

Navigating the Scholarly Scenario: A Complete Guide to the Types of Educational Articles for Publication

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ABSTRACT

Publications during the academic year are the foundation of professional growth and play important role in communication, especially in higher education. These try to help share and keep the research findings. Early career researchers (ECR) and doctoral scholars mostly get confused about what to publish as their research and what type of articles are there, so in this article it was tried to give a look at different articles that can be published. It aims to help career researchers and doctoral scholars with their publication options. According to different researches, library literature, previous studies, and different scholarly publications there is a greater importance of publishing. Here in this article a list of different publications along with explanations was discussed which includes original research articles, simple articles, review articles, scholarly work like book reviews, commentary and conference proceedings. Each category further explained regarding its unique features, uses and structure. This article also tried to cover the different forms of publications, like data and software documentation. It also talked about publishing models, including open access and challenges from predatory publications. The article offers advice on categorizing the search results by publication subject and type. Overall, this aims to ease the publications worries and enhance the quality and relevance of submissions. The article concludes with recommendations for mentoring early-career researchers and enhancing academic literacy development through purposeful publication strategies.

Keywords: Academic Publications, Scholarly Communication, Original Research Articles, Peer Review, Open Access, Publication Types

INTRODUCTION

The Need for Academic Publication

Academic publishing is a fundamental process through which scholarly knowledge is confirmed, shared and maintained across different generations of researchers. It is not only to produce the text for printing but it will also enhance visibility within the academic community and enable researchers to share their results and methods with the audience, resulting in greater growth and advancement across various disciplines. This element of communication renders publication the essential and necessary phase of the research process, converting research knowledge into public knowledge (Highland, 2015).

The deployment requirement is working at several levels simultaneously. In the disciplinary system, published science represents a collective dialogue that contributes to understanding in the different disciplines. The American Historical Association (2002) emphasized this point and said academic publications have works that are acknowledged by other scholars and their collaborations. It is the main means through which researchers interact with each other in popular discourses and debate about how it affects knowledge and shapes matters in

academia. Even the most outstanding research findings are meaningless to the academic community in case they are not published (Derekurt, 2018).

In the publishing industry, productivity is evaluated based on both quantity and quality, as well as influence factors that affect employment, promotions, tenure, and funding choices in many academic disciplines (Basali, 2010). At the personal level, publication records can be seen as the key resource for advancing in one's academic career (Harley, et. Al. 2010). This pressure begins long before obtaining the doctorate, as observed Kammler (2008) in his study. The research shows that PhD scholars are now encouraged and often expected to publish before securing professor positions. A recently published article has swiftly turned into an essential resource for self-assessment in the competitive academic job market.

Beyond professional considerations, the peer review process associated with popular scholarly publications provides the crucial professional development. Careful evaluation of unknown experts can provide writers with valuable career advice that can significantly enhance their performance (Weller, 2001). This formative aspect alters and aids in the dismissal and evaluation of discouraging obstacles to learning opportunities that McGill, Rickard, and Jones (2006) outlined as the rate of progression of academic writing skills.

Nevertheless, even under the pressure of these publishing, there is a great uncertainty: what must be published? Researchers in their early stages of career often find it hard to distinguish between the kinds of subjects, match the results of the research with the corresponding format, and understand the expectations associated with each type (Cavarella & Barnett, 2000). Such uncertainty may lead to wrong proposals, wasting efforts as well as losing opportunities. This gap is filled by this article that provides an exhaustive categorization of the scholarly topics and the explanation of the purpose, structure, and the appropriate application of each type (Murray & Newton, 2009).

Statement of Problem

Despite the importance of publishing to boost up academic careers and disciplinary advancement, considerable confusion persists among early career researchers regarding most suitable article types for their research (Kamler, 2008; Caffarella & Barnett, 2000; Murray & Newton, 2009).

This confusion shows in multiple ways: researchers submitting work to different journals expecting it would be theoretical contributions, misunderstanding the main difference between primary and secondary sources, failing to recognize and sort the functions of different publication formats, and making false choices regarding publication venues (Bazeley, 2010; McGrail, et. al. 2006). Such misunderstandings can lead to wrong and misleading submissions, increase in rejection rates, wasted efforts, missed career opportunities, and, in worst-case scenarios, publication in predatory venues or journals (Beall, 2012; Shamseer et al., 2017).

Objectives

This article is fulfilling this gap by underlining the following objectives:

1. To establish a comprehensive typology of academic article types, clarifying the main purpose, structure, and suitable application of each format
2. To provide evidence-based guidance for matching research outputs with appropriate publication formats
3. To offer recommendations for publication planning across different career stages and disciplines

Scope

This article mainly emphasized on peer-reviewed scholarly publications in the books, academic journals and conference proceedings across different disciplines. It explains the types of articles, their structural characteristics, and their functions within scholarly systems. The scope majorly focused on humanities, social sciences, and sciences.

Delimitations

The article does not address non-academic publishing, creative works, or exclusively digital format.

Theoretical Framework

This analysis is grounded in two theoretical perspectives that focuses academic publishing behaviour and decision-making.

Academic Literacy Theory

Academic literacy theory based on scholarly writing not only as technical skill but as social practice embedded in disciplinary communities (Lea & Street, 1998, 2006). This framework, building on the work of Lillis (2001) and Lea & Stierer (2000). It makes difference among study skills approaches; academic literacies approaches and academic socialization approaches. By applying this lens, publication decisions generally reflect the conciliation between the individual researchers and the disciplinary communities.

Scholarly Communication Theory

Scholarly communication theory examines the systems through which research is conducted, evaluated and applied (Tenopir & King, 2000; Borgman, 2007). This framework focuses on different publication formats within the knowledge production unit (Cronin, 2005). Based on Borgman's (2007) analysis of scholarship in the digital era and building on the work of Whitley (2000) on intellectual and social organization of sciences. Different disciplines prioritize different formats based on their knowledge production practices and validation mechanisms (Knorr Cetina, 1999).

Together, these two frameworks provide analytical depth for understanding why researchers choose particular publication types, how they develop scholarly communication, and how publication decisions shape scholarly identity and career success.

Research Questions

This analysis addresses the following research questions:

1. What type of academic articles exists, and what are the distinguishing characteristics of each type?
2. What strategic considerations should guide researchers in selecting appropriate article types for their research?

A Strategic Framework for Publication Planning

Integrating these theoretical perspectives yields a strategic framework for publication decision-making comprising five dimensions:

- Disciplinary Context
- Research Activity
- Career Stage
- Audience and Impact
- Career Goals

The Ecosystem of Scholarly Publications

Before discussing types of articles, it is important to understand the broader context of the functioning of scholarly publishing. Scholarly publications can be characterized in many ways, and they include: the level of peer review, the intended audience, the type of contribution and the model of publication.

Peer review is a quality assurance mechanism that distinguishes academic publishing among other types of publications. Weir (2008) described in his extensive study of peer review that it is a panel of experts who evaluates the basic research papers submitted in regard to factors such as accuracy, rationale, procedures, and other factors of academic excellence. Feedback and adjustments could be made by writers, or submission may be rejected. Even though the process is still incomplete and is subject to continued criticism, it also provides readers with enough reassurance that some literature has been published to meet the disciplinary standards (Smith, 2006).

It is obvious that not all content in scholarly journals undergoes peer review. Journals usually contain a variety of materials, and as observed by the Vancouver Community College Library (2025), while these articles can be significant and trustworthy, they cannot be classified as early peer-reviewed research papers. Grasping these distinctions is essential for both readers and writers seeking suitable methods that determine where to showcase their creations.

The models for publishing were quite distinct as well. In conventional subscription-based publications, readers (or their entities) are required to pay for access. Conversely, open access publishing offers free access to articles for all readers and is typically financed through article publishing charges (APCs) covered by authors or their institutions (Suber, 2012). Hybrid journals provide both alternatives in a single publication. Every model affects readership, influence, and professional factors (Piowar et al., 2018).

Original Research Articles: the primary Contribution

Empirical research articles

An experimental research article known as the original research article, preliminary research article, or study is the fundamental form of publication in the natural and social sciences. These articles explore the authors' initial research along with current, novel, and unprecedented data and discoveries. According to the Scholarly Work Guide by the Illinois Institute of Technology Library (2025), an experimental article is an in-depth piece that concentrates on a particular study carried out by the authors and serves as a primary source, as the essay writers are directly involved in the research they discuss.

A unique characteristic of experimental subjects is their structure, which typically adheres to the IMRaD format: introduction, methods, results, and discussion (Sollaci & Pereira, 2004). The introduction mostly adheres to background knowledge, explains the research question and its importance, with a brief literature review. The section on Methods provides sufficient details to be reproduced. The Results section presents the findings in an objective manner, usually through the use of tables and figures. The analysis of the findings, the identification of the constraints, and the implications are discussed (Day and Gastel, 2012).

Experimental participants encompass specialized terminology relevant to the field, several authors with particular credentials, numerous references, and advanced materials that involve statistical analysis or comprehensive qualitative data (Klinger, Scanlon, and Presley, 2005). Depending on journal guidelines, these articles usually vary from a few thousand words to essay-length discussions.

Theoretical articles

Although experimental subjects dominate science, theoretical subjects play an important role in all fields. These works develop more conceptual frameworks without collecting new data, as noted by the Colegio de la Santa Cruz Library (2025) in the classification of article types. Rather than presenting new observations, theoretical subjects develop, amplify or critique conceptual structures that regulate understanding within a field.

In the humanities, theoretical subjects may represent a fundamental form of cognitive contribution. In the natural sciences, theoretical works often suggest new models or frameworks that explain existing observations and generate verifiable predictions (Watten, 1989). The main difference with experimental subjects is that they do not collect new data. Theoretical subjects work entirely with existing concepts and evidence, re-interpreting them in restructuring in new ways.

Case studies

Case studies represent a specialized form of empirical research that studies specific cases in detail (Yin, 2018). These studies may be descriptive (documenting events), research (investigating unknown phenomena), or interpretive (establishing causal and impact relationships). It is a fact that case studies have limited generalizations, although they are rich in information, provide in-depth context of the problem and excellent tool for the understanding of real-world applications and factors as suggested by the Duke University Faculty Affairs Publications Type Guide (2025).

In fields such as psychology, medicine, economics, and law, case studies perform essential tasks in documenting unusual phenomena, examining theoretical claims in real-world contexts, and generating hypotheses for larger studies (Stack, 1995).

Review Articles: Synthesizing Scholarship

LITERATURE REVIEWs

Review subjects, also known as secondary subjects, represent fundamentally different contributions to original research. Rather than reporting new findings, review articles summarize existing literature and serve as the best starting point for understanding each topic (University of Georgia Libraries, 2025). It provides a comprehensive overview of research on specific topics, draws conclusions about the state of knowledge, and identifies future research directions.

The main advantage of review articles is that they are secondary sources and not direct studies. As the Vancouver Community College Library (2025) explained, authors repeat what others have done without specifying how they conducted their research. Review articles do not present any problems or hypotheses derived from new research findings, do not provide a method for collecting new data, and do not report the results of any particular study. It even provides an overview of many other studies.

Review articles perform many important functions in the scholarly ecosystem. For experienced researchers, it provides an opportunity to summarize the work and propose an integrative framework (Webster & Watson, 2002). For starters, they provide entry points to little-known literature. For the entire sector, they work to expand knowledge and define the limitations of research (Bautasso, 2013).

Organized reviews and meta-analysis.

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses represent more rigorous and methodologically explicit forms of review articles. Systematic reviews use comprehensive search strategies, clear inclusion criteria, and systematic analyses to reduce biases in the search results collection (Higgins et al., 2019). Meta-analyses combine the results of multiple studies in terms of data to create quantitative summaries of the effects (Borenstein, Hedges, Higgins, & Rothstein, 2009).

While these formats are technically review subjects, they follow protocols that are almost as rigorous as the original research. It describes search strategies, inclusion criteria, and analysis methods in reproducing detail. As reported in the Queensland University of Technology Handbook (2025), some scientists consider it a separate category that combines primary and secondary research.

Other Scholarly Contributions

Book Reviews and Review Essays

Book reviews are a common type of publication, but not everyone is familiar with them. Reviews of books in scholarly journals significantly differ from those in mainstream magazines. The resource guide from the University of New Haven Library (2024) notes that academic book reviews are generally much longer than those that are popular. They often draw comparisons between related titles and include extensive bibliographies. They consider academic studies that are still being debated in their field.

Review articles expand upon this framework and examine a range of related tasks that can highlight emerging trends, conversations, or directions in science. While these contributions do not feature original empirical research, they are quite beneficial to scholars as they assist the reader in navigating the latest publications (Nicholas, 2019).

Commentaries, Viewpoints and Opinion Articles

Opinion articles and commentaries offer scholars a chance to reflect on released research, explore new trends, or suggest innovative approaches to tasks. The "Faculty Affairs" guide (2025) from Duke University indicates that readers' responses, termed letters or counter-disciplines, might be organized reflections with citations to other texts, rather than casual.

These contributions typically do not experience peer review like original research, yet they are still very important for sustaining scholarly dialogue. Editorials may be written by journal editors or invited contributors, addressing recent literature, new advancements in the field, or challenges affecting the profession

Conference Papers

In the publishing field, conference presentations, conventions, and posters hold a key role. Certain conferences publish their conference reports as books or in a magazine supplement. You can arrange and locate conference summaries. The Illinois Institute of Technology Library (2025) states that conference papers are typically reviewed with less rigor compared to journal papers. This indicates that they showed continuous processes rather than just completed outcomes.

Books and Book Chapters

Scholarly Monographs

Academic research achieves the greatest success when published in diverse areas of the humanities and social sciences. The study encompasses comprehensive and detailed examinations of subjects that require extensive exploration. Research offers distinct perspectives on comprehension and continuous debates through original studies, unlike textbooks.

A standard format for research includes an introduction, a literature review, a methods section outlining the approaches taken (in the relevant fields), results organized into various sections, and final conclusions. The study's research and writing are highly thorough and could require several years to finish. It necessitates independent research, institutional frameworks, and endorsement by the committees on revised manuscripts.

Edited Volumes and Book Chapters

Another significant way of publishing is through contributions to edited collections. These contributions are as extensive and detailed as newspaper articles, but they are compiled by an editor alongside other chapters addressing related subjects (Grhythm, 2019). Chapters may also discuss recent studies, present theoretical claims, or evaluate additional research

The book's sections additionally include more detailed contributions such as introductions, results, prefaces, appendices, and notes. Each of these formats sets unique expectations and should be classified into academic profiles accordingly.

Grey Literature and Professional Publications

Reports and Policy Briefs

The reports constitute a vital form of scientific publications that surpass conventional, peer-reviewed approaches. It encompasses policy briefs created for governmental bodies, research institutions, international entities, and diverse sponsors, along with supplementary expert reports (Lawrence, et. al. 2014).

Reports provide advantages like quicker publication, increased independence for the writer, and direct engagement with relevant political and practical audiences. Nonetheless, the suggestions from the Queensland University of Technology (2025) indicate that it does not entirely peer-review research topics and could be affected by biases from authors or sponsors. However, the reports can signify important scientific contributions, particularly in applied areas

Business publications.

The journals focus on professional categories and release articles that update readers on the most recent developments in their fields (University of New Haven Library, 2024). These publications connect scholarly research with real-world application and frequently present research findings in accessible formats or evaluate practical implementation.

Even with a decrease in scholarly weight loss in niche publications, peer-reviewed journals hold significant value in academic translation and professional engagement. For researchers in practical fields, publishing in specific journals could affect outcomes beyond the academic realm.

Innovative publishing formats.

The emphasis on open data and transparency in research has given rise to new publishing formats. Data articles provide comprehensive descriptions of datasets, including their collection methods, structure, limitations, and potential applications, without necessarily providing analysis or interpretation (Chwan and Benioff, 2011). These papers support data sharing, indicate datasets, and assist researchers in achieving academic recognition for data curation.

Digital software and publications

Software publications record codes, algorithms, or applications created for research objectives. Digital publications consist of digitally created materials like geographic data analysis, text analysis, data visualization, and various other digital research outputs (Nowviskie, 2013). These formats question and advance conventional publishing classifications, as topics establish criteria for analyzing and citing digital science (Borgman, 2007).

Dissertations and articles

While theses and papers demonstrate substantial research outcomes, they fall into a specific category. Many graduate programs necessitate that papers be gathered into institutional repositories, thereby rendering them accessible as grey literature. Nonetheless, as indicated in the Duke University Handbook "Faculty Affairs" (2025), it is anticipated that the research results will ultimately be disseminated as journal articles or monographs rather than being referenced mainly as a thesis.

Select from types of items

The variety of commodity types offers both possibilities and difficulties. In what manner should researchers determine their publication choices and formats?

Researchers need to recognize that various research activities yield distinct suitable outcomes. A study involving original data gathering inherently results in an experimental subject. A comprehensive insight into the area of study that has developed through years of involvement is most effectively conveyed through an overview article.

Critical Analysis of Contemporary Publication Challenges

Open Access Publishing: Opportunities and Tensions

The open access movement has substantially transformed academic publishing since the early 2000s (Suber, 2012). Open access makes articles freely available to all readers, typically funded by article processing charges

(APCs) paid by authors or their institutions (Björk & Solomon, 2013). Hybrid journals offer both traditional subscription and open access options within a single publication.

The Challenge of Predatory Publishing

Varied publishing models, particularly open access, have generated possibilities for utilization. Predatory publishers establish unlawful publishing companies that offer authors rapid and effortless publishing for a charge yet fail to deliver substantial editorial or peer review assistance (Beall, 2012).

To avoid predatory publishers, researchers ought to verify if journals are published by reputable companies, have clear editorial policies, are included in recognized databases (Web of Science, Scopus, PubMed, Directory of Open Access Journals), and charge fees only after peer acceptance (Shamseer et al., 2017).

Strategic Recommendations for Publication Decision-Making

Doctoral Students should focus on:

- Preparing one or two empirical articles from dissertation research
- Writing book reviews to develop scholarly writing skills
- Presenting at conferences to gain feedback and establish scholarly presence
- Developing understanding of disciplinary publication conventions

Early-Career Researchers should focus on:

- Publishing empirical articles demonstrating original research competence
- Building a publication record aligned with tenure and promotion expectations
- Developing collaborative research networks through co-authorship
- Establishing a research niche through strategic publication choices

Mid-Career Researchers should focus on:

- Publishing review articles demonstrating command of research fields
- Considering book publication for comprehensive contributions
- Engaging with emerging publication formats (data papers, software)
- Mentoring early-career colleagues in publishing

Senior Researchers should focus on:

- Publishing theoretical or synthetic statements
- Authoring monographs representing cumulative contributions
- Contributing to edited volumes and interdisciplinary collections
- Shaping disciplinary conversations through commentaries and editorials

Disciplinary Conventions

It involves understanding:

- Typical article structures and "move" patterns (Swales, 1990)
- Appropriate citation practices and rhetorical functions of citations (Hyland, 1999)
- Discipline-specific argumentation strategies
- Appropriate levels of technical language and specialized terminology

Avoiding Predatory Publishers

To avoid predatory publishers, researchers should implement the following strategies:

1. Verify that journals are published by reputable publishers with recognized editorial standards
2. Examine editorial boards for recognized scholars in the field
3. Confirm indexing in established databases (Web of Science, Scopus, PubMed, Directory of Open Access Journals)
4. Ensure that payment is required only after peer review and acceptance

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings

This comprehensive analysis of academic article types has yielded several key findings. First, the imperative to publish operates at multiple interconnected levels disciplinary, individual, institutional, and societal with publication serving as the primary mechanism through which scholarly knowledge is validated, disseminated, and preserved (Björk & Solomon, 2013; Hyland, 2015).

Second, the landscape of academic publications encompasses a rich diversity of formats, each serving distinct purposes in scholarly communication. Original research articles report new findings. Review articles synthesize existing knowledge.

Third, publication decisions must be understood within theoretical frameworks of academic literacy, scholarly communication, and research capacity development.

Fourth, researchers face significant challenges in the contemporary publication landscape, including navigating open access models, avoiding predatory publishers, and managing disciplinary variations in publication practices.

Recommendations

Based on this analysis, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Develop explicit academic literacy instruction** in doctoral programs, including education about different publication types, their conventions, and their appropriate applications
2. **Provide mentoring on publication strategies** at all career stages, helping researchers make informed decisions aligned with their research activities and career goals
3. **Support open access publication** through institutional agreements and funding, while maintaining quality standards

Concluding Remarks

The pressure to publish need not produce confusion or anxiety. With clear understanding of available formats, their appropriate applications, and the frameworks informing publication decisions, researchers can strategically develop publication portfolios that reflect their contributions, advance their careers, and serve their disciplines. The diversity of publication types represents not confusion but opportunity a rich ecosystem of formats through which scholars can communicate their work to appropriate audiences. By understanding this landscape, researchers can navigate the scholarly communication system effectively, contributing to the advancement of knowledge while developing their careers and scholarly identities

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