

## Editorial

### Get indexed and cited, or perish

The phrase “publish or perish” has become a motto for successful functioning of individuals and research facilities. Scholarly journals seeking visibility and continuous growth of quality have also declared a policy of increasing the rate of publication of quality articles.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, for small and specialized journals, attracting high quality submissions has become a matter of survival. To maintain positions in indexing databases, most journals face a “change or perish” dilemma, which necessitates improving editorial work flow and switching towards higher publishing standards.<sup>2,3</sup>

Unarguably, editors should support their journals and provide a good service to their authors and readers. Increasing the submission rate and readability of publications is an essential part of their efforts. Even more important is the visibility of publications in numerous indexing databases, which leads us to the concept of “get indexed or perish”.<sup>4,5</sup>

Entering and obtaining a high rank in Thomson Scientific, primarily in Science Citation Indexing Expanded (SciSearch), is just one option.<sup>6</sup> An important alternative, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), seems more relevant to newly launched, small journals.<sup>7</sup> This relatively new metric is based on citation analysis of journals covered by SciVerse Scopus and contains information on the prestige of sources citing journal articles; the higher the rank of journals citing articles in a target journal, the higher the rank of the target journal. SJR and the average citation rate calculated by SCImago Journal and Country Rank correlate well with the established two-year impact factor by Thomson Scientific.<sup>8</sup>

Many journals not covered by Web of Science, but with relatively high values of alternative journal metrics (eg *Vascular Health and Risk Management*), are now displaying these rankings on their websites to attract quality submissions. *European Science Editing* is also committed to improve its rank by publishing articles citable by many other journals, including those with high scientific prestige.

Over the past few years, the *h* index has emerged as a relatively simple, easily understood, and validated bi-directional (evaluating productivity and citability) metric of scientific output.<sup>9</sup> It can be used to evaluate journals and can present information on the quantity and citability of journal articles. Values of the *h* index for any journal indexed by Scopus can be obtained from SCImago Journal and Country Rank. With this index, journal editors can provide an objective account of their efforts to publish high-quality articles of interest to authors of other journals. On the whole, older journals covering a wide range of scientific issues will have a higher *h* index than specialized, small, and relatively new journals. However, for evaluating the rate of increase of articles and their citations, the *h* index will be more suitable for smaller or specialized journals.

The *h* index of *European Science Editing* for the period of 2006–2010 is 3, meaning that the journal published at least three articles each year with at least three citations from journals covered by Scopus. Such a low value of the index is perhaps attributable to the relatively short time span of indexing (2006–2010) and a strong focus on readers’ rather than authors’ needs. It is hoped that the recent changes in the journal’s indexing profile and more active approach towards a global audience<sup>10</sup> will raise the *h* index and other journal metrics provided by SCImago Journal and Country Rank and then, hopefully, by Thomson Scientific.

In summary, editors are in a position to improve the profile of their journals and to achieve higher values of traditional and alternative journal metrics. In a time of change the phrase “get indexed and cited, or perish” should be a driver for more active editorial work.

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