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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.

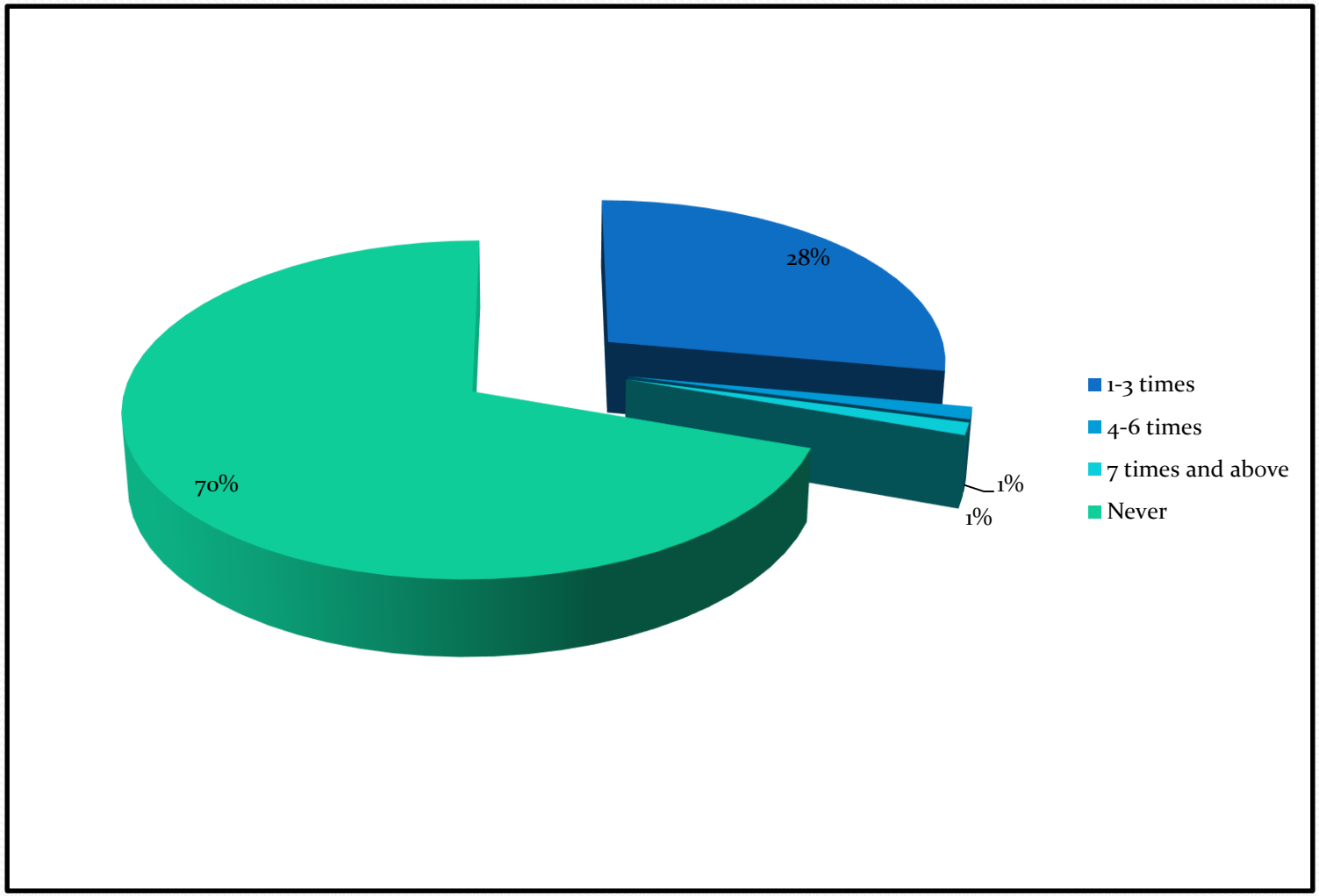
# Table 1: Importance attached to digitization skills by librarians

| 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***<br>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***<br>Abilities to select and use meta-data sets (Dublin core, MARC, METS, LOM, PREMIS, etc | 74 | 1.9595 | 0.91321 |

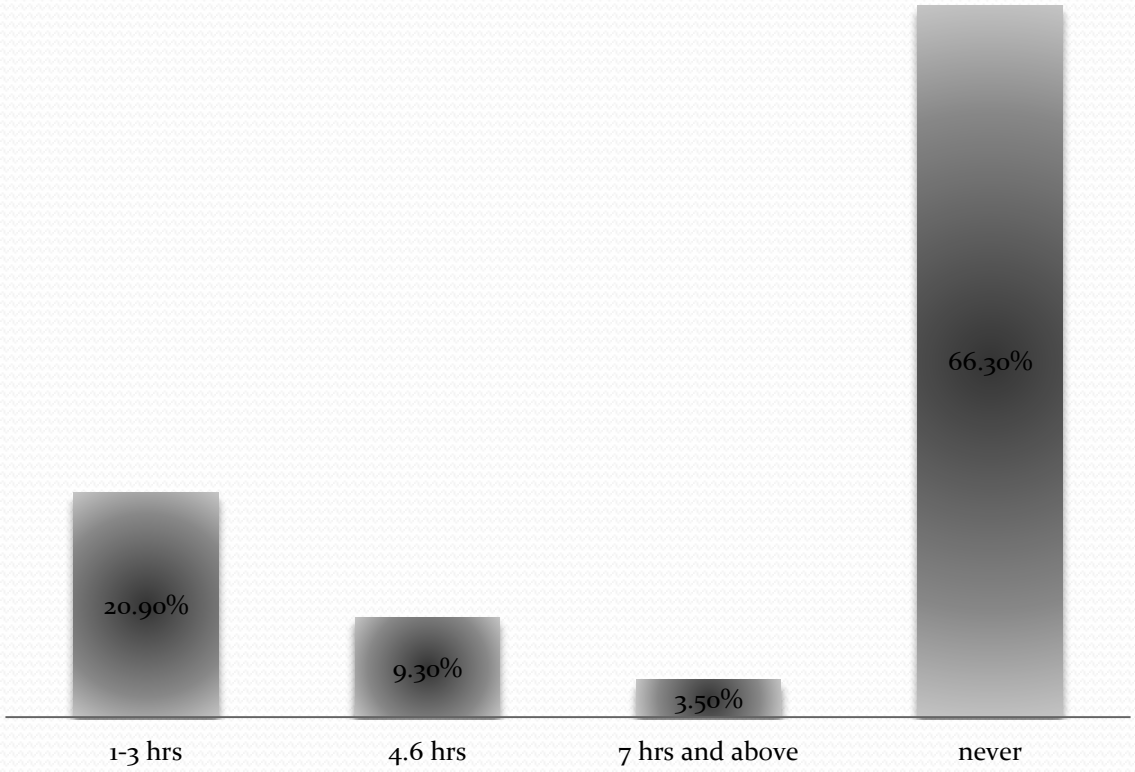
# Table 2: Librarians' Capacity to Implement and Manage Digitization Projects

| 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