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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Case Study: How the Discovery of a Siloed Publication Sparked a Cross-National Research Partnership

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ABSTRACT

Siloing of peer-reviewed publications is an often hidden challenge for both scholars attempting to locate and obtain research outputs and those trying to disseminate their work. This case study describes a faculty member in Uganda and a faculty member in the U.S. who uncovered the siloing of a specific peer-reviewed open access (OA) publication. The faculty member in the U.S. was voluntarily reviewing an article published by the Ugandan faculty member in mid 2023 and looked for an online link to promote it through her social media channels. Through these efforts, the U.S. faculty member discovered that even though the publication was OA, it was not discoverable through Google Scholar. Although the original contact between these two scholars happened in 2023, at the time of this article writing (November 2024), the journal article in question was still not discoverable. This exploratory qualitative case study examines this phenomenon along with extant literature around inequalities and possible injustices in scholarly communication affecting scholars in low- and middle-income countries, as with the context of the Ugandan researcher. Evidence shows that discrepancies in scholarly communication abound with many areas needing further investigation to be fully understood. In this case, it is the discoverability of articles that is unequal and possibly unjust. For journal articles to be read and cited, they need to be discoverable. Unfortunately, not all legitimate peer-reviewed journals make it into global scholarly search engines. Future research will be suggested based on the findings, including the study of factors that prevent journal articles or entire journals from being discovered and what can be done to inform scholars and equalize opportunities to engage in global scholarly communication.

Keywords: scholarly communication, dissemination bias, access bias, research siloing

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IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. When training scholars about information literacy, it is imperative to point out that academic search engine algorithms can exclude pertinent research.
2. When training students and faculty in scholarly communication, it is critical to help them understand that where they publish will have a huge impact on the dissemination and therefore the influence their research will or will not have.
3. When guiding researchers in academic integrity and equitable citation practices, it is essential to emphasize the importance of using diverse and reputable sources to provide a comprehensive and credible foundation for scholarly work.

INTRODUCTION

Inequalities, inequities, and possible injustices in scholarly communication need to be studied from a variety of angles and perspectives to paint an accurate picture of factors affecting individual scholars, disciplines, and society in general. A moral stance could be taken that determines when the inequalities in scholarly communication lead to inequities or injustices; however, taking that stance is beyond the scope of this article. We will not attempt to articulate when the disparities can be defined as injustices, but rather, we will focus on exposing a dissemination issue that is often missing from discourse on scholarly communication challenges.

This case study examines scholarly communication through a collaboration between a researcher in Uganda and a researcher in the U.S., who—working together—discovered how research can be siloed, even peer-reviewed open access (OA) publications. The article that led to this case study was published in a respected regional Ugandan journal by the second author. The U.S. faculty member determined that the article was not discoverable using Google Scholar. She searched using keywords as well as the entire article title. Google Scholar is known to be the most comprehensive of the academic search engines, beating Scopus, Web of Science, and others based on comprehensiveness of inclusion of sources (Martín-Martín et al., 2021). At times, articles on Google Scholar are included with only a title and an abstract; however, access to the full article may be behind a paywall. This is still helpful as it shows the existence of the articles that can then be sought out by other means, either through another academic search engine that the scholar has access to or through paying if necessary. In the case of the article she was seeking, however, nothing was discovered. It was as though the article did not exist.

Justice in global scholarly communication is often discussed through the lenses of access to published research outputs and the ability to produce and disseminate them. It is often stated

that researchers in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) face increased barriers to access to extant literature and to publishing their research findings. Roh et al. (2020) mention that the largest and most popular academic publishers are found in high-income countries. We do not argue that these statements are generally true; however, there are many more factors that need to enter the discourse.

In the instance to be presented in this article, it will be demonstrated that an access barrier existed for the U.S. researcher and a dissemination barrier for the Ugandan researcher. Both barriers can be defined as epistemic (Fricker, 2007; Oliphant, 2021). For the U.S. scholar it is distributive epistemic injustice, as the article was unavailable to her and even hidden, and for the Ugandan scholar it is discriminatory epistemic injustice because the article is not being disseminated fully and is even being blocked from the academic search engine algorithms (Ford & Alemneh, 2022; Fricker, 2007). Ford and Alemneh (2024a, 2024b) posit that although these injustices are epistemic in nature, they are more than simply epistemic. They suggest there is a need for an appropriate critical lens to be established to define these injustices and many others that keep research from LMICs siloed from the rest of the world.

Scholarly communication inequities also occur for scholars attempting to attend and present at academic and professional conferences. However, peer-reviewed publications are often considered the primary method for scholars to share their research findings and to demonstrate high-quality research valued by the wider community. Since this case study is based on a particular peer-reviewed OA publication, the focus for this article will be on peer-reviewed publication dissemination and discoverability.

Whereas the peer-review process is intentionally and appropriately rigorous to maintain high quality of publications, evidence suggests that scholars who find themselves located outside of core research countries, such as the U.S., the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and other high-income countries, face additional barriers and challenges to passing through the already challenging peer-review process (Canagarajah, 2002; Demeter, 2020; Ford & Alemneh, 2024a). Since publications are critical to career advancement for academics around the globe, this has a significant influence on those experiencing additional challenges. Publications are also how scholars work together to advance science. Therefore, lack of ability to publish hinders scientific growth. However, the lack of ability to be able to publish is not the particular focus of this article. Even though the Ugandan scholar had published in an OA journal, highly respected in her country, her work was not being widely catalogued globally as it was not being picked up as scholarly by Google Scholar. The focus here is on the siloing of research, which also has negative effects for individual scholars and for science in general.

This case study focuses on the inequalities and possible inequities of dissemination of peer-reviewed publications. The experiences of these two scholars are important because they reveal an often overlooked phenomenon that produces individual effects on scholars and contributes to discrepancies in publication numbers. This case study will highlight a real-world event that occurred in 2023–2024 and will suggest several avenues that can be taken to further investigate how and why simply looking at database search results and publication numbers are not inclusive of all factors that may lead to publication disparities. If researchers focus only on these areas, they can be misled about what the results and numbers indicate. In this case, the article in question does not show up in Google Scholar and is therefore not counted as a publication for the country of Uganda, even though higher education leadership would consider this a valid publication and count it toward promotion and tenure.

This case study challenges assumptions about the numbers of publications coming out of specific countries. Evidence shows that the ability to actively engage in global scholarly communication is known to have inequities based on scholars' geopolitical positions (Canagarajah, 2002; Demeter, 2020; Ford & Alemneh, 2024a); however, there may be a much higher number of publications coming out in LMICs that are not being counted because they are not currently indexed in academic databases such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, or Scopus.

Scholars often rely on search engines to locate the extant literature around topics of interest. However, this case study provides an example of why such searches may not be as comprehensive and trustworthy as scholars assume. Not only are valid scholarly publications not being counted, but researchers are also not made aware that many publications even exist. Scholars may be relying too heavily on algorithms that are hidden within the black boxes, and which are based on data that is biased (Lloyd, 2019). Much more research needs to be done on search engine algorithms.

The research design for this study is that of an exploratory case study with the purpose "to study a phenomenon with the intention of 'exploring' or identifying fresh research questions which can be used in subsequent research studies in an extensive way" (Priya, 2021, p. 96). This study demonstrates where further research needs to be completed for a more comprehensive understanding of the often reported discrepancies between research productivity between scholars from core research countries and those scholars who live and work in periphery countries. The organization of this article starts with a brief exploration of the extant literature about the geopolitical disparities in research productivity, and then moves into examining the event that brought these two authors together. It finalizes with discourse on how this event highlights aspects of global scholarly communication engagement and with several ideas for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inequalities in scholarly communication manifest in many ways and include those experienced by scholars when they attempt to access or consume scholarly literature, when they try to conduct and produce research studies, and when they attempt to publish and disseminate their findings. Access to scholarly publications is often limited by subscription fees or paywalls, making it difficult for individuals or institutions with limited resources to access the latest research. This creates a divide between well-funded universities and researchers in developed countries and those in less privileged regions or institutions (Demeter, 2020).

When considering how scholars become published, it is important to remember that the studies that are published in globally prestigious journals are often considered "global" and groundbreaking, excluding research that are less sensational or considered regional topics. As Roh et al. (2020) indicate, scholars from outside core research countries should not have to make choices between conducting and publishing studies that are relevant to their context or studies that will gain them recognition. We posit that scholars anywhere in the world should be able to maintain local relevancy in their research and still be recognized globally for their contributions. This bias perpetuates existing power structures within academia (Mitra, 2022).

It is also important to note that most high-impact journals have little to no representation of minority scholars on their editorial boards (Liu et al., 2023), possibly perpetuating the problem. Adding to the already uneven chances to get published, many scholarly journals under the auspices of OA charge high fees for authors to publish their articles, which presents barriers to researchers, especially scholars from developing countries with limited or no access to grant funding. Furthermore, since English is the dominant language of academic publishing, this puts researchers whose first language is not English at a disadvantage (Hultgren, 2019; Roh et al., 2020). This limits the visibility but also impact of research from non-English-speaking regions. Nkoudou (2020) states that scholars who have a local language and then possibly another language such as French, Spanish, or Portuguese still have to manage to translate their work into English for publication purposes.

Many scholars assert that academic recognition and career advancement often depend on publishing in high-impact journals, which favor established researchers or those with access to resources for conducting large-scale studies (Kwiek, 2021). This perpetuates inequalities within the academic community in both developed and developing nations. Thus, addressing these issues requires systemic changes within the academic publishing industry and broader academic community. Some of these changes could include promoting fully indexed OA publishing models, supporting initiatives that provide free or low-cost access to research in developing countries, advocating for diversity and inclusion in academic publishing, and recognizing alternative forms

of scholarly output beyond traditional journal articles. Raju et al. (2020) suggest a library publishing model. "There is a need for a disrupter to this publishing landscape, and the library publishing service, driven by its social justice and inclusivity imperatives, will facilitate the dissemination of African scholarship and the equitable and equal participation by African researchers in knowledge production" (Raju et al., 2020, p. 61). Tang et al. (2021) discuss the changing paradigms in scholarly publishing, making this a perfect time to expose the inequities and injustices that need to be addressed.

Evidence demonstrates that when scholars in high-income countries search for publications, fewer peer-reviewed articles make it to the top of their search list from scholars in LMICs than from scholars in core research countries (Demeter, 2020). After the experience that will be discussed in this case study, several questions arise. One of the key questions is whether this lack of articles from LMICs is because fewer publications are produced or because the publications being produced by scholars in LMICs are siloed from the global stage (Grossmann & Brembs, 2021; Solomon & Björk, 2012).

Fraudulent journals

Fraudulent journals are a significant issue in the academic and scientific publishing world and continue to require consideration when discussing equity and justice in scholarly communication, especially since these types of journals affect scholars in LMICs at a higher rate than their counterparts in high-income countries (Boukacem-Zeghmouri, 2023). Many of these journals exploit the OA publishing model for profit without providing the necessary editorial and peer-review standards expected of reputable scholarly publications. They are typically characterized by low or non-existent academic standards, lack of rigorous peer review, and often aggressive solicitation of manuscripts from researchers (Kurt, 2018). Unfortunately, appearing in reputable academic databases is not complete reassurance of a journal's credibility, as some predatory or fraudulent journals appear in such databases (Duc et al., 2020).

Fraudulent or predatory journals primarily generate revenue through article processing charges (APCs) paid by authors. They may promise quick publication, easy acceptance, or even falsely claim high impact factors to attract submissions. In addition, there is no doubt that submitting research to predatory journals can damage the credibility of researchers and their work. Since these journals lack proper peer review and editorial oversight, the published research may be of poor quality or even misleading, affecting the integrity of scientific literature (Mathew & Patel, 2022).

It is important to note the quality concerns that arise when articles published in predatory journals do not undergo proper scrutiny for scientific validity, as this undermines the reliability

of research findings and can lead to misinformation spreading within the academic community and beyond. This becomes an unethical practice. For instance, it is misleading authors, listing fake editorial boards or impact factors, and not adhering to standards of transparency in publishing practices (Günaydin & Dogan, 2015).

Identifying predatory or fraudulent journals can be challenging for researchers, especially those who are less experienced or new to academic publishing (Frandsen, 2019). Common signs for predatory or fraudulent journals include rapid publication times, unsolicited invitations to submit articles, unclear or low-quality websites, and lack of transparency about fees and peer-review processes (Shamseer et al., 2017; Strinzel et al., 2019). Several initiatives have emerged to combat predatory publishing, including blacklists and whitelists of journals maintained by academic institutions and organizations, guidelines for researchers on identifying trustworthy journals, and efforts by publishers and scholarly societies to promote ethical publishing practices.

Another view on journals labeled as predatory or fraudulent is provided by Krawczyk and Kulczycki (2021), who discussed "mislocated centers of scholarly communication." They describe such journals as those that appear to scholars in LMICs and other non-core research country contexts to be legitimized by core countries but that either appear illegitimate or are invisible to scholars in core countries. They explain that this occurs due to unequal power relations in academia. They state that even though many of these journals are not predatory, they pose a geopolitical problem and are often tossed into the discussions and lists of predatory journals, lists that are often biased against publications from peripheral countries. A key takeaway from their work is that not all journals labeled as predatory are predatory but might rather be "mislocated centers." Overall, while OA publishing has worked to democratize access to research, the rise of predatory journals poses serious challenges to the integrity and reliability of scholarly communication, particularly articles published using the OA paradigms. Vigilance, increased awareness and education, and collaboration within the academic community are essential to mitigate the impact of predatory and fraudulent journals, or those with "mislocated centers" on scientific research and publishing.

Academic search engines

Many early career researchers seem unaware of the list of search engines available to them (Hyland, 2015). Conversations around this topic are rare, especially in institutions that have not prioritized research and academic publishing due to other heavy commitments. Without proper training, experience, and an environment that promotes ongoing research, it is challenging to know all of the available choices, especially as technology and options increase. In many LMIC contexts, there can be struggles to promote an active research culture (Fussy, 2019; Nakijoba & Awobamise, 2022).

It is imperative that scholars understand that each of the search engines only cover works that they actively index (Martín-Martín et al., 2021). It is not enough to just know this fact. Scholars should also be aware that each academic search engine also has biases (Lloyd, 2019). Just as biases in news search engines have been highlighted, revealing several contributing factors (Paramita et al., 2024), one goal of the authors of this case study is to demonstrate through personal experience that biases may exist in academic search engines. These biases may hide certain works from the wider research community, and we posit that this can have detrimental effects not only on the authors of the hidden publications, but also for the researchers and wider research community that would benefit from knowing about these publications. Scholars need to be aware of the many different kinds of biases that search engine algorithms can work with based on the humans that created them and based on the data used to train them (Lloyd, 2019). The list includes cultural biases, representation biases, knowledge biases, power biases, trust biases, and opacity biases (Lloyd, 2019).

METHODS

The research design chosen for this study was that of an exploratory case study. The main data collection methods were informal conversations (Swain & King, 2022) between the two affected scholars and examining academic searching from their respective geopolitical positions. Because the scholars being studied are also authors in this work, the consent was fulfilled through their verbal agreement to work with each other to examine this phenomenon and to publish their experience and findings. Through the process of these informal conversations, further investigations, and the writing of this article, quality checks occurred during each stage of the research and writing process. The participatory informal conversations between the two researchers took place via Zoom video chats over the 2023 to 2024 academic year and during a face-to-face meeting in Kampala in October 2024. Additional data collection and analysis was ongoing and communicated regularly between the two authors.

THE CASE BEING STUDIED

The event being examined in this case study took place during the voluntary review of an article published by the Ugandan scholar in a peer-reviewed OA journal. The U.S. scholar appreciated the research and practical value of the article and wanted to promote it but was unable to direct others to a link on Google Scholar as the article did not appear in several search attempts. It does not appear the journal that the article is in is discoverable on Google Scholar, Web of Science, or Scopus, meaning many academics around the world would not have any idea that this article even exists unless they were aware of the journal and went directly to its website, if they were contacted directly with the article information, or through some

other serendipitous means. It is unclear what the indexing efforts of the journal staff currently are as that portion of their website appears to be under development.

RESULTS

As this is a case study of an event that took place between a faculty member in the U.S. and a faculty member in Uganda, this section will provide a brief overview and then each of the faculty who are also the authors of this article will share their personal experiences. Through informal communication between the two scholars, it was discovered that the article under review, although already published as OA, was not discoverable in Google Scholar. Google Scholar is known to be the most comprehensive search engine, with an algorithm that searches the Internet to pick up articles that appear to be scholarly and peer reviewed. At this point in the investigation into search engines, it is unclear what type of bias in the Google Scholar algorithms cause this article to not show up; it could be cultural, as this is a Ugandan publication, or it could be power or opacity (Lloyd, 2019). We do not assume to know the nature of the bias; however, we encourage future research that will enlighten this and other situations like it.

Ugandan faculty experience

It was surprising having a U.S. faculty member write to me. At first, I thought maybe it was a scam. Then she asked that we have an online meeting, and even though I was skeptical, I agreed. When the meeting occured and we saw each other's faces, I began to trust that she was legitimate. She had provided a positive review of my article via email, and when we met via Zoom, she informed me that my article was not discoverable on Google Scholar in the U.S.

I did not understand the magnitude of this discovery right away. I had not attended any conferences or workshops demonstrating or emphasizing the importance of global dissemination and the problems with siloing of research from certain global political or geographical regions. It was not until later, when the U.S. faculty member suggested writing about our experiences for this case study article, that I began to more fully understand what the benefits are with having academic work in journals that are discoverable worldwide.

At this point it is worth noting that there are many scholars, not only in my university but in my country and across Africa, whose work is not registered in popular academic search engines and thus cannot be found by scholars elsewhere who depend on these search engines for source discovery. This means that such works cannot be found and read, and it means they certainly will not be cited or referenced. The assumption is that by the time people complete their PhDs, they will have this knowledge, yet this is not the case. The importance and benefits of global publishing are not known to all scholars, and the situation can be perpetuated if

these scholars continue to lack exposure through attendance at international conferences and through lack of access to a large percentage of academic publishing.

Recently (October 2024), the U.S. faculty member visited my institution in Uganda and held a workshop on engaging in scholarly communication for many of our faculty, and we are forming plans for her to conduct additional trainings online and in person when she can visit again. Much of what she shared with us may be offered in academic courses in other parts of the world; however, much was new and inspirational to even some of our more seasoned faculty. The U.S. faculty member also learned a great deal about our research and writing culture to further her justice work in scholarly communication. This demonstrates the need for such human capacity building and collaborations.

One area we have identified through our collaboration, discussions, and diving into the literature is the importance of choosing the right journal for publishing research. Choosing the best publication is crucial to maximize visibility and impact and in reaching the target audience. It is important to determine the goals for publishing, especially aiming for high-impact, wide dissemination, and reaching a specific audience (Testa, 2009). In addition, it is important to conduct a thorough literature review to identify journals that have published similar research in a similar field. Thus, one ought to look for journals that specialize in a topic area and have a strong reputation in the discipline. It is also worth evaluating whether a journal's scope aligns with the focus of one's research (Madera, 2012). This helps to be sure that the manuscript fits within the journal's aims and scope, considering whether the research addresses the interests of the journal's readership. In addition, it is important to become familiar with a journal's reputation and impact factor. This can be done by considering factors such as the journal's citation metrics, editorial board members, and publication history. Seeking feedback from colleagues, mentors, or collaborators on the choice of journal is a critical step (Testa, 2009). They can provide insights and recommendations based on their experiences with publishing in different journals. Higher-impact journals offer greater visibility and recognition for the work.

It is also worthwhile to investigate whether the journal has policies on OA, copyright, publication fees, peer-review processes, and author guidelines. While conducting this research, scholars can ensure that the journal's policies align with their preferences and requirements. OA journals may offer greater accessibility and visibility for one's research (Miguel et al., 2011); however, as we discovered, not all OA journals are indexed in the major global academic search engines. Similarly, considering the journal's publication frequency, acceptance rates, and publication timelines are also important (Testa, 2009). This helps to assess whether the journal's publication schedule aligns with the timeline for disseminating one's research. As a rule, journals have submission requirements, including manuscript formatting, word limits, and supplementary materials, ensuring that the manuscripts submitted meet the journal's formatting and submission

guidelines (Eikebrokk et al., 2014). Last but not least, scholars may want to explore alternative publishing options, such as preprint servers, interdisciplinary journals, or specialized niche journals, if they better suit the research goals or audience (Eikebrokk et al., 2014).

The Uganda Higher Education Review was the chosen journal for my research because it is owned by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education—a body that does accreditation of academic institutions in the country. Partly, the choice was to show visibility for my education institution, Muteesa I Royal University, which had submitted its application for a charter, and it is most likely that this and one other article written by another colleague were the first ones from our academic institution to be published in this publication. Even though our university is now a chartered academic institution, it remains important to show visibility. However, now understanding the importance of choosing a globally disseminated journal, future choices will include a list of criteria before submission to any specific journal.

United States faculty experience

When my co-author made contact with me in July 2023 (Nakijoba, R., personal communication, July 2023) with a request to review an accepted and published article, I gladly accepted and found the article to line up with my research interests. Therefore, I searched for an accessible link to the article to promote it on social media. I used keywords and then the entire article title in Google Scholar and was unable to locate the article. I used the entire citation and was still unable to locate the article in Google Scholar. Because I research the experiences and situations of scholars in LMICs, this was quite alarming and prompted me to dig deeper, which was the impetus for the writing up of this case study. "Social justice in scholarly communications requires more than the provision of access to materials through the open web. It requires true global participation—from authorship to the tools and means of production, and to the indexing of and access to the end product" (Roh et al., 2020, p. 49).

The article was also not discoverable through my home institution's online library academic search, through Web of Science, or through a search on Scopus. I was able to find the Ugandan author by her name in Web of Science, however, it was for a different publication. I was unable to find the journal in Scopus using the ISSN number. At the time of this writing, the journal with the article in question, *The Uganda Higher Education Review*, provided an ISSN number on their website and had a link for a page on indexing; however, it had a note about more information coming soon.

In April 2024, I asked a colleague in Tanzania to also search Google Scholar to locate the same article, and he indicated that he was unable to do so (Fussy, D., personal communication, April 2024). This indicates that another country in East Africa with similar context may not be

benefiting from scholarship being written by their colleagues in surrounding countries. Consider that such research being siloed may hold results and findings that could be applied in these other country contexts, thus possibly causing duplicate or similar research to be conducted and even stunting the advancement within disciplines.

Upon revisions of this case study (November 2024), I checked Google Scholar again from my location in the United States. I entered the entire title of the article, "Building Educational Research Capacity: Challenges and Opportunities from the Perspectives of Faculty Staff of Selected Private Universities in Uganda" (Nakijoba & Awobamise, 2022), and Google Scholar produced only one publication, and it was not the one I was looking for but rather a publication with a similar title focused on a different country. On the same evening, when searching with the main Google search engine (not Google Scholar) using the full title, the article came up as it was posted on ResearchGate, and the third entry was a linked to the journal's website. This was very telling and showed that even though the article is peer reviewed and obviously scholarly, Google Scholar's algorithms do not warrant its inclusion with scholarly literature. This made me question how many other scholarly resources are not being picked up by Google Scholar?

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The impetus for this study was to expose a siloed research article that does not appear in Google Scholar, or other academic search engines, even though it is in a peer-reviewed, OA journal that is considered reputable within its home country of Uganda. By doing this case study, we have increased our understanding on how research, even OA research, can be siloed from global dissemination, even if the journal has an ISSN number and is an encouraged publication for scholars to submit to from leadership within their institutions. This type of phenomenon needs to be understood by scholars in all geopolitical locations, as can be witnessed from our experience. Even scholars in high-income countries, or what are at times labeled core research countries, are unable to discover research using the tools in front of them unless they are aware of hidden publications. Scholars could be informed of the current discrepancies in searching so that they do not assume when they do a thorough search with the typical and well-known academic search engines that they have found all the available research on their topics. Journal editors, even those working for small regional journals, could be encouraged to index their publications and inquire with search engines when their articles are not appearing. On the other end of this process, indexers of publications could be encouraged to seek out and include regional publications by aiding journal editors.

For this case study, we did not examine the idea of citations, but it is important to note that articles that are not discoverable will receive fewer citations, particularly in any geographical location where scholars are unaware of their existence. This could add greatly to the global

citation discrepancies. Since citations are the currency of researchers, this creates and perpetuates unequal academic power structures.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This exploratory case study highlighted factors involved in scholarly communication siloing that require further investigation. Future research could include individual, organizational, and systemic factors, as well as the importance of information literacy trainings for scholars and higher education leadership to understand the importance of strategically publishing in journals with true global dissemination. Many scholars assume that OA means open globally, but as we have seen here, that is not the case. Trainings could also include advancing knowledge about inequities and biases in academic search engine algorithms. The examination of individual factors could include how scholars can modify their behaviors around searches for extant literature to include regional or non-indexed publications.

Additional research around searching for sources could examine how students and faculty search for regional journals, particularly those they may not even be aware exist. Examinations could also be conducted to understand what new heuristics are required to increase inclusivity of scholars and publications not indexed by the major academic search engines. Studies could be conducted around publishing behaviors that follow scholars' decision-making through choosing what and how to publish. This would shed light on the individual factors that play a part in when and how scholars disseminate their findings.

At the organizational level, trainings could be implemented to bring awareness to the siloing of research. As can be seen from this case study, siloing affects both those trying to disseminate their findings and those trying to obtain and use research outputs. Therefore, organizations can help scholars by encouraging publishing in journals that will be indexed and therefore more widely disseminated, and they can also help make scholars seeking research findings aware that regional journals may be hidden from the academic search engines. At the system level, publishers and individuals building and modifying academic search engines could work to reduce inequities and biases.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this case study sheds light on an area of inequity within scholarly communication that is often overlooked and that often perpetuates the inequities experienced by scholars in geopolitical locations outside of what are considered core research countries. Despite the growth of OA publications, siloing and discoverability remain challenges, especially for scholars from LMICs publishing in national or regional publications. The absence of an article,

even in a comprehensive search engine like Google Scholar, underscores the need for systemic changes. Researchers from different backgrounds face distinct biases—access for some and dissemination for others.

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