LIBSENSE Regional Open Science Policy

Development Workshop 1

Monday, 8th November 2021

WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2020 TOP 500

LIBSENSE

STRENGTHENING OPEN SCIENCE IN AFRICA

Case Study

Open Access @ Covenant University: *Scholarly Communication for Global Visibility*

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University's Profile & Context

- *Covenant University is a Nigerian Christian Mission University founded in February of 2002. It currently has four colleges and twenty-two departments.*

- *Covenant aspired to be among the globally recognized university.*

- *Covenant sought to engage best practices in research, innovation, and discovery.*

- *Covenant sought to encourage globally competitive research engagements as one of the critical tools for fair and responsible hiring, promotion, and tenure of faculty.*

Policy & Key Elements of Change

Policies

- **2012** - *Covenant University proposed global recognition and visibility agenda.*
- **2013** - *University faculty and senate adopts 3 policies:*

i. **Open Access (OA) scholarly communication policy**

ii. **Open Educational Resources (OER) policy**

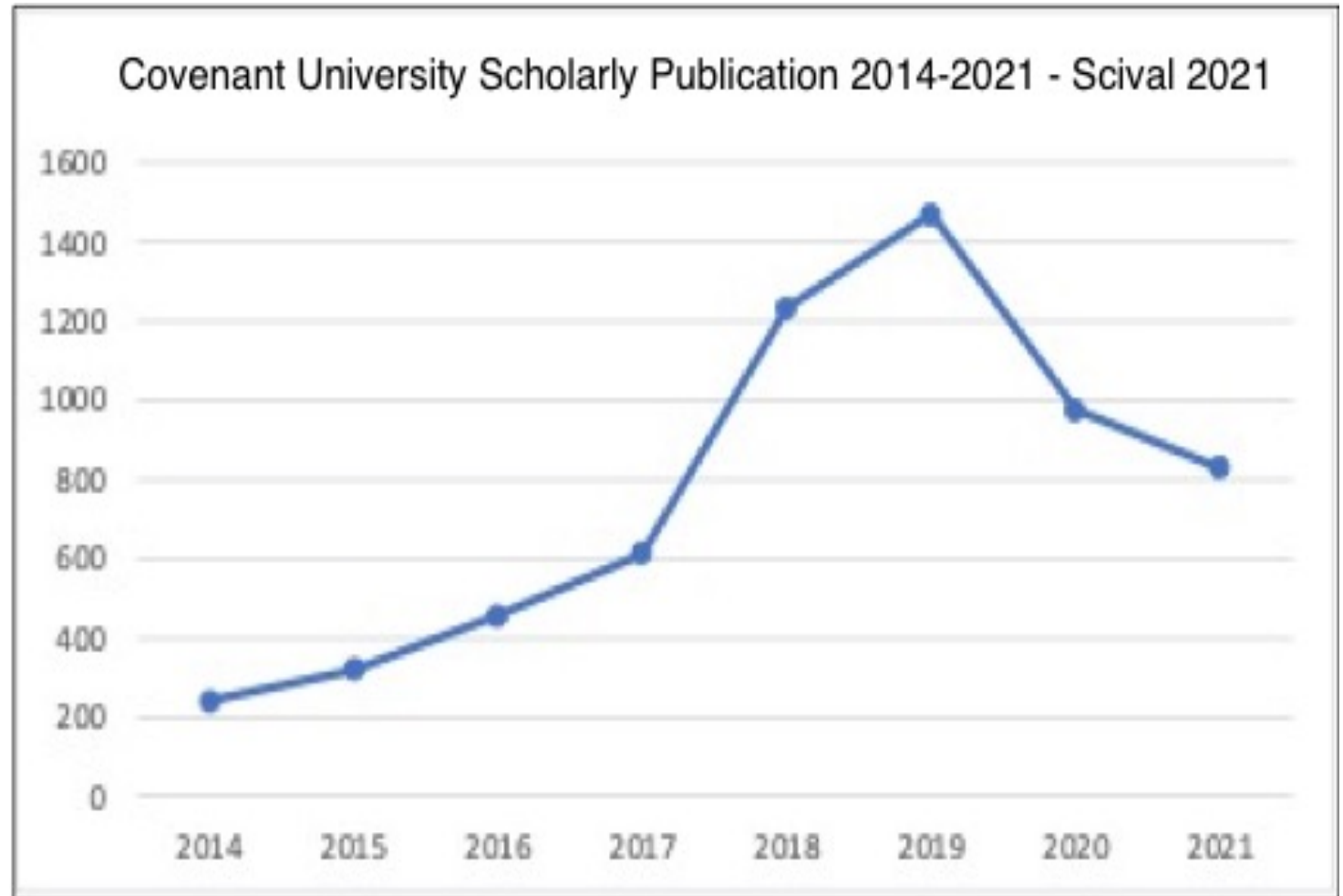iii. **Open-Access Repository (Open Archive) policy**

Key Elements of Change

- *Adopting the **Open Access** (OA) scholarly communication policy was strategic because funding research publications in Nigeria is generally researcher-centred.*

- *Model eliminated hurdle for researchers in Covenant.*

- *Researchers gained the liberty to access a wide range of journal outlets and retain rights to their research works.*

- *Users have instant access to published works through the university's funding support for OA communications.*
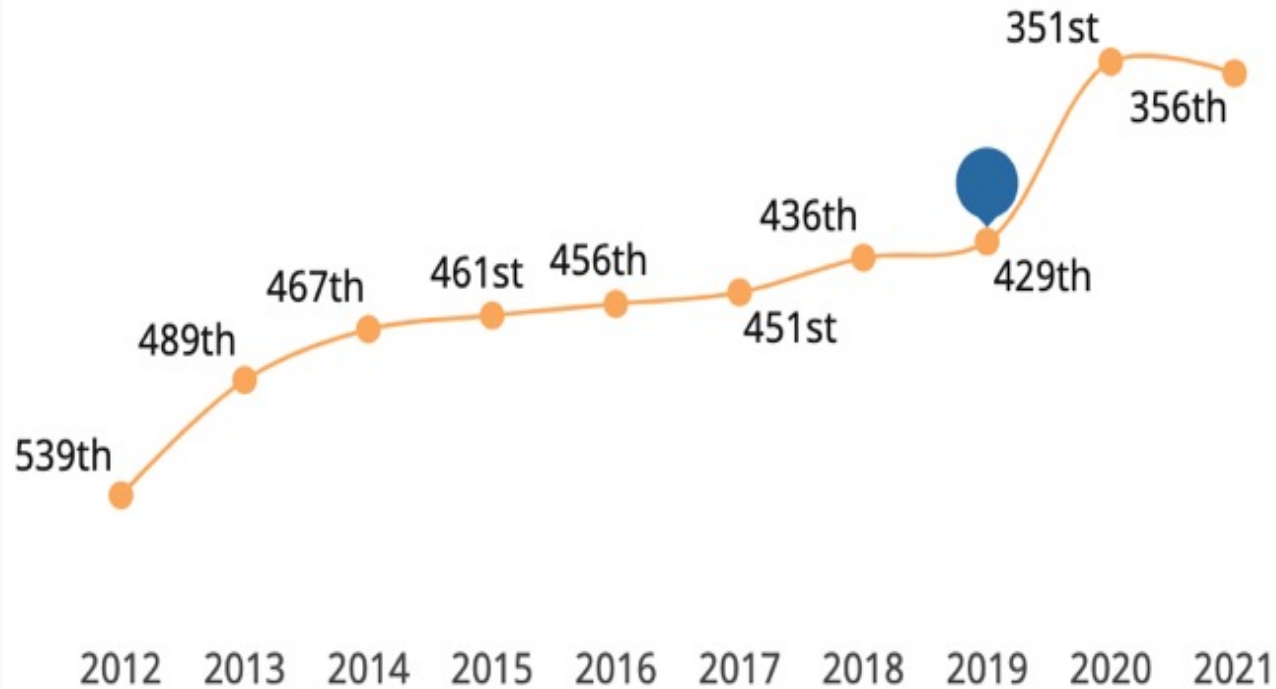
Feedback

- *Overwhelmingly feedback for researchers and university.*

- *Increased research outputs from the University's stables.*

- *Promoted interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research engagements.*

- *Improved collaboration by the university researchers.*

- *Improved the University and researchers' global visibility.*

- *One of the highlights of the model's adoption is the increase in research publication outputs by researchers in the University.*

- *The scholarly publication output rose by over 500% in six years, only slowing down in the COVID-19 period as captured on Scival.*

Covenant University Scholarly Publication 2014-2021 - Scival 2021

- *Following this, the University commenced its participation in the Times Higher Education rankings. Emerging 601-800, with a citation score of 36.9in its maiden year (2019).*

Covenant University Research Rank - Scimago 2021

- *its research visibility improved 52.93% with a citation score of 78.4 and ranked 401-500 in its second year (2020).*

- *Covenant ranked 1st amongst universities in Nigeria and West Africa and 5th in Africa within six years of adopting the model.*

- *The University has remained amongst the top universities in Africa since 2019, driving research quality, development and progression for both researchers and institutions.*

Motivation for Change

Major motivations for the change….

- *…**Internal** (primarily) in part by a desire to be relevant at national, regional, and global levels.*

- *…**External** - the non-existing governmental funding for privately operated universities.*

- *Deploy best practices in research, learning, teaching, and archiving research outcomes.*

- ***Bottom-up Approach** - Challenge the national research, teaching and learning environment for better engagements – Covenant Drag-Net Effect*

Processes & Dynamics for Developing, Implementing and Managing change

- *Covenant has a dynamic management system that drives Openness in the University.*

- *Centre for Research, Innovation, and Discovery that co-ordinates research, research funding and works with the Open Access co-ordinating unit.*

- *University library works with the OA unit to operate the Open Archive system.*

- *Academic Planning Unit, the Centre for Systems and Information Services, and the Open Distance Learning programme work with the OA unit to operate the OER.*

- *After adopting the Open Access policies in 2013, the University evolved commensurate hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure criteria to accommodate the growing University's profile, retain faculty and attract top-level personnel (faculty and research positions).*

- *Feedback from outside and within the institution has been pivotal to improving the institution rewards system.*

Key obstacles:

- *initial poor awareness of Open Access and its effect on research outcomes and research funding;*

- *the apathy to switch from the well-enshrined closed access publication model to the Open Access model;*

- *resistance to the research assessment reforms following the adoption and its potential benefits to researchers.*

Timeline for Development and Implementation

- **2012**: *Covenant University proposed to seek global relevance and set a ten-year timeline (2012 – 2022).*

- **2013**: *Adopts the three policies to promote Openness as a platform to pursue its global agenda.*

- **2014**: *Commenced funding for Open publications (Journals, conferences, etc)*

- **2016**: *Revised policies to accommodate feedback from a wide range of stakeholders.*

- **2019**: *Emerged top ranking in Times Higher Education World University Rankings.*

- **2019**: *World Bank's Centre of Excellence.*

- **2020**: *Berths among top 500 universities globally.*

- **2020**: *Invited to the national research projection review – TETFund RSDC*

- **After 2022**: *Revamp commitment to the Openness drive.*

Thank you

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