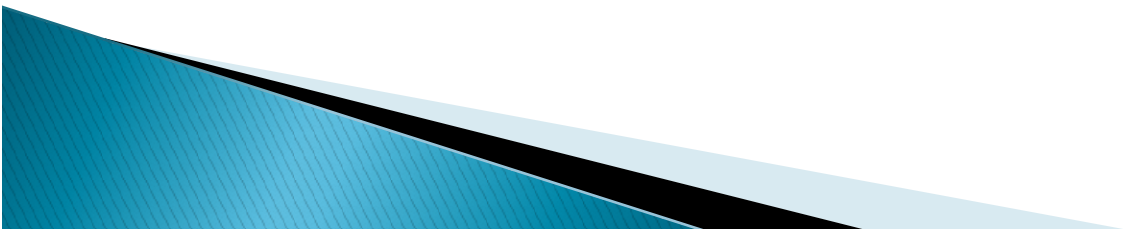# Scholarship in the Global South and the Open Access: a study of India

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Scholarly literature, the Global North, and the Roman-script languages

- Scholarship in the modern times has largely been hegemonised by the Global North, with most of it being reported in the English and other Roman script languages.

- Although a few non-European languages do use Roman script now, but the majority of scholarly journal content is being produced in Roman script languages: English, French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish, etc.

- Scholarly literature, such as primary journals, in English and other Roman-script languages, even if published in the Global South is neither fully covered by the global indexing/abstracting services, nor given due weightage in international rankings.
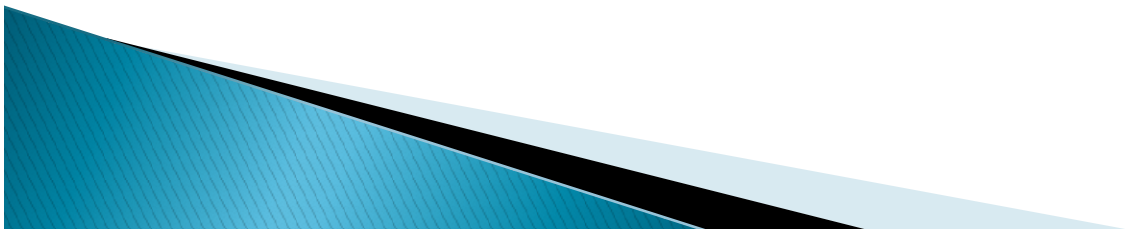
Scholarly literature in the Global South

▸ Many countries of the Global South have millenia old traditions of scholarship recorded in their languages, whereas a little of it is available in translated form in English and other other Roman script languages.

▸ In India alone, there are several hundred languages. The Constitution of India recognizes 22 languages. These languages are entitled to representation on the Official Languages Commission.

▸ A lot of scholarly literature, primarily in the Humanities and Social Sciences gets generated every year in these languages in the form of monographs and journals, but the Global North doesn't take into account such literature in its coverage and rankings.
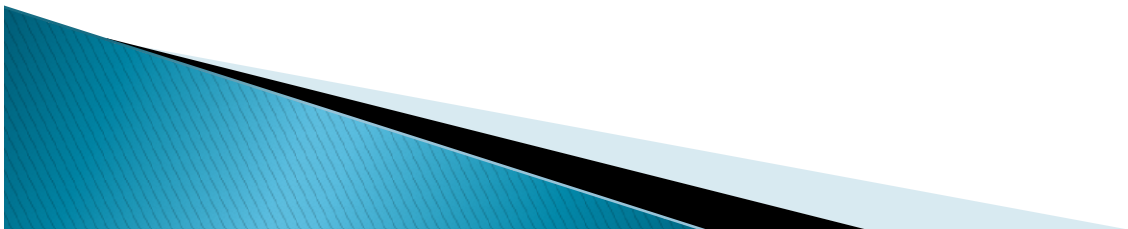
Open access and the Scholarly literature in the Global North

- In science and technology or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine) the scholarship is fast moving towards open access in the Global North.

- Universities, Research Institutions, Libraries, and the faculty and researchers are asking for better deals from the commercial publishers in the scholarly information generation-processing-use cycle.

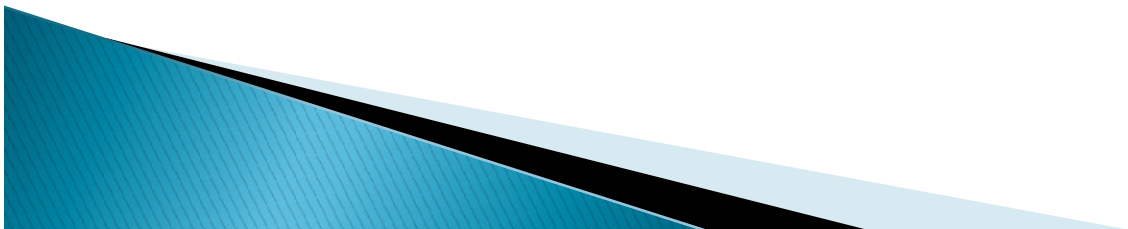- This phenomenon is also evident to a lesser extent in disciplines of social sciences and humanities.

Open access and Scholarly literature in the Global South

- But the modern scholarship in the Global South, in English as well as the regional languages is still primarily either published by commercial publisher or by universities/research institutions, societies and associations.

- In the digital era, this literature is being left out on account of the hegemony of the Global North, and also to some extent because systems for open access to scholarship in regional languages are not so well developed.

- Another reason is the lack of/inadequate open access policies. For example, many activists and organizations in India have been advocating open access to public-funded research for years, but nothing has come out from the government in this regard.

Open access in India and the Predatory journals

- The current situation of scholarship in India in the context of open access is not very rosy. There is so far no support for open-access to public-funded research other than those for PhD theses.
- In the last few years, particularly after the introduction of API (Academic Performance Indicator) Score for promotion and appointment of faculty in universities and colleges, in 2010, proliferation of predatory journals has taken place.
- These predatory journals are also there in the Global North, but their proliferation in India in particular has been a point of concern in the academic world.
- These predatory journals claim themselves to be open access, and thus bring a bad name to the noble cause of open access. Moreover they overshadow a few genuine open access publications and the scholarship that is being generated in the Global South.
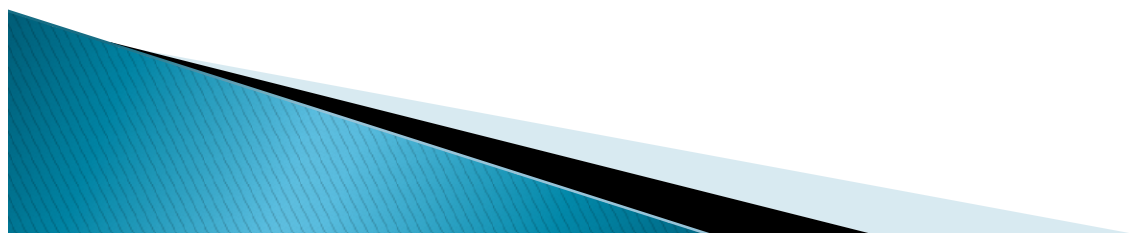
Open Access to PhD theses in India

▸ Full-text of PhD theses submitted to Indian universities are now being made available for search and use through ShodhGanga.

▸ It is an initiative of INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network Centre) of the University Grants Commission.

http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/

165,000+ full-text theses available
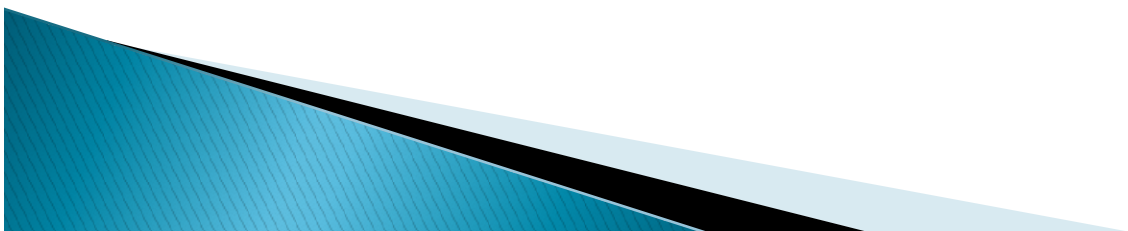
Open Access India (OAI)

http://openaccessindia.org/

A community of practice advocating Open access, Open data, Open education in India has been formed.

Launched as a Facebook group in 2011, it has grown into a community of practice with over 10,000 members.

Members of OAI developed and submitted to Government of India in February 2017, a 'Draft National Open Access Policy' for public-funded research.

Open Access India (OAI)

OAI is a member/partner of several organizations, initiatives, and networks including:
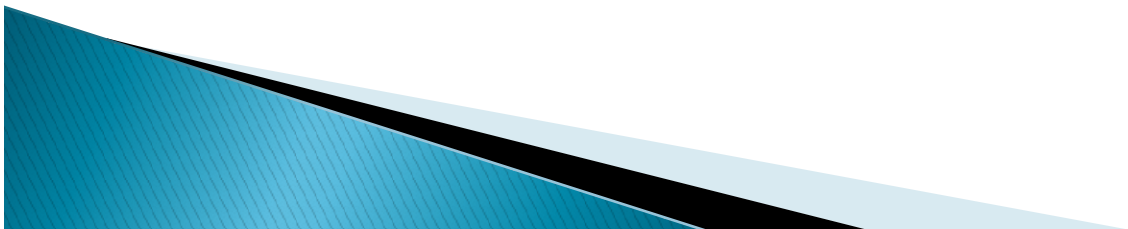
Budapest Open Access Initiative;

FORCE11 Data Citation Principles;

ICORE – the International Community for

Open Education and Research;

OA2020 – initiative for large-scale transition
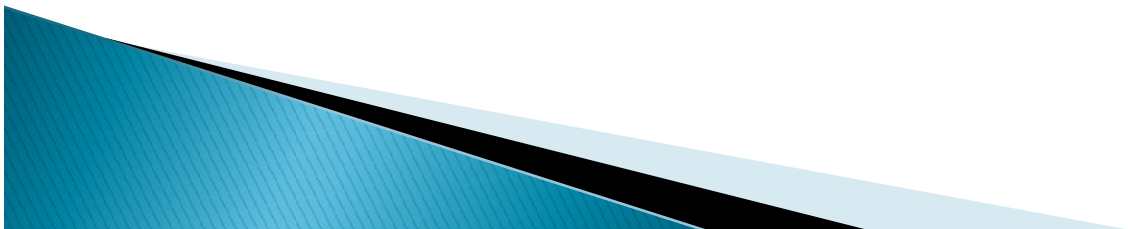
for open access;

and many others.

Examples of Open Access resources from India and in an Indian language

- **Encyclopedia of Sikhism**
  Edited by Prof. Harbans Singh. Published by Punjabi University, Patiala (in print form in 4 volumes in English language). Online version of this encyclopedia searchable at: http://www.learnpunjabi.org/eos/index.aspx
  (Used by users in 80 countries across the world)

- PunjabiPedia
  A peer-reviewed open access Encyclopedia in Punjabi language (Gurmukhi script)
  Started in 2013, launched in 2014
  Contains more than **178,000 articles** covering all subjects.
  Aceesible at http://punjabipedia.org/

Global Scholarly Literature

- Only when the scholarship both from the Global South and the Global North are made available through open access, can we truly call the scholarship, scholarly communication, and scholarly literature diverse and inclusive.

- To develop what this paper proposes is a 'Global Scholarly Literature' including the scholarly literature from the North as well as from the South, in as many languages as possible, we need to address this issue at global conferences both in the North, and in the South as well through advocacy of open access to governments.

Thanks for your kind attention.

Your questions, comments, and suggestions
  are most welcome now or later at

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