The academic journal: has it a future

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Abstract

This article examines the current state of the academic journal. It does so for a number of reasons: the increasing expense of paper journals; the advent of electronic publishing; the use of publication in journals as an indicator of research quality (in addition to disseminating knowledge within a discipline) and consequent criticisms of systems of peer review and evaluation of scholarship; emergent issues of equity and access; and evidence of malpractice. These issues taken together constitute a critique of, and challenge to, the process whereby research papers become journal articles, which has in the past been viewed as unproblematic and straightforward. This paper brings together a wide range of literature in order to inform discussion about the future of the academic journal. It briefly examines the origins of the academic journal and then provides a comprehensive overview of current debates concerning how academic journals work today. In so doing, it raises questions about decisions that will need to be taken regarding the continuity or otherwise of the conventional academic journal, and how publishing practices may change in the future.

Keywords

Electronic Publishing; Futures (of Society); Online Systems; Scholarly Journals; Writing for Publication

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Gaby Weiner is professor of teacher education and research at Umeå University, Sweden. She moved there from a similar post at South Bank University, London in 1998. She has written and edited a number of books and reports on feminism, equity and social justice in education. She has also held a number of positions on various academic journals including journal editor, member of editorial board, editor of special issue, reviewer and of course has
Articles in most academic journals are roughly 20 to 25 A4 pages (1½ line spacing) or 4000 to 7000 words in length. An academic journal article in which the findings of quantitative research are reported will typically have the structure outlined in Table 1. Table 1: Typical structure of an academic article reporting the findings of a quantitative study. Title. 8 – 15 words. Publishing an article in an academic journal can be a frustrating process that demands a substantial commitment of time and hard work. These five suggestions will help you turn the odds in your favor and make the publishing process less daunting. Remember, your argument doesn’t have to be revolutionary to be new or interesting, it just needs to be original enough to make a contribution to what’s already out there. Edit Your Work Extensively. You need to have a serious editing and revision process if you intend to publish your work, one that goes beyond the quick skim you might give a paper before passing it in for a class. Start by doing something very old fashioned: fire up the printer and grab a pen. Academic journals are scientific peer reviewed journals in which researchers publish current news or reports in the form articles of their research work. The term academic journal applies to all scholarly publications in all fields, from scientific and quantitative social sciences to humanities and qualitative social sciences. In content, academic journals usually consist of articles that present one's original research as well as reviews of previous works. Some well-founded theories could even be debunked in the future as new discoveries prove alternative explanations for particular phenomena. An example of this would be the series of theories of evolution that constantly tries to prove the evolution of living things in the course of time.