

Digital libraries are social as well as technological entities. They aim to help people learn and carry out shared knowledge-related work or processes across the boundaries of space and time. Digital libraries are designed, used and evaluated in this context of collective knowledge creation; and digital libraries interact with this context, changing and being changed by it.

The construction of digital libraries cannot therefore be confused with digitization, understood as the migration from paper to digital media. Effective digital libraries need to be designed and evaluated with a sensitivity to how knowledge is created and understood, and the work of knowledge creation is done in community-driven contexts that share practices and tools. The use of digital libraries is a socially integrated process. Similarly, the development of digital libraries is a complex social process.

This Digital Library Perspectives' second issue of 2023 intends to present socially rooted approaches to understanding digital libraries; to identify and discuss the main issues that emerge from these approaches and, more generally, from the social nature of digital libraries in different context of the world; and to consider the implications for the design and management of digital libraries.

In "Copyright implications for the aggregation of audiovisual content in Greece," Malliari, Nitsos, Zapounidou and Doropoulos provide an overview of the copyright legal framework for audiovisual (AV) resources in Europe and Greece, and they discuss how AV content is currently licensed by Greek providers and how current licenses enable reuse. Despite the abundance of copyright legislation in the European Union and in Greece, AV content providers in Greece seem to ignore it or have difficulties in choosing the right license. More than half of them choose to publish their resources on popular AV platforms using the default licensing option provided. Copyright licenses and exceptions in the European Union and in Greek legislation have been thoroughly reviewed along with the reuse of content, based on the terms of Fair Use, Rights Statements and Creative Commons.

The legal perspective and analysis of user behavior is also present in the second paper of this issue. Otike and Nakitare in "Plagiarism conundrum in Kenyan Universities: An impediment to quality research" report the problem that plagiarism is on the rise, mainly due to increased access to the internet and digital sources. To combat the threat of plagiarism, various universities have implemented countermeasures, but in Kenya, there seems to be a lack among universities to tackle plagiarism. Hence, this paper examines and identifies current anti-plagiarism practices in Kenyan universities. The study determined that most universities agree that plagiarism negatively affects the quality of teaching, learning and research; however, there are no adequate mechanisms, strategies and policies to address plagiarism issues. The results of this study can be used to improve the quality of academic writing and standardize plagiarism procedures by proposing policy actions necessary for this goal.

From the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh, Islam Md. Anwarul and Tonmoy Tazbir Khan present their research on student behavior with the title "Do students look for information differently? Information seeking behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic." This study highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for a variety of information sources and usage has changed over time before and during the pandemic. Most students, while searching for COVID information, have faced challenges, mostly related to the availability of unreliable information. Students used more social media tools during the COVID period than before it, and some significant relationships were found between student demographic variables and student understanding of choosing COVID-related information sources.



A major problem is the lack of digital skills to use digital libraries. Oseghale authored “Digital information literacy skills and use of electronic resources by humanities graduate students at Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.” This research aims to evaluate digital literacy proficiency by humanities graduate students. The findings, related to the main challenges faced by graduates, identified inadequate awareness of electronic resources, irregular access to the internet, inadequate training on the use of electronic resources, inadequate staff assistance, lack of continuity in the subscriptions to electronic resources and scarcity of local digital content. To benefit from the use of electronic resources, the study recommends taking active steps to stimulate access to electronic resources so that everyone can benefit from the opportunities of the information age.

Organization of information is also linked to facilitating sharing and the need for standard schemas. Mapulanga, Chapepa and Ngwira from Malawi, in “Metadata creation practices at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources Library’s institutional repository,” investigate the metadata creation procedures in their university repository. Qualified Dublin Core was chosen as the metadata schema used to create and implement metadata in the repository, and the Dublin Core Application Profile was the schema used for uniform naming and capitalization conventions. Research participants pointed out that institutional filing system compatibility, resource subject matter, resource types and staff experience influenced the selection criteria for the Qualified Dublin Core metadata schema. The Repository policy has been developed but is yet to be adopted by the university management.

Symulevich and Boczar from the USA, in “Summer of migration: Consolidating institutional repositories into a redesigned singular platform,” describe a large-scale, time-sensitive project of institutional repository migration, a situation which has not been discussed in detail in the literature. Politicians have requested the university to merge the institutional repositories of two campuses into one new institutional repository. The authors discovered many unexpected problems during the migration process, such as difficulties with site redirects and hidden collections, among others.

Advanced technologies are transforming digital libraries’ creation and usage. In “Metaverse academic library: Would it be patronized?,” Adetayo Adebowale, together with Adekunmisi Sowemimo, Abata-Ebire and Adekunmisi Adedokun, investigated students’ opinions in Nigeria about the Metaverse, should it become available in the academic library. Their results indicated that the majority of students have never used virtual reality equipment, yet they are eager to use the metaverse academic library (MAL) for services such as online academic research, library user training, access to circulation services, reading journals and contacting reference librarians. This study contributes to the scant research on MAL and concludes that the use of metaverse in libraries would be student-sponsored, if made available.

The Cologne library has long assumed the role of introducing and familiarizing the community with advanced technologies. During a visit to the Library of Cologne, Anna Maria Tamaro interviewed its director, Hannelore Vogt. This interview closes this issue under the title “The Cologne Public Library as accelerator of digitisation,” which tries to clarify the mission of the library and the strategies they have implemented to inspire and stimulate community learning of technologies and beyond.

Anna Maria Tamaro

Department of Information Engineering, University of Parma, Parma, Italy, and

Juan D. Machin-Mastromatteo

*Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua,
Chihuahua, Mexico*