

International collaboration in scientific publishing: the case of West Africa (2001–2010)

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Abstract

Bibliographic data of publications indexed in Web of Science with at least one (co-)author affiliated to any of the 15 West African countries and published from 2001 to 2010 included are downloaded. Analyses focused one collaboration indicators especially intra regional collaboration, intra African collaboration and collaboration with the world. Results showed that the rate of papers with only one author is diminishing whereas the rate of papers with six and more authors is increasing. Nigeria is responsible for more than half the region's total scientific output. The main African partner countries are South Africa (in the Southern Africa, Cameroon (in the Central Africa), Kenya and Tanzania (in the Eastern Africa). The main non African partner countries are France, USA and United Kingdom, which on their own contributed to over 63 % of the papers with a non West African address. Individual countries have higher international collaboration rate, except Nigeria. West African countries cooperated less with each other and less with African and developing countries than they did with developed ones. The study suggests national authorities to express in actions their commitment to allot at least 1 % of their GDP to science and technology funding. It also suggests regional integration institutions to encourage and fund research activities that involve several institutions from different West African countries in order to increase intra regional scientific cooperation.

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