Chapter 16
Management of Institutional Repositories (IR) in Developing Countries

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ABSTRACT

The chapter discusses the management of institutional repositories (IR) in developing countries. It starts with the introduction of the concept of institutional repositories and its origin. Various definitions of institutional repositories are highlighted. The chapter goes further to discuss the features of institutional repositories such as infrastructure, hosted service, customer support, content organization and control, content discovery, publication tools, reporting, multimedia, social features and notifications, and so on. It further analyses vital issues in management of institutional repositories. Peculiar issues in open access for developing countries are also identified and discussed. The chapter covers the roles of libraries and librarians in the management of institutional repositories; the roles include collection development and management, software acquisition and training, formulation of guidelines for standard metadata and catalogue system, assessment of submission for standard and quality, persuading authors to contribute their intellectual works, enlightenment on copyright issues, information literacy in the use of institutional repositories, promotion and marketing of institutional repositories. The chapter further highlights the challenges and intervention strategies in the management of institutional repositories in developing countries; it enumerates the challenges to include: personnel and technical staff, ICT equipment and infrastructure, lack of awareness and advocacy, inadequate funding, poor policy guidelines, poor power supply, open access, software, copyright law and inadequate internet bandwidth. Based on these, the chapter recommends that an aggressive enlightenment programme should be carried out from time to time; developing countries and their higher institutions should wake up to their responsibilities by formulating policies on institutional repositories (IR); developing countries should also come together to form consortia in the areas of software selection and deployment for institutional repositories. Management of institutions in these countries should make funds available for the smooth running of their institutional repositories, and so on. The chapter concludes with the need for academic institutions and their libraries to pay more attention to the funding and development of institutional repositories in order to provide more effective and efficient access to digital information services to the global academic community.

INTRODUCTION

Institutional Repositories are a growing worldwide phenomenon. Giesecke (2011) defined an institutional repository as a set of services that are offered by an institution for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the members of the institution or scholarly community. Lynch (2003) defined it as a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members.

The open source edge in scholarly communication and subsequent development of software has inadvertently affected the development of institutional repositories. They are part of efforts geared at reasserting institutional control over research output and reforming scholarly communication by breaking the monopoly of journal publishers (Halder & Chandra, 2012). They serve as platforms for scholarly electronic communication via open access initiatives which allows for increased accessibility for authors to easily distribute and share information and scholarly works. An institutional repository is essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of its digital materials, including long-term preservation organization and access or distribution.

Institutional repositories are basically created to manage and preserve digital content created by its faculty and staff. They serve as indicators of the scope and extent of institutions' research activities and may also help to:

- Create global visibility of faculty research: research papers that are freely available online enjoy better visibility and usage than closed access papers. Academic work deposited in an institutional repository increases the profile of the author globally; such papers enjoy wider dissemination and makes reasonable impact. IR increases the impact and Web presence of an institution thereby raising their global profile.
- Provide open access to institutional intellectual research output by archiving it; thereby also improving the usage of the research output.
- Improve the impact of research conducted by the researchers of the institution.
- Collect content as an added library resource;
- Provide researchers an avenue to publicize their work, thereby increasing citations for their research.
- Long-term preservation: Institutional repositories are often managed by an institution's library. Collections in the repository are guaranteed long term preservation as the library ensures regular/ongoing maintenance and back-ups.
- Provide persistent access: works deposited in a repository will have a perpetual URLs that will not change over time, thereby preventing dead links which is often common with personal /publishers' websites.
- Provide a means for an institution to measure and assess its research collections, thus managing its research output more effectively.
- Showcase institution research activities and serve as a strategic marketing tool. Quality research/academic output creates an effective advertisement tool for an institution and in the long run, attracts the interest of new researchers and students who wish to be part of the prestige of that institution. It can also attract external revenue streams.

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