

# Institutional Repositories and University Communities: Observations from Developing Countries

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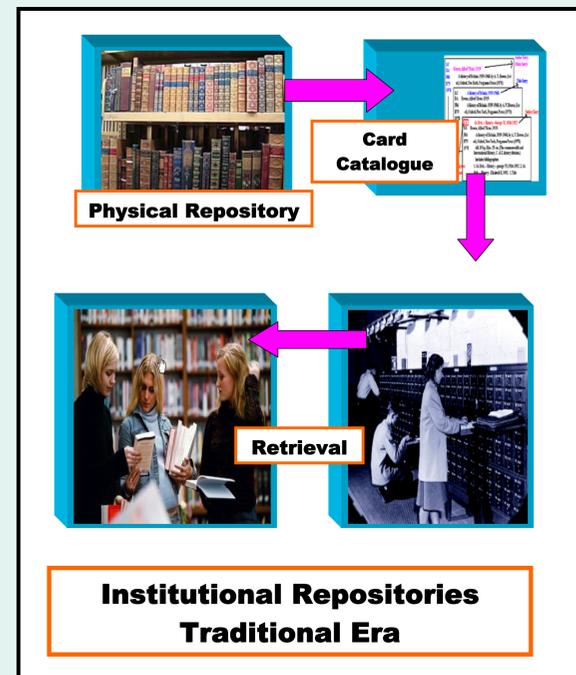
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Institutional repositories have become lifeblood of university communities, thus improving and accelerating their scholarly work. When compared with traditional physical libraries, digital institutional repositories produce various types of information, which never met with traditional walls.

Institutional repositories are facilitating more timely exchange of information among scholars and improve distance learning without any geographical barrier. It supports teaching, learning and research while reaching unreachable without walls. Greater revolution has occurred in the university libraries recent past converting paper-based libraries to electronic based ones. With the emergence of WWW and availability of national and global networks, university libraries have turned their attention to digital collections rather than building printed-based collection. In this way, librarian's role dramatically changed and is responsible for what e-repositories available for their users and how users can access to the available information within the physical walls of the library or elsewhere.



Institutional digital repositories will ultimately lead to paperless society, which were earlier dominated by paper. The information super highway is today thought of as a revolutionary platform intended to form a network connecting computers globally. The institutional repository is an information storage in which all the information resources are available in computer processable form and the functions of acquisition, storage, preservation, retrieval, access and display are carried out through the



use of digital technologies. The resources in institutional repositories can be divided into those that are originally created in digital format such as e-journals, e-books and on-line databases and those originally non-digital resources such as manuscripts and prints that subsequently digitized. A repository can disseminate its information across a network and users can retrieve information in the same way. The age-old concept of ownership of the traditional physical repositories now has been changed with access to digital repositories through the Internet connectivity. Internet has now provided access to huge repositories that can be considered as a paperless, wall-less, distributed multi-access, digital libraries/repositories. Institutional repositories have become life blood of the university community without any geographical barrier.

