

The Role of Open Access in Fostering Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration: A case study

» Getaneh Agegn Alemu, Tallinn University

Researchers often invest a lot of time, energy, money and intellectual effort in producing knowledge in the form of scholarly articles. They forecast trends, create efficient and better working models, design systems and help to improve work and processes. To publish their intellectual works on peer-reviewed journals, they transfer their copyright to the publisher (Swan, 2006a). The goal of the authors focuses on creating a meaningful impact with their research work and in return expecting intangible gains such as peer recognition, academic rewards and promotion.

In the current reader-pays publishing model it is ironic that the knowledge creator i.e. the author, "rarely benefits as the subscription fee usually remains the revenue of the publisher" (Glover, Webb & Gleghorn, 2006:197) and "academic authors are interested primarily in wide dissemination of their publications and seek no direct financial reward" (Park and Qun, 2007:57).

While the digital divide continues to widen, the disparity in access to scientific publications between the scholars from developed and developing countries also continues to expand. Open access is claimed to be one of the solutions to bring scientists on a relatively equal footing in terms of access to knowledge hence researchers in developing countries can disseminate and access scholarly knowledge. Nonetheless, the question which open access models work better for these countries and how open access can be harnessed to improve research uptake needs to be explored.

There exists no research on open access in Ethiopia. The main impetus for this research came from an observation that Ethiopian scholars in universities have lagged behind in terms of publishing their research works. This research was initiated to answer those questions by collecting evidence in Ethiopia mainly from researchers and librarians in Ethiopia.

The study looks at how open access fosters knowledge sharing and collaboration among scientists in Ethiopian universities. Articles and book chapters, news and blogs, Web sites and online directories are reviewed and analyzed to discuss and present the current status of the open access movement and contextualization will be made to the situation in Ethiopia. This is an ongoing master thesis that is expected to be completed in the course of April 2009.

A study of Major Institutional Repositories in India

» Shalini Lihitkar, R.T.M. Nagpur University, Nagpur, India

» Ramdas Lihitkar, Institute of Science, India

Institutional repositories (IR) are digital collections that capture, collect, manage, disseminate, and preserve scholarly work created by the constituent members in individual institutions. The establishment of IR in the developing countries ensures that their national research becomes mainstream and contributes to an equal footing to the global knowledge pool

The paper presents the Indian scenario in developing the Institutional Repositories. The authors depict the main bottlenecks for setting up of IRs in various Indian institutions and come up with appropriate suggestions.

Total number 33 Institutional Repositories in India have been analyzed based on selected study criteria like software used for repositories, size of the items, contents included, languages, description and Country.

BREAKOUT SESSION 3C

OPEN ACCESS: CONTINENTAL STYLE

» Moderator: John Hagen, Manager, Institutional Repository Programs, West Virginia University Libraries

» Friday, June 12 11:15 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

ETD and Open Access Developments in South Africa and the SADC region

» Felix Ubogu, Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

» Daisy Selematsela, Knowledge Management and Evaluation Division, National Research Foundation

After ten years of uncoordinated and varied approaches to electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) projects, a national framework, managed by the National Research Foundation, has now been established in South Africa for institutional repositories that will provide electronic access to full-text ETDs for the research community in South Africa and beyond.

There is now general acceptance by most of the higher education institutions that there should be open access to ETDs, which will make them visible and easily accessible to potential users in and outside Africa. This will enhance access and sharing of these vital research resources on the continent and contribute to the socio-economic development of Africa.

The same does not, however, hold for other forms of scholarly communication such as peer-reviewed journal articles and grey literature such as research reports, seminar and conference papers.

The paper will review ETD and open access developments to date in South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. A literature search and examination of the Web sites of selected higher education institutions in South Africa and the SADC region will establish the extent of ETD and open access activities in the higher education institutions.

This will also establish the existence or otherwise of legislative frameworks for open access in the countries of the region. The paper will conclude with recommendations on ways to foster regional collaboration in the development of institutional repositories to enable open access to research work carried out in the region.

Open Access: Latin-American Caribbean Style

» Swarna Bandara, Head, Medical Library

Latin–America and the Caribbean include 27 countries, and have a history of over 35 years in bibliographic networking. Agricultural Information Network (AGRINTER) and Health Science Information Network (LILACS) are good examples of such networks.

The primary objective of these networking initiatives was to contribute to the information needs of the region by creating regional bibliographic databases on specific disciplines. As Information Technologies became available, these databases were lifted to a new paradigm making Open Access (OA) possible to address emerging research communication issues in the region.

BIREME, a branch of the Pan-American Health Organization is the Coordinating Center for LILACS. BIREME proposed the Virtual Health Library (VHL) concept in 1998 to the LILACS membership to create an OA platform to all research papers

published in the region using modern information technologies. Since then, BIREME developed tools to facilitate a number of aspects of the research communication process. Among these, SciELO provided the “Gold Road” for journals within the membership countries.

SciELO is a platform for electronic publication of scientific journals that provides statistical indicators of usage and impact factor, archival and preservation. SciELO selects the journals it publishes on the basis of international, scientific journals evaluation criteria.

This ensures quality. SciELO’s second module facilitates visibility and access to these journals via thematic and national Web portals. The third module is to collaborate with all players in the international scientific communication process. SciELO now publishes 611 Journals with 200,000 articles that produced over 3.8 million citations and numbers continue to grow. SciELO is also used in a number of Spanish speaking European countries and is a representative element of the VHL on OA.

VHL concept has been accepted as Global Health Library by the World Health Organization for global use. The concept is replicable in any discipline.

Cyberthesis style page application for producing digital theses in two Peruvian universities

» Libio Huaroto, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos

» Liliana Elespuru, Peru

Objective: This paper describes activities that were carried out in order to implement the Cyberthesis style page for the producing of undergraduate and graduate digital theses by students from Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC) and Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM). Methodologies developed in both institutions vary according to their respective regulations. UPC is a private university, UNMSM is a public one.

Methodology: In UPC it is mandatory for students to follow the Cyberthesis style page; workshops were implemented there at all academic levels. In UNMSM, pilot workshops were conducted with researchers, faculty and senior undergraduate students, in order to considerate the utilization of this style page.

Results: In both cases results are considered a success. In UPC the style page is now a tool used for producing digital theses and its use is considered as a requirement by the Regulations for obtaining degrees and titles. In UNMSM, pilot workshops have given their organizers the opportunity to show the need for implementing a style page, so now there exists a formal proposal presented in order to make this application a mandatory step when producing digital theses at all academic levels.