



# Attitudes of Lecturers in South-South Federal Universities in Nigeria toward the Establishment of Institutional Repositories

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## Abstract

*The publishing paradigms are shifting. Researchers and research funding institutions are increasingly challenging the traditional publishing models by making their research findings available for free on the Internet through open access institutional repositories. This new publishing model enhances research exposure, increases the institution's prestige and, in the long term, may alleviate the financial burden incurred through costly subscriptions. However, attitudes towards open access and institutional repositories still vary widely. This study reports the findings of a survey of attitudes of lecturers in south-South federal universities in Nigeria toward the establishment of institutional repositories (IRs). The study adopted a quantitative survey methodology approach with a questionnaire as its main data collection instrument. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics were mainly used to derive the findings. The study revealed that lecturers in South-South federal universities in Nigeria endorse the principle of IRs. However, there is significant difference in the attitudes towards the establishment of IRs among lecturers from different faculties. Also, there is no significant difference in the attitude towards the establishment of IRs among lecturers of different academic status. The study concludes that universities in South-South federal universities should endeavour to establish IRs since the lecturers have positive attitudes towards the establishment.*

**Keywords:** Attitudes, Institutional Repository, Open Access.

## Introduction

University libraries have an increasingly important role to play in supporting open access publishing and dissemination of research outputs. In particular, many libraries are playing a leading role in establishing and managing institutional repositories (IRs). For centuries, institutional libraries and scholarly publishing were the traditional methods used in disseminating and preserving information resources in educational institutions<sup>1</sup>. Whereas institutional libraries house information resources in various forms such as periodicals, journal articles, textbooks and monographs, playing greater role in terms of preservation than dissemination of information resources through scholarly journals<sup>2</sup>. Over the past decades, the economic, market, and technological foundations that sustained the publisher-library-market relationship has begun to shift resulting to the networked information economy (free access) which is slowly but surely displacing industrial information economy (restricted access) that typified information storage and dissemination from about the second half of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century<sup>3</sup>. Ways in which scientific and scholarly knowledge is created and disseminated are undergoing radical change in the light of new digital technologies, though the extent and pace of this change is not uniform across disciplines<sup>4</sup>.

One of the major barriers faced by scholars and researchers is the lack of access to the current literature in their fields. This is a worldwide problem. However, the situation is even more critical in developing countries, where library budgets can be extremely small. As a consequence, teaching and research in some countries is being performed without the essential input and benefit of research being conducted internationally<sup>5</sup>.

The situation of research publishing in local scholarly journals in Nigeria has increased in recent times. Unfortunately, these publications are not widely accessible to the users. An attempt to make the publications widely accessible has been to list the journals in the African Journal Online database. Unfortunately, the database is not openly accessible and as such only details about the abstract of the research is openly accessible. Although, the statistics on the abstract had shown the state of research publishing in Nigeria as compared to other countries. The lack of access to the contents of the information resources is a matter of concern and an issue that a growing number of initiatives seek to remedy. One of such initiatives is the Open Access Movement<sup>1</sup>.

Open Access (OA) as a new mode of scholarly communication through which the author(s) and right holder(s) of scholarly work grant(s) to all users a free, irrevocable, worldwide right of access to, and a permission to

copy, use, distribute, transmit, and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship<sup>6</sup>. The basic objective of open access has been to provide immediate, digital, online access to peer reviewed research articles<sup>7</sup>.

While it might be easy to picture the aftermath of inadequate information provision on the scientific communities in the developing world, it has been observed that the international scientific community is equally unable to access the outputs from researchers in the developing world<sup>9</sup>. This situation could stifle development initiatives. Open access to the contents of research will help to judiciously utilize the limited resources by avoiding duplication of researches. The state of open access to researches in developing world is so poor that it is much easier for a researcher in Nigeria to know what have been published on a given subject by a researcher in the United States or Britain than to locate a similar publication by a researcher in neighbouring country like Cameroun<sup>1</sup>.

Arising from above, open access can be defined as an alternative to the traditional subscription-based publishing method which is made possible by the means of the digital technologies and networked communications that allows free access to the world of knowledge. Open access can be achieved through two categories. They are open access journals and institutional repositories. The focus of the study is institutional repositories.

The aim of IR is to increase visibility, preservation and storage of all types of institutional output, including unpublished literature, support for learning and teaching, standardization of institutional records, ability to keep track of and analyse research performance, breaking down of publishers' cost and permission barriers, help universities to share their knowledge and expertise. Institutional repositories are proposed as one of the major strategies for achieving open access. Essentially, IR collects and provides free access to the research output of a given institution. The main function of IR is to provide improved access to the full text of research articles and improve retrieval of relevant research<sup>1</sup>. Institutional repositories are one of the important channels of open access providing easy access and wide visibility to the scholarly contents most importantly the peer reviewed articles<sup>7</sup>.

Arising from the definitions, it could be seen that an institutional repository is institution-based, contains scholarly publications, organizes and provides free access. Hence, it may be defined as a type of digital library established by an institution, populated by the staff, researchers, students and other members of the institution and to be consulted by both members of the university and the outside world.

The growth of IRs had been extremely momentous in developed countries as well as some developing countries like Brazil, India and South Africa. There are a total of 1,897 repositories in the world<sup>8</sup>. Of the total number of repositories, 1,553 are institution-based; such as universities and research institutes, Europe and America have the highest concentration. Africa has 47 institutional repositories in 13 countries, out of this number, South Africa has 24, Egypt 6, Kenya has 4, Namibia 2, Nigeria 3, while other eight countries have one each. In Nigeria, the three universities that have IRs are university of Jos, Jos, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Covenant University, Otta.

Various factors have been established as militating against the establishment of IR. Attitude is one of the mostly acknowledged factors considered to play key role in shaping individual's acceptance of IR<sup>9</sup>. Attitude is a belief that predisposes us to act and feel in certain ways. A person's attitude towards an issue or object can be judged from his behaviour in situation involving that object or issue<sup>10</sup>. It is clear from the foregoing that the development of positive attitude among lecturers towards the establishment of IR will ensure effective implementation of IRs in universities in the study area (South-South Nigeria). Faculty in which lecturers are located and their academic status may also influence the establishment of IRs.

#### **Lecturers' Attitudes towards the Establishment of IRs:**

An attitude is a general, relatively enduring evaluation of an object. Attitudes are evaluative in the sense that they reflect the degree of positivity or negativity that a person feels toward an object<sup>11</sup>. The Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) started with its initiative in 2002 which has special significance for open access. Reinforcing the importance of its open access policy, the BOAI recommendations for the next 10 years has made the following recommendations. The BOAI recommendation 1.1 states "Every institution of higher education should have a policy assuring that peer-reviewed versions of all future scholarly articles by faculty members are deposited in the institutions' designated repository"<sup>12</sup>. Some studies suggest evidence of advantages associated with IR, however, despite this, researchers have not yet fully engaged with IR or self-archiving. Swan and Brown's studies conducted successively in 2004 and 2005 have set milestones in the understanding of authors' perceptions of IR. These studies have shown that there is generally a low level of awareness of IR. Results from survey conducted by Swan and Brown showed that self-archiving practice remains limited amongst researchers, with only a minority of respondents making a copy of their articles available on IR via institutional or personal Web pages or via institutional or subject-based repositories<sup>13-14</sup>. Despite lecturers' low level of awareness of the IR, majority of them were found to be interested in contributing their research work to IR. In a survey carried out by Alemayehu in 2010, it was found out that 26 out of the 27 researchers who did have an awareness

of IR were interested to contribute content to DUO repository<sup>15</sup>.

It is generally agreed that the technical challenges and the costs of installing IR software are relatively minor issues when compared with the time and effort required to persuade users to populate it with their work. It is therefore important to understand the attitudes and motivations of the user group if an IR is to fulfil its potential. The success of an IR depends on the willingness of researchers to deposit their research output in it. Many IR administrators have overcome technological barriers, only to find that a greater challenge is that of persuading authors to deposit their work. It is therefore important to understand what might motivate or deter an author from contributing to an IR.

The following were listed as author attitudes to IR<sup>16</sup>. In brief, the findings are as follows: i. The principle of institutional repository receives widespread support from authors. ii. Levels of awareness of IR issues are variable. iii. The benefits of accessibility and impact have been shown to be major selling points of IR model. iv. The issue of quality is an important one for most researchers. v. Some authors have concerns over intellectual property rights.

There have been several studies that looked at academics' attitudes to open access and their willingness to contribute to repositories. According to Foster and Gibson, who conducted a survey in 2001 to determine lecturers' participation in depositing materials into digital repositories from nine scientific disciplines in colleges and universities in the United States and Canada, the study indicated that unfortunately, the perceptions of authors who have not published in an OA journal are generally more negative. Low readership, impact and prestige were cited as reasons for not publishing in OA journals<sup>17</sup>.

Ideally, the practicalities of depositing an item in an IR should not deter authors from doing so. Most self-archivers had deposited their articles themselves and found the process became easier with practice<sup>18</sup>. The average time spent was about ten minutes per paper, but users became quicker as they deposited more items. For the few authors finding self-archiving particularly difficult, some form of mediated deposit may be appropriate<sup>19</sup>. This would have the advantage of enabling IR administrators to check and perhaps enhance user created metadata<sup>20</sup>.

Some journals' publishers seek to recoup the cost of providing IR to their articles by charging authors fees. Author opinions of this vary. Studies have found that about one half of authors surveyed are willing to pay a small amount (up to \$500) to make their work available to others for free<sup>21-22</sup>. Some say that fees might be acceptable if they were paid by grant agencies or institutions.

Another study carried out by Abrizah in 2009 in Malaysia, it found that in spite of the low awareness of IR, 39 (29.8%) out of 131 respondents strongly liked the idea of making their intellectual output available through the university's IR. These science-based lecturers in medicine (6 out of 15 people), engineering (9 out of 11 people), science (17 out of 35 people) and computer science (7 out of 23 people) were overwhelmingly in favour of permitting the deposit of their research work through the university's IR. Interesting, 7 out of 39 who were motivated to contribute to the IR had no awareness of IR, but wanted to make IR contributions in the future. Another 85(64.9%) liked the idea, and out of this figure, 53.4% had no awareness of IR. Thus, among those respondents who liked the idea and intended to contribute to IR, 15 were already aware of the IR and 70 were not. Of the remaining respondents, only one person (1%) disliked the idea and had no plans to contribute in the future and 6(4.6%) were undecided. It could be deduced from the above that lecturers in Malaysia have also attitude towards establishment of IR<sup>23</sup>.

Dulle conducted a study in Tanzania and found that as far as researchers' attitudes towards IR is concerned, many respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with all positive statements about IR (publishing in IR is a good idea; accessing and use of IR materials is a good idea' and IR content is beneficial to the scholarly community) by scoring more than 90%. It could also be deduced from this study that researchers in Tanzania also possess positive attitude towards IR. From all the analysis arising from the findings, one may conclude that lecturers' generally have a positive attitude towards the establishment of IR<sup>24</sup>.

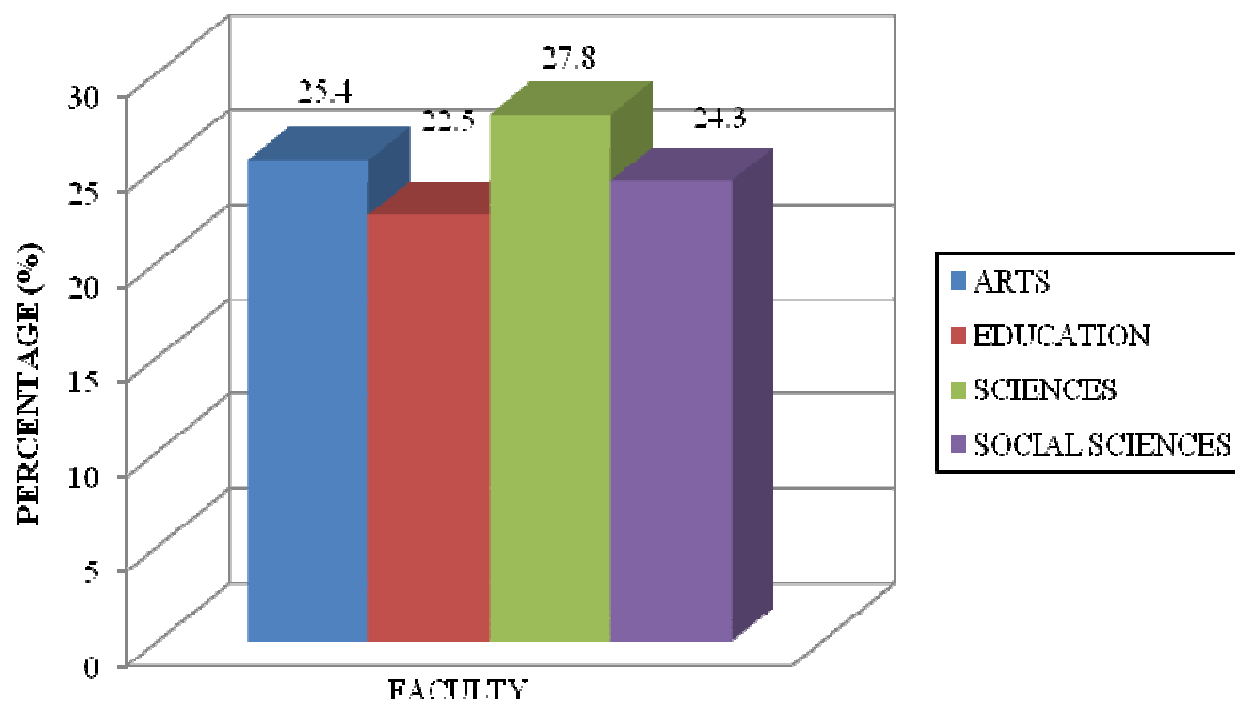
## Methodology

The research design that was utilized for this study is the survey design type of descriptive research. Federal universities in South-South Nigeria were used for this study. The target population for this study is all categories of lecturers in federal universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. At the time of this study, there were 3,786 lecturers in the federal universities in the South-South excluding Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun which is a peculiar university and such have excluded from the scope of this study<sup>25</sup>. A sample of 1,136 respondents (lecturers) was selected for the study. The figure represents approximately 30% of the target population of lecturers in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

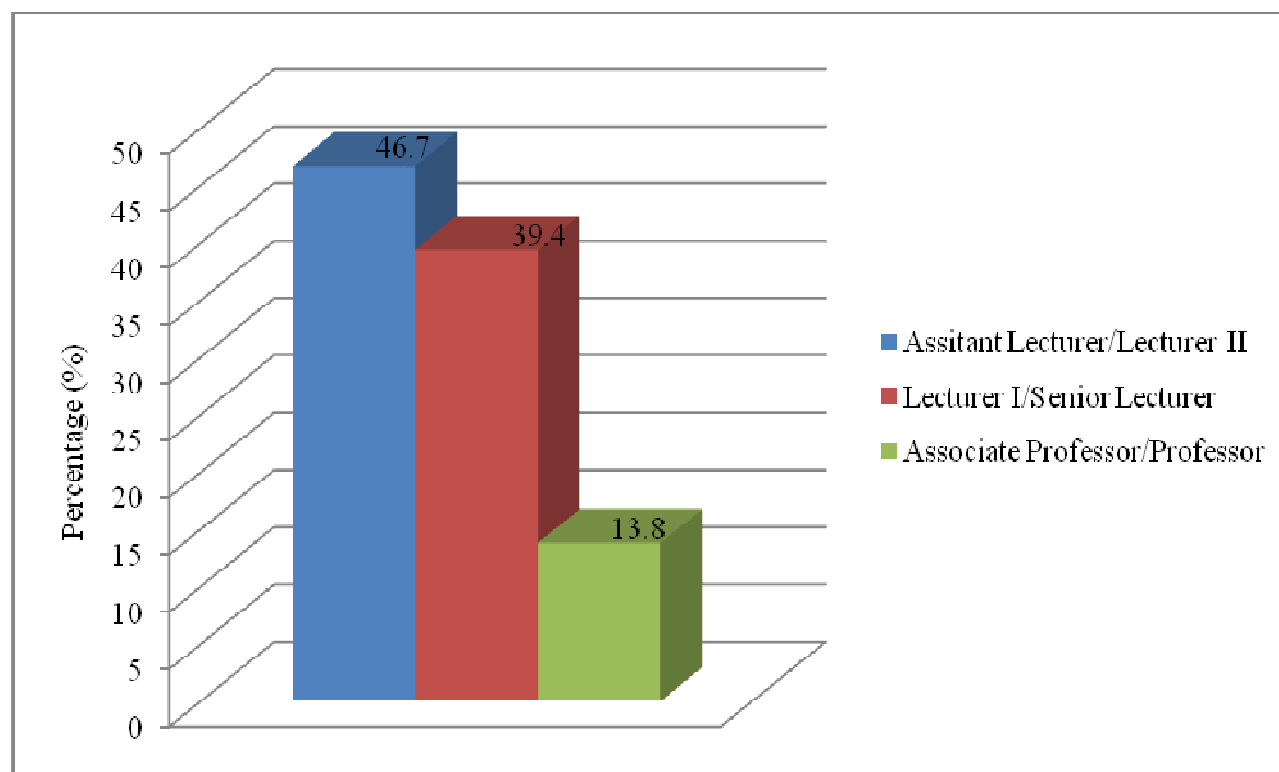
## Results and Discussion

**Research Question 1:** What is the percentage distributions of lecturers in the faculties used in the South-South federal universities in Nigeria?

**Research Question 2:** What is the academic status of lecturers in the South-South federal universities in Nigeria?



**Figure-1**  
**Distribution of Respondents by Faculty**



**Figure-2**  
**Distribution of Respondents by Academic Status**

The faculties of the respondents are shown in figure 1. There are (25.4%) lecturers in the faculty of Arts, Education (22.5%), Sciences (27.8%), while Social Sciences (24.3%). This implies that there are more lecturers in the faculty of Sciences than in other faculties in the federal universities in South-South Nigeria.

The academic status of the respondents is shown in figure-2. The result shows that majority of the respondents are Assistant/Lecturer II and Lecturer I/Senior Lecturer. However, not many Associate Professors/Professors were involved in the study. Assistant Lecturer/Lecturer II are (46.7%), Lecturer I/Senior Lecturer (39.4%) and Associate Professors/Professors (13.8%).

**Research Question 3:** What is the attitude of lecturers' towards the establishment of IR in South-South federal universities in Nigeria?

A cursory look at table-1 reveals that the establishment of IR in South-South federal universities in Nigeria may be influenced by the lecturers' attitudes towards its establishment. With a mean statistic of 32.967, it therefore means that lecturers' have positive attitudes towards the establishment of IR in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of lecturers from different faculties towards the establishment of IR in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

To establish whether there is any significant difference in the attitude towards establishment of IR among lecturers of different academic status in South-South federal universities in Nigeria, the scores of faculties of lecturers were cross tabulated with the frequency of attitude towards establishment of IR and the result is shown in table 2.

From table-2 above, the F-calculated value of 10.496 is greater than F-critical value of 2.61 at 0.05 alpha level, df 3 and 942. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the attitude towards the establishment of IR among lecturers from different faculties in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

Because the result of the test is significant, further analysis was carried out using the Scheffe Post-Hoc Analysis to find out where the significance lies. From the analysis, it shows that the significant difference lies in the faculty of Education, and this is closely followed by faculty of Arts. It may be inferred from the analysis that lecturers in the faculties of Education and Arts possess more positive attitude towards the establishment of IR than lecturers in the other faculties. The result is presented in table-3.

**Table-1**  
**Mean Responses of Attitude of Lecturers towards the Establishment of IR**

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Attitude	946	32.967	3.987	0.130
Valid N (listwise)	946	-	-	-

**Table-2**  
**Summary of ANOVA table showing Significant Difference in the Attitude towards Establishment of IR among Lecturers from Different Faculties in South-South Federal Universities**

Source of variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Cal.	F-Crit.	Sig.
Between Groups	485.897	3	161.966	10.496	2.61	0.00
Within Groups	14536.087	942	15.431	-	-	-
Total	15021.984	945	-	-	-	-

P<0.05 -Highly Significant

**Table-3**  
**Scheffe Post-Hoc Analysis showing where the Significant Difference Occurred**

FACULTY	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
SCIENCES	263	31.99	-	-
SOCIAL SCIENCES	230	32.95	32.95	-
ARTS	240	-	33.13	33.13
EDUCATION	213	-	-	34.00
Sig.	-	.074	.967	.123
Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.				

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of lecturers of different academic status towards the establishment of IR in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the attitude towards establishment of IR among lecturers of different academic status in South-South federal universities in Nigeria, the scores of academic status of different lecturers were correlated with the frequency of attitude towards establishment of IR and the result is shown in table-4.

**Table-4**  
**Summary of ANOVA table showing no Significant Difference in the Attitude towards Establishment of IR among Lecturers of Different Academic Status in South-South Federal Universities**

Source of variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Cal.	F-Crit.	Sig.
Between Groups	14.053	2	7.027	.442	3.00	.643
Within Groups	15007.931	943	15.915	-	-	-
Total	15021.984	945	-	-	-	-

$P > 0.05$  -Not Significant

Table-4 shows that F-calculated value of 0.442 is lower than F-critical value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level, df 2 and 943. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the attitude towards establishment of IR among lecturers of different academic status in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

This study revealed that lecturers' have positive attitude towards the establishment of IR in South-South federal universities in Nigeria. This finding corroborates Dulle (2008) who found that "as far as researchers' attitude towards IR is concerned, many respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with all positive statements about IR".

Another finding also revealed that there is significant difference in the attitude towards establishment of IR among lecturers from different faculties in South-South federal universities in Nigeria. This implies that not all lecturers from the different faculties in the South-South federal universities in Nigeria have positive attitude towards the establishment of IR. The significance lies in the faculty of Education. This is closely followed by the faculty of Arts. This implies that lecturers in the faculties of Education and Arts possess higher positive attitude towards the establishment of IR than the lecturers in the faculties of Sciences and Social Sciences. One of the findings of this study revealed that there is no significant difference in the attitude towards establishment of IR among lecturers of different academic status in South-South federal universities in Nigeria.

This implies that all lecturers irrespective of their academic status have positive attitude towards the establishment of IR.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that lecturers in South-South federal universities in Nigeria have positive attitudes toward the establishment of IRs in their respective institutions.

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