The importance of Open Access research publishing in developing countries

Eve Gray
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Open Access Seminar 2011
A publisher’s perspective
publishing = strategy
at a digital crossroads...offering new opportunities for easy, fast, global knowledge distribution
in an African context in which conventional scholarly publishing is of marginal viability
How can we leverage digital potential and OA to deliver the wider opportunities we seek?
‘How could the application of knowledge end poverty and hunger in Africa? How could higher education empower women and promote gender equity? How can knowledge be considered in the African context to address child mortality and improve maternal health?’

Nahas Angula, Namibian Prime Minister, UNESCO 29th Conference on Higher Education, 2009
Our universities, in particular, should be directing their research focus to address the development and social needs of our communities. The impact of their research should be measured by how much difference it makes to the needs of our communities, rather than by just how many international citations researchers receive in their publications.

Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education and Training, South Africa, at the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in 2010
Open access has the potential to open up research publication for wider development impact.
and yet this does not seem to be delivering the impact the policymakers seek
We live on a huge continent
but have a tiny share of scientific output
but what do we mean by ‘output’?
The dual mission of African universities

What the university wants is profile in the ISI and other indexes in the interests of enhancing its reputation and prestige. But the university must be relevant to its context in Botswana and in the region. It therefore needs a double pronged approach - enhancing local relevance and at the same time seeking to increase the quality of the journals and other outputs.
one kind of ‘output’ dominates research publishing policy ...
and one dominant metric
THOMSON REUTERS (ISI) WEB OF KNOWLEDGE

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PRODUCTS IN THIS SUITE

Arts Humanities Citation Index
Provides quick, powerful access to bibliographic and citation information you need to find research data, and analyze trends, journals, and researchers.

Biosis Citation Index
Get a comprehensive view of life sciences research, including the most important publications, and track the impact of your research.
en by the search for advanced prestige and competitiveness.
‘green route’ repositories make published articles accessible
but the quest for local relevance remains at the periphery
and ‘the article’ becomes equated with ‘scholarly publication’
The result of this policy focus is tunnel vision...
...which pays attention to only a small segment of the publishing ecosystem..
the tip of the iceberg
- formal publishing
international journal
companies dominate
Figure 1. Since 1998, the scholarly publishing industry has greatly consolidated. Its major players are now multi-billion-dollar companies. Those that are publicly-held are legally obligated to turn profits and maximize their shareholders' value.
but mainstream publishers are using OA material and social media to transform their offerings
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A note from the Editor-in-Chief

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university presses constrained by a lingering (but erroneous) belief that university presses can be profitable businesses
CITY OF EXTREMES

City of Extremes is a powerful critique of urban development in greater Johannesburg since the end of apartheid in 1994. Martin J. Murray describes how a loose alliance of city-builders — including real estate developers, large-scale property owners, municipal officials, and security specialists — has sought to remake Johannesburg in the upbeat image of a “world-class” city. By creating new sites of sequestered luxury catering to the comfort, safety, and security of affluent urban reside ...

More about: City of Extremes
but...
O A journals are growing and becoming mainstream
The exchange of scientific and medical information can play an important role in international development.

BioMed Central provides free, immediate and permanent online access to the full articles published within its portfolio of over 200 peer-reviewed journals, ensures that scientific authors in developing countries do not face financial barriers to publishing in open access journals, and provides a way for researchers from low-income countries to participate more fully in the international research community, and so BioMed Central created a set of initiatives designed to increase the visibility and output of research from these countries.
more sympathetic to developing country issues
In South Africa, government-supported journal OA
...raising quality through national initiatives...

SciELO South Africa

The Scientific Electronic Library Online - SciELO South Africa is an electronic library covering a selected collection of South African scientific journals.

The library is an integral part of a project being developed by FAPESP - Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo - in partnership with BIREME - the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information. Since 2002, the Project has received support from CNPq - Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico.

The Project envisages the development of a common methodology for the preparation, storage, dissemination and evaluation of South African scientific literature in electronic format.

As the project develops, new journal titles are being added in the library collection.
OA scholarly presses
- the HSRC Press
Academy of Science programme for scholarly books (open access) supported by DoHET
Could open access online scholarly book publishing revive the publication of serious long-form scholarship?
public funding would be needed
Below the waterline
informal, development-focused policy papers, research reports and publications have been OA for decades
Research Reports

Status report on land and agricultural policy in South Africa, 2010 - Research Report 40 (RR40)
Author(s): Stephen Greenberg
Year: 2010
Read More...

Mainstreaming of HIV and Aids into South African Fisheries Policy - Research Report 39 (RR39)
Author(s): Moenieba Isaacs, Mafaniso Hara
Year: 2008
Read More...

Land Reform in South Africa: A status report 2008 - Research Report 38 (RR38)
Author(s): Edward Lahiff
Year: 2008
Read More...
Title: The Policies for Reducing Income Inequality and Poverty in South Africa

Author: Murray Leibbrandt, Eva Wegner, Arden Finn

Date of Publication: September 2011

Abstract

Trends in inequality, poverty, and redistribution in post-apartheid South Africa have received intense attention especially in terms of measuring inequality and poverty levels and the proximate causes of these levels. We review this literature and find a set of established trends. Inequality levels have increased but the face of inequality has changed with present-day inequality displaying lessened racial make-up than under apartheid. In contrast, poverty has decreased but is still bears the strong racial makers of apartheid. The labour market continues to drive inequality. A related literature has concentrated on fiscal redistribution in South Africa.
open data links to national programmes
Welcome to DataFirst

DataFirst is a unit at the University of Cape Town, South Africa devoted to survey research in Africa. The unit operates a Research Data Centre and provides basic and advanced training in microdata analysis. DataFirst is also an international web portal for South African census and survey data, as well as survey metadata and all research output based on this data. The unit aims to facilitate the collection, exchange and use of census and survey microdata on a collaborative basis in the African region, and build regional expertise in quantitative survey methodology and analysis.

Our Survey Data and Metadata Portal

The DataFirst Survey Data Catalogue enables online keyword searches of the survey data available from DataFirst. It also provides information to assist users of the data files (Metadata). Survey microdata and metadata files from public access datasets can be downloaded from this portal.

The list of survey datasets allows an overview of the data holdings of DataFirst and provides links to supporting documentation in the form of questionnaires, metadata files and survey reports, which can be downloaded from this site. Links to publications based on the data are also available here. This list will eventually be incorporated into the DataFirst Survey Data Catalogue.

DataFirst/SALDRU Data Quality Project

The Data Quality Project (DQP), funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has been running since 2006. The aim of the Project is to deepen the capacity of South African researchers to conduct top-quality research using survey data that is placed in the public domain by the government statistics agency, Statistics South Africa. This is accomplished through an intensive examination of the comparability and usability of these datasets, and liaison with the national data producer and data users to ensure appropriate analysis of this data. This website provides access to Data Quality Project Output.

This includes research notes on anomalies in data
‘translations’ of research for community and national development
The information contained on this website is a compilation of in-depth qualitative studies of various forms of civic engagement between UCT staff and students and other communities. These studies are conducted and published as "portraits of practice" in annual reports, with a view to offering perspectives that cannot be accommodated in the format of a database.

Consequently, the website does not contain exhaustive information on all the many and varied forms of social responsiveness manifested at UCT, and, while we are now posting summaries as well as qualitative reports, this website should be viewed as work in progress.

Finally, activities have been posted under various categories, but the inter-disciplinary nature of the work means that they may not be found where expected. Users are therefore encouraged to browse.
Does ‘grey literature’ need to be redefined in a digital world?
Where this all comes together...
radical new journal models emerge
Mapping Change in Large Networks

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Abstract

Change is a fundamental ingredient of interaction patterns in biology, technology, the economy, and science itself: Interactions within and between organisms change; transportation patterns by air, land, and sea all change; the global financial flow changes; and the frontiers of scientific research change. Networks and clustering methods have become important tools to comprehend instances of these large-scale
Journals are a giant sorting mechanism.
the journal article is becoming part of the research continuum
a ‘hub’ rather than a final stand-alone outcome
and finally, new measures are being developed to evaluate a wider range of scholarship
do we need to get on board the ‘altmetrics’ bandwagon?
altmetrics: a manifesto

We rely on filters to make sense of the scholarly literature, but traditional filters are being swamped. However, the online scholarly tools allow us to make new filters: these tools reflect the broad, rapid impact of scholarship in this burgeoning field, call for more tools and research based on altmetrics.

As academic literature explodes, scholars need to select relevant and significant sources from the rest. Unfortunately, three main filters for importance are failing:

- MEDLINE-indexed articles published per year

workshop
altmetrics11: Tracking scholarly impact on the social Web
An ACM Web Science Conference 2011 Workshop

about
what’s altmetrics?

resources
- altmetrics on Mendeley
- altmetrics on FriendFeed
- altmetrics on LinkedIn

impact
usage
downloads
total views

peer-review
citations

expert opinion

storage
links
books

conversion
Would it be in our interest to leapfrog to the cutting edge of the 21st century?
REFERENCES


Mark Patterson, Re-engineering the functions of journals. CERN OAI17 Conference, Geneva 22-24 June 2011.