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Exploring state and institutional support for sustainable scholarly journal publishing

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Abstract. The study aims to identify global practices of financial and non-monetary support for scholarly journals, funding criteria, and associated outcomes. An exploratory review retrieved 438 documents from Scopus, Web of Science, and Research4Life, 28 of which were selected for thematic content analysis. Data were categorized into eight micro-themes, including funding schemes, infrastructure, and journal evaluation criteria. The findings reveal six key models of support: (1) public grants at the state level, (2) program-based funding at the state level, (3) national infrastructure/platform support, (4) consortia-based funding, (5) direct institutional funding from publishers or parent organizations, and (6) institutional non-monetary or in-kind support. These models vary across regions and are often combined. Countries with stable national funding and infrastructure (e.g., Finland, Poland, Canada) show higher journal sustainability and indexing success. In contrast, journals in resource-limited settings often rely on volunteer work and institutional goodwill. A noteworthy trend is thematic and language-based targeting. For example, Taiwan prioritizes technology journals, Canada's SSHRC supports social science journals, and Quebec programs only support French-language journals. Academic libraries contribute to sustainability through infrastructure, metadata services, and policy support.

Keywords: scholarly publishing, journal funding, open access, institutional support, sustainability, diamond OA, international indexing.

JEL Classification: D80, D83, D89, L82

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1. INTRODUCTION

Scholarly journals play a central role in the scholarly publishing ecosystem. They constitute a vital channel for scholarly communication. Scholarly journals, in spite of the model they operate, require resources to run and persist. The latter may take various forms and have different origins (e.g. monetary, volunteer work, and shared infrastructures). "However, without sufficient resources, a scholarly journal cannot continue to exist in the long run" (Laakso & Multas, 2023, p. 445).

Discussing the future of scholarly publishing in the context of the open science movement, JungWon Yoon, Halin Ku, EunKyung Chung highlight the need for national and international support (to enhance the sustainability of OA diamond journals) and propose that a collective approach involving policymakers, funding agencies, and journal administrators are crucial for fostering a sustainable open access ecosystem (Yoon et al., 2024). In conclusion, the authors emphasize "role of national support in bolstering the sustainability of OA diamond journal publishing, indicating that government- or national-agency-backed journals tend to fare better in maintaining their operations" (Yoon et al., 2024).

A pilot survey on sustainable scientific publishing, conducted among researchers, editors, and non-academic staff from Europe, North America, South America, Asia, and Africa, identified key motivators for editorial sustainability. Those included government incentives, publisher policies, and personal commitment of the staff (Höller et al., 2024). Furthermore, respondents highlighted employer policies as the most significant factor for motivating sustainable journal operations (Höller et al., 2024, p. 9). In this regard, the motivation basics in editorial processes are linked to general principles of motivation and engagement regardless of the kind of enterprise activity (Mishchuk et al., 2021; Szostek et al., 2024; Tutar et al., 2024). In editorial processes these basics should be combined with transparency and ethics in highlighting tense social issues, like war – attitudes towards this issue, including sanctions for russian authors, remain questionable today (Kozmenko et al., 2025; Ostapenko et al., 2023; Kohus et al., 2022).

It is important to note that sustainability is a multidimensional concept. Its various dimensions have been highlighted in different discourses over time and applied in many areas (Giovannoni & Fabietti, 2013; Ozbek et al., 2025, p. 3). Marc J. Epstein and Adriana Rejc Buhovac "focus on the criteria that are usually included in sustainability discussions, analyses, measurements, and reports - social, environmental, and economic"; the authors described nine principles of sustainability: 1. Ethics; 2. Governance; 3. Transparency; 4. Business relationships; 5. Financial return; 6. Community involvement/economic development; 7. Value of products and services; 8. Employment practices; 9. Protection of the environment" (Epstein & Rejc Buhovac, 2014, p. 22). We consider sustainability in scholarly publishing primarily in terms of the financial aspect, though other aspects are taken into account.

The **objective** of this study is to review the relevant literature to identify and synthesize information regarding the international practices of state or (and) institutional support for scholarly journals, along with the criteria employed for evaluating journals for financial support. This is important in order to ascertain the most effective ways to ensure the sustainable development of scholarly journals, on the path to diamond open access and internationalization.

We are looking for answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the existing state and institutional support models for scholarly journals?

RQ2: What is the state funding amount and financing period?

RQ3: What criteria do countries use to evaluate journals for financial support?

RQ4: What is the kind of institutional support available?

RQ5: What outcomes are associated with funding?

2. METHODOLOGY

We applied an exploratory review methodology to collect and synthesize publicly available information from research papers, reports, regulatory documents, and funding program descriptions related to scholarly journal support. This approach allowed us to identify key trends related to our research questions.

2.1. Search strategy and study selection/screening

The search for relevant scientific articles was conducted in databases Scopus, Web of Science, and Research4Life using key phrases such as "state AND support AND scientific AND journal", "motivation AND staff AND scientific AND journal", "scientific AND journal AND funding AND mechanism", "sustainability AND scholarly AND publishing" in article titles or abstracts. The search was limited to English-language research and review articles published in open-access journals from 2014 to 2025 in the following subject areas: social sciences, arts and humanities, business, management and accounting, economics, econometrics, and finance. A total of 438 articles were retrieved.

Figure 1 shows the differences in coverage across the three scientometric databases. The search yielded 438 documents: Scopus (117; 26.7%), Web of Science (176; 40.2%), and Research4Life (145; 33.1%). The query "state AND support AND scientific AND journal" produced the most results (251; 57.3% of the total), with Research4Life leading (99; 68.3% of its total). "Sustainability AND scholarly AND publishing" followed with 129 documents (29.5%), with WoS ranking first (59 documents, or 33.5%). "Scientific journal funding mechanisms" generated 47 results (10.7%), led by WoS (24; 13.6%). The least productive query, "motivation AND staff AND scientific AND journal," yielded only 11 results (2.5%). WoS retrieved the most records overall, while Research4Life excelled in the "state and support" query.

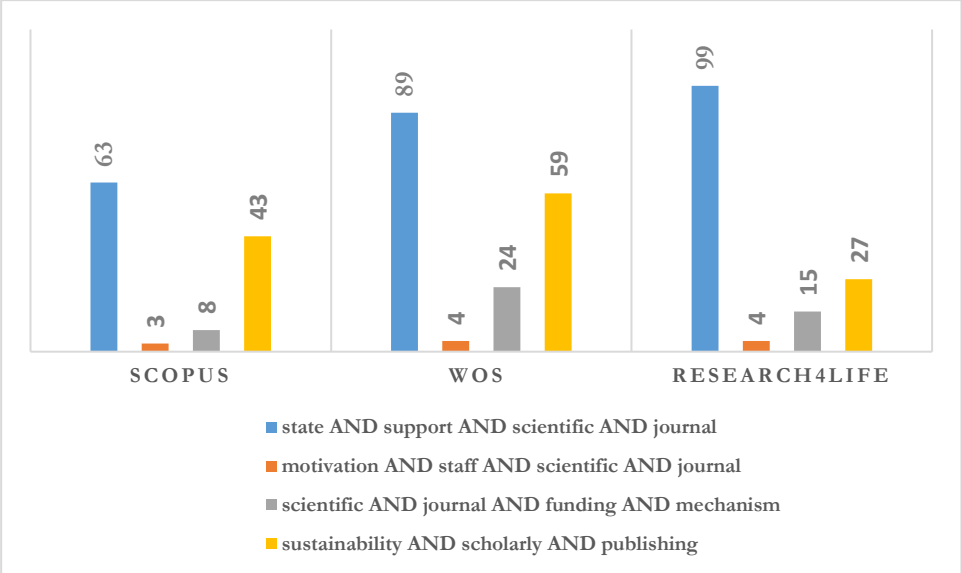

Figure 1. Distribution of retrieved documents by database and search query

Source: Authors' results

Firstly, we analysed the titles and abstracts of all 438 identified records and excluded 345 that did not contain information about the funding of scientific journals corresponding to our research questions. Seven articles authored by researchers from Russia, Belarus, and Iran were also excluded from the analysis. We then added the 86 selected records to the reference management software Zotero to search for duplicates

and further processing. Following the exclusion of 30 duplicate records, 56 publications were selected for a full-text review as presented in the PRISMA chart in Figure 2.

At the **second** stage, we checked the titles in the reference lists of the selected articles. This allowed for expanding the research base to include new articles from Scopus- and WoS-indexed scholarly journals, articles from scholarly journals not indexed in Scopus or WoS, project reports, conference papers, preprint, white papers, and online publications bringing the total number of publications for a full-text review to 88.

Due to a full-text review, articles that did not focus on information important for addressing the research questions were excluded (60). As a result, we selected 28 publications for qualitative analysis (Figure 2).

In the **third stage**, we conducted a targeted Google search for regulatory documents related to the support of scholarly journals in different countries. As a result, we included two regulatory documents from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. We also incorporated official information from the websites of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Fonds de la Recherche du Québec (Canada), the Ministry of Education and Science of Poland, the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (Finland), and the Independent Research Fund Denmark concerning national funding programmes.

2.2. Data extraction and analysis

Using Google Spreadsheets, we organized the extracted data in a Review Matrix on two levels: metadata (author, article or project title, publication year, document title, DOI/URL, document type and region/country) and micro-themes. In line with our research questions, we identified eight micro-themes:

1. The state organization providing funding.
2. The amount of funding and financing period.
3. Funding evaluation criteria.
4. Infrastructure/platform support at the state level.
5. Direct funding from parent institutions.
6. Institutional non-monetary or in-kind support.
7. Infrastructure/platform support at the institutional level.
8. Outcomes from funding or challenges due to a lack of funding.

The short citation was then extracted and collected in the Review Matrix by micro-themes.

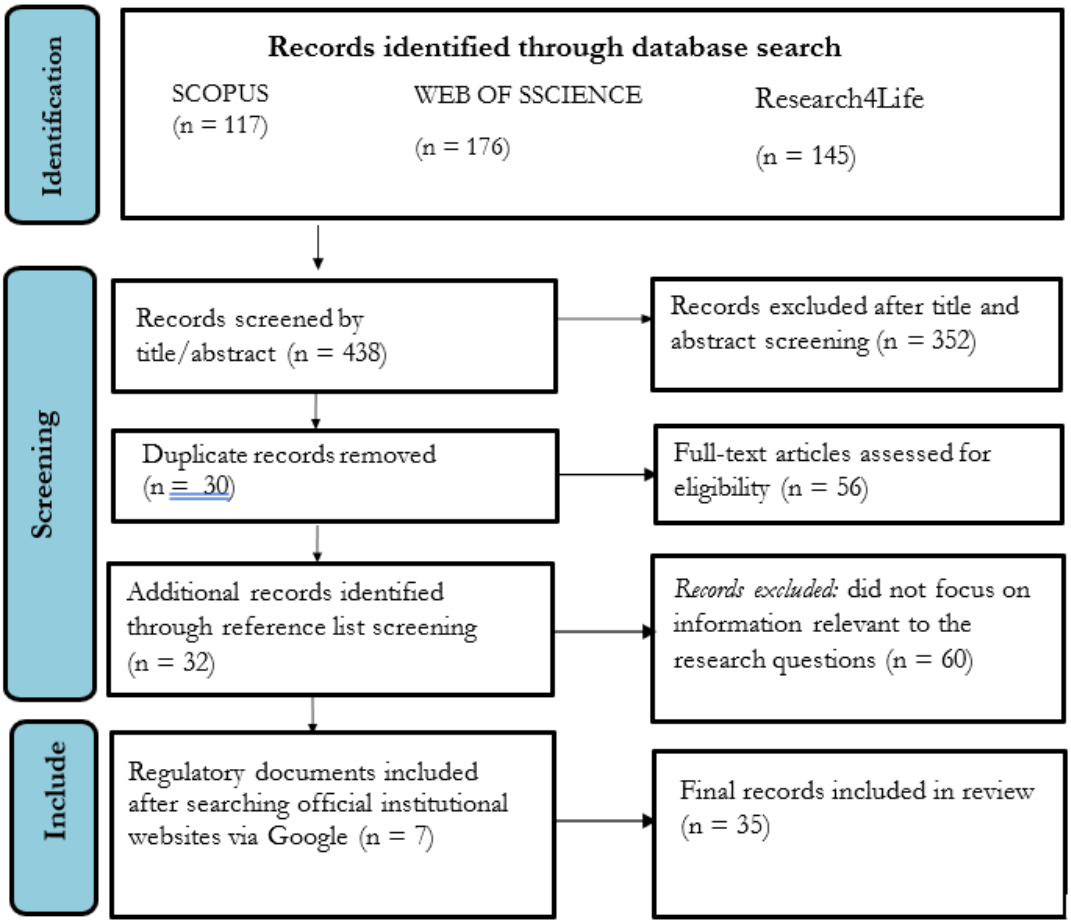

Figure 2. Data Selection Flow Based on the PRISMA Model

Source: Authors' results

3. EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. General data characteristics

The exploratory review includes information about state and institutional support practices for the scholarly journals in countries from all continents: Africa (Nigerian, Tanzania), Europe (Austria and Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Finland, France, Ukraine), Asia (Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietman), America (Canada, Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela, USA), Australia.

The distribution of publications by region is presented in Figure 3. The data indicate a clear dominance of Europe, which accounts for 17 publications**.** America follows with 8 publications, while Asia contributed 6 publications. Africa recorded 3 publications, and Australia had the lowest representation with only 1 publication.

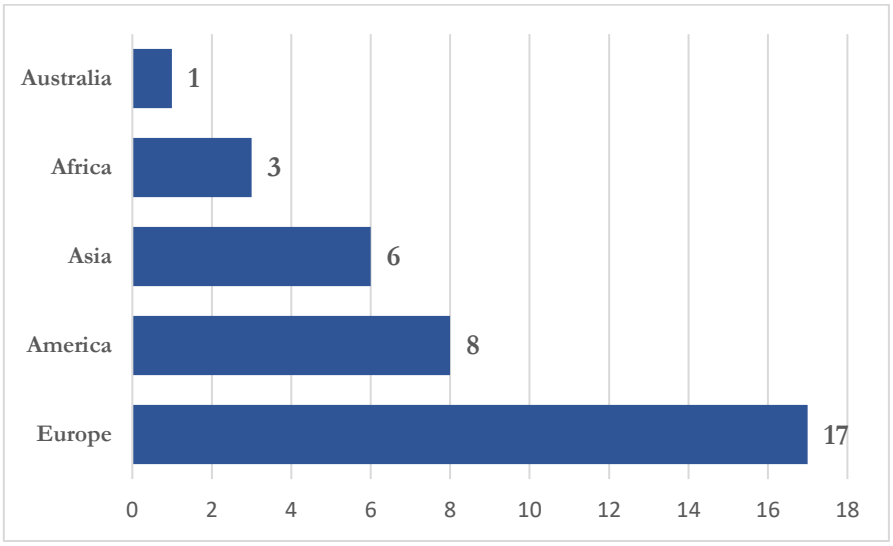

Figure 3. Structural analysis of publications on state and institutional support for sustainable scholarly journal publishing by their continent focus

Source: Authors' results

Figure 4 presents a world map illustrating the number of identified publications addressing the support of scholarly journals across different countries. The highest counts were recorded in Croatia, Finland, and Canada (4 publications each), followed by Germany, Poland, and Ukraine (3 each), with other nations contributing smaller numbers of relevant studies.

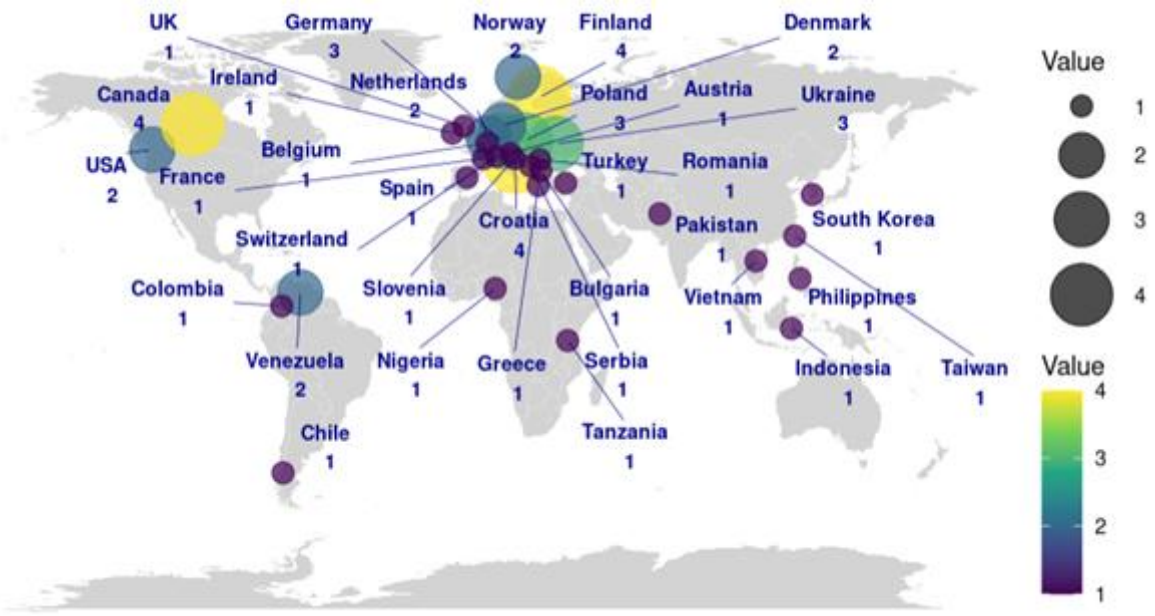

Figure 4. Structural analysis of publications on state and institutional support for sustainable scholarly journal publishing by their country focus

Source: Authors' results, biblioshiny

Most of the publications included in the review are research journal articles (19). Next are regulatory documents (7), reports (4), conference papers (2), preprints (1), white papers (1), and online publications

(1). The distribution of publications by document type from 2014 to 2025, illustrated on Figure 5, shows significant variation from year to year. Research articles were the predominant type almost every year, forming the core of scholarly output. Review papers and conference proceedings, on the other hand, appeared sporadically, with isolated contributions in specific years. Total output per year ranged from low in the early years to more consistent in the later period, indicating gradual diversification of document types alongside the dominance of research articles.

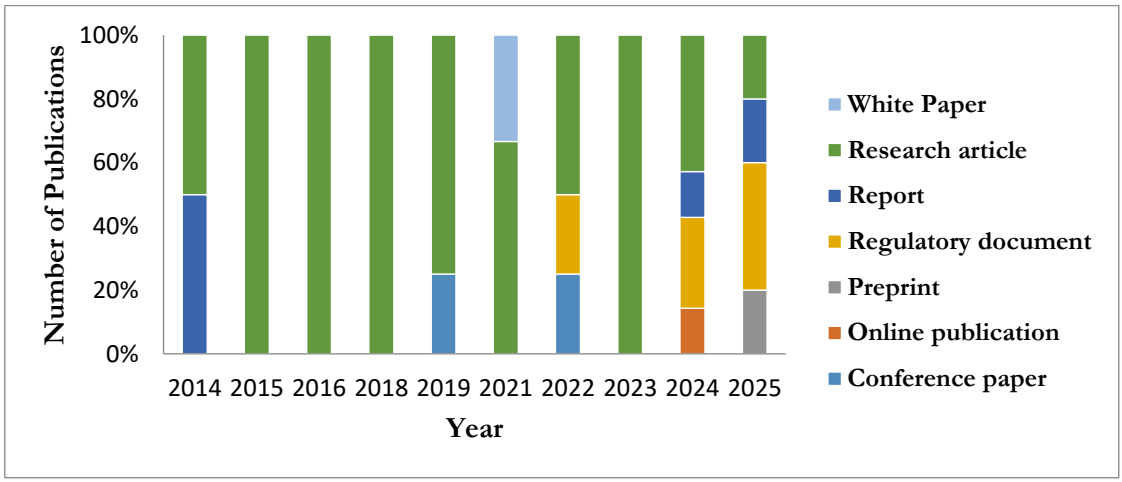

Figure 5. Types of sampled publications

Source: Authors' results

From 2014 to 2025, a considerable number of research articles addressing state and institutional support for sustainable scholarly journal publishing were published across a wide range of journals, reflecting a highly dispersed publication landscape. Eight research articles appeared in three leading journals – *Science Editing*, *Publications*, and *Learned Publishing* – which nonetheless serve as the primary platforms for research on sustainability and support mechanisms in scholarly publishing. The remaining eleven articles were published in various other journals (Figure 6). This distribution underscores the fragmented yet growing nature of scientific output in this domain, highlighting the diversity of research interests and the lack of a single dominant publication venue.

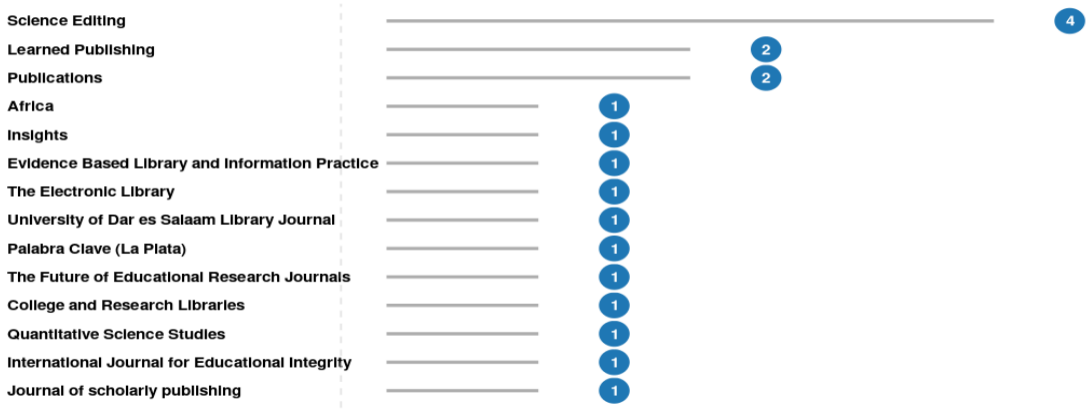

Figure 6. Distribution of sampled research articles by journal, 2014–2025

Source: Authors' results

3.2. Models of state and institutional support for scholarly journals

Based on the data extracted from the reviewed publications, we defined the following models of support for scholarly journals at the state and institutional levels.

1. **Public grants at the state level**. Provided by national research funding agency (or (and) federal or regional ministries, such as *Ministries of Science and Education* (Croatia until 2023, Poland), *Independent Research Denmark* (Denmark), *Fund for Scientific Research* (Belgium), *Austrian Science Fund* (Austria), The Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sport and the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (Spain), *Centre national de la recherche scientifique*, CNRS (France), *Ministry of Education and Culture, administered by the Federation of Learned Societies* (Finland) (Laakso & Multas, 2023; Ilva, 2018), *The Ministry of Science and Technology* (Taiwan) (Hsu & Tuan, 2016), *Korean Federation of Science and Technology Societies (KOFST)* (Huh et al., 2015). These grants are often based on open calls and competitive evaluations.

2. **Program-based funding at the state level**. "Canada's Aid to Scholarly Journals" (ASJ) from the Canadian government's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), "Support for scientific journals in French (RE) 2025-2026" from Fonds de recherche du Québec **(**FRQSC**)** and Poland's "Development of Scientific Journals" programs provide multi-year funding with specific eligibility requirements such as OA compliance, peer review practices, and national relevance (Monika Sewastianowicz, 2024; Lange & Severson, 2024; (*Soutien aux revues scientifiques en français (RE) 2025-2026*, 2025). After 2023 Croatian Ministry of Science and Education "changed its subsidy policy and started distributing the finances for scholarly publications through programme agreements with public universities and research institutes as a part of institutional subsidy for research infrastructure" (Stojanovski & Mofardin, 2025).

3. **Infrastructure/platform support at the national level.** Some European countries have created centralized national platforms for OA scholarly journal publications, such as Hrčak (Croatia), doiSerbia, and PublishOA.ie (Ireland). These national platforms provide the technical infrastructure and integration with global indexing services, such as DOAJ, Crossref, and Google Scholar, and also provide centralized hosting for OA scholarly journals (Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 58; Laakso & Multas, 2023; Mahony, 2024).

4. Consortia-based models. Among the literature included in the review, several models of consortia-based funding of scholarly journals were identified. These models vary in their degree of practical implementation and institutional support. The NÅHST model in Norway is a notable example of a national consortium-based funding mechanism for Diamond Open Access journals. It is supported by the Research Council of Norway (55%), the Ministry of Education (40%), and Norwegian universities (5%). This model demonstrates a functioning structure of shared financial responsibility and public investment in scholarly publishing (Wenaas, 2021, p. 480; Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 145; Vasylieva et al., 2023).

In contrast, several other proposed models, although described in detail in the reviewed literature, have not yet been implemented in practice. One such model is the Kotilava project in Finland, which envisions a consortium-based alternative to APCs. This model pools financial contributions from various domestic stakeholders who benefit directly from the country's scholarly publishing ecosystem, including universities, research institutes, and funding bodies. The funding formula is based on the volume of peer-reviewed articles published by researchers affiliated with each institution, with an average reimbursement rate of approximately €800 per article. Additionally, each member organization pays a fixed annual fee of €1,500 to support the collective infrastructure. However, the initial response from Finnish universities was disappointing, and the launch of the funding model was postponed – initially until 2019 – with further negotiations anticipated (Ilva, 2018, pp. 5-7).

Efforts to establish similar collaborative funding models have also emerged in other countries. In the United States, the Academic Research Community (ARC) Alliance initiative represents a promising proposal

for a community-led, non-profit publishing model. Although detailed and aligned with open science principles, the model remains a theoretical proposal. Preliminary discussions with the leadership of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have indicated potential support for launching the Alliance (Miller & Rice, 2023).

5. Direct funding from the founder (publisher) at the institutional level. According to the reviewed literature, some European universities, such as the University of Granada (Spain), the University of Silesia in Katowice (Poland), provide direct funding for scholarly journals (Laakso & Multas, 2023). "Fixed and permanent" or "periodically negotiated subsidy" from the parent organization received scholarly journals in Finland (Taşkın et al., 2024). Most scholarly journals in Tanzania are also funded by their respective universities, so the amount of funding depends on each university's generosity (Samzugi & Kagugu, 2023).

Mikael Laakso and Anna-Maija Multas presume that these types of university funding calls are much more common, given that they are difficult to find through open web searches (Laakso & Multas, 2023, p. 454).

6. Institutional non-monetary or in-kind support. The editorial offices of scholarly journals often benefit from the infrastructure of their parent institutions, including office space, IT services, computers, internet access, publishing software, hosting services, editorial systems, online ISSN registration, print ISSN registration, DOI activation, DOAJ registration, Dimension registration, Scopus registration, Web of Science (WOS) registration, Virtual Account (VA) publishing service (Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 44-45; Murray & Clobridge, 2014; Widowati et al., 2022, p. 5; Kolesnykova & Matveyeva, 2019).

Noteworthy is the support program for Ukrainian scholarly journals from parent research institution - National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (NASU). The project "Program of support of scientific journals of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine" is implemented at the expense of budgetary funds within the framework of the annual plan of preparation and publication of the publishing products of the Publishing House "Akademperiodyka" of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, approved by the corresponding resolution of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine on the proposal of the Scientific and Publishing Council of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. The decision to include a journal in the program for five years is made by the Scientific and Publishing Council of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. This period can be prolonged if the founding institution submits a second application. Within the framework of the program, "Akademperiodyka" carries out the following: control over the production of original layouts of all journal issues in accordance with current legislation, production of the portion of the circulation intended for free distribution, and its distribution, provision of digital identifiers (DOI). Additionally, the following may be provided: updating the artistic and technical design and template of the journal, production of original layouts for all issues of the journal, editing article texts and metadata in Ukrainian, translation and/or editing of articles and metadata in English *(On Approval of the Functioning of the Procedure for the Program of Support of Journals of the NAS of Ukraine: Resolution 198 of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2024).*

It should be emphasized that support for scholarly journals can be provided according to one of the identified models, or a combination of models can be used.

3.3. Amount of state funding and duration of support

Funding is usually given for one to three years (Laakso & Multas, 2023). The exact amounts of financial support provided to scholarly journals are rarely mentioned in the reviewed literature. The following are a few examples:

- *Europe*: *Austria*: €50,000 over 3 years; *Spain* (University of Granada): €3,000–€4,000 for 1–3 years; *Denmark*: up to DKK 130,000 with an equal distribution over 3 years *(Independent Research Fund Denmark,* 2025); *Poland*: up to PLN 120,000 (Laakso & Multas, 2023, p. 453-454; Monika Sewastianowicz, 2024; *Rozwój Czasopism Naukowych*, 2024); *Finland*: €10,000–€20,000 for 1 year (Ilva, 2018); *Ukraine*: UAH 350,000 per year over 2 years.
- *Canada*: up to $30,000 per year over three years (two per-article rates: $1,050 for journals that offer immediate open access or delayed open access with an embargo period of 12 months or less, and do not charge article processing charges (APCs); and $850 for journals that offer immediate open access but charge APCs) (*Aid to Scholarly Journals*, 2021).
- *Asia: Taiwan*: $1,400,000 per year for 60 journals (Hsu & Tuan, 2016); *Philippines*: 200,000 Philippine peso (about 4,440 US dollars) per year for three years (Tecson-Mendoza, 2015); *South Korea*: 5,000,000 US dollars per year for 431 STM journals (Huh et al., 2015).

To enhance the analysis of state and institutional support models, a k-means clustering algorithm was applied to categorize countries based on key funding characteristics extracted from the reviewed literature, specifically annual funding amounts (in USD equivalents) and funding duration (in years). Data for ten representative countries (Austria, Denmark, Poland, Spain, Finland, Ukraine, Canada, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan) were selected from the empirical results (Section 3.2), where funding values were approximated as follows:

- Austria ($19,571/year over 3 years),
- Denmark ($20,245/year over 3 years),
- Poland ($16,413/year over 2 years),
- Spain (~$4,000/year over 2 years),
- Finland ($15,000/year over 1 year),
- Ukraine ($8,440 /year over 2 year),
- Canada ($30,000/year over 3 years),
- Philippines ($4,440/year over 3 years),
- Taiwan ($2,500–$25,000/year, averaged at $23,000 for 1 year annualy),
- South Korea ($11,600/year over 1 year).

The cluster analysis was performed using R's statistical computing environment in Posit Cloud. The k-means algorithm with k=3 clusters was applied using set.seed(123) to ensure reproducible results. Countries were grouped based on Euclidean distance calculated between their funding characteristics: annual amount, duration, and total funding amount (Figure 7):

Cluster 1: High Funding, Long-term Commitment: Austria, Denmark, and Canada. These countries provide substantial and sustained funding for journal editorial support, typically ranging from $19,500 to $30,000 annually for two to three years. This long-term commitment enables journals to develop strategic plans, implement robust peer review processes, and maintain consistent editorial quality standards.

Cluster 2: Moderate Funding, Medium-term Support: Poland, Finland, South Korea, and Taiwan. Countries in this cluster offer moderate annual funding ($11,600–$16,400) with commitments typically spanning one to two years. The shorter funding cycles necessitate more frequent reporting and renewal processes, but they also allow for flexibility in adapting to the changing needs of journals.

Cluster 3: Basic Funding, Variable Support Structures: Ukraine, Spain, and the Philippines. This cluster has more limited funding approaches ($4,000–$8,400 annually) and varying implementation models.

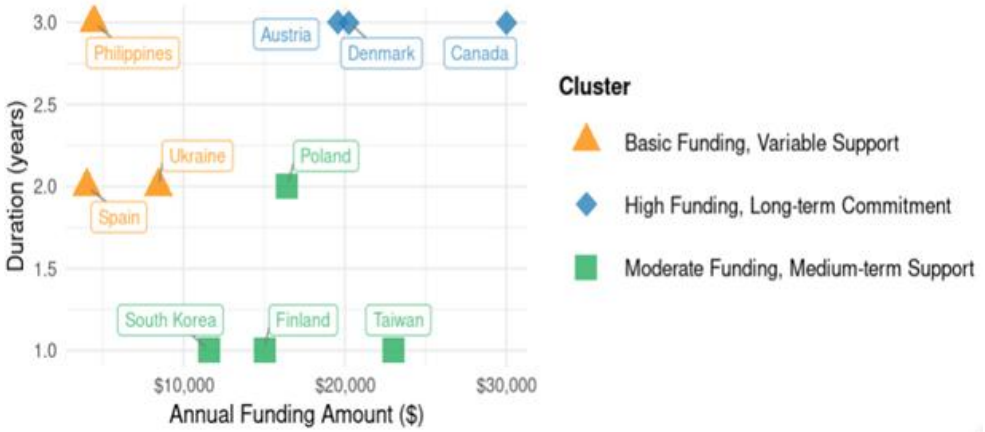

Figure 7. Clustering of annual funding for journal publishing (k-means approach)
Source: Authors' results, biblioshiny

3.4. Evaluation criteria for financial support of journals

Adherence to Open Access (OA) principles. The majority of funding requirements for scholarly journals to offer open access for all their content. The Fund for Scientific Research in Belgium, the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), and Polish universities require OA for the funded journals. The FWF "also offers its grants for journals transitioning into OA" (Laakso & Multas, 2023, p. 453-454).

In 2014, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) announced that only OA journals would be funded from 2017, offering one-time conversion grants. However, these covered just 50% of the costs, while subscription income was expected to disappear (Wenaas, 2021, p. 480).

Since "Korean Federation of Science and Technology Societies (KOFST) listed an open access policy as one of the evaluation items, most journals have followed an open access policy" (Huh et al., 2015, p. 58).

In Quebec (Canada), Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQSC) supports only 7% of subscription journals, compared to 36% of Diamond OA journals (Van Bellen & Céspedes, 2025, p. 104).

Adherence to Open Access (OA) principles + peer review quality and editorial integrity. As demonstrated by the following examples, scientific journals in Croatia (until 2023) and Canada are obligated to adhere to several criteria related to the transparent and independent peer review processes and adherence to COPE or national ethics standards in order to procure funding, in addition to providing open access to content.

Croatia (until 2023). Journals had to meet a set of formal eligibility criteria: "control the quality of the papers they publish, edit their issues according to the technical guidelines of the MSE, publish all issues in OA, on the Hrčak portal (portal of Croatian scientific journals). The Hrčak portal has its own inclusion criteria: fulfil standard technical requirements, publish instructions for authors, accept international ethical standards (such as those of COPE or ICMJE), publish in OA (a 6-month embargo period is acceptable), and publish the acceptance date" (Hebrang Grgić & Guskić, 2019, p. 3).

Canada. To be eligible for support, a *journal* must:

- meet the definition of a scholarly journal;
- *offer either immediate open access upon publication or delayed open access with a 12-month maximum embargo period;*
- submit each article to be published to a rigorous, independent peer review process;
- have been founded at least two years prior to the application deadline and have published, within that timeframe, a minimum of two issues per year, each having at least three peer-reviewed articles

or, for electronic journals not publishing in issue format, at least six peer-reviewed articles per year over the two-year timeframe – journals unable to meet the required publication minimums due to the impacts of COVID-19 can nevertheless be considered eligible for support, but to be considered eligible, must describe these impacts in their application;

- publish primarily in English and/or French; and meet at least one of the two following criteria: a minimum of one third of the core editorial board is affiliated with an eligible Canadian postsecondary institution; and/or the journal title is owned by a Canadian not-for-profit organization (*Aid to Scholarly Journals*, 2021; Wenaas, 2021; Lange & Severson, 2024).

The NÅHST model (*Norway*) also "emphasises scholarly quality in its selection of journals to be funded, where the research community is involved in selecting the journals that receive funding (The National Board of Scholarly Publishing is responsible for organising that component)" (Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 145).

Indexing: inclusion or potential inclusion in DOAJ, Scopus, WoS and (or) national register. The latest application round, held in 2023 for the 2024–2026 funding period by NÅHST (Norway) required journals to be "listed in DOAJ (or with submitted application provided as appendix) and the national publication channel listing" (Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 145).

Universidad de Concepción (Chile), the Universidad de Antioquia (Colombia), and the Universidad del Zuliaand the Universidad de Los Andes (Venezuela) "has been to support the top-ranked journals that have been first included in the Thomson Reuters' Web of Science (WoS) and SciELO basically with the editing and printing expenses" (Delgado Troncoso, 2014, p. 4).

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines grants accreditation awards to journals listed in the Scopus Master Journal List, providing PHP 200,000 (approximately USD 4,440) annually for three years (Tecson-Mendoza, 2015, p. 77).

In 2024, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MESU) announced its intention to establish a national grant program to support Ukrainian scholarly journals indexed in international databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. The Competition Commission's decision to grant state support is based on the following criteria:

- the publication's impact indicators, as determined by international scientometric databases and rankings (SCImago quartile, impact factor, Eigenfactor, and h-index);
- the editorial board's adherence to the principles of academic integrity;
- the editorial board must also comply with the principles of transparency, open access, and best publishing practices: COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics), WAME (World Association of Medical Editors), and EASE (European Association of Science Editors);
- compliance with the principles of DORA (the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment) and the FAIR principles for research information;
- no publication fees for Ukrainian authors, with the obligation of the publication to provide them with necessary access to such publications if the publication receives state support;
- inclusion in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and in Category A of the List of Professional Publications of Ukraine, as approved by the relevant order of the Ministry of Education and Science and valid for the year in which the competition is held *(On Approval of the Procedure for Providing State Support to Scientific Journals of Ukraine Indexed by International Scientometric Databases*, 2024).

During the public discussion in August 2024 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine's draft resolution "On Approval of the Procedure for Providing State Support to Scientific Journals of Ukraine Indexed by International Scientometric Databases," the Ukrainian scientific community offered many comments and suggestions.

On August 26, 2025, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 1032, "On Certain Issues of Providing Financial Support to Scientific Publications in Ukraine," which allocates funding to the

scholarly journals that have been indexed in the Scopus and/or Web of Science Core Collection databases for at least two consecutive years prior to the competition year. Winners of the competition will receive financial support for two consecutive years, with each year receiving an equal portion of UAH 350,000. This amount will cover the following:

- support for the editorial process, including remuneration for editors, technical editors, proofreaders, and layout designers, as well as payment for professional peer review;
- administrative expenses related to organizing editorial activities;
- compliance with FAIR, COPE, and OASPA standards;
- translation, localization, and editing, including translation of individual articles or the entire publication into English, professional editing of English-language texts (proofreading and copyediting), and localization of metadata for indexing in international databases;
- marketing support, including information campaigns, correspondence with potential authors and partners, and participation in scientific forums or exhibitions to promote the journal;
- material and technical support, including upgrading equipment (computers, scanners, printers, etc.);
- software, including anti-plagiarism systems, editorial platforms, and style editors;
- professional development for editors and reviewers (*On Certain Issues of Providing Financial Support to Scientific Publications in Ukraine*, 2025).

Language/local affiliation requirements: e.g., Norwegian-language content in Norway's NÅHST with requirements to have "around at least half of their content in Norwegian, with editors being tightly connected to the Norwegian higher education sector" (Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 145) and the "Support for French-Language Scientific Journals" program aims to promote scientific publication in French and recognize the efforts of Quebec scientific journals to increase their circulation and facilitate access to their content. The program also supports these journals' efforts to change their business model with a view to transitioning to the so-called "diamond" model and encourages the implementation of processes geared towards open science (*Soutien aux revues scientifiques en français (RE) 2025-2026*, 2025).

3.5. Forms of institutional support for scholarly journals

The reviewed literature highlights two types of institutional support: 1. *Direct funding from a parent organization*, such as the grant from the University of Granada in Spain (Laakso & Multas, 2023a), and a "fixed and permanent subsidy" or "periodically negotiated subsidy" in Finland and Italy (Taşkın et al., 2024, p. 61). 2. *Non-monetary or in-kind support* that can be realised in different formats: salaries of permanent staff, general IT services, human resource management, facilities and premises, and service-specific IT services, registration of publications, transfer of metadata or full texts to databases (national, thematic, international) (Taşkın et al., 2024; Laakso & Multas, 2023; Kolesnykova & Matveyeva, 2019).

It is worth noting the significant infrastructure and platform support provided by university scientific libraries, which is essential for modern research. For example, University of Rhode Island Libraries maintains a contract with bepress for the Digital Commons platform, coordinates the setup of new journals on the platform, and assists with migrating content and metadata to DigitalCommons@URI from other systems. They also apply for an ISSN and a listing in the Directory of Open Access Journals on each journal's behalf, maintain a contract with Crossref, and train editors (Lovett & Rathemacher, 2020). Similarly, the M. Maksymovich Scientific Library of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv supports the scholarly journals founded by the university by administering the process of creating Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs), archiving all articles in the eKNUTSHIR institutional repository, and evaluating all journals for compliance with Scopus and Web of Science requirements. Other Ukrainian university libraries

also offer these digital publishing services.: "54 of 60 work with digital repositories, 47 provide digital publishing platforms for journals, and 23 provide digital publishing platforms for conferences" (Kolesnykova & Matveyeva, 2019, p. 53).

Several studies emphasize the vital role that university libraries can play in fostering sustainable open access publishing. Waidlein et al. argue that university libraries, rather than continuing to subscribe to large commercial journal bundles, should redirect their expertise and resources toward supporting open access journals. With their longstanding experience in acquiring and providing access to scholarly literature, university libraries are well-positioned to offer tailored guidance and practical support to open access journals (Waidlein et al., 2021). A similar conclusion is reached by Maryna Nazarovets, who highlights that university libraries are essential in supporting university-based journals by "offering technical infrastructure, hosting services and assistance with typesetting and other production tasks"(Nazarovets, 2025, p. 11). Together, these findings suggest that libraries are not merely service units but also strategic actors.

3.6. Outcomes from funding or challenges due to a lack of funding

Key outcomes associated with support for scholarly journals observed from reviewed literature are following:

- ***Stability of publishing operations and regularity***. In Venezuela, the cessation of government support led to stagnation: "39% [of journals] were practically paralyzed, and 19% were delayed due to the lack of articles" (Mercado et al., 2023, p. 11). This illustrates that sustained funding is directly tied to a journal's ability to publish regularly.
- ***Indexing and international visibility.*** A lack of funding negatively affects the inclusion of journals in international databases (Tran et al., 2019). For instance, in Venezuela "the number of indexed journals in Scopus peaked at 44 in 2010 (when state support was active) and dropped to 31 in 2020 after the cessation of support. Venezuela fell from the 50th place in Scopus country rankings in 1998-2000 to the 98th in 2021" (Mercado et al., 2023, p. 11).
- ***Capacity for open access (OA) transition***. The many countries like Austria, Belgium, Croatian, Poland, Finland, and Canada national funding programs support fully OA journals. In Norway, the introduction of funding conditional on OA increased Diamond OA publishing but also presented financial strain: "The grants from RCN covered only 50% of the journals' expenditures and the already falling subscription income would disappear entirely when the journals converted" (Wenaas, 2021, p. 480).
- ***Support for technical development and innovation.*** In Canada, financial assistance includes a portion for innovation: "the applicant may request up to $5,000 per year to contribute to the costs related to the development and implementation of innovative practices (e.g., developing a social media strategy aimed at increasing the dissemination and impact of the journal's articles and/or content; extensive hyperlinking within the text; developing innovative layouts and structures for articles; producing high-quality graphics, videos and podcasts; offering interactivity for after-publication discussions)" (Aid to Scholarly Journals, 2021).
- ***Centralisation and infrastructure provision***. In Croatia, funding enabled a centralized diamond OA model, and even after public support declined, infrastructure like the Hrčak portal remained. Infrastructure institutional support, whether through a university or other parent organization, plays a significant role in enabling journal operations.
- ***Financial constraints and volunteerism.*** When a scientific journal operates entirely without monetary funding in a "cashless" environment, it relies solely on volunteers and material support from institutions (Murray & Clobridge, 2014). As the reviewed literature mentions, in contexts where funding is lacking or minimal, editorial work is often voluntary: "Some editors work ad honorem and

some do their editing work as part of their workload" (Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela) (Delgado Troncoso, 2014, p. 12); "Almost half of the part-time editors were not paid for their editorial work: 37% perform their duties as editors voluntarily, and another 10% noted that working as an editor of a scientific journal is considered part of their teaching workload" (Ukraine) (Zhenchenko et al., 2023, p. 8); "Editorial tasks are mainly done by small teams of collaborators, often young researchers in the roles of PhDs, postdocs, or academic assistants. Nearly all journals heavily rely on volunteer work with only very few journals being able to financially compensate editors, editorial managers, assistants and other contributors"(Switzerland) (Hahn et al., 2023, p. 8).

Even when national funding is reduced or absent, institutions sometimes fill the gap. For example, some universities' science and humanities councils in Venezuela have initiated efforts to sustain and adapt their publishing activities. These efforts include editor training workshops on open access, securing resources for DOI registration, and hosting journals on private platforms (Mercado et al., 2023, pp. 1, 17).

4. CONCLUSION

This exploratory review reveals substantial variation across continents in how countries design and implement state and institutional support for scholarly journals. These differences are not only administrative or financial but reflect distinct approaches to research governance, evaluation culture, and engagement with sustainability principles.

Most **European** countries provide public funding for scholarly journals through national research funds or ministries of education and science. Such support is often delivered in the form of competitive or program-based grants covering editorial workflows, digital infrastructure, and dissemination tools. Stable national-level support in Europe has enabled the widespread adoption of diamond open access models and contributed to the long-term sustainability and international visibility of journals. In addition, countries such as Finland, Croatia, and the Netherlands maintain national publishing platforms (e.g., *Journal.fi, Hrčak, openjournals.nl*), offering editorial and technical infrastructure.

This model ensures the financial stability necessary for long-term development and global reach. It correlates with the following key point from research: "The road to sustainability: Examining key drivers in open access diamond journal publishing" "Government or national-agency-backed journals show higher sustainability, indicating the importance of stable, national-level support" (Yoon et al., 2024).

Outside Europe, several **Asian** countries – including Taiwan, the Philippines, and South Korea – also offer competitive public funding for scholarly journals, typically linked to Scopus/Web of Science indexing or national accreditation standards. These models prioritize academic quality and global visibility.

In **North America, Canada** implements a national grant program for scholarly journals, characterized by transparent evaluation criteria. However, this system often relies on short-term project funding, making long-term sustainability uncertain. Despite the availability of government support, many Canadian journals continue to depend on volunteer work, institutional in-kind contributions, and diverse, unstable funding streams (Bosman et al., 2021; Van Bellen & Céspedes, 2025, p. 105).

Funding eligibility requirements often act as a catalyst for quality improvement and international indexing. To access funding, journals are often required to:

- Provide immediate or delayed open access;
- Implement transparent peer review processes;
- Demonstrate regular publication output and editorial continuity;
- Comply with COPE or national publishing ethics standards;
- Be indexed in or show potential for inclusion in DOAJ, Scopus, or Web of Science.

These criteria motivate editors to improve journal quality, editorial transparency, and technical infrastructure.

Funding policies influence not only journal survival but also academic visibility and competitiveness. The case of Venezuela illustrates that the withdrawal of government support correlates with journal stagnation and delisting from Scopus.

A notable trend in the state funding mechanism was identified in this review: financial support for scholarly journals is often embedded within broader government funding strategies for specific scientific disciplines or initiatives that promote research in national languages. For instance, Taiwan allocates most of its funding to engineering and technology journals, whereas Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) supports only humanities and social sciences journals. The Quebec Research Fund has a dedicated program to support and promote French-language scholarly publishing. In the Philippines, the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST PHL) recognizes exceptional papers published in local journals.

Many countries in **Africa** and **Latin America**, including Tanzania, Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela, as well as some **European** countries such as the Netherlands, Greece, do not allocate national public funding specifically to support scholarly journals. In these contexts, journal operations rely heavily on institutional goodwill, staff time, and external donor assistance. Support is mostly indirect and provided through institutional repositories, university presses, and academic libraries. Where applied, evaluation criteria are typically internal and vary across institutions.

Without dedicated public funding, adherence to key sustainability principles, particularly regarding transparency and long-term infrastructural development, is undermined. In the absence of stable funding, journals struggle to maintain ethical editorial practices, support professional staff, and invest in platforms or technologies that ensure their accessibility and visibility.

A promising development identified through this review is the growing interest in consortium-based funding mechanisms for scholarly journals. While still rare, consortium-based models represent a scalable and sustainable alternative to project-based or purely institutional funding schemes and deserve further exploration and piloting in other national contexts.

This cross-national review provides a conceptual map and a comparative foundation for future empirical studies, policy development, and strategic investment in resilient scholarly publishing ecosystems.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited by its focus on open-access and publications in selected disciplines (Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Business, Management and Accounting). It excludes sources from countries under academic sanctions (e.g., Russia, Belarus, Iran), which may affect the geographical comprehensiveness of the analysis. In addition, the exploratory research methodology prioritizes breadth over depth, and no primary interviews with editors or policymakers were conducted. Future study should include empirical assessments of funding outcomes and stakeholder perspectives across different publishing contexts.

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