

HIGH IMPACT JOURNALS: DEFINITION, SCOPE AND DISTINCTIONS

Tunde Opeibi, PhD

***Professor of English, Digital Cultures &
Discourse Studies***

University of Lagos, Nigeria

1ST NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON PRAGMATICS RESEARCH, 17-18 July 2018, Lagos State University, Nigeria

Introduction



Over the past decades, academic discourse around the best approach or standard of assessing dissemination of research results has dominated the public space. Scholarly communication has become a more rigorous exercise but also subject to abuse because of the age of the internet



Top class scholarship in different fields has impacted generations of scholars in different climes, dispensations and regions of the globe.

Global best practices have been established to benchmark the quality and profundity of research work and academic publications

This era of digital revolution is however providing new ways of exploring varied phenomena and doing research in different fields.

THIS PRESENTATION

Describe Basic Categories of Academic Journals



Discuss Specific Features of High Impact Journals



Steps to Publishing in High Impact Journals

- ❑ a double blind peer reviewed International Journal
- ❑ High calibre scholars and renowned international discipline-specific experts on the editorial board of the Journal
 - ❑ Institution-based Journals
 - ❑ Stand alone Journals with long years of reputation
- ❑ Reputable Publishing-House sponsored Journals

High Impact Journal

```
graph TD; A[High Impact Journal] -- yellow arrow --> B[Low Impact Journal]; B -- red arrow --> C[Predatory Journal];
```

Low Impact Journal

Predatory Journal

HIGH IMPACT JOURNAL

"high-impact journals" – are journals considered to be highly influential in their fields. A journal's impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which an average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year.

Impact factor is commonly used to evaluate the relative **importance** of a journal within its field and to measure the frequency with which the “average article” in a journal has been cited in a particular time period. Journal which publishes more review articles will get highest IFs.

Scopus Journal

Scopus is a bibliographic database containing abstracts and citations for academic **journal** articles. It covers nearly 22,000 titles from over 5,000 publishers, of which 20,000 are peer-reviewed **journals** in the scientific, technical, medical, and social sciences.

Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature: scientific journals, books and conference proceedings.

SCI Journal

The Science Citation Index (**SCI**) is a citation index originally produced by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) and created by Eugene Garfield. ... The larger version (Science Citation Index Expanded) covers more than 8,500 notable and significant **journals**, across 150 disciplines, from 1900 to the present.

The **Impact Factor** is **calculated** by dividing the number of citations in the JCR year by the total number of articles published in the two previous years. An **Impact Factor** of 1.0 means that, on average, the articles published one or two year ago have been cited one time.

The **impact factor** (IF) or **journal impact factor** (JIF) of an academic journal is a measure reflecting the yearly average number of **citations** to recent articles published in that journal. ... **Impact factors** are calculated yearly starting from 1975 for journals listed in the **Journal Citation Reports**.

The **impact factor** is one of these; it is a measure of the frequency with which the “average article” in a journal has been cited in a particular year or period. The annual **JCR impact factor** is a ratio between citations and recent citable items published.

Journal impact factors are found in Journal Citation Reports (JCR). JCR is a unique database which is used to determine the relative importance of journals within their subject categories.

An impact factor is one measure of the quality of a journal. This is calculated by the number of citations received by the journal, from other journals within the Web of Science database.-

<https://guides.library.unisa.edu.au/c.php?g=169983&p=1119052>

Relevance of DOI number in High Impact Journal

A DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is a unique identifier that identifies digital objects. ... If a **journal** publisher uses DOIs, they will usually print the DOI somewhere on the first page of the article. Some of the online resources used to search for articles on topics will supply DOIs in the citations.

How to Find Journal Impact Factor

Use the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) to locate impact factors. The impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year. The JCR also lists journals and their impact factors and ranking in the context of their specific field(s).-

<https://www.hsl.virginia.edu/services/howdoi/hdi-jcr.cfm>

It is better to publish one paper in a quality journal than multiple papers in lesser journals. [...]. Try to publish in journals that have high impact factors; chances are your paper will have high impact, too, if accepted.

-

Bourne, P. E. (2005). Ten Simple Rules for Getting Published. *PLoS Computational Biology* 1(5): e57.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.0010057>

Publication in journals with a high impact factor is regarded as an indication of the quality of the research published and, by implication, the quality of its authors. Not surprisingly, publishing in highly ranked journals is an aspiration for most scientists and often plays an important role in one's own career prospects and progression. Yet, as more and more researchers aspire to publish in top rated journals, the competition gets tougher and the success rate far lower than publishing on low-impact journals. So, how to achieve a much sought-after high-impact publication?

LOW IMPACT JOURNAL

- These are journals that lack international respect within the scientific and research communities.
- Lack rigorous peer review mechanism
- Accept low quality articles
- Have low level of citations

PREDATORY JOURNAL

- **Predatory** open-access publishing is an exploitative open-access academic publishing business model that involves charging publication fees to authors without providing the editorial and publishing services associated with legitimate **journals** (open access or not).

A “predatory journal” is a supposed academic journal that charges authors for publication (rather than using a peer review or editorial review process to select articles). There is no real career value in getting published in a predatory journal. There are organizations that track reputable journals and expose ones that are viewed as predatory.

-<https://www.quora.com/What-is-a-predatory-journal>

The term "predatory journal" or "predatory publisher" was coined in 2010 by American librarian Jeffrey Beall to describe unscrupulous open access publishers who were publishing articles with little or no real peer review. One business model in open access is article-processing charges, under which accepted articles are paid for by the authors (or usually their funder or institution).

Legitimate publishers had been using this model since the early 2000s, but around 2007/8 observers of OA journals raised concerns about spamming and poor peer review from some new publishers, dubbed "black sheep" by Gunther Eysenbach. Beall wrote up a list of some of these suspected bad actors in an article, which later became the basis for "Beall's List". Many of these journals operate out of India and Nigeria but pretend to be based in Western countries, and most of the authors who publish in these journals are from developing countries. Similar fake conferences exist, some run by "predatory publishers".-

<https://www.quora.com/What-is-a-predatory-journal>

Predatory publishers have common characteristics:

- Their primary goal is to make money (i.e. there will be fees).
- They do not care about the quality of the work published (i.e. no or little editing or peer-review).
- They make false claims or promises (i.e. claims of impact factors and indexing).
- They engage in unethical business practices (i.e. not as advertised).
- They fail to follow accepted standards or best practices of scholarly publishing (various).

<http://instr.iastate.libguides.com/predatory>

Predatory publishers make false claims (such as quick peer-review) to lure unwary authors into submitting papers. While sending a predatory publisher a manuscript may see it "published" there is no guarantee that it underwent peer review, is included in indexes like Web of Science and Scopus, or that it will be available in a month much less in five years. Predatory publishers do authors a disservice by claiming to be a full-service publisher. Remember, as an author you are providing a valuable product and legitimate publishers provide valuable services to protect your work. Some of the dangers of publishing with a predatory publisher are outlined below

Your work may be subject to sub-par peer-review

The peer-review system isn't perfect but there is general consensus that papers that undergo peer-review are better for it. If you plan to seek promotion or tenure you want to make sure you are publishing in a place that values your work and is willing to devote time and resources to improving it.

Your work could disappear

One of the advantages of publishing with a responsible publisher is that they make commitments to preserve your work. Opportunists looking to make a quick buck are not going to care if your paper is still available in 5 years, much less tomorrow. This situation is the stuff of nightmares if you plan to go up for tenure or promotion.

Your work will be hard to find

Some predatory publishers advertise that they are included in well-known databases like Web of Science or Scopus when they are not.

<http://instr.iastate.libguides.com/predatory>

CONCLUSION

TEN SIMPLE RULES FOR GETTING PUBLISHED

Rule 1: Read many papers, and learn from both the good and the bad work of others.

Rule 2: The more objective you can be about your work, the better that work will ultimately become.

Rule 3: Good editors and reviewers will be objective about your work.

Rule 4: If you do not write well in the English language, take lessons early; it will be invaluable later.

Rule 5: Learn to live with rejection.

Rule 6: The ingredients of good science are obvious—novelty of research topic, comprehensive coverage of the relevant literature, good data, good analysis including strong statistical support, and a thought-provoking discussion. The ingredients of good science reporting are obvious—good organization, the appropriate use of tables and figures, the right length, writing to the intended audience—do not ignore the obvious.

Rule 7: Start writing the paper the day you have the idea of what questions to pursue.

Rule 8: Become a reviewer early in your career.

Rule 9: Decide early on where to try to publish your paper.

Rule 10: Quality is everything.

Ten Simple Rules for Getting Published- Philip E Bourne
<http://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.0010057>

- ❑ It is better to articulate a good research question and look out for the necessary tools in order to answer it than to pose a research question according to the tools you already have.
- ❑ • You must try to be original. A curious thing I've found out from papers authored by Spanish-speaking people is that, the more evidences they find in the literature supporting their results, the more assertive they feel over the importance of the contribution they are making.
- ❑ • We must address the difficult issues. Unfortunately, that is the interesting one and the one which will be getting published in Nature or any other of our journals. That is the main difference between famous researchers and the rest of us.

- Focus on innovative aspects
- Be clear in your mind about the structure of the paper
- Make it comprehensible and interesting
- Select carefully which is the best place to get it published
 - Be honest and upstanding
 - Focus on quality rather than quantity
 - Be patient when writing the article

- ❑ Always contemplate several journals in which your paper could be published
 - ❑ Select the right journal
 - ❑ Read the journal's scope carefully
 - ❑ Look out for partners when publishing
- Effects of collaboration

☐ Be honest with authorship

BEWARE: The authors' position reflect their contribution to the paper Authorship:

Criteria and Policy

Authorship implies accountability.

Listed authors must have contributed directly to the intellectual content of the paper...

Authors should meet all of the following criteria:

- Conceived and planned the work that led to the article or played an important role in interpreting the results, or both.
- Wrote the paper and/or made substantive suggestions for revision

Make a good literature review Be honest when citing, do not omit competitors Cite the most recent literature Cite international papers, use scientific databases Make sure to cite all papers on the topic published in the journal to which you are submitting your manuscript

When writing the manuscript

1. Many papers are rejected or lose their value because they are not well written, presented or structured.
2. If we do not pay attention to the details, probably the main message and good ideas expressed in our paper will be missed out and go unnoticed.
3. Just taking care of a series of basic details our paper may improve substantially.
4. Work out which are the main conclusions of your work and write and present the paper always keeping them on mind.
5. Give some thought to the introduction, in it we must present what has been previously done and what will we contribute with.

Approach the topic from an international perspective Because if you don't, this will be the answer you will receive“[...]However, the paper does is utmost best to present itself as a contribution to just Spanish national matters. Then, non-Spanish readers may not be very interested, and that includes most of Research Evaluation readers. Thus, unfortunately, the paper as it stands now is only of marginal interest to RE and is much more suitable for a Spanish national journal. Now, the paper could certainly be improved: focus on what is interesting for an international public, present the study as dealing with a general issue[...]”.

Respect authors' guidelines Pay a special attention to the journals' instructions for authors

- Abstract, keywords • Structure, tables and figures • Length • Referencing

IF WE FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS WE WILL AVOID HAVING THE EDITOR AND REVIEWERS CALLING OUR ATTENTION. THESE ERRORS MAY BE CRUCIAL ON THE FATE OF OUR PAPER Check some papers previously published by the journal

Look out for your English

- Journals hate bad written manuscripts
- Check the terminology you use
- If you are hiring a translator
 - Choose someone specialized in your field of endeavour
 - If you have written the text
 - Have a native English-speaker to check it
 - Beware the type of English you use
 - American or British

<http://www.ease.org.uk/guidelines/index.shtml>

Look out for tables and figures. Sometimes tables and figures are the most important part of our work or even the only one our readers will pay attention to. Include only the necessary ones, only those that reinforce our results.

Do not transform your paper into a list of tables, try to comprise results in just a few tables always preserving their quality. More tables and figures do not necessarily mean more results! Avoid redundancy. Avoid overlapping tables and figures. Use explicative titles avoiding acronyms if possible. Make sure the tables and figures can be interpreted without reading the text. Make attractive figures, take your time, they summarize part of the message you are sending

Before submitting a manuscript Writing a research paper You may as well send it to some colleagues to check some aspects. Don't forget to thank them!

Writing a research paper Sending a research paper the manuscript Writing

- Include a “Cover Letter” underlining the paper's originality and novelty, also pointing out its potential interest to the journal's readers
- List the main results of your research and emphasize its importance How are you contributing to the field?
- Sometimes it may be interesting to suggest some possible reviewers, especially if the paper is of great novelty

it is advisable to always send it Example extracted from the “authors guidelines” of: Authors should include a cover letter detailing the key findings of their manuscript. The cover letter should highlight the novel aspects of their data and briefly describe how the authors feel their results will generate progress in their field.

....Furthermore, if the authors feel their work merits publication as a breakthrough paper, they should indicate this in the cover letter..

Always have your research data organized conveniently before submitting a paper as reviewers may ask for them or you may have to reprocess them after the review process. • Create complementary datasets well documented that would allow to replicate your study if necessary or display more results not included in the paper because of the length. You may upload them in your personal website or in data banks. They add value to your paper.

The peer review process Writing research paper This may be one of the hardest moments, we must study the reviewers comments and respond to them in a letter. 1) Answer to all the commentaries, even if you don't agree or are minor issues. 2) Be well-mannered when answering and use solid scientific arguments when you disagree with the reviewer. 3) If necessary, get ready, you may have to retrieve more data, undertake more observations or perform new experiments. 4) If the changes suggested do not require an excessive effort and do not alter the paper excessively, make them, don't waste your time arguing with the reviewer

The peer review process What can we have in a review?Comments implying retrieving new data, processing it and redoing the paper“Reviewer: I do not think that computer science is the appropriate field for the method to be tested. In computerscience there is heavy reliance on proceedings... It would be good to test the method on additional fields as well”Comments which do not imply changing the paper but responding to the reviewer“You say that CS is well represented in JCR. I strongly disagree with this” Comments which involve minor changes “TOPCIT - you should provide a more detailed definition”Comments which imply modifying the text without further discussion “Page 8, first line "proving" I suggest to replace this by "indicating

The peer review process Writing research paper Accept rejected papers with good nature • NEVER take it as something personal • Be honest and try to understand why the paper was rejected• Make the most of reviewers’ comments to improve your work • Rewrite a new paper but don’t send it to another journalwithout correcting the facts why it was rejected on the first place

The peer review process Maybe your paper was not that bad after all!“Undeniably, the most common way to communicate a given finding, theory or discovery is through its publication in articles submitted to learned journals. It may happen that the editors and referees who read articles reporting a novel discovery are not able to assess the value of innovative work”Campanario, JM. Rejecting and resisting Nobel class discoveries... Scientometrics, 2009

Final tips

- Good and well-focused research lines
- Good knowledge of research methodologies in our specialty
 - data analysis and results should be presented in a way that shows **carefulness, rigour, and accuracy.**
- Ambition for publishing internationally
- Patience with the research, writing and reviewing
- Neatness, clarity and conciseness when presenting results
- Persistence against failure

<https://www.slideshare.net/figaro/how-to-publish-in-journals-with-impact>

- make sure your proposed article matches the journal's scope
- read carefully the Guidelines for Authors provided by the Journal
- familiarise yourself with the specific requirements as to length, formatting, referencing, etc., and follow them scrupulously
- try to find a colleague who has published in, or has been a reviewer for, your targeted journal. Their experience may prove invaluable in assisting you shape your article
- ask colleagues to comment on drafts of your work.
- read plenty of articles from the journal you intend to publish in and learn from other people's style
- Read [how to become a better writer](https://marialuisaaliotta.wordpress.com/2012/07/16/high-vs-low-impact-factor-journals-what-difference-does-it-make-to-your-writing-style/))

<https://marialuisaaliotta.wordpress.com/2012/07/16/high-vs-low-impact-factor-journals-what-difference-does-it-make-to-your-writing-style/>

Journal Analyzer (Compare Sources). The Journal Analyzer allows you to compare multiple journals against each other in addition to seeing their individual impact factors. This tool is available to the Des Moines University(DMU) community through the library subscription to Scopus.-

<http://lib.dmu.edu/db/scopus/metrics>

PONDER!

- AVOID GENERAL PURPOSE JOURNAL
- AVOID ONE-MAN EDITORIAL BOARD
- AVOID ONLINE STAND ALONE JOURNAL THAT REQUESTS PUBLICATION FEE
- AVOID ONLINE JOURNALS THAT PROMISE TO PUBLISH YOUR ARTICLE WITHIN TWO/FOUR WEEKS
- AVOID JOURNALS WITH YOUR FRIENDS AS EDITORS



Tunde Opeibi, PhD

Professor of English, Digital Cultures & Discourse Studies

University of Lagos & Research Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Germany

Email: bopeibi@unilag.edu.ng

References

Bourne, P. E. (2005). Ten Simple Rules for Getting Published. *PLoS Computational Biology* 1(5): e57.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.0010057>

Wikipedia- what is high impact journal?

<https://marialuisaaliotta.wordpress.com/2012/07/16/high-vs-low-impact-factor-journals-what-difference-does-it-make-to-your-writing-style/>

<https://guides.library.unisa.edu.au/c.php?g=169983&p=1119052>

<https://www.hsl.virginia.edu/services/howdoi/hdi-jcr.cfm>

<http://lib.dmu.edu/db/scopus/metrics>

<https://marialuisaaliotta.wordpress.com/2012/07/16/high-vs-low-impact-factor-journals-what-difference-does-it-make-to-your-writing-style/>