Tips to Publish Your Thesis Project or Dissertation

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July 19-21, 2016
Objectives

- Why Publish your dissertation or project?
- Selecting a journal to publish your dissertation/project (manuscript).
- How do dissertations/projects differ from journal articles?
- Tips for successfully publishing your dissertation/project as a journal article.
Background

- Increasing numbers of nurses completing PhD programs of study requiring a dissertation
- Increasing numbers of nurses completing DNP programs of study requiring completion of a project
- Growing number are focusing on a rural setting and/or phenomenon
- Dissemination of findings is the final, but often neglected step of the research process
- Academic institutions mandate publishing requirements for faculty
Why Publish Your Dissertation/Project?

- Share your findings with peers and other health professional disciplines
- Dissemination of research findings contributes to evidence
- Dissemination of projects contributes to change in practice
- Prevent others from going down an incorrect path (lessons learned)
- Enhance scholarly focus
- Enhance your resume
Selecting Journal

- Fit of your dissertation/project with journal’s objectives
- Fit of your dissertation/project with journal target audience
- Is there an interest by the readers
- Have similar articles/topics been published? If so, how recently?
- Is there a future issue theme that fits your dissertation/project?
- Is the editor interested in your topic area?
- Manuscript submission acceptance rate?
Journals Ranking and Selection

- Journal Impact Factor – Thomson-Reuters journal Impact Factor (TRIF)
  - Measure of Popularity – uses all citations (2 – 5 yrs.) regardless of status citing journal. May or may not be peer review of citing journal

- SJR or SJR-2 - Scimago Journal Rank
  - Measures Prestige – Citations (3 years), Peer reviewed only. Weighting on basis of prestige. Limits self (journal) citation to 33%.

- Source Normalized Impact / paper – SNIP –Publisher’s point of view
  - Measures Prestige – Citations (3 years), Peer reviewed only. Citing source has no weight. Literature reviews are more cited so may increase index.
How Do Dissertations/Projects Differ From Journal Articles?

- Dissertation/project expansive includes various subtopic/areas
  - (Comprehensive) Literature review
  - Methodology & analysis procedures
  - Findings and implications

- Journal articles format parameters, deadlines
  - Limited in page length
  - Specified format & terminology (APA, other)
  - Focus may be on one area (e.g., mythology, state of the science, practice)
Journal Manuscripts Differences Compared to Dissertation/Project

- More focused content (fewer pages)
- Shorter abstract with key terms
- Literature review will be shorter and more focused
- Methods (compared to methodology) and less extensive discussion
- Main research findings and not as extensive detail
- Abbreviated discussion, implications, recommendations, limitations
- Only references cited in paper
Understanding Peer Review Process (‘gatekeeping’)  

- Manuscript sent to multiple reviewers having similar expertise  
- Review time frame varies; sometimes several months  
- Editor Response  
  - Accept as written  
  - Needs (minor) revision (complete/resubmit ASAP) – May not have to go back through full review.  
  - Needs revision and resubmit to review panel (complete/resubmit ASAP)  
  - Does not fit journal objectives/audience  
  - Reject (use feedback to revise manuscript –to submit to another journal
Journal Responsibilities & Publishing Manuscripts

- Based on ethical research
- Brings original information forward
- If information not original it should present value added content
- Vet against plagiarism
- Ensure adequate and accurate citations / references
- Meet reader needs by fulfilling mission of the journal
Quantitative Research-based Manuscript

- Title: (Descriptive, clear, informative, short, inviting)
- Abstract: (Problem, context, method, sample, results, implications Key words (3-5)
- Introduction: (Include purpose, statement of problem)
- Literature review: (Abbreviated with conceptual framework)
- Methodology: (Setting, sampling strategy, design, IRB, data collection techniques, analysis)
- Results (Narrative, tables, figures)
- Discussion (Interpretation and implications of results for research, policy, practice, education)
- Conclusions
- References
Qualitative Research-based Manuscript

- Review several publication’ articles for narrative format/style
- Abstract, Key terms
- Introduction
- Literature Review (include methods philosophical underpinnings)
- Method, (sampling/data collection/analysis procedures)
- Results (themes, tables, etc.)
- Discussion, Implications, Limitations
- Conclusion
- References
Collaborating With Another Author

- Contract up-front on sequence of authorship
- Listing of contributing authors
- All authors must make a significant contributing and are responsible for content
- Determine who is the corresponding author
Bowen’s (2010) Seven Publishing Rules

- Summary of dissertation will not suffice
- Thick description is often necessary with qualitative studies
- Advantages of collaborating with a colleague
- Adhere to guidelines and deadlines
- Revise and resubmit is common
- Be cautious about submitting to electronic journals
- In the end patience and persistence is key!
Other Publishing Tips

- Tailor your manuscript for the target journal – follow objectives and preferred language
- Strictly adhere to journal guidelines, format, page length, etc.
- Use tables/figures only as necessary; justify/explain in narrative; third-party materials need permission
- Proportional lengths in manuscript (lowest-highest length) will vary by journal (i.e., introduction, method, results)
- Include only target literature; use recent pubs., paraphrase in your own words, avoid direct quotes
More Tips

- Avoid using secondary sources
- Clearly articulate significance – why is your manuscript important?
- Articulate what your unique contributions are to the science/literature
- Avoid reporting in-progress research; rather, report preliminary findings
- Use appropriate language (correct grammar, punctuation)
- Be concise, focused, articulate!
- Conclude with a ‘take-home’ message
More Tips (Edit; Edit; EDIT!!))

- Does the manuscript pass the ‘so what’ test?
- Make sure literature reviewed is latest available.
- Evaluate each paragraph to see if it is necessary.
- Be purposeful, brief, and to the point
- Be sure all of the research components are aligned (purpose, literature, conceptual framework, method, results, discussion)
- Before submitting proof read (ask someone else to read too)
- Submit to Turnit.in to ascertain originality report
- DO NOT submit to more than one journal at a time
Summary

- Make the effort and the sooner after the dissertation the better.
- Fit of manuscript to journal is essential.
- Highlight how the work is relevant to the journal audience.
- Attention to detail (author guidelines, format) is critical – it may not assure publication but it will go a long way in avoiding an automatic rejection.
- Make sure you update literature particularly if you started the dissertation research several years in the past – literature gets old fast!
- If asked to revise – do so - ~ 80% of articles require some level of revision.
References

- Moed, H.F., Colledge, L. Reedijk, J., Moya-Anegon, F., Guerrero-Bote, V., Plume, A., & Amin, M. (2012). Citation-based metrics are appropriate tools in journal assessment provided that they are accurate and used in an informed ways. Scientometrics, 92, 367-376. doi 10.1007/s11192-012-0679-8