

EDITORIAL**Publishing in the Digital Era: Open Access Journals Model****Abdelrahim Mutwakel Gaffar Ali**

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The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) was launched in 2003 at Lund University, Sweden. DOAJ is a membership organization, Publisher, Ordinary Member and Sponsor are the three membership available categories. It is a community-curated list of open access journals and aims to be the starting point for all information searches for quality, peer reviewed open access material. Membership in the DOAJ is a vibrant declaration of intent and proves a commitment to quality, peer-reviewed open access. To support Open Access Journals (OAJ) community, DOAJ is co-author to the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (Principles) (<https://doaj.org/bestpractice>) and DOAJ members are expected to pursue these principles as a condition of membership.

In 2002, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) includes only 31 journals, now there are more than 9,206 Journals including 2,329,619 articles from 128 country ⁽¹⁾ (Figure 1). Open Access Journals (OAJ) Model is based on the Creative Commons license and usually utilize Open Source Software (OSS) solution; the Open Journal Systems (OJS). Traditionally, scientists and students in low and middle income countries seldom have access to full text articles. Recently, OAJ model became the first publishing option for most of researchers and fund agencies. Because OA serves the interests of many groups including:

- Authors -
Readers
- Teachers and students
- Libraries
- Universities
- Journals and publishers
- Funding agencies
- Governments
- Citizens

EDITORIAL

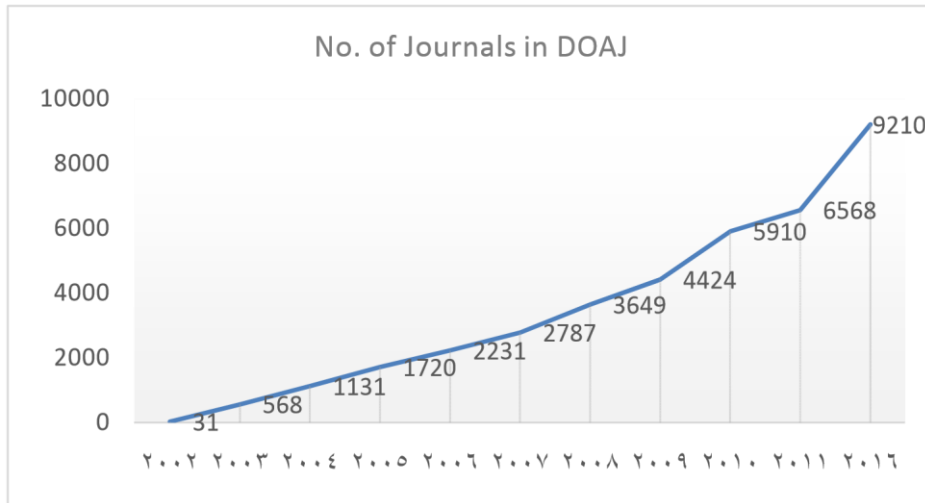


Figure (1): Number of Journals in the DOAJ 2002 - 2016 (Nov 10, 2016)

Unfortunately, till now no journal from the Sudan is listed in the DOAJ. Recently, on Nov 17th, 2016, the University of Gezira, hosted a seminar titled “Publishing in the Digital Era: University of Gezira Journals Situations and the Way Forward”. The aim was to discuss Gezira University Journals current status and propose action plan to migrate to OAJ model. The seminar was organized by Faculty of Medicine, Gezira Journal of Health Sciences and Education Development and Research Center in collaboration with Health Information Systems Program - Middle East and North Africa Network (HISP-MENA Network). HISP-MENA Network is a non-for-profit multidisciplinary network of professionals and institutions advocate and promote the implementation of DHIS 2 and Open Source Software (OSS) solutions to improve equity, efficiency and quality of health services in MENA region countries.⁽²⁾

University of Gezira, Deanship of Higher Studies and Scientific Research publish five bi-annual peer-reviewed journals since 2003; namely:

1. Gezira Journal of Agricultural Sciences.
2. Gezira Journal of Educational Sciences and Humanities.
3. Gezira Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences.
4. Gezira Journal of Health Sciences.
5. Gezira Journal of Economic and Social Sciences.
6. Taphakour Journal

All these journals are regular and implement rigorous peer-review standards but they are not indexed in any international databases nor using Open Journal Systems for editorial flow management. University of Gezira has unique community oriented teaching and research approach and is in excellent position to contribute to national and regional development. University of Gezira is committed to open access philosophy and knowledge transfer and sharing principles, thus Open Access Journals Model is the best fit to fulfil the University vision and mission.

EDITORIAL

It is obvious that all societies need knowledge to develop. Using Creative Commons (CC) licensing and publishing research result in open access journals will enhance the availability of full text articles and serve the interest of all stakeholders. We believe that University of Gezira have strong foundation, great efforts and a lot of ideas to share with the national and global community. It is highly and urgently recommended that GJHS and other University of Gezira Journals should migrate to Open Access Journals Models to increase their visibility in the digital Era, and submit them for indexing in relevant international databases.

Acknowledgement

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References:

1. DOAJ. Directory of Open Access Journals [Internet]. DOAJ. 2016 [cited 2016 Dec 15]. Available from: www.doaj.org
2. HISP-MENA. HISP-MENA Network [Internet]. Avicenna LLC. 2016 [cited 2016 Dec 15]. Available from: www.avicenna-llc.us