

OPEN ACCESS IS BRIDGING THE KNOWLEDGE DIVIDE.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN SPECIFICALLY FOR THE
EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN AFRICA?

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Knowledge is power not because it's required before things could be done but simply because all successfully completed projects require some atom of knowledge to be applied.

As man cannot do without blood running through his vein, man cannot do without knowledge as well.

Information which is an essential ingredient in knowledge acquisition appears to be available to man but the question remains, is information accessible by man when, where and how it is required?

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Man has been deploying several measures to proffer access to information of all kinds to enhance growth and developmental processes.

- Print Access & Electronic
- Oral and Written
- Sign and Sound....
- Several Others

Then...Why the need for Information by man?

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Information is development and lack of information is largely responsible for underdevelopment

(World Bank 2012).

KNOWLEDGE

The Cambridge Dictionaries describe knowledge as the understanding of information....

....about a subject that you get by experience or study, either known by one person or by the people generally.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

KNOWLEDGE DIVIDE

Marshall, Kinuthia & Taylor (2009) Knowledge divide is a concept used to explain the **GAP** that exists between people who can find, process and utilize information or knowledge and those who cannot due to some reasons

Need to eliminate the **GAP**

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

KNOWLEDGE DIVIDE - ELIMINATION

Man quest to eliminate **GAP** lead to the introduction of a concept known as **Open Access (OA)**

The **Open Access (OA)** movement started in 1960s and gained momentum in the 1990s with the advent of internet and archiving.

.....started advocating that everything available should be accessible and usable by everyone without restriction (**division**)
(Ahmed, 2007).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

AFRICAN WOMEN AND EDUCATION

Women's access to education is critical at all levels of the education.

“If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)”
(Suen, 2010)

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The concept is indeed a blessing to women in Africa that have been marginalized in several ways.

With the concept of open access, African women do not have to spend a fortune to access needed information to acquire knowledge and skills.

The extent to which women in Africa have adopted the use of open access for educational processes has not been ascertained.

This study is thereby aimed at establishing the effects of open access on the education of women in Africa.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to determine the specific effects of open access on women education in Africa

Specific objectives

- To determine the forms of Open Access that facilitate women education in Africa
- To establish the impact of open access on women education in Africa
- To identify the impediments to open access for women education in Africa
- To recommend ways in which open access can be utilized to promote women education in Africa.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research work will be of specific benefit to African women, families and friends in a number of ways. The study will;

- sensitizes the women folks on some of the ways through which they could take advantage of open access initiative to get themselves educated
- sensitizes the general public on the need to support open access initiatives.
- contributions to the existing body of knowledge on open access
- stimulate further research activities on OA adoption, development and use in Africa

In general, this work will serve as an eye-opener to African women and other stake holders on the role of Open access towards the education of women and other groups of people in general

RESEARCH METHODS

- This study adopted the use of Desk Research Methodology to generate inferences and attend to the research objectives.

According to Johnston (2014), secondary data analysis involves analysing data which was collected by another person or research body and or agency for another primary purpose.

SOURCES OF DATA

- The major databases that were searched include EBSCOHOST database, Science Direct, UNESCO, Wikipedia and Emerald publishing group.
- The researchers also used Google Scholar to find scholarly articles and papers related to the topic under study.

This section explains forms of open access, the advantages of open access, the impediment of open access in Africa and proffers recommendations.

Open Access

According to Glushko & Shoyama, (2015) OA is an ecosystem of freely available ideas, research input, output and publication. Free means the research outputs are available on the Internet allowing anyone to download, distribute and use.

Knowledge Divide

A divide is generally defined as the distance and the depth of the division between two units (UNESCO 2010).

Gold Open Access

This is when a publisher allows access to the research products freely immediately after publishing work is done

Green Open Access:

The research product has been published and the authors do self-archiving of their article in an institutional repository to make it open access

Hybrid Open Access

In this model, publishers publish OA articles in toll-access scholarly journals, after receiving certain article processing charges (APC) from the authors

Delayed Open Access

In Delayed OA model, publishers offer free access after a specified period, anywhere from 6 months to 2 years (UNESCO)

Short-term Open Access

In Short-term OA model, publishers offer free access until a specified period, anywhere from 6 months to 1 year (UNESCO)

Selected Open Access

In Selected OA model, publishers selectively offer free access to selected contents only. Other contents are available to subscribers only (UNESCO 2010).

Open Education programmes occur when learning and acquiring skills is done by eliminating barriers that hinders people from participating in institution based learning.

The Open University in Britain eliminated barriers like academic admission requirements and e-learning programs are free. However, to acquire a certificate is a cost in some institutions and some are free. Examples are...

- Massive Online Course (MOOC)
- Open Courseware (OCW)
- Open Educational Practices (OEP)
- Open Educational Resources (OER)

Fuchs & Horak (2009) agree that there are advantages of OA on both the publisher/Author and the consumer of the educational information as see below:

- Increased visibility
- Citation Rate
- Compliance with resaerch funder's policies
- Availability of free knowledge and learning
- Access to knowledge and education barriers are eliminated

Saariluoma (2007), Fuchs & Horak, (2009), Singh & Lewa(2014) and UNESCO(2015) agree that there are various impediments associated to open access in Africa as mentioned below;

- Technological infrastructure
- Gender Bias
- Language Barrier
- Lack of sufficient advocacy and awareness campaigns

LITERATURE REVIEW

Open Access and Women Education in Africa

Women are custodians of African culture as they are the one who manage their households and transfer knowledge to the children they nurture and up bring.

The old African proverb – “If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)” was a pioneer in its time for realizing the importance of women’s education when men predominated education opportunities (Suen, 2010).

The same women today still face so many challenges when it comes to accessing education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Open Access and Women Education in Africa

A number of literature writers agree that the prevalent factors in women education in Africa are:

- sociocultural barriers,
- early marriages cultural perceptions of boys' superior abilities
- lack of parental support

Open Access is thereby providing a platform to transform education and assist developing communities to close the knowledge divide especially among women(Taylor, 2009).

COMPARATIVE VIEW OF OPEN ACCESS IN UGANDA, SOUTH AFRICA AND NIGERIA

AFRICA AT A GLANCE

AFRICA

500 OA journals published in North and sub-Saharan Africa are indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and in African Journals Online (AJOL)

125 repositories have been registered in the Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR)

18 OA policies have been developed and registered in the Registry of Open Access Repository Policies and Mandates (ROARMAP).

University of Pretoria (South Africa) became the first African University that adopted an OA mandate.

OA in Africa has been possible because of collaborations and partnership with various bodies such as Stellenbosch University, The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), UNESCO, library consortia, INASP and Irish African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (IAP) ETC.

Source: UNESCO 2016

LITERATURE REVIEW

Status of Open Access in Uganda, South Africa and Nigeria



The Open Access (OA) in Africa is gaining ground.

Researchers, research managers and policy makers, journal editors and publishers, librarians, practitioners, students and general public have started to understand the benefits of OA and have started to implement OA projects in the region

LITERATURE REVIEW

Status of Open Access in Uganda, South Africa and Nigeria

According to UNESCO (2016) Uganda's adoption of Open Access has been positive and steady although at a slow pace.

- Nannozi & Kamusiime (2013) there were only three (3) open access repositories in Uganda in the year 2012. Uganda Scholarly Digital Library (USDL) at Makerere University, E-commons at the Aga Khan University and UMU Research Repository at Uganda Martyrs University
- Three open access journals had been indexed in DOAJ by May 2015. (UNESCO 2016)
- 2 open access repositories registered and indexed in open doar
- According to UNESCO (2015) there is an enabling environment in Uganda through Open Access organizations and groups like Consortium of Uganda University Libraries, INASP,
- Plans to improve, spread and increase access to more repositories were being taken by different stakeholder like University Libraries under their consortia, the consortium of Uganda University libraries (CUUL) as well as government agencies like the National council of Higher Education (NCHE) Uganda and the Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions (SPIDER).

What this means for women education in Africa and Uganda in particular is that women have very few open access resources at their disposal to aid their education.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Status of Open Access in Uganda, South Africa and Nigeria



- According to UNESCO (2016) South Africa is the leading African country in terms open access policies on government and grassroots level (universities and research organisations) in Africa.
- OA was introduced in SA in 2004 and workshops to introduce it to different institutions were conducted in 2005,
- The first IR workshop took place in May 2005.
- Most universities and other research institutions in South Africa have institutional repositories in place for their research output. UNESCO explains that as of 15 June 2015, 30 Open Access repositories registered in open-door (Directory of open access repositories). This includes 11 traditional universities, several universities of technology, 3 comprehensive universities and council for scientific and industrial research (CSIR).
- As of June 2015, there are 7 open access policies registered in ROARMAP,
- As of June 2015, 72 open access journals had been registered in DOAJ.

These developments in open Access in South Africa are an enabling environment for women Education in Africa

LITERATURE REVIEW

Status of Open Access in Uganda, South Africa and Nigeria



- Current data from the OpenDoar – Directory of Open Access Repository, enlisted 17 registered institutional repositories from Nigeria.
- The DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journal, have 38 Open Access Journals from Nigeria indexed on its Database. ...UNESCO (2015)
- 465 articles have been published with BioMed central...UNESCO (2015)
- 119 articles have been published with Public Library of Science (PLoS) ... UNESCO (2015)
- The first workshop on open access repositories in Nigeria was organised between 28th and 29th April 2008 ...UNESCO (2015)
- Barriers to open access in Nigeria as reported by UNESCO (2016) include lack of national policies on open access, limited support from institutions' leadership and lack of awareness of potential of open access among researchers and scholars, librarians, publishers and policy makers etc. among others
- **With the above efforts in promoting open Access, Nigeria provides a fair enabling environment for open access and women education. This puts Nigeria at a better footing than Uganda though still below South Africa**

LITERATURE REVIEW

Comparative statistics

	NIGERIA	SOUTH AFRICA	UGANDA
Ist workshop	2008	2005	NR
Repository Registered in Open Doar	17 (2016)	30 (2015)	2
Indexed Journal in DOAJ	38	72	3
Enabling Environment	Yes	Yes	Yes
Registered Policies	1	10	NR

Note: NR = No record

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The study revealed that there are several forms of open access. In addition to the commonly known and identified forms i.e. Gold and green forms of Open Access, there were other forms like Hybrid, delayed, Short term and selected open access
2. The study revealed that open access in Africa has gained ground which provided African women with the opportunity to exploit open access resources to enhance their education.
3. It was observed that most governments of African countries do not have necessary legislation in place that are meant to encourage the education of the women folks in Africa

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

4. It was revealed that there are a number of challenges that affect the advancement of open access and its adoption in Africa such as poor ICT infrastructure, lack of awareness, Lack of policies, etc.
5. It was also observed that some individuals and groups in Africa are making efforts to encourage the adoption and use of open access in Africa.
6. It was discovered that there are no studies that have been done on the effects on open access on women education in Africa

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that several studies have been conducted on the adoption and use of open access and most of them presented open access as a means to an end.

Based on the findings of this study, it shows that open access has a lot of benefits to African women.

The study therefore concludes that while there is a direct relationship between open access and its ability to bridge knowledge divide, there is no literature to justify a direct effect or impact of open access on women education in Africa. However, the available open access information resources can have a positive contribution to the education of women in africa

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the current trends in open access movements and bridging the knowledge divide in relation to women education, the following are our recommendations; (6)

- The need to train Librarians. Librarians and other information providers should be trained in open access so as to equip them with knowledge and skills on how best open access can be offered especially in institutions of higher learning.

Librarians needs skills in information organization and description, setting up institutional repositories, use of ICT skills, etc. Such trainings can be done by Librarians, library schools consortiums, and other training agencies.

Academic libraries can benefit more with a trained body of librarians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The training should also be extended to women on access procedures and use of open access repositories. These should be equipped with skills such as information search and retrieval, navigation, storage and information evaluation. This will enable women to use available open access resources with ease so as to better their education. Such trainings can be done by Librarians, library schools consortiums, and other training agencies.
- There is also need for advocacy for open access publishing. There is a need to encourage researchers to value and publish in open access journals so as to increase on the availability of information products that are available for free use.

Academic libraries will in turn have a vast resources base of open access repositories

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Librarians need to offer more awareness sessions among women in their institutions of learning. These should be informed of the available open access resources as well as giving them access procedures
- Academic institutions should also be encouraged to establish and develop institutional repositories where the institutions' research heritage can be documented and made available to users. Establishing institutional repositories require policy issues that should be addressed so as to ensure that repositories are operated and run according to the established institution's policy while keeping others issues like copyright in mind. This widens the information resource base for academic libraries
- There is also need to educate and inform stakeholders in different institutions about the concept institutional repositories and what it exactly, means. Institutional repositories are expected to document and offer free access to research, however, there are institutions that populate their repositories with research products but never provide full access rights to the users. This would be seen as an act against open access principles which shouldn't be encouraged. In turn academic libraries will widen their resource base and therefore have more open access resources.

ENDING

Thank you for
Listening!



AS OPEN ACCESS RESEARCHERS, WE ARE OPEN FOR QUESTIONS...