Think, Check & Submit: Unique Approach to Journal Selection

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**Abstract:**
In the recent decade, the fast transition from print to digital publishing has resulted in an unparalleled increase in scholarly journal publications. The wide range of options accessible to them is increasingly overwhelming to many academics, particularly early-career scholars, researchers, or faculty members of an institution online. Researchers questioned following their findings, “Where should I publish my article for others to read?” In science, the answer to this issue has never been trivial, but it is today more crucial than ever. How can you as a researcher determine whether the publication you are going to submit your research to is legitimate? Think, Check, Submit, a campaign by a consortium of scholarly communications groups may hold the key to finding the solution. Think, Check and Submit is a tool that facilitates the process of selecting the best journal for your research publication. It is getting harder and harder to choose which academic publication is worthy of your work with the release of hundreds of new academic online journals every year. Although having more options is typically a good thing, the profusion of new titles has also led to a rise in what some refer to as ‘predatory publishing.'

**Keywords:** Think Check & Submit, Predatory journal, Journal selection

Think, Check & Submit is a cross-industry initiative led by representatives from DOAJ, INASP, ISSN, LIBER, OASPA, STM, and UKSG. The website (https://thinkchecksubmit.org/) is freely accessible and the toolset given is simple to follow.

**Step 1 (Think):**
Are you submitting your research to a trusted journal? Is it the right journal for your work?

**Step 2 (Check):**
Reference this list for your chosen journal to check if it is trusted.

Do you or your colleagues know the journal?

- Have you read any articles in the journal before?
- Is it easy to discover the latest papers in the journal?
- Name of journal: is the journal name the same as or easily confused with that of another?
- Can you cross check with information about the journal in the ISSN portal?

Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?

1. Is the publisher name clearly displayed on the journal website?
2. Can you contact the publisher by telephone, email, and post?
Is the journal clear about the type of peer review it uses?
☐ Does the website mention whether the process involves independent/external reviewers, how many reviewers per paper?
☐ Is the publisher offering a review by an expert editorial board or by researchers in your subject area?
☐ Does the journal guarantee acceptance or a very short peer review time?

Are articles indexed and/or archived in dedicated services?
☐ Will your work be indexed/archived in an easily discoverable database?
☐ Does the publisher ensure long term archiving and preservation of digital publications?
☐ Does the publisher use permanent digital identifiers?

Is it clear what fees will be charged?
☐ Does the journal site explain what these fees are for and when they will be charged?
☐ Does the publisher explain on their website how they are financially supported?
☐ Do they mention the currency and amount of any fees?
☐ Does the publisher website explain whether or not waivers are available?

Are guidelines provided for authors on the publisher website?
☐ For open access journals, does the publisher have a clear license policy? Are there preferred licenses? Are there exceptions permitted depending on the needs of the author? Are license details included on all publications?
☐ Does the publisher allow you to retain copyright of your work? Can you share your work via, for example, an institutional repository, and under what terms?
☐ Does the publisher have a clear policy regarding potential conflicts of interest for authors, editors and reviewers?
☐ Can you tell what formats your paper will be available in? (e.g. HTML, XML, PDF)
☐ Does the journal provide any information about metrics of usage or citations?

Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?
☐ Do they belong to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)?
☐ If the journal is open access, is it listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)?
☐ If the journal is open access, does the publisher belong to the Open Access Scholarly Publishers’ Association (OASPA)?
☐ Is the journal hosted on one of INASP’s Journals Online platforms (for journals published in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Central America and Mongolia) or on African Journals Online (AJOL, for African journals)?
☐ If the journal is open access, is it hosted on Scielo (for Latin American scientific journals)?
☐ If the journal is open access, is it indexed in Latindex (for journals that are published in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain, and Portugal)?
☐ If the journal is open access, is it indexed by Redalyc (for journals that are published in Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain, and Portugal)?
☐ Is the publisher a member of another trade association?

STEP 3 (SUBMIT):
Complete the checklist and submit your manuscript only if you can answer ‘yes’ to most or all of the questions above.

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