

Open to change? Factors influencing faculty adoption and use of open access repositories

Rowena Cullen and Brenda Chawner

November 2010

Outline

- Study background
- Research design
- Key findings
- Conclusions/Future research

Study background

- Since the late 1990s, there has been a global trend to set up institutional repositories (IRs) in universities and other tertiary institutions
- Europe and North America account for ~75% of the repositories listed in OpenDOAR

The New Zealand context

- Institutions relatively late to adopt IRs
- National Library of New Zealand sponsored a study of IRs and their potential for NZ in 2005
 - First NZ IR set up by University of Otago School of Business in late 2005
- NZ government provided seed money for IRs in 2006/07 as part of its digital strategy

NZ repository development

- Initial government funding covered four projects:
 - Institutional Repositories Aotearoa (IRA)
 - CODA: An Institutional Repository for the New Zealand ITP Sector
 - Open Access Repositories in New Zealand (OARiNZ)
 - the establishment of a national OAI-OMH harvester (known as KRIS), run by the National Library of New Zealand)

Other NZ repository initiatives

- Library Consortium of New Zealand (LCONZ)
- Australasian Digital Theses (ADT)

NZ IR status in Nov 2010 (1)

- Universities

- Auckland University of Technology (968 Records)
- Lincoln University (2781 Records)
- Massey University (1459 Records)
- The University of Auckland (4530 Records)
- University of Canterbury (4853 Records)
- University of Otago (1099 Records)
- University of Waikato (4117 Records)
- Victoria University of Wellington (1359 Records)

NZ IR status in June 2010 (2)

- Polytechnics
 - Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (100 Records)
 - Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (57 Records)
 - Unitec New Zealand (233 Records)

Research description

- Longitudinal study of IR development in New Zealand
- Initially funded as part of the OARiNZ project, to document the early development of NZ IRs and provide 'best practice' advice
- Additional funding from VUW Research Trust

Methodology

- Mixed methods, including:
 - Interviews with repository managers and other key people, to identify strategic goals, specific techniques, perceptions of successes and challenges
 - Quantitative survey of a stratified random sample of NZ university and polytechnic academic staff
 - Content analysis of repository items

Survey of NZ Faculty attitudes and use of IRs

- Quantitative postal survey of 2,175 research-active academic staff, randomly selected from the eight universities and ten of the larger polytechnics, and sent in mid-2008
- Respondents were also offered the opportunity to complete the survey online; ~20% chose this option

Survey design

- 30 questions, covering:
 - Awareness and use of IRs vs other sources
 - Deposits (if any) and reasons for depositing
 - Willingness to deposit, and attitudes to benefits and disadvantages of IRs
 - Demographic characteristics

Respondent characteristics

- 25.1% (546) response rate
- 56.1% male (304), 43.9% female (238), 4 non-responses
- Covered all age ranges from 26-30 to over 65; most respondents were in the 56-60 age range

Results are representative

- All institutions and academic disciplines were represented in the results
- Respondents came from all academic ranks, with most at the Senior Lecturer level or higher
- 19.9% had been in an academic position for 5 or fewer years, and 16.7% for more than 25 years

Low awareness of IRs

- Less than half (44.3% or 239) respondents knew that their institution had an IR
- 44.8% (242) didn't know, and 10.9% (59) said no

Limited use of IRs to locate research

- 35% (190) had accessed an IR to look for a colleague's research
- Of these, 153 used a search engine (many named Google), only 16 used KRIS
- Other sources used included referrals from colleagues, links on web sites, and help from the library

Disciplinary sources preferred for searching

- Respondents showed a strong preference for a subject repository (75.1%), followed by individual or department websites (69.3% and 69.0%)
- IRs were the least preferred (57.5%).

Limited use of IRs to deposit research

- 131 respondents (24.2%) had deposited at least one output from their research in an IR; 56 (10.6%) had deposited research in a subject repository
- A majority of these had only deposited a small number of their research outputs in their IR, typically 3 or fewer

Altruism a key reason for depositing

- Most importance was given to making research to students, colleagues, and the wider research community
- Least importance was given to gaining peer esteem and career advancement

Repositories seen as benefiting institutions most

- Respondents expressed the most agreement with statements about institutional benefits, and least agreement about replacement of traditional (and increasingly expensive) modes of scholarly publishing

IRs perceived as adding work and being hard to use

- Most agreement about:
 - Extra workload for staff
 - Difficulty in using an IR compared with traditional journal databases

Encouragement needed to encourage deposits

- The most common issues were:
 - Lack of awareness of IR,
 - Lack of an invitation to deposit, and
 - Concerns about journal copyright policies

Alleigance to discipline not institution

Summary of results

- IRs have not yet become part of the researchers' information seeking toolkit
- They are not (yet) highly valued as a venue for research dissemination
- IR content needs to be discoverable through other channels
- Altruism is a key motivator for depositing research in an IR

Future research

- Repeat survey in another context, including at least one university that requires mandatory deposit
- Examine attitudes to publishing in open access journals