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ARE THEY BEING INDEXED II? A FOLLOW UP TO TRACKING THE INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING OF OPEN ACCESS JOURNALS

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Abstract

With flat budgets and journal price increases, libraries find it necessary to invent ways to provide access to scholarly content at as low a cost as possible. Open access journals are a potential scholarly resource but if open access journals are to fulfill their promise, their inclusion in the indexing and abstracting services used by scholars and researchers is essential. The “Are they being indexed” project, first presented at the 2007 Charleston Conference, created a model using 78 Library and Information Science journals in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). That project has been expanded to cover more subject areas and refined based on experience and comments made at the 2007 session. The session will feature a presentation of data from new subject areas that have been studied in the DOAJ, a brief review of previous data with updates, and a critique of the methodology. Attendees will come away with a greater understanding of the content and impact of the DOAJ and the implications this may have on serial collections and scholarly resources at their library as well as have an opportunity to comment on the study and methodology.

Introduction

A journal's inclusion in the indexing and abstracting services used by scholars and researchers is essential to discover the content of the journal. The original purpose of this project was to design a model for tracking the inclusion of open access journals in recognized indexing and abstracting services and to test the model. With the successful testing, presentation of the findings at the 2007 Charleston Conference, and a replication of the model by Edward Hart for legal journals in the DOAJ, it was time to expand the research to another subject area and to review the previous study's data for change.

Research design / data collection and analysis

1. In the 2007 pilot study, 78 Library and Information Science journals in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) were checked for inclusion in Library Literature & Information Science (LibLit), Library & Information Science Abstracts (LISA), Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA), Information Science & Technology Abstracts (ISTA), Trade & Industry Index (T&I), and Social Science Citation Index (SocSCI). Ulrich's, the home pages of the journals, and the lists of the indexing/abstracting services were consulted to verify inclusion or exclusion. For the 2009 project, the number of journals with the subject Library and Information Science had grown to 97 in the DOAJ. The same process as above was repeated with these titles, that is, the indexing was checked in Ulrich's but checking the lists of the indexing/abstracting services and the homepage of journals was not part of the process. The journal homepages were not checked because in 2007 these were found to have limited information about the journal. The indexing/abstracting services were not reviewed as it was felt that the information in Ulrich's was of sufficient quality. Edward Hart, based on his attendance at the 2007 session, replicated the model using the 76 journals in the DOAJ with the DOAJ subject of law. The indexing/abstracting services checked were Index to Legal Periodicals and Books, Current Law Index, Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals, and Current Index to Legal Periodicals. As was planned, the second phase of the research included the 31 journals with the subject of

music. The indexing/abstracting services that were used for the music journals were the International Index to Music Periodicals (<http://iimp.chadwyck.com/home.do>), RILM - Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale (<http://www.rilm.org/>), and The Music Index (<http://www.harmonieparkpress.com/MusicIndex.asp>).

The Access database that was created in 2007 to allow for the storage of data was updated to the Microsoft 2007 version and modifications were made for the inclusion of new data. The database continued to allow for the sorting of data and the movement of data into Excel for calculations.

The online version of Ulrich's Periodicals Directory (<http://www.ulrichsweb.com/ulrichsweb/>) was used to complete the data entry. As state above, the websites of the indexing services were not consulted to determine that the journal was listed as Ulrich's was used as the authoritative source. Finding and searching the website of the journal was also deleted as it was found in 2007 that these websites provided little additional information that was not included in Ulrich's. The basic question of the proposal, whether the open access journals were being indexed by the six indexing/abstracting services, was answered and could have been completed relatively quickly by just consulting Ulrich's. Future expansion of the project may require the return to the websites of the indexing services or the journal websites to determine other elements of research quality such as peer-review status.

The 2007 Conference Session

At the 2007 presentation session several comments were made and were acted upon in the second phase of the project.

1. It was noted that titles varied from DOAJ, Ulrich's, and websites and it was sometimes difficult to search. At the conference...
 - It was suggested that the difficulty of searching by title, where some journals were listed by acronym and not their official title, could be alleviated by using the ISSN.

This suggestion proved very useful especially since a student assistant was enlisted to do some of the data entry. The use of the ISSN made matching of variations of the title easier.

2. The relatively low number of DOAJ journals found in the major Library and Information Science indexes was noted. A participant offered...
 - Many open access journals are relatively new and may not yet have the content, longevity, or reputation to warrant an abstracting and indexing service's attention. Most new print journals are not indexed until at least three or more issues are published or they have existed for at least one year. Many new open access journals are not even published in the traditional volume and issue format.

This issue was addressed with an analysis of the longevity of the journals.

3. As mentioned above, an element of a journal's quality is not only inclusion in an indexing /abstracting service but also the fact that there is a peer review process. It was suggested by a session attendee that...
 - Many online journals may be considered a newsletter format and because they are not peer-reviewed they may not justify inclusion by the traditional abstracting and indexing services.

The peer review aspect of journals was not tackled during the second phase of this study. The format of the journal, be it scholarly research, with or without peer review, and the format, journal or newsletter style, may be the subject of future analysis.

4. One premise of the research was that the content of open access journals is hidden because it is not included in the major indexes. A participant offered...
 - Other methods of finding the content include bibliographies and using citations in other works. The use of citations, not only as a method of discovery but also as a predictor of value, correspond to the view by many that citations are a better way to judge value than inclusion in an index.

Many in the scholarly community feel that citation of an article in a particular journal may be a better way to determine the quality of that journal. Since the scope of this research was to determine inclusion in indexing/abstracting services that element of journal quality was not pursued.

Figure 1. Percentage of the 96 DOAJ Library and Information Science Journals Indexed 2009

LibLit_LitLit	LISA_LISA	LISTA_LIST	ISTA_INFOSA	T&I_T&II	SocSci_SSC	Other*
		A	b		I	
27.08%	30.21%	45.83%	25.00%	0.00%	3.13%	15.63%

Figure 2. Number of the 96 DOAJ Library and Information Science Journals Indexed 2009

LibLit_LitLit	LISA_LISA	LISTA_LIST	ISTA_INFOSA	T&I_T&II	SocSci_SSC	Other*
		A	b		I	
26	29	44	24	0	3	15

Figure 3. Percentage of the 31 DOAJ Music Journals Indexed 2009

Int. In. Music Per.	RILM	Music Index	Other*
12.90%	48.39%	9.77%	3.22%

Figure 4. Number of the DOAJ 31 Music Journals Indexed 2009

Int. In. Music Per.	RILM	Music Index	Other*
4	15	3	1

*not indexed in one of the three listed indexes

Figure 5. Comparison of 2007 to 2009 data collection for library and information science journals

Number of the 96 journals indexed

	LibLit_LitLit	LISA_LISA	LISTA_LISTA	ISTA_INFOSA	T&I_T&II	SocSci_SSC	Other*
2007	17	24	23	20	0	3	
2009	26	29	44	24	0	3	15

Percentage of the 96 journals indexed

	LibLit_LitLit	LISA_LISA	LISTA_LISTA	ISTA_INFOSA	T&I_T&II	SocSci_SSC	Other*
2007	22.37%	31.58%	30.26%	26.32%	0.00%	3.95%	
2009	27.08%	30.21%	45.83%	25.00%	0.00%	3.13%	15.63%

*not indexed in one of the six listed indexes

Other statistics

Figure 6. Indexing by multiple indexing services

	LS 2007	LS 2009	Music 2009
Number of journal indexed at least 1 time*	36	60	19
Number of journals indexed at least 3 times*	13	31	4
Number of journals not indexed*	40	36	12

*(includes other indexing services)

Figure 7. Languages represented in open access journals

Languages	LS	Music
English	63	24
Spanish	12	4
Other	35	9

Figure 8. Journal longevity and availability in indexing services

Start year	Indexed	LS		Music	
		#	#	Indexed	
Pre-1990	17=81%	21	3	3=100%	
1991-1995	10=91%	11	5	4=80%	
1996-1999	16=73%	22	5	5=100%	
2000-2004	9=43%	21	13	7=54%	
2005-	8=38%	21	5	2=40%	

The 2009 Conference Session

At the 2009 session data from the legal and music journal investigation was presented as was data that compared the 2007 to 2009 library and information science journals. A handout included the information included in figures 1-8. Ed Hart presented his information on the legal journals.

The most interesting part of the second round of data collection proved to be the comparison of 2007-2009 library and information science journals as seen in Figure 5. Over the course of just two years there was a significant difference in the number of journals of this subject included in the DOAJ and there was an increase in the number of journals being indexed in the major indexing/abstracting services. LISTA showed the most gain. The library and information science journal data in Figure 6 is also of interest. Sixty journals were indexed at least once in 2009 as compared to 36 in 2007 and 31 journals were indexed in multiple services in 2009 compared to 13 in 2007. The number of journals not indexed decreased.

A participant at the 2007 conference commented that it takes time for a new journal to be noticed and included by one of the major indexing/abstracting services. This comment seems true in light of Figure 8. The start year of the library and information science journals was recorded from Ulrich's. Eighty-one percent of the journals started before 1990 are indexed. Those journals begun in the 1991-1995 are indexed at a 91% rate. The lowest rate, 38%, of indexing/abstracting is represented by those journals begun after 2005.

Conclusion

The analysis of the indexing/abstracting of the journals in the DOAJ will be continued. The subject areas already covered, library and information science, music, and law will be expanded to other subject areas. Several trends, an increase in the number of publications and an

increase in indexing/abstracting, have already been noticed in the library and information science subject area and it is hypothesized that this trend will be seen in music and law as well. Including new subject areas will provide a base-line for future analysis of the DOAJ content that is indexed and abstracted by major providers in those new subject areas.