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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Identifying Open Access Practices in Librarianship Journals

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In this article, we discuss the results of our research over the spring and summer of 2023. During this study, we conducted an environmental scan of 377 journals in the field of librarianship to gather information on open access publishing practices.
Methods: We used a mixed methods framework as a starting point for our research, collecting data on selected journals' publishing practices. We selected journals based on the following criteria: 1) peer reviewed, 2) written in English or abstracted in English, 3) actively published at the time of analysis, and 4) scoped to librarianship. Data we collected included the journals' open access policies, peer review processes, and data sharing policies.
Results: With a dataset of 133 of the initial 377 journals meeting our criteria, we observed variations in the journals' open access practices, peer review processes, and data sharing policies. We noted more journals allowed diamond open access than any other publishing option, and a low number of journals are toll access.
Discussion: Within our study sample, open access policies are varied and in flux. Ascertaining the openness of individual peer-reviewed journals was challenging. Within the 133 journals examined, the state of open publishing practice is clearly evolving quickly, but with varying levels of transparency and consistency.
Conclusion: Even though there are myriad challenges associated with open access publishing, the field of librarianship must continue moving toward an open access model. Academic librarians can advocate for scholars to critically analyze and challenge the scholarly communication system. In addition, journals should provide publishing transparency and guidance for those looking to publish.

Keywords: Open Access, Scholarly Publishing, Green Open Access, Gold Open Access, Diamond Open Access, Librarianship, Predatory Publishing

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IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Policies around open access (OA) models, open peer review, and open data are often not transparent or consistent, leading to barriers in understanding for scholars, particularly those new to publishing; therefore, librarians and editors should take care to learn about OA models ahead of the publishing stage of their writing process.
2. Diamond OA is the most common method of publication in librarianship journals, and librarianship journals are most commonly published by association or society publishers. Librarians can highlight how this positively impacts authors and readers while being conscious of the workload and power imbalances possible in editorial environments where labor is not directly remunerated.
3. Following diamond, hybrid (green) OA is the most commonly offered publication option by all types of publishers in librarianship journals. Librarians can advocate for deposit in institutional repositories and support researchers in doing so.
4. A very low number of the analyzed librarianship journals (14 of 133) were either closed or required an APC for OA publication; therefore, librarians and editors can note that the field has strong adoption of no-fee publication and readership models.
5. To inform their own publication choices and to better engage with and guide other researchers at their institutions, librarians should develop competencies in OA literacy by following industry trends and changes and considering critically the structure of academic publishing.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine you are a newly hired academic librarian, expected to publish as part of your role. As much of the professional ethos in your field revolves around making information accessible and equitable, you hope to publish your scholarly work openly. Then, as you prepare a manuscript submission, you encounter barriers within the open access (OA) landscape: enormous fees, confusing licensing options, unfamiliar repository systems, open data requirements, and possibly predatory journals. A junior scholar must learn a whole new language in order to publish openly, and when that junior scholar is an academic librarian, they may even be expected to instruct others in this new language before they feel fluent themselves. Furthermore, they may start to wonder if the core professional ethics of librarianship, such as equitable access to information, are currently in alignment with their field's publication choices and realities. Is the scholarly output of the library community moving toward OA, open data, and even open peer review?

We are three faculty librarians at a doctoral-granting research university where peer-reviewed scholarship is required for our reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Two of us are new to

publishing library-focused research. We are all interested in publishing our scholarship openly, which led us to ask:

- How "open" are journals in the librarianship field?
- How easily accessible are the OA policies of library journals?
- Are journals in our field adopting the practices of open peer review and open data requirements?
- Is there a relationship between OA practices of a journal and the type of publisher?
- Is there a difference between OA practices of journals indexed in a commercial database versus an independent, not-for-profit database?

To navigate this complex dynamic, Šobota (2024) has proposed critical OA literacy as a strategy to address the challenges of OA publishing. They write that critical OA literacy can empower scholars to understand, analyze, critique, and challenge the economic, social, political, legal, and technological conditions and implications of OA (Šobota, 2024). This article aims to provide an overview of the web of variables associated with OA publishing through a lens of critical analysis. Within this article, we present the findings from a dataset of 133 journals in the field of librarianship. We used a mixed methods approach to perform an environmental scan of the state of OA in these selected library journals during the spring of 2023. We discovered wide variation in both OA policies and the availability, consistency, and clarity of these policies. This article advocates for increased support for researchers to publish openly and a focused strategy of critical OA literacy that will help scholars feel more informed about their publishing choices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Open versus toll access

OA is defined by the Budapest Open Access Initiative (2002, para. 3) as follows:

> [F]ree availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.

OA literature is found in journals, repositories, and on authors' websites. The origins of OA publishing, at least in its most recent digital iteration, can be traced over a quarter century

(Seiferle-Valencia, 2020). In the field of librarianship, the first OA journal, according to its website, was *The Public-Access Computer Systems Review* (https://hdl.handle.net/10657/4718). This journal, published between 1990 and 1998, covered issues like digital libraries, electronic publishing, the internet, and online catalogs. Around the same time, the Census Bureau began collecting data about home internet use (Ryan, 2018), and people like David Wiley proposed the idea of openly licensing intellectual property (Wiley, 2016; Bliss and Smith, 2017). Four years later, Lawrence Lessig developed the first iteration of Creative Commons licenses (Lessig, 2005). This literature review will focus on OA trends, opportunities, and best practices.

In contrast to OA is toll access, in which either a publisher charges the reader for access to an article or a publisher charges an institution to access articles and journals (Suber, 2012). OA has grown in part as a response to library serial subscriptions prices, which have risen faster than inflation and library budgets (Suber, 2012; Cronk, 2020). Scholars criticize this model of scholarly publishing. For example, Suber (2012) describes toll access as having "more to fear from their own price increases than from rising levels of green OA" (p. 158).

Open access models

OA materials are often published in three common ways: green, gold, and diamond. Green OA articles are openly archived by authors in repositories (Suber, 2012). When authors deposit work in an institutional repository, Gargouri et al. (2010) found this work is cited more often than authors who do not self-archive; however, some journals have an embargo period that prohibits posting articles online anywhere from six months to several years (Neville and Crampsie, 2019). In contrast to green OA, gold OA articles are published in journals that bill authors or their institutions article processing charges (APCs) (Demeter et al., 2021). APCs can run thousands of dollars (McMillan et al., 2016). Some libraries and institutions provide funding for APCs to encourage more OA publishing (McMillan et al., 2016). Another publishing option for authors is diamond or platinum OA, which means journals do not charge fees for authors or readers (Plan S, 2024). This model is most desired by the OA movement (Ma et al., 2023) because articles are published without cost to readers or authors (Ancion et al., 2021). Volunteers or library workers often run diamond OA journals, which are published in a diverse range of countries.

Institutions interested in open research sometimes issue OA mandates, which require researchers to publish their work either gold or green OA (Suber, 2012; Mering, 2020). Gargouri et al. (2010) researched institutional mandates and found an average uptake of around 60% for institutions with mandates, compared to around 15% for institutions without. At the time of writing, over 1,100 policies encourage or require OA publication on

ROARMAP, an international registry of OA mandates. Despite these mandates, Zhang et al. (2015) found that encouraging rather than requiring authors to self-archive more successfully furthers open scholarship.

Advantages and challenges of open publishing

One long-perceived advantage of OA publishing is called the citation advantage: "The real cause of the higher OA advantage for the more citable articles is not a quality bias from author self-selection but the quality advantage of the more citable articles, an advantage that OA enhances by maximizing accessibility, and thereby also citability" (Gargouri et al., 2010, p. 11). Enhancing accessibility is a core principle of librarianship, as is the commitment to lifelong learning and literacy. Peter Suber (2012) writes, "[T]he same evidence suggesting that OA increases citation impact also suggests that it increases readers and reading" (p. 154). Basson et al. (2021) found that citation advantages exist only for specific subject areas; however, some studies suggest there is no citation advantage from OA publishing (Evans and Reimer, 2009; Salisbury et al., 2017).

Perceptions of OA publishing can vary. Faculty with OA publishing experience view the model more positively than faculty without (Peekhaus and Proferes, 2015). Meanwhile, views about OA publishing vary according to rank; in a survey by Peekhaus and Proferes (2015), the authors found, "Assistant professors (74%) are the most likely across all faculty ranks to agree to some extent that all scholarly articles should be free for everyone to access online, followed by associate professors (62%), full professors (59%), and professors emeriti (8%)" (p. 645). Junior faculty often worry about OA publishing negatively impacting their careers (Peekhaus and Proferes, 2015). Fisher (2007) offers one possible solution: Universities can recognize OA scholarship in their criteria for promotion and tenure.

Academic elitism also contributes to misperceptions surrounding OA publishing. Bashir et al. (2022) write that the belief in which journals published behind a paywall are more credible creates a scholarly "class system." Often, the view is that free implies low-quality content (Fisher, 2007), and many faculty are unsure how promotion and tenure committees will evaluate OA publishing (Peekhaus and Proferes, 2015). The literature is unclear about whether OA publishing is consequential for promotion and tenure. Neville and Crampsie (2019) describe this as a result of the "tenure and promotion culture" that can hinder the growth of OA practices. Predatory journals also harm the image of OA. It can be difficult to distinguish legitimate OA journals from predatory journals, which have found their way into trusted sources such as PubMed (Manca et al., 2018). Further complicating the issue is the lack of an agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a predatory journal (Manca et al., 2018; Schultz et al., 2023). This confusion and academic traditionalism directly and negatively impacts new

and emerging professionals entering scholarly discourse. Furthermore, underrepresented scholars, either through positionality, research, or both, often become doubly underrepresented in traditional publishing paradigms.

Open access economics

The publishing industry is not likely to change of its own volition. Big publishers (BP) have no financial reason to change their methods as their subscription income remains unchanged (Björk, 2013). Even though the publishing industry might seem impervious to change, scholars have sway. Suber (2012) writes that authors control their work and where it is published. One irony is that while scholars may *feel* powerless against BP, they provide the research, intellectual content, and free labor driving it. Bergstrom (2001) posited more than twenty years ago that academics would be less likely to supply journals with free labor upon realizing the exorbitant pricing of academic journals.

There has been no change in this situation in the last 20 years; the publishing industry still relies on free labor whether or not journal articles are published behind a paywall. While commercial publishers can make a profit using free labor from authors, diamond OA publishers often rely on the free labor both of authors and of editorial staff. The commercial nature of BP may drive this; Majumdar (2023) writes this current model supports capitalist establishments that undermine access to publicly funded research. Bergstrom asserts that commercial publishers profit from academia: "In no other industry does one produce material of great value, give it to others, and allow them to sell it back to the community that created it and at a high price" (as cited in Fisher, 2007). This practice depletes university budgets and results in information starvation (Bergstrom, 2001; Majumdar, 2023). Even though OA publishing is not as widely understood as traditional publishing, the model is gaining traction.

Applying open practices

As journals open up, other aspects of publication are slowly transforming. Chakravarty and Diksha (2020) assessed library journals in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and found that a majority of the journals applied varying degrees of blind peer review while only 1% were openly peer reviewed. Ford (2013) writes that open peer review can promote social justice, while closed peer review can cultivate elitism. Sewell (2023) writes that the collaborative aspects of open peer review embody an "ethics of care" (p. 800). Definitions of open peer review vary, but many researchers agree the process makes peer reviewers' identities public (Ford, 2013). Open peer review not only allows readers to assess the quality of the review process (Majumdar, 2023) but also involves less gatekeeping and supports "open access and feminist practices" (Sewell, 2023, p. 800). Rodríguez-Bravo et al. (2017) noted that

some early career researchers have concerns about open peer review exposing them to criticism and potentially abuse. However, Majumdar (2023) views this openness positively because the reader can scrutinize the review process; similarly, Tattersall (2015) views open peer review positively for its potential to increase accountability in the peer review process. Ford's (2013) descriptions of open peer review characteristics in Figure 1 are still applicable.

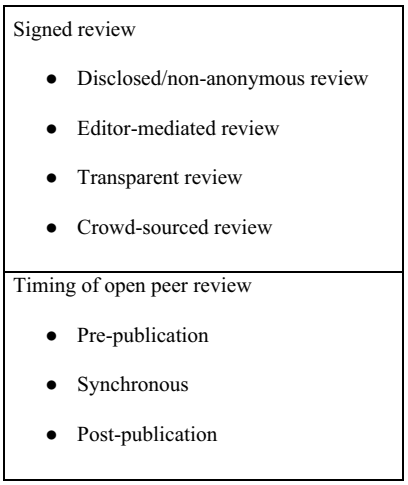

Figure 1. Characteristics of open peer review (Ford, 2013).

Research data is also becoming more accessible. van Gend and Zuiderwijk (2023) define open research data as freely available in formats that can be read by machines, classified with metadata, and openly licensed to allow its re-use and modification. Jackson (2021) writes that open research data can increase transparency. Papers with openly published research data have been found to have a citation advantage (Piwowar and Vision, 2013; Fu et al., 2023), positively impacting scholars' reputations and propelling research. Sometimes, foundations and agencies require researchers to publish their data openly (Pittman, 2010; Latham, 2017; Brainard, 2019). Publishers and academic publishing associations have created guidelines for data citation and sharing, and big publishing houses more often have open data policies (Jackson, 2021).

Increasingly, academic librarians curate open data by developing systems and infrastructure to store and manage it (Latham, 2017). There are many reasons why researchers do not publish their research data; for example, privacy, confidentiality, and ethics concerns may prohibit some researchers from openly publishing their data (Jackson, 2021). However, some researchers do not openly publish research data for the same reasons they are reluctant to embrace OA publishing. Time, money, and licensing concerns may hinder researchers from openly publishing their data (Wicherts and Bakker, 2012; van Gend and Zuiderwijk, 2023). Wicherts

and Bakker (2012) also state that openly publishing research data preserves and helps facilitate the scientific rigor of datasets because a broader range of researchers with diverse perspectives can access and interpret the data, similar to how Majumdar (2023) writes that opening up peer review allows readers to investigate its merits. Wicherts and Bakker (2012) write that open data tends to be more updated, thorough, and rigorous. Despite the potential benefits of opening up publication steps, the overall openness of library journals can be complicated to predict without a detailed analysis. For example, BP, which relies on subscription pricing, often has internal mechanisms like blanket statements that encourage researchers to openly publish their data while ironically publishing the interpretations and discussions of that data behind a paywall.

METHODS

Our study analyzed library journals in the Proquest subscription-based database Library and Information Sciences Abstracts (LISA), a commercial database focused on librarianship, as well as the DOAJ. We used the Frameworks for an Integrated Methodology (FraIM) to examine the openness of librarianship journals. We collected empirical data using quantitative and qualitative methods (Plowright, 2011). The basic structure of FRaIM is illustrated in Figure 2. We gathered information from each journal to identify their OA practices and analyze whether there were patterns related to each one's publishing model, peer review process (open or closed), and open data policies. The framework's basic structure drove the design of our research, data collection, and analysis.

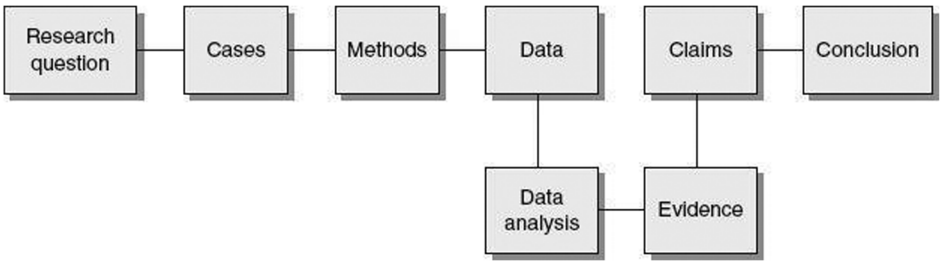

Figure 2. Basic Structure of the FRAIM (Plowright, 2011).

Study design

To analyze library journals in LISA and the DOAJ, our research group met biweekly beginning in January 2023 and collaborated within shared documents. We scoped our dataset to assess current OA practices in librarianship-focused journals. We gathered 377 scholarly journals covering the work of librarians, archivists, and affiliated information professionals. This

data encompassed 222 journals from LISA, widely regarded as authoritative partly because of its robust thesaurus and international coverage. One hundred and forty-four librarianship journals in this study were indexed in the DOAJ, widely recognized as a comprehensive source for OA journals across disciplines and subjects (Rathinasabapathy & Veeranjaneyulu, 2022). We also included 11 other journals not indexed in the DOAJ or LISA, based on our knowledge of existing OA library journals. All 11 are peer reviewed, and most are from state library associations. Ultimately, our group examined open peer review policies, open data policies, and type(s) of OA models offered.

Data collection and scoping

To explore the current state of OA scholarly publishing in librarianship, we developed the following criteria: Journals must be published at the time of analysis, peer reviewed, and scoped to librarianship and must have articles or abstracts in English so that we could determine the journal's scope. After applying inclusion/exclusion criteria, 145 of 377 journals remained; however, the total number of journals analyzed is 133. The DOAJ and LISA shared 12 journals, and each journal was only counted once in the total number of journals. However, these 12 journals were analyzed in both groups to accurately reflect the OA practices of each group and to prevent skewing the analysis of either group's OA practices. Additionally, we chose to analyze each group of journals (LISA and DOAJ) separately to understand the commonalities and differences between a commercial database and an independent database. See Figure 4 for a complete look at the breakdown of publication options in aggregate and by journal grouping. The full list of journals in our study is openly published.

LISA.

Using a comprehensive list obtained from the publisher Proquest, we scanned the list of indexed works in the database LISA, and we eliminated journals from our analysis using the following criteria: (1) Only scholarly and peer-reviewed journals were retained, excluding works such as magazines, trade journals, book reviews, and conference papers and proceedings; (2) journals had to be current; (3) the journals were either published or translated into English, or they had an English-language abstract; and (4) the journals focused on library science, which Song et al. (2023) state is related to reading, public library research, information sharing services, and information literacy. The journals we included in our research did not focus on information science, which is more related to informatics, data services, or distributed technology systems. Song et al. (2023) also state that information science covers topics related to competitive intelligence, or the ability to gather and use information that could affect business, and information analysis. We were able to distinguish between journals that focused on library science versus information science by assessing the journal's title, stated scope, contents, and recent issues.

Criterion 1 was based on the notion that promotion and tenure review boards often require peer review for scholarly work published as part of tenure and promotion dossiers. As tenured and tenure-track faculty librarians, we were particularly interested in understanding the landscape of scholarly library research we are in conversation with. Furthermore, we wanted to evaluate whether journals had open or closed peer review, which made peer review a required component for any potential journal in our analysis. LISA categorized six journals as "scholarly" that did not use a peer review process; therefore, we excluded them from our study. Criterion 2 was applied to illustrate the contemporary state of OA in library-focused publications; only current journals were analyzed. We determined currency by verifying that at least one issue was published during 2022. Criterion 3 was necessary for the researchers to fully assess the journals' scope, since we are all English-speaking. We eliminated those we could not read. Unfortunately, this limits the vast number of journals published in the Global South. Criterion 4 was our final inclusion metric; we reviewed current and back issues to ensure the journal was within the desired scope of our research. This scoping process left us with 73 LISA journals meeting our criteria.

DOAJ.

Researchers applied the same criteria to DOAJ journals. Unlike acquiring an index of journals in LISA, researchers examined each librarianship journal in the DOAJ. To identify librarianship journals in the DOAJ, researchers searched for journals whose scope fell under the following subject area terms: librar* (to cover library, libraries, librarian, librarians, librarianship). Selected journals were also classified under the DOAJ subject heading "Bibliography. Library science. Information resources." After applying these filters, we found 144 journals. Each journal's website was assessed for the four criteria mentioned above. Ultimately, we included 61 DOAJ journals in our research.

Additional journals.

In addition to the LISA database and DOAJ, 11 journals were identified for inclusion; these were not indexed in LISA or DOAJ but met all other criteria for analysis. We recognize this list is probably incomplete because it stems from the researchers' knowledge of available OA journals in librarianship.

Scoping the data.

We evaluated the journals using different tabs on a single spreadsheet. Journal titles were assigned to each researcher, who used journal and/or publisher website information to evaluate the journal's OA policies. For each journal, we looked for information on what type, if any, of

OA publishing practice was followed, whether the journal had an open data policy and/or an open peer review policy, and whether publications allowed for Creative Commons licensing. We also recorded whether a journal had APCs, along with its publisher, type of publisher (commercial, university press, etc.), and country and region of publication. We categorized regions using the following groups: South America, North America, Africa, Asia and Australia, and Europe. More specific details on data collection and scoping are published in an open dataset.

Gathering and verifying this information was time-consuming. The LISA database included journal information such as subjects, place of publication, and publisher; other information, like OA practices and licensing information, was gathered outside the database on individual journal websites. Identifying policies on journal websites was difficult because each had its own organizational structure. Sometimes, it was impossible to identify a journal's OA practices. Sometimes, searching was circular: After investigating author guidelines on a journal's site, the researchers were directed back to the publisher's site. The DOAJ maintains a dedicated web page for each journal it indexes on its website. These web pages include journals' URLs, first date of OA publishing, APC costs, and licensing details. However, we cross-checked any data we found on DOAJ web pages with official journal websites. When we encountered inconsistencies, a journal's website superseded the DOAJ, as the DOAJ does not continuously update journal information. On journal websites, we also verified scope a second time and collected peer review and data policies.

To determine gold, green, or diamond OA, we often needed to read through the author guidelines because OA designations might not be explicitly stated. We inferred diamond OA designations by exploring journals' publication policies (i.e., journals are immediately available on the web at the point of publication and they do not charge any fees). To determine whether a journal was gold OA, we investigated whether a journal imposed APCs. Finally, we determined whether a journal allowed green OA publishing by looking for guidelines on self-archiving.

Interestingly, identifying the OA classification for each journal was often easier than determining other characteristics of openness. Finding the actual peer review policies of journals could be difficult. While the style of peer review could be included in the journal description, many journals' information was found on the submission guidelines for authors. Moreover, specific details about APCs were difficult to find and sometimes embedded behind the login area of a journal's editorial system at the point of article submission. This evidence confirms previous research that illustrates the often indirect path of OA publishing (Peekhaus and Proferes, 2015; Wical and Kocken, 2017; Neville and Crampsie, 2019).

Determining the open data policies of each journal was the most complex task. Open data policies were available on publishers' and individual journal websites. Larger publishing houses like Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Sage had open data policies that encouraged sharing original research, aligning with Jackson's (2021) findings that journals published by large commercial publishers were more likely than independent journals to have a data sharing policy. Jackson (2021) asserts large publishers adopted data sharing policies for journals in other disciplines and could easily extend them to library journals. Meanwhile, editorial boards in smaller but impactful presses, *College and Research Libraries* for example, are thus far debating the topic of open data policies (Wang et al., 2023).

Publishers' websites often advised authors to review the open data policies on each of their journal's websites. Within the journals indexed through LISA, 34 of the 73 journals had open data policies. Open data policies were located in a variety of places: On a parent organization website, under a journal website's "About" tab or "Author Guidelines" area, in a separate author guidelines document linked out in a PDF, and lastly, some journals' open data policies were in the submission area of their site. As a result, one limitation to this research is being definitively certain we ascertained all journal open data policies. All of the 34 LISA journals with open data policies in this study, except for one, had policies that "encouraged" researchers to publish their data. The exception was the *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, which requires their researchers to publish their data (*JMLA*, 2024).

Whether indexed in LISA (73 journals), the DOAJ (61 journals), or neither (11 journals), each of the 133 journals we ultimately analyzed underwent detailed verification. We calculated how many journals offered OA publication and what type, and how many had open peer review and open data policies. We overlaid this with publisher information, using Excel and Google Sheets to organize and visualize these intersections.

RESULTS

Before describing the results in Figure 3, we offer an explanation of the categories for publication options. If a journal only offers a traditional subscription model, it is labeled toll access. If a journal is fully OA with no charges associated, it is labeled diamond. Journals that only offer publication with payment of an APC are labeled gold. Journals offering a choice between toll access or gold are labeled as hybrid. Journals offering OA after a limited amount of time are labeled embargo/delay. All of the aforementioned categories are standard when analyzing OA publications. However, we also chose to offer a category of hybrid-green. This category allows for differentiation between hybrid journals only offering toll access or gold options (as described above, labeled hybrid) and journals offering toll access, gold, or green options

(labeled hybrid-green). We wanted to know which of these options was more common among librarianship journals, hence the bifurcation of the hybrid category.

Figure 3 shows that diamond OA is by far the most common publishing option offered across all journals analyzed, at 85 of 133 journals. This is followed by 33 journals offering hybrid-green, 8 offering toll access, 4 offering hybrid, 2 offering gold, and 1 offering embargoed OA.

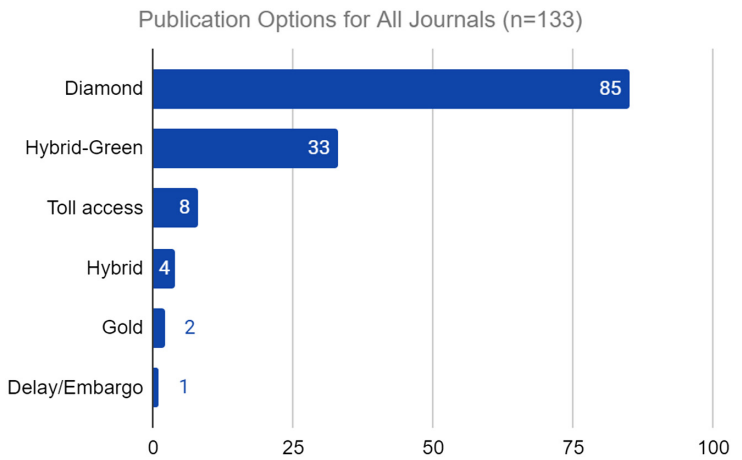

Figure 3. Publication Options for All Journals.

In Figure 4, publication options are disaggregated by journal group (LISA, DOAJ, additional journals). We also included the data represented in Figure 3 to visually compare the

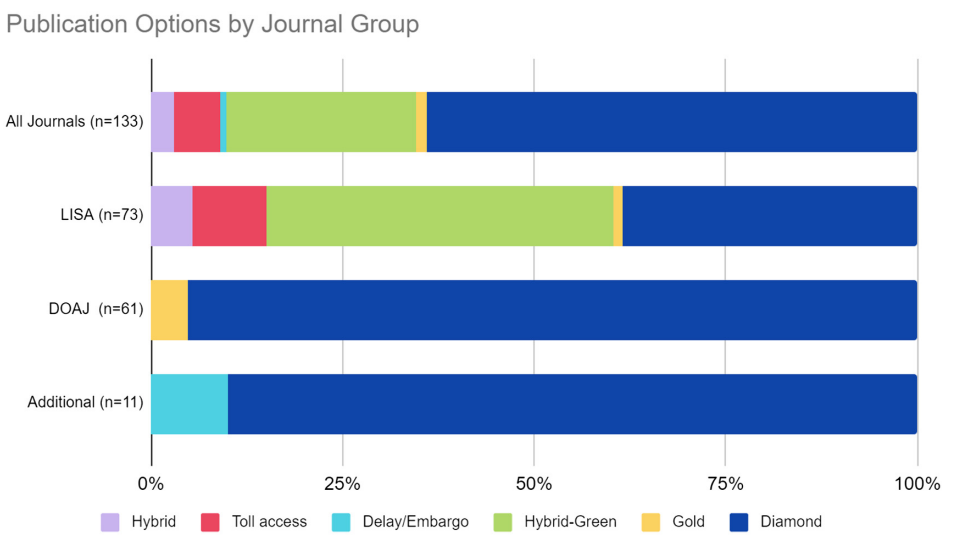

Figure 4. Publication Options by Journal Group.

disaggregated and the aggregated data. Journals grouped in DOAJ do not offer toll access publication options, as this would exclude them for inclusion in DOAJ. Only two (3%) of the 61 DOAJ journals offer gold, with 59 (97%) offering diamond. The additional journals group also had a high number of diamond journals, 10 (91%) of the 11. The remaining journal is delayed OA. The LISA group contained the most variation. It had almost as many diamond journals as hybrid-green journals. Diamond comprised 28 (or 38%) of the total 73, and hybrid-green comprised 33 (or 45%). Toll access journals only accounted for 10% of the total with 7 journals, hybrid journals accounted for 5% with 4 journals, and gold journals accounted for 1% with 1 journal.

Figure 5 shows our analysis of the types of publishers represented in each journal group. We categorized publisher type as Association (professional association and society publishers), Independent (without commercial or other institutional affiliation), Commercial (for-profit, traditional publishers), Large Academic (large-scale, revenue-driven university presses), and finally, smaller-scale academic publishers are categorized as University, Library, or Archive (ULA). We opted for the Large Academic category of analysis due to the differences in business models and scale between them and smaller academic and library publishers. We wanted to evaluate whether there were meaningful variations in OA practices because of these differences.

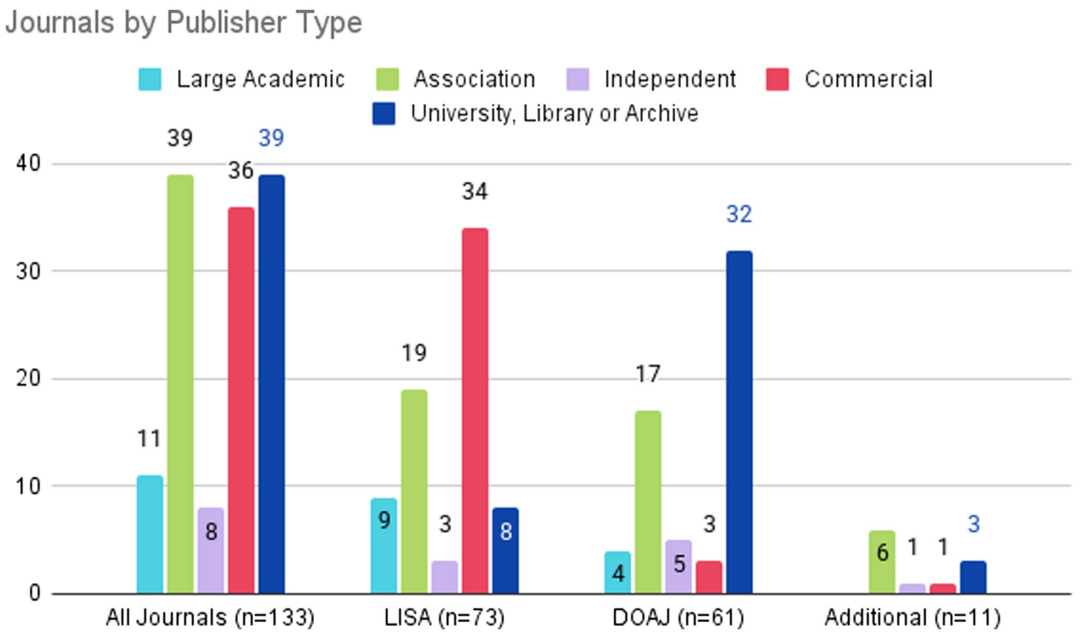

Figure 5. Journals by Publisher Type.

Figure 5 shows an aggregate of publisher type data first, as well as a breakdown by journal group. As mentioned earlier, there were 12 journals located both in the DOAJ and LISA; for this reason, the three graphs on the right in Figure 5 will not add up to the "All Journals" graph. We see that Association and ULA publishers are represented equally in the aggregate group. Commercial publishers are represented most in the LISA group, as anticipated in a commercial database. ULA publishers are represented most in the DOAJ group, with much more representation than Large Academic publishers. LISA had slightly more Large Academic publishers than ULA, but both categories were fewer than 10. Association publishers were very closely represented in the LISA and DOAJ groups, and they represented the largest number in the additional journals group.

Figure 6 shows which publication options are available from each publisher type. In our dataset, 36 Commercial publishers offer 4 (11%) of their journals as diamond. This low number is not surprising; however, the even lower number of toll access journals is surprising, at only 3 (8%). Hybrid and hybrid-green make up the remainder, at 4 (11%) and 25 (69%) respectively. The ULA, Association, and Independent publishers in our dataset are all 75% or more diamond. Large Academic publishers were closely split between diamond and hybrid-green options, but they were the only other group beside Commercial publishers whose offerings of diamond OA were less than 50%. In this sense, Large Academic publishers are more aligned with Commercial publishers than with smaller ULA publishers.

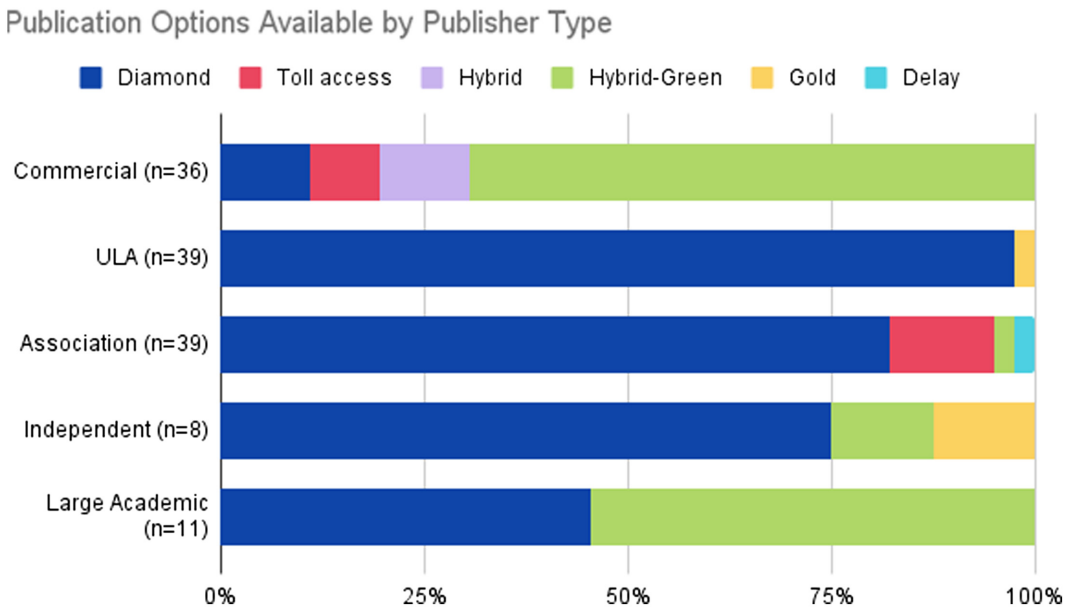

Figure 6. Publication Options Available by Publisher Type.

Our research group gathered data on open peer review and open data policies to gain a fuller picture of OA practice. Figure 7 shows that, across all 133 journals, only 7 offer open peer review; 3 come from our additional list and 2 each from LISA and the DOAJ.

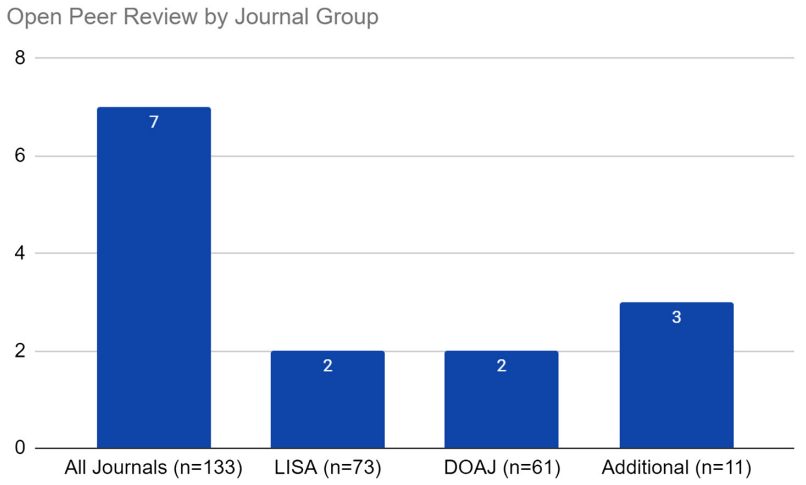

Figure 7. Open Peer Review by Journal Group.

Figure 8 shows that all the open peer review policies found were in diamond journals, except for one in a hybrid-green journal. We did not find any policies associated with hybrid, gold, delayed, or toll access journals.

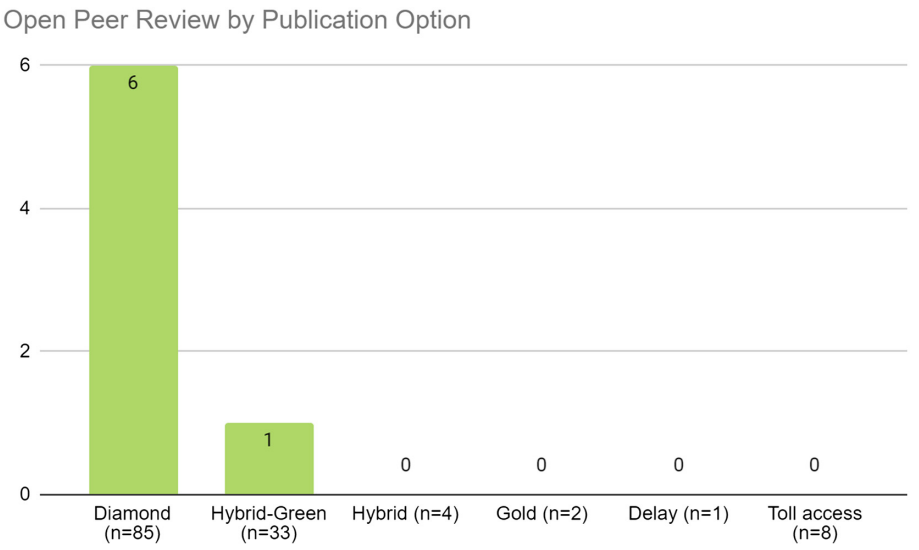

Figure 8. Open Peer Review by Publication Option.

Figure 9 shows that a great many more journals, at 50, have an open data policy as compared to the low number of open peer review policies. As mentioned, these open data policies almost exclusively encourage, not require, making research data open. LISA has the highest number of journals with open data policies, at 34. The DOAJ has 16, and our additional list has 3. LISA contains the highest number of commercially published journals, once again aligning with Jackson's (2021) findings that journals published by large commercial publishers were more likely than independent journals to have a data sharing policy. We see this in Figure 10, which disaggregates the 50 journals with open data policies: 31 from Commercial, 10 from ULA, 4 from Association, 3 from Large Academic, and 2 from Independent publishers.

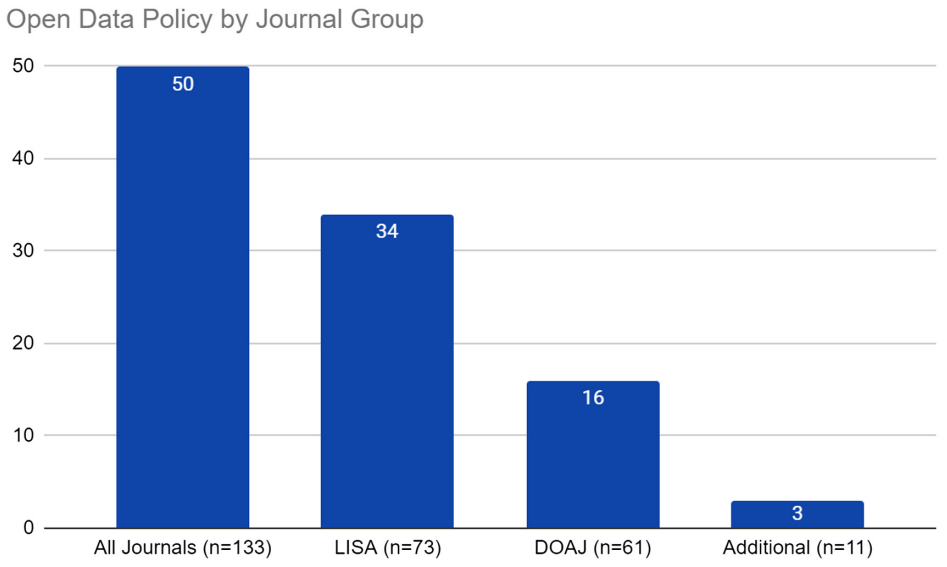

Figure 9. Open Data Policy by Journal Group.

Figure 11 shows that open data policies are most often found in hybrid journals, with all of the 4 journals having policies. For hybrid-green journals, 26 of 33 have policies. This is in line with the aforementioned findings that demonstrate their frequency in commercially published journals. Almost as many open data policies (19) are found in diamond journals. However, among 85 diamond journals, the 19 with open data policies make up only 22%, in contrast to hybrid-green journals, among which 26 journals make up 79% of the total 33.

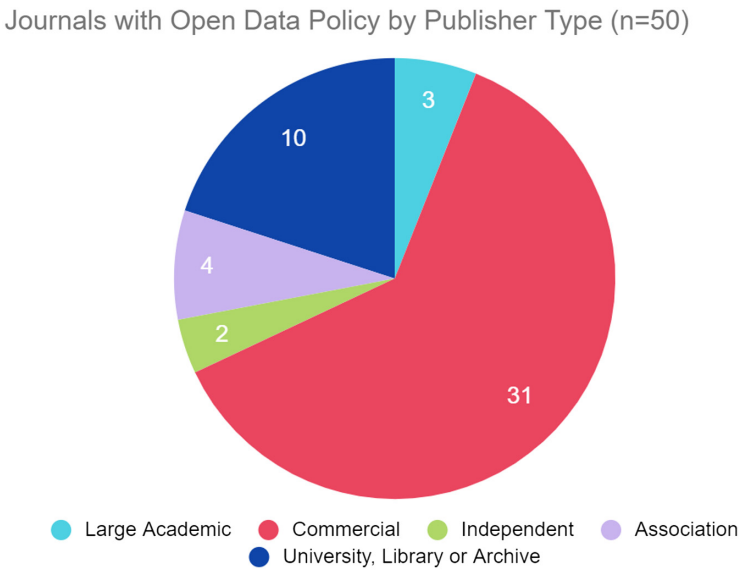

Figure 10. Journals With Open Data Policy by Publisher Type.

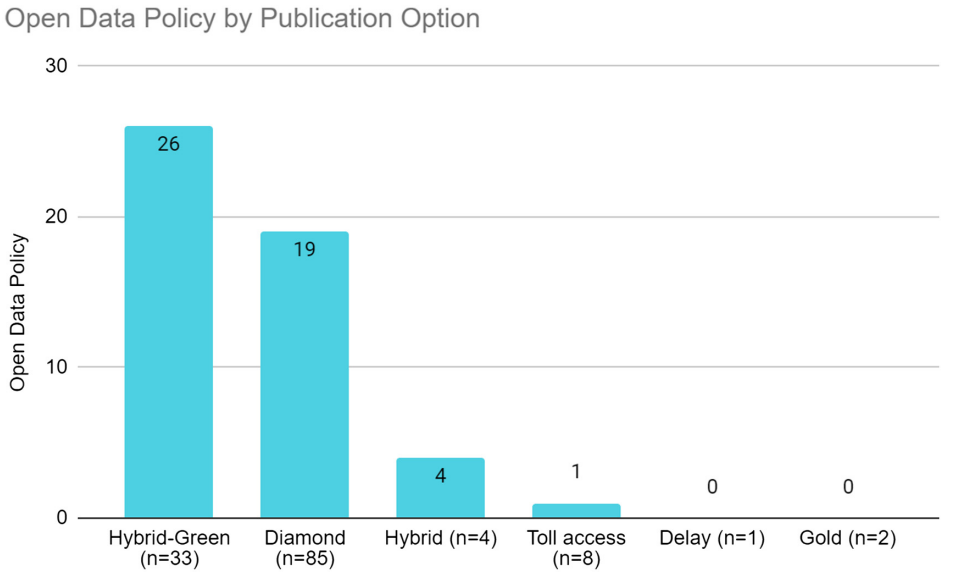

Figure 11. Open Data Policy by Publication Option.

Only two journals, *Code4Lib* and *Journal of Open Educational Resources in Education*, have both open peer review and an open data policy. Both are diamond journals and from North America. One is independently published, and the other is affiliated with a university library.

DISCUSSION

Diamond OA and labor

Diamond OA was the most prevalent publication option in the journals we analyzed. It is often touted as the ideal because it lacks fees and the final product is openly published (Ma et al. 2023). However, we recognize that publishing a diamond OA journal is not cost-neutral. The labor of editing and producing the journal, when performed by academic employees, can be considered service work, which is an expected component of many academic roles. However, since editorial labor for a diamond OA publication is not directly remunerated, it can also be conceived of as unpaid. Either conception leaves room for imbalances in power and workload, as requirements for annual research and service records are often different between faculty ranks and job roles.

Open peer review and open data policies

We found variations in all the open peer review policies we identified. It can be difficult for authors to understand what an open peer review process might look like, or what the benefits or drawbacks might be, without more consistency among policies. For example, *In The Library With The Leadpipe*'s open peer review process included a review by both a journal editor and an outside editor, and *Code4Lib*'s open peer review process included the author working with an editor or two before the article was screened by a large editorial committee (Rochkind, 2012). And the *Journal of Open Educational Resources in Higher Education* publishes open peer reviews alongside published articles. This research is in line with Ross-Hellauer (2017) and Ford (2017), who write there is no standardized definition or agreed-upon framework for its application. Majumdar (2023) writes the absence of standardized open peer review guidelines makes assessing the practice difficult.

While there was less variation among the content of identified open data policies, they could be difficult to locate, and often were not prominently displayed among journal guidelines. Again, increased consistency and transparency around these policies would benefit all those seeking to contribute to the field.

Article processing charges

When it comes to funding one's gold OA scholarship, our findings show that obtaining specific details about APCs can prove difficult. Those prices were sometimes embedded behind the login area of a journal's editorial system at the point of article submission, which could create an obstacle for researchers at an important and stressful time of the writing process, right

before one sends out their work. Increased consistency and transparency in APC information would benefit scholars.

Our findings emphasize the need for clear guidelines and increased information literacy to address challenges in OA publishing. Some of these challenges include 1) understanding the different types of OA publishing and what is allowed and expected by each, 2) the different types of open peer review, and 3) finding and understanding open data policies.

CONCLUSION

Though assessing the current state of OA in librarianship journals is complex, we assert that librarianship as a field has made meaningful strides in adopting OA practices. This finding is encouraging, as librarians are often helping scholars navigate the OA publishing landscape through instruction and consultation, maintaining institutional repositories, employing data curators, publishing OA journals, administering funding for APCs, and managing open educational resource initiatives, which are often run through libraries and are aimed at reducing textbook costs for students. Additionally, as Majumdar (2023) writes, academic librarians can further OA practices through educating campus stakeholders.

While librarianship as a field has largely adopted OA publishing practices, new and emerging library workers can face difficulty in navigating the paradigm for their own publications. This underscores the complexity of the current landscape, and the need for a framework of understanding that can be responsive to the rapidly changing environment. Šobota (2024) proposes such a construct that applies critical information literacy to the challenges of OA publishing:

> [C]ritical OA literacy should empower scholars to understand, analyze, critique, and challenge the economic, social, political, legal, and technological conditions, aspects, and implications of OA and its underlying ideologies and narratives, the economic models that drive it, and its financial publishing models—the scholarly communication system overall, as well as its power dynamics, tensions, and flaws. (p. 178)

Šobota (2024) encourages scholars to apply critical information literacy practices as they research and publish. This study advocates for authors to navigate OA publishing with an informed approach. We recommend strategies such as utilizing institutional repositories, exploring institutional support for APCs, and considering diamond OA when possible. We also recommend that researchers, journals, and publishers promote open data policies and seek out the assistance that academic libraries may offer with data curation and storage.

By codifying the worth of OA publishing, academics can counter the current publishing paradigm, making the process of scholarship more accessible for all.

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