

EDITORIAL



Publication in a scientific journal of health science: Experience as an editor, reviewer, and an author

Introduction

Publication in health science journal has been visualized as one of the methods at health-care professional's disposal to exhibit scientific talent to peer group. Frequent and successful publication of research brings laurels to the scholars as well as their institutions. The number of publications of a teacher/scholar/health-care professional in an academic institution and university is used to measure individual's competency. The present paper highlights the experiences of the authors from various perspectives such as an editor, reviewer, and an author.

Perspectives of an Editor

The once popular logo "Publish or Perish" is taking a new dimension with a paradigm shift toward quality manuscripts being the essence of high impact factored, indexed journals of national and international repute. The role of editorial board is quiet challenging due to the pressure of maintaining the standards of the journal, wide readership, getting the articles peer reviewed by subject experts, plagiarism check, editing, and release of scheduled issues on time. The work of the editorial board headed by an efficient chief editor is rewarding when there is continuous flow of the spectrum of quality articles earning maximum citation for the journal, with a wide readership. Another issue of concern is finances involved in running the entire show.

Perspectives of a Reviewer

Finding a subject expert as a reviewer for a scientific journal is very important. The reviewers' job is to critically evaluate the submitted manuscript and make suggestions for improvising the quality of submitted article. In addition, the reviewer has to be smart in gauging the originality of the submitted research. Since the reviewer's job is very demanding, most of them are declining to do the reviews at the present time. Increase in the number of journals in recent times has led to overburden and fatigue for the reviewers. Insufficient interest in topic, non-relevance of topic to their specialty, tight deadlines, other commitments, lack of reviewer recognition, and time constraint are some factors prompting the reviewer to decline the number of reviews. Articles from different journals to review at the same time might compromise the quality of review as well. Most often,

if a reviewer submits the useful and positive review comments within the given time constraint, he is sent another article to work on which leads to reviewer fatigue and reason for declining. This leads to the selection of other inexperienced reviewers which might compromise the final quality of the manuscript. Having an efficient reviewers' panel is an added challenge for the editorial board of the scientific journal.

Perspectives of an Author

Publication has become mandatory for the faculty to get a job, for academic promotion, to receive grants, and for other academic perks. Thus, there is a steady increase in the number of publications as well as journals in recent time. Some authors publish for the sheer passion of publishing their work.

A scientific journal publishing quality articles contributing to the existing scientific knowledge is always appreciated. However, it requires a core team for its success. Success of any journal depends on the authors, quality of the articles published, peer review process, and its editorial staff along with the reviewers. It starts with the submission of an article with a relevant topic which would be of interest to its readers.

Preparing a quality manuscript is no easy job. It takes a lot of effort to write a critical manuscript. Authors have to collect the data on the relevant topic of their interest from various sources either through the printed matter or through the internet, then compile the data in an orderly manner and quote the references. Writing the inference from original research is another challenging task for authors. Adding to the list of tasks would be the preparation of the manuscript according to author guidelines of a particular journal and also supporting documents such as copyright form, covering letter, declaring conflict of interest, and others. Author will experience a series of entries before successfully submitting the article online. Further, every time the article gets rejected and resubmitted to a new journal, copyright form, text style, and referencing style need to be changed unless both the journals are from the same publisher.

Authors should choose an appropriate journal with the appropriate scope for submission. Many factors depend on the selection of journals by authors such as scope of the journal, reputation, indexing, article processing fee, frequency, impact factor, early acceptance, short review time, circulation among

the related fraternity, and ease of using journal website and so on. The authors also look forward to constructive criticism from the reviewers if their article gets rejected which would be useful further to improvise their article. However, most of the time article is rejected without any reasons which may have tremendous impact on the mind of a new author. Experienced authors would already have faced this many times and they would know what to do next.

Publishing in an indexed journal is more sought. Journals indexed in PubMed/MEDLINE/Index Medicus, SCOPUS, EBSCO, EMBASE, and Index Copernicus are usually chosen. Some journals indexed in PubMed further say that only selected citations which have obtained grant from National Institutes of Health will be PubMed indexed and not all the articles submitted. This is usually mentioned in the National Library of Medicine catalog entry of the journal. This point, however, may be missed out by a fresh author. Many journals charge for article processing which is non-refundable and adds to the authors' burden. A need to publish in indexed journal adds to further problems like plagiarism. The lack of awareness of the plagiarism among young authors leads to the rejection of many articles. Free and paid softwares are available for plagiarism check. The authors who have access to such facility can check their manuscripts thoroughly before uploading their manuscript.

Once the article is uploaded on a journal website, it enters the editorial phase. Initial screening of the submitted manuscript would be carried out by the editor-in-chief/editorial board. Articles which fail to fulfill the journal requirements and those lacking sufficient research would be rejected at this level. The manuscripts passing the editorial review would be sent to suitable reviewer for peer review process. The author then has to answer the comments of the reviewer, revise the manuscript, and upload again. Later, the accepted article would be sent back to the author for proofreading and finally would be published in the journal.^[1,2]

Concluding remarks

The present compilation represents the personal experience of the authors and may not be generalized. Writing a good article

is both science and an artwork. Reviewing a scientific article is another challenging task; needless to comment on the herculean task of the editor-in-chief of a journal of high impact factor.

However, the combination of three factors: Manuscript being written by a passionate author, commented by an efficient reviewer, and published in a scientific journal of high repute is the need of the hour to uphold the quality of scientific research in health-care profession for betterment of humankind.

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Received: 19 September 2018;

Accepted: 18 October 2018

Doi: 10.15713/ins.jmrps.146

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How to cite this article: Nandini DB, Madhura MG, Rao RS. Publication in a scientific journal of health science: Experience as an editor, reviewer, and an author. *J Med Radiol Pathol Surg* 2018;5:1-2