



Datasphir



TUESDAY, 2ND OF APRIL

FUTMINNA OPEN ACCESS WORKSHOP

With BookHub and Open Book
Collective (OBC) UK



WORKSHOP REPORT

2025

OPENING REMARKS BY PROF. ABDULSALAMI SANNI KOVO



Prof. Abdulsalami Sanni Kovo
Director APC FUTMinna

Tuesday the 2nd of April, 2025, went down in history as the first workshop on Open Access Book Publishing hosted in Nigeria. FUTMINNA Academic Publishing Centre played host to Directors of university APCs, book authors, researchers, librarians, and key institutional management staff and stakeholders.

The one-day workshop themed **“Revolutionising academic publishing in Nigeria: FUTMINNA’s open access initiative with BookHub and Open Book Collective (OBC) UK”** explored strategies for enhancing the visibility of institutional research outputs through Open Access platforms. With support from Open Book Collective, Datasphir, and tetfund, FUTMINNA APC is strengthening OA initiatives and bolstering academic publishing in Nigeria. This blog post recounts key issues discussed, particularly the adoption of the Open Access Academic Books Publishing Framework for Nigeria.

The Director FUTMINNA APC, Prof. Abdulsalami Sanni Kovo in his welcome address enlightened participants on the successes recorded by the publishing centre during the print only closed access era and explained the challenges that warranted a transition to online open access book publishing. These challenges include rising cost of publishing materials, high cost of equipment maintenance, increase in fuel price which affected transportation cost, expenses incurred in establishing and managing a warehouse at the Federal Capital Territory, and inability of authors to pick up published materials due to financial constraints. The support that the centre enjoy from the university management was duly acknowledge and cited as one of the reasons for the successes recorded. This was followed by series of goodwill messages from heads of institutions, directors of APCs, book authors, and librarians setting the stage for scintillating presentations that ensued.



Dr. Fatimah Abduldayan (Director CoDeL, Co-Lead FUT Minna OA Project)

DISCUSSION: REVOLUTIONIZING ACADEMIC PUBLISHING IN NIGERIA



Dr. Fatimah Abduldayan, Director of the Centre for Open Distance and E-learning, and the Co-Lead of the FUTMinna OA Project took participants down memory lane with a detailed account of the evolution of printing. *The distinction between academic publishing and other forms of publishing was explained and challenges associated with print publishing further expounded.* Limited audience reach, high production and distribution costs, environmental impact especially as it relates to climate change, and lack of metrics to measure effectiveness were identified as the constraints to print publishing and the driving force for publishers to embrace digital publishing. The presenter argued that despite the metamorphosis from print to digital, certain barriers such as limited audience reach due to closed access publishing and subscription cost still persisted. This brought about the need for a model that allows for authors to publish without paying article processing charges and for readers to freely access the scholarly books, hence open access publishing.

DEMYSTIFYING MYTHS ABOUT OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING



The workshop presenters took turns in demystifying so many myths about open access publishing. Some of the myths discussed include absence of peer-review in OA publishing, inferiority of OA books in terms of quality, a means to ending print books, hidden costs in the guise of book processing charges, fear of sustainability, and increased plagiarism. Dr. Fatimah was able to unravel the mysteries for participants. For instance, peer review process is at the core of academic publishing and no academic publishing model can relegate its importance. Also, the quality of an academic publication is often a function of the citations received and this can only be achieved through visibility and accessibility. Owing to the fact that the visibility and accessibility offered by open access publishing model is unmatched, the quality of open access publications is also unparalleled due to the citations they enjoy. The necessity of acquiring print books due to its being a major requirement for university accreditation also dispels the myth of OA books being a means to an end for print in Nigeria. The concept of diamond no-fee open access which is community driven allayed the fear of hidden costs and addressed concerns bothering on sustainability of OA publishing. And lastly, the creative common license adequately addresses all copyright concerns eliminating room for plagiarism and holding defaulters accountable.

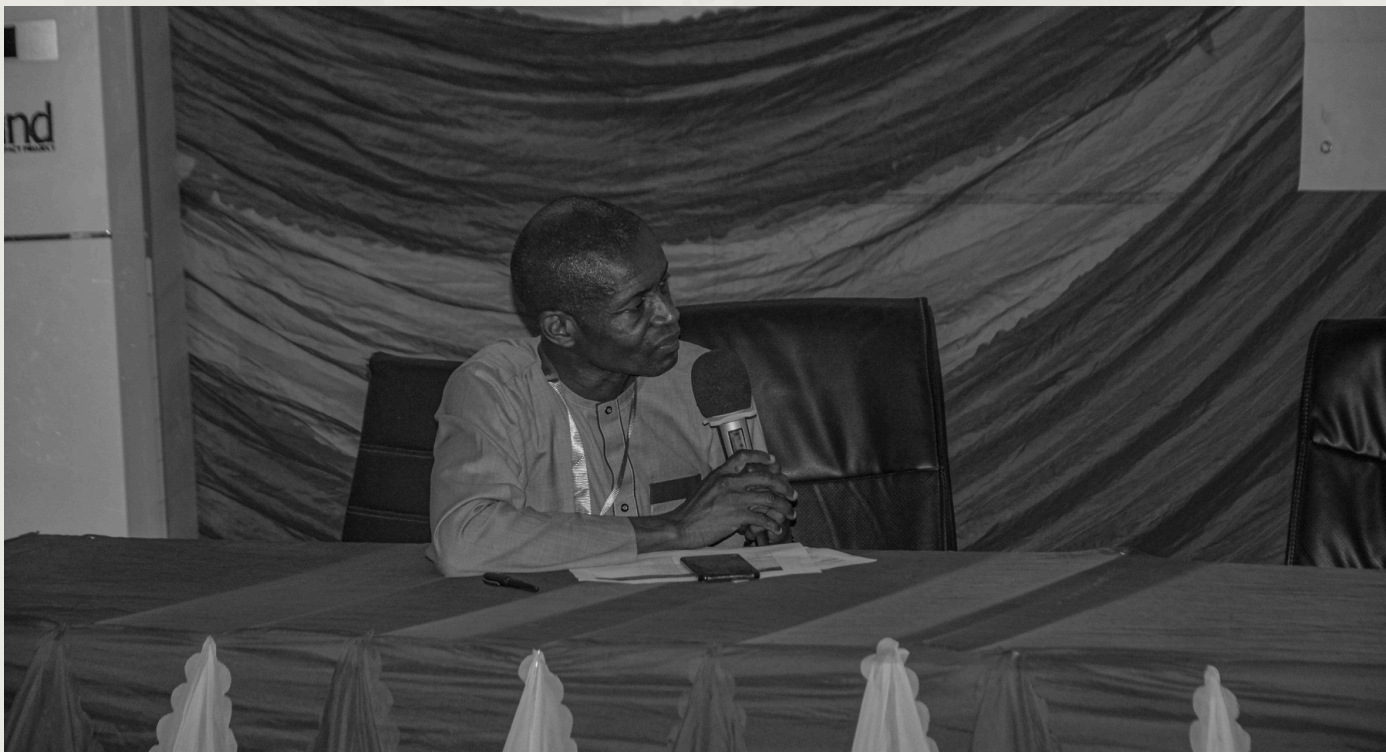
Dr. Fatimah acknowledged partners involved in revolutionizing academic publishing in Nigeria and the role each member has played. TETFund established the pioneer Academic Publishing Center in FUTMINNA, **Datasphir** provided the infrastructure, and **Open Book Collective (UK)** funded the piloting of the open access collaborative publishing platform – **BookHub**. The role **LIBSENSE** is playing in grooming librarians to champion the broader concept of open access (open science) across Nigeria, portrayed them as the human resource providers.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF FUTMINNA TO THE FUTURE OF RESEARCH



Dr. Adetoro, the Head of System and Multimedia Division of the IBB Library, FUTMINNA, began with pinpointing the factors diminishing the visibility of Nigeria's research outputs and Nigeria's contribution to the global research output despite having over 100 universities producing thesis/dissertation at postgraduate level annually and about 1000 scholarly journals. These factors include poor open research culture, universities ceding research publishing to commercial publishers, and absence of robust open science infrastructure. Efficiency, collaboration and societal benefits, quality, ethical conduct of research, and visibility were identified as the dividends of opening up research. The presenter explained the various open access publishing models and highlighted the superiority of the diamond open access publishing model. Research malpractices were mentioned as some of the by-product of exorbitant article processing charges and the attendant consequences being the retraction frenzy currently witnessed in the scholarly communication community.

The contributions of FUT Minna to the Nigeria's scholarly output were highlighted. Some of the key successes recorded include creation and management of a functional institutional repository, consideration of reviewers comment during academic staff promotion exercise, APC open book initiative, and adoption of open journal system platform for journal publishing in the university. However, absence of ownership of research process and infrastructure, paucity of funds leading universities to commercialize their research findings, lack of open access funding, and lack of open access policy currently threaten open science development at FUT Minna. Dr. Adetoro drew the curtain on the presentation with a call to action for FUT Minna to adopt an open science policy and incorporate open research practices. The presenter also called on the university to adopt diamond open access publishing model and incentivise open science practices. This presentation set the stage for the panel discussion that followed.



Prof Conrad A. Omonhinmin

PANEL DISCUSSION: RESEARCH OPENNESS AND GLOBALIZATION



The panel discussion was moderated by Professor Conrad, the Coordinator for Open Access and Science initiatives at Covenant University. The discussion revolved around FUT Minna's approach to presenting its research output to the global world, level of openness in the universities research policy, impact of openness on the output of the university's highest-ranking journal, and contributions of the centre of open distance and e-learning to the university's open content. The panellists identified quality as the first step to making research output global and its role in encouraging openness. When the research output is devoid of quality, the zeal to disseminate in global platforms will be absent, hence the emphasis on quality as a key approach to globalization of research output emanating from FUT. In the area of openness, the university has policy on making research data open however, the absence of open access policy is undermining the university's position as a leader in the open science movement in Nigeria.

Professor Oluwole O. Morenikeji (Editor-in-Chief, Nigerian Journal of Technological Research) acknowledged the role played by the apex body funding research and development in Nigeria (TETFUND). Thanks to their support, the university highest ranking journal runs on the diamond/no-fee open access publishing model which means that article processing charges and subscription charges are waved for both authors and readers respectively. This has helped in improving the global visibility and impact of the journal.

Dr. Fatimah highlighted the benefits offered by open educational resources produced at the centre and its licensing which allows academics within the university to edit to suit their teaching, learning, and research needs. This has tremendously increased the open contents produced within the university. The Chairman of the University Research Policy Committee emphasized the need for the global south to come up with an indigenous scholarly publishing system that will offer control of publication metrics, such as impact factor and h-index.



Mr. Oreva Orior

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKHUB PLATFORM



Mr. Oreva explained the features of the BookHub software and the progress made so far in its implementation at FUTMINNA APC. Simultaneous writing and editing by authors and editors, dialogue boxes detailing changes made and reasons for the changes, AI assisted text generation based on scholarly articles uploaded in the knowledge base, instant internet search, retrieval, and addition of relevant research articles to the knowledge base, and customised design of the book cover page were some of the features offered by the BookHub platform. A major highlight from the presentation was the revelation that the minimum time it took for authors to publish an open access book using the BookHub software at FUT Minna APC, after initial training was one week. A quick review of the published open access book titled “ASUU STRIKE AND LABOUR UNION STRUGGLES IN NIGERIA” showed the book to meet academic publishing standards. Mr. Oreva concluded the session with a hands-on session where participants experienced the transformative capabilities of BookHub and how it is revolutionizing academic publishing.



APC Directors and Staff from FUTMINNA Academic Publishing Centre and Datasphir

FRAMEWORK FOR OPEN ACCESS BOOK PUBLISHING: ADOPTION AND CLOSING REMARKS

The Director FUT Minna APC (Prof. Abdulsalami Sanni Kovo) and the Marketing Manager of the APC who also doubles as the Director CODEL (Dr. Fatimah Abduldayan) called for the adoption of a framework for open access book publishing in Nigeria. The APC Director of Usman Danfodio University Sokoto (North-West) heeded the call and moved for the adoption of the framework with support from APC Directors from Modibo Adama University of Technology, Yola (North-East), and University of Lagos (South-West).

The workshop ended with a closing remark from Prof. Abdulsalami Sanni Kovo (Director, FUTMINNA APC). The participants were urged to embrace open access book publishing and champion its adoption in their various institutions.

The framework has now been officially signed by the APC Directors.

[***View the signed framework document here***](#)

UPCOMING EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT



Details about the upcoming **Book Authoring Workshops** in Lagos and Abuja will be available soon. Stay updated by visiting our [project website](#), and express your interest by filling out the form [HERE](#).

We look forward to welcoming you!