

# INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES AS ESSENTIAL RESOURCES FOR THE PROMOTION OF SCHOLARSHIP IN BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

By

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## Abstract

*The study examined institutional repositories as essential digital resources for the promotion of scholarship in Nigerian universities. Institutional repositories gather and preserve intellectual outputs in electronic form, such as dissertations, seminar papers, conference proceedings, working papers, technical reports, and other materials from academic institutions. While some Nigerian public universities have established institutional repositories, the situation is quite different in most of the private universities in the country. Hence the focus of this particular study on Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Nigeria. The study sought to find out the role of institutional repositories in the promotion of scholarship in the University as well as the challenges. The study was guided by 3 specific objectives and 3 research questions that determined the benefits, awareness and challenges of institutional repositories. The study adopted descriptive statistics. The population of the study was 30 library personnel that comprised 10 professionals, 11 para-professionals and 9 supporting staff. There was no need for sampling due to small size of the population. A questionnaire created by the researcher was the tool used to collect data. The Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the items' internal consistency, obtaining an overall reliability score of 0.87. The on-the-spot method of collecting data was used. Findings indicated that majority of the respondents are not aware of the presence of IR in the university. Also, inadequate funding was one of the major challenges associated with institutional repository. The study recommends that awareness about IR by private university management should be established.*

**Keywords:** institutional repositories, digital, resources, scholarship, private university, Nigeria

## Introduction

Education depends on information resources and these resources are product of research, education is also crucial in moulding individuals and society, and it is primarily based on information resources. These knowledge resources, which serve as the foundation of educational systems, are

precisely constructed research products. Researchers attempt to create new information and insights that contribute to the growth and development of diverse academic subjects via rigorous study, analysis, interpretation and ICT. Information and communication technology (ICT) is changing the researches communication process in the private university. ICT has transformed not just how information is structured, processed, stored, and transmitted, but also how people seek and access information. As such, libraries, particularly academic libraries, are no longer limited to providing routine services such as collection development, cataloguing and classification, circulation, reference services, current awareness, selective dissemination of information, and other bibliographic services, but have additionally included ICT-related services such as the provision of e-books, e-journals, e-periodicals, and institutional repositories. (Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo and Momoh, 2019). Libraries may expand the range of materials and services they provide to its patrons by embracing these ICT-related services. Researchers, students, and other library customers benefit immensely from digital materials because they remove geographical constraints, allow remote access, and are always available. Furthermore, these services help to preserve and disseminate information, as well as manage library holdings efficiently. Lombardi (2000) Library patrons today desire extra computer material, such as computer indices, digital finding aids, article repositories, and online subscriptions to newspapers. These choices reflect the increasing relevance of digital materials and technology in library services. Computers, digital tools, and internet platforms are being used by library users to access information, do research, and keep up with current events. Libraries have expanded their digital services and provided online access to a wide range of computer information and tools in response to these requests. Adeyemo and Jamogha, (2021) understands institutional repository (IR) as an intriguing and creative medium of scholarly interaction that offers broader recognition and access to the parent body's research output and preserves the institution's history, minimizes publication breakdown, enhances researches, and acts as an advantage for the visibility and availability of grey resources, as well as a faster and effective means of communication that enhances citation to publications. Ogbomo and Muokebe (2015) It should be mentioned that IR is a sort of digital library developed by an institution, inhabited by employees, researchers, students, and other members of the institution, and to be accessed by both university members and the general public. The IR documents are digitized in its nature, and they include all digital versions such as journals, theses and dissertations publications, and papers for conferences. (Okumu, 2015).

Institutional Repositories (IR) are frequently specified in conjunction with the open access activity, enabling free access to electronic content without restrictions; typically, they stocks an institution's scholarly resources and are regarded as very important to scholarly communication, educational institutions ranking, and institutional visibility. (Elaturoti, 2018). Institutional repositories collect and preserve an academic institution's intellectual contributions, which include theses, dissertations, seminar papers, conference proceedings, working papers, technical reports, and other scholarly works. In accordance with Ibrahim (2019), there has been a global acceptance of institutional repositories to support efficient teaching, learning, and research among faculty and students. This widespread acceptability is due to the numerous advantages that institutions, users, and academics hope to gain by implementing them. (Elaturoti & Jatto 2021). The benefits of institutional repositories in terms of centralized access to resources, preservation and long-term access, increased visibility and impact, collaboration and interdisciplinary research, compliance with open access policies, efficient data management, and educational support are driving global adoption. These advantages improve the entire teaching, learning, and research environment of

institutions, which benefits both the institution and its personnel and students. According to Sankar and Kavitha (2018), institutional repositories are the electronic repository of an institution's scientific and academic output maintained in an electronic form, where searching and recovering are permitted for further usage. As a result, an institutional repository is defined as an information system that collects, preserves, disseminates, and provides access to the educational work of the educational sector; it is an electronic archive of intellectual item developed by an institution's faculty, research staff, and students which is made readily available to recipients both inside and outside the institution with minimal or no obstacles for entry. It also stores experiments and qualitative information collected by institution members to assist their research efforts. Institutional repositories are critical to higher educational institutions in maintaining and preserving their intellectual properties; they offer: connectivity to other institutions' repositories; and automated readable information that aids academic institutions in their pursuit of outstanding performance. (Elaturoti & Jatto 2021). Ifijeh (2020) an institutional repository is described as an archives for gathering, storing, and sharing computerized records of an institution's scholarly work. According to Dutta and Paul (2014) awareness of the open access environment is seen as a significant component in deciding the use of this style of scholarly communication. The usage of IR is predicated on being aware of its existence, aims, and advantages. The awareness of institutional repositories' availability and desire to use them is a critical topic to address. For an IR to be effective and fulfill its full prospective, its constituents must be aware of its their existence, recognize its importance, and be eager to offer their scholarship. (Yang & Li, 2015). The aim of this research topic is to examine the role of institutional repositories in promoting scholarship in Nigerian universities, with a focus on Benson Idahosa University, Benin City.

Benson Idahosa University library is a second-generation academic library established alongside its parent institution, Benson Idahosa University in 2000. The main library is a magnificent one-storey building situated opposite the central administration building. It houses over 53,322 volumes of books, pamphlets, journals, theses, dissertations and government documents. It can seat about 300 users when fully utilized. The library, a hybrid system, has collection developed mainly along programme consideration. It has on its staff workforce, a total of 30 members: 10 professional, 11 para-professional and 9 supporting staff. Using the SLAM software management system, the library has over 10,000 of its resources, through retrospective conversion, Online Open Access Catalogue (OPAC). The high point of the library's electronic services is that the library also has an ultra-modern equipment for the digital conversion of its physical resources, towards the advancement of its content-rich and highly functional institutional Repository. The choice of using Benson Idahosa University emanated from the fact that is a second generation of academic library and one of 14 private university in South-South, geo-political zone in Nigeria. Moreover, based on observation most studies focused on public and polytechnics librarians. Therefore, to fill this gap, the study focused on private university.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Numerous researches had been carried out on institutional repositories in libraries in Nigeria and all over the world, with major emphasis on public university libraries, However, to the researcher's understanding, little if any recent study specifically looked into private university libraries. This obvious situation calls for investigation.

During a pre-survey and from the researcher's experiences, trends observed in Benson Idahosa University library are similar to what they encountered trying to setup e-library and complete

automation in the library. This trend has had varying negative impact on implementation of institutional repository in the university. Notably, addressing these problems is crucial for Benson Idahosa University to fully leverage the potential benefits of institutional repositories in promoting scholarship, by creating awareness, providing adequate infrastructure and technical support, implementing efficient content management strategies and establishing clear copyright policies, the university can overcome the challenges and maximize the impact of its IR on scholarly communication and knowledge dissemination. Despite the potential benefits of institutional repositories for promoting scholarship and research most staff of Benson Idahosa University library are yet to embrace this commendable innovation. Therefore, this study aims to investigate institutional repositories as essential resources for the promotion of scholarship in Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the level of awareness of institutional repositories among scholars and researchers in Benson Idahosa University.
2. To find out the potential benefits of institutional repositories for promoting scholarship and research in Benson Idahosa University.
3. To identify the challenges to effective use of institutional repositories in Benson Idahosa University.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of awareness of institutional repositories among scholars and researchers in Benson Idahosa University?
2. What are the potential benefits of institutional repositories for promoting scholarship and research in Benson Idahosa University?
3. What are the challenges to effective use of institutional repositories in Benson Idahosa University?

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **Brief History of Institutional Repository (IR)**

An institutional repository is a web-based resource for archiving scientific or academic works in electronic format on account of the institution, such as research papers, dissertations, and theses. The World Wide Web (WWW) and institutional repositories coexisted in their development. The institutional repositories online repository was founded in 1999 by Paul Ginspan of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. Theoretical physics was the primary concern. He has recently broadened his expertise to encompass areas such as mathematics and computer science. The success of arXiv prompted the creation of additional repositories, such as repec (research papers) in the economic, cognitive, and educational fields. Eprints software for institutional repositories was created in 2001. This resulted in the creation of software used for digital repositories, such as Dspace, which was developed in 2002 by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Fedora (Flexible Extensive Digital Object Repository Architecture) was founded in 1997 at Cornell University's Digital Library research group as a collaboration between Cornell University of information science and the University of Virginia library. The most recent version, however, was released in 2005. Raym Crow, a senior consultant with the scientific publishing and academic resources coalition (SPARC) in Washington, D.C., published an article on institutional

repositories in 2002. The important study titled "The Case for Institutional Repositories" was published. Crow underlined that, in addition to academic and scientific organizations, non-academic entities such as the government may profit from this research. SCIC, a Spanish website, produced a list of over 400 prominent Institutional Repositories with the name "Ranking Web of World Repositories" in 2010. The first institutional repository, arxiv, was ranked top. Nevertheless, six of the world's top ten institutional repositories are American, including arxiv, citeseerx, the Scientific and Technical Information Network, the Social Science Research Network, the Smithsonian/NASA Astrophysics Data System, and MIT Dspace. (Halling, 2006 cited in Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo and Momoh, 2019).

### **An overview of (IR) in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions**

Despite the importance of IR in enhancing visibility and standing in the current online ranking of international institutions, its growth in Nigeria is still in early stages. However, some Universities in Nigeria have since embraced instructional repository. According to Musa, Musa, and Aliyu (2014), several educational institutions are now starting to digitize their local material. In 2009, the University of Jos was the first university in Nigeria to establish an institutional repository (IR), and the second in West Africa after the University of Science and Technology in Ghana. In July 2005, Kashim Ibrahim Library, the central library of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, established an institutional repository. The University of Nigeria Nsukka followed the path in 2008, when it began digitizing its resources. Federal University of Technology, Akure, began utilizing Dspace (application software) in 2011 to manage the institutional resources of their repository, while Covenant University became the first private university to possess an institutional repository in 2012. According to Igwesi (2010), as quoted by Iheanacho-Kelech and Uche (2020), Nnamdi Azikwe University (UNIZIK) Akwa, Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), and Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Ile-Ife have all begun digitizing their collections. According to Iheanacho-Kelech and Uche (2020), institutional repositories are well-established at public universities but not so well in private universities analyzed.

The concept of institutional repositories (IRs) in Nigeria is a technological development that should be enthusiastically accepted by private universities because it is a relatively new theme that necessitates the availability of institutional resources, which improves the visibility as well as ranking in institutional web rankings. In recent years, various Nigerian institutions have fought with one another for greater rankings in the webometrics ranking of universities worldwide (Oye, Oyeniyi, & Mahan, 2020). Most private universities in the country, on the contrary have not adopted or looked into institutional repositories or their potential benefits, and the gap among the two types of higher education institutions (that is, private universities and public universities) is growing (Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo, & Momoh, 2019).

### **Institutional Repository in Private Universities in Nigeria**

The roles of private university librarians in institutional repository are very crucial. Private university librarians, like other librarians, are usually responsible for collecting, organizing, and maintaining information resources to improve the institution's teaching, learning, and research. Private university libraries have historically served as a source of information. According to Cisse, (2004) cited in Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo & Momoh, (2019), the role of private university libraries and librarians have progressed since the era of limited assets to the contemporary notion of open access and institutional repository via surf browsing and card catalogue, punch cards, and OPACs.

In a related development, Anunobi (2008) reported that research libraries and librarians have taken the leadership role in both policy formation and operational deployment roles for institutional repositories, based on a survey conducted by the Coalition for Network Information (CNI) and United States Higher Education Institutions. Prior to the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), libraries and librarians were the primary custodians of information in physical form, and many private universities, particularly in poor countries, relied on the conventional exhibition of their faculty's intellectual publications. Libraries are often in charge of institutional repositories. Libraries are playing an increasingly significant role in information diffusion and IR management. (Adeyemo & Jamogha, 2021).

Oni ,Odaro-Ekhagubebo and Momoh, (2019) articulates the role of a private university libraries and librarians in institutional repository as follows:

1. Private university libraries and librarians may efficiently deliver a lot of the knowledge required in institutional repository metadata tagging, authorization restrictions, along with additional content management requirements that promote access to and use of the material.
2. Private university libraries and librarians are ideally prepared for imparting a majority of the information gathering knowledge, such as document format control, preservation standards, and so on, in order to assist authors in contributing their research work to the institution's repository.
3. The duty for maintaining and preserving published information items should be retained by private university libraries and librarians.
4. Private university libraries must participate in the years to come, and institutional repositories provide libraries and librarians with a convincing alternative.

In order to facilitate the use of the repository by everyone in private university, libraries and librarians must conduct more outreach campaigns and promoting programmes about the repository and its value to the private university sector. According to Abdelrahman (2017) There is a substantial connection between academic staff knowledge of IRs and the means of information employed to educate them regarding it. Librarians developed and implemented numerous marketing techniques to guarantee that academic staff was knowledgeable in IRs. Several writers (Ezema and Okafor, 2016; Ukwoma and Okafor, 2017; Shukla and Ahmad, 2018) have emphasized the need of employing promotional approaches to popularize IRs within the academic environment. In this vein, the examined literature revealed that various institutions in both advanced and underdeveloped nations utilize a variety of techniques to increase awareness of IRs across prospective beneficiaries. According to Shukla and Khan (2014), 35:69% of research scholars and 36:37% of members of faculty learnt about IRs via close associates and coworkers; 29:66% of research professionals and 27:68% of faculty members discovered about IRs from the library's website. At the same time, 15 (50%) among researchers and 14 (76%) of faculty members learned about IRs via promotional brochures and periodicals. Additionally, Manjunatha and Thandavamoorthy (2011) discovered that the majority of respondents at Karnataka University in India learnt about IRs via colleagues/friends and internet searches. According to Dutta and Paul (2014), the internet is the primary source of IR awareness within faculty members. Same outcomes have been presented by Ogbomo and Muokebe (2015), who discovered that the majority of educators in Federal institutions in Nigeria's South-South zone learned about IRs via academic staff/colleagues, publishers, and internet surfing. Furthermore, Halder and Chandra (2012) did a study at Jadavpur University and discovered that the major sources of IR knowledge were colleagues/friends, instructional staff, and library websites.

### **Private University Libraries**

Private university libraries are libraries established and run by private universities to offer their users with information materials. These types of libraries are essential in providing the information materials necessary for academic establishments to develop fully successful individuals who have a beneficial influence on national development (Sobalaji & Ogunmodede, 2015). According to Alexander (2020) stated that in comparison to the general institutions, a private library is one that is cared for by private proprietors. For this study, private university libraries are libraries that are established in the university libraries and maintained by private individuals. Private institution may also be seen as those libraries that are not run by the Government and, while they are bound to Government rule, they are free to define their guidelines and principles. In the same vein, Clark (2015) stated that private universities are corporations operating under state laws. In this context, a private university is described as a degree-granting institution established and funded by a private individual or corporate body. These libraries were established to serve their clients' information and research requirements. Examples of the users are students, lecturers, staff, and communities.

The private university libraries are to support the universities in terms of learning, teaching, and research. The private university libraries are referred to as the powerhouse of any academic organisation, and they have a special place in the scheme of higher learning. Onifade, Ogbuyi and Omeluzor (2013) noted that libraries are not just stores of knowledge, but also dispensers of knowledge, as private university libraries are seen as an integral part of the institution's vast instructional endeavor; without them, no significant academic effort can be carried out. As a platform for national growth, library facilities enhance information and skills for positive productivity. If education is to be effective, private university libraries have a bigger role to play in shaping and creating a happier individual and healthier community.

In Nigeria, private university libraries are indispensable, since they help private universities to achieve their organisational goals in the face of high competition in the country. Establishment of private education in Nigeria has indeed progressed through two historical periods: the first was under President Shehu Shagari's administration from 1979 to 1983, and the second was under President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration from 1983 to 1999. Some private individuals took the risk of founding private universities.

### **Benefits of Institutional Repository (IR)**

Private universities, for example, are internationally considered as knowledge providers, instructors, and disseminators. Institutional repositories have recently emerged as important avenues via which institutions carry forth these activities. Institutions that have open access e-documents have better usage and rating of research materials, which raises the profile and ranking of both the institution and faculty members (Adeyemo & Jamogha, 2021). Institutional repositories have grown in significance in academic communication, institutional exposure, university ranking, and as a viable basis for institutional management of information. (Kakai, 2018). According to Saini (2018), IR promotes scholarly communication among academics by increasing the exposure of faculty and researchers' intellectual contributions. The IR documents are digital in form, and they include all electronic publications such as journals, theses, books, and conference papers (Okumu, 2015). With the transition from printed sources to the usage of online and electronic resources on the internet, private universities and research institutes in Nigeria now have the option of creating their academic work available to the general public. IR contributes to the global

awareness of intellectual research activities conducted at private universities. Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo and Momoh, (2019) listed benefits, the following will be obtained from the institutional repository for private universities: the institutional repository will make the private university's research output available to the rest of the globe. By showcasing the private university to the academic community, institutional repositories will assist to increase the visibility and effect of publishing output. the institutional repository will enable and foster multidisciplinary approaches to research facilities at private universities. Private university libraries will be able to gather and develop digital outputs thanks to institutional repositories. In the private university, an institutional repository will promote the development and exchange of digital instructional materials and assistance, Finally, institutional repository will promote private university students' interests by offering access to their lecturers' and other researchers' theses, dissertations, projects, seminar or conference papers, and journal articles. Institutional repository constitutes one of the requirements for webometric ranking or grading of institutions.

Institutional repositories provide several advantages to private universities, academics, and researchers. According to Saini (2018), IR allows institutions such as private universities to exchange digital intellectual treasure with the global community of researchers while also providing a long-lasting conservation solutions. According to Asadi (2019), institutional repositories offer researchers with greater information connected to research conducted by individuals or groups in a given area of interest. IR provides information consumers with a means of accessing a variety of information resources or intellectual contents, all on a single network and in a single place. By exhibiting institutional intellectual works created in the institution, accessibility of IR promotes organizational identity, worth, publicity, and reputation (Lee & Stvilia, 2017). This raises the rating of institutions in academic rankings. It also demonstrates the worth of institutional research funds allocated to studies. IR sheds light on an institution's research activity, motivating research funding agencies who have previously supported earlier studies to undertake more Breakthrough research results urge organizations and governments to provide more cash and grants for study. The government funds a variety of institutes, including the National Centre for Technology Management (NACETEM), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), and the Institute for Advanced Medical Research and Training (IAMRT). The government creates an enabling environment for the advancement of development and research. The intellectual outputs of researchers in universities, polytechnics, and institutes are critical to a nation's growth and development. Scholarly results and conclusions influence policy, decision making, and community development. As a result, the results of researchers put on IR would improve the policymaking and decision-making processes of a diverse range of users who may use the IR. IR may additionally be utilized to preserve the work of researchers for eternity.

Once institutional publications are not stored in electronic form, problems such as instability, natural catastrophes, destruction, or thievery may jeopardize their longevity and trustworthiness. However, when these publications are saved on electronic format, as is the situation with IR, there is no need to be concerned (Adeyemo & Jamogha, 2021). Adaeze (2020) asserts that institutional repositories promote workplace productivity and effectiveness. Faculty staff would be driven to work more since their papers posted to the repository would reach a larger audience and be more accessible, perhaps leading to sponsorships, scholarships, and grants. Employee productivity contributes to the growth and development of any institution or business. (Yaya, 2016). Despite the benefits of deploying IRs in protecting, communicating, collaborating,

and utilizing research outputs, Nigerian private institutions have been hesitant to embrace and apply IRs in comparison to universities.

Mckay (2003) cited in Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo and Momoh, (2019) describes the following advantages of institutional repository: The institutional repository facilitates access to library materials. Instead of a small group of researchers, information will be available to everybody through institution repository library collections. Institution repository initiatives enable individuals to conduct searches for collections quickly and exhaustively from wherever at any moment. The institution repository renders the inaccessible seen; numerous people are able to use the same content at the exact same moment without difficulty; it also eliminates faraway challenges, as individuals are not required to come to libraries to obtain physical copies of library resources beforehand they may utilize these resources. Furthermore, institutional repositories have the benefits of offering the library's collections online, thus enhancing the availability of resources found in libraries, allowing for faster collection searches, and eradicating the obstacles of a distance, excluding physical limitations, and the price of printed materials collection (preservation and conservation of traditional library materials). It raises the profile of an institution by showcasing digital collections, which can be a useful public relations exercise, and fosters visibility not solely of the library's content, but also of academic work (theses, dissertations, research projects, seminar papers, conferences proceedings, working papers, and technical reports) within the university. The institution repository enables libraries to digitally deliver information sources with intrinsic characteristics.

### **Challenges Facing Implementation of Institution Repository in Private Universities in Nigeria**

Challenges facing the Implementation of Institutional Repository in private universities in Nigeria are similar to the challenges faced in setting up e-library and automation in their libraries. According to Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo and Momoh, (2019), most Nigerian private universities have failed to completely implement open access institutional repositories. Several reasons contribute to the sluggish acceptance and deployment of IRs in Nigerian private universities. Notably, majority of private university experts in Nigeria have yet to commit to storing their scholarly works in IRs (Malekani & Kavishe, 2018). Therefore, the private universities' research outputs and products are poorly visible and accessible. Poor usage of research results and products is associated with a decline in web ranking position. Malekani and Kavishe (2018) listed some of the barriers to institutional repository adoption to include non-commitment by faculty members (primarily research fellows and academics) to self-archiving of their publications; insufficient publications for accumulation in the repository, which stems from a shortage of machinery (such as scanners) to digitize hard copies of publications for the purpose of repository.

The following are some of the challenges militating against the adoption and implementation of Institutional Repository in Nigerian private universities.

#### **Policy Issues**

Adding materials produced by users or independent service websites may appear time demanding to time-pressed researchers. The organization could be eager to submit content yet hesitant to do so alone, necessitating the use of facilitated deposit services. (Jain, 2010 cited in March *et al* (2019). The study furthermore indicated that, it may take time, constant encouragement and mandatory policies for routine self-archiving to become part of normal academic behaviour. In addition, permanent, reliable mediated deposit services perhaps based on the library may also

take time to be established especially if staffed by existing personnel undertaking this role on top of normal duties. In addition, procedures created to check the level of submissions might hinder the adoption of Institutional Repositories (March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019).

### **Inadequate Funding**

Lack of adequate finance had been a barrier to developing-country library development. Notwithstanding the reduced budgetary allocation to private university libraries, the libraries are lacking accessibility to the funds and are unaware of their availability. The private university library is faced with one major challenge which include inadequate fund. Okoroma and Abioye (2017) It was also discovered that the development of Institutional Repository in emerging nations such as Nigeria entails significantly more funding than in advanced nations. This is because academic and research institutions in developed countries already have widely recognized cutting-edge technology ICT infrastructures on which to build. However, in underdeveloped nations such as Nigeria, this kind of facility or base does not exist and involves a significant investment to get it in place. Lack of finance and inadequate funding has always been a major problem reported to be impede the development and implementation and adoption of emergent technologies.

### **Content Recruitment**

The institutional repository's objective, in particular, is to act as open access repositories of the faculty's intellectual output at the university and to demonstrate the concrete consequences of those endeavors abroad. As a result, the success of institutional repositories is dependent on faculty donations, nevertheless only a few faculties participate in institutional repositories. (Casey, 2012 cited in March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019). There might be clear challenges in creating content, particularly from the start. Most private university lecturers are either reluctant or unable to put down their research papers. Institutional repositories will only operate optimally if they are stocked with intellectual publications.

### **Lack of Digitization/ICT Infrastructures**

The lack of automation in most Nigerian private university libraries has delayed the formation of institutional repositories. The automation of libraries is a prerequisite for the formation of an institutional repository. Virtual Library Projects are some of the problems of African digital library development. Most private university libraries lack the essential information technological facilities and services required to build an institutional repository. Some Nigerian private university libraries lack a website, an account with Facebook, email addresses, sufficient computers, Wi-Fi (internet access), a server, and so on. In the twenty-first century, access to information and knowledge is facilitated via the Internet. Private university management in Nigeria should prioritize providing these amenities in order for private universities to adopt and apply IR seamlessly. Some Nigerian private university Management is uninterested in or devoted to the growth of the library. It is no more hidden that certain academics and non-academic employees at Nigerian private universities do not utilize the library; they are unaware of the materials available in the library in their respective fields. Some management employees are unable to describe the library's aims inside the institution, which means that, they perpetually vote against any library expansion plan on the grounds that it is a waste of scarce funds. (Oni, Odaro-Ekhaguebo & Momoh, 2019). In Nigerian private universities, poor energy supply is a serious hindrance to the functioning and expansion of information and communication technologies.

### **Inadequate Advocacy**

One of the most effective approaches to encourage the creation and usage of institutional repositories in Nigerian private university in this digital age is through advocacy. Institutional repositories are very new to most of the academic global community, specifically private universities in underdeveloped nations. It is challenging to convey the numerous advantages of institutional repositories while assuaging stakeholders' fears, and a persistent selling and advertising element is critical to effective institutional repository deployment. (Jain, 2010 cited in March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019). Advocacy has been shown to be an effective means of achieving change in organizations and society as a whole. The establishment of an institutional repository is a novel method to research dissemination, with numerous participants at Nigerian private universities knowing little or nothing about it. The library, as a hub for information dissemination, should be at the heart of this effort. (March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019).

### **Inadequate Knowledge and Skills**

Some academic librarians are not ICT compliant. They are unable to use a computer, utilize the internet, or social media, and as a result, they do not support any IT driving policy or program. According to Ekuoye, Oni, and Momoh (2015), one of the key obstacles confronting digital library initiatives in Nigerian universities has been academic libraries' preparation in terms of skills and expertise to deploy digital library services. Rosenberg (2006) cited in Ekuoye, Oni and Momoh (2015) argues that private universities lack expertise in e-resource management, e-service creation, full-text technological advancement, and teaching. private university libraries are even worse. Information and communication technology skills encounter several obstacles in Nigerian academic institutions. According to Iheanacho-Kelech and Uche (2020), ineffective advocacy and ICT accessibility problems were followed by copyright issues and a lack of information or awareness of the repositories. However, poor technological expertise was not seen as a significant barrier.

### **Copyright Issues**

Copyright is an exclusive license provided to an author and other artists who create to authorize the use of their works in any way. Copyright is used by a number of nations in order to safeguard works of entertainers, phonogram manufactures, and television networks. However, creators are mindful that uploading their articles in an institutional repository may violate the copyright contracts they made with their creators of content. (Okoroma & Abioye, 2017). Manjunatha and Thandavamoorthy (2011) cited in March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019) in their study where respondents were asked the reasons for not depositing on Institutional repository found that 53.45% of the respondents said other users might copy their works without their permission.

### **Perception of Institutional Repository**

Perceived utility the degree to which a person feels that adopting the system will assist him or her in achieving increases in work performance (Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis 2003 referenced in March, Vaikosen, & Nsirim, 2019). People can either reject or embrace technology based on how much they believe it will simplify their job. People can also utilize technology to attain certain purposes, and if these goals are not met, they merely stop using it. (March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019). The main problem faced by the Institutional Repository adoption and

implementation in private universities is the perception of management toward Institutional Repository development and the willingness to support the development. The negative perception of Private Universities Management and lecturers that Institutional Repository is a waste of fund and the willingness to submit their intellectual work to the Institutional Repository may affect its adoption. Perceptions of private universities management and staff have lots of effect on institutional repository development and use.

### **Awareness of Institutional Repository**

Online publication, institutional repositories, open access, and other novel technical options have all influenced academic publishing. One result has been an increase in the availability of academic outputs. However, these modifications are occurring despite contributors completely comprehending how these shifts may imply for academic communication and how the essence of scholarly work may be impacted (Manjunatha & Thandavamoorthy, 2011 quoted in March, Vaikosen & Nsirim, 2019). Academic organizations create the Institutional Repository, which captures, stores, indexes, preserves, and redistributes all of the host institute's academic information and intellectual activity. A steady supply of material is a prerequisite for growth and sustenance, and faculty members are the primary source of content flow. However, the low degree of engagement of faculty members in Institutional Repositories is a key barrier to success. Faculty engagement is hampered by a lack of understanding and uncertainty regarding copyright problems (Dutta & Paul, 2014). The use of any information product requires a high level of awareness. In this regard, Yang and Li (2015) stated that in order for the deployment of Institutional Repository to be effective and fulfil its full purpose, its participants must be aware of its presence. Awareness of IR by private university leadership and educators, as well as their desire to engage and contribute to its formation, are variables that may lead to the acceptance and use of IR in Nigerian universities in the digital era. Omwanghe and Ogbemor (2021) discovered that the majority of librarians in Edo State claimed to having a high degree of awareness of institutional repositories.

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive statistics was used for the study with the adoption of the entire population of 30 library personnel from Benson Idahosa University Library. The population of the study was 30 library personnel that comprised 10 professionals, 11 para-professionals and 9 supporting staff. There was no need for sampling due to small size of the population. According to Umar (2015), if the total population is small enough, the researcher can include the complete population in the study. A questionnaire created by the researcher was used to collect data. The Cronbach alpha technique was used to determine the items' internal consistency, yielding an overall reliability score of 0.87. The on-the-spot technique of data gathering was used. A response criteria of 2.5 or more was approved, while less than 2.5 was rejected.

### **Data Analysis and Discussion**

Data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The result for the analysis is based on 30 respondents who properly filled and returned the questionnaire. The Rating keys: (VHL= Very High Level, HL=High Level, LL=Low Level, VLL=Very Low, SA=Strongly Agreed, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree)

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of your awareness of IR in your university?

S/N0.	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	DECISION
1	Do not know of the existence of IR in the university	4	3	10	13	1.3	Rejected
2	Aware of the presence of IR in the university	10	13	3	4	2.0	Rejected
3	Use IR everyday in the university	2	5	10	13	1.9	Rejected
4	Use IR weekly in the university	4	4	10	12	2.0	Rejected
5	Use IR monthly in the university	2	3	11	14	1.8	Rejected
6	Use IR occasionally in the university	10	12	6	2	3.0	Accepted
7	Do not use IR in the university	2	12	10	6	2.3	Rejected

**Table 1: Level of your awareness of IR in the university**

The data presented shows in table 1 revealed that seven (7) identified level of awareness and utilization of IR in the university are as follows : (1.3) do not know of the existence of IR in the university, (2.3) do not use IR in the university, (1.8) use IR monthly in the university, (2.0) The presence of IR in the university is known. The findings are reinforced by Dutta and Paul (2014), who believe that lack of knowledge is a crucial component in institutional repository utilization. The findings show that the majority of respondents are unaware of the presence of IR at the institution. The findings also corroborates with that of Yang and Li (2015) who expressed that for the adoption of successful institutional repository the use of any information product requires a high level of awareness. This study concludes that there is a need to create a great awareness of IR in Benson Idahosa University. Finally, The study suggests that library administration conduct more institutional repository awareness programs.

**Research Question 2:** What are the potential benefits of institutional repositories for promoting scholarship and research in Nigerian universities?

**Table 2: Benefits of IR in the university**

S/N0.	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	DECISION
1	Webometric ranking	10	12	6	2	3.0	Accepted
2	Enhance visibility	9	8	8	5	2.7	Accepted
3	Rating of institution	16	10	0	4	3.3	Accepted
4	Encourages inter discipline approach to research	12	13	4	1	3.2	Accepted
5	Sharing of digital teaching material	10	12	6	2	3.0	Accepted

As shown in the table 2 above, potential benefits of institutional repositories for promoting scholarship and research in Nigerian university are as following : (3.0) webometric ranking, (2.7) enhance visibility, (3.3) rating of institution, (3.2) encourages inter discipline approach to research, (3.0) sharing of digital material. This in line with, Adeyemo and Jamogha (2021) stated that institutions with open access e-documents enjoy increased utilization and ranking of research resources, hence raising the prominence and rating of both the university and faculty members. The results show that the advantages of implementing institutional repositories enable libraries to deliver information sources virtually with their intrinsic qualities.

**Research Question 3:** To identify the challenges to the adoption and effective use of institutional repositories in Nigerian universities.

**Table 3: Challenges associated with IR in the university**

S/N0.	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	DECISION
1	Lack of understanding of the operations of IRs	10	10	6	4	2.9	Accepted
2	Inadequate funding	15	13	1	1	3.4	Accepted
3	Challenges of copyright and licensing issues	12	12	2	4	3.0	Accepted
4	Resistance to adaptation of IR and its operations	9	8	8	5	2.7	Accepted
5	Lack of willingness by authors and publishers to donate their research outputs	11	14	2	3	3.1	Accepted
6	Inadequate advocacy	13	9	6	2	3.1	Accepted

Table 3 presents the challenges associated with institutional repository include: (2.9) lack of understanding of the operations of IRs, (3.4) inadequate funding, (3.0) challenges of copyright and support, (2.7) resistance to adaptation of IR and its operations, (3.1) lack of willingness by authors and publishers to donate their research outputs, (3.1) inadequate advocacy. The findings of the study revealed that inadequate funding was the major barrier associated with institutional repository. This view lends credence to the findings of Okoroma and Abioye (2017) who discovered that development of Institutional Repository in developing countries like Nigeria requires much of finance than in the developed countries.

## Conclusion

This study investigated institutional repositories as essential resources for the promotion of scholarship in Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Nigeria. Private universities, like any other institutions of higher learning, are research oriented. The private universities and their libraries have been at the centre of providing access point to print institutional resources. Academic staff in private universities are already accustomed to writing for professional acknowledgment, job promotion, and contributing to knowledge advancement in their fields of interest. The development and acceptance of an institutional repository in a private university will provide worldwide popularity to the private university's scholarly papers. The institutional repository is a method of lowering the cost of scholarly publications while improving visibility and access to research by private university faculty and pupils by posting it on the library's institutional repository website.

There are various reasons why institutional repositories are important to private universities. IRI serves as a publisher of academic work from the private university, such as theses, peer-reviewed papers, working papers, lecture notes, memorial lectures, keynote addresses, and other forms of grey literature, thus raising the private university's visibility and web rating worldwide. Apart from visibility and recognition, institutional repository is one of the factors for webometric ranking or rating of institution. However, challenges such as private university lack of willingness, lack of funds, copyright issues, computer anxiety, lack of awareness and advocacy among others are hampering the establishment of an institutional repository at a private university in Nigeria. To minimize needless infringing rights private university administration and library administrators should implement proper copyright procedures. Private university management should promote

awareness or offer favourable atmosphere such as funding, advocacy, willingness, provision of ICT infrastructure among others for the development of institutional repository. Private universities should follow in the footsteps of their university contemporaries and spend massively in creating of institutional repositories in order to increase their visibility and remain relevant as research institutions in this digital age.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. There should be rigorous and sustained awareness campaign on IR in private universities in Nigeria.
2. Lecturers should be willing and ready to deposit their scholarly works to the library for the purpose of IR.
3. Workshops should be organized regularly with a view to sensitizing members of the academic community on the benefits of institutional repository to both themselves and the university, especially global visibility and web rating.
4. Adequate funds should be provided by the university management for effective development of institutional repository while all other hinderances should be eradicated forthwith.

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