

CONNECTING UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA ART SCHOLARS WITH OPEN ACCESS PUBLICATION

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ABSTRACT

In Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), the scholars were known to publish their scholarly materials in commercial journals, magazines, and books. However, studies on trends of publishing in Open Access journals, self archive in institutional repositories (IRs) and Open Access perceptions among art scholars are still enigmatic. For these reasons, the USM librarians have established a research team that focused on studying the Open Access publication trend. Next, the team intended to develop an effective approach in advocating Open Access publication targeting specific groups of researchers, especially the art scholars. The Open Access team had persuaded art scholars to organize a pilot study through a focus group meeting. The focus group meeting was held at the School of Art, USM on 2nd September 2014. During the meeting, the librarians and the art scholars discussed on the Open Access issues. The librarians presented the pros and cons of the Open Access and the art scholars gave responded to the USM librarians' presentation. Based on the feedback, the effective approach to advocate Open Access, specifically for art scholars were identified. This paper is significant as a guide for the librarians that intend to advocate the Open Access publication.

KEYWORDS: *Academic Librarians, Open Access, Art Scholars, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Scholarly Communication*

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Scholarly Publication Trend for Art Discipline in Malaysia

As stated by Kay (2000), arts can motivate people in training and employment, supporting volunteerism, recognizing cultural identities of the locals, and enhance creativity. Various art performances can be seen in many platforms such as television, magazines and newspapers. In Malaysia, the Federal Government is highly supporting

the local arts performers to broadcast their artistic creations on television, especially during prime time (Ishak & Firdaus, 2010). Due to these opportunities, art performers are able to broadcast their creations to a mass audience even though they have to compete with other international programs especially from Hollywood. There are also numerous of collaboration programs between the art performers with art scholars to enhance the quality of artistic creations. They work together to develop more attractive art creations.

However, the trends of publishing scholarly articles in local based journals are not outstanding among the art scholars in Malaysia. For instance, there were only eight (8) titles of Malaysian journals, that are related to the art discipline, accepted in Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities index that can be seen through the Thomson Reuters Web of Science (WoS), Scopus and Malaysian Citation Index (MyCite) (Abrizah, Zainab, Edzan, & Koh, 2013). While the study investigates on the journal titles, there were no journal names displayed as 'art' among those eight (8) titles journals. Instead, three (3) titles are found as 'museum'. On the other part, the Malaysian Journal Management System (Myjournal) website (URL: <http://www.myjurnal.my/public/browse.php>) listed only about four (4) journal titles that focuses on performing arts subjects, while another three (3) journal titles were found related to the visual arts subjects.

Futhermore, it was found that the total numbers of peer-reviewed articles written by Malaysian art and humanities scholars listed in SCOPUS showed that the scholars from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) were found to be significantly higher compared to Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), National Arts Culture and Heritage Academy (ASWARA) and University of Malaya (UM). Until March 2015, Art scholars from UKM were found published 762 peer-review articles in SCOPUS. However, the topics covered were higher on "Malaysia" and "Gender". There were no topics of papers specifically related to "arts" within the top three. These two findings show that the art scholars in Malaysia still have a long journey in developing a strong local based scholarly publications.

1.11 Learning from the Open Access movements of developed countries

Fourteen (14) years after the public statement on the principle of Open Access (OA) was made in the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) meeting, the OA publication models are increasingly more recognized in many countries by several government education authorities, research funders, commercial journal publishers, special group researchers, librarians and other parties involved in the publishing industries. This is the impact of the efforts taken by Open Access advocates that successfully organized the OA

movement comprehensively. They managed to influence the policy makers to uphold the Open Access Mandate. For instance, OA advocates in the United Kingdom have mobilized the implementation of Open Access policies with Research Councils UK, a non-departmental public body (NDPB) that have high influence in determining research funding policies. In a similar way to the United Kingdom, the Australian Open Access Support Group (AOASG) successfully influenced Australia Research Council and National Health and Medical Research Council (ARC & NHMRC) to enforce Open Access Mandate. The Australia Research Council acknowledges the need to support Open Access Mandate in order to make Open Education Resource (OER) initiative successful (Picasso & Phelan, 2014). The OA movement was also strengthened through international alliances under the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) that helps many scholars to get an OA rights for their scholarly materials from commercial journal publishers by introducing the SPARC Author Addendum initiative. Due to that initiative, the commercial publishers are now able to grant privilege upon authors' request to change their scholarly materials from perpetual closed access to Open Access publication model (Blixrud, 2011; Suber, 2007; Wirth & Chadwell, 2010)

Moreover, world top research universities such as Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) had also enforced the OA mandate and policy to encourage their researchers in practicing open knowledge sharing. The official statement was published on their websites and endorsed by the authority personnel to show their commitment to Open Access. The OA mandate was effectively implemented when it was being put as an eligibility requirement in the university's research grants agreement. This made the scholars compulsory to publish their materials in any OA peer-reviewed journals. The scholars were also allowed to self-archive preprints and post-prints of their scholarly materials including the grey literature materials in Institutional Repositories (IRs). At this stage, the librarians from both universities played an integral part in controlling the IRs to make it an effective OA platform. Nevertheless, the librarians are not only focusing on collecting, organizing, and maintaining the scholarly materials in IRs from the schools or faculties, but also in marketing and promoting the OA movements.

Although Kiran and Chia (2009) mentioned that Malaysian university libraries were the pioneers of the Open Access initiatives, Hisham and Hamzah (2011) have provided examples of case studies on promoting self-archive in the Universiti Malaya Library but there were no specific studies that enlightened the strategies to uphold the OA policy at the top of government level by the Malaysian librarians as well as advocating OA at grassroots level. As stated by Mohamad (2010), there were no constructive efforts in

Malaysia to uphold the OA movement at the top level of policy makers due to these reasons:

“Malaysia is not a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and none of its public research funding agencies and institutions is a signatory of the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities, the idea of granting open access to publicly funded research output as one of the catalysts for innovation does not sink well in the mind of Malaysian policy makers. Hence, they need to be convinced not only of the benefits of open access, but also of the close link between access to gaining knowledge and promoting innovation”.

Furthermore, there were unclear comprehensive strategies in promoting high understanding of the OA issues starting from the top decision makers' level to grassroots researchers by any government education agencies. Thus, the initiatives to make the Open Access mandate as a national agenda by the Malaysian Ministry of Education are also difficult to interpret. There were also undetected records of official discussions and statements that uphold the OA Mandate policy in Malaysian Higher Education Institutions that same been implemented by the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK) and Australia.

1.III Malaysia Librarians need to promote Open Access comprehensively

Back in the early days, Suber (2003) has reminded the needs of librarians to advocate Open Access. He reminded that when OA is not encouraged to the scholars, the libraries would face serial crisis as well as the permission crisis especially for electronic journals. These crises have severely impeded the research works not only for the academics, but also postgraduate and doctorate students as future scholars. The librarians were also urged to awaken the scholars to eagerly retain their own copyright and consent Open Access to seek research impact and not for money. It is important to clearly understand that the OA movement aims to make research literature available online without price and permission barriers. OA also should be shown as a positive initiative to many groups, especially the authors, readers, libraries and universities in terms of unrestricted reading, downloading, copying, sharing, storing, printing, searching, linking, crawling as well as referencing the scholarly materials.

However, the extent that Malaysian librarians are actively advocating the OA for scholars and researchers to create a clearer understanding of the benefits of Open Access is irresolute at this current time. Kratoska (2014) and Singeh, Abrizah, and Karim

(2013) exposed that there are still few Malaysian academics who self-archived and were involved in OA initiative. In fact, many social scientists are still suspicious and confused about Open Access publication (Nicholas et al., 2014).

Zainab (2013) mentioned that there were six (6) key points that the librarians should be concern of in promoting OA. They are:-

- i. Awareness of OA issues.
 - a. The librarians should be aware of the OA progress in terms of structures, organizations, achievements and challenges.
- ii. Remove price crisis and limited permission crisis
 - a. The librarians should promote to increase the involvement of scholars in their universities and institutions to self-archive.
- iii. Help in the development of Institutional Repositories (IRs).
 - a. The librarians should have a good knowledge relating to IRs especially in policy making, maintenance issues, and promoting programs.
- iv. Provide advice to OA journal publishers.
 - a. The librarians able to encourage the researchers to publish in OA high impact journals rather than pursue the commercial high impact journals only.
- v. Libraries as publishers of OA journals.
 - a. Some university libraries have been involved in publishing journals such as The University of Houston published The Public-Access Computer Systems Review in 1989. By this efforts computer systems researchers can have more choices to publish the scholarly materials especially to the library.
- vi. Libraries can collaborate in building special collections.
 - a. The librarians can initiate various collaboration projects between libraries with special research groups to establish the special collection, especially on the local contents in order to make high visibility to worldwide audiences. Those collaborative initiatives benefits in terms of;
 - Getting the rare items digitized without incurring any financial cost.
 - Obtaining more experience in setting up an OA repository and understanding the processes that need to be structured; and
 - Making the institutional research and fragile items more visible and open to the public to be read, used and cited.

Meanwhile, Swan and Chan (2014) stated that the librarians should diversify methods to attract researchers into engaging with OA. The methods are:-

- i. The librarians should be able to develop advocacy programs on campus such as a seminar or symposium on OA issues.
- ii. The librarians should be able to send several key messages to counter misunderstanding about OA for their liaison schools or faculties.

In addition, Mamtora, Yang, and Singh (2014) outlined twelve (12) important steps to strengthen the Open Access initiatives and one of those is to develop a circle of OA advocates which includes administrators, librarians, academics to exercise the positive influence on their peers.

Therefore, the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) librarians believe that advocating the Open Access is important to USM researchers. The USM researchers should anticipate the opportunities and benefits of Open Access especially in terms of increasing the scholarly publication visibility for bottom billions researchers. It coincides with the fact as stated by Mercer (2011), the librarians are the authentic activists for changes in the publishing system particularly for Open Access trend. Moreover, the librarians are suitable to elaborate issues on scholarly publication trends, especially in explaining numerous types of Open Access publication models to the scholars intensively (Tomaszewski, Poulin, & MacDonald, 2013). Following to this necessity, the USM librarians have established a team to conduct a research on identifying the effective approach in advocating the Open Access for researchers based in Malaysia. The USM Open Access team is also responsible in investigating the scholars' perceptions on Open Access trend. Hence, the USM Open Access team selected the art scholars for the pioneer study.

II.METHOD

The objectives of this study were to identify the effective approaches to advocate Open Access specifically for the art scholars and to identify their perceptions on the Open Access trend. Therefore, the research questions have been developed to answers based on two stated objectives of the study. There are:

- RQ1. What do the art scholars know about Open Access?
- RQ2. Did art scholars attend any official meeting to discuss specifically about Open Access?
- RQ3. Are the librarians capable of promoting Open Access to art scholars?
- RQ4. Are the art scholars still suspicious and confused about Open Access publication after the session?

Next, the USM Open Access team chose to implement a focus group meeting to retrieve the answers to the research questions. The group meeting was held at the USM School of Art. The meeting was jointly organized by USM Library and the USM School of Arts. The location of the meeting was set on 2nd September 2014 at Pasiban Hall, USM School of Arts. The session started from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Three (3) librarians were chosen as facilitators to conduct the session. The appointed facilitators have experienced and have conducted several series of workshops to educate researchers on various topics related to current academic issues especially scholarly publication. However, this was the first time for the librarians to conduct a session on open access.

During the meeting, the librarians held discussions and presented information related to more than Open Access itself. Other related topics such as self-archive in Institution Repositories (IRs) and the usage of Google Scholar were also discussed. The reasons were:-

- (a) To show the physical evidence on how the OA works.
- (b) To highlight the importance of IRs as an electronic archive platform to manage the scholarly and grey literatures materials.
- (c) To highlight Google Scholar features as an indexer to their scholarly materials that based in IRs.
- (d) To highlight the Google Scholar as worldwide visibility tool for bottom billions.

Questions on RQ1 and RQ2 were asked to participants before the session started. Meanwhile, questions on RQ3 and RQ4 were asked after the session finished. Observed interaction among participants and spontaneous face-to-face interviews were also implemented. Notes were taken during the sessions. 28 art scholars participated in the meeting.

The demography of participants is given in Table 1 and 2.

TABLE 1: Participants' Demography based on Subject Expert

Subject Expert	Total
Fine Art	6
Drama & Theatre	3
Music	7
Graphic Communication Design	4
Design & New Media Technology	3
Product Design	5

TABLE 2: Participants' Demography based on Gender, Academic Rank and Years in Academia

Gender	Total	Academic Rank	Total	Years in Academia	Total
Male	20	Professors/ Associates	5	More than 5 (Senior Researchers)	21
Female	8	Lecturers	23	Less than 5 (Early career researchers)	7

III.FINDINGS

This section demonstrates the answers to the research questions. The participants' quotes were presented to show the answers given. Each quote includes the type of participants' experience as references (SR- Senior Researchers, ECR – Early Career Researches)

RQ1: What do the art scholars know about Open Access?

Twenty eight (28) of the participants were confused about the OA practice. The participants were concerned on OA related to the availability to download the full-text of scholarly articles from the search engine, Library portal and Google Scholar. However, as authors, the art scholars were not really concerned in publishing their own scholarly articles on specific journals that have an OA policy. The art scholars were only concerned on publishing any scholarly materials in journals that are accepted by the Section C, Malaysia Research Assessment (MyRA) requirement. Moreover, the art scholars were unable to clarify any official statement about OA in the MyRA guideline that explains specific terms and conditions whenever the author wants to publish articles in OA journals. They also randomly selected journals that were listed on ISI Web of Science, Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and Scopus without knowing that the journals have provided privileges on OA policy for authors. Hence, they were uncertain about the needs to self-archive pre-print, post-print articles as well as grey literature materials in IRs.

We have our own journal name which is Open Access. However, we were not aware that there were Open Access journals listed in Web of Science and Scopus. We selected

any journals related to our topics without knowing the privilege on Open Access policy (SR).

We published magazine articles, chapters of books, and newsletter articles. Nonetheless, we knew that MyRA guideline is the main reference for us; to decide which platform to publish any scholarly materials. Our main targets are to publish articles in journals that are listed in Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI) or Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) and we are not concerned whether the journals were provided Open Access policy. We were not aware about the benefits to self-archive in IR. (SR, ECR)

We were unclear about the objectives of IR. We were not concerned of the need to send the conference papers, post-print scholarly materials as well as the grey literature materials. There were limited campaigning about IR from the librarians (SR, ECR).

RQ2: Did art scholars attend any official meeting to discuss specifically about Open Access?

All of the participants never attended any similar OA sessions neither official nor unofficial meetings to perform such specific discussion. Nevertheless, the discussion about Open Access has rarely been raised during top university's management meetings.

We never initiated any meeting that specifically talked about Open Access. However, we heard about the issues during top university's management meetings (SR).

We just chattered about the Open Access (ECR).

This showed that the participants were unable to compare the librarians approach on promoting OA to others.

RQ3: Are the librarians capable of promoting Open Access to art scholars?

98% of participants felt that the librarians conducted the discussion and presented the information about Open Access very attentively during the session. However, 2% of the participants felt that the librarians still have to improve in terms of their communication skills to deliver more information on Open Access issues. All participants were delighted that the librarians have presented all three topics efficiently. Moreover, the participants felt

that this session benefitted in terms of developing further understanding about OA in scholarly publication trend and useful for policy makers as well as researchers. The participants were also satisfied with the librarians on providing many facts and case studies regarding OA issues during the sessions especially those related to legal issues.

The librarians explained about these three topics clearly and concisely but they were seen not experienced advocate on this research topic. The references shown in the slide presentation were adequate and a lot of examples were presented. The pros and contrast facts related to Open Access were also included. (SR)

The librarians also presented about OA systematically. There were a lot of technical terms mentioned and were difficult to understand at the beginning of the presentation. However, we were able to understand after deep explanation. They were also able to enhance the presentation for the layman views. We also suggested a glossary for technical terms given to us for references (ECR).

The participants also felt that the time frame of the session was adequate. The location held at art scholars' place to discuss on Open Access was preferable. They did not favor on digital approach such as Facebook or Twitter because they have limited time to engage with the digital platform compared to a physical approach. However, they prefer to use emails and telephone to contact librarians if they have any enquiry. The art scholars stated that they had to spend more time in lectures, stage practice, designing art, painting, and, community programs.

*We are fortunate to learn about Open Access all together in one session meeting with the librarians. However, we are unfortunate to have time on digital platform to study about Open Access. We focused more on literature studies in our research topics
We are suggesting that the routine workshops should be implemented in the library for this topic as the same as Information Literacy Skills workshop that targeted the postgraduate and doctorate students (SR, ECR).**

RQ4: Are art scholars still suspicious and confused about Open Access publication after the session?

The participants were no longer suspicious about the published articles in OA journals and self-archive in IRs after the meeting session. They were more confident to identify the authenticity of OA journals that have high quality in terms of integrity, standard practice and metadata management. The qualities of journals were still their main concern in terms of reading, publishing, and cite as the references for their scholarly work. This perception of scholars is the same as mentioned in current studies by Abrizah et al., (2014) and Nicholas et al., (2015).

We understood the importance to study about journals' criteria and background, especially the journal editors' background. We understood the important criteria to read, cite, and publish articles, especially the high impact factor in Open Access journals (SR).

We were confused on how to identify the OA journals reputation at the beginning. Now, we have understood on how to find authentic scholarly journals based from the publisher background that have good standard practice and management. (ECR)

On the other hand, the participants were also felt no confuse to self-archive scholarly materials in IRs. They understood that archiving the pre-print, post-prints, and grey literature materials are important for reading access in the digital world. However, the art scholars still have to control about permitting unrestricted reading, downloading, copying, sharing, storing, printing, searching, linking, and crawling to their content materials.

IV. SIGNIFICANT/CONTRIBUTIONS

Based on the findings, although there are numbers of librarians currently initiating to promote and advocate OA to their customers through social media platforms, the face-to-face approach is still a vital method especially for art scholars. Moreover, the study recommended librarians to enhance their knowledge especially on case studies of OA and should be able to present constructive evidence as well as facts in order to convince the art scholars to participate in the Open Access movement. Moreover, the study recommended the librarians to conduct series of workshop sessions to expand advocating the OA for the postgraduates and doctorate students.

However, despite that this study is targeting specific group of researchers like art scholars, the Malaysian librarians currently need to be concerned to persuade the policy makers in establishing the standard public statement of principles on Open Access

publication. It is important to make clear comprehensive guidelines on practicing the Open Access for the entire education organizations in Malaysia. Thus, the Open Access Special Interest Group (SIG) is recommended to establish in Conference of Academic Libraries & National Library of Malaysia (PERPUN) to structure the Open Access movement for higher education institutes and research communities. The Open Access SIG will serve to embark series of discussions for all Malaysian universities targeting the lecturers and students to develop high understanding on OA issues. Moreover, PERPUN is recommended to strengthen the collaboration with the Malaysian Citation Centre (MCC) and the Council of Scholarly Publications Malaysia (MAPIM) to intensify the roles of Open Access SIG. Through these strategies, the Open Access movement is developing on the right track and would receive bigger impact in Malaysia.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to thank the Dean of the School of Art, USM, Assoc. Prof. Mohamad Omar Bidin, Deputy Dean of Research, Dr. A.S. Hardy Shafii and Dr. Zainurul Aniza A. Rahman, the initiator of the meeting to support the OA case study. Thanks to the librarians involved as facilitators; Mr. Shahriza Fadly Misaridin and Mrs. Noor Azlinda Wan Jan.

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