

Necessity of Framing Virtuous Journal Policies for Attaining High Impact Citations

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In the era of modern science and technology research has been given great significance. This will be only possible in light of accurate results extracted from good quality published researches in reputed journals. To ensure quality standard maintenance of medical journals, recommended international guidelines by International Committee for Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), and Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE) must be followed. All these will emphasize various steps for publications i.e. pre submission phase, submission phase, publication proceedings and post publication phase.

The ICMJE and WAME is comprised of a group of medical journal editors and the legislatures of associated organizations. They focus to refine the recommendations for the conduct, reporting, editing and publication of scholarly work in medical journals.^{1,2} While aim of COPE is to focus on publication ensuring maintenance of all ethical rights of subjects and patients especially in line with Helsinki declaration.³⁻⁵

Following and strict adherence to all these will be helpful to achieve good Global ranking of a journal. This will be done by SC Imago Journal Rank (SJR) which is an internationally recognized standard for recognizing the quartile (Q) of a journal. All the mile stones for this ranking and quartile demarcation, includes the overall number of published manuscripts, total number of citations, and average citations per week. Regarding quartiles, they helps in journal's ranking for impact factor or impact index. Q1 comprises of upper 25% of journals in the gradient, Q2 involves journals in next 25 to 50% group, Q3 includes journals between 50 to 75% groups. While Q4 is occupied by group of journals between 75 to 100%. The esteemed journals of specific discipline are usually the ones which can occupy first quartile, Q1.⁶

In light of ICMJE, WAME and COPE guidelines, following can be the plan to uplift a medical journal in view to make it a Q1 journal,¹⁻³ There must be clarity for each an ever policy to run a medical journal in successful way. Highlighted amongst those policies includes finalization of journal's name reflecting the content to be published. Then comes establishment of editorial board i.e. editor in chief, associate editors, assistant editors, advisory board, statistician, English language expert and team for plagiarism and software handling. The editors should be highly reputed individuals who are capable of making decisions regarding the acceptance or rejection of an article. He should have the ability to work as a team, because he is the one to regular involve author's reviewers and publishers in the process of printing the journal.

Next in sequence should focus the authors, authorship criteria and reviewers guidelines regarding types and requirements of manuscripts to be published. The precision should be there for the reference style as well. The steps for review process, types of review whether single or double blind all needs to be transparent. Reviewers who will review also plays a pivotal role. The scientific material should be either audited or peer reviewed. This will be to ensure a measure of quality screening mechanism through which high quality articles can get their publication in prestigious journals. Last not the least should be the protocols to consult statistician or English language expert. Details for expected time of publication along with fees and benefits for reviewers all needs to be in unblemished manner. The relationship for editors with journal and then with the owners and stakeholders should be good but no compromise on ethical practices. Financial issues to handle authors fees, reviewers payments, hard copy print outs, pays of all staff members, regular and timely provision of consumable things, billing of office, payments for auditors to have annual audits, payments for getting registration with National and International registry bodies etc all needs to be in transparent manner.

The selection for editorial board should be on merit basis especially for the persons having clear aims and objectives for journal's running.¹ As mentioned by WAME clearly defined policy should be there for the principles of transparency, professionals code of conduct for medical journal editors, publication ethics and relationship between journal editors in chief and their owners. No unethical proceedings or interference by owners in policy matters of journal should be addressed and entertained.^{2,3} The authorship criteria, especially for corresponding author, co-authors, and ghost authors, authors guidelines, publication fees, etc all needs to be clear for publication of original work nor fake work.¹ The gift authorship should be discouraged and there should be a mechanism to check gift authorship. Sometimes some seniors or friends who's have more publications or experience of publication try to help others because they need papers in order to get promotions but in doing so they even add their names in researches in which they have done nothing. The details regarding conflicts of interests should be unblemished at the time of article submission by corresponding author.² Regarding editor's relationship with journal, owners, and political parties, there should be a clearly define boundary and policy on no interference.² Starting from the definition or peer review, its types, complete process, requirements form reviewers, time line, their rewards all should be crisp and clear.^{1,2} Last not the least must be the selection of journal management system in light of requirements for National and International registration bodies.²

The dedicated hard working editorial along with clearly chalked down policies in light of National and International registration bodies will be a key to success for running a medical journal. Hence the ultimate of all efforts will be step forward to get good citation amongst a list of Thompson Reuters Impact Factor journal.

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