Harmonise the Open Access to Scholarly Communication

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ABSTRACT

Open access to the world's scientific and technological information is a worthy goal for the library profession. Scholarly communication occurs through journals, conferences, and articles daily. The open access movement supports students, the academic community, and citizens of industries and their professional development. Users require timely and affordable access to the information to frame their research questions, design their approaches, and verify their results. As Librarians, we must facilitate these functions. Open access is one vital approach. In the past, we had focused on elevating awareness of open access to scientific and technological information. This paper highlights a more open society through better access to information

1. Introduction

The open access movement started emerging when the serial crisis was introduced, and access changes for scholarly resources rose exponentially. The exponential rise in scholarly publications was concerning because the output produced by the universities and the research activities carried out by such institutes was funded by the government and the fact that public pays for its access. The open-access drive, thus, came forward with the

motive to provide free, digital, online access to scholarly journal articles according to free and standardised open-access policies. The role of copyright was solely to reflect and preserve the integrity and authorisation rights of the author/ creator.

2. Scholarly Communication

Scholarly communication is the exchange of scholarly data, and research output of an institute or organisation, including research papers, journal articles, reports, conference papers, theses, dissertations, teaching and learning materials, given a standard for their dissemination, encouraging sharing, collaboration, and initiatives to access and distribute the scholarly publications of the institute in a collaborative and policy restricted manner. Scholarly communication involves the institute's production, management, distribution, and access policies. Data related to institutional publications is concerned with scholarly communication. Scholarly communications include researchers, students, academicians, and all the scholarly exchanges in an institute that produces research papers, articles, journals, and other research publications. Scholarly communication encourages the use of information and knowledge possessed by the institute and its sharing among its members. It is a process driven to develop a knowledge-sharing culture and create an overall collaborative environment. Open access benefits researchers as readers by providing access to papers that their libraries do not purchase. Researchers are the direct beneficiaries of open access, as no library can subscribe to all journals– this is termed the "serials crisis". Given the above scenario, sharing research and its data will promote R&D activities worldwide.

3. Open Access to Information

Open access to information involves free and easy access to the research institute's scholarly output. Government-funded research, which is essentially for the public, must have its results and observations and be open to public access. Thus, open access involves free, digital, and online access to scholarly output for the public to read, download, distribute, and share. This type of access is termed free and open access.

4. Facets of Open Access

Information pervades our lives. Whether executing simple acts or making complex decisions, we depend on information to perform effectively. Learned societies provide equal opportunities to all citizens without any bias. In a prospective environment like this, people enthusiastically engage in learning, responsibly use resources around them and play a vital role in nation-building. The first and foremost need is to make learning resources like journals easily available. Providing open access to resources is the one-point solution to this scenario. Open Access is a boon to scholars when journal list prices have risen faster than inflation.

The goal of open access is to

• Enhance scientific knowledge by making preprint repositories, archives, and free online journals.

• Increase the interoperability between scientific disciplines

• Increase the research opportunities.

• Improve public opinion on scientific research and wider access to the scientific results.

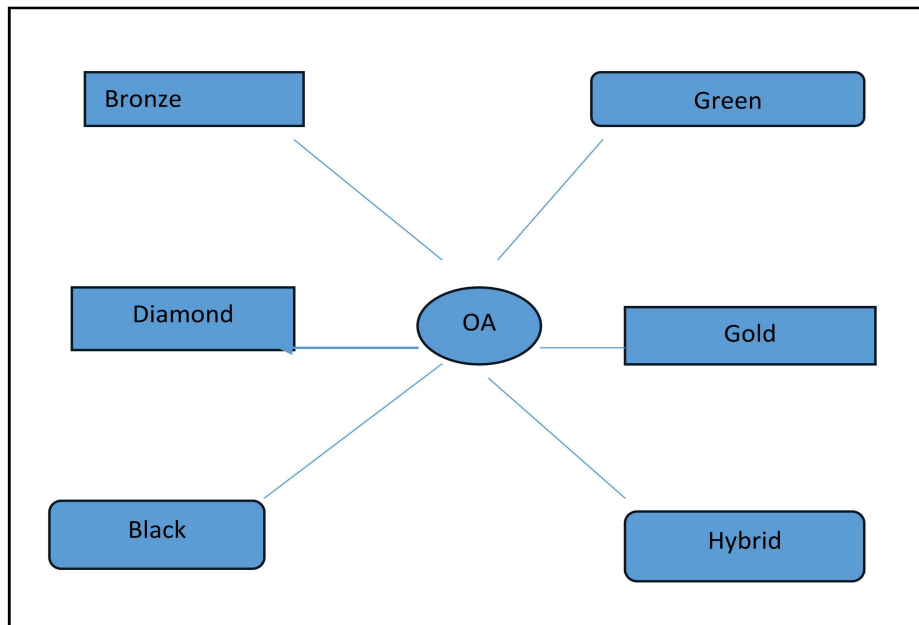• Change the whole educational chain and the learning systems.

"Open access" typically refers to unrestricted online access to scholarly research outputs, including articles, theses, scholarly monographs, and book chapters. This access is free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. Open access is often associated with making research outputs available to anyone who wants to access and use them without financial, legal, or technical barriers. The following are the important open-access models;

4.1 Green Open Access (Self-Archiving)
Authors publish their work in a traditional subscription-based journal, but they also deposit a version of their manuscript in a freely accessible repository, such as an institutional repository or a disciplinary repository. This version could be the preprint (before peer review) or post-print (after peer review).

4.2 Gold Open Access (Openly Available)
Authors publish their work in a journal that provides immediate access to all its articles upon publication. These journals often rely on alternative funding models, such as article processing charges (APCs), rather than subscription fees. The chart below also gives some sources.

5. Role of Open Access in Scholarly Communication

After studying open access and its type in detail, a clear understanding of the open access movement is built through which its role in scholarly communication can also be understood. Since the open access initiative is to promote the idea of providing access to resources free of charge, this plays out in the aspects of scholarly communication as the research output produced in immense value to the nation or even global level, and if access to such publications is not provided it can be a huge problem. Thus, the role of open access to such resources is crucial for the development of a well-informed society. If the articles/research publications do not reach the public, there is no way they can realize their full value and potential as well. Open access promotes the dissemination of knowledge and supports innovation by allowing researchers, students,

policymakers, and the public to access and build upon scholarly research without encountering paywalls or other access barriers. It's a crucial movement in the academic and research community. Therefore, open access plays a big role in scholarly communication.

6. Role of Libraries in Adopting OA

Libraries play a crucial role in several ways of advancing open access (OA) initiatives. The following services can be accessed through Open access.

6.1 Access Provision
Libraries are often at the forefront of providing access to scholarly content. In the context of OA, they curate and disseminate open-access resources, making them available to users worldwide without financial barriers. This includes hosting OA journals, databases, and repositories.

6.2 Advocacy and Education
Libraries advocate for open access principles within academic institutions and the broader scholarly community. They educate researchers, faculty, and students about the benefits of OA publishing, copyright issues, and alternative publishing models.

6.3 Support for Institutional Repositories
Many libraries manage institutional repositories where faculty, researchers, and students can deposit their scholarly works and make them accessible. Libraries provide infrastructure, support, and guidance for maintaining these repositories.

6.4 Negotiation and Licensing
 Libraries often negotiate with publishers to secure favourable terms for OA publishing, such as discounted article processing charges (APCs) or transformative agreements that transition subscription-based journals to OA models.

6.5 Metadata and Cataloguing
Libraries ensure that OA resources are discoverable through effective metadata creation and cataloguing practices. This involves indexing OA journals and repositories in library catalogues and databases to enhance their visibility and accessibility.

6.6 Preservation and Long-Term Access
Libraries are committed to preserving scholarly works for future generations. They employ digital preservation strategies to ensure the longevity of OA content, thus safeguarding the integrity of the scholarly record.

6.7 Community Building
Libraries foster collaboration and knowledge sharing within the OA community. They participate in consortia initiatives and working groups that advance OA principles and infrastructure development.

6.8 Research Support Services
Libraries offer various services to support OA publishing, including funding assistance for APCs, copyright clearance, manuscript formatting, and peer review management tools

7. Conclusion

Open access and scholarly communications go hand in hand, as just mentioned. The research output must reach the public for its good and the betterment of society. Thus, providing access to scholarly and research output reciprocates the institute to the public and expands its reach. Overall, as open access initiatives continue to evolve, they are only headed towards free access to the general public, promoting the idea of a knowledgeable society and serving society. As much as knowledge dissemination changes, the learning procedures differentiate. These systems and human activities compromise what is called Information ecosystems. Information is fundamental force of nature.

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