ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES (IRs):
COMPARING ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING INITIATION
AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TWO IR PROJECTS

by

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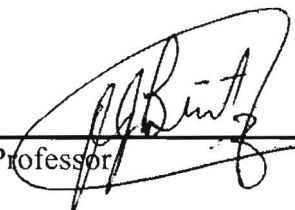Under the Supervision of Professor Johannes Britz

The development of institutional repositories (IRs) emerged as a new strategy

that allows universities to apply systematic leverage to accelerate changes taking

place in scholarship. This is made possible by technological developments in terms of

digital publishing, open source standards and a significant drop in on-line storage

costs. With the emergence of IRs, otherwise scattered information can be grouped

within a single information system. IRs have been increasingly prevalent for about

ten years now, and the extent of growth continues to increase.

The implementation and use of institutional repositories has been explored in

several recent research studies. However, very little research has touched the impact

of organizational factors such as institution characteristics and leadership influencing

on initiation and implementation of IRs. To better understand the organizational and

institutional impact influence the use of digital repositories in an academic

environment, I examined two institutional repository projects for my dissertation in

two countries: the U.S. and Taiwan. The focus of my inquiry was on how

institutions' organizational factors influence the initiation and implementation of

institutional repositories and knowledge building in the context of their academic work. In order to examine the complexity of this phenomenon, I conducted a comparative study through the qualitative research approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with librarians and administrative faculty. Document analysis was conducted on each case to determine which factors were related to the implementation of the institutional repository.

Results: The results suggest that a formal faculty leader in the initial stages of development of institutional repository project may assist in garnering faculty support related to the endeavor and that later administrative librarians may be required when the institution has developed sufficient faculty support. A thorough understanding of the organizational nature of the institution is required to navigate through the approval and leadership structures of the institution.

Conclusions: Organizational leadership interacts with institutional characteristics to effect change. These interactions describe a model of change that is comprehensive and within the institutional context.

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