

The Open Access Movement as Commoning: Everyday Practices and Tactics of Academics in Türkiye

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Abstract

The open access movement has increasingly been discussed as a practice of commoning and as a response to the commodification of knowledge. The aim of this research is to examine how academics working in higher education institutions in Türkiye position themselves within the open access movement. It explores how academics interpret and experience restrictions such as copyright within the context of the movement. More specifically, the study examines the everyday practices and tactical responses developed by academics in response to restrictions such as copyright and paywalls. To this end, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-one faculty members from state and foundation universities in Türkiye. A phenomenological design was employed, and the data were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis revealed that academics interpret the open access movement as a productive buffer zone within the liminal space in which alternatives are constructed, and that they adopt various everyday practices and tactical responses to restrictions such as copyright limitations. Grounded in orientations toward an open, free, and independent understanding of science, these tactics include forming solidarity networks, fostering collaborative practices, and compliance with copyright and related rules. By examining how academics position themselves within the open access movement and experience its values through everyday practices and tactical responses, this study contributes to the literature on knowledge commons and the commodification of scientific knowledge production.

Keywords: *Commoning, Open Access Movement, Tactical Responses.*



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1. INTRODUCTION

This study approaches the open access (OA) movement as a practice of commoning and examines how academics position themselves within the movement through everyday practices and tactical responses. In the era of neoliberal globalization, social opposition exhibits a distinctly fragmented structure. The organization of labor and production independent of time and place has introduced similar modes of organization into many realms of social life. Contemporary forms of social opposition are characterized by heterogeneous actors, leaderless forms of mobilization, transnational patterns of interaction, and the use of information technologies as organizational tools, all of which contribute to their potential to generate subaltern counterpublics.

Social movements, described by Fillieule as a form of “*voting with one’s feet*” can be understood as practices that balance freedom of expression and assembly with public order and political participation. This balance is shaped by whether a society’s cultural traditions and security structures regard such movements as legitimate modes of political participation (Uysal, 2017, p. 19). As popular collective actions directed toward specific authorities (Tilly, 2008, p. 17), social movements diversify and transform in line with the changing character of social formations. In the contemporary period, social opposition increasingly takes shape through networked struggles, social-media-based mobilization, and the practice of commoning (Gür Türkdoğan, 2021). Commoning involves the shared use and protection of resources understood as part of humanity’s collective wealth (Benkler, 2003, p. 6). Commons may include land, air, water, language, information, music, and software; cultural components with a public character are also considered part of the commons (Hutter & Throsby, 2008). In recent years, the rapid expansion of production based on digital commons has been widely noted, leading to what some describe as a revival of the commons (Wittel, 2018).

Commoning practices are contemporary forms of social opposition that develop through past accumulations into historical contexts. They encompass bounded spaces and ultimately become independent, countering the commodification of humanity’s shared values. Criticize the conversion of socially reproduced resources and science, language, and digital commons into private property (Hess & Ostrom, 2007). Against this background, the study consists of four sections. The first section discusses the theoretical framework of the study and examines the OA movement within the context of commoning practices and intellectual property debates. The second section explains the methodology of the research. The third section includes the analysis of the research findings derived from thematic analysis, and the final section discusses the findings and concludes the evaluations.

The OA movement is viewed as one of the earliest global initiatives within the broader landscape of commoning practices. The movement shows how new forms of property emerge when public values that belong to humanity are subjected to intellectual property regimes. Jessop argues that, with the rise of information technologies, “information” has simultaneously become a tradable commodity and a key component of capital accumulation shaped by the needs of the market economy

(Jessop, 2009, p. 170). Commoning practices challenge intellectual property rights that restrict access to the commons, such as the collective production of social knowledge and science. Therefore, citizens must monitor and control these rights (Hardt & Negri, 2006). By situating themselves at the intersection of ideas and property, these practices make the concept of property an object of inquiry, turning the public character of intellectual values into a practical struggle.

The OA movement is a way of articulating a stance against the commodification of knowledge because knowledge, communication, and technology are shared. The movement emphasizes the cumulative nature of knowledge production processes. The most distinguishing feature of this accumulation is that it develops as a continuous process through denial and distortion. Science develops rapidly and can only reach its current level under these conditions. Therefore, the open access movement defines open access literature as making it digital, online, free, and independent from most copyright and licensing restrictions. The digital ecosystem has radically reshaped the conditions for the production, distribution, and consumption of knowledge and culture (Pélissier, 2021, p. 13). In this context, the prerequisite for the OA movement is the emergence of open access. According to Poynder, “The OA movement lacks a formal structure and appointed leadership and demonstrates that building paywalls between researchers and research is no longer necessary” (Poynder, 2012). OA advocates argue that unrestricted access supports the advancement of science by reducing subscription-related price increases (Lewis, 2012, p. 493). The first study to link the open access movement to commoning practices was conducted by Hess and Ostrom (2007). OA to knowledge, is centered on digital ecosystems and the concept of knowledge common (Pélissier, 2021, p. 3).

Open access, widely discussed as the future of academic publishing (Tenopir et al. 2017, p. 824), comprises three types. The types of open access are gold, green, and black. Accessibility varies in the open accessibility of studies depending on user rights, the timing of availability, the financing of open access publishing, and whether the reader accesses the original article or a manuscript (Willinsky, 2006). Green open access involves authors’ self-archiving their articles in institutional or other repositories; gold open access publishing in open access journals for an additional fee (Zhong, 2009, p. 528). Black open access involves the free online sharing of subscription-based articles despite copyright restrictions. OA is a key element of the open access movement, but the movement goes beyond open access. Under gold open access, the author pays a fee to the publisher, making the article freely available. The central concept for this type of open access, is the term “fee.” The publisher charges a fee to ensure the publication is freely available (Holley, 2018, p. 217). Yalçıntaş (2018), the fee paid by the author for open access, under golden open access is a manifestation of an intellectual property regime. This creates resource transfer and, due to high-cost distracts from the core argument of the movement.

The need for open, free, and immediate access to articles, combined with the right to fully use these articles in the digital environment, has defined the purpose of the global OA movement, and only

under these conditions has the groundwork been laid for consistent and measurable progress for the movement (Joseph, 2013, p. 2).

Major OA initiatives aim to enhance societal well-being and support a knowledge-based society by removing barriers to access. One of the first global initiatives of the OA movement emerged from intellectual debates and searches for information sharing amid debates over intellectual property, culminating in the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) in 2002 as a joint declaration by researchers and institutions. BOAI advocated the free and open circulation of scholarly literature through internet technologies. BOAI advocated the free circulation and use of scholarly literature without financial, technical, or legal barriers. Advocating for the public dissemination of academic work without any payment, the initiative was supported by 7728 individual and 2150 institutional signatures, becoming one of the first collective initiatives of the OA movement (BOAI, 2002). Following BOAI, the global OA movement expanded with initiatives such as the Bethesda and Berlin Declaration (Holley, 2018). Numerous examples of forms of OA exist worldwide. Platforms such as arXiv, DOAJ, and OSF, alongside institutional initiatives such as the Max Planck Society and the Wellcome Trust, contributed to the expansion of OA policies and practices (Lewis, 2012, p. 499). Creative Commons- based digital platforms have played a significant role in the development of the OA movement by supporting the reduction of financial and legal restrictions on information.

Beyond platforms, the OA movement has also taken the form of faculty policies, boycotts, and institutional negotiations. Examples include a policy adopted by the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 2008, which granted the university worldwide licenses for faculty members' papers to be made OA to support the wider dissemination of research (Harvard University Library, 2008). Another example is the University of California's decision in 2019 to discontinue its Elsevier subscriptions. This decision supported open access to publicly funded research and challenged commercial publishing models (University of California Office of Scholarly Communication, 2019). The university administration explicitly positioned this initiative as part of the "global OA movement." "The Cost of Knowledge" boycott against Elsevier has been one of the most visible collective OA initiatives, with academics refusing to publish, peer review, and participate in editorial processes. The boycott, centered around criticisms of commercial publishing costs, access restrictions, and the commodification of academic labor, has been supported by 21,181 researchers (The Cost of Knowledge, 2012).

The OA movement represents one dimension of a broader set of anti-intellectual property initiatives that seek to secure open, free, and independent science by promoting unrestricted and cost-free access to data. Black open access platforms such as Sci-Hub, LibGen, and Anna's Archive confront the proprietary system directly by making copyrighted materials freely available. Platform usage rates indicate that they reach 80 percent more researchers than paid databases (Himmelstein et al., 2018). Sci-Hub, described as the world's de facto open access research library (Bohannon, 2016), reveals that academic centers in the US and Europe are the most popular downloading hotspots. Faust argues that

scholars rely on these platforms for their speed and convenience, and as a form of resistance to a system built on paywalls (Faust, 2016, p. 15). The classification of Sci-Hub as a pirate site has produced an ongoing cycle of monitoring and blocking between authorities and the platform. Following the blocking of Sci-Hub, many users began requesting articles on X using the hashtag #icanhazpdf, through Telegram and similar platforms, while others shared the requested materials. This circulation makes it nearly impossible to eliminate online piracy; even if websites are taken offline, blocking a hashtag is unworkable (Faust, 2016). A similar pattern appears in Türkiye, where article-request threads on Ekşi Sözlük—initiated in 2007—have reached 1,593 pages as of 2025 (Ekşi Sözlük, 2025).

2. METHODOLOGY

The study examines how academics position themselves within the OA movement through everyday practices and tactical responses. The research is based on a hermeneutic paradigm. Phenomenology was selected as a sub-design. Qualitative research aims to understand individuals' interpretations within their social contexts (Creswell, 2013). In a phenomenological design, researchers aim to explore individuals' experiences related to the phenomenon and how they make sense of them. This makes it possible to examine how an experience takes shape within the social sphere (Creswell, 2013, p. 77). The study adopts an interpretive phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach was chosen to understand how academics conceptualise and experience the OA movement.

The study group consisted of twenty-one faculty members working in the social sciences at eighteen different universities, including eleven state universities and seven foundation universities. This limitation was intended to ensure comparability in publication experiences and academic practices. Purposive sampling and maximum variation were used to select participants due to the need for participants to have prior experience with the phenomenon under study. Snowball sampling was used to recruit individuals. The study group included ten assistant professors, five associate professors, and six professors at all levels. Faculty members were selected based on publication requirements for both reappointment and academic promotion. Diversification in academic rank reflects the differences in academics' attitudes, dispositions and strategies toward the OA movement, thus aiming to maximize diversity. Ethical approval for the research was obtained from the Ethics Committee.

In-depth interviews were selected as the data collection technique. This technique was used to understand academics' attitudes, dispositions, and strategies toward the open access movement. In-depth interviews allowed for the development of contextual meaning and the collection of in-depth information about the experience. A semi-structured, topic-centered interview method was employed. An interview form was prepared with questions relevant to the research problem, while allowing to go beyond the established format during the interview. While preparing the interview form, relevant literature and research problems were reviewed, and a question pool was created. For the pilot study, an interview was conducted with an assistant professor in the social sciences to assess clarity. Tested the

questions' clarity and their adequacy for the research purpose. The need for prior knowledge of the concepts as well as revisions to in the question format was identified. Based on these findings, the questions were revised and finalized, and the pilot interview was excluded from the analysis. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher. Participants were interviewed via Google Meet video calls, and audio recordings were obtained. Data saturation was reached as the data became repetitive in terms of recurring themes and experiences, and data collection was limited to twenty-two academics.

Table 1. List of Interviewees

Code	Title	Department	University Type
<i>A1 (Pilot interview)</i>	Asst. Prof.	Communication	State
A2	Asst. Prof.	Law	Foundation
A3	Asst. Prof.	International Relations	State
A4	Asst. Prof.	Economics	Foundation
A5	Assoc. Prof.	Aviation Management	Foundation
A6	Asst. Prof.	Economics	State
A7	Asst. Prof.	Accounting and Finance	Foundation
A8	Assoc. Prof.	Economics and Finance	Foundation
A9	Asst. Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State
A10	Asst. Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State
A11	Prof.	Sociology	State
A12	Assoc. Prof.	Economics	State
A13	Asst. Prof.	Business Administration	State
A14	Assoc. Prof.	Economics and Finance	Foundation
A15	Prof.	Political Science & International Relations	Foundation
A16	Asst. Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	Foundation
A17	Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State
A18	Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State
A19	Asst. Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State
A20	Prof.	Accounting & Tax Applications	State
A21	Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State
A22	Prof.	Political Science & Public Administration	State

The first fifteen hours of audio recordings were converted into text files. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data from the interviews. Following the review of the audio recordings, the written texts were corrected for misspellings which also improved data familiarity. The participants' identities were anonymised and the researcher assigned codes to each text file (A2, A22). A codebook was created and the codes were discussed and agreed upon by the coders. The data were analysed using MAXQDA 24 software. Within the thematic coding process, the data were coded through labeling. Similar codes were grouped into categories and themes, and patterns were used to identify core meanings.

3. ANALYSES OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

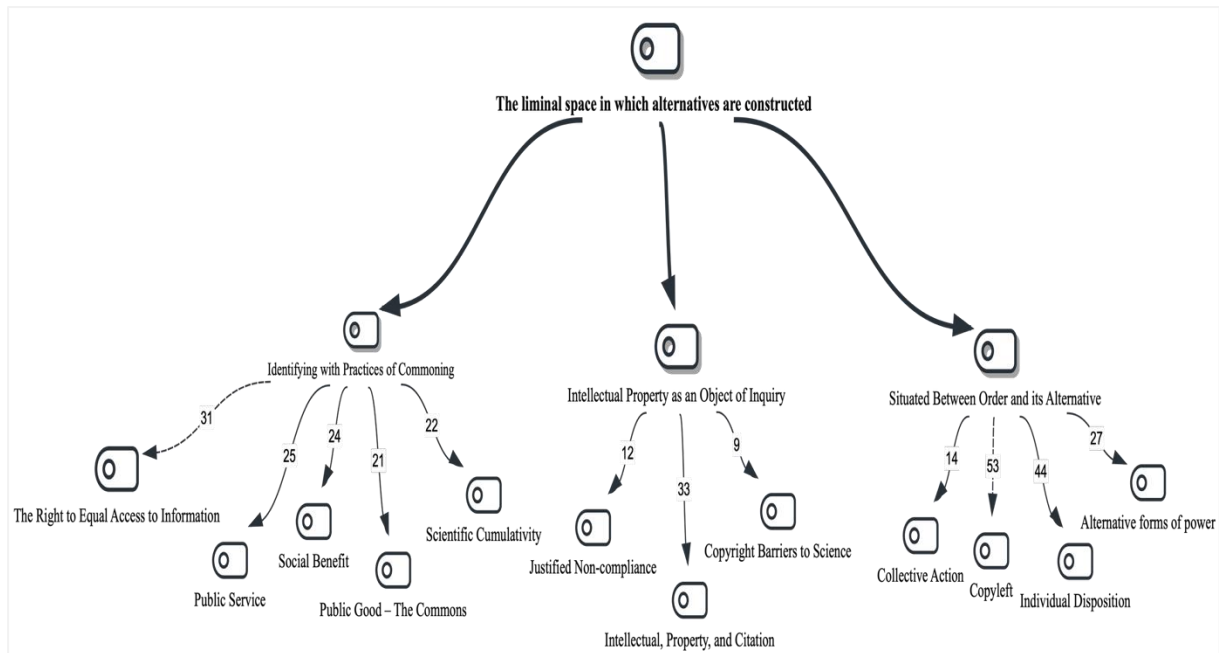
3.1. The Liminal Space in Which Alternatives Are Constructed

The data obtained were thematized to suggest that the OA movement is defined as a liminal space in which alternatives are constructed. This thematization functions as a metaphor for the semi-internal, semi-external zones in which movements emerge, develop, and organize. In the experiences of academics, the movement operates as a fertile buffer zone. This buffer zones simultaneously enable

access to system resources and the preservation of non-system values. While they are public and centralized, they remain unregulated and loosely controlled, positioned between the established order and its alternative. The counter-order (its alternative) refers to the development of alternatives to existing policies. The potential to transform these alternatives into widespread practice through unregulated mechanisms manifests within the professional, social, and daily practices of academics.

The liminal space in which alternatives are constructed frames academics' efforts to make sense of the OA movement. Three main categories were derived from the questions administered to gather information about academics' attitudes and dispositions. These categories reflect identifying with practices of commoning, engaging with intellectual property as an object of inquiry, and perceiving open access as situated between order and its alternative.

Figure 1. The Theme, Categories, and Codes



3.1.1. Identifying with Practices of Commoning

Commoning practices ground social opposition in economic equality as the basis for collective organizing, and scholars argue that political and legal rights develop on this foundation (Linebaugh, 2008, p. 278). By interrogating the historical origins of property (Thompson, 1993, pp. 180-185), these practices are understood as a form of social opposition that emerged alongside the rise of capitalism. The increasing privatization and monopolization of common lands at local and global levels demonstrate enclosure practices today and form the foundation of contemporary commoning (Firat, 2004, p. 568). They operate as a fragmented structure that emerges in response to the conversion of collective rights into commodities under intellectual property regimes. Participants regarded science as a common. The interviews examined the public nature of intellectual values and identified how academics understand scientific production.

Participating academics conceptualize scientific knowledge as both a public good and a common. They approach it through the framework of social benefit and, by emphasizing the scientific cumulativeness of knowledge, articulate a position that supports science as a public service and promotes the right to equal access to information. Some academics argue that denying equal access to information produces information asymmetries, reinforces existing inequalities, and ultimately constrains scientific progress.

“A scientist is someone who helps bring an invention or technical tool into existence, by using their ideas. But honestly, nobody can do anything completely alone. If you keep your ideas to yourself, they don’t really help you or anyone else. Ideas become more valuable when you share them, cannot keep an idea to yourself or to a limited circle” (A19)

Most academics take public service and social benefit as key reference points when they talk about doing science. For the overwhelming majority, producing scientific knowledge is essentially seen as an extension of public service.

“Isn’t our job to conduct research and contribute to the literature? To build on what is already existing, ask new questions. Researchers are performing a public service” (A4)

The movement centers on the cumulative nature of science. Scientific progress would be impossible if knowledge had been restricted within social formation reflects the logic of scientific cumulativeness. Academics emphasize the cumulative nature of scientific knowledge in their accounts of research. Defining knowledge as a common shifts the focus toward the idea of collective ownership.

“Science is really like a snowball. It starts small and grows as it moves forward. If we put barriers in its way, it just falls apart. That is why I think open access is necessary—so its development is not held back.” (A17)

“At first, the idea belongs to me. Working on it. As I work, I want to publish it quickly so others can approach it from different angles. Eventually, it belongs to science and humanity. This is how science grows. It cannot advance if it is restricted, hidden, or inaccessible.” (A7)

The findings indicate that participating academics regard scientific knowledge as a common and identify with the core values of the movement. The OA movement, a practice of commoning, is often considered alongside open and free access because of its associations with equal access to information, its characterization as a public service, and its role in promoting social benefit.

3.1.2. Intellectual Property as an Object of Inquiry

Intellectual property, referring to rights over intangible goods, is defined as the right to control use (May & Sell, 2006, p. 23). It means making intellectual goods part of the price mechanism by granting monopoly rights to individuals or institutions that individually hold those goods (Yalçıntaş, 2018, p. 189). The rapid development of communication technologies has called into question traditional forms of information production and circulation, rendering existing norms, rules, and laws obsolete. Hess and Ostrom argue for the need to counter expanding privatization dynamics by arguing that

information can become common within the digital ecosystem. Free open access platforms, along with the commons, contribute to this restructuring (Hess & Ostrom, 2007).

Some academics critically evaluate intellectual property itself, treating it as an object of inquiry. An idea is defined as a property, but some distinctions are noted in defining the nature of property.

"What I perceived as ownership wasn't the financial gain. If I write the book, ownership belongs to me. The publisher cannot reprint it without my consent. This is what I understand as ownership, in the academic sense." (A20)

This perspective was observed among the academics in the study. The concept of ownership is considered within property relations, but not within market pricing. A critical relationship is established between scientific production and ownership. A connection is drawn between ownership and "citation," highlighting the cumulative nature of science. Academics state they have no interest in financial returns from their work and that citations are sufficient as compensation. Citations underscore the potential for creating scientific commons, particularly through open access platforms.

Many academics define intellectual property infringement as "an act that is technically illegal but not morally wrong." This meaning is coded as "Justified Non-compliance" in the study. Academics state that they legally accept the existence of intellectual property in accordance with the requirements of the current social formation, but they do not view strategies aimed at undermining these rights as ethically wrong." Justified non-compliance is discussed within the broader context of capitalism and its orientation toward profit maximization.

"The last thing that should be violated in law is personal rights. Personal rights come before social rights. You cannot put someone under house arrest without a punishment, without a judge's decision, without them doing anything wrong. But during Covid, they locked all of us in our homes. No one could leave. Why? There was a public health situation, a crisis. Fine. It was a disease. But once the vaccine came out, people said the copyright should be lifted so others could produce it too. Suddenly the answer was no. They said there were copyright protections and nothing could be done. You restricted personal rights for a year. There was a disease. A fight against the disease. But now commercial rights matter more? Are you prioritizing commercial rights? Because of significant commercial interests. Look at the double standards. There was a disease before; people will perish during the crisis. Well, you've already found the disease, distribute the vaccine." (A8)

Academics' experiences have identified a response to deepening inequalities, and a sense of legitimacy defines a reckoning. While aware that they are acting in violation of existing legal rules, they highlight the role of addressing inequalities.

"Frankly, we're not the same as someone studying in the UK. Most universities have agreements, and they might not even realize that what they're studying has limited access. Therefore, we have to engage with such things. I mean, I don't feel any remorse when I download it." (A12)

Some academics argue that both publication and access fees hinder academic production. Copyright barriers to science mean that works published in paid databases are inaccessible to the author and other users unless an open access fee is paid.

"It is dysfunction, I'm not in favor of paying a lot for articles I can't access. Unfortunately, I can't. I mean, I can barely make ends meet due to everyday expenses. This is a double-sided restriction" (A16).

Academics approach the concept of intellectual property within the framework of rights-based ownership, emphasizing the ethical importance of attribution rather than the commodification of property. It is noted that associating it with profit mechanism can hinder the development of science. Furthermore, the fact that participants worked exclusively in the social sciences and that their research did not produce tangible outputs constitutes a fundamental limitation of the study.

3.1.3. Situated Between Order and Its Alternative

Situated between order and its alternative represents academics' capacity to utilize the opportunities offered by the existing order and access alternative information resources while remaining aware of their social formations. This demonstrates the OA movement is perceived as an alternative form of power base and its value for academics. Digital ecosystems are complex and characterized by ambiguous boundaries. An information resource, a priori, meets the economic definition of a public good: it is nonrivalrous (by consuming it, I do not reduce the amount of the resource available to others) and nonexclusionary (it is difficult to exclude others from consuming the information resource). The dilemma of overuse is eliminated (Hess & Ostrom, 2007, p. 5). This theme situated between order and its alternative lies in these characteristics. Evidence suggests that the movement is not perceived as a form of collective action, developing as an individual disposition within academics' professional practices in Türkiye. Rather, it is viewed as a form of social opposition. Some academics state that they embrace the principles of the OA movement and would support it if they had sufficient knowledge.

An examination of academics' experiences reveals an anti-copyright stance coded as copyleft. The OA movement includes practices challenging restrictive copyright regimes. The concept of 'copyright' has been reframed as 'copyleft', expressed as "not all rights reserved." Copyleft is an approach that grants creators permission to copy, distribute, and modify their work. The use of OA software is grounded in a radical reconsideration of copyright law. The impact of intellectual property law is discussed from the perspective of the information society. Academics appear to oppose access barriers and support open and free access. Many academics questioned the existence of intermediaries between individuals and resources and while the existence of fees reflects the current system, it creates inequality. They propose an open and free approach to science, challenging a system that deepens income inequalities.

"Only three to five companies remain. Two major powers dominate. All the effort is directed toward getting published in their journals and platforms, and they rank among the highest-earning companies in the world. I do the actual work. A ridiculous system has been created, and we are expected to accept it. For people in high-income countries, this is less problematic. But if I had to pay a thousand lira today just to submit an article, that would already be a significant cost for someone at my salary level. It creates serious income-base inequality in access to science. Therefore, if organized support for open access were available, I would join such a movement, because I think that is how it should be. The companies controlling everything will oppose it, and they will respond with different sanctions and restrictions." (A13)

Copyleft emerges as an individual disposition within the professional practices of academics, in the context of critiques of the commodification of science.

"I remember being angry when conferences started charging fees. That was where we exchanged information, and not being able to go just because I couldn't afford it I resisted (...). First, we paid for the conferences, then we paid for articles. And now I even have to pay to access journal I already gave all my copyright to." (A22)

Submitting articles to no-fee journals is a common practice shaped by individual dispositions. Academics share similar critiques and develop fragmented everyday practices against the commodification of science. Although participants frequently emphasize the collective nature of science and the need for collective transformation, organized collective action remains relatively limited compared to fragmented everyday practices.

"This is a form of resistance. Although a profit motive involved, it cuts into that profit while providing full access to information. It also reduces inequalities. It places someone with a PhD in England on the same footing as someone with a PhD in Congo. Otherwise, equality is unattainable." (A16)

Another emerging finding of the OA movement is its perceived function as an alternative form of power. The movement argues that the costs of sharing and disseminating knowledge in previous social formations have been eliminated. Recent advances in artificial intelligence are giving rise to alternatives to intellectual property and enabling peer-to-peer production, copyleft, patent-left, creative commons, and blockchain. Some academics argue existing alternatives should be supported to challenge restrictions and monopolies such as paywalls and copyrights. The importance of alternative forms of power in pressuring journals to change their publishing policies is emphasized and reduce their focus on profit margins is emphasized in relation to the current order.

"There must be a counterforce that keeps things from spinning out of control. When individual ownership becomes extreme—when we have to pay for water, or when we can't walk down to the coast just to breathe—the act of taking things out of private hands feels less like a small gesture and more like a remedy. When information is aggressively commodified and prices continue to rise, there is a need for collective actors that offer alternatives." (A22)

The study shows that overall knowledge of the OA movement among academics in Türkiye remains limited. Although academics do not perceive the movement as a form of organized collective action, they align with several of its core values. While the OA movement creates a space with the

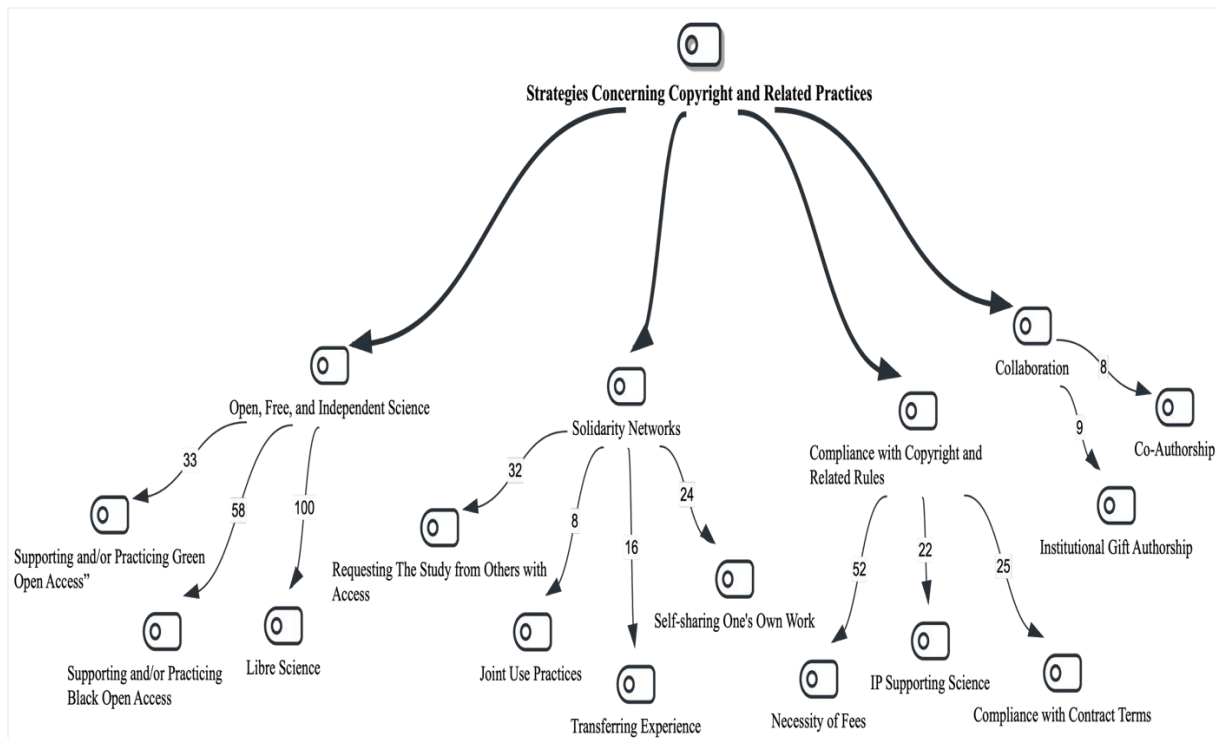
potential for global collaboration and social resistance, academics in Türkiye experience this space primarily through fragmented everyday practices and individual responses

3.2. Strategies Concerning Copyright and Related Practices

The open and free international access of scientific knowledge and technology is one of the core values promoted by the OA movement. Support for these values by institutions such as Berkman Center for Internet and Society and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have facilitated their widespread adoption. Early representatives of the movement, who were insistent on leveraging the advantages of the digital age, quickly recognized the potential of open access to transform the research process. Downloading literature, employing data mining technologies, and using scientific articles have become easier (Joseph, 2013). Both cost savings from downloading articles and their potential positive impact on others' research are considered benefits of universal open access (Björk, 2017, p. 250).

The movement emerged as an initiative aimed at promoting open and free access to scientific knowledge. The strategies developed by academics in response to paywalls were examined through their experiences. Analysis of these experiences revealed two broad orientations. First, academics develop fragmented responses within everyday practices to overcome mechanisms restricting access to scientific knowledge. Second, the theme “Compliance with Copyright and Related Rules” reflects orientations toward copyright regulations, with some academics emphasizing the necessity of payment systems, acceptance of existing regulations, and their role in supporting scientific production.

Figure 2. Theme, Categories, and Codes



The everyday practices and orientations that stand out in the experiences of academics within the context of the OA movement manifest themselves in ways such as supporting an open, free, and independent understanding of science, developing solidarity networks, and fostering collaboration. This study evaluates the OA movement as a practice of commoning; it examines the everyday practices and fragmented responses that academics develop in the face of mechanisms that restrict access to scientific knowledge, through of de Certeau's conceptualization of tactics. Tactics are the forms of action that individuals develop in everyday life. Within these spaces, individuals attempt to remain creative and active. Through the tactics they produce in everyday life, individuals infiltrate spaces dominated by strategies of power, manipulate these spaces, and reproduce them in alternative ways (de Certeau, 2009, pp. 117-202). Thus, explain the creative and fragmented maneuvers academics develop in response to mechanisms restricting access to scientific knowledge.

3.2.1. Open, Free and Independent Science

The OA movement advocates the promise and potential of a new digital landscape where open access knowledge is freely shared and the pace of scientific discovery accelerates, benefiting everyone (Joseph, 2013, p.1). It assumes that science should not be behind paywalls (Frederick, 2020, p. 3). The OA movement primarily stems from the expansion of open access and institutional repositories. In this context, open access is viewed as a prerequisite for open source. Early orientations against copyright restrictions supported open, free, and independent science. This understanding is reflected in tactical practices such as green and black open access. This distinction becomes more visible in critiques of gold open access.

The first finding related to academics was coded as *libre science*. The word, meaning "free" or "unpaid" in French, is used here to refer to the free, open and independent use within scientific production. Regardless of their academic background or title, all academics participating in the research believe that science should be conducted openly, free of charge, and independent. For academics, open access involves full access to both article submissions and access to scientific works. *Libre science reflects a tradition that treats scientific knowledge as a public good and promotes its circulation* (Benkler, 2003). Participants therefore interpret open access not merely as a publishing model but as a normative vision of science grounded in openness and shared knowledge.

"OA signifies freedom. Who are we writing this article for? Does someone need access to a university library to something academic? I mean, is my uncle not supposed to be able to read it? If the article isn't going to reach the public, what's the point? Freedom isn't just for academics; it's for the public. (A20)

A central finding regarding the concepts of free, complimentary, and open access concerns the experiences of professors, particularly those positioned higher in the academic hierarchy. These participants define open access through a lens that emphasizes the reduction of structural inequalities and the removal of barriers to knowledge.

"When we started in academia, we would wait forty-five minutes for a stern, judge-faced clerk at the National Library to retrieve a book from downstairs. You had to arrive before closing time. There was no easy computer access. Thanks to open access, my doctoral student never says, 'I can't access a source.' OA is valuable." (A21)

Many academics expressed support for, and/or practiced black open access. Black OA converts paywalled journals and copyrighted materials into free and open access resources. Swartz (2008) an internet activist and creator of platforms such as Creative Commons and Open Library, articulated a central declaration of the open access movement in his *Guerilla Open Access Manifesto*. After the Pacer site became publicly accessible, he downloaded JSTOR's database, an act constituting copyright infringement and generated public opposition reminiscent of Occupy-era mobilizations. Elbakyan, its founder, noted that authors submit to Sci-Hub to protest the high cost of journal subscriptions. Elbakyan facilitates paywalled research and enables circulation. Reports show that Sci-Hub includes eighty-five percent of paywalled journals and is widely used in OECD countries, with approximately 200,000 daily requests. (Elbakyan & Bohannon, 2021). Sci-Hub reflects growing reactions to restricted access and commercial publishing practices. Black open access emerges as a tactical practice through which academics navigate paywalls and expand the circulation of scientific knowledge.

"I use Anna's Archive and Sci-Hub. I'm considering donating to Sci-Hub's creator, but I'm hesitant—I might end up on some blacklist. I've read a hundred books; I have probably downloaded and read sixty of them from there." (A10)

Among the academics in the study, Assistant Professors reported using black open access more frequently than other groups. The analysis also identified a negative relationship between an institution's resource level and the use of black open access. A professor at one of Türkiye's well-established universities (A14) explained, *"LibGen was open. I do not know its status"*. These reflections indicate that early-career academics who confront access barriers place considerable value on black open access. High paywalls and unequal forms of academic competition appear to play a central role in shaping their reliance on these platforms.

"I completed my doctorate in England, where copyright issues are widely debated. Professors defended Sci-Hub, arguing that it took knowledge from elites and distributed it publicly, creating a more egalitarian. The publishing sector, especially academic publishing, has expanded rapidly and now demands substantial financial resources. One study showed it is among the fastest-growing industries and competes with the entertainment industry. It has grown to the extent that platforms such as Sci-Hub have a liberating effect. I support it." (A3)

Academics' accounts indicate support for, and/or practiced green open access. Green open access refers to "self-archiving in an OA repository" (Harnad et al. 2004, p. 310) and involves making pre-print or post-print versions of manuscripts freely available on personal websites or institutional repositories (Lewis, 2012). Scholars view green open access as the lowest-cost model because it preserves author control (Wildman, 2019, p. 105). Participants in the study expressed consistent support for self-archiving practices. Their reflections suggest that self-archiving functions as a tactical practice

that enables academics to navigate restricted-access regimes and circulate scientific knowledge more freely.

"I upload everything to RG. If I receive a printed book chapter, I scan it or request a PDF were permitted by the contract. I often upload the pre-publication version." (A16)

Academics at state and foundation universities explained that green open access enables access to scientific resources. They reported hesitation, because they are uncertain about contractual rules and do not understand which manuscript versions qualify as green OA.

3.2.2. Solidarity Networks

The concept of solidarity networks constitutes the second tactical practice in response to restrictive copyright practices. To overcome the economic barriers that limit their access, academics develop alternative usage practices that remain within legal boundaries. In this study, these tactics are identified as self-sharing one's own work, requesting the study from others with access, transferring experience, and joint use practices. Limited access emerges as the primary factor that compels academics to rely on these solidarity networks. The transformation of academic publishing into a highly commercialized and increasingly monopolized industry poses significant obstacles for researchers. Academics can access resources within the scope of their institutions' accessibility, and they can offer various alternative solutions where they cannot access them.

The first form of solidarity networks identified in the study is self-sharing one's own work. The concept refers to an author's willingness to share a restricted-access work through various channels when asked. Findings on academics' experiences show that self-sharing one's own work is both widespread and prioritized. Academics share materials through online tools or by providing a printed copy. Several academics explained that they shared requested texts because they saw no meaningful difference between printed and digital formats. Others described situations in which unequal access reinforced their commitment to sharing.

"However, justice needs to be ensured. I used to joke in my doctoral classes that whenever we handed out copies of SAGE books, we were touching a centuries-old injustice. At least we were contributing to balancing it." (A20)

Some academics argue that self-sharing one's own work does not fundamentally challenge the existing system. They point to features such as the "request" button on ResearchGate or the option to share pre-print versions on SSRN as evidence that the current publishing model implicitly accommodates these practices.

The second tactic within solidarity networks is defined as requesting the study from others with access. Academics implement this strategy in two ways: they may request the study directly from the author, or they may reach out to another academic who has institutional access. In the cases where

authors do not have full access to their own publications due to restrictive licensing rules, they request the full text from colleagues who are able to retrieve it.

"Six months ago, a professor at Oxford University sent me a chapter from his book. I wrote to him and explained that I needed the chapter for my article. He sent it." (A22)

Academics view the experience of requesting the study from others with access as a positive practice. Those who rely on this strategy also express a willingness to share their own work when asked, reflecting a reciprocal and supportive orientation toward scholarly communication.

"He sent me three of his articles. The professor is senior yet he was willing to share. This shows that academics self-share their work and are open to doing so. I also sent him the codes. Someone contacted me on LinkedIn, and I shared the codes with them." (A8)

Requesting access through colleagues obtaining a restricted work from someone other than its author emerges in the study as another form of solidarity network. Academics draw on their social capital to obtain publications they cannot access and describe this practice as an act of solidarity within the broader academic community.

"I can obtain data from my friends at other universities. I also have friends abroad, and they provide it to me." (A14)

Another solidarity network involves transferring experience circulating tactical knowledge about access practices. This involves sharing alternative ways to access resources. The study finds that early-career academics are more likely to share their experiences. Academics who quickly discover different access routes, often linked to digital skills, share their experiences with colleagues and students. The primary motivation for sharing experiences with students is economic.

"I promote black OA for books for students. We are not in the same income bracket, and purchasing books is already a luxury for most students. I cannot ethically say, "You will have to pay for this too," because this model is unsustainable. I also share with my friends. We can download books that others cannot. Because they have accounts at different universities, they can access resources that I cannot. We help each other. Sometimes my students even assist me." (A10)

The final solidarity network is joint use. This concept refers to providing multiple access to artificial intelligence software or paid databases through a single subscription. These access maneuvers, adopted for economic reasons, are supported by password sharing, which has become widespread, especially in countries with greater access to resources.

"I have a source from abroad. My brother is doing his doctorate in England. I download all my sources through his email address. Because the infrastructure in Türkiye doesn't allow downloading all the sources." (A19)

3.2.3. Collaboration

Collaboration is the final tactic academics employ to overcome payment-related issues. Academics implement this practice in two ways: Institutional Gift Authorship and Co-authorship. Co-authorship emerges as a collaborative tactic used to share the workload and the publication costs. The primary motivation for this informal coordination is to share the workload, eliminate perceived inequalities within academia, and circumvent paywalls.

"They have established an interesting network. They need to pay one thousand dollars. Ten people co-author the articles. One person writes the literature review, one writes results, one collects the data, and one conducts the analysis. They divided the costs accordingly. They have found a collective strategy to overcome the one-hundred-dollar barrier." (A21)

Institutional Gift Authorship refers to the practice of listing individuals as authors who did not contribute to a scientific study and/or excluding those who did contribute. Some academics employ institutional gift authorship as a tactical practice to circumvent paywalls.

"In Q1 you're going to submit it to a journal. The article processing fee is five hundred dollars. Few academics in Türkiye would spend half of their annual salary on an article. There is a professor in England. His university covers the cost. 'Professor, you should also be involved in the study. Let's publish it through your university. You assign him tasks solely to include him in the article. Regardless of actual involvement, the process proceeds.'" (A12)

3.2.4. Compliance with Copyright and Related Rules

Some academics complied with copyright regulations. Academics' experiences with the necessity of journal fees, the perception of intellectual property as supporting scientific production, and the protection of intellectual property rights through compliance with contract terms. The most frequently emphasized code after libre science is the necessity of fees. The necessity of fees reflects the belief that fees are essential for sustaining scientific production. The fees are viewed as necessary for reasons such as rationing, maintaining journal quality, and covering operational expenses.

"How will a journal be published? There are people who manage journal. It is unrealistic to expect all editors to work as volunteers without compensation. Each journal incurs costs. Publishing, reviewer recruitment and fees, and related expenses all require money. That is why they demand these payments." (A15)

Academics' experiences of copyright contracts manifest as compliance with contract terms. Primary motivations include concerns about legal liability, ethical codes, recognition of contracts' voluntary nature, limited understanding of contractual obligations, concerns about the ease of generating digital evidence, acceptance of associated costs and publisher support. Some academics state that intellectual property regulations have a supportive role in scientific production.

"If I conceive of something, I should be the first to benefit. That benefit could involve financial support (...) Without sufficient financial means. Motivation is limited. Consider historical philosophers. They all went to publishing houses in poverty. There was always a need for resources." (A14)

Factors such as the incentive to obtain financial gain, individual motivation, the protection of ideas, and the costs of conducting research emerge as central themes in academics' experiences regarding the supportive role of intellectual property in scientific production.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examines how academics understand the OA movement and how they experience its core values within academic everyday life. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-one faculty members, and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The study considers the open access movement not only as a model for accessing scientific publications but also as a field shaped around the circulation and commoning of knowledge. The study examines how the movement intersects with OA models. Within this framework, gold OA stands in tension with this commoning practice due to its market-oriented structure.

According to the findings, academics view the OA movement as a productive buffer zone. They observe a transformation in the relationship between public/common property as public goods increasingly shift toward private ownership and identify with commoning practices to challenge this shift. Their emphasis on the cumulative nature of science, its role as a public service, and its relationship with social benefit leads them to treat intellectual property as an object of inquiry, positioning it as a contribution to scientific advancement and as a barrier. Their recognition of the link between ideas and property within the existing social formation reflects the prevailing order, while copyleft represents a counter-order based on alternative forms of knowledge circulation. Ideas are not commodities that require production and exchange through formal legal mechanisms. Treating intellectual property law differently is viewed as justified non-compliance. Although knowledge of the OA movement remains limited, academics experience it primarily through fragmented everyday practices rather than organized collective action. These practices are grounded in individual dispositions and orientations aligned with the movement's core values.

The findings indicate that academics interpret the OA movement as a liminal space in which alternatives can be constructed and identify with its commoning-oriented values. These orientations appear through fragmented-tactical practices under restrictive access regimes.

Academics develop four primary forms of everyday practices and tactical responses in relation to restrictive access regimes. The first form of practice reflects orientations toward open, free, and independent science. Academics widely use forms of OA commonly referred to as black and green OA as tactical responses. They do not voluntarily engage in gold OA, and when compelled to do so, they emphasize the need for reasonable fees. Black OA is perceived as a necessity due to its alignment with libre science and its function as a response to income inequalities. The second tactical response consists of solidarity practices such as self-sharing one's work, requesting the study from others with access, transferring experience, and engaging in joint use practices. Academics experience accessing paywalled

articles that fall into legally unregulated or permissible gray zones. The third tactical response centers on collaboration through co-authorship and institutional gift authorship. These collaborative tactics contribute to the continual reproduction of the economically disadvantaged positions of certain academics. The final set of practices relates to compliance with copyright and related rules. Across these tactical responses, economic motivations emerge as the primary driving force. Academics situate these practices within broader structural dynamics of academic capitalism and the commodification of knowledge. They emphasize the role of the transformation of publishing into a profit-oriented sector contribute to the reproduction of inequality in academia.

Academics articulate the movement through identification with practices of commoning. Their stance reflects a critical positioning toward intellectual property rights, and they do not perceive green/black OA as ethically problematic to overcome access barriers. They conceptualize these practices as justified non-compliance. Their everyday practices and tactical responses are primarily oriented toward circumventing paywalls. These practices extend beyond overcoming financial constraints by revealing broader structural problems related to information asymmetry, the monopolization of knowledge access, and the extensive valorization of academic labor within commercial publishing. While the global open access movement creates an alternative space for knowledge common, academics in Türkiye mostly identify with it through the movement's core values and engage with it through everyday tactics developed within access regimes.

Ethics committee approval for the study was obtained from İstanbul Gelişim University Ethics Committee on May 31, 2024, with decision number 2024-8.

The author declares that the study was conducted in accordance with research and publication ethics.

The author states that artificial intelligence tools were employed only for the purpose of language polishing.

The author declares that there are no financial conflicts of interest involving any institution, organization, or individual associated with this article.

The author declares that the whole process of the study is conducted by the sole declared author of the study.

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