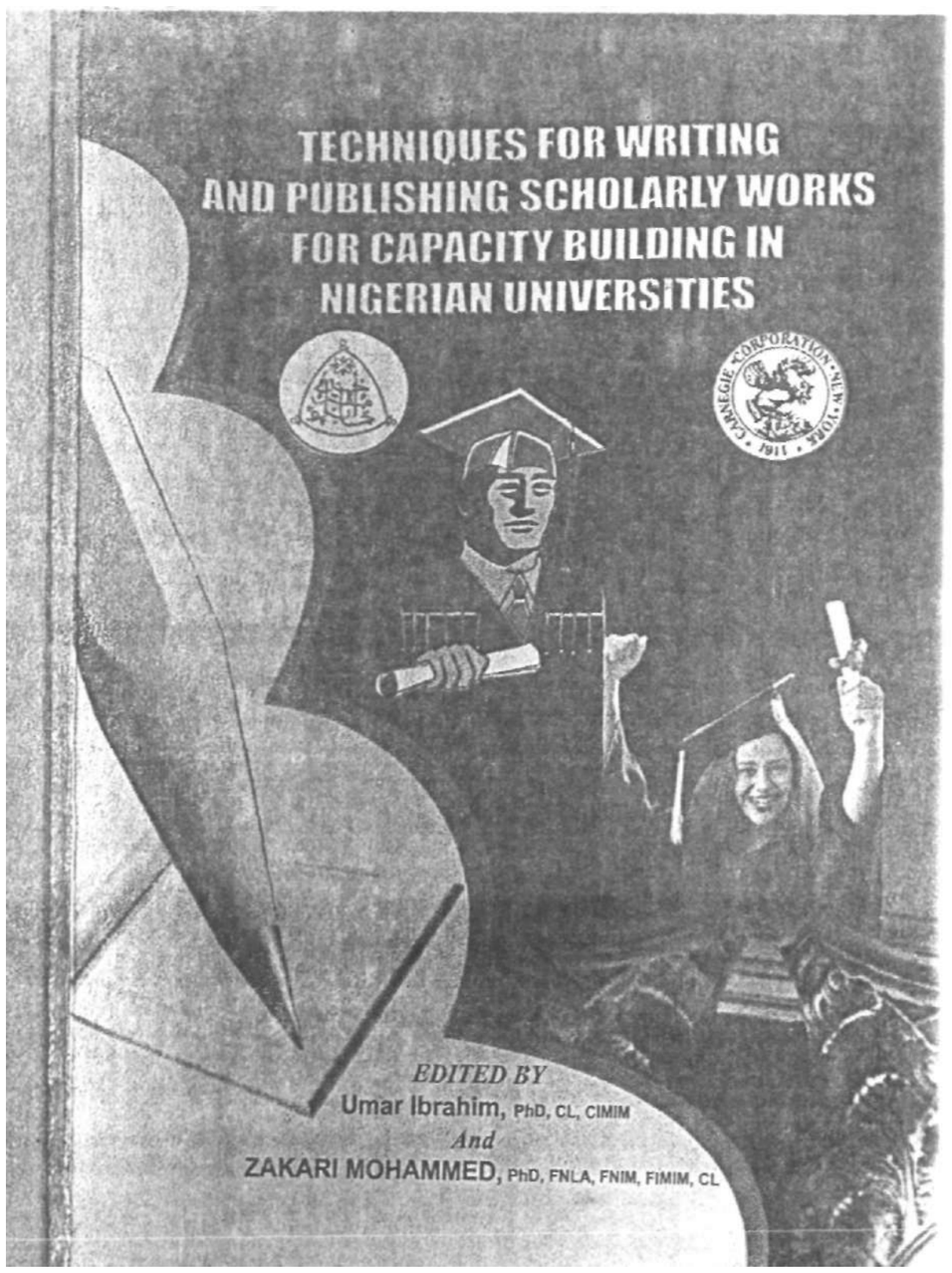
TECHNIQUES FOR WRITING
AND PUBLISHING SCHOLARLY WORKS
FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN
NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES
EDITED BY
Umar Ibrahim, PhD, CL, CIMIM
And
ZAKARI MOHAMMED, PhD, FNLA, FNIM, FIMIM, CL

TECHNIQUES FOR WRITING AND PUBLISHING SCHOLARLY WORKS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

EDITED BY

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FOREWORD

The goals of Research and Curriculum Development Unit (RCDU) of the Carnegie Corporations Projects in Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria include among others the need to:

i. strengthen postgraduate teaching and research for the enhancement of the university's capacity for postgraduate programme design, delivery and management;

ii. enhance the university's capacity for creativity in responding to global and national changes in knowledge acquisition and utilization as well as the needs of the Nigerian labour force; and

iii. prepare the university academic staff and postgraduate students for life-long intellectual pursuits and professionalism.

In its efforts to achieve these goals, the RCDU organized workshop on Techniques for writing and publishing scholarly works for capacity building in Nigerian Universities. It is the outcome of this workshop that culminated into the publication of this book by the Carnegie Corporations Project, Ahmadu Bello University to serve as reference material on writing, editing and publishing scholarly papers for the use of the Nigerian university community and the general public.

Considering the rich content of the book vis-à-vis the calibre of the contributors, I am confident that this book will be of great assistance to the academic staff and students in improving the quality and quantity of research out put. I strongly recommend the use of this book in our educational institutions.

Professor Shehu Usman Abdullahi, *OFR, mni*
Vice Chancellor,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. 2007

PREFACE

The basic mission of the postgraduate programme in Ahmadu Bello University I believe is to prepare students for life-long intellectual pursuits and professionalism especially through advanced and specialized programmes of study. In order to meet the needs of 21st century Nigeria and indeed the World, the University has planned to strengthen its academic programmes particularly at the postgraduate level through quality teaching and research as well as capacity building. This informed the University's request for financial assistance from the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 2004 which was provided graciously.

The Research and Curriculum Development Unit (RCDU) was therefore established under the Carnegie Corporation Project in the University to actualize its strategic plans and goals for the strengthening of postgraduate teaching and research as well as for capacity building.

The strategic objectives of the RCDU are to ensure the:

i. Availability of postgraduate structures and procedures capable of greater efficiency and with capacity for creative and responsive postgraduate programme design, implementation and delivery.

ii. Review of existing postgraduate programmes and expansion of types of programmes and the creation of capacity in the postgraduate school as well as within the academic departments for teaching, research, curriculum development and effective planning and monitoring.

iii. Enhancement and upgrading of teaching and research facilities in academic departments, institutes and centres especially in selected areas of proven institutional strength and public needs.

iv. Research results and postgraduate academic endeavours within and outside the university.

v. Preparation of periodic reports and studies on the issues relating to postgraduate activities in the University for the Consideration of the relevant ABU officers and authorities.

In order to facilitate the achievement of these objectives, the RCDU is divided into 3 sub-units:

1. Curriculum Design and Development sub-Unit
2. Capacity Building, linkages and Exchange sub-Unit
3. Publication and Information Management sub-Unit

To achieve the above noble objectives, series of workshops were organized by the RCDU, one of which was on Techniques for writing, editing and publishing scholarly Journal. During the workshop, experience and highly skilled editors-in-chief of reputable journals and publishing houses interacted with participants.

This book is therefore the outcome of papers presented at the workshop. The RCDU thought it wise to collate, edit and publish it in a book form for the benefit of those who could not attend the workshop. The theme of the workshop and subsequently the title of the book is no doubt of interest to all those that are pursuing academic excellent. The book should therefore be read by all.

Professor Zakari Mohammed, FNLA, FNIM, CL
Coordinator,
RCDU

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The publication of this very important book is made possible through the financial support received from Carnegie Corporations of New York. We are therefore most sincerely grateful to the Corporation for its financial support and keen interest in academic pursuit in the University,

We are also grateful to the Vice-chancellor, Professor Shehu U. Abdullahi, OFR, mni, for his concern and support to the Research and Curriculum Development Unit (RCDU), to ensure the actualisation of its mandate.

To our resource persons from the academic environment and publishing arena as well as the keen participants at the workshop, we sincerely appreciate your zeal and contributions.

Lastly, we thank all members of the various sub-committees of the research and Curriculum Development Unit (RCDU), especially Dr. Garba Muhammad, Dr. Alahira and the publication and information management sub-unit for their useful contributions and support to ensure the realization of the ideals of the Carnegie Corporation Projects in the University.

Dr. Umar Ibrahim
Chairman
Publication and Information
Management Sub-Unit.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS OF EDITING AND PUBLISHING ACADEMIC PAPERS

By

Musa Halliru

PREAMBLE

I am highly delighted to be invited to deliver this short paper, as one of the resource persons for this workshop.

Our nation's search for greatness will be elusive without having knowledgeable men and women. I am sure you will agree with me that the principal source of knowledge today is the written word, as popularized through publishing. We know that knowledge is power and that power comes from the written word. It is therefore proper to conclude that reading of books and other publications is the process of acquiring power and intellectual authority.

Apart from other things, reading clarifies the thought process. It stimulates the mind and provokes research, which ultimately leads to invention. Publishing is, therefore, the surest avenue of inculcating, sustaining and regenerating intellectual ideas.

The selection of this topic, therefore, is quite timely and appropriate when academics are being looked upon to put across a complete account of their thoughts in a form that will be beneficial to all.

The prime responsibility of the publisher is to identify the needs of the readers and to assist the author to present his/her work in a comprehensive readable and retrievable manner, with the objective of attaining high turn over and profitability.

SELECTION OF MANUSCRIPT

Materials for publication are obtained in two ways:

(a) Through unsolicited manuscripts
(b) Commissioning projects

Unsolicited manuscripts are those that are initiated by the author him/her self either as a result of his/her desire to contribute to the development of knowledge in his/her area of specialization or to produce a book for leisure reading.

Unless the publisher assesses and finds the work marketable and fits into the outfit's publishing programme, the work may be rejected. However, the author in this case, could decide to pay the publisher for professional services so that the book can be produced and handed over to him

Commissioned manuscripts on the other hand, are the ideas and initiative of a publisher who is out to satisfy a particular objective i.e. to produce a book based on a specific syllabus, course outline, general reading or government project. In this case, the publisher commissions an author or a group of authors to produce something strictly in line with the syllabus or course outline for a target market. However, commissioned manuscripts could also be the idea of both the publisher and the author.

It might be of interest to note that very few unsolicited manuscripts get published. This is because publishers do not sit comfortably in their office waiting for good manuscripts to land on their desks. The publisher has to go out to the field to feel the pulse of the market before embarking on any project.

The ability to choose the best work to publish remains an indefinable and elusive talent. To do this effectively depends largely on intuition and a deep knowledge of the subject which the publisher has at his/her disposal.

It is note worthy to say that the best integrated science course in Nigeria today was developed and published by a graduate of English Language. Needless to say that this author only has a scanty knowledge of science. This clearly shows that a deep knowledge of the

subject is not as crucial as the editor's creativity and ability to identify the best material to publish. This goes to confirm the fact that no matter how good the manuscript is, it requires a publisher to put it into the right shape.

It is also very important to note that for any manuscript to be considered it must however not be in conflict with any book already accepted and the subject matter of the manuscript is not one which has proved unsuccessful for the publisher in the past but one which has great market potentials.

Academic books are written for researchers, scholars, academics and specialists in particular fields. To publish an academic book there must be a thorough market research. Almost without exception academic books are commissioned, with the idea in many cases originating from the author. Only very rarely is a book published as the result of the publisher receiving an unsolicited manuscript.

Even when the idea to generate the manuscript is from the author, it is unusual for the author to begin serious writing until the publisher has carried out the fundamental research necessary to establish its market requirements so that the length and content of the manuscript can be agreed upon between the publisher and author.

MANUSCRIPT ASSESSMENT

In educational publishing, manuscripts are assessed in-house and by external assessors in order to ensure conformity with prescribed syllabuses or course outlines for which the manuscript has been written. The first hurdle for the author is to get the publisher's acceptance of the manuscript based on the latter's programme for the year. And to accept an unsolicited manuscript, which is outside the set objective for the year, the manuscript must be convincingly viable.

Having assessed and accepted the manuscript in-house, external assessor's report is very vital in enabling the publisher to take a final decision on the manuscript. To ensure reliability of assessment, a manuscript from Zaria could be sent to Calabar or Maiduguri. The

publisher expects concise report in writing from the external assessor. To avoid bias report, the assessor must not be allowed to know the author or vice versa.

It is pertinent to state here that a manuscript can still be accepted in spite of its imperfections, provided it holds out enough promise. The author can then be guided through, for the improvement of the manuscript. Good authors are level headed and accept corrections.

When the manuscript is accepted or otherwise on the basis of its educational value and bright market potentials, the author is then communicated with.

Finally, one of the essential roles of the publisher is to guide and encourage potential and promising authors to become good writers. It is important to note that manuscript generation is different from thesis writing. Our academics should be seen to be ready to contribute towards the improvement of the present scarcity of tertiary books in the market.

SCHOLARSHIP/FELLOWSHIP FORM, DESIGN AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

By

Dr. (Mrs.) J. A. M. Audi

INTRODUCTION

The Ahmadu Bello University, with the support of Carnegie Corporation of New York has embarked on the reform of teaching and research. The initiative is to prepare staff of the university involved in teaching and research in academics. The university through the Research and Curriculum Development unit (RCDU) is ready to embark on capacity building, provide scholarships/ fellowships and linkages. The goals of the capacity building through scholarships/fellowship and linkages are as follows:

1. To enhance the university's capacity for creativity in responding to global national changes in knowledge acquisition and utilization as well as the needs of the labour force.
2. To enhance the capacity for postgraduate teaching, supervision and research through improvement of the quality and exposure of the university's teaching.
3. To strengthen teaching and research for the enhancement of the university's capacity for postgraduate programme design, delivery and management.

The programme will provide an enabling environment to academic staff to acquire and apply new knowledge with capacity for original research and professional skills.

Techniques for Writing and Publishing Scholarly Works for Capacity Building in Nigerian Universities

Consequently, the enabling support would be through scholarship- by providing an amount of money to help pay for the reduction need. Or through fellowship between academic institutions and or award of money to allow the applicant to continue studies or research for a successful completion.

METHOD OF UTILIZING THE CARNEGIE FUNDS

Firstly, a form to be filled by applicants who are to be recommended by their respective heads of units is designed. The form demands certain information needed to help the selection committee to make the award.

Secondly, criteria and guidelines for selection have to be mapped out.

Thirdly, the scope of the award
Fourthly, eligibility for the award
Fifthly, method of application

Guidelines

Conditions for eligibility:

(i) Males and females (preference for gender equity)
(ii) Application may need to apply for and secure admission/secured by the RCDU
(iii) Applicant already in enrolment needs additional financial support to complete studies (grey area)
(iv) Applicants already on Federal Government, oil companies and other related scholarships need not apply
(v) Staff of other universities on sabbatical, etc. in A.B.U. need not apply.
(vi) Nomination to be forwarded through the recommendation of the respective units.

Scope Abide by the Conditions of the award.

1. Science, Social Sciences and Humanities
2. Distribution of awards across faculties

Selection Criteria

1. Needs of the Postgraduate School
2. Needs of the Faculty/Department/Unit/Centre
3. Needs of the staff

Method of Application

1. Filling the required application form
2. Nomination to be forwarded by the head of the respective units and endorsed by such person as may be applicable
3. Application must provide all relevant information requested
4. Submission must meet the deadline given

GUIDE ON THE INFORMATION NEEDED WITH FILLING THE FORM

NTRODUCTION

In order to support staff with scholarship/fellowship/academic xposure under the programme, applicants would be required to pro-ide certain information to guide the selection committee of the RCDU.

The aim of the information asked is to help the programme im-lementers achieve their goal at the end of the project implementation.

The answer, the actual grant, completion of the fellowship/ex-osure, and the impact will ultimately be assessed in terms of the fol-wing, amongst other things:

- How transformed are the staff and student's academic stand-ard and output?
- How transformed are the university's catchments area, the nation's labour market and global stock of knowledge?
- How can this programme support us not only to be in the assembly of can, but be distinguished in excellence?

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY-CARNEGIE POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION FORM

INTRODUCTION

The Ahmadu Bello University and Carnegie collaborative reform initiative on Research and Curriculum Development Programmer aims to fund Capacity Building, Linkage and Exchange in order to transform the capacity of postgraduate staff and students for the promotion of excellence in teaching, learning and community services.

Passport Photo

SECTION ONE

1. Name and P. No. .....
2. Date of Birth: ..... Sex : .....
3. Year of Appointment: .....
4. Nature of Appointment: .....
5. Qualifications and Institutions attended with dates: .....
6. Faculty/Dept./Unit/Centre: .....
7. Subject(s) you are teaching: .....
8. (a) Area of Specialization of:
   (1) Teaching: .....
   (2) Research: .....
   (b) Training/Course/Programme required: .....
9. (1a) Do you have an Institution to apply to? .....
   If yes, state the Address: .....
   .....
   (b) Are you already pursuing a study and need financial support to complete it?

If yes, Explain the nature of the study: .....

Who sponsored you? .....

.....

State Address of the Institutions: .....

.....

(c) Do you wish to pursue study under the RCDU secure programme?

.....

.....

(d) What do you hope to achieve at the end of the study? .....

.....

.....

(e) How would the study enhance your postgraduate supervision and the National Labour Market? .....

.....

.....

9.2 (a) State the academic exposure needed to enhance your teaching, research and community services: .....

.....

.....

(b) Describe the nature of the required exposure:.....

.....

.....

(c) i. Where is it obtainable? .....

ii. Give the address: .....

(d) What do you hope to achieve as a result of the exposure?

.....

... .

(e) How would the study enhance your postgraduate supervision, the National Labour Market and global stock of knowledge?

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Statement of Purpose: (If given the award)
Explain in 250 words the motivation for your wish to pursue a Fellowship/Scholarship Programme under this project.

11 Applicants are to attach the following to their applications
(a) C.V.
(b) One page resume
(c) Reference from your Dean/Director/HOD/ and supervisor if already on study and need support
(d) Letter of willingness to participate fully to successful completion of the study.

SECTION TWO

1. Give additional information (if any) and contact address(s) of Institutions that the University may link with for your study Fellowship/Academic exposure.

2. Give additional information (if any) on the Training Exposure applied for.

SECTION THREE

Applicant's certification and permission to information:

1. I hereby certify that all information given is true and accurate. I understand that submitting non-factual information will automatically disqualify me from being considered for the fellowship.
2. By submitting this application and being considered I authorize Ahmadu Bello University-Carnegie RCDU Project to release information on my participation on the programme to the media/ donor.

Applicant's Signature:..... *Date:* .....

Director/Dean/Head Certification

i. I hereby recommend the applicant for the Fellowship.
ii. Give reason(s) for your recommendation

.....

.....

Name of Director/Dean/Head of Unit/Supervisor: .....

Signature and Official Stamp

Date: .....

ETHICS AND TECHNIQUES OF WRITING QUALITY ACADEMIC PAPERS

By

Dr. Emmanuel A. Ameh

INTRODUCTION

Before embarking on writing a paper, the following points need to be appreciated:

- Be properly mentored
  Every aspiring writer would benefit greatly from the experience of those who have been successfully involved in writing and publishing.

It is unusual to be a good writer from beginning
Good writing comes with experience and you should not be discouraged by an initial poor outcome of your submitted papers.

Writing is a humbling experience
Reminds you of how very little you know
Makes you develop regard and respect for the opinion of others.

Who should write an academic paper?
Any body who 'thinks' he has something to say or share
You do not have to be in academic centre to write.

Why do people write?
GENUINE DESIRE TO ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE:

This should always be the main aim of writing.
Academic promotion ('publish-or-perish'?)
To obtain a degree or qualification
Financial gain
Show off knowledge: this should be discouraged. Any one, who writes for this reason, obviously is a mediocre!
Personal pride: also to be discouraged. Good writers are usually very humble people.

When to write

When you have something to say or share
Does not have to be a new discovery
Although, it is said that one "cannot re-event the wheel", surely, the wheel can, and should be modified, in the light of newer knowledge and more advance technology!
Do not be afraid to write
An unpublished idea never gets credit and is wasted idea.

CONCEPTION OF RESEARCH OR PAPER

The thought and idea: this should usually precede the beginning of the work.
Studying the work of others: this helps in understanding and appreciating what is already known and what needs to be done as well as any unanswered questions requiring further research.
The research or paper is often based on difficulty or challenge experienced by you or others.
A good paper can only come out of a well-designed and executed research work.

ETHICAL ISSUES IN WRITING

Writing is a highly intellectual activity and must be guided by principles and ethics. These ethics are necessary to maintain control from within. There are ethic issues involved at every stage of writing, and these include:

Ethical approval

Approval usually should be obtained from institutional authority such as:

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Ethical Committee

Most research work (irrespective of nature) require approval to:
Justify work
Conduct trials and interventions
Use data etc
Don't decide yourself that there is no need for ethical approval. Leave that to the approving authority.

Authorship and contributor ship
This is a most important aspect of any research work
Authorship issues should be discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of work regarding:
Who should be included?
How they should be listed
Who should be corresponding author?
Every author must have enough knowledge and understanding of work to take intellectual responsibility.
Never accept to be listed as an author unless you have met criteria below.
Every author must read through, and agree with final manuscript.
Authorship must be justified.
Mere collection of data not enough to be included as an author
To qualify for authorship, the individual should be involved in the following:

Conception of work
Data analysis with intellectual input
Write up of work

Review of work with intellectual input
Final review and approval of work

Conflict of interest

This relates to relationship of involvement with company or industry and funding agencies.

Always declare to the editor if you have any conflict of interest. If not sure, make a statement of any relationships with companies and industries, and leave the editor to decide if there is a conflict of interest or not.

All sources of funding for the research work must be declared and acknowledged.

Fraudulent practices

There are several fraudulent practices and acts of misconduct, which every writer should know about and avoid. These practices attract various levels of sanctions and punishments from journals and institutions. Such practices and acts are mentioned below, but detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this paper:

* Data fabrication
* Data inflation
* Duplicate ('double') publication
* Redundant publication (involves using old and outdated data)
* Fragmentation ('salad') publication
* Selective ('cherry picking') publication
* Failure to declare conflict of interest
* Authorship problems

Deliberate exclusion of deserving individuals as authors

Gift authorship: including someone who does not qualify to be an author of that paper.

Forced authorship: involves imposing oneself as an author, usually in a paper written by a junior colleague or student.

* Plagiarism: involves using the work of others without acknowledging that source.

TECHNIQUES IN WRITING

Deciding on type paper

Before embarking on writing a paper, you need to make up your mind on type of paper you want to write. The paper may be:

* Original research paper
* Short communication
* Letter to the editor
* Review paper

The type of paper determines the following aspects of the paper:

* Tone of language
* Length of paper
* Organization of paper
* Number of authors
* Journal of choice

Types of papers

Original research article

This is the true original article and is usually based on an original research work.

Report of small experiences

These may be in the form of:

* Case report
* Short report or communication

Letter to the editor

These may be:

* Research letters: based on research data that is not significant or large enough to make a full original article.
* Observational letters
* Comment on a published paper.

Festschrift

This is a write up on an individual, usually who has made useful contributions to that field, department or institution, association or society.

Review article

This is a detailed write up on topical issues or subjects. It must be well researched and should have up to date references including most important and significant references.

Literature search

* Don't assume nothing has been written on topic
* Do a detailed literature search

The search may be done using:

Search engines e.g. Medline, EMBASE, Current Contents, BIOSIS, etc.

Thumb searching of un-indexed journals and publications.

Some personnel are helpful in searching for and obtaining literature including:

Secretaries
Research assistants
Postgraduate students
Library staff

* Get full text articles as much as possible. These can be obtained by:

Reprints or photocopies (most authors will send you reprints if you ask them for it).
Online resources for free full texts
AGORA
CESCO
HINARI
Bioline international
AJOL
.....endless list

Selecting the audience

This is most important

If you choose the wrong audience

Your published paper may not be read or cited by colleagues
Benefits of your work may not accrue to the relevant community.

Types of audience to target include:

* Professional colleagues
* General colleagues
* Research community
* Postgraduate students
* Undergraduate students
* National/regional or international community

Selecting a Journal

* This has to be done before you begin to write the paper
* Should be based on the audience you have chosen for your paper
* Don't over publish in a particular journal. This may generate suspicion.

* Maintain a balance of National/regional and international journals
* As much as possible, publish in relevant indexed journals
* You may start by making a list of 3-4 likely journals
* Choosing a wrong or inappropriate journal may have the following consequences:
  Paper may be rejected
  If published, may not be read or cited by others
  May not make appropriate impact
* Get hold of a copy of the journal you have chosen (if possible) or check journal website
  Check instruction/information for authors
  Adhere to instructions very carefully and meticulously regarding
  Type of paper
  Format and style

The Paper itself

Title

Should

* be short
* reflect the contents of the paper
* be easily understandable
  Avoid being sensational

The abstract or summary

* Should be informative not just descriptive
  Should have enough information to be used as a reference
  Most useful in deciding to read/refer to paper or not
* May need to be structured (original papers) depending on journal's style and format.

A typical structured abstract will have the following subheadings:

* Objective and Background
* (Setting)
* Subjects
* Method
* (main outcome measures)
* Results
* (Limitations)
* Conclusion

Key words

* Most important for indexing and searching
* Usually not more than 5
* Not required by some journals

Text (or body) of manuscript

Mostly organized as (IMRAD):

Introduction
Methodology
Results
Acknowledgements
Discussion

Introduction

* Briefly introduce the topic
* Define the topic (if necessary)
* Outline what is already known
* Mention any controversies regarding the topic
* Justify why you undertook the work
* Use relevant, but few references. Efforts should be made to avoid having an introduction without references. It gives an impression that the author is ignorant about the topic or the work of others.
* Should not be more than 2 - 3 paragraphs

Methodology

* State how research was done including the following aspects:
  Details of the setting
  Details of the study population
  Inclusion and exclusion criteria where relevant
  You may need to provide specific information about the experimental technique(s) used
* State how data was collected and collated
* State how data was analyzed
  Mention specific statistical software if you used any
  You may need to get statistician to check statistics

Results

* Interpret your results using relevant tables, figures and statistics
* Avoid the temptation to discuss at this stage
* Don't leave it to the reader to interpret tables and figures e.g., avoid saying the results are as shown in table 1 (without providing further information).

Acknowledgement

* All sources of help and financial support should be acknowledged
* Those who helped without making intellectual input should be included here (nor as author). This includes those who helped in
  Data collection
  Data entry
  Statistical analysis

Discussion

* This is an important section and should be handled with all seriousness and concentration.

Not when you are sleepy or tired!

* Discuss your results in the light of other reports
* Don't
  Repeat results
  Provide new information that was not included in the results section
  Be conjectural
* Bring out any peculiarities, similarities or controversies
* Use relevant references
* Make recommendations if necessary
* End with a conclusion based on your findings

References

* Be as up to date as possible
  Surely, the oldest reference should not be more than 2-3 years old

* Citation in text of manuscript
  Adhere to journal style of references e.g.
  * Superscript
  * Parenthesis
  * Author name and year

* Minimize number of references. Cite only relevant references. It is no use having a long list of outdated or irrelevant references. It suggests that the author is trying to cover ignorance by large number of references.
* Don't cite references you have not personally read (full text, abstract)

* List of references
  * If abstract or letter, say so
  * Again, journals have different styles

Vancouver style
Alphabetical order

Tables

* Use only relevant tables
* Avoid unnecessary tables
* Avoid vertical and internal horizontal lines
  Provide the details in text of results instead
* Number appropriately
  Roman numerals
  Arabic numerals
* Each table must have an appropriate title
* Only one table should be on each page

Illustrations (Figures)

* Use appropriate figures and illustrations where necessary, e.g.
  Charts (bar chart, histogram, pie chart etc.)
  Pictures
* Some data are better presented as charts than in tables
* Each illustration or figure should be on a separate page
* Provide appropriate legend and number

Other types of papers and writing

These should be modified accordingly, depending on the requirements of the selected journal, publisher or institution. These writings include:

* Report of small experiences
* Letter to the editor
* Festschrift
* Thesis or dissertation

BEFORE SENDING YOUR PAPER FOR PUBLICATION

* Each of the co-authors must read through and make intel lectual contributions and agree with the entire content.
* Ask a 'trusted' colleague to read and criticize the paper. However, this colleague would not be:
  Someone who will flatter you
  Someone who will discourage you
  Someone who will steal or plagiaries your work
* Incubate the paper for a short period to mature. After writing, put it away for a period of 2 - 4 weeks, then read and review it. There will always be important adjustments or modifications to be made.
* Grammar and spell check should be done. Typographical and grammatical errors can be irritating to editors and reviewers. They suggest that the author is careless and sloppy.

SENDING THE MANUSCRIPT TO THE JOURNAL

* Always use a formal method of mail delivery such as post or courier. Never give or send by hand.
* Online uploading may be used for journals that have that facility
* E-mail attachments are accepted by some journals

TIPS FOR THE WRITER

* Avoid insisting that your report is the first
* Avoid long, wiry sentences
* Avoid unnecessary statistics
  Many times statistics is used to cover up for some methodological lapse or ethical issue (and editors and reviewers know this).
* Avoid lengthy papers
  May be an indication of inadequate knowledge

Is boring to review.
Even if accepted, takes too much space and most editors will avoid accepting such papers.

* Avoid too many references

May be an indication that there is not much 'meat' in the paper. You don't need too many references if work is authentic and research properly done.

* Send reminder to editor if editorial decision is taking too long

Sometimes, manuscript is lost or not returned by reviewer. But don't put pressure on editor to hasten review or publications.
Most editors will want to avoid such authors.

RESPONSE TO EDITORIAL DECISION

* Take all editorial decisions in good faith

* **Rejection**

Don't panic
Don't be discouraged
Never give up!

* **Revision or correction required**

These may be minor, major or you may be asked to shorten or resubmit as a letter.
Take time to carefully address all issues raised.

* **Suggest to send to another journal**

Carefully consider the editor's suggestion and make up your mind. You don't have to send to the journal suggested.

* Be prompt in responding.

Most journals will deregister manuscript if you take too long.

* Be very polite but firm and frank in response.

* You don't have to completely agree with referee or reviewer, but if you disagree, you have to justify it.

* Don't act smart!

Good editors will always check resubmissions to ensure you have addressed all comments.

PROOFS AND PUBLISHED PAPER

The following are useful points to note:

* Promptness

Be prompt in returning proofs, with or without corrections

* Don't make new additions

It's expensive to the journal
If you do, then justify it. Some journals may ask for a charge for new additions.

* Be sure to read your published paper
* Send reprints of your published paper to colleagues in the department and elsewhere

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

* Manual of style

The Chicago or Council of Science Editors' manual of style is a useful companion for every writer. Do try to get hold of one.

* Always keep data even after paper is published
* Don't hesitate to put your work and thoughts in writing (if they are genuine).

* You become a better writer, the more you write.
* A paper, once written must find an audience (no matter how many times it's rejected).

FINALLY....

ATTEND COURSES AND WORKSHOPS ON WRITING AND PUBLISHSING

* Very useful for 'junior' academics and students.
* Even the established academic will learn one or 2 things from such workshops.

REFERENCES

1. Uniform requirements of manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals. http://www.icmjue.org

2. The Importance of Mentors. http://www.spawn.org/editing/importanceofmentors.htm

3. Why Do We Write? http://www.spawn.org/editing/whydowewrite.htm

4. Writing and Editing Resources for Medical Writers http://www.amwancal.org/resourcesproduction links.html

ETHICS AND TECHNBIQUES IN EDITING SCHOLARLY WORK

By

Dr. Emmanuel A. Ameh

INTRODUCTION

Ethics deals with moral responsibilities and is related to an internal control system. This is in contrast to laws, which deal with rights and is related to an external control system.

Ethics of editing, therefore, are the moral guidelines, which aim to regulate the practice of editing from within the publishing world.

SELECTING EDITOR/EDITORIAL BOARD

Before going into the details of ethics and techniques of editing, it is important to note that the selection of the editor and editorial board is critical to the editorial system. The selection may be done or initiated by:

1. Publisher.
2. Association or society, which owns the journal.
3. Institution or department, for institutional and departmental journals.
4. Individuals.

The details of the selection process are beyond the scope of this article.

ETHICS IN EDITING

The following are important components of ethics in editing:

1. Developing the ability to make good decisions - on deadline.
2. The ability to draw on sound reasoning rather than on gut reaction comes with practice.

3. There must be a philosophical framework.
4. There are usually guided questions, which serve as steps toward rational choices.

The Philosophy

Editing a scholarly journal is academic journalism and should follow similar code of ethics of journalism given below:

Code of Ethics

(Society of Professional Journals)

1. **Seek truth and report it**
   Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

2. **Minimize harm**
   Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.

3. **Act independently**
   Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

4. **Be accountable**
   Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.

It is argued that editors should, as much as possible follow the "Golden Rule of Life" .... Do unto others, as you would have others do unto you....

It may however, be difficult to follow this moral etiquette as an editor of a scholarly journal because:

* Editors of scholarly journals generally hold more power than many of the people they deal with. So, they have the

ability to "do unto others" who may not be in position to do unto them in comparable ways.

* Editing that never harmed anybody would be a weak sort of editing indeed!

Some of the philosophical frameworks centre on the following aspects:

1. **It is about my duty**
   Approach ethical decision-making by identifying and then adhering to a central duty - for instance, to tell what they know to be true or to remain free of outside influence.

   (The philosopher most closely associated with this approach is Immanuel Kant, an 18th Century German).

2. **It is about finding a middle ground**
   Approach ethical decision-making as the need to find compromise solutions to problems that will satisfy stakeholders with competing interests.

   (The philosopher most closely associated with this approach is Aristotle, a 4th century B.C. Greek. Aristotle also emphasized the need to develop ethical habits through lifelong practice.)

3. **It is about doing what will best serve the most people**
   This utilitarian approach probably is the one most journalists take most often. They consider what action will result in the greatest good for the greatest number of people. For instance, a story that exposes a corrupt official harms the official but benefits the public.

   (The philosopher most closely associated with this approach is John Stuart Mill, a 19th century Englishman.)

ETHICAL ISSUES IN EDITING SCHOLARLY WORK

Copyright issues

Copyright must be protected. Each journal has to decide who owns the copyright of published articles - the author or publisher?

Editorial misconduct

The following acts may border on misconduct and editors should always try to avoid them:

1. **Publishing own work**
   An editor should as much as possible avoid publishing his/her work in the same journal which he/she edits. If own work must be published, then the entire peer review process (from submission to publication) must be handled by other members of the editorial team, without influence of the editor.

2. **Bias**
   Editors should avoid bias in the handling of manuscripts and taking editorial decisions. Personal disagreements and misunderstandings with authors should not be allowed to influence judgment.

3. **Connivance with referees and reviewers**
   Editors should not enter into any form of connivance with referees, to deal with a common enemy.

4. **Relationship Connivance with company or industry**
   It is wrong for an editor to connive with a company or industry to publish work that was sponsored by that company or industry or to publish work related to their product, without going through the normal independent peer review. This does not include advertorials.

5. **Favoritism**
   All authors should be treated in the same way, irrespective of their relationship with the editor.

Author misconduct

There are several acts of misconduct by authors, which editors and editorial boards are faced with from time and will need to take steps to address. Some of the common acts of misconduct include:

1. Fabrication of data
2. Duplicate publication
3. Plagiarism
4. Failure to disclose conflict of interest and source of funding
5. Unethical research
6. Deliberate exclusion of deserving individuals from authorship
7. Inclusion of non-deserving individuals as authors.

Handling author misconduct

Each journal should have its own mechanism of handling author misconduct. This may be handled by

Editorial board
Committee on misconduct

Punishment to erring authors may be:

1. Warning
2. Retraction of article in an editorial
3. Communication to authors' institution, and sometimes to other journals
4. Banning of submission from serious/repeat offenders

TECHNIQUES OF EDITING

The following points need to be noted about editing:

* Most editors have not received a formal training
* Most editors will have to develop their own style of editing
* Good editing comes with experience

However, there are some generally agreed guidelines regarding editing techniques.

Instruction/Information for Authors

Each journal must have their instruction or information for authors, which should be publicized in the journal and their website. Most journals follow a set of uniform requirements for journals in that field. Examples include:

* CONSORT (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials, 1996, revised in 2001)
  This is endorsed by World Association of Medical Editors, International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, Council of Science Editors and others.

The instructions to authors should have the following properties:

* Explicit
* Accurate
* No ambiguity
* Disclaimer should be included to remove the journal from liability

Editorial Personnel

This usually depends on the journal but generally may include:

1. Editor-in-Chief or Coordinating editor
2. Assistant and Associate Editors
3. Copy Editor
4. Statistics editor
5. Section editors

Secretarial Personnel

These personnel are responsible for the following:

1. Handle correspondence
2. Handle filing
3. day-do-day running of editorial office

Usually controlled by an Editorial Assistant

Methods of Editing

Selecting Journal Sections

Each journal should have sections, which may include the following:

* Editorial
* Reviews
* Original articles
* Short communications (case reports)
* Opinion section
* Letters to the editor
* Others
  * Announcements
  * Obituaries
  * Job opportunities

Manual editing

* Using papers only communication
* Quite tedious and time consuming
* Makes manuscript handling and copy flow rather slow and difficult
* The journal must have a good filing system
* Each submitted article is given a reference number for ease of handling and tracking. The dates and action taken should be indicated on file cover
* This method of editing should not be used exclusively these days

Electronic editing

May involve the following:

* Simple e-mailing
* Online editing

  The entire editorial and peer review process is done online

  Submission

  Review

  Editorial decision and communication to author

  Publication

  Online editing has the following properties:

  * Faster
  * Relatively cheaper
  * Shortens the peer review process
  * Several commercial online resources now available

Most international journals have adopted this method

Use of reviewing software

Several reviewing software are available and they make the job much easier.

Some include:

* Microsoft word
* Acrobat software

The Peer Review

Selecting referee and reviewer

It is important to have an organized system of selecting referees and reviewers. Most journals will have their own peculiar system involving the following:

* Develop a database of reviewers. Maintain a separate database of reliable reviewers for back up
* How many for each manuscript?

* Time frame
* Avoid the reluctant or time wasting reviewer

Avoid delays

This should be controlled by:

* Reliable and dependent secretarial staff
* Regular overview of manuscript files
* Electronic editing has an advantage

  Warning bell

  Automatic e-mail
* Reminders from authors: Don't wait for this. It can be embarrassing.

Editorial decisions

After review of articles by referees, the editorial decision may involve the following:

* Acceptance without corrections

  Editor or assistant should still go though to ensure there are no ethical issues and copyright problems (e.g. tables or figures copied from other journals/books).
* Revision required
* Manuscript with language problems

  Rewrite and ask author to review and accept

  Ask author to seek help of language expert
* Rejection

  Be considerate

  But firm

Scheduling of Manuscripts for Publication

* Who does this?

  May be the editor, editorial board or somebody given the responsibility by the editor

* How to do?
  Queuing
  According to section
  According to importance or significance
* Fast track publication

Some articles may need to be published immediately in the next available issue because of their importance and relevance for the following reasons

* Cutting edge research
* Potentially practice or knowledge changing work
* Indicating dates

Some journals indicate the following dates on published articles

* Date received
* Date revision received
* Date accepted

Helping Authors/Reviewers/Potential Editors

It is important that editors help in generating a critical base of quality authors, reviewers and potential future editors. This can be done through:

* Workshops
* Courses
* Providing language support/assistance

INCREASING VISIBILITY OF YOUR JOURNAL

The following will help to increase the visibility of your journal and make the journal more widely known. They help widen the authorship and submissions to the journal.

* Indexing
* Online publishing

* Open access (free access) publishing
* Advertorials can be made by
  Other journals
  Flyers
  Posters

Your authors: these are among the best advertisers of a journal because every author will want to popularize the journal in which his work appears

CHALLENGES IN EDITING

These are important challenges, which most editors face. Some of the challenges include:

* Acquiring and keeping good authors
* Getting good reviewers
* Handling ethical issues
* Maintaining quality of papers
* Indexing of the journal
* Change

Change is a necessity and must be on going. Every editor should be ready to accept change. To do otherwise is to risk extinction!

RECENT ADVANCES

Ethical issues

'Ghost authors'

These are people who help authors to improve their papers through language or technical support and advice. There are now discussions on whether these individuals should be included as authors as they actually make intellectual inputs into the paper. The controversy is ongoing.

Online editing

This has now made editing and publishing easier. There are several commercially available software for these, including:

* Editorial manager
* Scholar One® (Manuscript Central)
* E-Journal Press

Author AID

This is a new initiative by some members of the Council of Science Editors. It is intended to help authors, (particularly those in developing countries) to improve their papers before submission to journals. This will increase the chances of the acceptance of the paper, especially in the high profile journals in developed countries. The issue of ghost authorship however remains a challenge.

RESOURCES FOR EDITORS

There are several resources to help editors improve and cope with their work. Some of these include:

* Educational resources
* Internet
* Books
* Journals

* Training resources
  * Workshops
  * Courses: several are available (e.g. Tim Albert, Journal of American Medical Association, Board of Editors in the Life Sciences certification program etc.)
  * Conferences: examples are peer review congress (holds every 4 years), Annual Meeting of Council of Science Editors etc.

Techniques for Writing and Publishing Scholarly Works for Capacity Building in Nigerian Universities

* Organizations and societies: Some examples include:
  * Council of Science Editors (CSE)
  * Society of African Journal Editors (SAJE)
  * Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS)
  * World Association of Medical Editors (WAME)
  * Forum for African Medical Editors (FAME)

REFERENCES

1. Uniform requirements of manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals. http://www.icmje.org

2. Council of Science Editors. http://www/CouncilofScienceEditors.org

ETHICS AND TECHNIQUES OF PUBLISHING

By

Dr. Emmanuel A. Ameh

INTRODUCTION

- **It's important for every editor and aspiring editor to acquaint self with (at** least) the basics of publishing
- Most institutions have publishing houses to handle scholarly work of staff and others:
  - Advancement of knowledge as primary goal
  - Profit as secondary goal
  - Well-organized in developed countries
  - Poorly funded and rather inefficient in most resource poor setting (like ours).
- In most developed countries, there are professional, well-established publishers who are in business of publishing
  - Profit as primary goal
  - Advancement of knowledge as secondary goal

ETHICS IN PUBLISHING

- Registration
  - National library of each country
  - International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)
- Profit should not compromise ethics/quality

TECHNIQUES IN PUBLISHING

- Most publishing houses have their 'house style' and techniques
- How good a publisher is comes with experience and quality of staff

- In our setting, most journals use general printers rather than publishers
- There are some guiding principles, however

TECHNIQUES IN PUBLISHING

Staffing Issues

- Staff should be properly trained
- Quality staff required
- Staff should be motivated and have a high level of interest in advancing knowledge
- High level of supervision necessary
- EFFICIENCY AND TIMELINESS IS KEY

TECHNIQUES IN PUBLISHING

Print Publication

- Earliest and most commonly used
- Still very relevant in our setting
- Tedious
- Expensive
  - Personnel
  - Other resources

TECHNIQUES IN PUBLISHING

Online Publication

- Online first
  - Digital Object Identifier (DOI)
- Subscription-based
- Open access
  - Becoming more fashionable
  - Aimed making publications accessible to all
  - Hopes to reduce and bridge the 'north-south' divide/gap
  - Only not-for profit journals can be included

TECHNIQUES IN PUBLISHING

Online Publication

- ☐ Online-only
- ☐ Online/print versions
  - Each requires a separate ISSN

JOURNAL INDEXING

Selection Process

- ☐ **Editorial content**
  Determine if a journal enriches the body of knowledge in its field, or if the topic is already well covered.

- ☐ **Peer review**
  The peer-review process indicates high standards and overall quality of research.

- ☐ **Timeliness of publication**
  A prompt and regular publication schedule indicates a healthy backlog of manuscripts and ongoing viability and reliability.

- ☐ **Internationality**
  Seeks to include journals with international coverage as well as premier regional journals from around the world.

- ☐ **Citation analysis**
  Overall citation rate, impact factor and the immediacy index of the journal title, and the publishing and citation records of the journal's author and editorial board members are part of the crucial evaluation process.

JOURNAL INDEXING

Some Indexing Bodies

- Current Contents
  - PubMed/MedLine/Index Medicus
  - Has regional versions
  - EMBASE/Excerpta Medica (Elsevier)
  - Index Copernicus.....
  - African Journals Online

INDICES OF PUBLICATION QUALITY

- ☐ ISI® (Current Contents)

  - **IMPACT FACTOR**
    "Measures the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year or period. This factor is a ratio between citations and a recent citable item published, and provides a way to judge the prestige and influence of a particular journal"

  - **IMMEDIACY INDEX**
    "Measures the average number of times that an article published in a specific year within a particular journal is cited over the course of that same year. It indicates the speed with which citations to a specific journal appear in the published literature, which helps determine those journals that are publishing in emerging areas of research"

- ☐ INDEX COPERNICUS
  IC POINTS

CHALLENGES OF PUBLISHING IN NIGERIA

- Lack of willing and reliable publishers
- Meeting deadlines
- Staying regular
- Role of printers

FUNDING ISSUES
ROLE OF UNIVERSITY PRESS

FUNDING

Self-sustaining fund generation

- **Authors**
  - Reprints and postages
  - (Page charges?) - controversial

- **Adverts**
  - Beware of over-relying on these
  - Some of the 'big' companies/industries may use it to coerce journal to publish favorable/sympathetic work (unethical)

- **Purchase of reprints and journal copies by companies/ industries**

- **Support from institutions**
- **Funding from associations/societies**
- **Subscriptions**
  - **Limited in our setting**
    Poor reading habit
    Reluctance of institutions to subscribe

- GRANTS

PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT, EDITING AND PUBLISHING ACADEMIC PAPERS

By

Prof. J. A. Ariyo

STEP 1: PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

- Is the subject matter relevant to the aim and scope of the journal/book/publisher's interest?
- Has the target audience being specified?
- Is the level of presentation suitable for the target audience?
- Is the title appropriate, i.e. does it adequately reflect the contents of the paper/book?
- Does the article read well?

STEP 2: DISPATCH OF MANUSCRIPTS FOR DETAILED ASSESSMENT

- A manuscript that passes the preliminary screening is sent to two experts for detailed assessment.
- The manuscript is withdrawn if after three months and a reminder the assessor fails to review and return it.

STEP 3: DETAILED ASSESSMENT

- A manuscript that sails through step 1 is adjudged suitable for detailed assessment and a copy each is sent to two independent experts in its subject matter for scrutiny.
- The experts are provided and assessment guidelines that normally cover the following aspects, which are questions the Assessor is expected to answer about the article or book:

Title

- Is the title appropriate?
- If 'No', suggest a more appropriate title for the paper/book.

Abstract

Does it succinctly report the problem focus of the paper, the methodology used, and the findings?

Introduction

- Is the research problem clearly defined and contextualized?
- Does it contain a review of essential literature (ample and Current)?

Materials and methods

- The statistical treatment of such data?
- Where an experiment is Has the author given relevant information on the method(s) use for data collection and involved, is it well designed and satisfactorily conducted?

Results and discussion

- Does the discussion bring out the salient information emanating from the analysis?
- Is the length of the discussion appropriate?
- Are the recommendations made keyed to the findings of the research?

RESOURCES FOR PUBLISHERS.

Others

- Bioline International
  www.bioline.org.br
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
  www.doaj.org