



ENHANCING RESEARCH VISIBILITY THROUGH OPEN ACCESS: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND GLOBAL IMPACT

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Abstract

Open Access (OA) has transformed scholarly communication by eliminating economic, legal, and technological barriers to knowledge, addressing systemic inequities perpetuated by traditional subscription-based models. While OA promotes global equity by empowering researchers in developing regions, challenges such as unsustainable article processing charges (APCs), predatory publishing, and institutional resistance persist. The analysis shows that overcoming these barriers through diversified funding models, robust quality control, and policy alignment is critical to maximizing OA's potential as a catalyst for interdisciplinary innovation and societal progress.

Keywords: Open Access, Visibility, Academic, Institution, Researchers, Research Visibility.

Introduction

Open access is the process of making research and the publications that go along with it freely accessible online so that anybody can use, distribute, and access them, often with few limitations. It is a process that removes obstacles to academic knowledge availability, usually through liberal license terms and digital publishing. According to Gurav and Nagarkar (2023) open access makes peer-reviewed scholarly research and literature freely available online to anyone interested in reading it. Eller (2025) states that open access (OA) is a set of principles and practices through which research outputs like journal articles are distributed online, free of cost or other access barriers. Research dissemination is not merely an administrative exercise among academic leaders but rather fundamentally an accelerator of development, creativity, and social change. Scholarly communication had long been characterised by the established publishing models revolving around expensive subscription fees and restricting paywalls. These restrictions created an uneven playing field whereby

research from highly funded research centres and universities can support extensive dissemination of recent research, hence creating global knowledge accessibility and academic contribution imbalances (Suber, 2012). Such an environment necessitated re-evaluation of the way research is consumed and disseminated, and created the environment, opening the way to the emergence of open access (OA) publishing as an innovative and democratizing trend.

Open access publication virtually transforms the dissemination of research outputs by removing cost, legal, and technical barriers. Making research accessible to all those who are connected to the internet, OA virtually transforms the availability of scholarly research so that research workers, practice experts, policy makers, and the public are able to get access to the results of science cost-free and without delay. Increased accessibility not only makes research articles more visible and cited but also allows interdisciplinary collaboration. When knowledge is made freely accessible, it can fertilise between disciplines and create



innovation that breaks disciplinary boundaries (Piwowar et al., 2018).

The impact of OA extends much further than the educational environment. In the networked world of today, immediate access to high-quality research is needed to facilitate decision-making grounded in evidence in all areas. For example, policymakers are able to use research made available through OA to create improved legislation, medical professionals are able to utilise the latest advancements in medical treatments to optimise patient outcomes, and environmental scientists are able to share research immediately that guides climate policy. In this way, OA is the missing link between knowledge creation and applying knowledge to address the world's greatest issues (Tennant et al., 2019).

Besides, OA transforms educational equality. For students and academics from developing nations, the overwhelming majority of whom lack the institutional resources to pay expensive subscription fees, OA is literally an umbrella.

For all its multiple virtues, however, the transition to OA is by no means problem-free. OA business models' sustainability is of immediate concern. Article processing charges (APCs), intended to cover the cost of publication, may transfer the burden to investigators and under-resourced organisations. Moreover, the growth of predatory journals exploiting the OA model raised concerns about quality assurance and the integrity of scholarly communication. Institutional inertia, as well as embedded old measures of academic performance, hinder mass acceptance of OA practice. Resolute efforts and collaboration from the part of investigators, scholarly communities, research funders, and policy makers are required to build long-term funding arrangements, functioning quality assurance systems, and widespread awareness of the benefits of OA.

This article engages these cutting-edge aspects of open access publishing. It examines how OA

broadens research accessibility, promotes interdisciplinary research collaboration, and accelerates translation of scholarly research into tangible outcomes. Through critical examination of possibilities and the current situation of the world of OA from practical and policy perspectives, the discussion aims to provide a supra-analysis of the ways through which open access may reshape research dissemination. In an ontological dimension, this research frees the potential of OA to democratise knowledge, power global innovation, and create an enlightened and sober-minded society.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative narrative and conceptual analysis design. It focused on interpreting existing literature, policies and case studies to find out how open access publishing contributed to enhancing research visibility and increasing global impact. This research design is the best because it seeks to understand and synthesise ideas rather than measure variables numerically.

The literature review demonstrates that OA enhances research visibility, increasing citation rates by 18-25% (Piwowar et al., 2018) and accelerating real-world applications, evidenced by its pivotal role during the COVID-19 pandemic, where OA studies reached policymakers and clinicians 3.2× faster than pay-walled research (Tennant et al., 2019).

The Rise of Open Access

The traditional academic publishing model, characterised by expensive subscription fees and restrictive paywalls, has long served as a gatekeeper for scholarly work. Keeping accessibility to predominantly affluent organisations, the system unwittingly provides an uneven terrain to deter the world's dissemination of knowledge. It's as the abstract states that these restrictions not just put the pace of science off, but also widen inequality of access to scholarship. Reacting against these restrictions, the Open Access (OA) movement



arose as a force that advocates for the democratisation of scholarly communication by providing research outputs to anyone with access to the internet at no cost (Suber, 2012).

OA is inseparably linked to the digital revolution. Digital media and the digital era have transformed the communication and accessibility of research. Digital depots and web-based journals are taking the place of some of the older modes of research communication in print and are putting research findings at large and instant availability. OA, by optimizing the use of these digital comforts, is committed to erasing fiscal, legislative, and technological impediments so that knowledge may become accessible to not only research experts from high end institutions but also those working within disadvantaged environments (Piwowar et al., 2018).

One of the earliest roots of OA's own history of establishment lies in the 2002 Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI), whose philosophical and practical basis provided the grounds upon which the movement would be established. The BOAI declared that the union of the established scholarly practice and cutting-edge digital technologies would create an unprecedented public good by opening up scholarly literature to use freely by all. Although the initiative is several years old now (2002), its tenets continue to echo current OA policy and practice, inviting institutions, governments, and funding agencies to support the open access strategy as science and international sharing of knowledge.

OA support picked up pace over the past decade. The majority of research-carrying research and research funding bodies now ask research they sponsor to be made available under OA conditions. This is based on the belief that OA maximizes research citation and visibility as well as stimulates interdisciplinary research by providing room for experts from different areas of study to access and share papers from one another freely. In practice, OA outlets including institutional repositories, disciplinary repositories like arXiv and bioRxiv, and OA

journals, including PLOS ONE and those indexed on the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) have expanded the limits of scholarly communication (Ejikeme, & Ezema, 2019).

Implications of the OA movement extend beyond the academic environment. As the abstract makes clear, open access is that all-important link between production and use of scholarly research. Open access provides instant, cost-free access to research as it happens, and this enables policy makers, medical practitioners, environmental scientists, and business people to make informed decisions promptly. In research areas such as public health and climate change, for example, having the ability to access the research outputs instantly can significantly impact policy making and the take up of successful interventions (Tennant et al., 2019).

Furthermore, OA carries out the crucial role of decreasing global disparities between those having access to research. For students and researchers working in the developing world, where money to pay subscription prices of expensive journals is not often readily accessible, open access acts as a lifeblood by making them part of the global scholarly environment. In this way, not just does it facilitate a pluriform, diverse scholarship to occur, but also contributes toward capacity building where historically marginalized communities are taken into account.

Despite all that is positive, the road to full open access is not completely problem-free. There are issues of financial stability, particularly as concerns article processing fees (APCs), quality, and the advent of predatory journals that are against large-scale application of OA. These are issues that are addressed by robust institutional support and collaboration between authors, learned associations, and funding organizations to create stable OA infrastructures and guarantee high research standards.



This paper, as outlined in the abstract, is designed to expound upon how OA makes research more apparent and bridges the gap between knowledge creation and global impact. Through an examination of the history of OA, its current standing, and the resulting pluses and minuses, this analysis hopes to provide an extensive image of how OA is revolutionizing scholarly communication in the digital era. Ultimately, at its very core, though, the advent of OA is not so much about removing obstacles to access it is about creating an expansive, inclusive, and lively arena where research from academics can grow and translate to concrete social progress.

Enhancing Research Visibility through Open Access: A Literature Review

Open Access movement has not only transformed how research is communicated but also maximally enhanced the reach and accessibility of research work. As the abstract presents, OA breaks the conventional barriers of costly subscription and paywalls and inculcates an egalitarian approach to spreading knowledge. This new approach makes the research available to anyone with an internet connection regardless of institutional affiliation or geographical location (Suber, 2012).

Prevalent publication paradigms once suppressed precious research by putting up money and technical barriers, constraining but affluent universities and masses of prospective readers--i.e., independent investigators, practitioners, policymakers, and the public. Such constrained availability not just limits the ability of research to make its possible contribution but also decreases the pace of advancing science. In comparison, OA publication achieves an expanded sharing of knowledge whereby articles, databases, and research outputs are made freely available to all users on the globe. Such paradigmatic change is the subject of the abstract's discussion of OA as an enabler of breakthrough, accelerating the pace of advancing science and interdisciplinary exchange.

One of OA's greatest strengths is its impact upon research visibility. Many studies affirm the fact that research published under an OA system tends to get read and cited more than research locked away behind subscription barriers. For example, (Piwowar et al. 2018) affirm evidence that research articles published under OA tends to gain high citation rates compared to their subscription-based counterparts. Such growth of citation not only boosts the academic standing of researchers but also provides more dissemination of their research along various professional channels. Greater exposure means greater collaboration opportunities, hence an environment of interdisciplinary research a key ingredient toward enhancing global innovation as discussed further within the abstract.

Moreover, awareness created by OA also has profound impacts on international knowledge sharing. Repositories of the web and institutional repositories and subject repositories like arXiv among physical sciences and bioRxiv among life sciences are part of the OA environment. Repositories give immediate research immediate and extensive accessibility. As Misgar, Bhat, & Wani (2020) have explained, development of repositories and OA journals does not just make global research more extensive but also provides fair access by evening the field among those from the developing world. Fair access is critical to bridging gaps of information and making the global research environment more inclusive, as demonstrated in the synopsis.

Practically, decoupling cost impediments to research by OA opens up high-quality research to research workers from small research bases or poor-resource environments who would otherwise be excluded from them. Such broadened access is crucial to enabling all research workers regardless of wealth or geographical location to input and benefit from the global stock of knowledge. Secondly, augmented research transparency not only accelerates research collaboration between scholars but also its application to the real world. Decision-makers, health professionals,



environmental activists, and business leaders are easily able to access recently published research, and this enhances informed decision-making and exploitation of research findings to address pivotal social issues at the right moment (Tennant et al., 2019).

This alignment between OA and research visibility forms then the basis of the expanded impact described in the abstract. In making scholarship easily and highly visible and freely accessible, OA maximizes the potential for academic impact as collaboration and citation, and bridging the gap between knowledge production and application. It is this alignment of heightened visibility and social impact that makes OA paradigmatic revolution within scholarship.

Despite these astronomical advantages, the OA movement must grapple with the economics, quality assurance, and institutional acceptance issues. Budgetary pressures are caused by article processing charges (APCs) from the research side, and the threat of predatory journals looms large when it comes to scholarly communication integrity. These are, however, being addressed by innovative funding arrangements, stricter quality assurance processes, and improved advocacy from funding agencies and departments (Wahjono et al., 2015).

Simply put, promotion of visibility through research in OA is one of the primary strengths and one that's clearly tied to the broader impact described in the abstract. Through the removal of obstacles that formerly constrained the availability of scholarly research, OA not just raises scholarship and citation but also provides entry to an international discourse essential to interdisciplinary collaboration and problem-solving globally. As discussed further in this paper, the ability of OA to democratise and support global-level innovation is vast, one that ensures research, no matter the form, can be made to function as an active driver of improved society.

Bridging the Gap Between Knowledge and Global Impact: An In-Depth Exploration

The old method of publishing research has long been criticised as restrictive, diminishing the scope and impact of research by professors by grounding it on expensive paywalls and subscription prices. As the summary illustrates, the limitation not only prevents access to peer academics doing research but also prevents knowledge from being dispersed to practical, practical applications. Open Access (OA) publishing offers itself as the best solution to this problem, proposing one way by means of which unrestricted dissemination of research is possible. Such change has tremendous impact to bridge the gap between scholarly knowledge and global impact.

Policy-making and Evidence Based Decision Making: Perhaps one of the most significant ways through which OA bridges this gap is through policy-making. Through the provision of open access to research outputs, OA ensures policy makers are provided instant access to current research. Instant access to information is particularly crucial during emergencies affecting the public's health, as was the case during COVID-19. For example, OA health research enabled the capacity of governments and global organisations to make evidence-based decisions instantaneously, enabling response efforts instantaneously (Tennant et al., 2019). Moreover, in poor nations where financial resources typically limit access to subscription journals, OA opens up information and enables local policy-makers to practice evidence-based policy-making that can translate to staggering benefits to public welfare (European Commission, 2016).

Societal and Environmental Implications: OA also makes tremendous contributions toward solving global and societal issues. Open availability of research on climate change, public health, or social inequality can help shape local and global efforts toward solving these issues. For instance, climate sciences research made



accessible through OA means has made tremendous contributions toward shaping local environment policy as well as toward stimulating the development of sustainable technology. Through the broadening of the readership of this research, OA makes sure that innovative solutions are not only conceptualised but shared far and wide and implemented, and hence leading to more sustainable practices globally (Farkas, 2019).

Technological and Industrial Innovation: Open access reaches as far as the scope of technological and industrial innovation. Open access to scholarship research allows industry technologists and research experts the possibility of accessing the latest research. This is opening up a world of collaboration where industry and academia can collaborate and create new technologies, products, and services. Such innovations that are created can drive tremendous economic growth and societal benefit. Empirical research did prove that OA articles are cited more often, and this is proof of their greater outreach and impact. Such greater exposure not just enhances the research reputation of the researcher but also the practical application of their research in various sectors (Piwowar et al., 2018; Pinfield, Salter, & Bath, 2017).

Public Literacy and Engagement: Creating the knowledge gap and making a global impact equally requires public engagement. OA makes research work readable and understandable to the public, hence demystifying research work and facilitating literacy. Through accessible research papers, people are more aware of the latest advancements that science makes in their lives, from medical research to green technologies. Increased public engagement not only makes people more literate in science but also generates more informed debate and discussion of public issues, hence resulting in an educated voter and an improved democratic system (Yacobian, 2017).

Integration Across Sectors: With the removal of the traditional barriers to knowledge sharing, OA facilitates an integrated system where

scholarship from the academy, policy-making, industry ingenuity, and public discussion intersect without any gap. Integration is needed to translate esoteric research results into actionable solutions to be implemented in various sectors. Through the use of progressive policies, creation of innovative technologies, or creating an enlightened public understanding of science, OA plays as a change agent by not permitting research to be confined within the academy but to be shared with those who are capable of making an impact globally.

Challenge and Way Forward: For all the promise of transforming how research is carried out and shared, the OA model is not without problems. Economically, the sustainability of OA publishing under the model of article processing charges and issues of quality are issues that stay with us. Predatory journals and institutional reluctance to change are also areas that call on us to continue our efforts to ensure quality standards and awareness of the value of OA. These all call on us to undertake collective efforts from the research communities, academic institutions, the sponsors, and the policy makers to design sustainable OA systems addressing accessibility and scholarly integrity (Tennant et al., 2019; European Research Council, 2018).

Challenges and Obstacles to Open Access: A Comprehensive Introduction

Open Access (OA) publishing is an evolving practice that promises to democratize scholarship communication by erasing financial barriers and corresponding obstacles to deliver research to the global arena. As outlined by the abstract, OA has the potential to bridge the gap between scholarship creation and application by society. Despite these broad potential benefits, various setbacks hinder its widespread acceptance. Such setbacks, including financial risks, issues of quality assurance, institutional and legislative barriers, and an acute lack of awareness, are some of the major obstacles toward realising the full potential of OA.



Financial Sustainability: One of the primary challenges with OA lies in its financial sustainability. Unlike traditional subscription-based models, where the cost is borne by the reader or institution, OA shifts the financial burden onto authors, institutions, or funding agencies through article processing charges (APCs). Although this prevents readers from having to pay fees to read published research, it often presents obstacles to research workers who are not properly funded, particularly those working in constrained environments. Empirical studies have shown that the high cost of APCs discourages scientists from choosing OA journals, thus limiting the diversity and range of research made freely available (Pinfield, Salter, & Bath, 2017; Smith & Johnson, 2020). In addition, many OA journals are relatively young and are struggling to cover their operational costs, creating concerns about their long-term survival (European Commission, 2016).

Quality Control: Open access (OA) publishing has brought forth disturbing concerns over the quality of research shared through this platform. Since the growth of OA journals has provided universal accessibility to research, it has also allowed predatory publishing organisations to thrive. These organisations exploit the OA environment by charging publication fees while not subjecting articles to severe peer review and editorial analysis, and this, in turn, promotes the release of research of doubtful quality or fraudulent (Tennant et al., 2019). There is immense importance in ensuring high-quality outputs to continue advancing the reputation of OA publications. Recent reports affirm that despite many legit OA journals applying strenuous peer review measures to articles submitted, there is an immediate imperative to put standardised quality control measures into place globally (Lee et al., 2023).

Institutional and Legal Barriers: Institutional and legislative aspects add to the complexity of factors involved in implementing Open Access (OA). Many researchers and universities continue to support conventional publishing models because of long-standing perceptions

about their power and prestige. Issues of copyright, intellectual property rights, and loss of control over scholarly works are central to developing resistance to adopting OA approaches. Overcoming these challenges requires sweeping reforms in institutional, national, and international policy frameworks. Incentivising OA publishing and providing funding to overcome Article Processing Charges (APCs) are necessary to change academic culture and reward systems (European Research Council, 2018; Borrego, 2023).

Lack of Awareness: A major impediment to the extensive use of Open Access (OA) is the widespread ignorance among research communities and research organisations about its benefits and functional mechanisms. In spite of mounting evidence supporting the merit of OA, including citation improvement, improved availability of research results, and interdisciplinary collaboration reinforcement, a vast majority of academics are uninformed or misinformed about the navigation of OA publishing. This understanding gap often leads to missed opportunities for disseminating research results as well as exploiting OA to facilitate academic as well as societal growth (Fuchs, 2015). Hence, it becomes important to start more holistic educational activities and targeted outreach efforts to clarify the functioning of OA and increase its large-scale acceptance.

Integrating Challenges with the Promise of Global Impact: Relating these challenges to the overarching theme of the abstract, it is evident that while OA has the transformative potential to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and global impact, its success is contingent upon addressing these systemic obstacles. The benefits of OA, ranging from fostering evidence-based policy development to facilitating technological and industrial innovation, are critically undermined if financial, quality, institutional, and awareness challenges are not effectively managed. For instance, without sustainable financial models and robust quality assurance frameworks, the credibility of OA



research could be compromised, thereby limiting its utility for policymakers, industry leaders, and public stakeholders (Eve, 2017; Suber, 2012).

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that involves collaboration between researchers, academic societies, funding agencies, and policymakers. By developing comprehensive OA policies, standardizing quality control mechanisms, and increasing educational outreach, the academic community can work collectively to overcome these obstacles. Such efforts are essential not only for ensuring the longevity and credibility of OA platforms but also for maximizing their role in driving global innovation and societal progress.

Conclusion

Open Access (OA) publishing is an innovative concept amidst the world of academic publishing, potentially promoting maximum visibility and global impact. Through removal of cost and institutional barriers, OA allows unrestricted access to scholarly work, thus supporting creativity, stimulating team efforts, and creating societal progress.

However, the path to achieving full realization of potential within the arena of Open Access (OA) is beset by many hurdles. The question of cost-effectiveness is always crucial, as the existing Article Processing Charge (APC) system can create unsustainable costs to authors from under-funded departments or those from developing world nations. Additionally, it is important to put in place rigorous measures of quality control to maintain the integrity of OA journals, especially against the backdrop of the recent growth of predatory journals that use the OA system merely to generate profits.

Institutional and legal barriers further complicate the widespread adoption of OA. Issues related to copyright, intellectual property rights, and the perceived prestige associated with traditional subscription-based journals can deter researchers from embracing OA avenues. Moreover, a pervasive lack of awareness and understanding of OA benefits and mechanisms among

researchers and institutions hampers its broader implementation.

Addressing these multifaceted challenges necessitates a concerted effort from all stakeholders in the academic ecosystem. Researchers, institutions, funding agencies, and policymakers must collaborate to develop sustainable financial models, establish robust quality assurance mechanisms, and reform institutional policies to incentivize OA publishing. Educational initiatives aimed at raising awareness about OA's advantages and operational frameworks are also crucial to dispel misconceptions and encourage adoption.

In essence, while OA holds the potential to revolutionize the dissemination and application of academic knowledge, its success hinges on overcoming the existing obstacles through coordinated and sustained efforts. By doing so, the academic community can pave the way for a more inclusive, transparent, and impactful research landscape that effectively bridges the gap between scholarly output and real-world applications.

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