Open Access: Pros and Cons

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Abstract: This paper attempts to discuss the positive and negative aspects of Open Access. At the surface, the Open Access seems to have created a revolution, but in its deeper sense, it still suffers from significant problems on non-accessibility, non-availability of scholarly content to its users. The mindset of the author and existing modalities in operating the open access repositories have to adhere to standards which attract eminent authors, so that, the repositories becomes a referral source in the scholarly community and thus, encouraging the visibility of scholarly communication.

Open Access, Scholarly Communication, Scholarly Content

1. Introduction

The National Knowledge Commission, Government of India recommending the Open Access and Open Educational Resources, and also the Government's positive gesture of exploiting the Open Source and providing Open Access has to a great extent revolutionalised the implementation of Open Source and provision of Open Access in the country. As a result, we have Open Source implementations for Institutional Repositories, Digital Libraries, Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repositories, Open Journal System, Virtual Classrooms, Websites, Blogs, etc., Numerous workshops, conferences, symposiums, seminars are being held throughout the length and breadth of the country in adopting the Open Source and for providing Open Access.

The Library and Information Science Professionals have made a remarkable contribution to the growth and development of Open Access particularly in India. INFLIBNET has promoted Open Access in establishing the Shodganga, OJAS, e-PatShala and also encouraged the universities in setting up the Digital Repositories for scholarly communication. NCSI, Indian Institute of Science have played a keyrole in establishing the Cross Archive Search Service for Indian Repositories (CASSIR) which harvests metadata through OAI-PMH protocol. The Institute of Mathematical Science has collaborated with Cornell University for establishing an Indian Mirror for arXiv, an e-print service. DRTC, Bangalore has setup the Librarians Digital Library which is a subject specific Digital Library and University of Mysore has developed the VidyaNidhi which a cross institutional thesis and dissertation repository. NISCAIR promotes the use of Open Access by providing technical support for individual institutions and Research centres in establishing a Open Access Publishing System.

There are now in India 25 Institutional Repositories also registered at Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR), 407 Indian open access journals registered in Directory