

Availability, access and use

re-understanding the e-journal problem?

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Who we talked to

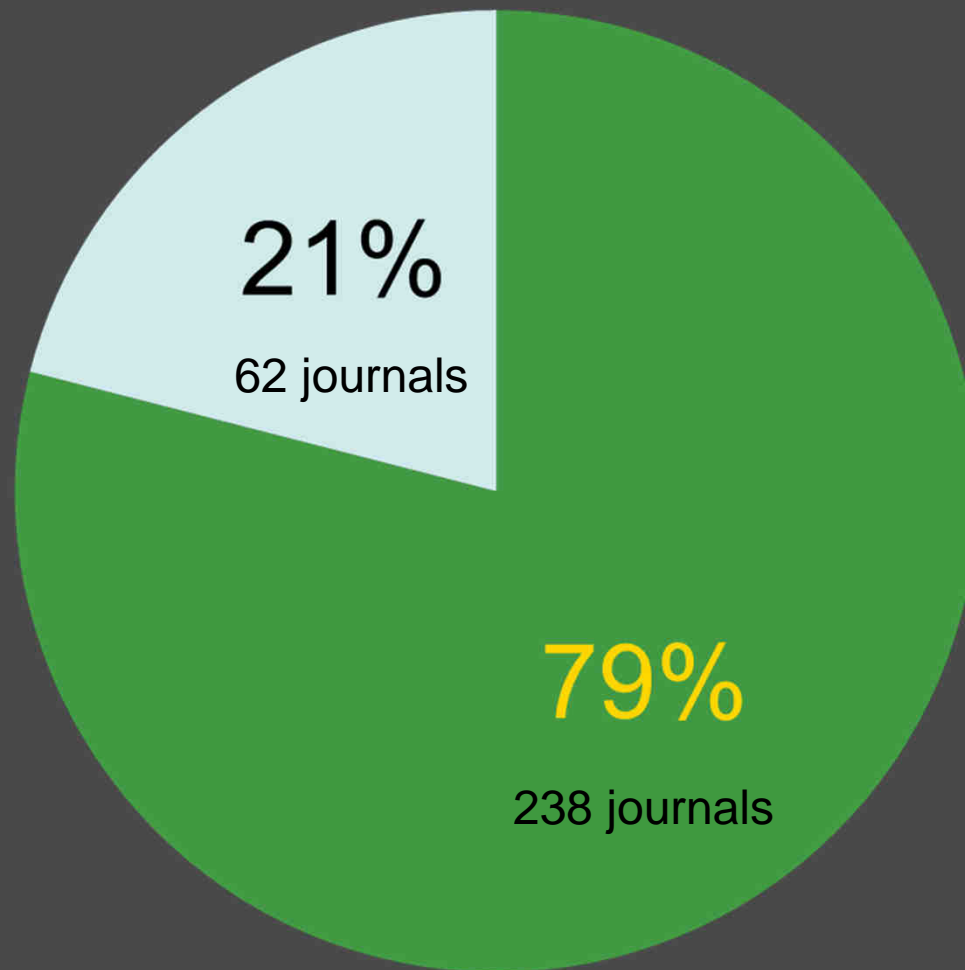
- 240 postgraduates and academics - including deans and heads
 - University of Malawi (Chancellor College)
 - University of Nairobi
 - National University of Rwanda
 - University of Dar es Salaam
- 201 survey responses, interviews with 32 with senior academics, discussions with 23 library and ICT staff, and several discussion groups and observation exercises with postgrads and junior researchers

Researchers and students don't have access to the latest journals...

- Without journals, researchers can't do their research, lecturers can't update their teaching, students can't produce good assignments.

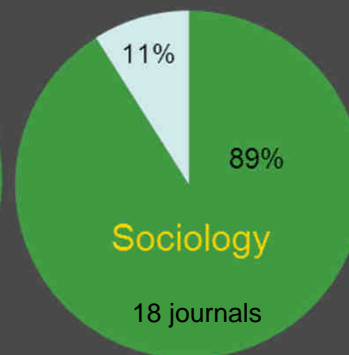
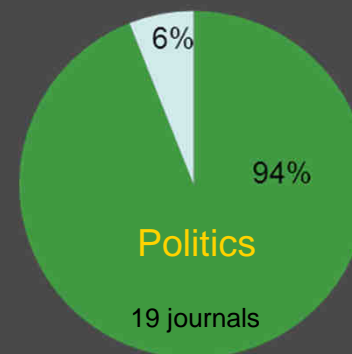
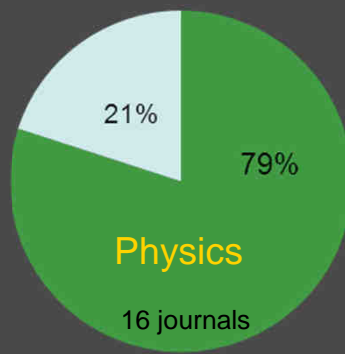
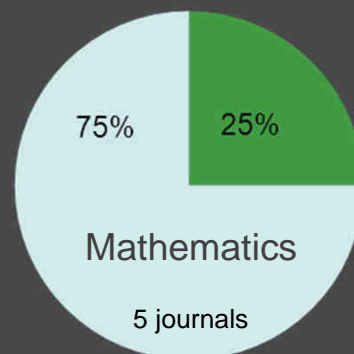
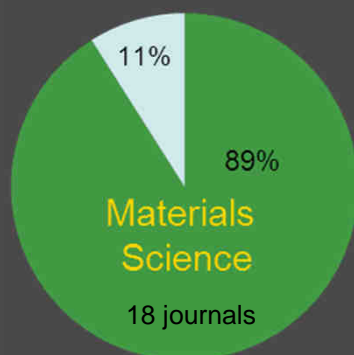
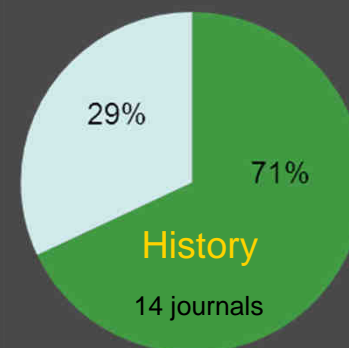
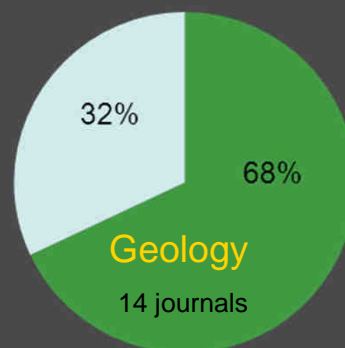
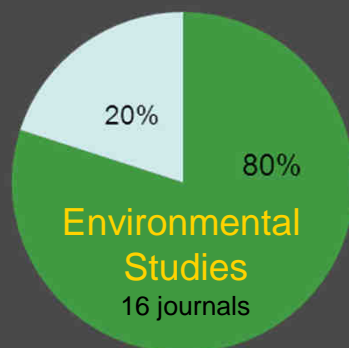
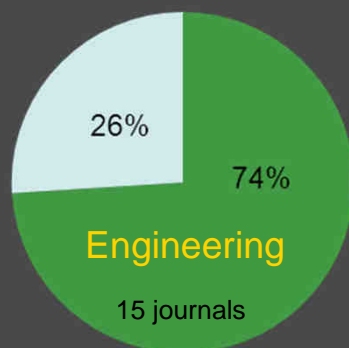
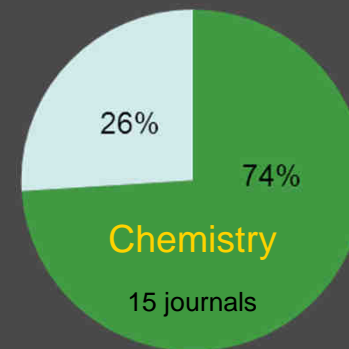
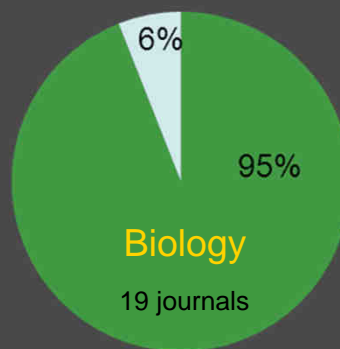
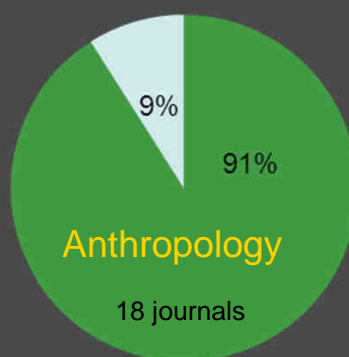
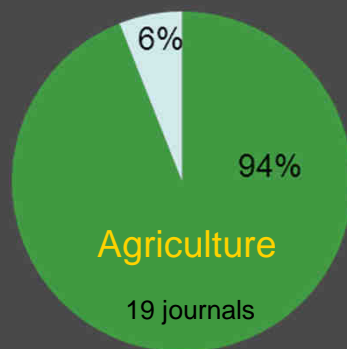
But is this really the case?

Availability is actually very good!



300 of the top 20
ISI ranked
journals in 15
subject areas

Four universities, average availability



Translating *availability* into *access* and *use*

What are the barriers?

- **Technology/connectivity** – Access to computers, good internet connections. Without doubt an important issue.

But this is improving, and even where technology/connectivity better (eg Nairobi), journal use not increasing at the same rate

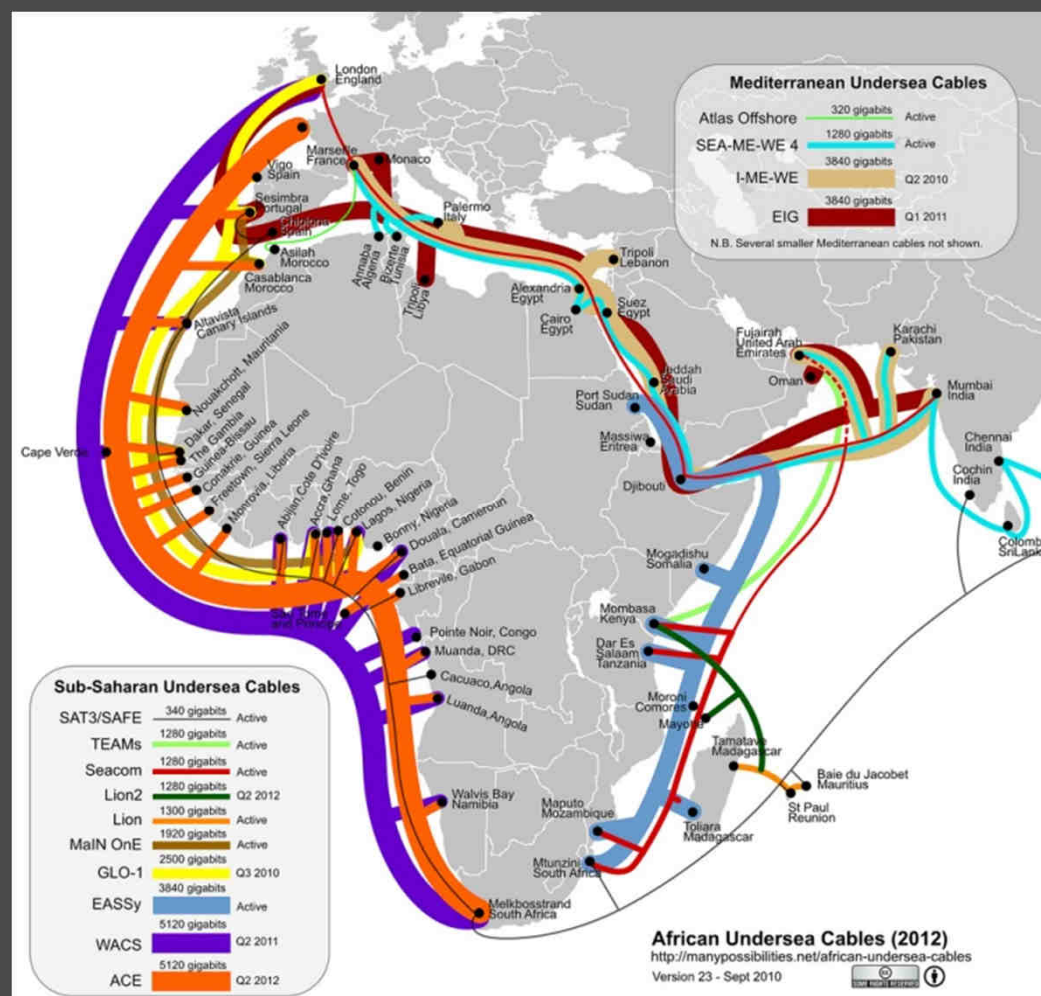
- **Skills** – information literacy & ICT

Librarians and others are training users in online skills, but can they reach everyone to the level that is needed?

The connectivity problem isn't yet solved, but it's getting a lot better...

994kb PDF from OUP		
	Mb/s	Download times
Malawi	1.7	45 mins
Nairobi	45	3 mins
Rwanda	6	4 mins
Dar	10	4 mins

...and in Malawi it only downloaded 80% of the file before hanging!



Do technology & skills explain it all?

We need to look beyond skills and technology to take account of

- Awareness
- People
- Relationships

and understand the **institutional context** in which all of this takes place

Policies, processes....

politics?

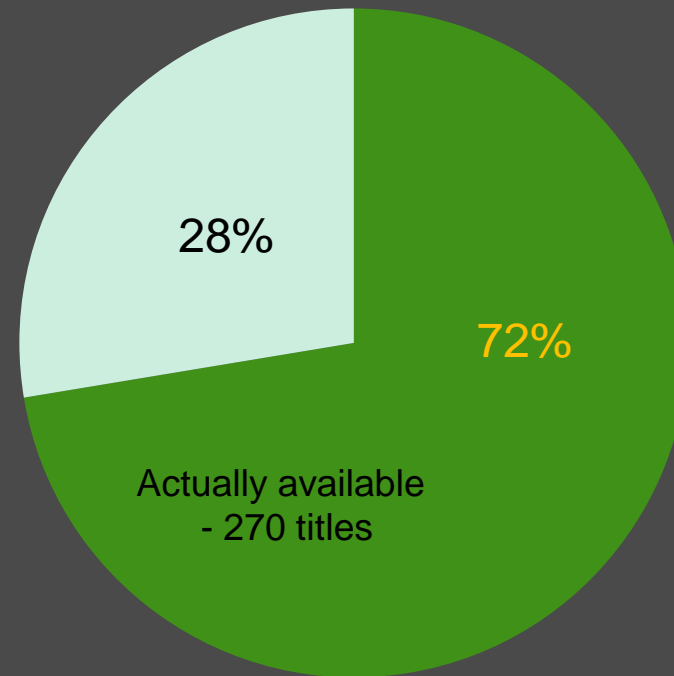
Awareness is low

Even where availability is high and connectivity is reasonably good, journals aren't being used

373 titles were reported
as unavailable

270 actually available

Titles actually available		
Malawi	71%	128 of 180
Nairobi	69%	73 of 106
Rwanda	83%	53 of 64
Dar	70%	16 of 23



Why is awareness so low?

Some suggestions

- empty shelves – so no journals?
- 'can't get in' – authentication and access
- relying on Google, not discovering the subscription content
- library websites/portals – underdeveloped
- what counts as 'scholarly'? - looking for the wrong thing

It all depends on people

Library leadership

- Leading libraries forward
- Inspiring and motivating staff
- Developing future-looking strategies
- New ideas and new ways of working
- Reaching out, marketing

Librarians vs ICT professionals

- Are librarians still relevant?
- New types of librarians

Librarians' skills & knowledge

Delivering e-resources requires...

ICT skills

- Do librarians have the ICT skills they need? - Or can they work with those that do?
- Can libraries develop a good web presence?

An understanding of research

- Do librarians know the strength of their collections?
- Do librarians know the content specification of the e-resources

Conservative approaches?

Librarians are pushing for more desktops in the library

...But more students have laptops and staff have desktops in their offices

Bandwidth Management and Optimisation

...considering bandwidth as one of the consumables

Relationships matter

Engaging beyond the library

Collaborations between librarians, researchers, ICT professionals

Making the case for the library
...But also learning about users' needs

Developing informal networks
...academics, students & senior managers

Researchers engaging with librarians?
...a two-way process

Drivers of change?

Librarians themselves need to drive this

- Understanding research
- Re-establishing their relevance
- Responding to users needs – **on a targeted, disciplinary basis**
- Changing peoples' perceptions – **what librarians can do**
- Librarianship should be about responding to user-needs – *Not business as usual*

Senior managers

- Developing strategic and policy frameworks
- Investing in libraries *and* in librarians
- Librarians need to work with managers to achieve this

With thanks to...

This wouldn't have been possible without the time, commitment and support of...

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...And the many academics and students who gave their time as respondents, discussion group participants and interviewees



Growing knowledge:

Access to research in east and southern African universities

www.acu.ac.uk/growing_knowledge