

Chapter Six

Overview of Formats of Some Journals



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Abstract

Every journal has its formats and guidelines that would-be authors need to study and tailor their articles to. Oftentimes authors write their articles without following these guides given by the editors of the journals and thus find their articles rejected. This closely examines two different formats as an illustration and overview for would-be authors to understand the various types that do exist. It also looks critically at what is expected from authors post submission of their articles to a journal for publication.

Keywords

Formats, Author's Guide, Templates, Journals, Instructions, Review

6.1 Introduction

There are several journals around the globe that are specialized in publishing peer-reviewed research journals. Some are open access and online; others are not open access and not online. Whether open access or not, online or not, all have their respective formats required by authors to meet before their articles are published. While others give their formats and templates, others have only the author's instruction guides which is expected to contain and give the author good idea of the format required. As mentioned earlier, journals differ in terms of their formats. This paper thus presents an overview of some of the journals and the formats they adopt.

6.2 Journal Type One

Let us look at format of some journals. Some have their own given formats and templates. Also present on their websites are the author's guide or instructions as well as archives from which would-be authors can download articles, study and format their articles accordingly before submission. The journal is expected to have all or some of the following items explained briefly or in details.

6.2.1 Authors Instructions

For every given journal, there are guidelines for authors to follow in order for their articles to be accepted and published. Would-be authors are expected to religiously follow the guidelines enshrined in what is called the 'Authors Instruction'. This gives a detailed description of how authors are to prepare their manuscripts prior to submission, and sometimes post-submission to acceptance. However, some journals do not have detailed author's instruction, for such journals, there would be a need to go into their journals archives to download

articles published in them in order to use them to structure ones' manuscripts. Also, sometimes, instead of the author's instructions or guide, some journals rather provide a template that pin- point how the author should format the article to be submitted. Some require that the template are downloaded and used for the write-up.

6.2.2 A Format to be Followed

This spells out and order the main components expected in one's manuscript: Titles; Authors Affiliation; Introduction; Methodology; Results and Discussions; Conclusion; and Recommendation; Acknowledgement and List of References. Formats differ from one journal to another. The guide has detailed or brief information on information expected under each of the components indicated in the format.

6.2.3 The Font Type and Size to be Used

The guide gives direction and indicates the font type and size to be used at various sections of the manuscript. Failure to apply the recommended fonts type and size would lead to the rejection of the article.

6.2.4 Type of Referencing Adopted by the Journal

There are different types of reference styles such as America Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Medical Society (CMS), Harvard Style, etc. Some journals adopt wholistically these formats others adopt these styles with slight modifications. However, the guide given would provide and illustrate how references are to be made in manuscript. That is, both in-text referencing, and the list of references.

6.2.5 Size of the Manuscripts (Number of Words / Pages)

Each journal has the total number of words or pages allowed for a manuscript / article. Failure to comply would lead to rejection or other times paying extra charges. Though the whole article is expected to have a specific number of words, sections like the abstract and keywords are also required to have specific maximum number of words depending on each journal.

6.2.6 Use of Journal's Template

As earlier mentioned, some journals have designed template and authors are required to download using a specified link to their websites to enable authors structure their manuscripts using the template.

6.2.7 Periodicity

It refers to the number of times / frequency of time the journal accepts submission and also the periods within which a journal accepts submissions. Some journals accept submission monthly, others bimonthly, quarterly or twice yearly. Periodicity of acceptance of submission varies from one journal to the other, and thus the author who wants to publish with a journal should know.

6.2.8 Mode of Submission

When one talks about mode of submission, it refers to whether a journal accepts and closes submission for its publication; or it allows continuous submission. With the former mode, a deadline is given for articles to be submitted for consideration after which all articles submitted would be rejected, but with the continuous submission mode, all submissions made after the deadline are not rejected but rather considered for subsequent publication.

6.2.9 The Review Process Adopted and the Duration

There are three main review process or method namely open review, single / blind and double blind. A journal can adopt one of the review methods. That would be at the discretion of the journal.

Open Review

With the open review method, the names of the reviewers are made known to the authors and vice-versa by the editor. In this case authors are likely to be victimized or favoured should human factor can to bare.

Single / Blind Review

In the case of single or blind review, the author's name is made known to the review only and not vice-versa. This also can allow victimization or favoritism by the reviewer.

Double Blind Review

This ensures that both the names of the reviewer and authors are not made known to each other. This confidentiality is kept and so the element of victimization and favoritism is reduced if not totally eliminated.

In terms of duration of the review process, some journals state it but others are silent on it. It is good that the author knows about the duration of the review process so that he/ she follow up on it and prompt editors in the case of excessive delays. The length of review differs from one journal to another.

6.3 How Authors are Informed About Acceptance of Articles

Often times, authors are informed by editors of acceptance of their articles via letters of acceptance to corresponding author's email. Some journal editors sent only letters of acceptance while others sent letters of acceptance breaking down the cost charged for the publication as follows; printing charges; plagiarism charging; processing charges.

6.4 Fees Charged and Payment Mode

Some journals charge publication fees while others do not, but the latter ones are in contemporary times uncommon. Most journals require authors to pay publication fees to help defray the cost of printing and reviewing of articles. It behooves an author to know the amount of fees charged by a journal before submitting the articles for publication. This would help the author to prepare towards the payment, way ahead of acceptance as it is a prerequisite for publishing of acceptable articles. Journals often delay the publishing of articles accepted but whose fees have not been paid for subsequent editions, if authors are unable to meet deadlines given. Moreover, the deadlines given for payment are often short, thus making it very vital for authors to have a fore knowledge of the publication fees. As regard the mode of payment, most journals use wire transfer, western union, credit card or paypal.

6.4.1 Wire Transfer

Journal's bank account information is given to authors to enable them transfer money from their bank into a journal's bank account.

6.4.2 Western Union

Some journals also give addresses where money can be sent for publication through Western Union money transfer.

6.4.3 Credit Card / Paypal

Other journals also allow the use of credit cards and other foreign payment modes.

However, the author should know of the payment modes that the journal require and check whether they are available in his or her location / country prior to submission as this can later on hinder the publication of his / her articles even though it has been accepted.

6.5 Journal Type Two

The second type of journals to be considered for our overview are those without authors' guides or instructions published on their websites, or do not have at all. With these type of journals, would-be authors are expected to download articles from the journals' archives in order to tailor their papers accordingly.

However, it should be noted that these types of journals are not common, and articles are likely to vary in terms of their formats.

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