

## Gaining a sustainable IR: thinking SWOT

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### Abstract:

This paper aims to reflect about the next steps and challenges to gain sustainably to our Institutional Repositories (IR's).

We first reference the earlier stage of creating and getting start in the IR: what was needed to do, how we make it and how we are right now.

As most of the universities have an IR, now we are starting to think about what is going next.

The objective is to reflect, in a practical and objective way, what we need to do. And we purpose to present a brief and concise vision SWOT analysis to each step of the way.

Our goal is to reflect about our challenges and prepare ourselves to what will it require.

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**Keywords:** Library. Higher education. Information management. Challenges. Institutional repository. Open Access. SWOT.

### 1. Introduction

We are finishing the “era of experimental repositories,” where we had many challenging ideas that could revolution the scientific community and their way to publish and research, and now we are entering a new phase: the “era of sustainability”.

First we faced many challenges and obstacles in order to create, implement, configure and organize an IR. Then, we needed to promote the concept and purposes of the repositories and of Open Access. And, finally, we had to find competences and human resources in our small teams in the library to populate the repository with content in order to motivate the authors to continue that with self-archiving.

Now, most of the universities have an IR, with all the past content and we are still promoting the self-archiving and figuring out what more we can do with the IR towards the user's needs – authors and the institution.

We are exploring the IR's possible and meaningful functionalities and services by thinking new ways to promote and advertise in our community.

This paper will present the essential steps in order to retrieve gains from the IR and will also be presented a SWOT analysis of each one so we can reflect and prepare strategies to face it.

### 1. Scientific content

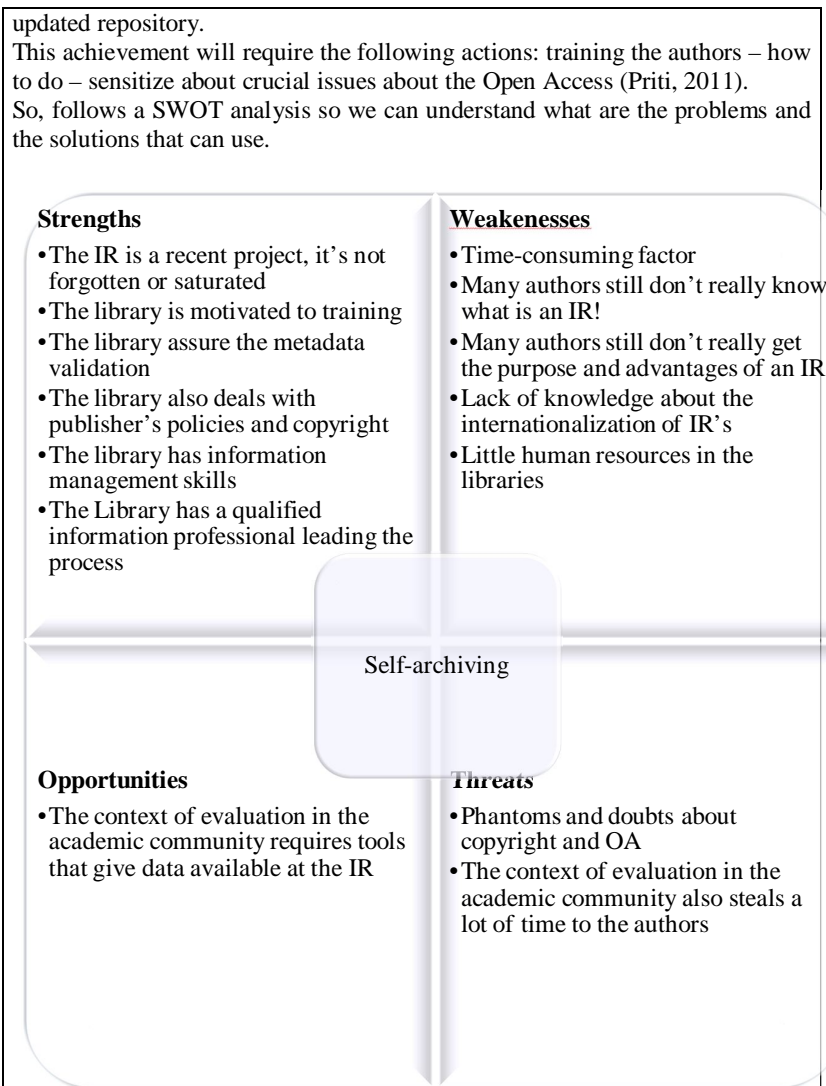
One of the first things we have to assure is that the IR is still being populated with content.

It's a prime key because if an IR is not updated the users will stop searching there and the authors will demotivate and give up.

In other hand, that's curious because the authors should be the ones that feed the IR... but it's one (we think the most important) of our priorities: the self-archiving (Grundmann, 2009).

The main priority is to promote and assure the author's self-archiving.

Our goal is to make the author's self-archiving a reality and a functional and



**Figure 1 – Self-archiving: a SWOT analysis.**

First, we analyze the weaknesses and threats in order to try to see how the opportunities and strengths can solve those.

One of the mains weaknesses of implementing the self-archiving are the time-consuming factor (Priti, 2011). The teachers and researchers always mention the lack of time because of their activities in teaching and researching. An important threat emphasizes this time factor: the context of evaluation in the academic community also takes a lot of time for them.

The training will help by showing, in practice, that the self-archiving is a simple and quick process.

It's important to enjoy the opportunity that the authors need to give academic and scientific information about them to the evaluation context and we can prove that the self-archiving will facilitate the process.

The library is motivated to training and the fact of the IR is still a recent project

means that isn't forgotten or saturated.

The library by assuring the metadata validation is good argument to motivate the self-archiving without the concerning problems that it involves (Sarker, 2010).

The lack of knowledge about the concept, meaning, purposes and international impact is a strong weakness. The doubts and fears about copyright issues and Open Access it's a threat that is needed to solve (Christian, 2009; Priti, 2011).

This lack of knowledge need a consistent and prepared set of campaigns, workshops and promotion of the themes in order to sensitize and clarify the community.

The self-assuming responsibility of the library to deal with publisher's policies and copyright issues can relieve the authors of those concerns.

The community and also the institution can rely on the process to the Library because it has information management skills to assure the success of the project. The repository has a qualified information manager that leads the project.

The weakness of the library is often the lack of human resources to assure all this actions in so many ways.

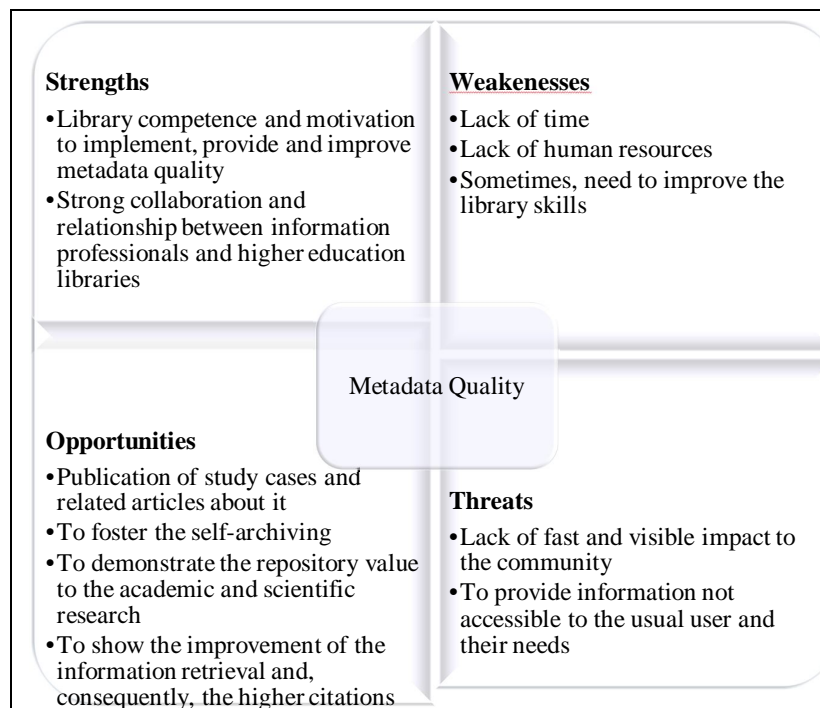
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## **2. Metadata Quality**

The next important big stage of the project is the improvement of the metadata quality.

It's a measure that means better quality standards and improves the information retrieval.

By improving the capacity of information retrieval, it means more access to the scientific production, higher citations and researcher's motivation and advantage (Sarker, 2010).



**Figure 2 – Metadata quality: a SWOT analysis.**

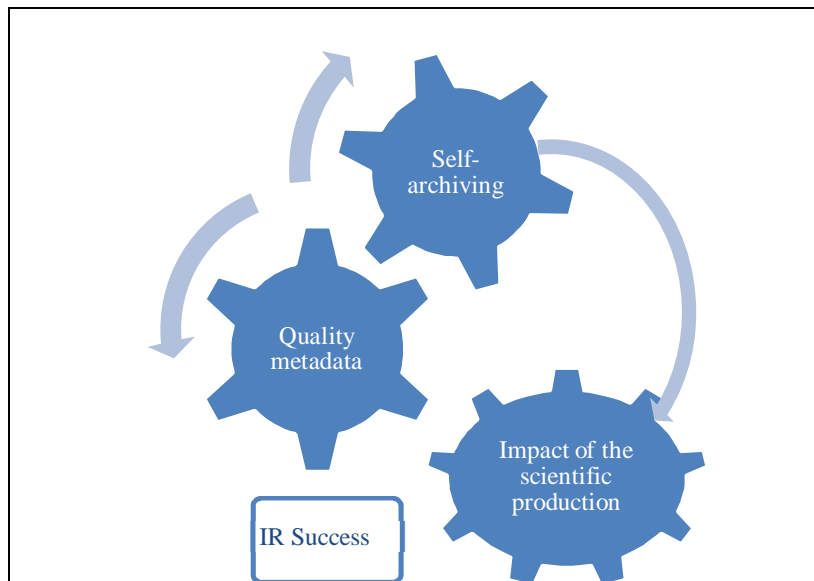
In order to assay the SWOT analysis given through the Figure 2, we will present the weaknesses and the treats that we must face it and the strengths and opportunities that we should take advantage.

The Library is consumed, each more, with new projects and developments without forgetting the day a day. So, the time factor is an issue allied to the lack of human resources that we face because of the absence of budget derived from the economic context.

The library stakeholders also needs, sometimes, improving the library skills and competences. The economic factor decreases the opportunity to develop those skills (Starkman, 2008).

On the other hand, the Library stakeholders have the motivation and competences to implement and develop the improvement of quality metadata. The treats that we appoint are the: lack of fast, visible impact and results to the academic and scientific community and the risk to provide information not accessible to the usual user and their needs.

By otherwise, the Library can count on a strong collaboration and relationship between information professionals and higher education libraries and on the support of several publications of case studies and exchange of experiences and knowledge about the themes.



**Figure 3 – The cycle and relations about the strategies.**

The improvement of metadata quality can foster the self-archiving, demonstrate the repository value to the academic and scientific community and show the improvement of the information retrieval that can increase the citations and impact of the scientific production (Priti, 2011; Christian, 2009).

## 6. Conclusions

The IR, implemented and managed by the Library, is a reality for most universities.

This project had some difficulties how to get started but was successful.

Yet, this project needs some measures and developments to answer to all its purposes and bring strategic advantages to its institutions.

The main strategies that the Libraries should take for this on are: establish the self-archiving and improve the metadata quality.

The self-archiving is one of the fundamental principles of the nature and concept of the institutional repositories.

The IR success depends on the adherence of the authors to populate and update the scientific contents.

The promotion, training and awareness of the self-archiving are crucial to its achievement.

The authors need some guarantees like: the support of the Library, the reliance on the metadata validation and the publisher's policies and copyright.

The context of evaluation in the academic community can be a treat and an opportunity: on one hand it takes times from the authors, on the other hand the self-archiving can facilitate the scientific outputs data for the databases.

The improvement of the quality metadata is important to the access, retrieve and dissemination of the scientific production.

All these gains can increase measurably the impact and citations received of the articles and authors can take advantage of the IR. This last can, in its turn,

provide more motivation for the self-archiving.

The main threats and weaknesses are the lack of time and human resources in the libraries and the absence of fast and immediate results and impact to the community.

Only, the relationship of collaboration and the exchange of knowledge between the librarians can increase the competences and the development of strategies to improve the metadata quality and the success of those projects.

The keyword is collaboration: together we can push up our skills and have new ideas to face all the treats and weaknesses presented. Then, we can see our strengths and enjoy the opportunities that, also, are present.

The success of the IR project means the creation of value for higher education libraries and its role in the creation and promotion of Knowledge

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