Issues and Challenges to Development of Institutional Repositories in Academic and Research Institutions in Nigeria

Gideon Emcee Christian

International Development Research Center (IDRC), Ottawa, Canada
gchristian@idrc.ca

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1. Introduction

Open Access institutional repositories are electronic archives that may contain post-published articles, pre-published articles, thesis, manuals, teaching materials or other documents that the authors or their institutions wish to make publicly available without financial or other access barriers. Open Access institutional repositories provide an avenue for the promotion and dissemination of knowledge and institutional research outputs. It can also provide a better picture of the type of research being conducted at these institutions.

With about 92 universities, Nigeria boasts of more Universities than any other country in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, emerging facts seem to suggest that it also generates more academic research outputs than any other country in the region. For example, Nigeria has 125 online journals listed in the African Journal Online (AJOL) as opposed to 54 from South Africa, 8 from Uganda, and 10 from Zimbabwe. Curiously though, the directory of Open Access Repositories shows that there are 15 Open Access repositories in across Africa - 12 in South Africa, 1 in Namibia, 1 in Uganda and 1 in Zimbabwe. There is yet no open access institutional repository in Nigeria. This prompts a reasonable inquiry as to what constraints have prevented a country with so many academic institutions and so much research outputs from developing Open Access institutional repositories. This presentation therefore seeks to highlight the challenges to the establishment of open access institutional repositories in Nigeria as well as views and awareness of open access institutional repositories among scholars and researchers in the target institution surveyed in the course of my field research in the country.

2. Objectives:

The main research objectives are:

1. Highlight the current state of open Access institutional repositories in academic and research institutions in Nigeria.
2. Establish a basis for understanding current state of open Access institutional repositories in academic and research institutions in Nigeria.
3. Highlight the opportunities presented by Open Access institutional repositories and archives in Nigeria.
4. Identify the issues and challenges hindering the development of Open Access institutional repositories in academic and research institutions in Nigeria.
5. Highlight the primary and practical solutions to the major issues affecting the development of Open Access institutional repositories in Nigeria.

3. Methodology

The presentation will be based on the results of a survey conducted at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. The survey was conducted via questionnaires distributed among 100 scholars, researchers and graduate students.

4. Conclusions

Institutional repositories provide universities in developing countries with a good avenue to disseminate their intellectual output to the outside world. However, notwithstanding increased research outputs from universities in Nigeria, there is still absence of Open Access institutional repositories. It is hoped that this presentation will highlight the level of awareness of institutional repositories among scholars and academic researchers in Nigeria, as well as the problems that have militated against the development of institutional repositories in Nigeria; a practical solution that will facilitate the development of institutional repositories in Nigeria.