

Chapter 44

Changing Face of Scholarly Communication and Its Impact on Library and Information Centres

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ABSTRACT

Scholarly communication involves publishing the research findings by academics and researchers in order to share and make available the academic or research output to the global community of researchers. Emergence of Internet and World Wide Web has brought revolutionary changes in the process of scholarly communication. Increasing price of serial publications, time lag in the publication and readership and other associated problems were addressed by the electronic journals and open access initiatives. Other models like – Consortia and Institutional Repositories have evolved as a cost saving models and improving communication. The social networking sites on the Internet are also promoting scholarly communication to a great extent. In the light of the changing technological environment this chapter depicts the history of scholarly publishing and reviews the changes that took place in the process of scholarly communication. Further, the impact of the changing models on Library and Information Centres (LICs) is examined.

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly communication involves publishing the research findings by academics and researchers in order to share and make available the academic or research output to the global community of researchers. According to Kauffer and Carley (1993), researchers publish their works with the purpose of gaining ownership of an idea, to get societal recognition, to claim priority for a discovery and to establish a community of authors and readers. Irrespective of the intention of the author, Scholarly communication results in diffusion of ideas and findings. Traditionally, for over hundred years, print has been the domi-

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nant medium for scholarly communication. The structure of the published literature gradually became more organized and the journal articles and conference proceedings emerged as primary channels for scholarly communication.

Emergence of Internet and World Wide Web has brought revolutionary changes in the process of scholarly communication. Increasing price of serial publications, time lag in the publication and readership and other associated problems were addressed by the electronic journals and open access initiatives. Other models like – Consortia and Institutional Repositories have evolved as a cost saving models and improving communication. The social networking sites on the Internet are also promoting scholarly communication to a great extent.

In the light of the changing technological environment this chapter depicts the history of scholarly publishing and reviews the changes that took place in the process of scholarly communication. The specific objectives of this paper are to –

- Study the History of Scholarly publishing.
- Examine the changes taking place in Scholarly Publishing with particular reference to the various stakeholders of the Scholarly publication process including scholars, record of scholarship, publishers, users and libraries.
- Discuss the emerging trends in Scholarly Communication.
- Examine the changing role of Library and Information Centres (LICs) in the emerging scholarly communication environment.

BACKGROUND

History of Scholarly Communication

The invention of the movable-type printing press by Gutenberg in 1445 has revolutionized the process of written communication. Spread of ideas has become easier compared to earlier process of writing with hand or making inscriptions which was a laborious process and involved longer periods of time. Books were printed more quickly; book making became less expensive and more copies were made accessible to people. More and more people started reading books, writing books to disseminate their ideas and thus creative writing has become more common. Consequently, the growing emphasis on education, academic writing and research gained importance. Scholars, researchers and scientists make extensive use of information in the process of their research and the results, findings, observations, and views arising from their work were reported in the form of scholarly publications such as academic journals, conference proceedings, reports, patents etc.

Until the late seventeenth century, communication between scholars depended heavily on personal contact. Scholars attending meetings arranged by the early learned societies (e.g. the Royal Society) used to exchange ideas and research findings. As the membership of these societies increased, and since everyone could not attend the meetings the practice of bringing out Proceedings emerged. These Proceedings subsequently turned out to be a place to publish research papers. Thus, the publication of research articles in scholarly journals has come into existence.

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society and *Journal de Scavans* are the first peer reviewed journals started in 1665 (Ellis, 1997; Monty, 1996). During this time, the journals were mainly published

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