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LIBRARIANS' TECHNOLOGICAL READINESS AS PREDICTOR OF THE CREATION OF INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated librarians' technological readiness as a predictor of the creation of institutiona repository (IR) in universities in South-south, Nigeria. To achieve this, two research questions were raised and one research hypothesis was formulated and tested. The study employed the descriptive survey design of the correlational type and the population for the study consisted of 181 librarians drawn from public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. Total enumeration sampling technique was employed for this study. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The face and content validity was established by the two experts in the field of Library and Information Science. The spearman Brown Prophecy Formula correlation coefficient (r) employing the split half method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and this produced a reliability index of 0.81. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and mean to answer the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regression statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that: (i) librarians demonstrated high level of technological readiness towards the creation of IR in the universities in South-south, Nigeria; (ii) librarians are highly willing to create IR in their respective institutions; and (iii) librarians' technological readiness significantly influenced the creation of IR in South-south, Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that Management should encourage librarians to improve on their current state of technological readiness in order for them to be fully equipped to fit into the 21st century technology and the creation of IR. Also, technology manufacturers should take note of the insecurity challenges faced by users in order to proffer lasting solutions to such issues.

Introduction

Information and communication technology (ICT) rules the world in diverse ways. The more technologically inclined a country is, the more advantageous it may be over its counterparts. It has been established that ICT has so much evolved that it has affected all spheres of human existence and change the paradigm of life including economic, social and education. In the educational sector, the advancement on ICT has led to the proliferation of information and various means of scholarly communication. Scholarly communication process, according to Ammarukleart (2017), consists of three different stages. The first is the conducting of research; during this process, the scholar will communicate informally with other scholars and scientists to develop ideas and create new knowledge or scholarly contents. The second stage in the process is to prepare and shape the work and to communicate with peers or colleagues in order to make a decision

regarding what will become the formal research results. The final stage in the process is the creation of the ultimate formal product that will be distributed to a broader community through one or more of the various scholarly communication forums, which include both print and electronic forms.

The complete process of scholarly communication starts with content creation and ends with dissemination (Thorin, 2003). The information gotten as the final product is stored and disseminated by academic libraries in academic institutions. This is done by the librarians to satisfy the needs of the users in their community. The sustainability of library services is a contemporary trend within the library's global ecosystem in which, emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain technology and IR are harnessed (Bakare, 2023). To sustain library service in this contemporary world around the globe, librarians must harness their potentials in the use of modern technologies. This is because libraries are poised to meet the evolving needs of their users in the digital age, driving innovation and fostering lifelong learning in the communities they serve (Ashikuzzaman, 2024).

One of the means through which librarians can effectively archive information for posterity and disseminate them is through the creation and usage of IR. According to Mgonzo and Yonah (2014), an IR is an electronic store of web based scholarly digital documents owned by an institution. Bribena and Godfrey (2021) see IR as an online storage used for the collection, preservation and dissemination of digital copies of the intellectual work of an institution. To them, IR also represents all types of institutional literary productions including unpublished materials which supports research, teaching and learning. An IR can therefore be viewed also as a web-based domain designed specifically for the collection, organising, disseminating and archiving of publications that emanated from staff, students, researchers and administrators of a particular institution. These publications include projects, dissertations, theses, journals, inaugural lecture papers, books, conference papers, articles, proceedings, and administrative documents in digital format (Okumu, 2015). IRs offer features and services that enhance access to scholarly contents for educational and personal development.

In creating an IR, information resources emanating from the institution are sourced, arranged in an organized manner for easy retrieval, disseminated and stored for posterity. The creation of IR has influenced the teaching and learning process because, most of the assignments, research, seminars, dissertations, theses and class activities given are carried out using electronic information resources and the quickest way to get access to specific information resources in specific fields without having to look for it on a broader scale is through the use of an IR (Di-Pietro, Costa, Karpiriski, & Mazza, 2020). Information resources that are used to build up the IR can emanate from the smallest unit of the institution, which is the department to the largest unit, which is the administrative. Information resources that are produced from a department, faculty and institution can easily be accessed irrespective of time and location through an IR by means of digital archiving. Contents are gotten from researchers, administrative staff, academic staff and students as the information content determines the viability of IR and the quality of the content is very essential for its success (Sang, Odini & Wamukoya, 2020).

Access to IR and other modern invention such as artificial intelligence offers several benefits to librarians and their patrons, which include accuracy and efficiency of library data, increasing the relevance and diversity of resources and services through expansion of access to information that could bring about perfection in the teaching, learning and research process (Bhorkar, 2024, Tomiuk, et al, 2024). The benefit of IR is both to the institutions, students and contributors. Institutions would benefit from IR because it serves as a tangible indicator of an institutions' quality, thereby increasing its visibility, prestige and public value. Also, it increases the chances of ranking an institution at both local and international level, as well as enhances online teaching and research, especially in higher institution of learning (Omeluzor, 2014).

The contributor benefits from IR because they enjoy access to articles without hindrance and payment of charges, and also have increased access to other researchers' work, increased citations to published scholarly work, international recognition and collaborations and even awards.

This buttresses the view of Silva et al. (2024) who stated that recognizing the sharing of information and knowledge is a preponderant factor for the generation of innovation, and that innovative performance in a nation is dependent on the ability of the innovative agent to share information and knowledge. Students also benefit from IR because they are able to retrieve current literature for their studies, get seminar and research topics and stimulate research collaboration. It also enables students to gain easy access to unpublished research reports such as theses, dissertations, projects, seminars and conference papers (grey materials). These kinds of materials aid and guide students in writing their own research and give them clues on areas that have been covered in order to avoid duplication of research. Its importance to librarians is that it has helped to quench the quest to properly archive information materials emanating from an institution for as long as possible and be able to retrieve such institutional information with little or no stress. It has also helped to drive the library core mission of digitisation. These benefits have led to the creation and usage of IR in most European nations (Suzanne, Stuart, & Joseph 2020; Adeyemi, Appah, Akinlade & Bribeba, 2017).

For an institution to benefit from an IR, it must first be created and facilities must be made available to sustain its creation. The establishment of IR in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular, is still at an infant stage, as re-echoed at the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference held in Barcelona Spain in 2022. Delegates at the conference attest to the fact that Africa had few repositories, which was a barrier that hindered data sharing between Africa and the rest of the world, despite its numerous benefits and recommendation by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in 2007, which mandated all higher institution to establish one. This recommendation has fell on deaf ears because literature has shown that only very few universities in Nigeria have been able to established an IR (Nyambi, & Maynard, 2012; David, 2018; Adeyemi, Appah, Akinlade & Bribeba, 2017). Out of the 259 accredited universities only 19 universities were recorded to have an existing IR and this account for about seven (7%) percent of the universities in Nigeria. The 19 universities with IR consists of five private universities, two state-owned universities and 12 federal universities, which was considered as very insufficient compared to the total number of accredited universities in the country. This insufficiency could be as a result of certain factors, some of which could include librarians' technological readiness.

The concept of technological readiness is mostly used in research and development, especially in areas such as aerospace, defense, and information technology. Defining the scope and components of technological readiness involves the ability to identify the factors that contributes to the technology's overall readiness for practical application (Anh, et al. 2024). Technological readiness is the level of preparedness of an individual in terms of his/her willingness to use a new technology. For an individual to effectively use a new innovation, he/she must be technologically ready or prepared by having the required skills and zeal. Technological readiness can also be explained as individual's willingness to embrace and use novel technologies for accomplishing various tasks that are life and work related. According to Parnasuraman (2001), technological readiness can be regarded as people's propensity to embrace and use new technology for accomplishing goals in home and at work. Technological readiness affects the emotional, mental and physical reactions of a person towards an invention or new technology and you get to notice how excited or layback they get when they see a new technology. These expressions will tell if they are ready to use the new technology or not.

According to Tunmibi and Okuonghae (2023), technological readiness refers to the level preparedness and capacity of individual, organizations and societies to adopt, utilise, and benefit from technology effectively. Parnasuraman and Colby (2015) further defined technological readiness as a representation of a gestalt of mental motivators and inhibitors that collectively determine a person predisposition to use new technology. They classified technological readiness under four dimensions: optimism, innovativeness, discomfort and insecurity. Optimism refers to a positive view of technology and a belief that it offers people increased control, flexibility, and efficiency in their lives (Parnasuraman & Colby, 2015). Optimism dimension states how eager technology enthusiasts are willing to use technology generally. Innovativeness is the tendency to be a technology pioneer and thought leader (Parnasuraman & Colby, 2015). Innovativeness dimension captures the degree to which an individual see themselves as been ahead of others in the use of new technologies and how well they can assist others in solving technological problems.

Discomfort is perceived as lack of control over technology and a feeling of being overwhelmed by it (Parnasuraman & Colby, 2015). Discomfort dimension measures the uneasiness and anxiety that people feel when faced with new technology. Insecurity refers to distrust of technology, stemming from skepticism about its ability to work properly and concerns about its potential harmful consequences (Parnasuraman & Colby, 2015). Insecurity dimension is concerned with the feeling of fear and lack of confidence that people have for technology in protecting their private details or transactions. They regarded optimism and innovativeness as motivators contributing to technological readiness while discomfort and insecurity are regarded as inhibitors from technological readiness.

According to Parnasuraman and Colby (2015), the four dimensions are relatively different which shows that an individual can possess different combination of them which may sometimes lead to contradictory state which consist of strong motivations tempered by strong inhibitions. They went further to say that technological readiness does not change suddenly in response to a stimulus, therefore librarians must continue to build up their willingness to use new technology in order for them to have the zeal to create, use and sustain IR. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate librarians' technological readiness as predictor of creation of institutional repository in South-south universities in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

With the proliferation of information resources, digital preservation is necessary for their storage and accessibility. One of the recent forms of preservation is through IR, which can be described as a set of activities that an academic institution offers to the members of its communities for the storage, management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It does not only preserve institutions' materials but also showcases the worth of an institution to the world. In the just concluded 2023 world universities ranking, the four Nigerian universities listed (University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, Covenant University and Federal University, Akure) have functional IRs (Times Higher Education, 2023). This is also an indication of its relevance on the global stage. Considering the huge benefit of an IR, its creation and usage would have been top priority to all universities in Nigeria. However, it is pertinent to note that only 7% of accredited universities in Nigeria have created it, despite the NUC recommendations in 2007. Northern Nigeria has seven (7) IR, West has nine (9), East has four (4) and only one (1) exist in South-south Nigeria. Having just one IR in the whole of South-south, Nigeria is insufficient. With this situation of insufficiency, the researcher seeks to investigate the influence of librarians' technological readiness on the creation of institution repository in Universities in South-south, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. What is the level of technological readiness of librarians towards the creation of IR in university libraries in South-south Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of librarians willing to create IR in university libraries in South-South Nigeria?

Hypothesis

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between librarians' technological readiness and creation of IR in universities in South-South Nigeria

Methodology

This research adopted the descriptive survey design of the correlational type. The population for the study consists of 181 Librarians from the public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria and the entire population was used for the study because it is of a manageable size. The total enumeration sampling technique was therefore adopted. The instrument for data collection was the structured questionnaire and was administered by the researcher and six research assistants. In order to determine the validity of the instrument, it was given to two experts in the Department of Library and Information Science to determine its face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using the Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula correlation coefficient (r) employing the split half method; the data obtained when analysed, yielded reliability co-efficient (r) of 0.81. The data obtained from the administered questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and mean to answer the research questions, while the hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) with the aids of statistical package for the social science (SPSS).

Data Analysis and Results

RQ 1: What is the level of technological readiness of librarians towards the creation of IR in University libraries in South-south, Nigeria?

To determine librarians' technological readiness towards creation of IR, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of technological readiness and their responses are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Level of Technological Readiness among the respondents towards the Creation of IR

Constructs	Items	VHL	HL	LL	VLL	Mean
Optimism						
	I use new technologies because it contributes to a better quality of life.	96	75	5	5	3.45
	I feel confident that technology-based systems will follow through with what they are instructed to do	72	100	6	3	3.33
	I use technology because it gives people more control over their daily activities and work.	80	80	14	7	3.29
	Technology makes me more efficient and productive in my personal life and career.	87	83	7	4	3.40
	Technology keeps me up-to-date of new trends in my career irrespective of location and time	100	72	6	3	3.49

	I prefer products and services that use the newest technologies because they are much more convenient to use	61	98	16	6	3.18
Sub-Mean						**3.36**
Innovativeness		**VHL**	**HL**	**LL**	**VLL**	**Mean**
	Other people come to me for operation and advice on new technologies.	42	83	46	10	2.87
	I acquire new technology when they are produced before my friends.	30	81	54	16	2.69
	I figure out new high-tech products and services without help from others.	40	80	44	17	2.79
	I keep up with the latest technological developments in my areas of interest.	42	103	25	11	2.97
	I enjoy using new technology since they can be mentally stimulating	53	103	19	6	3.12
	I enjoy the challenge of figuring out high-tech gadget functions	42	89	40	10	2.90
Sub-Mean						**2.89**
Discomfort		**VHL**	**HL**	**LL**	**VLL**	**Mean**
	I get discomfort while getting technical support from a provider of a high-tech product or service, it make me feel I am being taken advantage of by someone who knows more than I do.	43	73	43	22	2.76
	Technical support lines are not helpful because they don't explain things in terms I understands	29	73	56	23	2.60
	I think that technology systems are not designed for use by ordinary people	42	56	45	38	2.56
	One should be cautioned in replacing important people tasks with technology because technology is to a large extent not dependable	51	74	40	16	2.88
	Technology seems to fail at the worst possible time	50	59	50	21	2.78
	It is embarrassing when I have trouble with a high-tech gadget while people are watching	61	65	38	17	2.94
Sub-Mean						**2.75**
Insecurity		**VHL**	**HL**	**LL**	**VLL**	**Mean**
	People are too dependent on technology to do things for them.	83	58	29	11	3.18
	Too much technology distracts people to a point that is harmful.	68	64	35	14	3.03
	Technology lowers the quality of relationships by reducing personal interaction.	80	55	28	18	3.09
	I worry that information I make available over the Internet may be misused by others	62	74	32	13	3.02
	New technology makes it too easy for governments and companies to spy on people	77	67	25	12	3.15

	I do not consider it safe to provide personal information over the Internet	75	57	33	16	3.06
Sub-Mean						**3.09**
Grand-Mean						**3.02**
Criterion Mean						**2.50**

Table 1 showed a grand mean of 3.02, which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 implying that librarians are generally technologically ready for the creation of IR in university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. Also, it can be noticed that from each of the constructs, optimism has the highest (sub-mean of 3.36), which implies that librarians are positive and confident towards the use of new technology. This is followed by insecurity (with a sub-mean of 3.09), which stipulates that librarians faces high insecurity challenges while using these technologies and this may in turn discourage them from its usage. Innovativeness comes third (with a sub-mean of 2.89), it also implies that librarians are innovative in using new technologies. Discomfort has the least (with a sub-mean of 2.75) which also shows that librarians have some difficulties in using new technologies. All these indications attest to the fact that librarians have high level of technological readiness at all sections. Given the high grand mean of 3.02 that is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50, it can be concluded that librarians in universities in South-south, Nigeria are highly technologically ready for the development of IR.

RQ 2: What is the extent of librarians willing to create IR in university libraries in South-south, Nigeria?

To ascertain librarian's willingness to create IR in universities in South-south Nigeria, the respondents were requested to respond to the statements on their willingness to create IR and their responses were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondents' Willingness to Create IR

Items	**HW**	**MW**	**SW**	**NW**	**Mean**
Define the purpose of creating the repository such as the users accessibility and type of content to be deposited in it	73	68	26	14	3.10
Define repository services such as the structure of the IR	66	69	27	19	3.01
Choose/select repository software such as open source, commercial or software service	67	66	33	15	3.02
Develop/implement repository policies such as the collection, management and access to the IR	68	72	25	16	3.06
Staffing such as repository managers and administrators	68	73	21	19	3.05
Set up communities such as provision of subject matter in the IR	67	71	28	15	3.05
Market the repository such as creating awareness on the benefit for the need of contributors to deposit their content in the IR (profiling strategy, pull strategy, push strategy and consultation strategy)	67	70	27	17	3.03
Training and skill development	79	59	28	15	3.12
Maintenance of the created IR	80	54	34	13	3.11
Aggregate Mean					**3.06**
Criterion Mean					**2.50**

The data on Table 2 showed that the respondents are willing to create IR in their institutions. This can be seen in their responses which culminated to an aggregate mean of 3.06 which is greater than the criterion

mean of 2.50. With an aggregate mean of 3.06, it is proven that librarians are highly willing to create IR in the university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between librarians' technological readiness and creation of IR in universities in South-south, Nigeria.

To ascertain if there is a significant relationship between librarians' technological readiness and creation of IR in universities in South-south, Nigeria, the score of librarians' technological readiness was correlated with that of creation of IR. The result is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between Librarians' Technological Readiness and Creation of IR

		Level of Technological Readiness	**Librarians' Willingness to Create IR**
Level of Technological Readiness	Pearson Correlation	1	.195**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008**
	N	181	181
Librarians' Willingness to Create IR	Pearson Correlation	.195	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	
	N	181	181

In Table 3, it can be noticed that there is a positive relationship between librarians' technological readiness and creation of IR ($r = 0.195^{**}$, $N = 181$, $P = 0.008^{**}$ ($P< 0.05$)). Therefore, there is a significant relationship between technological readiness and librarians' creation of IR, since the significant value (Sig.2-tailed) of 0.008 is less than 0.05. This signifies that librarians' technological readiness significantly influenced creation of IR. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between librarians' technological readiness and creation of IR in universities in South-south, Nigeria is therefore rejected.

Discussion of the Findings

The first finding revealed that librarians posses a high level of technological readiness towards the creation of IR in university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with that of Raf, Mathias, Eveline, Ziggy, Peter and Erik (2018), whose study revealed a high level of technological readiness by their respondents thereby influencing a higher intention to use new technology. This finding could be as a result of the nature of their job which requires librarians to acquire some necessary technological skills for greater productivity and also as a result of using new innovations in their career path way that requires them to be technologically skilled. However, this finding is in disagreement with that of Owolabi, Okorie, Yemi-Peters, Oyetola, Bello, and Oladokun (2021) whose study revealed that the readiness of university libraries in Nigeria towards the adoption and use of robotic technologies is low.

The second finding of the study showed that librarians are highly willing to create IR in their institutions. This finding is in disagreement with that of Jelagat, Odini and Wamukoya (2020) whose study revealed that librarians are unawareness of their roles hence their unwillingness to create and use IR. Librarians' willingness to create IR could be as a result of the improvement in their technological readiness and possession of required skills to operate the IR. It could also be due to the perceived numerous benefits associated to them as librarians, the library and institution at large. The last finding of the study also revealed that librarians' technological readiness significantly influenced the creation of IR. This finding is in

agreement with Panday (2018) whose study revealed that technological readiness has positive influence on ease of use of a technology. This finding may be due to the fact that if the enabling environment for creation of IR is provided by management, and librarians are technologically ready, it will be possible for them to create and use IR.

Conclusion

This study has been able to establish the fact that a relationship exists between technological readiness and librarians' and creation of IR in universities in South-south, Nigeria. This implies that librarian's technological readiness influenced the creation of IR in the region. The study also revealed that librarians possessed high technological readiness towards the creation of IR in the region and they are also willing to create the IR. It is therefore evident that an improvement in librarians' technological readiness will further influence the creation of IR among universities in South-south, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Management should encourage librarians to improve on their current state of technological readiness in order for them to be fully equipped to fit into the 21st century technology and the creation of IR. This can be achieved through organizing and sponsoring of librarians to seminars and workshops on how to improve their technological readiness and other technological related fields.
2. Insecurity challenges faced with the use of modern facilities should be tackled by inventors in ensuring that the security and privacy of users are safe and cannot be hacked by unauthorized users in order to gain librarians confidence and the continuous usage of modern technologies.
3. Technology manufactures should also make system interface more user-friendly and simpler to understand and use in order not to discourage users or make them have discomfort in the use of new technologies.
4. Nigerian University Commission (NUC) should make the creation of IR a requirement for accreditation of universities since its recommendations have been bluntly ignored.

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