needs to be done to improve the quality of research and publication in universities by putting up appropriate measures to improve the quality of research and publication. Universities should also devise ways of making sure that the published works are further disseminated to increase their impact on societal growth and development. The paper also discusses a number of intervention measures to improve and go beyond mere publication which include the following: There should be a synergy between publishers, authors, universities and industry, use of different ways and forum to further disseminate the published work, ensuring that respondents and participating institutions are first beneficiaries of the researched and published work, universities providing conducive environment and the necessary support necessary for quality research and publication and facilitation of activities beyond publication, Placing more weight on the quality of publication other than the quantity and invigorating the whole professional life of the scholars and not just reducing them to agents of publication.

Keywords: publish or perish, publication, research, salami slicing

1. Introduction
Research institutions such as universities, pure research bodies in different fields, and other institutions encourage and support researchers in doing research and publishing their research reports for the sake of dissemination of knowledge to the world. In the academic world there has been a common phrase of "publish or perish", putting academicians and scholars on toes, to either publish regularly or remain irrelevant in the academic arena. Pressure has been piling on academicians to rapidly and continually publish research, scholarly and academic work in order to sustain and further their academic careers. This paper therefore discusses the aptness of the use of the phrase in the academic field and its positive contribution to the live of academicians in particular and that of the society in general. The paper also discusses the dangers of overemphasizing on publication through this slogan of and what should be done to ensure that there is quality research and publication to spur growth and development in society.

2. Review, Analysis and Discussions
2.1 Is the slogan Publish or Perish helpful?
Publication is a very important way of disseminating created knowledge. Publishing according to Glattorn (2002) [7] gives scholars an opportunity to tell the world what they have found out, perhaps the only way at their disposal to change the world. Published work is normally of high quality because of passing through several publication procedures and reviews before the work is accepted for publication. Published work lives longer than unpublished work. It is authenticated work which can be used for further research, citation and for implementation to change society. Through publication, scholars are able to get inputs to better their works from the general public who critique their work. Such critique help the researcher to improve on the research or the composed literally work. This ensures continues improvement on the literally and research works of the scholar, improving the published work and consequently uplifting the scholarly status of the researcher. Publishing

research findings, according to stock (2000) benefits the whole society in all spheres of life.

Published work is very important to both the researcher, institution of affiliation and the general populace. It is a powerful tool for scholars to demonstrate their academic talent and prowess to peers and general public. Successful publication brings about positive attention to scholars and affiliate institutions and the attendant benefits that accrue. This according to the views of Anderson (2014) helps the researcher and author to get his name out in the field hence building his academic reputation. The number, variety and quality of publications is a key measure of research productivity. Publication records are normally used for hiring, promotions or funding for further research. It is therefore important for scholars to publish their works for academic advancement and funding.

The pressure to publish has created the spring up of research spirit among academicians and scholars. More researches are being conducted now than ever before resulting to more publications. This spirit has created more professionalism and expertise in conducting research, literally writing, authorship and publication

The slogan inspires authors and researchers to keep on writing their great ideas and research outputs before they varnish from the face of the earth. Publication is the only way that their ideas can be preserved to go beyond their lifetimes. As one famous African proverb goes; 'When an African man dies, a library burns to the ground' (Judy, 2012) [9]. In order to guard against this, regular publication is necessary.

Through publications, the researched authored work becomes better as the scholarly paper is subjected to blind reviews and several revisions before it is accepted for publication. This benefits the author through learning from his/her peers hence improving his intellectual thinking towards the attainment of academic maturity.

The slogan has led to the spring up of many journals, publishing firms and magazines to publish the increased research outputs and other publishable materials. This has reenergized the growth of the publishing industry to greater heights. The traditional publishing firms and journals have also been forced to up their game in order to remain relevant in the face of new entrants and increased pressure to retain and attract new authors. This may have a positive impact in the quality of publications and growth of the publishing industry.

2.2 The Cost of the Overemphasis on the Slogan "Publish or Perish"

Whereas the slogan Publish or perish has increased research and publication in universities and research institutions, it has brought significantly unintended negative implications on research and publication. Scholars who don't want to "perish" in the academic jungle where publication is overemphasized through the slogan, 'publish or perish' have taken some steps to salvage themselves. This according to Booth (1995) has led to some scholars turning to unorthodox means to remain relevant by focusing more on the number of publication as opposed to the quality of the publications. They don't care much on the impact and quality of their published works, but the number of promotional points they help them gather.

Publishing has been used as a measure of competence by most Universities. The pressure to publish in order to

remain afloat in the academic world has led to poor work being submitted to academic journals for publication. This according to Gad-El-Hak (2004) [8] has led in most cases to poor quality articles and reports being published. Some of the publications are cooked up and poorly composed. Most researchers are victims of competitive publishing system where the focus is in publishing within a short time. This according to Abbot et al. (2010) [1] has been brought about by the University's academic staff grading system which is closely tied to publication outputs. This has led to most academicians focusing on publications than advancing meaningful research agenda. Many universities have worsened the situation by simply insisting on the number of publications as a basis of hiring and promoting academic staff. In most cases they don't look at pedagogical and research abilities. In most universities, the rewards for exceptional teaching, supervision and mentorship do not much the rewards for research and publications. As a consequence faculty members tend to concentrate on the later whenever there is conflict between the two. This lowers the quality of teaching, supervision and mentorship in our universities. Universities' regulatory bodies in different countries such as Commission for University Education (CUE) in Kenya, Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) in Tanzania etc. have also not been of much help as their guidelines put more emphasis on publications as the criteria for hiring and promoting academic staff, but less weight on the other competences and competencies that make an all round academic staff.

Some academic staff because of this pressure have become, I may say, 'professional-hangers on' Attaching their names to any paper they get to know is getting published soon even if they have not seen it. They do whatever they can to get their names appear as one of the authors. Some offer to foot the whole bill of publication and even give financial incentives so long as their names appear. This has resulted in one publication having more than five authors, a good number of course who know nothing about the paper. One author does the work the rest only attach and append their names in order to accumulate publication points for promotions.

The pressure to publish has led most academicians to devote much of their time in publishing rather than teaching and mentoring their students most of the time they are concerned with how many publications they have come up with. In most cases they are harsh to their students as they don't have time for supervision and mentorship. This is a sure way of lowering the value of research and publications in our universities making them worthless. Students who go through the hands of these academic staffs also tend to do the same when they assume similar positions later on, in life as lecturers and post graduate research supervisors. This makes the Quality of research and publication in our universities to assume a downward trajectory instead of improving over time. Overemphasis on publishing decreases the value of resulting scholarship. Scholars scramble to publish whatever they can rather than developing significant and valuable research outputs from where meaningful publication can be done. The overemphasis on quantity i.e the number of publication one has greatly affected quality of research and publication. This is self-defeating as the low quality researches and the resulting publications end up neither building the author and the institution of affiliation nor having meaningful impact on societal development.

The pressure to increase the number of publications has led to unethical practices such as 'Salami slicing', a practice of creating several short publications out of a material that could have been published as a single article in a journal. Breaking a study into small chunks and publishing each as a separate paper which makes the study and the resulting publication to lose meaning This practice is strongly discouraged in academia, but unfortunately academicians and scholars continue to practice it. This is brought about by the pressure put on them to publish or else… The fragmentation of a single study report to create several publications according to Beaufils and Karlson (2013) [2] lowers the quality of the publication making it meaningless. The readers and consumers of such works cannot see the full picture and implication of such a study hence implementation of any recommendations becomes impracticable. Most Universities encourage this practice by making it a requirement for their Masters and PhD students to publish a number of small publications from their single study before they graduate. The supervisors in some cases insist that their names should be included as co-authors with the students. This is selfish move by academicians who ride on the backs of their student's publications as co-authors. The journal of archives of Iranian medicine broke the record by publishing 33 articles from a single study as reported by (The College of Optometrists Ophthalmic physiological optics, 2013). This practice works against the spirit of quality research and publications and should not be entertained at all costs.

The increase in pressure to publish has led to other unethical practices including the emergence of predatory journals and publishers, plagiarism, duplicate publications, fraud, ghost authors etc. The increase in the number of publication has fuelled the proliferation of a number of predatory journals to ridiculous levels. For example, according to Bauerlein *et al.* (2010) [3], the number of scientific journals rose from about 16,000 in the year 2001 to about 24,000 in 2006 most of which were predatory. The acceptance and appreciation of a publication is frequently gauged by how frequently it is cited in scholarly work. A study done by Neill, (Neill, 2008) [13] found out that 45% 0f the articles published in the 4500 top scientific journal were cited within 5 years of publication. This figure is dropping significantly. Most of these citations are self-citation by authors or the journals themselves and some publications go none cited for a long time. This is a worrying trend indeed and a clear testimony of what the pressure to publish can do.

There is lack of commercialization of research findings. Published research ideas are in most cases not converted into products and services by industry. This is because of the lack of, in most cases the industry and research interface as most researchers and research institutions of affiliation do not have deliberate plans for the same. They are simply interested in publications and more publications and no time for those engagements. This leaves, in most cases very good research findings and innovations rotting on the shelves and pages of research institutions, journals and other published media.

The 'publish or perish' mindset pressures academicians into publishing too frequently not allowing researchers to develop their thesis well. This inhibits idea development. When a hurriedly composed paper is rejected by the publisher, the author may feel anger, stress and depression may set in. The anxiety created by this, 'do or die' slogan has created a lot of fear and panic among academicians. This has made published work more mixed up and inaccurate leading to misrepresentation of facts. This can be very costly to the researcher and the society in general both in the short and long run.

Senior academic staffs in universities because of the pressure to publish, ride on the backs of their students to increase the number of publications, they insist that their names appear in what students publish as co-authors. This has resulted in them having very many publications to their names within a short time majority of which they know nothing about. This unethical trend and research fraud has reached worrying trends. It is my humble submission that universities should reign on this errant academicians if they want to be taken seriously and live as per their mandate. But who is this to do it? The same academicians who engage in the vice hold high positions in the University management and are the ones who decide who gets what, which policy goes through, which one gets changed etc. The situation here then becomes complex.

3. Conclusion

Publication of research findings is an important step in the dissemination of important knowledge from the creators of knowledge to the users of knowledge in order to spur development in society. All along we have been operating on the assumption that once publication has been done, the knowledge automatically gets to the users and it transforms the world. However this has proved not to be so especially in the academic world where academicians and scholars publish their work in books, journals, magazines, newspapers etc. treating it as an end to itself. After publishing the scholars embark on another round of research and article development with an aim of enriching their curriculum vitae in order to display their academic prowess and increase their credit points for promotions [1]. They pay little regard to their published work as they treat it as a 'thing of the past which should not waste their time'. It is therefore imperative that researchers and scholars alike go beyond publication and proactively find ways of further disseminating their published works to increase the impact of their research outputs and publications on societal development. The 'publish or perish' clarion places too much pressure on the academicians hence compromising research quality and publication outputs. On the other hand the slogan has helped to increase the spirit of research and publication which has boosted research and publication outputs in our universities. Therefore a compromise should be found to ensure that universities increase their research and publication outputs without compromising quality. They should also encourage, support and create a conducive environment where researchers and scholars go beyond publication to further disseminate the published work including proactively engaging in activities and processes to ensure that their published get adopted by industry and society to change lives.

4. Recommendations

Research and publication is very important for economic, socio-cultural and political development of our societies. The importance of research and publication in development therefore cannot be gain said. After research and publication what next? Do publications bring about development? What should we do, to ensure that empirical quality research and

publication bring positive impact in society? Considering, the importance of research and publication. The researcher should not just sit and celebrate the publication as an end to itself. publication in a given media should be treated as the beginning of several processes to disseminate the published works through other media and forum. The researcher should take proactive steps to further disseminate the researched and published works. This can be done through seminars, workshops, and direct talks to the government, NGOs, concerned government ministries and departments and other relevant organizations and people. This will ensure that somewhere along the line on these engagements, somebody will hear, listen and implement the recommendations t change to bring a positive society

Researchers and research institutions should create a synergy between them and industry. Their research findings and recommendations in their repositories should be disseminated further to the relevant potential users of the knowledge. Journals and other publishers of research reports should also play a proactive role in further dissemination of published research reports to industry and potential users. This will improve the uptake and consumption of research and publication outputs to inform policy, provide solutions and bring a positive change in societal development.

Universities should also put other measures in place to update their academic staff of any new trends and emerging issues in research and publication. This will help to sharpen the research tools of the academicians in order to increase the quality of research they conduct and the resulting publications. Universities should also help their staff to develop a research spirit and culture. This can be done by stimulating and facilitating research and publication activities through funding. The institutions can also build strong research institutes within themselves with a clear mandate of training and guiding researchers to be competent in research and publication.

Instead of encouraging the academic staff to publish for their promotions, Universities should train, stimulate, guide and facilitate their academic staff with an aim of motivating them to do more research and publication for posterity and development of humanity. There should be an attempt by Universities to encourage their academic staff to grow in a balanced way through research, publication, teaching, student supervision, mentorship and community service to society. They should also be encouraged to focus on quality research and publication and not the number of publication alone. The rewarding systems in universities in terms of promotions, hiring and placement should also be balanced and look at all aspects and not just publication points which purely emanate from the number of publication one has to his/her name.

Researchers themselves can devise ways of engaging a wider audience with their publications by disseminating the published work through conferences, public meetings, public debates, and discussions with duty bearers, academic forums, stakeholder's forums, social media and blogs. This sharing will enable the author to share the published knowledge for wider application to the general public and relevant stakeholders. This can also initiate a debate on how to improve on the study for more applicability or implementation of the study findings.

The researchers, institutions of affiliation should always ensure as a way of social responsibility and research ethics that the first beneficially of the research report should be the

participants and the local inhabitants where the study was conducted. This can be done through involving the local leaders and other social structures in society to disseminate the findings and recommendations. The published materials in form of books and journal and journal articles should be made available to as many audiences as possible and the price should be affordable to the masses. Researchers should also look for ways of getting sponsors to subsidize the cost of these materials to the masses and even make them free to some groups.

Organizing symposia, workshops and seminars in institutions of affiliation whereby all relevant stakeholders are invited to discuss the published study findings with a view of improving their applicability and implement ability. The institutions of affiliation should play a key role in facilitating this through motivation and provision of any necessary assistance to the researchers and authors. When this is successfully done, it may improve the academic and scholarly standing of the author and the institution of affiliation.

Research institutions and their respective regulatory bodies should revise their hiring and promotion criteria to include other aspects of importance other than relying heavily on publication points. For example they can put some weight on the teaching ability, mentorship, supervision and training in pedagogy and andragogy, work performance through performance appraisal, quality of the published works etc. They should also hold the academic staff to account for what they have done beyond the published work to increase more access to the knowledge created and recommendations made for solving problems in society. This may diffuse the overemphasis on publication as the major criteria for hiring and promoting the academic staff and hence reduce the pressure on academicians. This will make the academic staff to embark on doing quality research, publication, teaching, supervision, mentorship and community service as the core mandate of these institutions.

It is in rare cases that the researchers go back to the location of the study to share the findings of the study with the informants or participants and other local stakeholders. Once they collect data they are disappear and never to be seen again. The only time they will be seen back in the location is when they want to collect data for another study. This sounds unethical, especially when it comes from a researcher who claims to uphold research ethics and did the research in question in order to solve societal problems. This makes the participants to feel used and dumped, a situation that may make the participants unwilling to participate in subsequent and future studies as they see it as a waste of time and energy. This may compromise the quality of subsequent researches as non response rates, non cooperative or intentionally giving inaccurate information may unnecessarily increase This scenario may be partly because of the pressure put on academicians to 'Publish or Perish'.

Most published material in books and journal are hidden from most of the populace. The published books are expensive to buy hence out of reach of most people. The books are also not widely circulated. They are only available to a 'chosen few'. Most journals are worse on this. They are only online and most are not on a free-access mode and one has to pay to access them. If research is done to solve societal problems, then why do research and hide the finding and recommendations from the society they were

intended to help? Researchers, research institutions and publishers should revaluate themselves on this and take steps towards this improving the access.

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