

Indispensable Quality of a Scholarly Online Journal

It gives me immense pleasure to bring out this issue of the National Journal of Professional Social Work. I would like to first share credit with all the authors who have trusted and submitted their precious work to publish with us. Secondly, I acknowledge the President of ISPSW and patron of this journal who granted permission to publish and entrusted me as Honorary Editor. I am also grateful to all the Executive Committee members for their support and encouragement and my esteemed editorial board members for their prompt and positive response for an extensive review and editing of this journal issue.

Publishing an academic journal is a matter of great pride and privilege for any professional association/society or institution. Hence, we in ISPSW have brought out this journal since 2000; we appreciate those who have successfully started and continued to achieve these milestones. Publishing 20 volumes is not an easy job; we however, look forward to improving it.

In the era of limited or no access to computers and networks, availing knowledge was also limited and depended on what book dealers and libraries could offer in the print media. The Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) in 2002 and thereafter, with the constant advancement in digital media and online publishing, open access is now feasible in terms of availability, accessibility and affordability. The open-access online publishing has brought remarkable changes in scientific peer-reviewed journals. Journals are now available both in electronic versions and print.

Publishing a Complete Issue in one PDF vs. Individual Articles

In the traditional journal, publication articles are collected for a period of time after which they are vetted and processed for publication, arranged into a complete volume or issue and published all at once preferably yearly or biannually or quarterly. Very often, this complete volume or issue of a journal is prepared in a single portable document format (pdf); and is uploaded on the website of the association/society or institution which is sponsoring or publishing that particular journal. This is available even in the social media like LinkedIn, Academia.edu, Scribd etc. When the complete volume or issue of a journal is uploaded in a single pdf file, one of the important advantages of online journals which cannot be used is the possibility of having article-level metrics. Article-level metrics is a tool used in a large number of journals. This method measures the number of times an individual paper is used, discussed and shared on electronic media (Gonder, 2018).

In contrast to conventional print publication of a journal, in online publication, single papers are promptly put out to the readers after being peer-reviewed and edited during a particular period, usually over a period of one year. A mixed approach with articles in press offers a blend of advantages. Articles are made accessible to readers as fast as could be reasonably expected, and simultaneously, editors can organize articles into an issue or volume thereafter.

When an article is uploaded separately (not with the complete volume or issue), it is more likely to appear more frequently in search engines like Google and more likely to be researched through search engines like Google Scholar; it also gets indexed automatically on publication if it has followed certain formats which are used in open access journals. Again it will be picked up easily by search engines when searched with appropriate keywords. So, when researchers search for any paper of their desired topic, pdf file of the complete volume or issue will also appear but likely later in the sequence of the search result compared to the article that is uploaded separately; hence there will be less chance for it to get read or cited. A pdf of the complete volume or issue appearing on electronic searches is similar to eating food in the same cooker where it was cooked; obviously it will be not at all convenient and

enjoyable to eat. Whereas an article uploaded independently appears as a properly served food plate to the desired person. It can be even well served in a sophisticated manner by using online and available publishing tools

Minimum Requirements vs. Innovation in Online Open Access Publishing

Handwritten or typed (by typewriter) manuscript submission are bygone; now the editor is getting computer typed manuscripts which gives her/him much more flexibility to make the manuscript compatible to various open-access platforms. This can be more reader friendly in terms of reading, reviewing, summarizing, storing and distributing in various formats through numerous digital mediums.

Contemporary scholarly journal publication is expected to comply with many quality concerns e.g. International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) which is an 8-digit code used to identify newspapers, journals, magazines and periodicals of all kinds and on all media - print and electronic, indexing in good databases, having a high impact factor. In India, listing with University Grants Commission (UGC) Consortium for Academic Research and Ethics (CARE) and registration with Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) is compulsory for any periodical.

Apart from the above requirements, grammatically correct, plagiarism-free, peer-reviewed quality content which includes various parameters such as keeping standard and uniform writing style or format, proper updated citation, an interesting and thought-provoking discussion. To maintain the high standard of the journal without adequate resources is a big challenge.

In conclusion, at the moment, I cannot make big promises because of our limited resources but I wish and hope to achieve together with you, all the essential requirements for the National Journal of Professional Social Work in as innovative a way as possible. I humbly and whole heartily request all authors, editorial board members, our seniors, mentors, each member of the society and entire professional social work community to be a part of this endeavour.

REFERENCE

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Kamlesh Kumar Sahu

Hon. Editor, NJPSW

Hon. General Secretary, ISPSW

Associate Professor & I/C Psychiatric Social Work

Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College & Hospital, Sector 32, Chandigarh

Mobile No. +919888871120 /9038751120 Email: withkamlesh@gmail.com

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