

Awareness and Attitudes of Faculty Members towards Developing Institutional Repository in Federal University, Kashere Gombe State Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigates the awareness and attitudes of faculty members towards depositing scholarly information resources in institutional repository of Federal University Kashere Library. A survey design was employed for the study. The population of the study consists of 415 faculty members, with sample size of 250 respondents and the instrument used in data collection was questionnaire. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed but 236 (94.4%) were returned duly filled. The study reveals that the faculty members under study are aware of the institutional repository but majority of them have not deposited their scholarly resources in the institutional repository. Many faculty members were very much interested in contributing course materials, dissertations and conference / seminars proceedings than scholarly journal articles, pre-prints/post prints and books in the future. The study recommends that the University management should encourage faculty members to contribute to the institutional repository by providing some incentives such as acknowledgment, provide sufficient research grants, and sponsor lecturers to attend conferences, seminars and workshops. Make contribution to the institutional repository as an institutional mandate. University Library should organize orientation programmes, seminars and workshops at regular intervals to create awareness on the benefits and effective use of institutional repository.

Keywords: Institutional Repository, Awareness, Attitudes, Faculty Member, Scholarly Information Resources, Library, Nigeria.

Background to the Study

Introduction of new models for the dissemination of scholarly research and knowledge has transformed and redefined the long established relationship between authors, publishers and academic libraries. The open-access movement gained momentum to provide access to scholarly literature free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. Institutional Repositories (IRs) are widely implemented across academic institutions with the intent to preserve the collective scholarly output of the university community, thereby increasing the impact of research. However, the extent to which faculty and researchers embraced IRs and the successes reported reveal a mixed result (Oguz & Assefa, 2014). IRs gives the opportunity to faculties and research scholars from universities to freely publish and facilitate open access to the results of their research activities.

There is also a good chance for scholars and research communities to highly increase their visibility in the world and their impact. Institutional repositories have the same advantages as other types of author self-archiving: global accessibility, increased speed of dissemination and potentially reduced subscription charges for institutions. The means of disseminating scholarly content has been greatly expanded through the internet and its capabilities for immediate and broad access to information. The movement towards open access (OA) journals and repositories are prime examples of the way the academies are trying to take advantage of this technology by wider dissemination of research, making it free of charge, and attempting to reduce copyright restrictions. Institutional repository is able to address the challenges faced by faculty members in attempting to disseminate their research through the internet, and to utilize various forms of digital media for scholarly communication. To design and develop IR, the preliminary requirement is deposition of the contents. The main source of content for any academic IR is the faculty members. To initiate and to sustain an IR, the flow of content submission is very much important (Dutta & Paul, 2014). The most popular IR software platforms are DSpace, ePrints.org, Fedora. Institutional repositories, electronic publishing, open access and other new innovative technological opportunities have all led to changes in scholarly publishing. These changes are, however, emerging without the participants fully understanding what the changes may actually mean for scholarly communication and how the nature of scholarly work may be affected (Manjunatha & Thandavamoorthy, 2011). With the rapid uptake of digital media changing the way scholarly communication is perceived, we are in a privileged position to be part of a movement whose decisions now will help to decide ultimately future courses of action. A number of strategies have recently emerged to facilitate greatly enhanced access to traditional scholarly content, for example open access journals and institutional repositories. Marketing institutional repository is by far a critical one. Though marketing of IR at the initial stage is an important part of the equation for the success of open access project; without an ongoing campaign to support the repositories their survival would be placed in serious peril.

According to Yang & Li (2015) “Open access” (OA) and “institutional repositories” (IRs) have been buzz words in library literature for years. Craw (2002) defined institutional repositories as the “digital collections capturing and preserving the intellectual output of a single or multi-university community which provide a compelling response to two strategic issues facing academic institutions”. Joseph (2010) on the other hand explains that “this is an online, searchable, web-accessible database containing intellectual works by scholars and researchers organized to increase access to scholarship and ensure their long term preservation”.

According to Francisca (2015) the aim of IR is to increase visibility, preservation and storage of all types of institutional output, including unpublished literature, support for learning and teaching, standardization of institutional records, ability to keep track of and analyze research performance, breaking down of publishers’ cost and permission barriers, help universities to share their knowledge and expertise. Essentially, IR collects and provides free access to the research output of a given institution. IR provides improved access to the full text of research articles and improves retrieval of relevant research materials.

Institutional repositories are digital archives of intellectual items created by the faculty, staff and students of an institution accessible to end users both within and outside the institution (university). The IR may hold various kinds of publications, such as pre-prints and post-prints of journal articles, conference papers, research reports, theses, dissertations, software, datasets, videos, audios and other scholarly items. This way, intellectual contributions of scholars are made available free of charge to the whole knowledge community around the world (Johnson (2002) in: Manjunatha & Thandavamoorthy, 2011). Similarly, Barley (2006) posits that IR consists of electronic information or other type of digital resources such as electronic theses and dissertation (ETD) and technical reports by authors. All these resources are managed and hosted in the university repository. Tiemo & Ebiagbe (2016) acknowledged that the purpose of open access journals or repositories is not to face out commercial electronic database publishers but to provide accessible means by taking full advantages of new technologies in reducing cost of acquiring information resources in university libraries.

Davis and Connolly (2007) reported that Cornell's IR is largely under populated and underused by its faculty as the Cornell faculty members have little knowledge of and little motivation to use the repository. Many faculty members use alternatives to IRs, such as their personal Web pages and disciplinary repositories. Among the many reasons given for not using the IR are: redundancy with other modes of disseminating information, confusion with copyright, fear of plagiarism, associating one's work with inconsistent quality, and concerns about whether posting a manuscript constitutes "publishing". Those collections that experience steady growth are collections in which the university has made an administrative investment, such as requiring deposits of theses and dissertations into the IR.

Based on this assumption, Abrizah (2009) investigated the factors that motivate or impede faculty contribution to IR where the researcher suggested the extrinsic and intrinsic benefits relating to IR contribution. Extrinsic benefits include accessibility, publicity and trustworthiness of documents in IRs, professional recognition, institutional recognition, and academic reward. Intrinsic benefits concern altruistic intention of and self-interest in the IR contribution. Cost factors relate to copyright concerns and additional time and effort required to make the IR contribution. Kim (2011) opined that trust and identification are considered important factors in the IR context, also incorporated contextual factors. The survey conducted on a sample of 67 professors whose materials were deposited in the IR of a major research university in USA revealed that benefit factors were more influential than cost or contextual factors. A 2009 survey of 555 faculties at colleges and universities in the United States and Canada found that "only 9.7% of the respondents have ever contributed a publication to their library's digital repository although 56.7% of those surveyed were aware that their institution had instituted "a digital repository for faculty publications (Primary Research Group, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Institutional repositories and other new technological innovations have changed the patterns of faculty members publishing. Despite the wide acceptance and growing number of IRs worldwide, its potential to enhance scholarly publishing and considering the efforts university system in Nigeria are making towards developing and implementing IR. The researcher observed that faculty members are very slow to deposit required information resources to enrich the institutional repositories. As a result, university IRs remains mostly empty, ineffective, or underutilized by the university community. Nevertheless, university and library management have not discover the information needs of faculty members on developing IR when planning and establishing IR in the university library. Lack of needs analysis before developing IR in the library contradicts normal library practice in academic environment. Therefore, this study investigates the awareness and attitudes of faculty members in Federal University, Kashere toward developing IR in the university library.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the awareness and attitude of faculty members towards developing institutional repository in Federal University, Kashere Library. The specific objectives of the study

are to:

1. investigate the level of awareness of institutional repository among faculty members in the University?
2. determine the attitudes of faculty members toward developing toward establishing institutional repository in the university libraries?

Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness of institutional repository among faculty members in the University under study?
2. What are the attitudes of faculty members toward developing institutional repository in the university library under study?

Research Methodology

This research used a survey method. The population of the study consists of 415 faculty members from the four (4) faculties (Agriculture, Education, Sciences and Humanities, Social and Management Sciences [HSMS]) in the University, during the 2016/2017 academic session. The sample size for the study was 250 faculty members using the Research Advisors (2006) which advanced that for a population of 400, a sample of 250 is reasonable at 99% confidence level and 5.0 % margin of error. The instrument used in data collection was questionnaire. Total 250 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. After all, 236 (94.4%) filled questionnaires were collected and were analyzed and discussed using descriptive statistical tools consisting of the Mean and the standard deviation (SD).

Findings and Discussions

To survey the University faculty members' awareness and attitude toward developing institutional repository, a total of 250 questionnaires were distributed among the four faculties of the university researchers. From which 236 questionnaires were filled and returned. On the base of these responses the following analysis and discussion have been made.

Table 1: The perception(s) of the faculty members on the Reasons for Developing University IR

Variables (Perceptions)	A	U	NA	Mean	SD
Response to administrative interest	10%	86%	4%	4.06	1.453
To provide open access to materials	49%	28%	23%	3.46	1.617
To preserve scholarly material of the University	88%	2%	10%	2.55	1.102
To participate in the scholarly communication process	46%	28%	26%	3.51	1.732
Response to faculty requests	20%	05%	75%	3.52	1.756
Response to AVCNU / NUC requests	90%	00%	10%	2.50	1.101
To develop collaborative workspace / information sharing space	36%	25%	39%	3.51	1.626
To increase the visibility of the institution	62%	25%	13%	2.68	1.384
To increase the visibility of authors	22%	7%	71%	2.32	0.902
To support the Archives	51%	17%	32%	3.40	1.682

Table 1 reveals that 86% of faulty members with mean of 4.06 are undecided on the perception of response to administrative interest as reason for developing IR in the university. But, highest number, i.e. 90% of respondents agreed that IR were developed in the universities as response to Association of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (AVCNU) / National University Commission (NUC) requests. Consequently, the finding discloses one of the most important results, which indicate 71% and mean of 2.32 of faculty members who disagreed to increase authors' visibility as a reason for establishing the Universities IR. This can be ascribed to the extent at which the faculty members perceive reasons for establishing the university IR and also been a point of discouragement on the side towards developing the IR.

Table 2: Awareness of Institutional Repository among Faculty Members in Federal University, Kashere

Awareness of IR	A	U	D	Mean	SD
I am aware of what IR is all about in my University Library	176	23	37	4.06	1.453
I am not aware of what IR is all about	26	18	192	2.55	1.102
I am aware of the type of information resources that should be deposited in the university library IR	203	10	23	3.51	1.732
I am aware of the benefits of depositing my information resources in the IR developed in the university library	198	15	23	3.52	1.756

Key: A= Agreed, U= Undecided, D= Disagreed, SD= Standard Deviation

Table 2 indicates a mean of 4.06 that majority of the faculty members in the University are aware of institutional repository in the university library. The findings revealed the awareness level of faculty members on what IR is all about so high. However, several academic staff (mean of 2.55) are not knowledgeable on the

reasons or need for developing IR in the university library. It could also be observed that good number of them (mean of 3.52) were aware of the benefits of depositing resources in the institutional repository of the university library. While on the types of information resources that should be deposited in the IR, faculty members responded in affirmative showing that they are aware with mean of 3.51 and SD of 1.732.

Table 3: Sources of information about IR of the University

Variables	Freq. /236	Percentage %
Through University website	153	68%
Through University Senate Proceedings	46	20%
Through University Bulletin	13	6%
Through University Library Circular	168	71%
from Colleague	23	10%
Through University Email Alert	00	00%
Through Internet	12	5%
From Friends	13	6% _s

It is most important to know that the sources from where the faculty members are aware of the institutional repository, its usability and likely benefits of depositing resources. The findings on table 3 illustrate that significant respondents got information about the IR database through library circular 168/71%. While none of the faculty members heard of IR through university email alert, which is not encouraging because the ICT directorate supposed to participate in the promotion and creation of awareness about the university IR to members of the university community and beyond. Although good of number of the teaching staff (i.e. 153/68%) said that they were aware of institutional repository through university website as the link is created under the links of university library on the university website maintained by the ICT directorate.

Table 4: Attitudes of Faculty Members toward Developing University IR.

Variables on the Attitudes of Faculty Members	A	U	D	Mean	SD
IR collections in the university library will assist in building the e-resources collection	63%	29%	8%	3.53	1.768
Preserve university's intellectual output in a central place	86%	4%	10%	2.66	0.932
University management should make it mandatory for all works published by lecturers should be deposited in the IR	49%	28%	23%	3.09	1.682
Provide long-term preservation of my digital research materials	78%	8%	14%	2.81	1.671
Depositing of my work in the university library IR will violate the copy right law	46%	26%	28%	3.12	1.599
University library IR will enable me to deposit my work for others to use for teaching, learning and research	54%	25%	21%	3.41	1.670
I cannot deposit my research work in university IR because I was not given research grant	17%	32%	51%	2.61	1.343
I need incentives before I can deposit my work in the university library IR	36%	25%	39%	2.98	1.534
If my research works are deposited in the IR it will be available for others to use, cite and increase my visibility	62%	25%	13%	3.39	1.626
I cannot deposit my work in the IR in the university library because it will encourage plagiarism	22%	31%	47%	2.68	1.384
Make my research available faster than the traditional publishing process	77%	7%	16%	2.32	0.902
Only peer reviewed information resources are to be deposited in the University library IR	57%	25%	18%	3.40	1.682

In order to know faculty members attitude toward university IR, respondents were asked some attitudinal questions and their responses are presented accordingly. Table 4 shows that 86% of the respondents with mean of 2.66 had positive attitudes towards the IRs. That IR will preserve university's intellectual output in a central place and provide long-term preservation of my digital research materials with the SD 1.682 and 1.671 respectively. Although, only 17% of the faculty members agreed that they cannot deposit their research work in university IR, because university did not give them research grant for the publications or research work and 32% are undecided. While, 62% of faculty members agreed that research works deposited in the IR will be available for others to use, cite and increase authors' visibility generally and 47% of respondents disagreed that depositing work in the IR of the university library will encourage plagiarism of their scholarly work.

Table 5: Type of Information Resources which Faculty Members are interested in depositing in the University IR

Variables	A	U	NA	Mean	SD
Scholarly journal articles	10%	00%	90%	4.06	0.812
Scholarly books	39%	00%	61%	2.69	1.107
Conference / seminar proceedings	88%	2%	10%	2.55	1.102
Technical papers	46%	28%	26%	3.51	1.732
Pre-prints/post prints	20%	05%	75%	3.52	1.756
Course materials	90%	00%	10%	2.50	1.101
Thesis / Dissertations	89%	00%	11%	2.52	1.106
Video/Audio materials	62%	25%	13%	2.68	1.384
Photos/images/slide collections	40%	40%	20%	2.32	0.902

A question which asked to the respondents on what kind of information materials are they interested in contributing to or depositing in the university IR. Interestingly, it can be seen in table 5 that more faculty members were very much interested in contributing course materials, dissertations and conference / seminars proceedings than scholarly journal articles (10%), pre-prints/post prints (20%) and books (39%) agreed accordingly. The most frequent undecided type of information materials to be contributed by the faculty members was found to be photos/images/slide collections materials. This might have been due to the faculty not having the type of information materials in that format because most likely their scholarly research output are produced in text than in photos/images/slide collections formats. However, even the number of respondents interested in submitting scholarly journal articles is very low compared to other types of information resources format. Despite, the university institutional repository policy required faculties to deposit their journal articles and thesis /dissertations upon completion of any research work or study.

Table 6: Faculty Members' deposition in the University IR (past experience and future plan for depositing) (n=236).

Variables	Yes	Undecided	No
Have you ever contribute any information resources to the university library IR	15 (6.4%)	0(00%)	221(93.6%)
Do you have any plan to contribute information resources to the University library IR in the future	185(78.4%)	12(5.1%)	39(16.5%)

To know faculty members past experience and future plan towards deposition of scholarly information resources into the university library IR; they were asked two (2) questions as on the table 6. Total of 15 (6.4%) faculty members responded in affirmative indicating ever contributing to the university IR, while majority responded negatively. High negative response of the faculty staff on the contribution to the university IR is what makes the IR collection so scanty. However, on the future plan of respondents to contribute information material to the university IR, 185(78.4%) faculty members were willing to contribute their work in the future, although, 12(5.1%) of researchers were said they have not decided yet to contribute their information resources in the future to the University institutional repository. This indicates that their past experience of not contributing information resources to the university IR had some influence on their future plan to deposit scholarly work of the faculties. Therefore, lack of contribution from faculties will makes the digital repository empty and not able to achieve the objectives for which it was established for in the institution and authors visibility, preservation of university intellectual output, sharing of scholarly information resources and increased citations of research work done within and by the university researchers to mention but are few.

Conclusion

In conclusion, FUK Library has developed a new system that will serve as an institutional repository for the university faculty members' intellectual output in digital formats. This repository will be the basis for managing the university communities' digital research collections over time. Nevertheless, as reported by other studies and supported by this study, university intellectual output is not finding its way into institutional repositories in Nigerian universities as expected. Therefore, it is doubtful that universities IRs will prove to alleviate the crisis in scholarly communication in academic communities any time soon. However, the success of some of the universities in establishing and implementing IRs, as directed by the Association of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (AVCNU) and National University Commission (NUC), should provide hope to encourage the faculty members have positive perceptions toward developing these repositories in Nigeria.

Accordingly, many respondents had positive attitudes towards the IRs. That IR will preserve university's intellectual output in a central place and provide long-term preservation of digital research materials. Although, few faculty members agreed that they cannot deposit their research work in university IR, because university did not give them research grant for the publications or research work. Many faculty members were very much

interested in contributing course materials, dissertations and conference / seminars proceedings than scholarly journal articles, pre-prints/post prints and books. So challenging very ignorable number of respondents indicate ever contributing to the university IR, while majority responded negatively; which makes the IR collections so scanty. However, reasonable numbers of respondents indicate interest to contribute information material to the university IR in the future.

Recommendations

The Chinese saying “feeling stones while crossing a river” best describes our experience. We did not start the project with a systematic strategic plan. We stepped on one stone at a time, moved onto the next, and have traveled this far (Chan, et al, 2005). Where do we go from here? The study recommends that:-

1. The University management should encourage faculty members and others researchers to contribute to the University IR by providing some incentives such as acknowledgment and appreciation letters to those who have contributed much of their work to the IR. To encourage lecturers to deposit their research work, the university management should provide sufficient research grants, sponsor lecturers to attend conferences, seminars and workshops within and outside the university communities.
2. The University management and senate should make contribution to the University IR as an institutional mandate. So that the negligence to contribute to the university library IR by some of the faculty members could have been avoided.
3. University Library should be organizing orientation programmes, seminars and workshops at regular intervals regarding the benefits and effective use of institutional repositories among the faculty members and researchers.
4. University libraries should integrate institutional repository collections into the library OPACs for more awareness, visibility and accessibility by users.
5. Librarians should educate faculty members on the dangers of giving out the copyright of their scholarly or research work to commercial publishers.

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