



## Editorial

# Roles and responsibilities of the editor of a scientific journal

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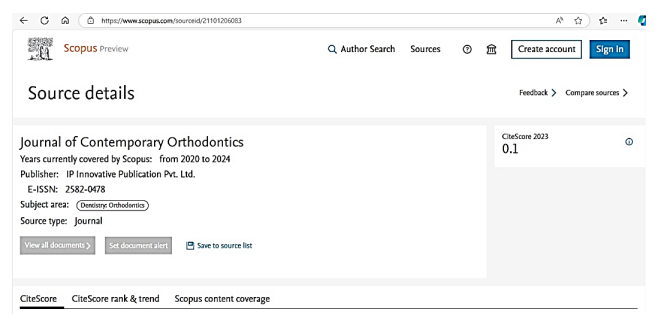
As I write (or rather type) the final editorial of my current term as Editor-in-Chief (E-i-C) of the Journal of Contemporary Orthodontics (J Contemp Orthod), it is undoubtedly a bittersweet moment. To give those who are unfamiliar with J Contemp Orthod a quick overview, the journal is an official publication of the Indian Orthodontic Society, one of the top five largest orthodontic societies in the world in terms of membership. It is a peer-reviewed, global publication that is widely distributed. It does not charge an article processing fee, and all of its papers are freely accessible online (open-access). The goal is to publish innovative, high-calibre, clinically relevant, evidence-based research that will support evidence-based orthodontic treatment.

The journal welcomes reports on original research into different treatment methods and techniques, systematic reviews, scoping reviews, meta-analyses and studies stimulating interest in new developments as well as short communications that improve clinical orthodontic practice. It is currently included in the Scopus indexing database amongst others (Figure 1).

I've had the chance to observe scientific publication up close during my time as the E-i-C, and it goes without saying that it's a really difficult undertaking. I'm writing about the duties and obligations of an E-i-C based on what I've learned over the years. I encourage editors and everyone else involved in scientific publishing to collaborate and

add to this list, which is by no means exhaustive. For the benefit of clarity, the following duties and responsibilities are separated according to the domain of the stakeholders involved in a scientific journal's enterprise:

1. Authors
2. Peer Reviewers
3. Readership
4. Journal Ownership



**Figure 1:** A screen grab from Scopus Indexing database's website showing the Journal's metrics

## Towards Authors

1. Must formulate clear succinct guidelines for the authors to help them prepare and submit prospective manuscripts in line with the journal's requirements.

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2. Publish a flawless white paper on the journal's website on its policies in determining authorship criteria.
3. Be civil, courteous, fair, objective, honest and transparent while communicating with authors
4. Establish and formulate policies on potential conflicts of interest
5. Respect authors' privacy and maintain confidentiality regarding their work
6. Establish a blinded and fair system for a rapid peer review
7. Editorial decisions must be made quickly and should be prudent at the same time
8. There should be a mechanism to address editorial decisions
9. If animal or human experiments are submitted for publication, the author must be provided with clear guidelines regarding acceptable practices.
10. Work closely with authors during the proof stages to refine the manuscript before its publication.
11. Work closely with publisher to ensure timely publication of accepted manuscripts.

### **Towards Peer Reviewers**

1. Assign manuscripts for review according to the author's area of interest and expertise
2. Creating a procedure for reviewers to follow in order to guarantee that they handle the paper with confidentiality and finish the review as soon as possible.
3. Notifying reviewers that they cannot utilize the work detailed in the submission in any way or utilize the knowledge they have acquired from evaluating it prior to publication.
4. To encourage careful, equitable, constructive, and educational criticism of the submitted work, the journal should provide reviewers with written, clear guidelines on its expectations for the scope, content, quality, and timeliness of their reviews.
5. Asking reviewers to disclose any possible conflicts of interest and to step aside if they are unable to give an objective assessment
6. Giving reviewers enough time to finish their reviews, and reminding them if the review is over due.
7. Asking for reviews in a fair amount of time so as not to burden any one reviewer
8. Identifying methods to acknowledge reviewers' achievements, such as expressing gratitude in the journal publicly, sending letters that could be included in applications for academic advancement, awarding professional development credits, or asking them to join the journal's editorial board

### **Towards Readership**

1. Examine every manuscript that is being considered for publication to ensure that it has the evidence that readers require in order to assess the authors' conclusions and that those conclusions are consistent with the evidence presented in the text.
2. Giving authors' contact details and connections to relevant literature so that interested readers can continue the conversation.
3. To the best of the editor's knowledge, clearly identifying individual and group authorship and creating procedures to guarantee that authorship requirements are fulfilled based on the information shared by the authors.
4. Require that all authors take ownership of the final draft of each paper or the sections they have contributed to; this can be done by having all authors sign the document.
5. Preserving the internal integrity of the journal (e.g., fixing mistakes; distinctly identifying and distinguishing between different kinds of content, including reports of original data, opinion pieces (e.g., editorials and letters to the editor), corrections/ errata, retractions, supplemental data, and promotional or advertising; and providing appropriate citations for published material).
6. Establishing systems (such as reader surveys) to assess whether the publication is meeting the needs and desires of its readers declaring or confirming the absence of any pertinent potential conflicts of interest for individuals reviewing a submission.
7. Clearly outlining the journal's rules on submission and publication costs, embargoes, ethics, and material accessibility (free versus restricted access).
8. Collaborating with the publisher to draw in the greatest research and manuscripts that readers will find interesting.

### **Towards Journal Owners**

The J Contemp Orthod is owned by the Indian Orthodontic Society. In such instances where an Editor is appointed by a professional society, foundation, university, governmental agencies, public or commercial organizations, the Editor has a responsibility towards them. These are as follows:

1. Establishing peer reviews of all submitted manuscripts.
2. Respecting the owner organization's policies and processes, including any clauses outlined in the agreement with that company.
3. Making suggestions for better scientific material evaluation and distribution.
4. Respecting the financial policies of the journal's owner and publisher, at least as long as they don't interfere

with editorial independence


5. Following the mutually agreed upon goals, publication guidelines, and timelines.

The E-i-C should not have any financial, direct, indirect, personal, or other conflicts of interest with the journal's operations. Under the direction of its editor, the journal must adhere to the ideals and standards upon which it was founded. In order to better future research and clinical practice, it must advance the larger scientific goal and build upon the body of existing knowledge.

### Conflict of Interest

None.

### Author's biography

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