

Open Access Initiatives in Kenyan Universities: Issues and Suggested Solutions

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Introduction

- Impact of ICT in information creation, organization, storage, dissemination and sharing is immense
- The digital and information divides have continued to exist between researchers in developed and developing countries. This is the concern of the Open Access movement
- The Internet, the World Wide Web and Open Source Software (OSS) are at the core of the Open Access movement

Attributes of Open Access Literature

- Digital
- Online
- Free of charge for everyone with Internet connection
- Free of most copyright and licensing restrictions

NB: the author's consent is needed to achieve these conditions

(Peter, 2004)

Triggers of Open Access

Most triggers are associated with

commercial scholarly literature:

- Ever-rising costs of journals and monographs against increasing enrolments and under-funding of most university libraries, especially in Africa
- Lack of space and sufficient number of computers in university libraries
- Restrictive licensing terms by publishers and vendors
- Access versus ownership issues
- Archival and preservation issues

Triggers of Open Access

Author-based Triggers

- Desire to publish for impact not for money
- Wide readership leading to professional visibility, prestige and promotion

ICT-based Triggers

- Reduced cost of publishing
- Increase in scope of distributions through networks
- Fast access and sharing among writers, peer-reviewers, institutions, readers *et cetera*

Vehicles to Open Access

Archives or Repositories divided into the following categories:

- Archives or repositories that are not peer-reviewed
- Institutional or disciplinary repositories
- Re-prints or Pre-prints
- Journals
- Any other information an institution deems fit to digitize and avail for access

Benefits of Open Access

- Fast access to, creation, dissemination and sharing of research information among researchers and institutions, leading to individual, departmental and institutional visibility and prestige
- Digitization and preservation of local content
- Alternative avenue for publishing by researchers
- Lessens Inter-loan requests as institutions share resources through networks
- Enhanced ICT skills among information professionals, academic staff and students
- Savings associated with storage space
- Saving on document retrieval costs: time, money etc

Background to Open Access in Kenya

- A more recent phenomenon
- Stakeholders engaged in sensitization and popularization of OSS for digitization
 - UNESCO: Greenstone
 - INASP: Grants for Open Access Week; Africa Journal Online (AJOL)
 - Association of African Universities (AAU): Database of African Thesis and Dissertations (DATAD)

Snapshot of Open Access Activities by Selected Universities in Kenya

- Based interview discussions that sought to establish the status of IRs in relation to:
 - The software in use
 - What is being digitized/documents
 - Funding for the project
 - Institutional support
 - Any challenges
 - Future plans

The University of Nairobi (Jomo Kenyatta Library)

<http://.library.uonbi.ac.ke/>

- A Public University
- Using DSpace OSS for digitization
 - inaugural lectures
 - distinguished lectures
 - conferment of honorary degrees
 - workshop presentations
 - library manuals and guides
- Has hosted several OSS and Open Access workshops
- Lack of guidelines on copyright, inadequate funding and staffing levels continue to be barriers to digitization efforts

Kenyatta University (Moi Library)

<http://.www.ku.ac.ke/index.php/library>

- A Public University
- Using Greenstone OSS
 - has a comprehensive database of thesis and dissertations' abstracts; and has successfully engaged in digitizing of past examination papers. All these under funding by the partnership for Higher Education in Africa
 - Is coordinating center for AAU's DATAD project; and has organized an Open Access conference in partnership with BioMed Central, publishers of commercial and open access journals
 - Has a copyright policy in place implemented by its Directorate of Intellectual Property and Copyright Issues
- Inadequate staffing, bureaucracy and rigid procurement procedures (for hardware and software); and uncooperative departments in regard to submission of examination papers are barriers to the ongoing projects

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Bishop McCauley Memorial Library)

<http://www.cuea.edu/>

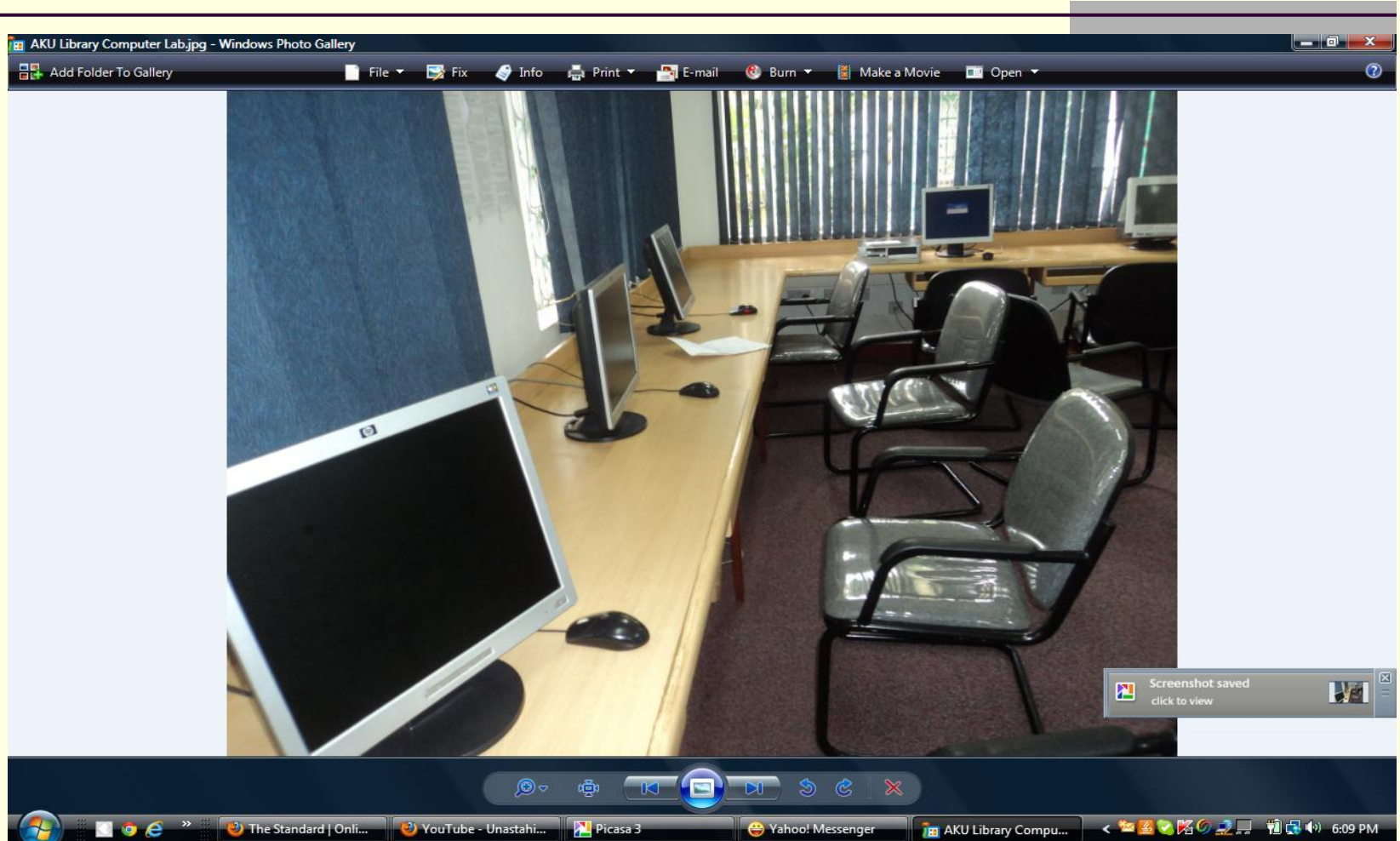
- A Private University
- Greenstone for digitizing Thesis and Dissertation abstracts
- Document Systems and Digital Archives software for digitizing two main daily newspapers: the Daily Nation and the East African Standard through outsourcing. The project has stalled for four years now.
- Major barriers include lack of requisite IT skills among staff; library understaffing; lack of institutional support

The Aga Khan University Library

www.aku.edu/akuLibray

- A Private University
- DSpace is used to capture:
 - postgraduate Thesis and Dissertations, most of which are submitted in electronic format
 - Lectures
 - Symposia and conference proceedings
- A suggestion by the overall librarian for all Aga Khan University libraries worldwide for the need to acquire a commercial software for easy networking has led to stalling of one of the most promising projects in the country. Another barrier is understaffing of the library

AKU Library Computer Lab



KLA National Seminar, 14-16 July 2011,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India

Strathmore University

<http://www.strathmore.edu>

- A Private University
- DSpace for digitizing institutional local content and provide links to subscribed to e-books through the SU-Portal
- Searching is by communities/departments or metadata
- The only university in Kenya on OpenDOAR at institutional level, with 162 documents by 8th July, 2011
- Has been at the forefront of helping automate other libraries using Koha OSS
- Major barrier is high library management staff turnover as they are sought after due to their IT skills mostly gained while at Strathmore University

A National Initiative: The Kenya Information Preservation Society (KIPS)

<http://www.researchkenya.org>

- A Private entity established in 1993 with the aim to collect, preserve and conserve local content
- Uses ProCite bibliographic management software
- Currently involved in collecting theses and dissertation abstracts whose research falls in the following categories:
 - any postgraduate thesis or dissertation written by Kenyan scholars regardless of where the degree is awarded
 - any postgraduate thesis or dissertation reflecting Kenyan aspects written by non-Kenyan scholars anywhere in the world
- All above are compiled in *The Union List of Theses and Dissertations held in Universities and Research Institutions in Kenya*

KIPS: Contributors

- 12 Universities + 6 other libraries affiliated to the University of Nairobi
- 8 Research institutions
- The Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services (KNADS)
- The Kenya National Library Services (KNLS)
- The National Museums of Kenya
- The University Microforms International, USA

Note: The University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University contribute over 50% of ETD to KIPS database

KIPS: Interface

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window displaying the ResearchKenya.org website. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.researchkenya.org/index.html>. The page features a navigation menu on the left with buttons for home, search, history, contributors, credits, and contact us. The main content area includes the site title "ResearchKenya.org" and a description: "This database contains 12,343 records of theses and dissertations undertaken in Kenya, collected together by the Kenya Information Preservation Society (KIPS), and last updated in March 2010." Below this is a search box with the placeholder text "simple search (titles, abstracts and authors)" and a "search >>" button. A footer contains the text "information from the Union List of Theses and Dissertations held by Universities and Research Institutions in Kenya © Kenya Information Preservation Society 2011". The background of the page is decorated with several CD-ROMs, each labeled "THE UNION LIST OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS HELD BY UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA" and "Compiled and produced by Kenya Information Preservation Society PO Box 436 1-00200, Nairobi, Kenya kenyadocuments@yahoo.com".

Firefox

Search : search for kenyatta x aga khan university library - Google S... x +

http://www.researchkenya.org/search.html

Most Visited Getting Started LiveScore.com : Socce... Latest Headlines

text size: A A A



ResearchKenya.org
> Search
>> search for kenyatta

simple search (titles, abstracts and authors)

kenyatta

search >>

home
search

history
contributors
credits
contact us

256 matching papers identified for kenyatta:

results page: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26

Status, ecological characteristics and conservation of the Pancake tortoise, (*Malacochersus torien*) in Nguni and Nuu areas, Kenya.

Malonza, Patrick **Kenyatta** | 1999 | MSc | Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
Pancake tortoise Malacochersus torieni is a rock crevice-dwelling terrestrial testunid inhabiting rock outcrops and kopjes discontinuously distributed throughout the semi-arid and arid savannas (Somali-Masai floristic zone) of Kenya and Tanzania. Their distribution overlaps with that of Precambrian rocks of the basement complex system... more

Mechanical properties aged and unaged polybutadiene-novolak blend as a function of rubber concentration.

Adams, Hussein Sheikh | 1990 | MSc | **Kenyatta** University, Kenya
Mechanical properties of polybutadiene -novolak blends were studied in the

Microsoft PowerPoi... Search : search for k...

10:59 PM

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window with the address bar displaying `http://www.researchkenya.org/search.html`. The search results for 'Chemotherapy' are displayed on the page. The search bar contains the text 'Chemotherapy' and a 'search >>' button. Below the search bar, it indicates '25 matching papers identified for Chemotherapy:' and shows 'results page: 1 | 2 | 3'. Two search results are visible:

- Physiochemical and in vitro evaluation of anti-Leishmania activity of parvaquone and related compounds**
Ronoh, Wesley Kiplangat | 2009 | Msc | Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya
Leishmaniasis is a widespread parasitic disease caused by protozoa of the genus Leishmania. The control of leishmaniasis remains a problem and it is emerging as an important opportunistic infection in immuno-compromised patients especially those infected with HIV... [more](#)
- Economic analysis of current tsetse and trypanosomosis control practices and ex-ante assessment of potential demand of a new tsetse control technology in Kajiado and Narok Districts**
Kimani, Tabitha Mugethi | MSc | Egerton University, Kenya
Optimal livestock production - a major source of livelihood among pastoralists in

The page also features a navigation menu on the left with links for 'home', 'search', 'history', 'contributors', 'credits', and 'contact us'. The background of the page is decorated with images of CD-ROMs.

KIPS: Challenges

- Long-term funding
- Staffing
- Office Space
- Lack of commitment by some contributing institutions

Issues with Open Access in Kenya

- Low appreciation of role of information in development
- Un-coordinated efforts at institutional and national levels
- Lack of advocacy and poor sensitization approaches
- Inadequate funding
- Poor IT skills among university library staff
- Computer illiteracy among faculty and students
- A 'Print-culture'
- Lack of institutional copyright regulations and fear of plagiarism of ones' work
- Failure by universities to recognize contributions to IRs for faculty promotions
- Lack of a binding MoU between institutions and KIPS
- Understaffing of university academic staff against high enrolment numbers
- A feeling of satisfaction due to availability online information through the Programme for the Availability of Research Information (PERI) and the Kenya Libraries and Information Services Consortium (KLISC)

Suggested Solutions

- Sensitization of all stakeholders about benefits of open access
- Advocacy for improved government, donor and institutional support and funding for required infrastructure, staffing and continued staff training
- Marketing of IRs; and information literacy training to curb on under-utilization of IRs and other information resources
- Encouraging postgraduate students and faculty to take the initiative to acquire IT skills
- Mandatory requirement that all theses and dissertations be submitted to the university library in electronic format
- Public funding of KIPS; and a MoU between KIPS and contributors
- Faculty promotions based on contributions to IRs
- Institutional rules and regulations to govern copyright ownership; how to deal with plagiarism *et cetera*

Conclusion

- Having functional Open Access initiatives in Kenya depends on dealing with the identified challenges at institutional and national levels.
- There is also need for a more comprehensive national study of IR initiatives in the country's universities, colleges, research institutions and schools. Findings of such a study will go along way in establishing institutional needs and chart a way for successful future projects, local partnerships and networking mechanisms. This will consequently put Kenya's research output in the global arena while at the same time enabling access to more local content by researchers.

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Thank You!

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