The Current scenario of open access journal initiatives in India

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The overall aim of the research was to gather the data related to open access journal initiatives in India with respect to its type, funding agency/host organisation, full text availability, article charges etc.

Methodology: Various sources of information were consulted such as literature, search engines, directories etc.

Finidings: Results shows that all 178 open access journals were peer reviewed, indexed and abstracted in various indexing and abstracting services, listed with DOAR and O-Jgate.

Limitations: Open access journals which were available on Internet were included but not those which were available on Intranet.

Originality: In the earlier literature it was mentioned only about 100 to 110 open access journals as well as nothing was mentioned about author paid journals. But the present study discovered existence of 178 open access journals with 3 author paid journals

Keywords: Open access journals, Open access publishing, open access initiatives

1 OPEN ACCESS JOURNAL INITIATIVES IN INDIA

A large number of the journals published from India belong to learned societies and associations, and are published by the association or the editor themselves without the involvement of any commercial publisher. The members of these learned societies receive the print copies of the journals without paying an annual or recurring fee. For continuing their publication activities the associations depend on non-member subscriptions, which are limited in number and restricted by and large to the Indian universities and colleges, on advertisements in print editions, and on income generated from other sources such as the annual conferences of the associations. Most of the Indian journals suffer from 'low circulation - low visibility - low impact factor' syndrome. With many fewer paid regional or international subscriptions, these journals have limited visibility, restricted mainly to the members of the association. With this limited visibility, these journals are cited less frequently than their western counterparts. The low impact

factor inhibits authors from submitting their quality work to the Indian journals. Thus, it is expected that with OA, Indian journals will be able to reach to a wider audience. At the same time, loss, if any, of paid non-member subscriptions is less likely to have a major effect on the economics of these journals (Sahu & Parmar, 2006).

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The overall aim of the research was to gather the data related to open access journal initiatives in India with respect to its type, funding agency/host organisation, full text availability etc.

There were six broad objectives as follows:

➢ Open access journals and their number
➢ Subject coverage
➢ Funding agency or Host organization
➢ Indexing and abstracting
➢ Full text availability
➢ Online/Print format
➢ Article Charges

3 METHODOLOGY OF PRESENT STUDY

The data gathering was done beginning with the process of identification of Open access journals. To identify Open access journals the researcher used various sources of information as follows

1. Literature
2. Search using search engines especially Google
3. Directories of archives/repositories
4. Blogs
5. Wikipaedia
6. Portals
7. Education & Training institution websites especially Indian institutions

8. LIS Forum mails and others forums / discussion groups

After identifying the open access journals researcher visited respective web pages and gathered information which was analyzed based on certain parameters such as Type of model, Funding agency or Host organisation, fulltext availability etc are presented in Table No 1. Also researcher contacted a few journal publishers and editors for certain information which was not available from journal websites.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Number of Open access Journals

From various sources and through search it was observed that there were 178 Open Access journals available online in India. The data is presented in Table No. 1.

According to the study done by Sahu (2006) India is placed 5th in the list of Open Access (OA) journals, well ahead of countries such as the Netherlands, China, Germany, Australia, and so on, which have higher number of online journals. Among the low-income countries, India ranks second only to Brazil for the number of OA journals. Almost 50% of the online journals from India are Open access.

Table No 1: List of Open access journals

Name of Publisher/ Host Organization	No.	Full text availability	Subscription required for print format	URL
Indian Academy of Sciences	11	Varies	Yes	www.ias.ac.in/pubs/journals/
Indian Medlars center, National Informatics Centre	40	Varies	Yes	http://medind.nic.in/
Indian National Science Academy	3	2006	Yes	http://www.insa.ac.in/
Medknow Publications	73	Varies	Yes	http://www.medknow.com
Kamla-Raj Enterprises	7	Varies	Yes	http://www.krepublishers.com
Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology/ Anil Aggrawal	1	2000	No print version but for CD	http://www.geradts.com/ anil/ij/indexpapers.html
Calicut Medical Journal / CMC Alumni Association	1	2003	No print	http://www.calicutmedicaljournal.org/
Carbon -Science and Technology/ Applied Science Innovations P Ltd	1	2008	No print	http://www.applied-science-innovations.com/indexpagej.

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Conservation and Society/ Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment' (ATREE), Bangalore	1	2003	Yes	http://www.conservationand society.org/
Contemporary Issues and Ideas in Social Sciences/ Society for Research in Social Sciences	1	2005	No print	http://journal.ciiss.net/ index.php/ciiss/index
DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology/ DESIDOC	1	2008	Yes	http://publications.drdo.gov.i n/ojs/index.php/djlit/index
E-Journal of Chemistry : An International Quarterly Research Journal of Chemistry/ WWW Pub-India	1	2004	Yes	http://www.ejchem.org/index ed.asp#
ICMR BULLETIN/ Indian Council of Medical Research	1	2000	Yes	http://icmr.nic.in
Indian Folklife/ National Folklore Support Centre	1	2000	Free Print copy	http://wiki.indianfolklore. org/index.php?title=Category :Indian_Folklife
Indian Journal of Medical Informatics / Indian Association for Medical Informatics	1	2007	Yes	http://ijmi.org
Indian Journal of Neurotrauma/ Neurotrauma Society of India.	1	2004	Yes	http://www.ijntonline.com/
Indian Pacing and Electrophysiology Journal/ Indian Heart Rhythm Society	1	2002	No print	http://www.ipej.org/
International Journal of Computer Science and Applications / Technomathematics Research Foundation	1	2004	No Print	http://www.tmrfindia.org/ijcs a/aim.html
International Journal of Cyber Criminology / K. Jaishankar	1	2007	No Print	http://www.cybercrimejourna l.co.nr/
International Journal of Integrative Biology/Omics Group	1	2007	No print	http://www.classicrus.com/IJ IB/
Internet Health/VirtualMed	1	2003	No print	http://www.internet-health.org/
Journal of Association of Physicians of India /Association of Physicians of India	1	2000	Print and CD	http://www.japi.org/index.ht ml
Jkscience: Journal of Medical education and research/ Dr. Annil Mahaja	1	2004	Yes	http://www.jkscience.org/
Journal of Neonatology/ The National Neonatology Forum (NNF)	1	2003	Yes	http://www.jnnfi.org/
Journal of Orthopaedics/ Calicut Medical College	1	2004	No print	http://www.jortho.org/
Journal of Semi-Arid Tropical Agricultural Research /ICRISAT	1	2005	No Print	http://ejournal.icrisat.org/ archives.htm
Journal of the Indian Academy of Geriatrics /Indian Academy of Geriatrics	1	2005	Yes	http://www.jiag.org/index.ht ml
Journal of Tropical Agriculture/Kerala Agricultural university	1	2001	Yes	http://www.jtropag.in/index.p hp/ojs/about
KnowGenesis : International Journal for Technical Communication /KnowGenesis	1	2006	Yes	http://www.knowgenesis.com /journal/index.php?journal=IJ TC
Law, Environment and Development Journal (LEAD Journal)/ SOAS, IELRC	1	2005	No print	http://www.lead-journal.org/index.php

Online Journal of Health & Allied Sciences/ B. S. Kakkilaya	1	2002	No Print	http://www.ojhas.org/index.htm
Pharmacognosy Magazine / Phcog.Net, Al-Ameen College of Pharmacy, Bangalore	1	2005	Yes	http://www.phcog.net/phcogmag/about.htm
Pharmacognosy Reviews /Pharmacognosy Network Worldwide	1	2007	Yes	http://www.phcogrev.com/contact.htm
PULMON-The Journal of Respiratory Sciences/ Academy of Pulmonary and critical care medicine	1	1999	Yes	http://www.pulmononline.org/
Sankhya: The Indian Journal of Statistics/Indian Statistical Institute	1	2003	Yes	http://sankhya.isical.ac.in/index.html
Solapur Medical Journal/Dr. V. M. Govt. Medical College	1	2004	Yes	http://vaishampayan.org/smj/
The International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences (IJCJS) / K. Jaishankar	1	2006	No Print	http://www.ijcjs.co.nr/
Bombay Hospital Journal/ Bombay Hospital Institute of Medical Sciences	1	1996	Yes	http://www.bhj.org/index.htm
Journal of the Indian Medical Association/ Indian Medical Association,	1	2007	Yes	http://www.jimaonline.org.in/jimastart.html
Indian Heart Journal/ Cardiological Society of India	1	2001	Yes	http://indianheartjournal.com/index.htm
VetScan/Society For Advancement of Veterinary Education	1	2006	No Print	http://www.vetscan.co.in/
Money & Finance/ Icra Limited	1	1997	Yes	http://www.icraratings.com/
Medico-Legal Update/ Dr. R.K. Sharma	1	2004	Yes	http://www.medicolegalupdate.org/
Indian Journal of Forensic Medicine & Toxicoloy/ Dr. R.K. Sharma	1	2007	Yes	http://www.ijfmt.com/
Indian Journal of Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy/ Dr. Archna Sharma	1	2007	Yes	http://www.ijpot.com/htmlpages/
Journal of the Indian Institute of Science/ Indian Institute of Science	1	2001	Yes	http://journal.library.iisc.ernet.in/index.html
Journal of Anatomical Society of India/ Govt. Medical College, Patiala	1	-	Yes	http://jasi.net
Bioinformation/ Biomedical Informatics Publishing Group	1	2005	Yes	http://www.bioinformation.net/journal/about.htm
Siddha Papers/ Bethesda CAM Research Center	1	2007	No print	http://www.siddhapapers.org/Index.html
Total	178			

4.2 Subject Coverage

Looking at the subjects covered by all 178 journals, they were broadly classified into two subjects i.e. Social Sciences and Science & Technology. There were 17 journals deal with Social Sciences, which includes economics, law, Library and Information Science etc. Rest of the 161 journals were dominated by Science and Technology related subjects including Biomedical Sciences, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Ayurveda etc.

4.3 Open access Journal Publisher / Host Organization

It was observed that most of the journals are published or funded by government agencies such as ICAR, ICMR; academies such as IASc, INSA; learned societies; associations, commercial publishers and even editors. About 113 journals are published or hosted on behalf of journal such as Medknow and Indian Medlars Center, 24 journals are published by government agencies and academies, 5 journals from Learned societies, 4 journals by Associations, 10 journals by commercial publishers, 1 journal by hospitals, 8 journals by editors and rest i.e. 13 are published by research organizations, forums, Public Limited Company, Non profit organisations etc. The data is presented in Table No. 2.

Table No. 2: Open Access Journal Publisher / Host Organization

Type	Number
Hosted on behalf of journal	113
Government agencies and academies	24
Research organizations, forums, Public Limited Company, Non profit organisations etc.	13
Commercial publishers	10
Editors	8
Learned societies	5
Associations	4
Hospitals	1
Total	178

4.4 Indexing and Abstracting

All journals were peer reviewed, indexed and abstracted in premier indexing and abstracting services such as Index Medicus, Chemical Abstracts Service, SCIRUS, SCOPUS, EMBASE etc. most of them are also linked from DOAJ, PubMed and OJ Gate.

But the concept of Metadata harvesting and journal indexing services is still not familiar to the Open access journal publishers. Most of the Publishers simply upload the new issues of journals in their respective websites. This creates another major problem for the metadata harvesters and search engines. National Centre for Science Information (NCSI) at IISc, Bangalore has initiated a project called "Scientific Journal Publishing in India", sponsored by Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, Singapore (a division of IDRC, Canada). Through this project, NCSI campaigns to the open access journal publishers of India for early adaptation OAI-compliant architecture using Open Journal System (OJS) or similar software. (Ghosh, and Das, 2006)

4.5 Full text availability

Online full text availability of all 178 journals varies which has been presented in Table No. 1. In general their archives were mostly available from 1998 onwards. One of the oldest archive available online was the Journal of genetics published by Indian Academy of Sciences that dates back to 1910. Another journal, Journal of Pharmacology hosted by MedKnow Publication provides archive from 1969 onwards.

4.6 Online/Print format

Out of 178 Open access journals 15 journals were exclusively available only in online format i.e. they were not produced in print format or any other format. Rest 163 journals were available in print as well as online format. They are called Duel mode journal/Hybrid journals - print plus electronic, with the print version sold against a subscription. The open access journals are free to access but not free to produce. OA publishers need money to cover the cost of publishing. According to Sahu (2006) the cost for publishing is shared by subscriptions to the print journals, advertisements in print and online media, association membership fee, author reprints and grants from the government.

The journal titled 'Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology' was available online and CD format. Another journal named 'Journal of

Association of Physicians of India' was available in print, CD and online format. All 151 Open access journals were freely accessible online but print and CD were distributed on subscription by the publishers except one journal titled 'Indian Folklife' published by National Folklore Support Centre distributes free print copies.

4.7 Article Charges

Even though all 178 journals provides open access or free access to reader but there were three journals where submission of articles to the journal was not free. They were author payable journals: Carbon – Science and Technology, International Journal of Human Genetics and Bioinformation

Carbon – Science and Technology published by Applied Science Innovations P Ltd asks authors nominal Obligatory Article Charge of Indian Rupees 9000 only (Approximately US $ 250), towards partial support of the publication of the article and production and maintenance of the database, which the authors must pay. Also supplementary Information can be published online and has a deposit fee of Indian Rupees 1500 only (for up to 10 MB of disc space). Supplementary Information can contain multimedia files, pdf files, word files etc. Authors from under-developed and developing countries can make a formal request for Article Charge Wavier. In such cases, quality of the articles is the sole criteria for such decisions.

International Journal of Human Genetics published by Kamla-Raj Enterprises, asks authors to pay for processing fee of the paper and photograph (if any in the paper) because the journal is available in print format as well. The corresponding author or first author gets a free print copy, but the other contributor/s need to buy a print copy. It is interesting to note that six other journals are published by Kamla-Raj Enterprises but do not ask authors to pay for article submission.

Bioinformation published by Biomedical Informatics Publishing Group ask authors processing fees under various categories mentioned in Table No. 2. General category is

compulsory for all authors but it can be waived for needy authors after receiving acceptable justification. Other categories are optional. The data is presented in Table No. 3.

Table No 3: Categories of Fees

Category	Charge	Description
General category	processing charge of US$100	Maintain a fast review process of 3-4 weeks and the article
Express category	additional processing charge of US$ 100	Editorial and peer review will be completed and a decision made within 1 week
Formatting service	additional charge of US$ 100	Formatting done as per the guidelines set by BIOINFORMATION
Production of high resolution illustrations	additional charge of US$ 100	Production of a high resolution illustration per manuscript

5 CONCLUSION

With the number 178 (almost 21% of DOAJ journals) it can be said that India has made important contributions towards the growth of Open access publishing. Not only governmental funding agencies but also learned societies, associations and publishers have taken a step towards Open Access Movement in a right direction.

Also there are efforts been done through Open Access advocacy programmes conducted by NCSI, IISc, Indian Medlars, MedKnow etc. to create awareness among the scholarly community. This is making many Indian journals to become OA journals causing maximum access, visibility and impact to the research done in India. This is again evident from study done by Sahu (2006) that nine journals which are providing free access for last 3 years have reported no loss of subscriptions to the print version and in fact, have gained from the increasing subscriptions. Many journals which were running into losses

are now self-sufficient to run the shown. It could be concluded that open access helps to improve the accessibility of the journals.

Even though overall picture of open access publishing in India looks promising, it makes unhappy situation from journal as well as publishing front. Minj, Singhal,& Abraham (n.d.) found that most of these online Indian open access journals do not comply with indexing standards of OA, i.e. the OAI-PMH (Open Access Initiative – Protocol for Metadata Harvesting) protocol and thus lie outside the OAI interoperability framework. The search and display interface of these journals revealed lack of support for field-based metadata search and display. A consequence of this is that in spite of their online presence, the articles in these journals tend to be less used, as they are not easily 'discoverable' due to poor metadata and poor indexing.

In India, there are more than 300 universities and institutions of higher learning and hundreds of research laboratories, both in the government sector and in the private sector, but there are only 178 open access journals and 33 registered archives. The situation can turn dramatically, if national donor agencies such as the Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Biotechnology, and heads of major research councils such as the CSIR, UGC decide that the results of all publicly funded research should be made available through self archiving and encourage open access journal publishing initiatives.

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