Abstract

This study explores the current trends, challenges and opportunities of selected digital libraries in Ethiopia. A structured questionnaire was used to get pertinent data administered to library staffs and digital library users using purposive and convenience sampling technique respectively. The study identified that Dspace and Green Stone are used digital library platforms in most of the digital libraries in Ethiopia because of its interactive user interface, full text accessibility, and easiness for installation criteria’s. The study results showed that thesis and dissertations and rare books were the most ranked items digitized for academic and research purpose. The major challenges of digital libraries in Ethiopia were found copyright issue of intellectual properties, and lack of funds to support digital libraries, incompatibility of digital library platforms for local languages, and lack of digital library plan, policy and procedures. Low speed of Internet connection and low quality of digital collections were problems while users gaining access to digital libraries. To educational, cultural, historical and governmental documents preservation and to wide document accessibility were placed the major opportunities for digital libraries in Ethiopia. Therefore digital libraries in Ethiopia should have a national digital
library policy, plan, standards, and procedures for successful digital library development in the
country were forwarded as recommendations.

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