Publishing in Non-Library Journals for Promoting Scientific Information Literacy

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Abstract
Academic librarians tend to publish in traditional "library" journals rather than journals directed at other academic disciplines, thereby missing the opportunity to inform and educate a key audience. This object of this poster is to alert librarians to publishing opportunities in science-related journals as a means of promoting science information literacy (IL).

Introduction
Scholarly publications are often the “make it or break it” component for academic librarians during promotion or tenure review. Most librarians tend to publish in traditional “library” journals rather than journals directed at the academic disciplines they serve. Librarians should seize the opportunity to interact with teaching and research faculty by publishing in subject-specific journals.

This list of recommended journals was developed by evaluating criteria (Figure 1). To gauge the extent of interest in the topic of “information literacy” in science journals, the authors used the SciFinder Scholar (CAplus database), one of the most comprehensive databases for scientific information, to evaluate the content of article and review documents published between 1907 and 2011. A search using the term “literacy” resulted in 290 documents. An examination of the titles and abstracts confirmed the major focus of the articles is instruction. The increasing importance of IL is evident from the increase in growth of the number of articles published over the years (Figure 2).

Methodology
Three databases were used to identify journals in the sciences suitable for librarian publications. These databases were: Web of Science, Proquest Educational Journals, and ERIC. The journal title lists from the other two databases were visually examined. Eighty-four potential journals were identified. E-mail letters were sent to the editors for information about their respective journal’s acceptance rates and review times. A total of 70 responses (83 percent) resulted.

The results of this study can be used to identify the availability of journals that are suitable for librarians to publish in. This study found there are journals that provide a suitable venue for publishing in the sciences.

There were 62 positive responses (74 percent) that provided all or some of the requested information. Information about the publishing body and the content and scope of each journal was obtained from each journal’s web page. Ulrich’s periodical directory and the journal’s webpages were used to identify the publisher, publication frequency, the journal’s first publication date, editors, and links to the corresponding journal’s webpages. A journal’s quality was evaluated from Impact Factors, Eigenfactors, SCImago Journal Rank Score, and h-index.

Results & Discussion

☑ All journals in the study go through a peer-review process (Table 1).
☑ Journal first publication dates in this study ranged from 1880 to 2003.
☑ Publication frequency ranged from range of 1 per week to 18 per year.
☑ Review times for journals in this study range from 2 weeks to 18 months.
☑ Article acceptance rate ranged from seven to 75 percent with an average of 32 percent.
☑ Quality indicators for each journals have been indicated. Most journals identified in this study have a h-index below 100 and range from one (Journal of Science Education) to 678 (Science).

Before selecting a journal for article submission, an author should consider and prioritize several criteria. One important question should focus on whether the theme of the manuscript falls within the journal’s scope. Other factors such as peer-reviewed status, quality indicators, acceptance rates, publication frequency, and publisher also need to be taken into account. It is also important that the journal is indexed in one or more databases. These articles will then be searchable and accessible, and are therefore more likely to be cited.

Table 1: Table of Selected Non-Library Science Journals

Conclusion
One way librarians can outreach to the science disciplines is by publishing in journals read by the scientific community. The non-library science journals identified in this article are potential sources for communication and outreach to the science disciplines. Future work will focus on identifying non-library journals in other disciplines.

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