Analysis of Open Access Scholarly Journals in Media & Communication

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ABSTRACT

The paper gives an account of the origin and development of the Open Access Initiative and explains the concept of open access publishing. It also highlight various facets related to the open access scholarly publishing in the field of Media & Communication on the basis of data collected from the most authoritative online directory of open access journals, i.e., Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). The DOAJ covers 8492 open access journals of which 106 journals are listed under the subject heading 'Media & Communication'. Most of the open access journals in Media & Communication were started during late 1990s and are being published from 34 different countries on 6 continents in 13 different languages. More than 80 % open access journals are being published by the not-for-profit sector such as academic institutions and universities.

Keywords: Open access journals, open access initiative, directory of open access journals, DOAJ, OAI media and communication

1. INTRODUCTION

Scholarly communication is often used interchangeably with the term scholarly publishing. Scholarly communication is the process of academics, scholars and researchers sharing and publishing their research findings so that they are available to the wider academic community (such as university academics) and beyond[1]. It includes both the dissemination and access to scholarship and research in a variety of formats and states of completion, such as published books or journal articles, research results and data sets, and drafts of papers[2]. Research is basically funded by public. But a publically-funded research is not allowed for the public. They have to pay for it again. Scientists disseminate the results of their research through journals. The traditional system of publishing provides an obstacle in the dissemination of research findings due to its pricing policies. Dwindling budgets, and high cost of journals are making libraries unable to purchase a good number of journals. In the present scenario, libraries are cutting the subscription of journals. Internet has changed the traditional scholarly publishing system and a new system of scholarly discourse has emerged, i.e., open access (OA) publishing system, which promises to give extreme advantages to the researchers, educational institutions, and libraries, particularly, those which have acute shortage of resources for purchasing scholarly literature. The OA movement has gained substantial popularity in developed countries and many developing countries are also taking interest in this movement. This movement is supported by different bodies such as Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), Open Access Initiative (OAI), Open Society Institute (OSI), Public Library of Science (PLoS), etc. With the three important declarations, i.e., Budapest, Bethesda, and Berlin, this movement has gained momentum since 2003[3].

2. CONCEPT OF OPEN ACCESS

By open access, one means the free and immediate availability on the public internet of those works which scholars give to the world without expectation of payment-permitting any user to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search or link to the full-text of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software or use them for any other lawful purpose[4]. The goal of the OA movement is to make scholarly literature freely available in digital form worldwide with minimal restrictions in their use. The present study is an attempt to identify the trends of

OA publishing (particularly OA journals) in the field of media and communication. It will be helpful for media librarians as well as subject professionals to get aware of the availability of OA journals in the field of Media & Communication.

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite of several directories of OA journals on internet (e.g. Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)) and search engines for searching article from OA journals (e.g. Open J-Gate), the people are unaware of the availability of OA journals in different disciplines. Different movements are undertaken to promote the use of OA journals. There is a large and growing body of fully OA journals in the field of Media and Communication. The DOAJ listed 106 titles under the subject heading 'Media & Communication' at the time of data analysis (i.e., on 15 December 2012). Several studies were conducted in different disciplines on the availability of OA journals and their impact factor, but none of the study has been undertaken to investigate OA journals in Media & Communication. This is an area where researchers are needed to know the availability and trends of OA journals publishing. The present study is useful for the librarians as well as subject concerned professionals to understand the various facets related to OA scholarly publishing in the field of Media & Communication.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of related literature has always been essential for research. According to Ali[5], "literature review is a comprehensive survey of the works published in a field of study, or related to a particular line of research, usually in the form of a bibliographic essay or annotated list of references in which attention is drawn to the most significant works". Literature review provides the researcher with a knowledge-base and helps in identifying the gaps in the literature.

According to Prosser[6], the current model of scholarly communication failed to meet the information needs of researchers world-wide, while new technology (in particular the origin of internet) allows us to revise or reinvent scholarly communication. Anbu[7] discusses the inadequacies of existing scholarly publication model, and elaborates on the advantages of OA model with particular reference to vertical portal. Ratnakar[8] presents a brief overview of print journals, define OA movement, and explains the reason for existence in current scenario. According to him, OA movement also deals with promoting creation of institutional archives and usage of open source software and digitisation programme. He also highlighted the area of OA journals and open archives and present limitations of OAI movement.

Nazim & Maya Devi[9] highlighted the trends in OA publishing in India, as per their study, among the top 25 OA publishing countries, India ranks 5th in the list. Keisham[10] describes the concept of OA and highlights some of the OA journal initiatives in India. Arunachalam[11] explains the current status of scientific research and progress made in OA journals, OA repositories and open courseware in India. He has also highlighted that India is feudal and hierarchical; there exists a wide variation in the level engagement with science and research and there is a wide gap between talk and action. The paper concludes that Indian Institute of Science (IISc) deposits a large proportion of the papers published by its faculty and students in the past hundreds years in its e-prints archive and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is also adopting the OA policy. Anup Kumar[12] discussed how Indian OA Journals get international visibility with increased outreach through primary and secondary open access journal gateways and aggregators. This paper proposed a model of self-sustainability for OA journals as well as for OA journal publishers.

Lone, Rather & Shah[13] revealed that India is continuously contributing in OA literature as some of the premier institutions, particularly in the S&T area which are providing open access to their research publications and revealed that India is at the 7th position in the DOAJ and is sharing 10th position with Sweden and Spain in Directory of Open Access Repositories (Open DOAR) in terms of number of repositories in the world. Bhat[14] discussed about OA publishing in premier research institutes of India and found that the IISc publishes 8.26 % of its research output in OA journals, All India Institute of Medical Sciences 19.37 %, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre 4.84 %, IIT, Delhi 3.04 %, and IIT, Kharagpur 3.26 % of 17,516 research articles published in 4232 journals. Thus, medical institutions are contributing more of their publications to OA journals as compared to other institutions. Sawant[15] revealed that, 178 OA journals were peer-reviewed, indexed and abstracted in various indexing and abstracting services, listed with Open DOAR and Open J-Gate.

Choudhary & Khode[16] analysed 114 OA journals in Computer Science included in DOAJ. They concluded that 21 % of the journals are published from USA while only two journals are published from India, and English is the most popular language of the OA Journals in Computer Science. Agashe, Lihitkar & Lihitkar[17] analysed 48 Business and Management e-journals listed in the DOAJ and highlighted that USA scored 1st rank by publishing 10 e-journals followed by Brazil. English is the most common communication language used by 41 e-journals. Findings of a study conducted by Sivakumaren[18], et al., indicated that most of the OA Journals in the field of Library & Information Science (LIS)

discipline are published from USA, whereas only 5 OA journals are published from India. English was found the most popular language of communication among LIS OA journals.

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aims to identify OA journals in Media & Communication listed in the DOAJ. The specific objectives of the present study are to:

(i) Know the distribution of open access journals in Media & Communication

(ii) Identify the overall growth of OA journals

(iii) Identify the leading countries in terms of publishing number of OA journals

(iv) Know the leading publishers of OA journals

(v) Find out the language-wise distribution of OA journals

(vi) Know the frequency of OA journals

(vii) Identify publishing pattern of OA journals

(viii) Know indexing sources where OA journals are indexed

(ix) Determine the prominent subjects covered by OA journals of Media & Communication.

6. METHODOLOGY

For conducting any research, systematic planning of study is most vital upon which the whole process of research study depends. Such planning acts as a frame of the guidelines while investigating the problem. Since the study was planned to analyse the growth and present status of OA journals in Media & Communication, survey method was found suitable. To achieve objectives of the present study, data was collected from the most authoritative online directory of open access journals (DOAJ: http://www.doaj.org/). The DOAJ is designed, developed and maintained by Lund University which, as on 15th December 2012, listed 8492 open access journals of which 106 (1.24 %) journals were listed under the subject heading 'Media and Communication'. The factual data were imported from the website of the DOAJ in Microsoft Excel format for further analysis in terms of number of journals, year and country of origin, language, formats, etc.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

7.1 Year-wise Growth of OA Journals

The growth in number of OA Journals during last 30 years was analysed. The journals in Media & Communication are mostly new journals. Based on the existence date in DOAJ, there are 5 journals in 1980s, 10 in 1990s, 76 in 2000s and the remaining 15 have started in 2010s. It is to be noted that, the existence in DOAJ is not necessarily the year of

the founding of the journal, as older journals often have back issues that have not yet been digitised and placed online. Table 1 shows the year-wise growth of OA journals in Media & Communication. It may be observed from the year-wise analysis of open access journals that at the end of 1990s there were a few OA journals in Media & Communication, but this number rose to 96 at the end of 2009. The 21st century saw a proliferation of OA journals in Media & Communication.

7.2 Country-wise Distribution of OA Journals

Open access journals in Media & Communication

Table 1. Growth of OA journals

Decade	Year	Number of journals (Year-wise)	Number of journals (decade-wise) (%)
1980s	1981	2	5 (4.7 %)
	1984	1	
	1985	2	
1990s	1994	1	10 (9.5 %)
	1996	1	
	1997	2	
	1998	4	
	1999	2	
2000s	2000	5	76 (71.7 %)
	2001	6	
	2002	4	
	2003	8	
	2004	7	
	2005	11	
	2006	6	
	2007	13	
	2008	13	
	2009	3	
2010s	2010	8	15 (14.1 %)
	2011	5	
	2012	2	
Total		106	106

are published from 34 different countries from 6 continents. South America and North America are the leading continents in OA Journals publishing, while there is only 1 journal published from African continent. As shown in Table 2, highest number of OA journals are published in Brazil (19), followed by the United States (16), Spain (12), Australia and Canada (5). Data presented in the table indicate that 86 journals are published from 14 countries, while remaining 20 journals are published from 20 countries with one journal each. It is important to note that not a single open access journal in Media & Communication is published from India. However, in LIS, 5 OA journals were being published from

India as listed in the DOAJ.

7.3 Leading Publishers of OA Journals

The vast majority of the OA journals, more

Table 2. Country-wise distribution of OA journals

S. No.	Countries	Number of journals (%)
1.	Brazil	19 (17.9 %)
2.	United States	16 (15.9 %)
3.	Spain	12 (11.3 %)
4.	Australia	8 (7.4 %)
5.	Canada	5 (4.7 %)
6.	Romania	5 (4.7 %)
7.	France	4 (3.7 %)
8.	Denmark	3 (2.8 %)
9.	Portugal	3 (2.8 %)
10.	Sweden	3 (2.8 %)
11.	Chile	2 (1.8 %)
12.	Finland	2 (1.8 %)
13.	Pakistan	2 (1.8 %)
14.	Turkey	2 (1.8 %)
15.	Other countries who contributed only one journal (Argentina, Austria, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, UK, and Venezuela)	20 (18.8 %)
	Total	**106**

than 80 %, are published by the not-for-profit sector. Over two-third or 73 journals are published by academic institutions and universities; about 15 % are published by associations and societies (15 journals); and 1 by a library while 17 journals are published by independent publishers and for-profit corporations (Table 3). The 106 journals have 99 different publishers; the only seven publishers on the list with 2 journals are: Central Queensland University, Danubius University, University of Texas at Austin, Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Sammenslutningen af Medieforskere i Danmark, and INTERCOM-Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação.

Table 3. Publisher-wise distribution of OA journals

Types of publishers	Number of journals (%)
Association/societies	15 (14.2 %)
Academic institutions/universities	73 (68.8 %)
Library	1 (0.9 %)
Independent/commercial publishers	17 (16.1 %)
Total	**106**

7.4 Language-wise OA Journals

English is the most prominent language of publishing OA journals in Media and Communication (Table 4). Out of 106 OA journals, 51 are in English, followed by Portuguese (21), Spanish (16), and French (5), 13 languages are represented in publishing 106 open access journals. Language-wise analysis of OA journals shows a western-centric list of languages, with only one journal in Persian. This list reflects a greater cultural diversity, but is still lacking in non-western representation. Another important finding, as emerged from the analysis, is that out of 106 OA journals of Media & Communication, 46 are published in two or more languages. Even there is one journal namely 'CIRCULO de Linguistica Aplicada a la Comunicacion' in Spain, which is published in 8 languages (Spanish, English, French, German, Portuguese, Basque, Catalan, and Italian).

7.5 Frequency of OA Journals

An attempt was made to identify the frequency of OA Journals in the field of Media and Communication.

Table 4. Language-wise distribution of OA journals

Language	Number of journals (%)
English	51 (48.1 %)
Portuguese	21 (19.9 %)
Spanish	16 (15.1 %)
French	5 (4.7 %)
German	3 (2.8 %)
Catalan	2 (1.8 %)
Danish	2 (1.8 %)
Other languages in which only one journal is published (Turkish, Croatian, Dutch, Romanian, Lithuanian, Persian)	6 (5.8 %)
Total	**106**

It may be observed from Table 5, that the frequency of 33 journals is twice a year, frequency of 19 journals is thrice a year, frequency of 25 journals is quarterly, frequency of 7 journals is six time a year and the frequency of 11 journals is annually. The

Table 5. Frequency of OA journals

Frequency	Number of journals (%)
Two times a year	33 (31.2 %)
Four times a year	25 (23.6 %)
Once a year	11 (10.4 %)
Three times a year	19 (17.9 %)
Weekly	3 (2.8 %)
Monthly	5 (4.7 %)
Six times a year	7 (6.6 %)
Not fixed	3 (2.8 %)
Total	**106**

frequency of 3 journals is weekly, whereas issues of 5 journals appeared monthly. The frequency detail of 3 journals could not be traced, and the publication of these journals was irregular.

7.6 Publishing Pattern of OA Journals

Table 6 shows that 73 journals are being published online and they do not have their print versions, whereas 33 journals are published online as well as in printed form. When identifying the modes of delivery of the articles of OA journals, it may be observed from Table 7 that 37 journals provide articles in both HTML and PDF format for reading and downloading purposes. Eleven journals provide reading facility in only HTML format, whereas 58 journals present articles in only PDF format.

7.7 Indexing of OA Journals

One of the objectives of the present study was to investigate whether OA journals are indexed in

Table 6. Format of OA journals

Format	Number of journals (%)
Both print and online	33 (31.1 %)
Only online	73 (68.9 %)
Total	**106**

Table 7. Modes of availability of OA journals' articles

Modes	Number of journals (%)
Only HTML	11 (11.4 %)
Only PDF	58 (54.7 %)
Both PDF and HTML	37 (34.9 %)
Total	**106**

indexing and abstracting sources. Indexing and abstracting of journals help in increasing the visibility of their articles; this ultimately contributes to scholarly impact of the journals. When investigating the indexing of the articles/journals, it was observed from the analysis that nearly two-third (75 journals out of 106) journals were indexed in one or more indexing and abstracting sources. However, the detail of indexing and abstracting of 22 journals could not be traced out. It is interesting to note that some journals indexed in one indexing or abstracting source, while others indexed up to 10 indexing or abstracting sources. 84 journals of Media and Communication are indexed in 55 different indexing and abstracting sources. It may be observed from Table 8 that out of 84 journals, 75 are indexed in DOAJ, 61 journals are indexed in Ulrich's Periodicals Directory and 57 journals are indexed in EBSCO publishing (Table 8).

7.8 Subjects Covered by OA Journals

The subject coverage of the of OA journals

Table 8. Indexing of OA journals

Name of indexing/abstracting sources	No. of journal indexed
Directory of Open Access Journals	75
Ulrich's Periodicals Directory	61
EBSCO Publishing	57
Index Copernicus	36
Sociological Abstracts	34
Social Science Research Network	29
Open J Gate	27
J-Gate	24
Columbia International Affairs Online	21
Academic Journal Database	21
EBSCO database of electronic Journals	20
Scopus	17
Current Contents of Periodicals on the Middle East	17
Academic Search Premier	16
EBSCO Host	16
Global Development Network	15
Genamics JournalSeek	15
JournalSeek Genomics	15
International Consortium for the Advancement of Academic Publications	15
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences	15
New Jour Databases	14
MediaFinder®	14
ProQuest Research Library	13
Proquest	13
Scirus	12
World Cat	11
Social Services Abstracts	11
Bielefeld Academic Search Engine	9
Caboose Open Directory	8
Cabell Directory of Publishing Opportunities	8
CiteseerX	7
Central and Eastern European Online Library	7
GALE Academic OneFile	6
European Sources Online	6
EuroInternet	6
ERIC	6
Electronic Journals Library	6
Gale Expanded Academic Index	5
HW Wilson's Social Sciences Index	4
SafetyLit	3
Norwegian Social Science Data Services	3
Knowledge Base Eastern Europe	3
SwetsWise	2
Standard Periodical Directory	2
Scipio	2

Name of indexing/abstracting sources	No. of journal indexed
International Relations and Security Network	2
Social Science Citation Index	1
Socionet	1
SciELO Colombia	1
GeoDados	1
Compendex	1
Central and Eastern European Online Library	1
Cabell	1
Total	**736**

Note: Total journals exceeds from 84 (in which indexing detail was given) because some journals are indexed in more than one indexing and abstracting sources.

Table 9. Subject coverage of OA journals

Subjects	No. of journals
Communication	20
Journalism	19
Media communication	17
Theory of electronic media	16
Information and communication technologies	11
Social communication	11
Communication studies	9
Scientific communication	8
Intercultural research	7
Media studies	5
Information science	3
International communication	3
Mass media	3
Visual culture	3
Journalism theory	2
Media theory	2
Multimedia programming application	2
Press studies	2
Public relations	2
Communication methods	1
Communication research	1
Communication science	1
Communication theory	1
Communications technology	1
Global culture	1
Human science	1
Intercultural research	1
Interdisciplinary studies	1
Mass communication	1
Urban culture	1

in Media & Communication is quite interesting. Table 9 shows that OA journals of Media and Communication cover 30 subjects. 'Communication' is the most prominent subject, which is covered by 19 % OA journals, followed by Journalism (18 %), Media communication (16 %) and Theory of electronic media (15 %).

8. CONCLUSIONS

The OA journals are now clearly and broadly being recognised as essential vehicle for scholarship in the digital world. This is evident based on the continuous growth of OA journals in different disciplines around the world. The OA journals in Media and Communication were mostly new journals started during late 1990s and published in 34 different countries of 6 continents, where Brazil tops the rank, followed by USA, Spain, Australia and Canada. It is surprising to note that India's contribution towards OA journals in Media & Communication is almost nil. At present, most of the OA journals in Media & Communication are published from academic institutions particularly universities. So, it is now time for Indian universities to take initiatives in publishing OA journals. At the same time researchers, lecturers, and practitioners within institutions need to convince the value and immense potential of OA journals. The continued development of OA journals depends a great deal on our continuing to overcome cultural, legal and financial barriers to their acceptance and use. Most of the public funding research institutions in India have started providing free access to their journals over the internet. It may be expected that in the next few years we will see sustainable growth of OA Journals as some leading publishers are also taking interest in OA journals publishing.

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