

Chapter 9

Exploring the Concept of Open Access Journals: Its Types and Features with an Emphasis on Identification of Active OA Journals Indexed by Scopus Database

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ABSTRACT

The chapter focuses on the exploration and elucidation of the open access concept, with the main emphasis on open access journals, their types and features, etc. Similarly, the thrust was also given to acquaint the audience with the open access journal publishers, in order to aware them about the availability of open access literature and the opportunities where open access research can be published by the authors or scientists. In order to give some practical flavors to the readers of this study, the focus of the study was also made towards gauging the active open access journals indexed by the Scopus database. Moreover, particular emphasis was given to check the distribution of active open access journals indexed by it in the fields of life sciences, social sciences, physical sciences, and health sciences. The purpose was to ease the users to search and use the open access journal literature as per the subject taste.

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INTRODUCTION

The knowledge is a power which enables mankind to find the core solutions to the complex social problems. Researches are conducted to find reliable answers and solutions to the problems faced by the masses in different social settings. Conducting research is heavily dependent on quality relevant literature, which is most costly in nature as it is available in subscription mode. Due to advancements in knowledge development and dissemination in an electronic mode, the concept of Open Access evolved on the horizon of scholarly communication.

The Open Access means the free and unrestricted access to full-text information especially, the journal articles, technical reports, conference papers, thesis, and other scientific literature, across the globe without any technical, legal, subscription barriers (Suber, 2007; Ghosh & Kumar, 2007; Herring, 2002). Today the concept of the OA has revolutionized the scientific communication by making access to knowledge easier and faster. It aims to make scientific knowledge universally accessible to those who need it for certain purposes. In the traditional scholarly communication model (Toll-Access model), scientific literature remained to be the property of elites (financially sound subscribers). Thus created the division within the scientific community by making the subscription group more powerful by getting the valued insights offered by Toll-Access resources and paralyzed the un-subscribed group by barring their accessibility on the same. In such a situation, the Open Access to quality scientific literature can provide a reliable solution to this problem faced by financially inefficient scholars. Most researchers try to search the scientific literature published in scientific journals to meet their literature requirements. The Toll- Access journals will meet the requirements of their subscribers only. While as, the OA journals offer free access to its scientific contents without any subscription, technical and other barriers for everyone. Thus it can become a helping tool for researchers to find the required scientific literature pertinent to their field of study.

Although the concept of Open Access has gained popularity to a greater extent still there is some lacking awareness among the literature users particularly about the concept of OA journals, its types & features? In this milieu, the study has made an endeavor to shed some light on the concept of the Open Access, its features, Open Access journals, their characteristics & types, and some OA literature publishing platforms. Besides, the study has also made an endeavor to acquaint the audience about the Scopus database & OA journals. The Scopus database is an indexing and abstracting database covering a large number of books, journals (both active and inactive, including OA & non-OA), and conference proceedings (Scopus, 2018). The prime focus of the study goes on Active OA journals indexed in Scopus data 2018, distribution of OA journals in fourtop-level subject areas viz: life sciences, social

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