



## Editorial

# Revisiting open-access versus non-open-access conventional publications in cytopathology

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Recently published study published in this journal demonstrated that open-access (OA) cytopathology journals accrued a higher citation rate as compared to the conventional non-OA cytopathology journals irrespective of their free access status.<sup>[1]</sup>

In OA, authors retain their copyright in the public domain without losing their intellectual property to any of their work in that publication. This allows unique flexibility for researchers and original authors to use their work for future review articles, chapters, and books using figures and tables (as it is or after some modifications if needed) by just citing the original OA publication source. The same is applicable if any OA publication is required in part or full for teaching and academic non-commercial purpose.<sup>[2-4]</sup>

Citation per article for both types of non-OA cytopathology journal articles irrespective of their free access status was lower than OA category.<sup>[1]</sup> The study highlighted that the authors prefer OA platform, irrespective of their free availability status. Some non-OA journals allow the articles to be available as free resource but usually after some post-publication gap. This may lead the scholar not to prefer such articles. Increasing number of scholars is realizing the advantages and long-term impact without losing the hard earned copyright to their creation.

The Creative Commons Copyright License (CCCL) provides tools to manage balanced application of the traditional “all rights reserved” mindset because of usual copyright laws. CCCL extends tools for both individual scholars and large entities including publishers, printers, and academic institutions.<sup>[5]</sup> This simplifies the process in a standardized fashion by granting copyright permissions to the creative works. This has impacted OA publication with creation of ever expanding platforms such as Digital Commons,<sup>[6]</sup> which is a pool of OA content which may be copied, distributed, edited, remixed, and built upon. All these are possible due to CCCL within the boundaries of copyright laws.<sup>[5]</sup>

In addition to many benefits related to the internet, special benefits of the OA articles include easy, quick real-time access, and referral to various cross references in the articles reviewed by the researchers, if the articles were in OA [Table 1]. In contrast, non-OA articles had to be purchased or find a source subscribing to these journals with disruption in the review process compromising the ability to review the scientific literature in seamless fashion. Many review articles in OA<sup>[7-9]</sup> could use previously published sketches and figures with benefit of referring to those original articles if needed as additional resources. Internet-based advantages allow inclusion of videos.<sup>[10,11]</sup> It also allows provision for automatic translations in various languages in the world, real-time consultation with researchers and comments/rebuttal, etc. The above benefits

**Table 1:** Summary of some of benefits with OA articles.

| # | Benefits of OA  |
|---|---|
| 1 | Increased impact of the publication for individual authors.   |
| 2 | Easy quick seamless access to the scientific literature in real time.   |
| 3 | Because of the copyright sharing principle of OA under CCCL, figures and sketches along with other data could be used seamlessly with or without modification in many review articles and OA chapters. <sup>[7-9]</sup>             |
| 4 | Overall cost to the general public and authors is significantly reduced with exponentially high output.   |
| 5 | Very important emergence of unique publication platform for rapid advances in science.  |
| 6 | Many benefits of internet could be applied including inclusion of videos, <sup>[10,11]</sup> provision for automatic translations in various languages in the world, real-time consultation with researchers and comments/rebuttal. |

OA: Open access, CCCL: Creative Commons Copyright License

at large are popularizing the OA publications with obvious reasons for its emergence and widespread preference.

These benefits are increasingly appreciated by intelligentsia and scholars with increasing attempts to prefer OA option. However, the OA model for self-advancement with financial independence requires special approach. The commonly used model is raising revenue through Article Publication Cost (APC) which range from \$1350 to \$ 5700.<sup>[12,13]</sup> Such cost may be acceptable to the scholars publishing grant-based research, which allows payment for APC through grant funding. However, most authors publish non-grant-based research or other scholarly work and for them there may not be funding for paying APC.

To balance this dilemma, CytoJournal as scientific journal publishing diagnostic and clinical cytopathology literature has designed a unique model. In this model, the non-profit organization, Cytopathology Foundation Inc. (CF) which supports CytoJournal's OA platform, accepts membership at low cost. All CF members get multiple benefits<sup>[14]</sup> which include total waiver of APC for all articles accepted after peer review and published in CytoJournal during their membership in good standing. Unfortunately, even professional organizations fail to protect the copyrights of the work of their members in addition to significantly high membership cost.

With CytoJournal, all cytopathology authors have access to OA platform in cytopathology at very nominal cost with many benefits.<sup>[14]</sup> This concept is extended further with provision to publish scholarly work as books at low cost through CytoJournal Monograph/Atlas Series project by Cytopathology Foundation<sup>[8,9,15,16]</sup> in collaboration with Scientific Scholar.<sup>[17]</sup>

In summary, OA publishing extends many benefits related to the internet in addition to special benefits such as convenience of quick real-time access and referral to various cross-references without disruption in the review process during the review of the scientific literature seamlessly online [Table 1]. For example, many review articles in OA<sup>[7-9]</sup> could use previously published sketches and figures in review articles and chapters after citing the original source.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (IN ALPHABETIC ORDER)

APC: Article Publication Cost  
 CCCL: Creative Commons Copyright License  
 CF: Cytopathology Foundation  
 CPA: Citations per Article  
 Dwlds: Downloads  
 IP: Intellectual property  
 JASC: Journal of American Cytopathology  
 J of Cytology: Journal of Cytology  
 non-OA: Non-open access  
 OA: Open access

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