Meeting report on the Online Workshop for Academic Journal Editors (2023-A02)

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Meeting: Online Workshop for Academic Journal Editors (2023-A02)
Date: May 24, 2023
Venue: Virtual conference
Organizer: Korean Council of Science Editors (KCSE)
Theme: Checklists and algorithms for establishing journal policies

As a person who has walked the path of a researcher for over 20 years, including my doctoral program, academic journals have always been a place for me to find necessary resources during my research journey. In essence, my engagement with these journals was largely passive and research focused. However, my perspective shifted in 2022 when I assumed the role of Editor-in-Chief for the *Journal of the Korean Society of Spatial Structures*. As I began receiving regular issues of the journal, I came to understand that it encapsulates not only the concerns and efforts of researchers like myself, but also those of many other individuals. Moreover, it offered me a unique opportunity to view the anxieties of various researchers submitting their papers from a third-party perspective. Amidst this, I was invited by email to a workshop organized by the Korean Council of Science Editors (KCSE), specifically tailored for editors-in-chief of academic journals. Motivated by my responsibilities as an editor and curiosity about the operations of other academic journals, I decided to attend the workshop. The sessions provided me with a wealth of knowledge and insights that I had not previously considered, and I am eager to share these experiences with my fellow editors.

In the first presentation, the Chairman of the Publication Ethics Committee of KCSE introduced a checklist and algorithm for formulating key policies of academic journals. This covered the management of complaints related to research findings and the publication policies of academic journals, as well as research ethics, though these may differ based on the field of study. The speaker outlined the steps to take when complaints emerge concerning academic journals and provided examples from international cases. Although these procedures seem straightforward, the truth is that many academic journals do not explicitly outline regulations for such scenarios. Specifically, the step of reaching out to the funding agency about the results of the actions taken was an aspect that had not been previously considered.

The second presentation, by the Chairman of the Information Management Committee, focused on the importance of copyright in academic journals and the need for digital archiving.
While the importance of copyright and related policies has been frequently discussed, the subject of digital archiving for academic journals introduced a fresh perspective. It was disheartening to acknowledge that our nation has historically failed to adequately preserve and transmit records of scientific and technological achievements. This has led to an inability to trace the origins of many scientific and technological contributions made by our predecessors, despite visible evidence of their existence. Viewed from this angle, even though the records in academic journals across various fields may seem insignificant at present, they could transform into valuable reference materials for future generations. These records could also provide a basis for understanding contemporary technologies. This underscored the urgency for digital archiving in academic journals, a sentiment that resonated powerfully.

The third presentation, which dealt with the peer review process, was extremely helpful. This topic is both delicate and demanding when viewed from the standpoint of an editor-in-chief of an academic journal. In the past, my perspective on the journal’s review process was limited to the roles of a reviewer or a paper submitter. However, in my capacity as an editor-in-chief, I have become familiar with the tasks of choosing reviewers and facilitating prompt submission and review procedures. This workshop introduced various peer review policies tailored to diverse situations, offering me a wealth of ideas on how to manage the manuscript review process more impartially going forward.

There was also a presentation on the subscription fees associated with academic journals, the transparency of these journals, and the dissemination of data or papers. I frequently use the site called ResearchGate to access and download papers when conducting research via Google. This indicates that, despite the existence of various online platforms for sharing papers and data, academic journals have not entirely transitioned from their conventional offline structure. Numerous researchers, both domestically and internationally, approach these sites with caution, engaging in discussions about copyright issues with the journals. Participating in conversations about topics such as the distribution of academic journal papers can greatly contribute to the future growth of these journals and the dissemination of research findings.

Lastly, there was a presentation on conflicts of interest in papers and authorship. As a researcher in the field of engineering, the issue of conflicts of interest had practical implications for me, since it can also affect patent registrations related to papers. This is especially true in instances of industry-academia collaboration, where the responsibility for research outcomes can become contentious in the event of failure. I noted that conflicts of interest can also emerge in the distribution of benefits, even in cases of significant success. In recent years, research has expanded to cover a variety of topics, moving beyond simple papers to focus on industry-academia collaboration or interdisciplinary research. I appreciated the presentation addressing this critical issue, as I have come to understand the importance of conflicts of interest among authors.

Initially, my attendance at the workshop was driven more by obligation and curiosity than anything else. However, as I listened to the presentations, my sense of obligation faded, replaced by the realization that this was a valuable opportunity to acquire new information and knowledge. Even if it might seem that the content about the operations of academic journals would not be of much use to actual researchers, in reality, researchers cannot afford to ignore them. As an editor-in-chief involved in the publication of such journals, I have taken on a variety of responsibilities. This workshop, however, served to alleviate much of that burden. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the speakers who presented at the workshop.

**Conflict of Interest**

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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**Data Availability**

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**Supplementary Materials**

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