

Institutional repositories in Sri Lankan academia: a study of platform adoption, OAI-PMH support, and content coverage

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Institutional Repositories (IRs) play a vital role in collecting, preserving, and providing access to the scholarly output of universities. Despite their importance, Sri Lankan state university IRs have not been comprehensively evaluated in recent years. This study explored the status of Institutional Repositories of state universities in Sri Lanka in terms of platform adoption, OAI-PMH support, and content coverage. The population and sample of this study consisted of 17 Sri Lankan academic libraries. At the point of data collection, only 14 out of 17 state university repositories were accessible. The study utilised an observational research approach using a desk-based method. Data were obtained from publicly accessible websites and analysed using descriptive statistical methods. The study revealed that all universities had adopted the DSpace platform as their IR. However, the majority had not yet obtained an SSL certificate, which is crucial for ensuring secure websites and protecting data. According to the observations, only 15% of universities had enabled the OAI-PMH in their repositories, which is essential for metadata harvesting. Even though 53% of repositories had been registered with open access directories such as OpenDOAR, it is doubtful whether metadata harvesting was functioning properly due to the above reason. All universities had stored research articles, theses, and dissertations in their repositories. Seventy-seven per cent (77%) of universities used their IRs to store and share books and book chapters. Among the respondents, 30% used DSpace for hosting past papers, 15% for archival material, and 7% for videos. Among the repositories studied, there were 154 total DSpace communities and 132,326 total resource items. Based on the observations, the study recommends giving immediate attention to obtaining SSL certificates for IRs, enabling the OAI-PMH protocol for metadata harvesting, conducting training and awareness programs on DSpace, metadata standards, OAI-PMH, and preservation, promoting the open access culture, and implementing a national IR maintenance guideline along with annual repository audits and performance reviews. As a future research area, the study suggests exploring Sri Lankan academia's contribution to the Open Access movement and investigating the role of IRs in institutional visibility.

Keywords: *Institutional repository, DSpace, OAI-PMH, University libraries*