

Description

Scientific journals have been around since the inception of Royal Society's Philosophical Transactions in 1665. As a researcher, publishing your work plays a big role in advancing your academic career. Scientific journals are the only tool that cater to meeting the goals of disseminating authentic scientific knowledge and increasing the article accessibility. The two forms of journals that currently publish scientific work are: Electronic or Digital journals and Print journals.

Print journals are the physical paper version of a journal. Library integrated systems are used to check print journals. **Electronic journals** are accessed via electronic transmission to provide materials for academic research and study. Some journals are online-only journals, whereas others are online versions of printed journals.

With this article, we explore the features and characteristics that help in choosing the correct type of journal for publishing your article.

Accessibility:

Print journals are only available in libraries. For researchers and readers, it is difficult to have constant access to libraries as per their convenience. In some cases, if the journal is issued to one reader by the library, others cannot access it at the same time. Furthermore, print journals need to be shipped out to reach its subscribers. This consequently curtails immediate access of the journal by readers.

Electronic journals are readily available on the web. These can be accessed from anywhere, at any time, and by multiple readers simultaneously. The articles published in **electronic journals** are visible depending upon its accessibility; i.e. if it's an open access journal or a subscription journal.

Citation Counts:

The citation counts for open access e-journals is comparatively more than that of print journals. This is because open access **electronic journals** are accessible to readers without any cost.

Over the years, it has been found that open access articles are cited more than non-open access articles. Articles published in open access **electronic journals** get more citations than those that are

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published in print journals. Consequently, more number of citation counts promisingly increases the impact factor of the journal as well.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO):

SEO plays a key role in enhancing the discoverability of online published articles. Articles published only on print media do not have presence on the web. This significantly hinders the discoverability of such articles. Furthermore, usage of appropriate keywords and key-phrases increases the probability of your article's visibility on the web.

Attaching Links:

Attaching hyperlinks makes it easier to cite material sources and find more information about the topic. Print journals feature a list of works cited at the end. **Electronic journals** contain links throughout the text for readers to easily click to know more information and read the source content. Furthermore, these in-text links can sometimes misguide readers in the flow of an article and render the reading non-conclusive. This happens due to the interconnection of the internet. Moreover, similar domain articles are nested among other links, moving images, flashing ads, and other clickable content, which obviously are not present in print journals.

Manuscript Formatting:

Print journals and **electronic journals** both have standard formatting rules. However, as compared to e-journals, print journals face a challenge of space constraints as only a limited number of pages can be allotted for articles depending upon its length. Not adhering to the word count limit whilst publishing articles in print journals leads to an increase in the printing cost of the journal. Additionally, articles published in e-journals are generally available in PDF or HTML formats. In conclusion, both the forms of media follow formatting aspects such as consistency in fonts, typography, content, pagination, aesthetics of the page, and layout of the articles.

Referencing Style:

Both print journal articles and e-journal articles have the same in-text citations, but they may appear differently in the reference list.

The referencing format for both the forms of journals differs in ways as given below:

1. Basic format for citing references in a print journal article-

- Author(s) Initial(s). Surname(s), "Title of the article," Abbrev. Title of Journal, vol. x, no. x, pp. xxx–xxx, Abbrev. Month, Year.

2. Basic format for print articles and e-journal articles that have also been published in print-

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- Surname, Initial. (Year of publication) ‘Title of article’, *Title of Journal,*Volume(Issue), pp. page numbers.

3. Basic format for e-journal articles that are not published in any print equivalent-

- Surname, Initial. (Year of publication) ‘Title of article’, *Title of Journal,*Volume(Issue), pp. page numbers. DOI: DOI number

Or

- Surname, Initial. (Year of publication) ‘Title of article’, *Title of Journal,*Volume(Issue), pp. page numbers. Available at: URL (Accessed: date).

In case of only digital availability of the articles, the reference will also need either a DOI or a URL and access date.

Costing:

Publication of print journals requires huge investments. It begins right from printing on paper to final delivery of the journal. The prices of print journals are higher than that of online journals. Most **electronic journals** are now moving towards complete open access, which gives an upper hand over print journals, eventually leading to increased subscribers and more citations for articles published therein. In conclusion, publishing of e-journals costs a tiny fraction of what it takes to produce and distribute a print journal.

To Each His Own!

Readers may prefer print journals:

1. If they have difficulty in reading on screen
2. Because the quality of images is sometimes better in print version
3. If they prefer searching articles by flipping through pages physically

Readers may prefer **electronic journals**:

1. If they want to access articles remotely even at the comfort of their homes, irrespective of the time
2. Being a product of technological development, **electronic journals** use accessibility tech such as screenreader or text-to-speech software to enhance the reading experience
3. Discoverability of articles becomes easier by using keywords
4. E-journals have more content online

This or That? For Authors to Decide

Electronic Journals	Print Journals

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Easily available on the go	Only available through libraries or book shops
More citation count due to open access	Fewer citation counts due to difficulty in discov
In case of open access journals, published articles are available for the whole world	Need to subscribe to get the copy of the journa
Direct feedback from readers	No direct feedback from readers
Corrections are easier to incorporate even if the article is published	Once published, the article will have to be repr retraction statement, which leads to added cos

Publish your next article in the right journal by analyzing the above-mentioned characteristics. Let us know the difference of impact you have experienced by publishing in both forms of journals in the comments section below! You can also visit our Q&A forum for frequently asked questions related to different aspects of research writing and publishing answered by our team that comprises subject-matter experts, eminent researchers, and publication experts.

Category

1. Publishing Research
2. Selecting Journals

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