

Challenges of Digital Library in Nigeria: An Overview of the University of Jos, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Knowledge is a continuum, central to any paradigm shift like the Fourth Industrial Revolution (FIR). This means that access to knowledge greatly increases one's overall endeavors. Western nations have gone great lengths in making sure that accessing information which translates to knowledge is not just easy but interesting too. In our part of the world (Africa), few countries are participating in the information revolution. This calls for the need for Africa to not only become part of the digital world but to actively participate in its development. Because the new age before us, powered by FIR, is an age that is between the informed and the uninformed. Africa needs to be on the former. This article therefore x-rays the diverse challenges directly impacting on Man power, Infrastructure and Expertise that have continually hampered its attainment in Nigeria and the University of Jos Library in particular, and possible prospects towards solving them. Quantitative approach (descriptive design) and related secondary sourced materials were used to present the needed grounds for this article. It finally posits that while digital libraries remain the key technology for Africa and Africans to evolve, there are prompt and pertinent grounds that need to be worked on; all captured in the article.

Keywords: *Fourth Industrial Revolution (FIR), Information Revolution, Digital Libraries, New Age,*

1. Introduction

It is widely accepted that knowledge is the key to human development in all endeavors. Having knowledge in any particular field, gives you an edge of being informed in that capacity, thus knowledge begets information while information begets innovations. This is the reason why contemporary issues are taking over diverse professions in the world today and the Library and information profession is not left out. In fact it is more in the area of information dissemination and management as opined by Omekwu et al. (2006). "No profession will undergo more radical change between 2000 and 2010 than will the information professional". With this obvious change at play, it has strengthened a number of emerging issues like the capacity of information management and knowledge, management and professional competencies, skills and attitudes to ICT (on the part of librarians) etc.

The "radical change" emerging technologies is already challenging the traditional methods of studies in Africa; teaching, learning and research, and also the way education is structured and managed because this radical change is powered by technologies that have brought about electronic learning (e-learning). According to Evers (2002:1), "Nations and Organizations that have been able to leverage their knowledge more effectively and efficiently through the use of new information and communications technologies (ICTs) are poised to continue to dominate the world trade and to derive massive benefits in human development". One will only be stating the obvious by giving the credit to the western world. It is so because they made it a priority and heavily invested in it, making sure that acquiring knowledge is an easy task. For Africans however, the case is different. First, they are poorer than their western counterparts and even among themselves, they are at par in terms of their capacity to generate and utilize the knowledge resources at their disposal. This is buttressed in the World Bank Group (2013:22) on Poverty Headcount Statistics (PHS). The reason for this is primarily blamed on Corruption and lack of