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How to Publish Scientific Research without Financial Resources: Some Prospects for Postdocs

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Short Communication

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Abstract

Upon completing their PhD, researchers can access a wide range of opportunities. In the context of postdocs conducting independent research due to inadequate economic support, one potential strategy for navigating the highly competitive scientific landscape is to publish research in predatory journals after disseminating preprints. This article aims to provide an introduction to some of the key forms of publication in the scientific world.

Keywords: Independent Scientific; Postdoc; Information; Preprints

Introduction

Once a researcher has completed their PhD, a wide range of opportunities opens up. In the case of the author of this article, for example, he completed a Master's and a PhD in Animal Ecology, after which he was forced to leave his department. Prior to this, he undertook a preliminary one-month visit to the University of Stirling (UK) before completing his PhD in Spain, which took 10 years. The language conditions were unfavourable and I also had family commitments in Spain, creating a dilemma regarding whether to return or remain [1-6]. Ultimately, I decided to complete my PhD in Spain [7]. This is probably not an isolated case among Spanish researchers. Sometimes, the crux of the matter lies with families and their different roles [4,8], or with jobs outside the academic sphere, which PhD graduates tend to pursue after completing their theses. Despite higher salaries, job satisfaction in these roles is often low. For instance, Sala-Bubaré, et al. [9] examined the employability of Catalan PhD graduates between 2014 and 2016. While those working outside academia enjoyed better working conditions than those employed at universities and research institutes, PhD graduates working outside academia were less satisfied with the relationship between their work and their PhD. For vulnerable families, defined as those at risk of psychological and economic harm due to their low socioeconomic status, membership of a minority group, or another stigmatising condition, this can prevent them from settling into university life once they have completed their studies [4,10].

At this critical juncture, a researcher may find themselves unemployed and with no prospects, due to a series of setbacks, and reaching an age where they lack the financial means to pay for publication, given the high fees charged by almost all predatory journals (higher prices) or non-predatory journals (lower prices). A predatory journal is a publication that mimics the format of legitimate scientific journals with the primary aim of making a profit by charging fees to authors, without offering in return the editorial and quality control services (such as peer review) typical of academic scientific communication; the lack of rigour of these sites may be overlooked [11].

From the first half of the last century onwards, science became extremely competitive [12,13]. Articles were quickly rejected by journals if the author or authors were unknown, even if the articles were of good or acceptable quality. Before submitting to a journal, I recommend depositing your work in a preprint repository and waiting for a low-impact journal, also known as a 'predatory' journal, to contact you via email and offer to publish your work [14].

Material and Methods

To start writing an article, all you need to do is get stuck in. If English isn't your first language, it's best to write it in your own language and then use a good translation tool. Most scientists use the DeepL translator ttps://www.deepl.com/es/translator. Once translated, you'll need to try to improve the syntax and grammar using an English language editor. One option I'm aware of is Free Writing Tool https://englishedit.ai/. To search for references, the most widely used search engine is Google Scholar https://scholar.google.es/, and to search for DOI (Digital Object Identifier), the Crossref search engine https://www.crossref.org/ is very useful. There are several free preprint repositories in biology, but the most well-known is BioRxiv https://www.biorxiv.org. In my view, perhaps the best repository for uploading published articles and unpublished manuscripts is Figshare https://figshare.com/. Any finalised article could be run through an English language checker, which indicates the likelihood of acceptance from a linguistic perspective. The best one I know of is the free service offered by Wiley Editing Services https://en.wileyeditingservices.com/english-language-checker-service-recommender.

Discussion

From the first half of the last century onwards, science became extremely competitive. Articles were quickly rejected by journals if the author or authors were unknown, even if the articles were of good or acceptable quality. Before submitting to a journal, I recommend depositing your work in a preprint repository and waiting for a low-impact journal, also known as a 'predatory' journal, to contact you via email and offer to publish your work.

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