

A Look at Open Access in South Africa

A case study of researchers' publishing practices



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This poster presents a case study of journal publishing at one South African university to identify existing journal publishing practices in terms of open access.

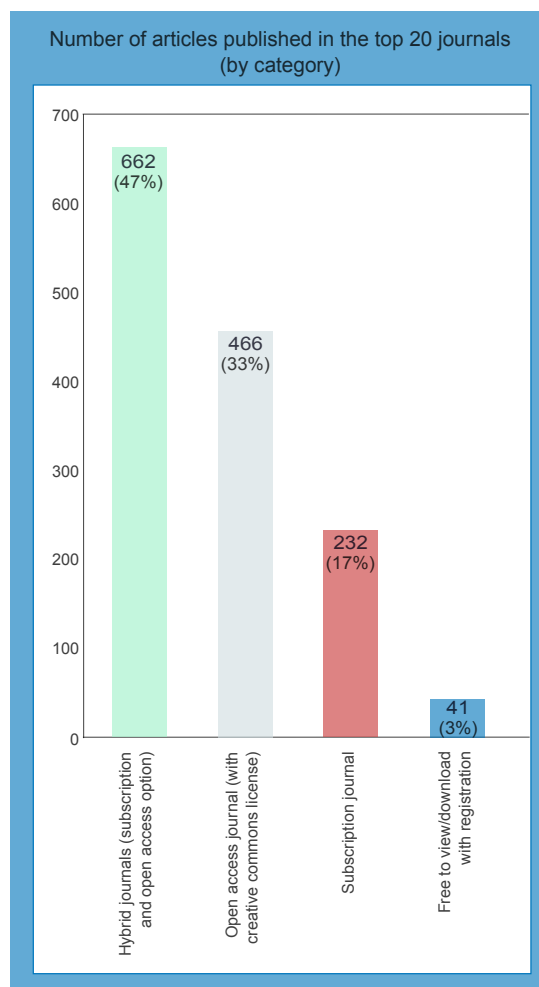
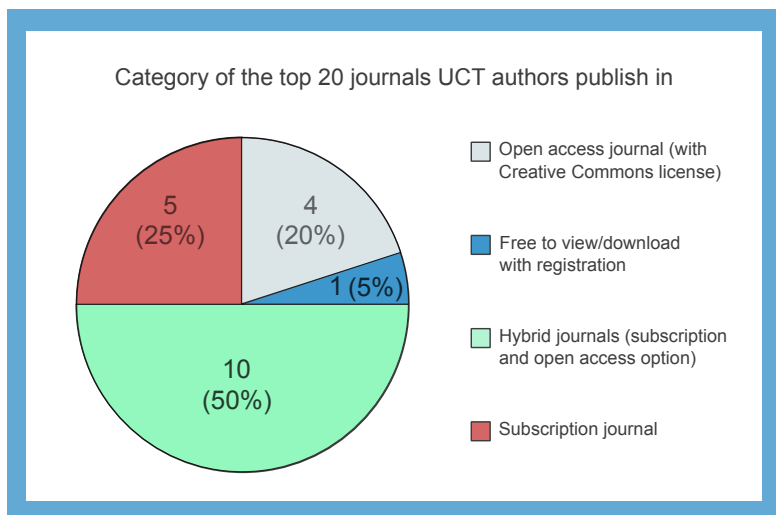
Methods and Results

An analysis was undertaken of the top 20 journals in which the University of Cape Town's (UCT) research output was published. Approximately half of UCT's journal output for 2006 to 2011 was in these 20 journals. The analysis presented here looked at each journal in terms of:

- open access status (category), determined by inclusion in the Directory of Open Access Journals*, as well as license type; and
- how many articles were published in each category.

*on 17 May 2013

Four journals of the top 20 journals, which published 33% of the top 20 output, were found to be open access (with a Creative Commons license).



Implications of global open access trends for South African researchers.

Be savvy:

- less reason than ever for academics to give away their copyright

Be aware:

- differentiate between types of journals (whether fully open access or hybrid) and between open access options

Be proactive:

- deposit work in institutional and disciplinary repositories as well as properly curated websites

Contribute to the global conversation:

- representation matters because what is found online increasingly shapes what is known and what can be known

Lobby for change:

- in performance assessment and promotion mechanisms in order to widen the types of knowledge production acknowledged by the rewards system

Conclusion

Academics' engagement with open access and scholarly communication debates is in their interests as global networked researchers whose virtual identities and online scholarship are now a critical aspect of their professional engagement.

Read more about this study in our paper *Open access in South Africa: A case study and reflections*, available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/sajs.2014/20140111>