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Library Research Journal Authors Guideline

Library Research Journal is an annual publication of Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Format for Submission

Manuscript submitted for publication must not have been submitted or published elsewhere. Articles should not be more than 14 pages. Manuscripts should be typed on A4 sheet using MS word (Times New Roman, 12 points, double-spaced). The title, author's full name, institutional affiliation, position, phone number and e-mail address should appear on the first page.

Submissions should include an informative abstract of not more than 200 words. Four to six keywords should be included. Tables and graphs should be included in the body of the work (where necessary). The APA 6th Edition (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association) referencing format should be used throughout the manuscript. All submissions will be peer reviewed.

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Library Research Journal is an institution based journal from Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. It is an online peer reviewed Google Scholar journal, published in the month of September. This edition is a compilation of research reports from various institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. The research reports cover a wide array of issues in Library and Information Science. This volume addresses topical issues in librarianship such as NgRen, Competency Appraisal of law cataloguers as well as law students' profile as a correlate of library use. Emerging concepts in librarianship such as MOOC's, parenting styles and readership were part of the compilation. Research reports from Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library focused on library practices in the Circulation Department, Information Literacy, Zik Research Centre and reprographic services in the library.

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OPEN ACCESS REPOSITORIES IN NIGERIAN LIBRARIES: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

This paper discussed issues and challenges involved in the management of open access repositories in Nigerian libraries. Open access repository concerns the archiving of a research report or book written into a database belonging to an institution. This platform allows free access and exchange of ideas without subscriptions. The era of publishing in closed access is gradually being phased out with the emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). This new media form has enabled gathering together of already published works by an institution, on an institution and its staff into a database called institutional repository. Expectedly, this synergy has numerous advantages amongst which is free access and exchange of knowledge. This in turn promotes web visibility and global university ranking. This paper thus highlights software that enhances open access repositories, types of open access repositories, advantages, challenges, as well as strategies that can be adopted to enhance open access repositories in Nigerian libraries.

Keywords: *Institutional Repositories, ICTs, Open access, Nigerian Libraries.*

Introduction

Before the emergence of the Internet, one could access the full text of scholarly article published in a journal by subscribing to the journal or through interlibrary loan. However, the advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has changed the way information is created, packaged and disseminated. This has affected a lot of things including access to people's scholarly articles in journals free of charge. According to Bothma, Cosijn, Fourie, and Penzhorn (2014), there is now a move towards open access (OA) digital scholarly articles

and papers. Open Access (OA) according to Bhat (2010) and Pinfield (2005), is free, immediate, and unrestricted availability of content. To Prosser (2003), OA is defined as free and unrestricted access on the public Internet to literature that scholars provide without expectation of direct payment. Thus, open access is the ability of anyone to view and download published works without having to pay any fees. Another option is to publish in journals that have open access as the centre of their business plan. The journal does not charge any access fees. However, some journals charge publication fee to be paid by the

author before such works are published. Part of the reasons for doing this includes: accelerating research, enriching education, and sharing learning across rich and poor nations. Similarly, Merriam Webster (2021) defined repository as a place where things are stored for safe keeping, or where there is an ample supply of something, or a person or thing with a lot of information about something. It went further to define open access repository.

Open Access Repositories:

- ❖ This is another name for Open Archives (OA). They are digital platforms that hold research output and provide free, immediate and permanent access to research results for anyone to use, download and distribute
- ❖ It is about putting your result /research into a platform where the whole world will have access to it without subscriptions.
- ❖ A scholar or researcher can decide to make open his study on the Internet before it is published in a journal; when this is done, it is called pre-print, and when the article is published before it is made open on the Internet, it is called post-print.
- ❖ Open repositories are electronic services designed to preserve and provide open access to journal article reprints or preprints, audio, video and other media, and/or digital data. Unlike electronic journal or book publishers, they do not generally themselves provide editing or peer review services, though they may provide access to edited, peer-reviewed documents. Repositories may be maintained by an institution (Institutional Repositories) for the benefit of its own authors and researchers, or be open to deposits from any researcher in a given subject area. Some funding agencies require that articles and/or data from the research that they fund be deposited in an open access repository.
- ❖ Open Access Repositories are enabled by open access repositories software which help in the hosting, accessibility and dissemination of information.

Open Access Software

These are software that enables research works to be uploaded successfully to the websites. Examples of most frequently used software for open repositories according to OpenDOAR (2016) are:

- Dspace
- Digital Commons and
- Eprints
- Other examples are arXiv, bioRxiv, Dryad, Figshare or Zenodo.

Dspace – This is software of choice for academic, non-profit and commercial building open digital repositories. It is free and easy to install and completely customizable to fit the needs of any organisation. Dspace was created in 2002 through a joint development effort of Hewlett Packard (HP) and MIT. It was developed as open source software to manage search, scholarly, and other published content in a digital repository, focusing on long term storage, access and preservation. The latest version is 7.0 which was released on July 29, 2021 (Duraspace, 2021).

Digital Commons– It is a commercial, hosted institutional repository platform owned by RELX GROUP. This hosted service, licensed by Bepress, is used by over 500 academic institutions, healthcare centers, public libraries, and research centers to showcase their scholarly output and special collections (Breeding, 2017).

Digital commons are cloud hosted software for institutional repository. It features a professional grade publishing platform for journals, conference proceedings and others. They are a form of commons involving the distribution and communal ownership of informational resources and technology. Resources are typically designed to be used by the community by which they are created. Examples of the digital commons include wikis, open source software and open source licensing (Elsevier, 2017).

E-Prints - This is a free and open source software package for building open access repositories that are compliant with the open archives initiative protocol for metadata harvesting. It is designed to capture research outputs, and make them discoverable and re-usable, and preserve them for future use. It was

developed by university of Southampton and released stably on July 17, 2020.

Types of Open Access Repositories

- ✓ Majorly, there are three types of Open Access Repositories, they include:
 - (1). Institutional Repositories: an institutional repository (IR) is an archive for collecting, preserving, and disseminating digital copies of the intellectual output of an institution, particularly a research institution or of a university library (*New World Encyclopaedia*, 2018). Examples in Nigeria include institutions open access databases and databanks like that of University of Jos, Nigeria; Federal University of Technology, Owerri; Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka; University of Nigeria Nsukka,; University of Ibadan, repositories among others.
 - (2). General Repositories: This is a collection of stored data from existing databases merged into one so that it may be shared, analysed or updated throughout an organization. Having all information in a central location allows for the data to be easily organized, analysed and secured. Examples include:
 - National Repository of South Africa, National Repository of Nigeria. doaj , doar, zenodo etc
 - (3). Subject Based Repositories – This Involves collections that are made online concerning specific subject areas, most of the interesting ones provide full textsof scholarly publications available free of charge and are searchable by web robots (Bjork, 2013). This include Arxiv database which hosts only subjects in Physics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Biomedicineamong others.
 - Europe PMC – This gives access to worldwide life sciences, Pubmed.

Why Open Access Repositories?

Many advantages abound for the use and adoption of open access repositories, supporting this assertion Ukwoma and Okafor (2017) includes:

- For Visibility index – Includedworks will be rated with altmetrics (e.g – viewership, downloads, read etc)

- Examples– Doaj, Wiley’s Open Access Journals, Springer’s Open Access Journals, Thomson Reuters, Scopus (Grace, 2013)
 - Worldwide audience of the output of the institution and individual (Universal access)
 - Maximizing of the visibility and impact of the research output
 - Showcasing of the institution and individuals to interested constituencies for prospective students, staff and other stakeholders
 - Collecting and curating digital output (long term preservation)
 - Supporting researchers endeavours, providing access to theses and dissertations and a location for the development of e-portfolios
 - Provision of workspace for work-in-progress and for collaborative or large-scale projects

Other benefits according to Oliveira (2011) include: Expanding the circulation of scientific work, creating global visibility for an institution's scholarly research, accelerating the dissemination of research information, maximizing research, providing maximum access to scholarly communication, providing access to archival literature, allowing digital copies to be posted in subject-specific institutional repositories, eliminating financial or permission barriers, enhancing the speed with which articles are cited, providing for unlimited space for tables, allowing forfigures and video footage, and allowing for collaboration with researchers around the world.

Open Access in Libraries

Open access means, having unrestricted access to scholarly publications published online. Some of these publications that are available online include articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, theses, working papers, data and images. No library exists without any of these materials. A Library according to Nworie (2012) is set up with the responsibilities of collecting, processing, storing, and dissemination of recorded information with well trained staff managing the affairs, for the purpose of reading, studying and consultations. Materials that are published are expected to be found in the library, made available for use. Fortunately, today there are virtual and digital libraries where users can have access to these published materials easily online.

Libraries register with some of these repositories, while some libraries domicile institutional repositories (IRs) of their institutions thereby making it easier for users to have access to their outputs. IRs also provides additional services such as collecting, sharing, and preserving collections such as thesis, grey literature and research data. According to Bothma *et al* (2014), many universities all over the world have local repositories where academics can make their research available through the library or information services website. When one makes his own articles available, it is known as ‘Open Access (AO) self-archiving’ or ‘green OA’. Publishing in an open access journal is known as ‘gold OA’ (Uttkarsha, 2022).

Libraries in developing countries which adopt Open Access repositories tend to benefit so much by hooking up with libraries in developed countries rich in providing recorded knowledge to their users free of charge. In the case of libraries that have institutional repositories, open access gives them opportunities to gain worldwide audience and visibility of their outputs. This will also give the institutions more recognition (Islam and Akter, 2013).

Issues and Challenges of Adopting Open Access Repositories in Nigerian Libraries

Adopting Open access in libraries is a good way to go like the institutional repositories, digital commons etc. It also helps in giving credence and recognition to libraries. However, such arrangement has its own challenges. According to Christian cited in Narayan and Luca (2017), some of the issues and challenges that face open access repositories include:

- Lack of awareness of open access repositories and its value among researchers and librarians
- Inadequate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure
- Inadequate and epileptic power supply to power ICT facilities
- Inadequate funding by government and parent institutions
- Low level of advocacy for open access repositories
- Confusion about publishers copyright policies and researcher reputation
- The lack of visibility and usability of the library-managed institutional repository.

This is why Christian (2008) says that “Lack of awareness of open access institutional repositories among researchers and academics in the country’s academic and research institutions is a serious challenge. According to her, more than 74% of the respondents surveyed during this study, were unfamiliar with open access institutional repository. Other issues include inadequate Information and Communication Technology infrastructure. A major problem in this area is the high cost of Internet bandwidth in the region. This cost results from the use of satellite infrastructure for Internet connection as opposed to much efficient and cheaper fibre optic infrastructure used in developed nations of the world. There is also the problem of inadequate and epileptic electricity supply to power ICT facilities in academic institutions. The long-term solution to the high cost of bandwidth lies in the development of more fibre optic infrastructure in the region as well as open access to same. The issue of poor electricity power supply will necessitate further research into eco-friendly alternative energy generating system to power ICT facilities in academic and research institutions.

Poor fundings is also a major problem. Most of the academic and research institutions in Nigeria are funded by the government. These institutions continue to grapple with percentage decline in budgetary allocation. Considering the fact that development of institutional repository in this part of the world is a capital intensive, poor funding helps to cripple the development of institutional repository in Nigeria.

Low level of awareness of open access institutional repository in Nigeria is directly linked to issue of inadequate advocacy for open access in Nigeria. However, Chanai (2019) added that open access is an ongoing theme and a good way to promote the development of open access institutional repository in a developing country such as Nigeria is through advocacy. Effective advocacy presupposes that the advocates or stakeholders are very familiar with the concept. Unfortunately, evidence in the course of this research revealed that knowledge of open access institutional repository is very low among the major stakeholders in the region. South Africa once had this problem. They tackled it headlong through open

access workshops and training for stakeholders (Christian, 2008).

This research paper advocates that researchers should retain the copyright to their research works. This will serve as an incentive to make them willingly submit their work to the open access institutional repository. This is possible through the use alternative publishing agreement. By means of an alternative publishing agreement, researchers are able to grant a limited right (licence) to publishers to publish their work while the copyright in the work remains with the researcher or author of the work”.

Possible Solution to the Challenges

According to Christian (2008), Oliveira (2011), Narayan and Luca (2017), some of the possible solutions towards overcoming open access repositories challenges include:

- Creating more awareness among librarians and researchers of various institutions about open access repositories during conferences, workshops, seminars and professional association meetings.
- Improved funding and grants on open access repositories to researchers
- Encouraging free access to the Internet in libraries
- Making regular power supply in libraries a priority for institutions and government agencies

- Intensifying advocacy about Open access repositories
- Strengthening of punishment for plagiarism and compliance to copyright law

Conclusion

The emergence of Information and Communication Technology has enabled increase in the creation, packaging and dissemination of information. One major reason for the publication of any research report and publication is to be consulted, shared and knowledge gained fully utilized for national development. Most research works before the emergence of Information and Communication Technologies were published in closed access journals and kept in libraries and information centres only in most cases to be consulted online through subscription. This hinders access, exchange of knowledge and global visibility.

With the Internet, research works and published books can be consulted free of charge via open access repositories. Similarly, many Nigerian libraries struggle with the preservation and conservation of their materials, but with open access repositories, published works can be assured of long-term preservation. However, no meaningful endeavour goes without its own challenges. This paper has tried to x rayed these challenges and proffered possible solution to these challenges.

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