

STAKEHOLDERS AWARENESS AND WILLINGNESS TO SUBMIT SCHOLARLY WORKS TO INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY TOWARDS RESEARCH VISIBILITY: A CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

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Abstract

Purpose: The study investigated the awareness level and willingness to submit scholarly works to institutional repositories among selected academics at University of Lagos, Nigeria.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study applied descriptive research design. A questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents. Copies of the questionnaire were personally distributed to 58 faculty members of academic staff who were appointed by their respective faculties and departments as focal officers towards content development of the institutional repository (IR). Collected data were analysed using simple descriptive statistics, and presented in tables showing frequencies and percentages. Bivariate analysis was used for the purpose of determining the empirical relationship between the variables.

Findings: Key findings showed that majority of the respondents were only aware of the existence of the UNILAG repository through the University circular and visit to the Library website. Results also showed that there is a positive attitude towards the IR and its content development.

Implications: The university library should embark on a massive awareness campaign and advocacy programmes about the university repository and its benefits to the academic community.

Originality/Value: Study suggests that the University in collaboration with copyright commission should adopt adequate plagiarism policy that will strengthen ownership right agreement and enforcement.

Keywords: Institutional Repository; Awareness; Scholarly communication.

Paper type: Empirical research

Introduction

The adoption and distribution of Institutional Repositories (IRs) have increased in recent times as a result of development witnessed in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Lynch (2003) avers that university-based institutional repositories serve as one of the services that the university library provides to members of its community through effective management and dissemination of digital materials. This collection is in a continuous rise as evidenced by the rates at which scholarly materials that are “born digital” is on the increase by the day (Ifijeh, 2011). Musa, Sahabi and Lawal (2016) while quoting Kennan (2008) stated that universities are the most suitable places to deploy institutional repository as it is essential for university libraries to document and share scholarly content. The core mandate of universities is anchored on a tripod which bothers

on learning, research and teaching; and library being the academic hub of every university plays a critical role in the actualization of this mandate.

Beyond setting up institutional repository by academic libraries as an access point to scholarly materials, institutional repositories provide the platform where scholarly publications are organised for ease of use. Succinctly put, Crow (2002) defines institutional repository as a digital archive where institution’s electronic collections are made available, accessible and usable for immediate and posterity sake. This suggests essentially that IRs are set-up to manage, disseminate and preserve digital scholarly information resources generated by the university’s academic and community members. In the view of Musa, Sahabi and Lawal (2016) universities and research libraries in Nigeria were encouraged to organise their scholarly output into institutional repositories to make visible and

accessible their research works through open access initiative (Bozimo, 2008). In bolstering the while quoting Okojie (2008) advocated for free access to all journals, dissertations and conference proceedings in Nigeria's educational sector.

Dutta and Paul (2014) are of the view that the significant source of generating contents for the institutional repository is the academics scholarly outputs. Omeluzor (2014) recalled that the potential value of IR is not yet fully appreciated by most faculty members in several universities especially in Nigeria including the University of Lagos. Hence, there is a need for academics to be knowledgeable about the enormous benefits inherent in the adoption of IR. Some academics and researchers have pitched their argument on copyright issues as a major setback to the efficient and effective as well as successful adoption of IR in Nigerian universities. Empirical evidence and literature have shown that despite the benefits of institutional repositories, the level of acceptance has been credibly low as only a few universities in Nigeria have embraced the initiative, and where it has been implemented the content development has been very low and slow. Similarly, it has also been reported in the literature that the level of awareness of IR among academics in Nigerian universities vis-à-vis their preparedness to submit their research findings is incredibly low (Dutta and Paul, 2014).

Notwithstanding, some elements may impact on and shape the attitude of many scholars with regards to self-archiving practice. For instance, several studies have found a low rate of faculty submission to IRs" (Abrizah, 2017; Dutta, G., & Paul, 2014; Salo, 2008; Foster and Gibbons, 2005) Comparably; an experimental inquiry showed low rate of deposition by the academics in the University of Lagos, Nigeria even when majority of the stakeholders are aware of the existing university IR. Therefore, this study is geared towards examining the current methods the academics in University of Lagos use in making their scholarly outputs freely available globally, the depositions mandates in making research available through the existing IR by the academics, and what makes them reluctant to self-archive their research materials (Moksness, and Olsen, 2017). Upon these assertions, it is

assertion further, Musa, Sahabi and Lawal (2016

necessary to ascertain if the academic staff at the University of Lagos, Nigeria are aware of IR. What is the level of their willingness to submit their scholarly outputs to the University digital repository? Thus, the scope of the paper is geared towards determining the perceptions of stakeholders in the University of Lagos towards their willingness to contribute to research visibility.

Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1.How do academic members of the University of Lagos learn about the existence of the IR?
- 2.What are the attitudes of the respondents towards the submission of scholarly works to the repository?
- 3.Why do academic members submit their research/teaching materials to IRs?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between the level of awareness and staff submission of scholarly works to IR.
2. There is no significant relationship between stakeholders' copyright infringement concern and submission of scholarly works to IR.

Significance of the Study

The study would be of immense benefits to Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) especially universities and other bodies who intend to establish institutional repository. It would provide the empirical evidence about the status of institutional repository in Nigeria generally and University of Lagos in particular. It would be a valuable asset to researchers and authors who want to patronize institutional repository. It would enable library to widen their access to information resources for their users. It would equally, aid decision and policy makers in taking decision on matter concerning institutional repository.

Statement of the Problem

Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) have the responsibility of producing new knowledge, validating the new knowledge produced, and authenticating existing knowledge. These same institutions where knowledge and scientific discovery are so made, are also the highest consumer of knowledge products. In essence, the HEIs (especially the Universities) patronize the private and commercial publishers as well as scientific information resources vendors at a huge cost. Funds are made available by many universities to support staff training for higher degrees and certificate. So much financial resources are committed towards conferences attendance, and other professional meetings for members of staff including staff on special research exercise. The theses, technical reports and dissertations originating from these aforementioned academic and scholarly activities are not deposited to the institutional repository, which otherwise, should have be the platform to disseminate the institution’s research publications. So, Institutional Repositories (IRs) were primarily set up to provide access to an institutions scholarly publication but over time it was observed that

much is not known about the scholarly output of the University of Lagos (UNILAG) hence limited access. Therefore, the study was aimed at finding out why the academics were not depositing their works in the University’s Institutional Repository domiciled in the University Library.

Background Information on UNILAG-DSPACE

The University of Lagos Digital Repository (<http://ir.unilag.edu.ng>) was deployed about six years ago. The institutional repository was set up as a result of university and library management commitment towards Open-access initiative. The contents of the University of Lagos Digital Repository contain different types of digital materials. These include articles, conference papers, theses and dissertations, and the University’s archival documents. The IR provides full text of all publications, except articles that are copyrighted. There is now a total of 2,543 items deposited in the repository, and this number is steadily increasing. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the different items held by the University IR.

Table 1. Items held by the University of Lagos digital repository (IR)

S/N	Communities	TOTAL
1	Distance Learning Institute	52
2	Faculty of Arts	195
3	Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences	311
4	Faculty of Clinical Sciences	606
5	Faculty of Dental Sciences	275
6	Faculty of Education	461
7	Faculty of Engineering	432
8	Faculty of Environmental Sciences	161
9	Faculty of Law	52
10	Faculty of Management Sciences	309
11	Faculty of Pharmacy	128
13	Faculty of Science	1461
14	Faculty of Social Science	375
N.B.: Total Collections as at 3rd July 2020		4,818

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Literature Review

Crow (2002) affirms that an institutional repository is a digital system which captures and preserves the intellectual output of a single or multi-university community and that it is an avenue to publish scholarly publication and increase visibility and access to scholarly research

from faculty and students of an academic institution. Sharma, Meichieo and Saha (2008) affirm that since IR captures, preserves and disseminates collective intellectual capital, it serves as a meaningful indicator of an institution’s academic quality. They further insisted that IR increases visibility, reflects a high quality of scholarship; demonstrates the value that can

translate into tangible benefits including funding from public and private sources that derives in part from an institution's status and reputation.

The foregoing assertions imply that a university is measured by the quality of publications made available and accessible to researchers worldwide. It equally means that the placement of universities in the global ranking is primarily anchored on the quality of its research output made accessible to the global academic community. This claim is justifiable because publications in IR are hosted by the university's website or a third-party provider and published on the Internet (Omeluzor, 2014). Therefore, according to Bamigbola and Adetimirin (2017) institutional repository (IR), is any digital repository that is set up to capture, manage, preserve and distribute the intellectual properties of the host institution. The purpose of establishing IR is to create a central digital archive for scholarly works of an institution which helps the visibility of such an institution and also proffers solution to serial crises. Other papers suggest that scholars generally view the publication model favourably, although they are reluctant to fully commit themselves (Rowley, et al, 2017). OA is a channel for publishing where scholars' motivation for using this new opportunity is not fully explained or understood.

Literature indicates that Europe, America and Australia have a higher adoption rate of institutional repositories compared to other continents across the globe (Abrizah 2017; Okumu, 2015; Cullen and Chawner 2010 as referenced by Nunda and Elia (2019). According to Nunda and Elia (2019), in their reference to Cullen and Chawner (2010), in 2006, all Australian universities had to function institutional repositories. Europe leads other continents with 47.92% of universities having institutional repositories (Nunda and Elia, 2019). Despite heightened adoption and usage of institutional repositories in developed countries, the rate of submission of scholarly works among American universities is fairly low (Casey, 2012).

In Asia, the literature indicates India, Taiwan, Japan and Thailand lead other Asian countries in adopting and using institutional repositories (Okumu 2015; Abrizah, 2010). Increased adoption of institutional repositories in Asia is attributed to

several factors. These include user awareness of archiving and quality control policies, availability of documents in the repositories, types of the publications and ease of use of the institutional repository software and system (Ammorukleart, 2017). Other adoption factors in Asia are expected academic benefits, visibility, cultural issues, content availability, accessibility and quality, user awareness, fear of plagiarism, attitude and copyright issues (Kim, 2010; Ammorukleart 2017; Park and Qin, 2013 as cited by Nunda and Elia (2019).

Contrary to the developed and Asian countries, African countries have recorded a low adoption rate of institutional repositories (Ezema, 2013; Kathewera, 2016; Lwoga and Questier 2014; Dulle 2010; Fasae, et al. 2017). The adoption of institutional repositories in Africa has not been promising, and among the factors contributing to the low adoption are lack of institutional repositories awareness, unreliable electricity, insufficient information communication and technology (ICT) skills and lack of skilled workforce (Christian, 2008; Nwakaego, 2017; Saulus, Mutula and Dlamini, 2017). Other critical adoption factors in Africa and most developing countries include expected repositories' benefits, awareness and understanding of self-archiving service (Anenene, Alegbeleye and Oyewole 2017; Bamigbola 2014; Dulle 2010); ignorance of publishers' policy (Bamigbola, 2014).

An institutional repository (IR) aims at the collection and collation of research output of an institution and making it available to the public. In the majority of cases, the document servers are run by the libraries belonging to the institution. Concerning self-archiving, lack of willingness on the part of academics to upload their work on these servers is the major problem. Studying nine important IRs worldwide, Xia and Sun (2007) reported that the archiving of the articles is mainly done by librarians or administrative staff – hence, the self-archiving rate of authors is rather low. Jain, Bentley and Oladiran, (2009) highlighted the benefits of open repository for both the university and the contributor. According to Jain, Jain, Bentley and Oladiran, (2009), benefits of an IR to authors among others include enhancing wide dissemination, impacting on scholarship, offering

storage and access to a wide range of materials in addition to feedback and commentary from users.

Dhanavandan and Tamishchelvan (2013) carried out a study on the level of awareness of institutional repositories and open-access publishing among faculty members at Annamalai University in India. The study revealed that awareness of open-access and repository archiving was low, but there was a high level of support for the concept of open-access and that perceived benefits of enhanced exposure and potential for sharing outweighed the perceived risks. They also revealed that the majority of respondents were supportive of an existing mandatory thesis submission policy. On the contrary, Bamigbola's (2014) research on the level of awareness, attitude to use of institutional repositories, and challenges faced by faculty in Agriculture disciplines in federal University of Technology, Akure, (FUTA) Nigeria revealed that the level of awareness of faculty members about IRs was increasing; as well as positive attitude to the IR. In spite of these excellent results, there was low submission of scholarly works by faculty members. The result finally revealed that the use of IR is jointly determined by the level of awareness and attitude.

Methodology

The study applied descriptive research design. Copies of the questionnaire were personally distributed to 58 faculty members appointed by

Table 2. Knowledge about the existence of University IR

Means	No. of Academics	Percentage
Through the University circular	32	55.17
Through University/Library website	15	25.85
Other through colleagues, or from librarians	11	18.98
Total	58	100

N =58

Source: Field Survey, 2019 using SPSS 20.0

What are the attitudes of the respondents towards the submission of scholarly works to the repository?

The respondents were asked if they are willing to submit their papers to the repository, and whether they would recommend the repository to their colleagues. The vast majority of the respondents (94.4%) stated that they would gladly submit their papers to the repository, while only 5.6% were indifferent. Although, 69.2% expressed their concern on the confidentiality of their

their respective faculties and departments as focal officers towards content development/populating of the IR. The questionnaire was administered during a one-day **train-the-trainerworkshop**. Data were analysed using simple descriptive statistics, and presented in tables showing frequencies and percentages. Bivariate analysis was also used to determine the empirical relationship between the variables.

Data Analysis

How do academic members of the University of Lagos learn about the existence of the IR?

The majority of respondents (55.17%) indicated that they became aware of the existence of the University (UNILAG) repository through the University circular, whereas (25.85%) said that they knew about it accidentally while visiting the University/Library website. Others indicated that they learned about the repository through colleagues, or from librarians. Table 2 shows the spread of the respondents. The implication is that if the university has not sent out a circular as well as nominating them as focal officers, they would not have been aware of the existence of the IR let alone submitting their scholarly works. This indicates that the library should carry out awareness campaign and advocacy programmes about the repository and its benefits to the academic community.

intellectual product but majority of the respondent (75.5%) agreed that institutional repository will improve accessibility and visibility to their scholarly works over printed journals. The result, therefore, reveals that there is a positive attitude towards the digital repository and its content development. This positive attitude could be attributed knowledge gained during the one-day train-the-trainer workshop earlier mentioned as well as from advocacy programs carried out by librarians and webometric committee to acquaint staff with the benefits of IRs.

Table 3: Attitudes of the respondents towards the submission of scholarly works to therepository

Attitudes of Staff towards submission of scholarly works to the repository	Agree	Disagree
If I publish my work in an institutional repository, I may not be able to publish it elsewhere due to copyright or other restrictions	27.7%	72.4%
There may be a conflict of interest with journal publishers	37.9%	62.1%
People may copy or use my work without permission	74.5%	25.5%
I will willingly submit my publications to the institutional repository platform if there is an official directive.	94.4%	5.6%
I am concerned about confidentiality concerning the participants' information	69.2%	30.8%
I am concerned about confidentiality concerning the researcher's details	69%	31%
Publishing my works on the institutional repository will improve accessibility to my scholarly literature over printed journals.	75.5%	24.5%
My scholarly research works might not be good enough to put in the public domain (on the web)	24.2%	75.8%
Publishing my scholarly research outputs will allow people to criticize my work	51.7%	48.3%

Source: Field Survey, 2019 using SPSS 20.0

Why do academic members submit their research/teaching materials to IRs?

Table 4 presents those reasons based on ratings of respondents. The reason for ‘‘financial reward’’ has the lowest mean of 1.43 and a standard deviation of 1.20; thus, the standard deviation is more concentrated around the mean. This is followed by ‘‘submission of my scholarly work would count toward my tenure and promotion’’ with a mean of 2.31 and a standard deviation of 1.44 which is also centred around its means.

Conversely, the reasons ‘‘would earn me global recognition’’ has the highest mean of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 1.60, thus the standard deviation is not concentrated around its mean. This followed by the reason ‘would earn my university recognition’’ with a mean of 4.36 and a standard deviation of 1.19. Though the population is very small respondent are first concerned about financial and career pre reason before global recognition and impact on their university ranking and reputation.

Table4. Reasons for submitting intellectual products to IR

Items	Mean	SD
IR would preserve my scholarly works	4.22	1.17
For financial reward	1.43	1.20
Submission of my scholarly works would count toward my tenure and promotion	2.31	1.44
Would earn my university recognition	4.36	1.19
Would earn me global recognition	4.42	1.60

5= very important; 1= very unimportant N=58

Source: Field Survey, 2019 using SPSS 20.0

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between the level of awareness of IR by academic staff and submission of scholarly works to the University of Lagos Digital repository

From the hypothesis above, we assume that there is no significant relationship between the level of awareness of IR by academic staff and submission

of scholarly works to University of Lagos Digital repository because the result presented in Table 3 shows that 58.3% of respondents are both aware and contributed to the institutional repository. Also, the chi-square analysis reveals that the calculated value (X^2) is 1.125 and the ‘p’ value is 0.319, which is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Hence, the Null Hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. This implies that there is no relationship between the level of awareness and

submission of scholarly works by academic staff to the content development of the institutional repository. The implication is that in spite of awareness of IR by academic, there is a noticeable

lack of requisite skills that will enable them to submit (self-archiving) their scholarly works to the IR.

Table 5: Level of Awareness and submission of scholarly works to IR.

Awareness	Submission of scholarly works		Total
	Yes	No	
Aware	28 (58.3)	20 (41.7)	48 (100)
Not Aware	4 (40)	6 (60)	10 (100)
Total	32 (55.2)	26 (44.8)	58 (100)

$X^2 = 1.125$; $df = 1$; $p\text{-value} = .319$

Source: Field Survey, 2019 using SPSS 20.0

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between stakeholders’ copyright infringement concern and submission of scholarly work to IR. Table 4 shows that 58.2% of respondents entertain fears for misuse of their works, plagiarism and more but still submitted their scholarly works to the institutional repository, while about 41.8% did not contribute at all to the institutional repository. The chi-square

analysis reveals that the calculated value (X^2) is 3.894 and the ‘p’ value is 0.084, which is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Hence, the Null Hypothesis (H_0) is not rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) is not accepted. This implies that there is no relationship between copyright infringement concern of the respondents and their contribution to the institutional repository.

Table 6: Stakeholder concern for copyright infringement and contribution to the content of IR

Fear of Misuse of work	Contribution to Repository		Total
	Yes	No	
Afraid	32 (58.2)	23 (41.8)	55 (100)
Not Afraid	0 (0)	3 (100)	3 (100)
Total	32 (55.2)	26 (44.8)	58 (100)

$X^2 = 3.894$; $df = 1$; $p\text{-value} = .084$

Source: Field Survey, 2019 using SPSS 20.0

Discussion of Findings

This study discovered the obvious, that majority (55.17%) of the academics would not have been aware of the University’s IR if not for the efforts of the University Library in creating awareness through University circular and social platform. This in tandem with the findings of Ivwighreghweta, (2012) and Ridwan, (2015) in which it was suggested that many academics in Universities and Research Institution are completely unaware with open access repositories even within their own academic environment.

The study further revealed that while 58.3% were aware of the repository and submitted their scholarly works, 41.7% of the respondents were aware but did not deposit their works on the one hand, and on the other hand, 40% were not aware yet submitted their works while 60% were not aware and did not submit their works. Hence 55.2% of the total respondents deposited their works while 44.8% did not contribute to the IR. This result shows that deposition of scholarly materials for population of Institutional repository of University of Lagos is on the increase thus

contradicting the findings of Bamigbola and Adetimirin (2017) which suggested that frequency of use of IR as archive among lecturers in Nigerian universities is low.

Findings also showed that 55.2% entertained fear that their works if deposited in the IR would be misused but still went ahead to deposit their works while 44.8% did not submit their works due to the fear of misuse of works deposited in the IR. These fears border majorly on copyright and plagiarism issues. This is consonance with the discovery of Bamigbola (2014) and Bamigbola and Adetimirin (2017) wherein it was shown that fear of copyrights infringement and fear of plagiarism are the major challenges inhibiting deposition of scholarly work in IRs. The result is also in tandem with Ivwighreghweta, (2012) in which it was found out that perception of IR contents to be of lower quality, low level of awareness about deposition mandate and self-archiving practices, fear of plagiarism and low level of understanding of publishers licensing policy as the major factors that makes them reluctant to self-archive their work

Conclusions

The need for University Digital repository as a veritable platform to provide access to academics' intellectual products and digital contents of a university is very important. The main essence of this is to enhance visibility, recognition, collaboration and dissemination of scholarly information to the global community. As revealed in this study most faculty members of the university are yet to realise and recognise the potentials of IR hence the low contributions to its content development. The implication of this non-realisation and non-recognition of the potentials of IR is that the global visibility of the University in general and the academics, in particular, will be abysmally low, and the academics will be missing out in collaborative research efforts. Hence, there is an urgent need for the University Library to embark on a massive awareness campaign and advocacy programmes about the repository and its benefits to the academic community.

The findings further showed that vast majority of the respondents were willing to submit their papers to the repository. This could be attributed

to the awareness and benefit of IR gained during the one-day train the trainer workshop. However, a good number of the respondents still lack the requisite skills that will enable them to engage in self-archiving (that is; submit their scholarly works to the IR). Therefore, the University Library should continuously organise workshops on content development of the IR as well as self-archiving. It should be noted that lack of understanding of IR goal requires effective and aggressive awareness campaign, education and persuasion. In allaying the fears expressed by some of the respondents regarding copyright infringement of their scholarly outputs, it is required of the University Management in collaboration with Nigerian Copyright Commission to adopt adequate plagiarism policy to strengthen ownership rights agreement and enforcement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is hereby recommended that;

- The University Library should embark on a massive awareness campaign and advocacy programmes about the university repository and its benefits to the academic community.
- The University Library should also, in conjunction with the Deans of Faculties through the University management constantly issue circulars.
- The University Management could make deposition of works in the IR as part of promotion exercise. In this way, the academics will begin to see deposition of their works in the IR as a means of improvement.
- The fears expressed by the academics should be addressed by the University Library through the University Management.
- The study also suggests that university in collaboration with copyright commission should adopt adequate plagiarism policy that will strengthen ownership right agreement and enforcement.

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