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Research in Africa

South Africa is responsible for
• 79% of the publications
• 0.55% of the world’s literature
• India produces 2.94% of the world’s literature
Africa
• Is least able to pay for access to information
• Will benefit greatly from Open Access
Worldmap according to poverty

http://www.worldmapper.org/display.php?selected=179
Worldmap according to Science research

http://www.worldmapper.org/display.php?selected=205
Internet has changed our lives...

- Internet has brought about phenomenal changes
  - Communication
  - Management of tasks such as reservation of flights, movies, banking
  - Information at your fingertips...or not?
Paying for online access...

E35/$49/R378

E13/$19/R149 - one day

Buy Online Access to this Article

Oxford Journals Subscribers and Registrants Sign In

Purchase Short-Term Access
The costs of the “Big deal”/online access

- Big Deal is an online aggregation of journals that publishers offer as a one-price, one size fits all package (Frazier 2001)
- Libraries gain electronic access from large publishers in the form of bundled journals & licenses
- Problem?
  - Contracts are inflexible and vary
  - Libraries are struggling with price increases
  - Libraries are paying different prices for same subscriptions
- Result: libraries are considering cancelling contracts
British research Libraries say No!

22 July 2011: Unless Elsevier & Wiley agree to reductions, Research Libraries UK will not sign the Big Deal

The demise of the Big Deal

Reasons:
- Global financial crisis
- Rise of the Open Access movement

http://poynder.blogspot.com/2011/03/demise-of-big-deal.html
The cost of knowledge

6795 Researchers Taking a Stand. See the list

Academics have protested against Elsevier’s business practices for years with little effect. These are some of their objections:

1. They charge exorbitantly high prices for subscriptions to individual journals.

2. In the light of these high prices, the only realistic option for many libraries is to agree to buy very large “bundles”, which will include many journals that those libraries do not actually want. Elsevier thus makes huge profits by exploiting the fact that some of their journals are essential.

3. They support measures such as SOPA, PIPA and the Research Works Act, that aim to restrict the free exchange of information.

The key to all these issues is the right of authors to achieve easily-accessible distribution of their work. If you would like to declare publicly that you will not support any Elsevier journal unless they radically change how they operate, then you can do so by filling in your details on this page.

More information:

http://thecostofknowledge.com/#list
So, what is Open Access?

The opinion of an expert:

- Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. What makes it possible is the internet and the consent of the author or copyright-holder.
- It is compatible with peer-review
- Open Access literature is not free to produce and the business models for paying the bills depend on how OA is delivered

Peter Suber [http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/brief.htm](http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/brief.htm)
What is the Open Access movement?

- The Open Access movement is
  - A global movement in academia
  - Dedicated to sharing information for the common good
  - Of importance to researchers, academics, librarians, funding agencies, government officials, publishers

- Open Access is provided by:
  - Open Access archives or repositories (green route)
  - Open Access journals (gold route)
Open Access map

http://www.openaccessmap.org/
Open Access archives/repositories (green route)

- **Archives/repositories**
  - Belong to an institution (universities, disciplines such as Physics, Economics)
  - Supplement publishing, it is not a substitution
  - Do not perform peer review
  - Internet users can easily find content, if repositories comply with the metadata harvesting protocol of the Open Archives Initiative
  - Make scholarly content globally available

- A repository is a “critically important tool for managing a university’s image and impact on a global scale” (Alma Swan 2011)
Content of Open Access repositories

- Journal articles
  - Preprints
  - Postprints
  - Final publisher’s version
- Scanned versions of formerly print only journals, such as HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies
- Theses and dissertations
- Other material – grey material
- Datasets for the future
ROAR: Registry of Open Access Repositories

Lists a total of 300 open access mandate policies!

http://roar.eprints.org/
Benefits of an Open Access repository

Alma Swan (Swan 2011) identified the following benefits:

- It opens up the institution’s output for the whole world
- Maximizes the visibility and impact of these outputs
- Showcases the output to prospective staff, students, funders and other stakeholders
- Collects, curates and preserves intellectual output
- Manages and measures research & teaching activities
- Provides a workspace for work-in-progress
- Supports students endeavors (etds)

Benefits researchers, institutions, nations & society
Prof. Ray Frost (chemistry) began uploading the accepted manuscript versions of his published articles to **QUT ePrints** in 2004.

These copies have been downloaded a total of 202,754 times.

His annual citation rate (as measured by Scopus) increased from 265 citations in 2004 to **1760** citations in 2008 (publication rate remained stable).
Author concerns

- Ignorance & resistance
  - “I don't really understand what kind of preprints or prints you need. Not being the first author of the below listed papers, I do not have any preprints. Both papers are anyway available through the library from the relevant journals. I also doubt whether this request and the display of the preprints is legal!
  - “I was going to get all hot under the collar about yet another "mandatory" decision taken”

- Copyright restrictions
  - “The journal this article was submitted to now owns the copy-right and I am not allowed to give you their documents for open-access!”

- Not all journals allow self-archiving of the post-print
- Not many authors are satisfied in submitting these versions

- Time, time, time…
  - “We have very limited time and there are several websites to keep updated lately”
Open Access Journals (gold route)

- Research articles are peer reviewed and contents are made freely available

- Business model
  - Some journals receive subsidy from hosting university/professional society
  - Some require processing fees from authors

- Major Open Access publishers
  - BioMed Central
  - Hindawi
  - AOSIS
DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals

http://www.doaj.org/
Are Open Access journals accredited?

http://www.library.up.ac.za/aoajsa.htm
What can we do to promote Open Access?

- **Researchers**
  - Submit articles to Open Access journals OR the post-prints to repositories
  - If he/she is an editor – convert the journal to Open Access
  - Support Open Access – professional societies, colleagues, journals

- **Librarians**
  - Launch an Open Access repository & assist researchers to submit
  - Undertake Open Access projects (digitization, preservation)

- **Universities & Administrators**
  - Encourage researchers to maintain copyright
  - Encourage publication in Open Access journals/provide financial support
South Africa’s database which provides wider impact, visibility & access to quality journals

http://www.scielo.org.za/
UNESCO started programme mid-2010 & pays attention to Africa and developing countries by presenting regional African workshops.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/open-access-to-scientific-information/
National & International collaboration – EFL

EIFL is an international non-profit organization enabling access to knowledge in developing countries by awareness-raising events & workshops.

http://www.eifl.net/
African Journal Archive – retrospective OA project of full-text to African journals

http://www.sabinet.co.za/?page=african-journal-archive
Conclusion

- Readership of African research is reduced due to excessively expensive online subscriptions
- Open Access provides a solution to make research articles freely accessible online
- BUT, we need the buy-in of everybody on the continent to change the face of African research
“The evolution of scientific communication will go on, without any doubt, and although that may not mean the total demise of the traditional models, these models will necessarily change. After all, some dinosaur lineages survived as well. We call them birds. And there are some very attractive ones. They are smaller than the dinosaurs they evolved from, though. Much smaller.” – Jan Velterop (Currently CEO of Academic Concept Knowledge Limited (AQnowledge), previously from Elsevier, Academic Press, Springer, Nature and BioMed Central)

http://poynder.blogspot.com/2012/02/open-access-interviews-jan-velterop.html
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Thank you!

Questions?

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