Scholars emphasize the importance of publishing their research (1) to establish their credentials as a researcher, (2) to establish a track record of research, and (3) to increase chances of funding. Publishing can be difficult given the competing obligations of students and faculty members.

DETERMINING THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH/FUTURE PUBLICATION

- Increase chances of job acquisition or graduate school admission
- Facilitate promotion and/or tenure
- Enhance professional development
- Contribute to scholarship
  - Test, develop, or apply theory
  - Increase understanding of topic
  - Enhance research methodology
  - Help practitioners, program developers, counselors, etc.
  - Inform lay audiences

SCHOLARSHIP

- Scholarship often means publishing peer-reviewed journal articles, such as:
  - Empirical research – original, unpublished research
  - Review articles – summary of research on a specific topic with implications for theory, future research, practitioners, educators, and/or policy makers
  - Brief reports – a shorter article reporting on original, unpublished research. A brief report is often used for preliminary results of a longitudinal study, validity study of a scale, etc.
- Scholarly journals differ from magazines (see next table), there are journals that are hybrids (i.e., publish both peer reviewed and non peer reviewed articles, e.g., Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences).
- Scholarship can also include other peer-reviewed, public works (e.g., juried recitals, juried art).
- Most prestigious to least prestigious in psychology (order varies based on discipline)
  - Peer-reviewed, journal articles
  - Edited book chapters
  - Research monographs by government or foundation
  - Books – books are okay to cite as long as the authors are reputable or experts in the field.
  - Conference proceedings
  - Magazines/Wikipedia
  - Other internet sources

Scholarly Journals Versus Magazines/Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Scholarly Journals</th>
<th>Magazines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submissions</td>
<td>Open to anyone with expertise relate to the journal’s aims and scopes</td>
<td>Limited to magazine writers and some external contributors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Blind peer review and editorial review</td>
<td>Editorial review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audiences</td>
<td>Researchers, practitioners, educators, policy makers</td>
<td>Lay audience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RANKINGS OF SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

- **Impact factor** indicates the frequency of citations of an average article in a particular journal in a certain time period. Generally, a journal’s impact factor is calculated as follows:

  \[
  \text{Impact factor} = \frac{\text{Total # of citations in a year (e.g., 2013) in the journal}}{\text{# of citable items published in the journal in the prior 2 years (e.g., 2011 & 2012)}}
  \]

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• Impact factor is often considered a more “objective” method of evaluating a journal’s value/prestige.
• However, journals can increase impact factor in many ways, such as:
  ▪ Publishing less original research and more review articles.
  ▪ Publishing more citable articles earlier in the calendar year to give more time for citations.
  ▪ Not publishing topics that have less likelihood of being cited.
• There are critiques to using impact factor as measure of a journal’s value.
  ▪ Impact factor is highly dependent upon the topic of the publications.
    o For example, publishing ‘hot’ or timely topics can result in the increase of impact factor (yet, the journal structure itself does not change).
  ▪ Also, impact factor varies based on the field/discipline.³
    o For example, some fields (e.g., mathematics, philosophy, history) rely less upon recent citations than other fields (e.g., biology and medical sciences).
  Journal tier is a subjective indicator of journal ranking (see next table).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal Tier</th>
<th>% Ranking in Field</th>
<th>Editorial Board</th>
<th>Acceptance Rate</th>
<th>Other Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top A*</td>
<td>Top 5%</td>
<td>Mostly leading scholars in the field; many from top institutions</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Almost all papers are very high quality and help define the field. Authors brag when publishing in this tier journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High A</td>
<td>Top 6-20%</td>
<td>A number of well known scholars in the field from top institutions</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Many very high quality papers. Publishing in this tier journal would enhance an author's standing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium B</td>
<td>Top 21-50%</td>
<td>A few well known scholars in the field from top institutions</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>A solid, but not outstanding, reputation. Only a few very high quality papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low C</td>
<td>Top 51-100%</td>
<td>Scholars in the field</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Quality, peer reviewed, journal, but does not meet the criteria of the higher tier journals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from http://www.research.qut.edu.au/data/quality/qutonly/rankings.jsp

• Studies show that subjective ratings (e.g., tier) of journals are not correlated⁴ or are moderately correlated⁵ with impact factor.

DETERMINING THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH/FUTURE PUBLICATION

• Contribute to knowledge and scholarship
  ▪ Test, develop, or apply theory
  ▪ Increase understanding of topic
  ▪ Enhance research methodology
  ▪ Help practitioners, program developers, counselors, etc.
  ▪ Inform lay audiences
• Increase chances of job acquisition or graduate school admission
  ▪ Publishing scholarly work can lead to an increased acceptance rate in doctoral programs and increased likelihood of acquiring fellowships.⁶
• Facilitate promotion and/or tenure
• Enhance professional development

KNOWING THE PURPOSE WILL DETERMINE THE OUTLET FOR PUBLICATION

• Refereed vs. non-referred journal?
• What target audience (e.g., practitioners, researchers, educators) does the author want to write it for?
• What level of journal does the author want to publish in (e.g., tier, impact factor)?
• What tradeoffs is an author willing to make when publishing?
  ▪ Example: Is it more important to get the information to more people (e.g., students, researchers, practitioners) but have less prestige, or is it more important to get the information to a select few (e.g., researchers in the field) and have higher prestige?

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IDENTIFYING THE JOURNAL

- Examine the mission statement (also called ‘aims and scopes’) and author submission guidelines
  - Purpose of journal
  - Acceptable topics (Hint: Look at recent articles published in the journal)
  - Target audience
  - Type of manuscripts acceptable (e.g., research, review article, best practices, research notes, book reviews)
  - Review process
  - Fee for review/submission
  - Style guidelines
  - Page, table, figure, and/or word number limitations

- Journal analysis involves looking at current versions of the journal to identify the following:
  - What components appear in the currently published articles?
    - Introduction
      - Review of literature, but it is more than a review of literature; it should justify and set up the study.
      - It should answer the questions of “so what?” and “why is this study important?”
      - Purpose of the study
      - Research question(s) and/or hypotheses
    - Methods/Methodology
      - Procedures – How were the data collected?
      - Sample characteristics – Who were the data collected from? Describe the sample.
      - Measures/Instrumentation – How were the variables measured?
    - Results/Findings
      - What analyses were conducted and what were the results?
    - Discussion
      - Restate the purpose of the study
      - Discuss the findings: Why did the study find these results? Similar to past research? Does theory support the results? If different than previous studies, why?
    - Limitations
      - What are the problems with the current study?
    - Implications
      - Research implications – How can results of this study be used by other researchers? Sometimes the limitations and research implications will be integrated together.
      - Implications for practice – How can results be used by practitioners, educators, and/or therapists?
    - Conclusion
      - What point(s) does the author want to leave with the reader?
  - How long are the various components? What percentage of each article is comprised by each section?
  - What types of analyses/methods are used and how are the analyses reported?
    - Any qualitative articles?
    - Is there a preference for mixed methods?
    - Is multiple regression analysis used or does the journal prefer SEM?
  - Are the articles written in 1st person/2nd person, 3rd person?
  - Do most articles have a theory base? Or a particular theory base?
  - Does the journal have a particular bias on your topic?
    - Example 1: If you are writing a manuscript on self-esteem, does the journal publish articles that use a global measure of self-esteem, or does the journal only publish articles that examine self-esteem from a multi-dimensional aspect?
    - Example 2: If you are conducting a program evaluation, does the journal only publish articles that use control groups?

- Other issues to find out about the journal include:
  - Editor and editorial review board
  - Fees for printing, reprints, etc.
  - Acceptance and rejection rate (APA journals rate)
  - Length of review process
  - Number of reviewers

PEER REVIEW

- Peer review/refereeing refers to the process of having one’s scholarship evaluated by qualified (i.e., experts in the field) and impartial peers to determine if the work merits publication.
  - Blind peer review means the reviewers do not know whose works they are reviewing.
  - Peer review is often required for:
    - Manuscripts submitted for publication to scholarly journals, and
    - Grant proposals submitted to get funding for research or programs.
**PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATION PROCESS**

- Write manuscript.
- Submit manuscript, submission letter, and review fee (if applicable).
- The editor conducts an initial review for appropriate content and to determine if it fits the journal.
- The editor sends the manuscript to the reviewers (usually 2-3 reviewers).
  - The reviewers are usually people on the editorial review board.
    - **Ad hoc reviewers** are not on the editorial review board, but are occasionally asked to review a manuscript because of their expertise.
  - Manuscripts are sent without author identification (i.e., blind peer review)
- The reviewers typically have about 4-8 weeks to do the review and send it back to the editor.
  - Reviewers provide the following:
    - Constructive critique for the authors to improve the manuscript.
    - Ideally, reviewers should providing positive comments as well, but this does not always occur.
    - Recommendations about whether the manuscript should be accepted or rejected.
- The editor looks at the reviewers’ comments, reviews the manuscript based on the reviews, and then makes a decision about the manuscript regarding acceptance/rejection.
  - **Acceptance**- outright with minor or no revisions
  - **Acceptance-conditional** with revisions
  - **Rejection-conditional** – in this case the author(s) is encouraged to revise and resubmit the manuscript
  - **Rejection-outright**
    - High rejection rates of many journals can discourage young scholars.⁷
- The editor notifies the author(s) on the status of the manuscript.
  - Waiting to hear back from the editor can be stressful.⁸
- There may be multiple revisions before final acceptance.
- Proofing and editing the article proofs.

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**ESTABLISHING AUTHORSHIP**

- Generally, the 1st author makes the most contribution, followed by the 2nd author, and so on.
  - There are some exceptions, such as “anchor authorship” – where a principal investigator takes last authorship while more junior authors (e.g., students, more junior faculty) take a higher position in authorship.
- Decide on order of authorship ahead of time.
- Being a research assistant does not guarantee authorship on an article.
- Designate tasks for each author (with time lines for completion of each part).
- For additional information, see the following guidelines:
  - **American Psychological Association**
  - **The Office of Research Integrity**
  - **International Committee of Medical Journal Editors**

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**BEING ETHICAL**

- Ensure the accuracy of all information in the manuscript.
- Do not send a manuscript to more than one journal at a time.
- Do not publish the same study in more than one outlet.
  - Note: One research project can produce multiple publications because there may be numerous variables, several possible research questions, and different ways of examining the data.

**SUGGESTED READINGS**

- *APA Journals Manuscript Submission Instructions For All Authors* – provides a quick overview for publishing and gives a good bibliography of more thorough sources