

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

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Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam

Abstract

This study assesses the level of researcher visibility among lecturers at Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam, within the international academic community. Employing a survey methodology with 70 lecturers, the research investigates the current state of visibility, identifies influencing factors, analyzes challenges, and proposes enhancement strategies. Findings reveal that despite a majority of lecturers having recent publications, their overall global visibility is very low. Key barriers identified include a lack of research funding, inadequate infrastructure, limited access to scholarly databases, and insufficient mentorship. While institutional support was acknowledged, challenges such as a lack of recognition and incentives for publication were significant. The study concludes by recommending actionable strategies, including establishing international research partnerships, providing targeted training on writing for international journals, creating dedicated research funds, promoting the use of research management systems, and implementing a system to recognize and reward research contributions. These measures are crucial for increasing the global academic presence of the institution's researchers.

Keywords: *Researcher Visibility, Academic Community, Research Funding, International Collaboration and Institutional Repository*

1. INTRODUCTION

Researcher visibility is essential for knowledge advancement, securing collaborations, and improving institutional reputations in an academic environment that is becoming more interconnected by the day. The degree to which researchers and their work are acknowledged and available both inside and outside of their disciplines is referred to as visibility. This concept has evolved from traditional measures citations and peer-reviewed publications to include social media activity, digital presence, and active involvement in international academic network. Enhancing researcher visibility is crucial for both institutional and individual academic development for schools like Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, which are situated in a comparatively under-represented area. Increased visibility can draw collaborations, financial opportunities, and a wider exchange of ideas that support academic advancement on a local and international level. The essence of any research output is be read by others so that they may satisfied their thirst, hence the visibility is very important.

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the present level of researcher visibility among Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic lecturers. It seeks to investigate the elements that affect their visibility, look at the difficulties they encounter, and offer doable solutions to increase their visibility in the international academic scene

Problem statement

Despite the strategic importance of global academic engagement, the lecturer at Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam face systematic, intuition, and individual barriers that impede their visibility in the international academic community. The absence of empirical data on these challenges and potentials solutions specific to polytechnic environment in Nigeria creates a critical gap. This study seeks to

investigate the factors constraining researchers visibility at the area of study and propose context- specific strategies to enhance their global academic presence

Objectives of the study

The following objectives will guide me toward conducting this research:

- To examine the current state of researcher visibility among lecturers at Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam
- To identify key factors influencing the visibility of researchers in the institution
- To analyze challenges faced by lecturers in achieving global academic visibility and
- To propose actionable strategies for enhancing the global visibility of researchers at the institution

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptualizing Researcher Visibility

Researcher visibility refers to the degree to which a researcher's work is accessible and recognized within the global academic community. Modern indicators like online presence and altmetrics (Sugimoto et al., 2017) now complement traditional measures, such as peer-reviewed publications and citations.

In another way researcher visibility refers to the extent to which scholars are recognized within and beyond their academic communities, this will serve as influencing career advancement, collaboration opportunities with different authors in the globe, and societal impact. Cruz & Patel, 2020 asserted that traditionally, visibility was measured through publication counts, citations, and conference participation. Notwithstanding, the digital age has expanded this concept to include online presence, social media engagement, and accessibility of

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

research outputs as in the view of Van den Besselaar et al., 2022. Visibility now encompasses both traditional metrics and digital footprints, with scholars emphasizing its role in fostering interdisciplinary partnerships and public engagement (Nielsen, 2011). This dual framework underscores visibility as a dynamic asset shaped by institutional, technological, and individual factors. Theoretical frameworks emphasize the importance of digital scholarship and academic branding in enhancing visibility (Borgman, 2007). Theoretical perspectives illuminate the mechanisms driving visibility. Bourdieu's theory of academic capital posits that visibility accrues symbolic power, enhancing a researcher's influence within hierarchical academic fields (Bourdieu, 1988). Social capital theory further explains how networks on platforms like ResearchGate amplify visibility by connecting researchers to peers and stakeholders (Lin, 2001). Additionally, Nielsen's networked science paradigm highlights digital tools as catalysts for open, collaborative research, democratizing access and accelerating knowledge dissemination (Nielsen, 2011). These frameworks collectively position visibility as a resource intertwined with power structures, collaboration, and technological adoption.

1. Digital Platforms and Tools

Platforms like Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Academia.edu are crucial for disseminating research and networking with peers. Studies highlight their effectiveness in increasing citation rates and collaboration opportunities (Mewburn et al., 2017).

Social media platforms such as Twitter and LinkedIn have also emerged as tools for academic networking, enabling researchers to share findings and engage with broader audiences (Powell, 2016).

2. Institutional Support for Visibility

Institutions increasingly recognize their role in boosting visibility. Support includes training on digital literacy, funding open-access publishing, and developing institutional repositories. Universities like MIT and Stanford promote open-access mandates, significantly increasing research reach (Suber, 2012). Libraries often lead workshops on profile management (e.g., optimizing Google Scholar profiles), while grants for collaborative projects foster cross-border visibility. However, institutional policies vary globally, with disparities in resource allocation disproportionately affecting researchers in the Global South (Chan et al., 2020). Hence, institutional policies and resources play a significant role in promoting researcher visibility. Training programs, access to subscription-based journals, and financial incentives have been shown to boost academic output and visibility (Togia et al., 2014).

Case studies from other institutions reveal that structured programs focused on visibility lead to improved research output and global recognition (Ware & Mabe, 2015).

3. Challenges to Visibility

Despite opportunities, visibility efforts face obstacles. Information overload dilutes individual presence, while the digital divide excludes under-resourced researchers (Hilbert, 2016). Privacy concerns, such as data misuse on commercial platforms, deter participation. Predatory journals exploit the pressure to publish, risking reputational harm (Beall, 2016). Time constraints and institutional "publish or perish" cultures further strain researchers, prioritizing quantity over strategic visibility. Ethical dilemmas also arise, such as balancing self-promotion with academic rigor. Furthermore, common barriers include limited funding, lack of access to high-impact journals,

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

and insufficient training on digital tools (Wouters et al., 2019).

Institutions in resource-constrained settings face unique challenges, such as inadequate technological infrastructure and low awareness of visibility-enhancing strategies.

4. Strategies for Enhancing Visibility

Proactive strategies mitigate these challenges. Curating a consistent digital identity across ORCID, LinkedIn, and disciplinary platforms ensures discoverability. Engaging publics via blogs or podcasts translates complex research for broader audiences. SEO optimization of publications and leveraging open access maximize reach (Jamali et al., 2020). Collaborative projects, especially international ones, amplify networks. Institutions can aid by integrating visibility metrics into tenure criteria and subsidizing open-access fees. Regular monitoring via altmetrics allows adaptive strategies, ensuring sustained impact.

Table 1 gender information

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	63	66.3	90.0	90.0
	Female	7	7.4	10.0	100.0
	Total	70	73.7	100.0	
Missing	System	25	26.3		
Total		95	100.0		

Successful case studies demonstrate the value of personalized branding and consistent engagement with academic and non-academic audiences (Sugimoto et al., 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY

To achieve a comprehensive understanding of researcher visibility at Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam a structured survey questionnaire was distributed to 75 lecturers across various departments to gather data on their academic profiles, publication history, and use of digital tools and only 70 questionnaires were retrieved back. In addition, the responses were analyzed using SPSS statistical tool.

3.1 Analysis and Findings

3.1.1 Demographic information

The table 1 below depicting the gender of the respondent where male score 90% while their counterpart female got only 10%

Table 2 age distribution of the respondent

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 30	6	6.3	8.6	8.6
	31-40	24	25.3	34.3	42.9
	41-50	33	34.7	47.1	90.0
	51-60	7	7.4	10.0	100.0
	Total	70	73.7	100.0	
Missing	System	25	26.3		
Total		95	100.0		

The table 2 above indicate the age of the respondent, those that are in the range of below 30 years are only 8.6%, 31-40 years are 34.3%, 41-50 having the highest score of 47.1% and 51-60 years having 10% of the total responses from the respondents.

The table 3 below is showing the result of years of service spent in the area of study where below 5 years received 12.7%, 5-10 years 29.6%, 11-15 got the highest score of 36.6%, 16-20 having 12.7% as it responses and 21 and above having least score of only 8.5% of the responses received from the respondents.

Table 3 years of experience

		Years of service			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	below 5 years	9	9.5	12.7	12.7
	5-10 year	21	22.1	29.6	42.3
	11-15 years	26	27.4	36.6	78.9
	16-20 years	9	9.5	12.7	91.5
	21 and above years	6	6.3	8.5	100.0
	Total	71	74.7	100.0	
Missing	System	24	25.3		
Total		95	100.0		

Table 4 depicting the highest qualification of the respondent where HND having 15.5% of the responses, BSc received 33.8% MSc having most responses of 46.5% and PhD having the least score of only 4.2%.

Table 4 highest qualification of the respondent

		Highest qualifications			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	HND	11	11.6	15.5	15.5
	Bsc	24	25.3	33.8	49.3
	MSc	33	34.7	46.5	95.8
	PhD	3	3.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	71	74.7	100.0	
Missing	System	24	25.3		
Total		95	100.0		

3.1.2 Research productivity

From the below 5 table showing more than fifty percent of the respondent have a publication in the past two years while those that they do not have are less than twenty-five percent

Table 5 information of publishing article in the past 2 years

In the past two years have you published research paper in peer reviewed journal

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	48	50.5	68.6	68.6
	NO	22	23.2	31.4	100.0
	Total	70	73.7	100.0	
Missing	System	25	26.3		
Total		95	100.0		

Table 6 paper presentation in national or international conference

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

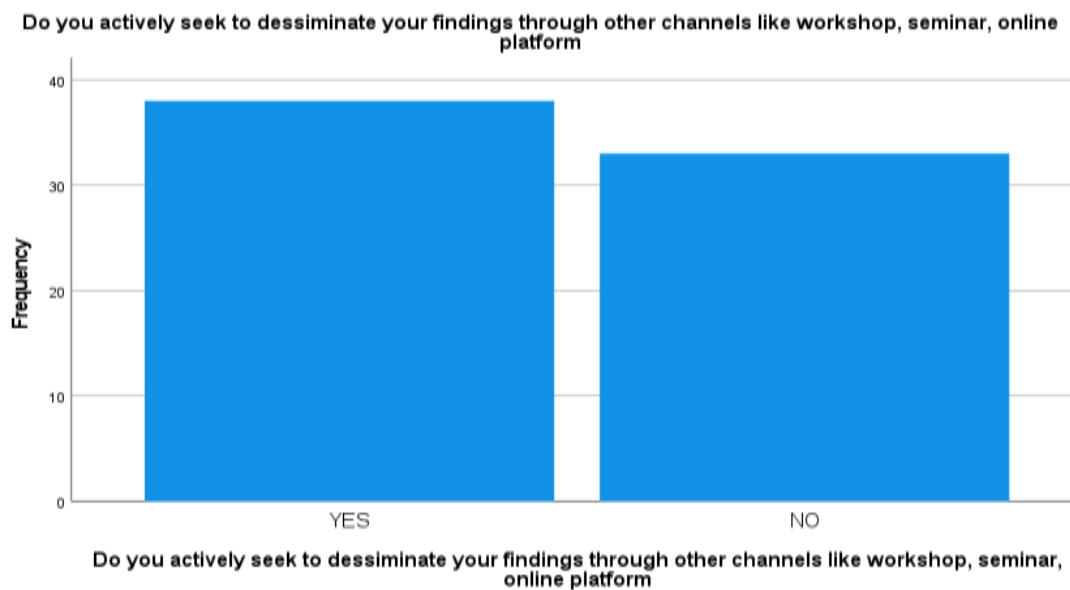
Have you presented a paper in the past two years in National or international conference

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	32	33.7	45.1	45.1
	No	39	41.1	54.9	100.0
	Total	71	74.7	100.0	
Missing	System	24	25.3		
Total		95	100.0		

Table 6 above showing the result of paper presentation in national or international conference where most of the respondent says No with more than 50% and Yes with less than 46% responses.

Below chart 1 depict the responses of the respondent on dissemination of information through any other medium like workshop, seminar, online platform where YES attracted more than 50% of the responses and NO received 36.3% of the responses.

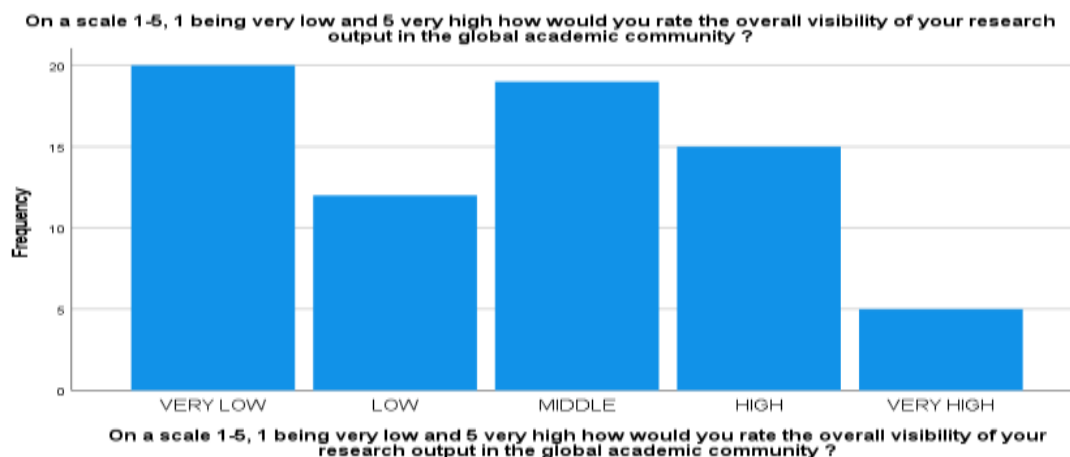
Chart 1 other channel of disseminating research output



In the below chart 2 indicate the result of the overall visibility of research output in academic global community of the Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam lectures using LINKERT scale. The result shows that very low received highest score followed by middle, then high, low and very high with the least score from the responses that indicate the lecturer of the area study are not most visible in the global research output and this may hinder their talent to others to view.

Chart 2 overall visibility of the research output

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers



Factors influencing research visibility

Table 7 factors influencing research visibility

SNO	Description	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a.	Lack of research funding significantly hinder my visibility to conduct high quality research	29 (40.8%)	14 (19.7%)	16 (22.5%)	3 (4.2%)	9 (12.7%)
b.	Inadequate research infrastructure like lab, lib limit my research productivity	22 (31%)	19 (27%)	10 (14%)	10 (14%)	10 (14%)
c.	Limited access to databases and scholarly resources affect my research	23 (32%)	21 (30%)	12 (17%)	8 (11%)	7 (10%)
d.	Lack of mentorship and guidance from senior researcher affect my research output	27 (38%)	17 (24%)	9 (13%)	7 (10%)	11(15%)
e.	My institution provides sufficient support for research activities	22 (31%)	12 (17%)	23 (32%)	4 (6%)	10 (14%)
f.	I have adequate skills and knowledge to effectively disseminate my research findings	13 (18%)	21 (30%)	18 (25%)	16(23%)	3(4%)
g.	Language barriers hinder my ability to publishing high impact international journal	7 (10%)	7 (10%)	12 (17%)	6 (8%)	39 (55%)

The above table 7 is indicating the factors influencing research visibility of Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam lecturers. The result shows most of the respondent strongly agreed lack of research funding is significantly hindering their visibility to conduct high quality research with 40.8% of the responses and those that have not yet decided score 22.5% of the

responses, and those with agree view score 19.7% and the remaining score few percentages. In the other hand, inadequate research infrastructure as if library and laboratory are limiting their research productivity the more than 21 responses said they strongly agreed with this statement and 19 of the responses says they agreed on the

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

statement where the remaining three options got 10 responses each. Furthermore, limited access to research databases and scholarly resources affect their research as most of the responses are with the view of strongly agree with the statement followed by the agreed while other options received only few each. The result also indicate that lack of mentor-ship and guidance from senior researcher are among the factors influencing the research output of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam lecture as more impact international journal with more than 54%

than 37% of their view are strongly agree with the statement followed by agree. Most of the respondent strongly agreed that their institution is providing sufficient support in research activities. Moreover, most of the lecturers are neutral in term of having adequate skills and knowledge to effectively disseminate their findings and at the same most of them strongly disagree that language barrier is part of the factors hindering their ability to publish in high

Challenges in achieving global visibility

Table 8 challenges in achieving global visibility

SNO	Description	MS	S	N	LS	LS
a.	Lack of international collaboration	16 (23%)	5 (7%)	26 (37%)	7 (10%)	17(23%)
b.	Limited access to high impact journal	17 (24%)	11 (15%)	15(21%)	9 (13%)	19 (27%)
c.	Lack of awareness of international research funding opportunities	11 (15%)	12 (17%)	21 (30%)	9 (13%)	18 (25%)
d.	Insufficient training on research writing and publications ethics	12 (17%)	18 (25%)	19 (27%)	5 (7%)	17(24%)
e.	Lack of recognition and incentives for research publication	18 (25%)	18 (25%)	17 (24%)	7 (10%)	11 (16%)

Key: MS: most significant S: significant N: neutral LS: less significant LS: least significant

In the table 8 above, depict the challenges face by the lecturer of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam in achieving global visibility in academic community as can be seen in the above. The responses where most of the respondent are having neutral view on the statement whose says lack of international collaboration with 26 responses, followed by least significant and most significant with 17 and 16 responses respectively. In addition, limited access to high impact journal is least significant in achieving global visibility for lecturer in the area of study with 19 responses followed by most significant with 17 responses, neutral view with 15, significant with 11 and

less significant with 9 responses. Most of the respondent have neutral view pertaining Lack of awareness of international research funding opportunities with 21 responses, followed by least significant, significant, most significant and less significant. Insufficient training on research writing and publications ethics are also have no significant nor less significant as the most responses indicate. Furthermore, lack of recognition and incentives for research publication are most significant as most of the responses goes to it with high responses simultaneously with significant followed by neutral, least significant and less significant.

Strategies for enhancing visibility of a researcher

Table 9 strategies for enhancing visibility of a researcher

SNO	Description	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a.	Establishing research partnership with international institution	21 (30%)	17 (23%)	19 (27%)	7 (10%)	7 (10%)
b.	Organizing international conferences and workshops	18 (25%)	13 (18%)	19 (27%)	4 (6%)	17 (24%)
c.	Providing training on research writing and publication for international journal	20 (28%)	17 (23%)	20 (28%)	4 (6%)	10 (14%)
d.	Creating a dedicated research fund to support international collaborations and publications	20 (28%)	13 (18%)	17 (24%)	12 (17%)	9 (13%)
e.	Developing a strong institutional research culture	21 (30%)	13 (18.3%)	6 (8.4%)	18 (25.3%)	13 (18%)
f.	Promoting use of research management systems	24 (34%)	18 (25.3%)	10 (14%)	13 (18.3%)	6 (8.4%)
g.	Recognizing and rewarding research contributions	34 (48%)	9 (26.6%)	14 (19.7%)	9 (12.6%)	5 (7%)

The table 9 above describing the strategies for enhancing visibility of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam lecturers where the respondent strongly agreed Establishing research partnership with international institution will serve as part of strategist for enhancing visibility with 21 responses followed by neutral view, agreed, and strongly disagree and disagree with 7 responses each. Organizing international conference and workshops in the other is not part of the strategies that will enhance their visibility as most of the responses goes to neutral opinion, followed by strongly agreed, strongly disagree the remaining got few. In contrast providing training on research writing and publishing for international journal is part of the strategist that enhance their visibility as most of the respondent strongly agreed with this statement simultaneously with those with neutral, followed by agreed and disagree with strongly disagree received least attention from the respondent. Furthermore, crating a dedicated research fund to support

international collaboration and publication is also strongly agreed as part of strategist for enhancing visibility of the lecturer in the area of study as it attracted 20 responses followed by neutral view with 17 responses, agreed received 13 responses strongly disagree and disagree received 9 and 2 respectively. developing a strong institutional research culture is also part of strategies to enhance the visibility of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam because most of the responses are strongly agreed with the statement with 21 responses followed by disagree view with 18 responses, agreed and strongly disagree with 13 responses each and neutral view with 6 opinions. In addition, promoting use of research management systems is also part of strategies for enhancing their visibility in academic community as strongly agree and agree received 24 and 18 responses respectively followed by disagree and neutral where they received 13and 10 responses respectively and strongly disagree received only 6 responses. Most of the respondent are

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

strongly agreed recognizing and rewarding research contributions will be part of the strategies that will enhance visibility of the lecture with 34 responses followed by neutral view with 14 responses then agree and disagree with 9 responses each and strongly disagree with only 5 responses.

4. FINDINGS

It was found most the lecturers in Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam are male with the range of years between 41 to 50 years and having 11 to 15 years of experience in service and with masters as their highest qualifications, creating a dedicated research fund to support international collaborations and publications.

The study revealed that the lecturers have publishing at least one paper in two years in the peer review journal although the lecturers have not presented their findings in ether international nor in national conference but they use other medium to present their research output such workshop, seminar and online platform therefore their overall visibility in the global academic community is very low.

The research also found out among factors influencing their research visibility may include; Lack of research funding, Inadequate of research infrastructure, Limited access to database, Lack of mentorship and guidance and Lack of adequate skills and knowledge to portray their research output. While in the other hand the institution is providing support in research activities and language barrier is not problem

The study also revealed the challenges face by the lecturers in achieving their global visibility is lack of recognition and incentive for research publication while in the other lack of international collaboration, limited access to high impact journal, lack of awareness of international research funding opportunities

and insufficient training on research writing and publication ethics are less significant in term of challenges achieving global visibility.

It has also find out that; establishing research partnership with international institution, organizing international conferences and workshops, providing training on research writing and publication for international journal, developing a strong institutional research culture, promoting use of research management systems, and recognizing and rewarding research contributions are among the Strategies for enhancing visibility of the researcher in the area of study.

5. CONCLUSION.

Conclusively, the visibility of the lecturers is very low this is because they published mostly in local journal and they are not participating in either national or international conference where they can have collaboration with other colleagues.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Base on the aforementioned findings the following recommendations are very crucial:

- The lecturers should try to portray their findings in international journal and if possible their field related journal.
- They should also participate in international and national conference.
- Research funding should increase so that research infrastructure to be provided in excess.
- Access to database also should provided couple with guidance and mentorship in writing and publication ethics
- A workshop should be organize to sensitize the lecturer on research writing and disseminating research findings

Increasing the Visibility of Researchers in the International Academic Community: An Analysis of Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic, Geidam Lecturers

- Researchers should be recognize by rewarding and motivating them.
- And above all creating institutional repository that will be available online 24*7

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The research was sponsored by TETFUND in its efforts to support research and development.

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