

## Research Article Publishing Tasks: Hectic but Mandatory in Academia

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Publication is a must in many academic and research contexts for career advancement, obtaining degrees, and gaining professional recognition (APA, 2010). According to this manual, any written academic text is said to be a research when it gets published only. It necessitates, hence, universities and other academic institutions peer-reviewed publications for promotions, tenure decisions, and for the completion of advanced degrees like PhDs based on their own rules, disciplines, and country-specific academic regulations. Thus, academic publication is a key criterion in academic career milestones and institutional advancement processes. But, what makes research article publishing tasks hectic? What are the current situations of research article publishing tasks in Ethiopian contexts? Why is research article publishing task mandatory in Academia? This article sheds light on these three questions.

### 1. What Makes Research Article Publishing Tasks Hectic?

Publishing an article is a *hectic task* in the sense that it is a process that makes the author, reviewers, journal editors, and an administrative body very busy and stressful as it involves a lot of intense and rapid activities, as Journal handling is a collaborative work. These tasks necessitate significant effort, time management, and mental focus in general and involve several steps.

First, an author searches for the topic thoroughly takes considerable time and mental effort to gather relevant and accurate information. Planning and outlining the article to have a clear direction and focus requires an author organization skills and clarity on the article's purpose. Then, writing the draft under time constraints forces writers to get words down even when uninspired. Next, editing and revising multiple times, including proofreading for grammar, style, and clarity consumes time and it is mentally demanding. Formatting the article to meet specific publication guidelines and standards and managing deadlines creates pressure to complete each

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stage quickly and efficiently. Finally, submitting the article and responding to peer review comments or editorial feedback involves additional rounds of revision and communication. All these steps contribute to the hectic and demanding nature of publishing an article due to the need for focus, time management, and iterative refinement throughout the process.

Second, publishing an article urges the qualified reviewers, if getting the willing ones is possible, to manage several tasks like teaching, research, and their own publishing deadlines. These limit the time they can dedicate to reviewing manuscripts, which in turn can lead to requests for slow responses. Many reviewers get overwhelmed by the volume of review requests and may delay responding, forcing editors to find replacements. With regard to reviewer search delays, the process of finding qualified and available reviewers becomes slower, which can take weeks or months.

Third, editors may have to spend more time searching and inviting suitable reviewers, restarting the search if initial invites are declined. Editors themselves may take time to assign reviewers, reconcile differing reviewer opinions, and make final decisions, adding to delays. Each editor handles more manuscripts and administrative tasks, which reduces the time they can spend promptly assigning reviewers, following up on reviews, and making decisions. Few editors managing high volumes may delay sending reminders or clarifications to reviewers, leading to longer response times or stalled reviews. Editors might have less time for checking review quality and handling conflicts of interest quickly. This causes reassignments and further slowing timelines which lead to slower overall processing. Still, understaffed teams may take longer to assess reviewer comments, reconcile conflicting feedback, and reach final editorial decisions, especially if multiple review rounds are needed. Finally, reliance on manual handling of submissions and communications rather than automated editorial management systems increases administrative bottlenecks and handoff delays between review and production stages. Together, these factors mean understaffed editorial teams struggle to maintain efficient workflows, resulting in extended peer review and publication timelines.

Regardless of these challenges, worldwide, the payment for all the participants to compensate all the challenges is basically mental satisfaction in her/his profession; every academician is satisfied with this/her job and/ or academic life. In most academic or professional journals, professionals publish their work for the sake of disseminating experiences, various practices,

knowledge etc. that they possessed in their walk of life. They can observe their deeds in the day-to-day change of the existing world in various disciplines or academic arena.

## **2. What are the Current Situations of Research Article Publishing Tasks in Ethiopian Contexts?**

### *A. The Journal as Described*

*Salale Journal of Social and Indigenous Studies* is one of the three journal hosted by Salale University. It is an open access peer-reviewed journal published bi-annually in both printed and online versions. It was publically inaugurated in 2023, participating different stalk holders and other known individuals from the surrounding society. It is a trilingual publishing journal as it employs three languages as the medium of researching and publication: English Language, Amharic and Afan Oromo.

This is volume two-third issue publication in which the editorial body of the journal faced many challenges in collecting manuscripts, reviewing and publication processes etc. but succeeded. In the future the editorial body of the journal will strive for making *Salale Journal of Social and Indigenous Studies* one of the best journals in Ethiopia and for getting accreditation from the concerned body. The journal will be competent and become the best choice at international level for the academic community to get publish their research work.

As commonly done elsewhere across the world, the collaborative bodies together with their responsibilities in the journal are arranged in hierarchic order: the journal editorial body, the editors, the reviewers and the authors. Belcher, W. (no date) discusses this saying:

“The person responsible for the content of the journal is usually called the editor, but sometimes the editor-in-chief. The person responsible for the production of the journal is the managing editor or executive editor. People responsible for helping either the editor or the managing editor are called associate editors, assistant editors, and editorial assistants, in that order of hierarchy.”

They are facilitating the publication of the journals, hence, practicing the dissemination of knowledge in collaboration. According to this scholar, there are also others partners of the research journal namely language editors, website manager, secretariat and the advisory board at the top.

### *B. Challenges Encountered*

Although disseminating knowledge in a journal or in any form of platform has been very vital, the quality of most journals is not in the standard of good publication; it is not competitive at the international level. The Ethiopian context is not different. These days, most academicians are fed-up with publishing a manuscript for many reasons (Ethiopian Ministry of Education, 2025). Firstly, there is a lack of incentives such as promotion/ Upgrading, publication pay, variety of recognition measures, better working opportunities, etc. for publishers, reviewers and editorial body. The Ministry of Education of the country has found out these problems and recognized them in the guidelines for evaluation and accreditation revised in 2025 saying “Despite notable progress, the productivity, visibility and quality of national research journals remain low, P.2”. The ministry has been working on the quality of research journals published in various Ethiopian universities and research institutes. It has reported that these journals should have been in a best quality and become competitive at international level.

Secondly, there has been a problem of delays in publishing the research articles. First, the editors and reviewers were not timely in responding the journal in accordance with the journal guidelines.. This in turn facilitated unnecessary delays either to accept or reject the collected manuscripts in the arranged time frame. Second, most of the authors were not good enough in reacting on the given comments provided by the reviewers in line with the journal guide /policy. The administrative body did not treat the journal publishing procedure properly. Specially, the procurement wing did not carry out its responsibilities within the given time frame for announcements for calls for paper and the hard copy publishing process, Moreover, the administrative body did not equip the journal office with necessary stationary materials, internet infrastructure, telephone, etc. This contradicts with the fact that publication of research journals worldwide should be well flourished as Belcher, W, says, “The number of academic journals—electronic and print—has exploded over the last decade, yet instruction on how to run an academic journal is virtually nonexistent. Of course, most journals are launched by academics but run by larger publishers, such as SAGE or Duke” (no date: P. \_\_\_).

However, in practice, research journals are published without harmonized plans and implementations. This leads to the flourishing of incompetent research journals. According to the information from the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, there are many hundreds of research journals in various universities of Ethiopia. From these, some hundreds of research journals have been evaluated in partnership with Ethiopian Science Academy and the Ethiopian Research

Journal Editor's Association (MoE, 2025).. Out of these, about 71 (seventy one) research journals received accreditation and re-accreditation through six rounds. This shows that only few of the research journals in Ethiopia are legible to pass the evaluation.

### 3. Why is Research Article Publishing Task Mandatory in Academia?

Publishing a research article is mandatory in academics mainly due to the following reasons:

- ❖ *Career Advancement and Recognition:* publications are used as benchmarks in several institutions for evaluating a scholar's contributions to their field to gain opportunities for promotions, tenure, awards, and grant funding.
- ❖ *Knowledge Sharing and Advancing Fields:* Scientific research findings, theories, and innovations are disseminated by publication which fuels ongoing research, development, and practical applications across academia and beyond.
- ❖ *Peer Review and Quality Assurance:* publishing peer-reviewed journals validates scientific rigor and ethical standards, maintains trust in academic work, and strengthens research quality.
- ❖ *Establishing Credibility and Expertise:* Publications help researchers develop their reputation as experts via collaborative working and networking.
- ❖ *Academic Requirements:* publishing research articles is a compulsory work for academic progression and also a prerequisite for obtaining degrees, academic titles, or career milestones.

In sum, publishing research articles is mandatory in academics because it is integral to career development, scientific validation, knowledge dissemination, and maintaining the integrity and growth of academic disciplines

### References

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian Ministry of Education. (2025). Revised guideline for Evaluation and Accreditation of research journals published in Ethiopia, Guideline Number: 01/2025

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Publication manual of the American Psychological Association. (2015). Sixth edition.