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DIGITIZATION: AN EXAMINATION OF THE CAPACITY AND SKILLS OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN NIGERIA

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Digitization Tide in Nigeria

- More university libraries are building institutional repositories in Nigeria
- University of Jos was the first to break the ice in 2009
- FUT, Owerri is digitizing postgraduate theses and dissertations
- Redeemer's University digitized past question papers in 2011
- Other efforts are ongoing.

Why are Nigerian Universities Digitizing

- To increase visibility in the public domain
- To improve performance in web ranking of world universities
- To improve accessibility to institutional resources to every group of researchers
- To allow for more rapid and comprehensive search of collections
- To remove the barriers of time and distance

What then is the problem?

- Digitization is still at the formative stage in Nigeria
- Lack of skilled manpower militates against digitization projects
- Training of librarians to implement digitization is inadequate in Nigeria
- Empirical studies on the skill sets and competencies of librarians for digitization are rare

Objectives of this paper

- To report librarians' level of involvement in digitization projects of their universities in Nigeria;
- To report the importance librarians attach to skills acquisition in digitization in Nigeria;
- To report librarians' capabilities with digitization skill sets in Nigeria; and
- To report librarians' efforts to build capacity for digitization in Nigeria

Methodology

- The study adopted survey method
- Eleven university libraries were selected for the study
- Target population was librarians working in the selected libraries
- A three part questionnaire adapted from Cassella and Morando (2011) was used
- Part A elicited the demographic information of the respondents
- Part B is 14 item 5 point Likert scale that addressed the importance librarians attached to 5 digitization skills, namely: communication, management, technical, copyright management, collection and metadata management
- Part C scored librarians on a 10 point scale to assess their capacity with the professional skills in part B
- The SPSS was used to analyse the collected data

Results

- Response rate: 86 copies of the questionnaire were returned (50 from public and 36 fro private university libraries)
- 54.7% were females; 45.3% were males
- 78% had Master degree in librarianship and related fields
- Majority (72%) were in lower rungs of the ladder of the profession
- Other results are presented in the tables and figures below.

Table 1: Importance attached to digitization skills by librarians

Digitization skills sets	Importance attached to skills		
	N	Mean	SD
Communication skills	**74**	**2.0721**	**0.64303**
Abilities to communicate and promote digital content to faculty, research communities and administrative units.	74	2.0946	0.84673
Abilities to manage liaisons and to communicate with the institutional leadership.	74	2.1216	0.72059
Abilities to communicate and promote digital content to external stakeholders.	74	1.9730	0.73973
Abilities to plan and develop institutional advocacy program in order to support digitization activities.	73	2.1096	0.77391
Copyright skills Abilities to manage intellectual property rights issues in the digital environment.	74	2.0405	0.76640
Management skills	**74**	**1.8840**	**0.67922**
Project management abilities.	73	1.8630	0.75120
Abilities to plan digitization activity workflow	74	1.8108	0.78820
Abilities to coordinate and manage human resources and teamwork.	74	1.9595	0.88270
Abilities to plan a budget	73	1.9054	0.89395
Technical skills	**74**	**1.8547**	**0.74370**
Abilities to deploy and manage digitization software	74	1.9730	0.84356
Abilities to implement interoperability standards and protocols	73	1.7123	0.90492
Abilities to customize digital content web pages (layout, design)	74	1.8283	0.89685
Abilities to plan and develop digital collection	72	1.8889	0.84845
Metadata creation skills Abilities to select and use meta-data sets (Dublin core, MARC, METS, LOM, PREMIS, etc	74	1.9595	0.91321

Table 2: Librarians' Capacity to Implement and Manage Digitization Projects

Digitization skills sets	Capability scores		
	N	Mean	SD
Communication skills	**76**	**4.8388**	**2.80259**
Abilities to communicate and promote digital content to faculty, research communities and administrative units.		4.8947	2.96459
Abilities to manage liaisons and to communicate with the institutional leadership.		4.9605	2.88648
Abilities to communicate and promote digital content to external stakeholders.		4.6842	2.89924
Abilities to plan and develop institutional advocacy program in order to support digitization activities.		4.8158	3.02307
Copyright skills Abilities to manage intellectual property rights issues in the digital environment.	**76**	4.9868	3.12194
Management skills	**76**	**5.2610**	**2.88403**
Project management abilities.		4.9868	3.13047
Abilities to plan digitization activity workflow		4.8904	3.16035
Abilities to coordinate and manage human resources and teamwork.		5.6579	2.97345
Abilities to plan a budget		5.4079	3.14188
Technical skills	**76**	**4.4243**	**2.96146**
Abilities to deploy and manage digitization software		4.5467	3.23533
Abilities to implement interoperability standards and protocols		4.4400	3.14617
Abilities to customize digital content web pages (layout, design)		4.2105	3.07383
Abilities to plan and develop digital collection		4.5658	3.19306
Metadata creation skills Abilities to select and use meta-data sets (Dublin core, MARC, METS, LOM, PREMIS, etc	**76**	4.3553	3.05376

Figure 1: Professional Training in Digitization

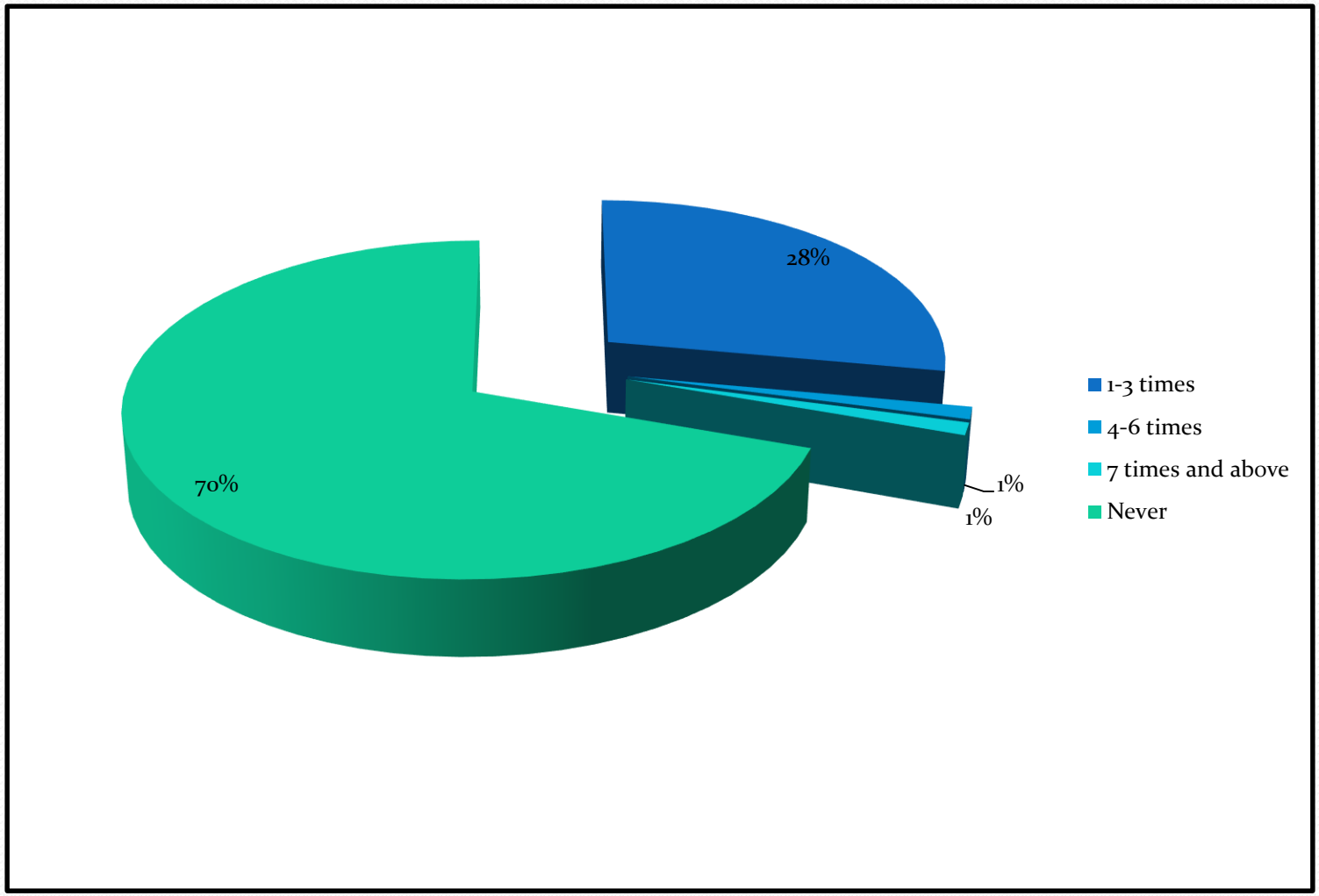
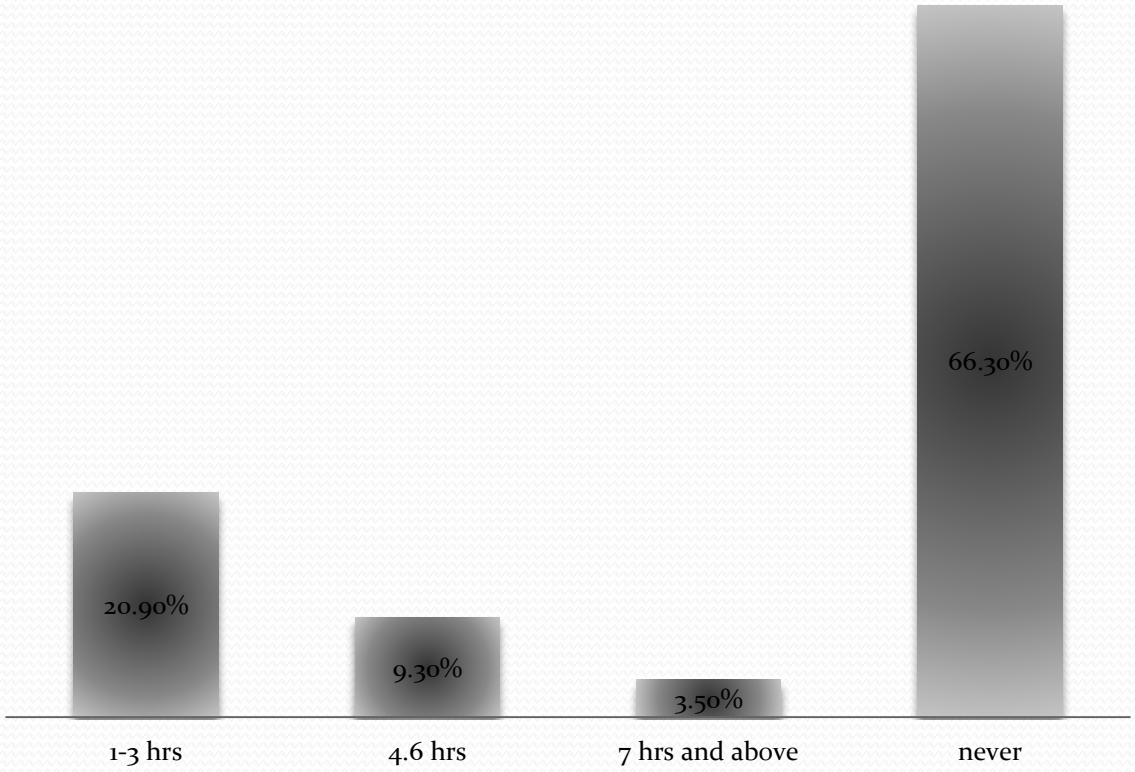


Figure 2: Time spent per day for self training in Digitization



Major Findings of the Study

- Digitization was confused with computerization of library operations;
- Only 29 librarians were involved in digitization for 2.67 years;
- Library management and other application software were mistaken for digitization software;
- Digitization software varied among libraries;
- Librarians attached more importance to communication and copyright skills;

Major Findings of the Study

- Librarians possessed limited skills to implement digitization projects;
- Librarians demonstrate strength with management skills than others;
- Librarians were weak in technical and metadata skills;
- Majority did not have formal training in digitization; and
- Little time is spent on self skill development.

Recommendations

- More efforts should be made by concerned local and international organizations to promote the opportunities and benefits of digitization to the university library and scholarship;
- Management of university libraries and institutions should be involved in digitization awareness and promotion campaigns in order to attract policy and budgetary supports;
- Librarians at all levels irrespective of department of work should be involved in planning and implementation of digitization projects;
- Librarians should be sponsored to attend local and international workshops, conferences, trainings and seminars specific to digitization in order to acquire the required skills;
- University library environment should be designed to enable and support self training and personal skill development of librarians.



THANK YOU