Journal Articles: How to Choose a Home for your Research

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As Kean University is working towards a new Carnegie research classification of R2, it is becoming increasingly more important for faculty and students to publish in academic journals.

Carnegie Research Classification

The Carnegie Classification has been the leading framework for ranking university programs in higher education scholarship for nearly 50 years (Huang, 2018). As Kean University seeks R2 status, which essentially means there is "High Research Activity" in and among their doctoral students and faculty, as well as a certain threshold of research expenditures (as reported in the [Higher Education Research and Development Survey](#)). That said, faculty need to know not only how to design and conduct research, but also how to be informed about where and how to publish their scholarly work.

Strategize

There are many factors to consider when seeking a scholarly publication for your research. First, begin to review both international and national journals that match the content area/ discipline you are working in. Review submission guidelines including word count, aims and scope of journal, audience of publication and determine your research is a match.

Reputation

A significant factor in determining where to submit your scholarship is the reputation of the journal. There are a few ways to determine the quality of the reputation of the journal you are considering (Jones, 2021).
1. Is the journal peer-reviewed? [There are different kinds of peer-review: blind, double-blind, open](#).
2. Do you recognize any of the scholarships of those on the editorial board?
3. Did you review the articles in the publication?- does the research and methodology seem credible?
4. Is the Open Access Policy clearly stated? [The Directory of Open Access Journals has built in "quality control"](#). It would be important to cross-check the journal here.
5. What is the publication history of the journal? Are there gaps in the publication history? Is it new?
6. Is the journal indexed in scholarly databases such as Google Scholar or those hosted by EBSCO, ProQuest, and Elsevier? If not, it may not be the best quality journal for your scholarship.
7. What is the publisher's information? Is it clearly stated?
8. [Are the ethical guidelines clearly stated?](#)
9. Are the guidelines for digital archives clearly stated?
10. Are the copyright guidelines clearly stated?

Predatory Journals

According to Xia et al. (2015), in the last several years, there has been an increase in the Open Access journals and due to this increase, traditional publication practices have given way to new ways to examine and publish scholarship. Unfortunately, with the increase of OA journals, many have demonstrated a lack of transparency and do not identify an editorial board. Additionally, many of these journals require large fees for authors to be published with the intention of making quick profits and paying little or no attention to peer review. It is important to be aware of any publication that is asking you to pay fees. Largely, academic publications that are well-reputed do not ask for any monetary compensation to publish.

Red Flags

1. <u>Pay to publish</u>- this is usually called predatory publication and is not a good choice for academic scholarship.
2. <u>No peer review process</u>- this is a major issue, as peer-reviewed journals have a built in authentication system where leading scholars in the field review the submitted scholarship to evaluate it for authenticity, rigor, appropriate methodology, ethical considerations, and so forth.
3. No editorial board- there are always several academics who collectively review scholarship. If there is no point of contact for the editor or contact information for the editorial board, this is a major issue.
4. <u>Manufactured metrics for journal ranking and impact factor</u>- cross-checking ranking would be important.

Journal Ranks

Academic journals are usually ranked based on bibliometrics and particular algorithms that measure the "impact" of a journal. Theoretically, the higher ranking a journal has, the more credible, sound, reliable, ethical, innovative, and trustworthy the publication is (Brembs et al., 2013). Peer-review is one of the main ways to ensure that scholarly publications maintain public trust.

Impact Factor

The impact factor of the journal is essentially taking the number of citations of a journal in one year and dividing it by the number of publications over the previous two years, thus measuring how much of the research the journal is publishing is being disseminated throughout the field (Jones, 2021). [More information on impact factor can be found at Clarivate](#).

The following databases are useful references to determining the legitimacy, ranking and impact of the journals you are looking to publish in. Likewise, these are great resources to determine where you would like to submit your scholarship.

1. [SCImago](#)
2. [Google Scholar](#)

3. [Scopus](#)
   4. [Journal Citation Reports](#)
   5. [Altmetric](#)
   6. [Plum Analytics](#)

[Kean University Libraries have additional resources to understand and explore journal rankings found here.](#)

H-Index

The H-index or Hirsch index measures the impact of a specific author or researcher, rather than a journal or publication. According to Schreiber (2008) "It is defined as the highest number of publications of a scientist that received h or more citations each while the other publications have not more than h citations each." If a researcher has articles published in different journals, the H-index measures how many citations each article has. It is important to note that each researchers' H-index may differ depending on the database used. One way to check the academic impact of the editorial board of the journal you are submitting your work to is to check the H-index for each of the members of the board.

Your Academic Profile

As you begin publishing your work, you immediately start building your academic "story". Largely, this means your research interests, publications and contributions to the discourse in your field will be kept on record, through your research metric (downloads, citations, requests for full-text, and so forth). Your academic profile builds your research identity.

As a researcher you will be required to sign up for [ORCID](#). ORCID is a unique digital identifier that you will use as you submit your research, apply to conferences and build your research agenda. ORCID creates a professional profile for you that is accessible to editorial boards, research institutions and professional communities. Similarly, [Impactstory](#) gathers data on your publications including downloads, citations, social media posts of your scholarship.

Social Media

There are few other social networking databases you should be familiar with as you move forward with your professional publications. These allow you to connect with researchers who are in your field, have completed research that you are interested in and ask for their permission to use their publications.
[Research Gate](#)
[Academia.edu](#)

Whatever stage you are in on your publication journey, know that you are building a legacy through your contributions to the discourse in your field.

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