

Description

Single academic journal options are reserved for the most esoteric scientific niches. Beyond that, most fields have several journals competing for an audience, typically one with historical primacy that gave it a head start in bibliometrics, and others that were willing to take on the challenge of competing with it. If you can't match the legacy and prestige, your best option is to focus on the newest, most cutting-edge research. Your longer-term objective is then to become so enmeshed with the field that researchers start to wonder if the journal is keeping-up with the latest trends, or if the latest trend is established through publication in that journal.

Replication Studies? Forget!

Unless your replication study data are rock solid and challenge an accepted rule of science so convincingly that any journal editor would be a fool to pass on the chance to publish it, most validation studies do not have strong prospects for getting published. The novelty factor just isn't there, and most editors err on the side of caution based on the assumption that competing journals might publish similar replication studies, which would leave them all in a crowd rather than standing out from that crowd.

The Risk in Chasing Trends

That preoccupation with always standing out from the crowd makes it very difficult for a researcher to predict what an editor will consider to be innovative when the study has been completed and the research paper is ready to submit. Tracking topics that you consider to be "hot" based on current publications risks leaving your paper out in the cold if that topic has cooled by the time you're ready to submit your findings.

The Pressure to Be Different

So, if replication studies won't work, and chasing research trends could leave your research behind, what can you do? "Do something original," is easier said than done. Some experts argue that you should select your journal target first, and then do some detective work on past issues, preferred topics, and the expertise of the editor and editorial board. Just as you would make sure that your

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resume and skill set would be a good fit for your preferred job, your research study should follow the same approach.

However, the harsh reality is that there may never be a good fit, and you will fall back on doing the study that you can get funded and deal with the challenge of getting the research paper published down the road. Some researchers, however, are not always willing to settle for that reality. Their response is to falsify or even completely fabricate the studies in order to generate research results that demand to be published. Judging by the rise in journal retractions, an increasing number of research teams are deciding that such actions may be the only way to cope with the pressure to publish or perish .

Category

1. Publishing Research
2. Selecting Journals

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