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The Art, Science and Politics of Publishing

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Introduction

Academic professionals do research to get published and to get cited. There are, of course, other more elevated motives involved in the everyday practice, but generally speaking ‘a successful academic’ is ‘a publishing academic’. Especially now that the budgeting for scholarly research appears to be getting tighter, the ‘publish or perish’ principle is as true as ever. Promotions, hiring and firing in academia are, to a large degree, related to the citation record of scholars. Yet, not any publication will do. In order to get cited, it is important to get your work published in the right (hard-copy) journals. Being in the right journal is a necessity but not a sufficient condition for getting the right attention. Being noted is a necessary condition for being persuasive, gaining a reputation, receiving tenure, getting funded, and so on. Noting the works of colleagues is a necessary part of partaking in the game of science. Anyone who partakes in this process of seeking attention and paying attention to other authors who are seeking it faces the two harsh facts of scientific publication. The first fact is the inflation in number of publications that calls for our attention. The second harsh fact is the skewed distribution of attention over all those publications.

This chapter introduces the reader to the art, science and politics of publishing in the world of academia. We begin by attempting to answer the following key questions: Why submit? Why publish? Why review? We then proceed by providing an overview of the status of Social Science and Humanities publishing in Africa today before taking the reader through the cardinal steps in the art and science of publishing. The flipside of academic publishing is provided by considering its pitfalls. Finally, the chapter concludes by examining Africa's place in scholarly publishing within the framework of its mechanics and how to avoid the dangerous paths.

Why Submit? Why Publish? Why Review?

It goes without saying that most academics get excited at the prospect of seeing their names on the covers of beautiful, glossy books, perhaps on the listing of Amazon, and may be even their own spaces on the shelves in prestigious libraries. However, we need not be quite so ambitious at the start of our publishing careers; perhaps, we should learn to walk before we embark on the marathon involved in producing a complete book? Or, perhaps we should begin by submitting an academic paper for publication in a journal serving our specific discipline?

But where does a novice academician start? Each discipline has its own list of highly regarded journals, that are ranked according to their 'impact factor', and whilst each of us may aspire to appear in the most prestigious publications in the list as early as possible in our academic careers, it is a good idea to gain valuable experience closer to home. For instance, PhD students in many departments within universities produce peer-reviewed journal papers submitted to fellow student editors in their disciplines for publication consideration. Publishing at this level will provide you with useful feedback from experts in your field.

Apart from the personal pleasure of sharing and writing about your work, one of the first and most obvious advantages of publishing a paper is the additional line it provides on your curriculum vitae (henceforth, CV) – a very important line! In fact, the more of these lines there are on your CV, the more attractive it will appear to prospective employers, particularly if those employers are academic institutions that keep a careful eye on their rankings in the Research Excellence Framework (henceforth, REF). The REF is a matter of utmost importance to all research departments in universities throughout the world. The publication contributions of academic staff nominated by each department of each university are evaluated in order to provide each discipline with a ranking. Prospective academic employers planning to hire a newly-graduated academic will cast a critical eye over the applicant's list of current and pending publications with a view to imagining how this individual will be able to help them climb a few rungs on the REF ladder.

However, you may feel that you have enough work to do with your current studies, without worrying about writing research papers and journal articles. But you can make it easy on yourself. For instance, you can rework material from an earlier assignment or from part of an undergraduate or Master's dissertation/ thesis. If you plan to have an academic career, it is a very important learning process to receive explicit (and anonymous) reviews of your own work and then revise your initial paper according to these comments. Although at the outset you might face the task with a big sigh and much grumbling, after you have finished, you will realize that your paper really has been improved and, additionally, that you have learned something new in the process!

Another reason for publishing in academia is the need to get your name out in the field and build your academic reputation. You may have found a cure for the common cold or discovered that the earth is flat, so get out there and tell everyone! The dissemination of new academic work typically happens at national and international conferences. The proceedings resulting from these conferences are often considered to be valuable publishing opportunities. One of the main advantages is that you can present at a conference venue, get feedback on your research, write a paper based on your presentation and the feedback received, submit the paper, receive the reviews, revise the paper, re-submit the revised paper, celebrate the paper's acceptance, and see the paper in print, all within the space of a few months.

As an aside, another good thing about attending conferences is the networking you can do while you are there. Getting to know other researchers in your field is not only an interesting social activity but it can ultimately lead to further publications, perhaps as a second author, or possibly as part of a group, where your data may contribute to a larger project.

But perhaps you feel that you are not 'good enough' to publish academically. Maybe you believe that if you write a paper, it would be rejected. First, an important point to note here is that even the most established academics receive rejections, so it is not the end of the world if you, as a novice in the field, also receive one. Second, you can still learn from the comments you have received from the reviewers, who are generally not paid for reviewing your paper and certainly do not reject it just for the sake of it. Their comments are not intended to be a personal criticism of you but should be seen as constructive criticism of the paper you have submitted. Becoming a reviewer yourself can be one method of improving your own academic writing and also extending the knowledge of your field. If there is something wrong with the paper, you need to say what it is and how you believe the problem could be remedied.

Brief Overview of the Status of Social Science and Humanities Publishing in Africa Today

This section focuses on the context of publishing in the social sciences and humanities in Africa today. Of critical importance are the main trends and issues that feature in publications, open access publishing opportunities, and the implications, as well as the 'publish or perish' culture in universities. We sum up the section by looking at the publishing challenges and opportunities in Africa in order to segue into the next section on the mechanics of publishing articles and books.

Publishing Trends and Issues

Ebrima Sall provides an excellent overview of key issues that depict the scholarship trends in the social sciences and humanities in Africa. The issues captured are as follows (Sall 2015):

a. The institutional base for knowledge production in Africa and how it has been evolving, with different generations of institutions and the diversification of institutional types and modes (from what were in the early sixties just a few 'traditional' universities that were almost all public universities, and almost all contact universities – the main exception being UNISA), to the many hundreds – that are now thousands – of public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) of all shapes and kinds, many of which are engaged in mixed modes of delivery, and have not only contact students, but also distance learners, particularly with the revolution in ICTs, and the formidable advancement of internationalisation: virtual universities, off-shore campuses; public and private institutes, centres and laboratories. Today, the complexity of the institutional landscape has become much greater than anybody could imagine. What Zeleza called the "four Cs" – commercialisation, corporatisation, etc has reached enormous levels (Zeleza 2004). Many of these changes are global, but with a particular implication for scholarship in Africa that we need to fully understand.

b. The second set of issues has to do with the social science disciplines: those considered to be the core disciplines of the social sciences and humanities (sociology, political science, anthropology, history, economics, etc), as well as the multidisciplinary fields of study, cultural studies, human rights studies, conflict and peace studies, gender studies, development studies, among others.

c. The third set of issues relates to the scholars themselves, particularly those in the human and social sciences. In a paper published in CODESRIA Bulletin in 1995, Thandika Mkandawire, a former executive secretary of CODESRIA, identified "Three Generations of African Scholars" (Mkandawire 1995; 1997). From the generations that studies or did their research under conditions of colonialism, or the cold war, or apartheid, to the generations of the age of the internet and of neoliberal globalisation, there are great differences: the historical experiences are different; the worldviews are different; the issues facing the societies in which they live are evolving and are different; the ways data collection and research, teaching, publishing, even conferencing are done have all changed.
d. The fourth and last set of issues are research themes that we have been taking up, and the debates in the social sciences and humanities that we have been having in Africa. Here are a few examples: (i) Decolonizing the social sciences and humanities. The transformation of the colonial library is just a first step towards the transformation of the larger "imperial library", and the transformation of the global epistemological order (Zeleza 2004). (ii) The challenge of autonomy has and still is a major challenge for the social sciences and humanities in Africa; the independence of the mind is a precondition for the independence of the nation and the continent. (iii) Our own identity and our own history - the debates about ethnicity and nationhood, and those on 'Africanicity' involving Mafeje and others, and those about "African modes of self-writing" (Mbemba), are good illustrations. so are the debates on ethnic and national identities, and the attempts to re-write our histories (as part of decolonisation of our past. The need to re-write history was also felt after the Rwanda genocide and after apartheid).

Other themes and issues explored include but are not limited to the emancipation and independence of Africa, and liberation from apartheid; the transformation and development of African economies and societies; crises and structural adjustment; politics and governance in Africa, and the challenges of building inclusive, democratic and developmental states and governance systems on our continent; regional integration; environmental change; the health challenges—maternal and infant mortality, HIV/AIDS, malaria, Ebola; basic education and higher education; youth and youth cultures; gender; globalization, among others. The following points can be drawn from the foregoing:

a. The factors that have a role in determining the state of the Social Sciences and Humanities in Africa are many and varied.

b. The criteria for assessing the Social Sciences and Humanities to determine whether they are "healthy" are not different; one can use the bibliometric data, or the citation indexes, most of which are developed in the North, to count the number of articles in what are considered to be the only "international peer reviewed/refereed journals" (a category from which journals produced by scholars in Africa are often excluded); and come to the obvious conclusion that in global terms, Africa hosts very few international journals, produces very little, all disciplines combines; and among the disciplines, the Social Science and Humanities produce even less; African universities are not ranked very highly; whether it is in the Shanghai rankings or in other global rankings.
c. More important, the exercise itself: i.e. determining the state of the Social Sciences and Humanities, whether in Africa or elsewhere, is not a neutral or value free exercise. For instance, African scholars have demonstrated through research that structural adjustment programs (henceforth, SAPs) was very problematic and was unlikely to lead to the desired positive transformation of African economies, societies or politics, and came up with serious criticisms of the SAPs imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund) in the world 20 years before former officials of the Bank came round admitting that there were problems with SAPs.

The Open Access Publishing Opportunity

Open access (henceforth, OA) publishing has been defined in several ways, but it is generally known to involve the free availability of the findings of research mainly in the form of scholarly articles. Access is usually in an electronic form via the Internet. For authors, OA can be achieved in two primary methods: (1) publishing articles in open access journals (OAJ) and (2) depositing copies of articles in open access archives (OAA) or repositories often referred to as self-archiving. These two parallel but complementary paths for achieving OA are sometimes referred to as the 'Gold Road' (i.e., publish in an OAJ) and 'Green Road' to open access (i.e. published in a non OAJ but deposited in an OAA) (Harnad et al. 2004).

The Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities (2003) defines open access (OA) as a new mode of scholarly communication, through which the author(s) and right holder(s) of scholarly work grant(s) to all users a free, irrevocable, worldwide right of access to, and a license to copy, use, distribute, transmit, and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship. According to this definition, a complete version of the work and all supplemental materials, including a copy of the permission to use, should be deposited in at least one online repository using the suitable technical standards to enable open access, unrestricted distribution, and long-term archiving of such works.

The new form of scholarly communication is achieved through two main channels: (1) open access journals (OAJ) for electronic refereed journals and (2) self-archiving (Chan & Costa 2005:149). On the other hand, both the Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing (2003) and the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Science and Humanities (2003) agree that for a work to be OA, the copyright holder must consent in advance to let users 'copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative work in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship'. OA is of vital importance to developing countries, which often do not have the capital necessary to access scholarly literature. Although schemes like JSTOR, OARE (Online Access to Research in the Environment), EBSCOhost, and HINARI (Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative) sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) do give access to scholarly literature at little or no cost, they, however, have restrictions because individual researchers may not register as users unless their institutions have access (Okoye and Ejikeme 2011).

Open Access Journals

Open access journals, also referred to as 'Gold Road' to open access, are peer-reviewed journals that are free of charge to the public through the Internet. Unlike the business publishing model, in open access publishing, the end user is not charged to access journal articles. Instead, various funding strategies such as direct author fees, institutional membership to sponsor all or part of author fees, funding agency payment of author fees, grants to open access publishers, and institutional subsidies are used to cover the costs for publication. It is also possible to access OAJ articles indirectly by using search engines such Google or Google Scholar. Several studies have been conducted on OAJ, which highlight the benefits as follows: (a) free access to information, (b) increased research impart (measured by citations/downloads) of OA articles versus non-open articles (Antelman 2004), and (c) a possible solution to the so-called 'serial crisis' or 'journal affordability problem'. Okoye and Ejikeme (2010) identified the benefits of using OAJ to include the following: (a) it provides increased citation to published scholarly work, (b) publications are made free for authors, (c) it increases the impact of researchers' work, (d) articles can be accessed online free of charge, (e) it provides free online access to the literature necessary for one's research, (f) it helps in career development, and (g) it provides high quality scholarly work.

Self-archiving

Self-archiving, also referred to as 'Green Road; to OA, is making articles freely available in digital form on the Internet by authors (Budapest Open Access Initiative 2002). There are three most common ways of self-archiving on the Internet: (1) authors' personal websites, (2) disciplinary (research-specific) repositories, and (3) institutional repositories.

The Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR) and the Directory of Open Access Repositories (DOAR) provide a list of OA compliant archives from disciplinary and institutional archives worldwide. As the case with OAJ, articles from ROAR or DOAR may be accessed through direct search of respective repositories/directories or indirectly using other search engines. Harnard et al. (2004) noted that there were many advocates of OA who believe that scholars should continue to publish their articles in traditional subscription-based journals but at the same time, should upload OA copies of their paper to subject-based or institutional E-print repositories. This alternative mode of OA is often referred to as green route as opposed to the gold route of the journals themselves being OA.

Opportunities with Open Access Publishing

OA has presented many opportunities to many stakeholders. Suber (2004) eloquently spelled out opportunities presented by OA to various groups of people as follows:

- *Authors*: OA gives them a worldwide audience, larger than that of any subscription-based journal, no matter how prestigious or popular, and probably increases the visibility and impact of their work.
- *Readers*: OA gives them barrier-free access to the literature they need for their research, unconstrained by the budgets of the libraries where they may have access privileges. It increases their convenience, reach, and retrieval power.
- *Libraries*: OA solves the pricing crisis for scholarly journals. It also solves the permission crisis. OA serves libraries' interests in indirect ways, too.

Librarians want to help users find the information they need, regardless of the budget-enforced limits on the library's own collection. Librarians want to help faculty increase their audience and impact and thereby help the university raise its research profile.

- *Universities*: OA increases the visibility of their faculty and institution, reduces their expenses for journals, and advances their mission to share knowledge.
- *Journals and publishers*: OA makes their articles more visible, discoverable, retrievable, and useful. If a journal is OA, then it can use this superior visibility to attract submissions and advertising, not to mention readers and citations.
- *Funding agencies*: OA increases the return on their investment in research, making the results of the funded research more widely available, more discoverable, more retrievable, and more useful. OA serves public funding agencies by providing public access to the results of publicly-funded research.
- *Governments*: As funders of research, governments benefit from OA in every way that funding agencies do. OA also promotes democracy by sharing government information as rapidly and widely as possible.
- *Citizens*: OA gives them access to peer-reviewed research (most of which is unavailable in public libraries) and gives them access to the research, for which they have already paid through their taxes. It also helps them indirectly by helping the researchers, physicians, manufacturers, technologists, and others who make use of cutting-edge research for their benefit.

A growing number of studies have confirmed that an OA article is more likely to be used and cited than one behind subscription barriers. There is enough evidence that OA documents are most likely to be cited than non-OA documents. This gives OA authors an advantage over other authors, who are skeptical about OA. Scholars are paid by research funders and/or their universities to do research; the published article is the report of the work they have done, rather than an item for commercial gain. The more the article is used, cited, applied and built upon, the better for research as well as for the researcher's career (Suber 2004).

According to Cetto (2001), OA goes beyond the academic circle and spreads its wings to other areas. An OA article can be read by anyone, including professionals, researchers in different fields, media practitioners, politicians, civil servants, etc. OA articles can often be found with a web search, using any general search engine or those specialized for the scholarly/scientific literature. He stated that librarians believe that OA promises to remove both the price barriers and the permission barriers that undermine library efforts to provide access to journal articles. Most library associations have either signed major OA declarations or created their own. In most universities, the library houses the institutional repository, which provides free access to scholarly work of the university's faculty. Some OA advocates believe that institutional repositories will play a very important role in responding to OA mandates from funders (Cetto 2001).

Most African countries cannot afford books. Most of these books are available internationally but are quite expensive by African standards. This is where OA comes in. In Africa, researchers, students, and scholars in general get materials via OA. This way, they can obtain the latest, updated materials otherwise beyond their reach (Hamel 2005).

The 'Publish or Perish' Culture in Universities

In the daily lives of people working in academia, the maxim "publish or perish" can mean different things depending on where you are in your academic career. For graduate students, it means that if the research you are working on is not 'publishable', you may have a hard time finding a job. For new faculty, 'perish' means not making progress on the track to tenure. For established researchers, you are assumed to be only as good as your last project, so if the results do not get published in a prestigious journal, 'perish' could refer to a loss of research funding or your position with the university.

Universities and academic journals are now equally involved in this pervasive culture of publish or perish. Facing budgetary pressures, institutions must depend on prestige to attract research funding, and one of the best ways to do that is to be highly visible in prestigious journals. For journals, the increase in submissions from academic researchers under pressure to get published raises their operating costs to process them all. In addition, with so many new journals being published every year, the pressure to maintain prominence via Impact Scores and other measures of perceived rank, generates increased pressure to publish groundbreaking research that will garner media attention and larger numbers of citations.

It is easy to dismiss publish or perish as an old maxim that academics use to complain about their terrible working conditions, but research has shown that the longer this culture of pressure persists, the greater the risk to academic integrity. As the players in this publishing game start to suffer, and the cracks begin to appear, we can see real consequences:

a. *Salami Slicing* – researchers start slicing up their project results in order to generate multiple articles rather than just one large paper.

b. *Multiplication of authorship* – researchers start to join each other's studies as co-authors, contributors, or even guest authors as a way to boost their publication credits.
c. *Publication Bias* – in order to maximize citations, journals choose to only publish research with positive results (But it is important to publish negative results), which in turn limits the number of replication studies to verify those positive results.
d. *Citation Obsession* – journals focus on citations to manipulate their Impact Factor scores, and institutions use citations as a metric for performance reviews and tenure appointments.
e. *Research Integrity is compromised* – peer reviews get manipulated, results are massaged or outright faked, and conflicts of interest are conveniently ignored.

The culture of "publish or perish" is clearly pervasive and appears to be here to stay. Calls for instant distribution and transparency of both authorship and peer review may help to address problems with research quality, but as long as researchers are threatened by the publication venue of their research, the system will remain fundamentally broken.

Publishing Challenges and Opportunities in Africa

There is a preponderance to generally lump scholarly and academic publishing together as though the two are the same. Nonetheless it needs to be categorically stated that scholarly and academic publishing are not one and the same thing. It is therefore prudent to start by examining exactly what is scholarly publishing. The following constitutes scholarly publishing/outputs: (a) peer-reviewed journal articles, (b) peer-reviewed monographs, (c) peer-reviewed conference proceedings, and (d) peer-reviewed research-based books.

Academic publishing mostly comprises the publishing of non-research-based university textbooks meant for teaching. What then distinguishes scholarly books from other types of books? Scholarly books can be defined as follows, according to Ngoben (2012)i: (a) an extensive and scholarly treatment of a topic by one or more scholars, largely comprising significant and original research, embedded in relevant literature; (b) an extensive scholarly exposition by one or more scholars of the available literature on a topic, from a position of demonstrable authority, which makes a significant conceptual or empirical synthesis that advances scholarship; (c) a collected book, assembled by one or more scholars in a field or group of related fields, which as a planned group of individually peer-reviewed chapters by appropriately qualified authors generates a new conceptual synthesis that advances scholarship; and (d) a collective work assembled by one or more scholars in a number of related fields, in which the individual authors have noted and reviewed each other's chapters and adapted their contributions to generate a new conceptual synthesis that significantly advances scholarship.

The university libraries have been the principal market for the products of university presses. They continue to be the cornerstone of scholarly publishing as the university libraries have been the largest buyers of scholarly books from university presses. Scholars write books, university presses publish them, university libraries buy them, and other scholars read them to produce new knowledge/ research. However, since university libraries have been experiencing budget cuts, scholarly publishing has suffered as a result as libraries have now cut down on their purchase of scholarly books in favour of subscribing to journals and other serials. The university press is thus losing its biggest customer. Many university presses are struggling financially due to the following aspects identified by Ngobeni (2012): (a) low university library budgets, (b) a generally under-developed market, (c) generally impoverished university staff, (d) a weakly developed reading culture, (e) short print-runs which are not economically viable, (f) lack of distribution hubs such as bookshops, and (g) lack of intra-Africa book trade.

Across the African continent, bookshops do not stock up on scholarly books but mostly prescribed educational and university textbooks. African university presses also face other challenges such as overcoming the burden of economic problems, political instability and unemployment to name a few. It is our contention therefore that the move towards commercializing university presses, which are the cradle of scholarly expression, pose a serious threat to the growth of scholarly publishing in Africa.

Scholarly publishing on the African continent has also suffered from lack of government funding and oppressive political environments, which have resulted in the sad fact that most of Africa's scholars have migrated and are making their living in countries other than their own across Africa and outside the continent. Their outputs are then claimed as products of their adopted countries. Futhermore, most African universities are impoverished, and so are the lecturers (this is one of a plethora of the push factors) and most universities in the United States, Europe and the Diaspora have superior facilities (this is one of a plethora of pull factors). This has resulted in what we know today as the brain drain.

To all intents and purposes, research institutes and science councils have been in the forefront of scholarly publishing. The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (henceforth, CODESRIA) in Dakar, Senegal and the Human Sciences Research Council Press (HSRC Press) in Cape Town, South Africa are cases in point. The latter can do so because it is subsidized by the state and therefore does not publish for gain but uses what we call a 'cost recovery model' and makes its books available for free on-line. Other science councils such as the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), and research institutes such as the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) and the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD) have immensely contributed to the literature, in large part because they are donor- and government-funded and can operate on a 'cost-recovery model' free of the vagaries of commercial enterprise.

The scholarly publishing sector in Africa remains small and therefore in a very precarious situation. Given the precarious nature in which scholarly publishers find themselves, their role has been usurped by academic and educational publishers, in some instances. Elsewhere on the continent, the CODESRIA from West Africa and the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) in scholarly publishing cannot be over-emphasized. The two have published many important monographs and books which would otherwise not have been published by commercial publishers.

The Art and Science of Publishing

Publications are the principal means used by academics to communicate and disseminate research findings. Without publications, research findings remain out of the realm of public knowledge and, therefore, unusable for policy and practice. Research that is not communicated or disseminated also fails to aid in theory building and development. Publishing in academia encompasses several scholarly artifacts. We are all familiar with books, book chapters, encyclopedia entries, journals, technical reports, and conference papers. When university academics or those working in policy research institutes author these artifacts, they are communicating their findings or perspectives to specific audiences within their fields of expertise. These writings are regarded as a marker of recognition by peers, which allow them to count for promotions or upward mobility in their careers. In most research-oriented universities and research institutes, it is the most published who have been able to scale up the professional ranks.

In this section on publishing, we devote our attention to two scholarly artifacts: (1) journal articles and (2) books. The reason for doing so is the centrality of these two products to the beginning of the careers of many doctoral degree graduates. The journal article and academic book (monograph) provide the best avenues for the recent doctoral graduates to disseminate their research findings to a specific academic community. Of course, many will have presented aspects of their research in academic conferences and seminars, but formal publication of the research will most likely occur through journal articles and books. Though our focus on academic publishing is on journal articles and books, we are cognizant of other equally important academic authorship outlets.

Writing the Journal Article

As a successful doctoral degree graduate, now that you have conducted a research study, written the report, successfully defended the thesis or dissertation, it is time to communicate with the rest of the academic community. It is time to write. The time is nigh to get published. The most likely route for many upcoming scholars in the making will be writing an article for a journal, a peer-reviewed journal at best. Needless to say, there will be those who will publish articles that are not necessarily based on their doctoral research or other empirical studies but rather based on critical reflection of pertinent issues and review of secondary sources. Either way, the strategies for writing articles remain the same. In this section, our primary focus is on articles emanating from empirical research such as that undertaken in doctoral research.

For those in universities, there are other reasons why publishing in a journal makes the most sense. The regularity with which journals are published (sometimes up to four times a year) means there is an outlet available at a definite time to communicate the work. This provides a partial recourse to administrators' pressure for academics to publish. Furthermore, under conditions of severe fiscal constraints that many universities are going through, travel funds for conferences and seminars have become scarce. Thus, the best means to communicate research findings, keep abreast with developments in the field and exchange ideas is through journal articles. Additionally, journals, owing to their regularity, offer the most viable platform to advance the discipline in terms of new ideas, innovations, theory development and advancement as well as challenge the prevailing orthodoxy (Ngobeni 2012). Reading and publishing in journals is one of the best ways to make connections within the disciplinary field.

In order to publish an article in a journal, one must be cognizant of three important aspects: (1) target audience, (2) journal selection, and (3) strategies of writing the article. We shall look at these issues based on our experience in writing journal articles and serving as article reviewers for disciplinary and area studies journals. We shall also incorporate ideas derived from our own research on this subject.

Determine Target Audience

The target audience comprises the intended readers of your work. You can easily determine the target audience of a journal by looking at the aims and scope section located in the 'About' tab on the journal's website. If you are writing on a theoretical and conceptual topic in political science, sociological analysis, educational technology, or social psychology, then your audience will most likely be university or research academics in these fields. However, if you are writing an article on technology application in the teaching of high school history, then your target audience will most likely be high school teachers. Based on your target audience, you will then be able to identify the appropriate journal that will consider your work for publication. Knowing your target audience is key to selecting a journal outlet for your research.

Select Target Journal

Having determined the target audience, the next immediate step is to identify the suitable journal to publish the work. Selecting the journal early is crucial since it has implications on the format to be used in the writing as well as the content. Broadly speaking, we can identify two major content-related categories of journals in the social sciences:

1. *Disciplinary-focused journals*: these are journals that are specific to a discipline; for instance, political science, sociology, development studies, history, etc. These types of journals only publish articles in their particular disciplines of orientations. CODESRIA has such discipline-specific journals such as *Africa Development, African Journal of International Affairs, African Sociological Review, Journal of Higher Education in Africa,* and *The African Anthropologist*.
2. *Area/Regional Journals*: unlike the disciplinary-focused journals, these journals will accept articles from a variety of social sciences and humanities fields so long as they focus on a certain region or area. Some of the well-known journals that focus on Africa include *African Affairs, African Studies Review, African and Asian Studies,* and *Journal of Global South Studies* (formerly *Journal of Third World Studies*). These journals will publish any social science and humanities articles that focus on their particular areas/regions. In other words, they will accept articles from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

Besides these two major content-oriented categories, there are also the following three types of journal publishing models of which to be aware:

1. *Open-access model*: these journals are available freely on the Internet, thereby guaranteeing a wide circulation. However, to publish in these journals, authors may be asked to pay a publication fee. Some are owned by large commercial publishers like Routledge, Sage, and Elsevier, others by professional organizations or by private companies.
2. *Subscription-based access model*: articles in these journals are housed behind a pay wall. You will need a subscription or payment to access the articles which means circulation is limited. However, publishing in these journals is generally free of charge.
3. *Hybrid model*: these journals are a mix of the preceding two; they require no publication fee and are open-access. All CODESRIA journals follow this publication model as are many housed in universities.

It is important to mention that the bulk of journals published today are based in the West. Indeed, the United States of America dominates the world in terms of journal series and article publications in the English language (Altbach 2007, 2016; Chew, 2013). This type of dominance translates into a construction of Africa that is Eurocentric and largely colonial, if not neo-colonial. It is a construction that portrays the African continent as underdeveloped, 'tribal', and the theatre of violence and war. It is a paradigm that depicts the people as primitive and in a primodal form of existence (Arowosegbe 2014). If you seek to publish on Africa challenging this Eurocentric view of the continent, your work will most likely be rejected. Furthermore, advancing African-oriented epistemology such as Ubuntogogy as an African educational paradigm superior than pedagogy, andragogy, ergonagy and heutogogy (Bangura 2005 & 2015) will not be welcomed in educational journals that give preeminance to Western educational thought. It is advisable to glean through the aims and scope section of journals, the names of editorial board members, as well as sample some of the ariticles published to discern the orientation of the journal particularly in regard to African issues. This process should also shed light on the methodological approach advanced by the journal.

Emerging scholars should also be aware of Journal Acceptance Rate (henceforth, JAR), which is the percentage of journal articles submitted to a particular journal that are accepted for publication. Some journals are extremely competitive, mostly older and well known, with an acceptance rate of only 5% and a rejection rate of 95%. Newer journals tend to have higher acceptance rates, sometimes accepting up to 90% of the articles submitted for consideration. For novice scholars submitting work to highly competitive journals which only publish known names can lead to frustration after rejection. On the other hand, seeking to publish in a low-quality journal that accepts any submission may not translate into the challenge needed to grow one's academic career. It is advisable for new doctoral level graduates to initially consider mid-tier, credible and peer-reviewed journals for publication before venturing into the highly competitive periodicals.

A good resource for information on JAR is the Cabell's directory of publishing opportunities, owned by Cabell International, which collects and publishes information about academic journals. Not only does it house information on acceptance rate, it also stores information on subject areas emphasized by each journal, the nature of the review process, time between submission and review notification, and the procedures for revision, if any. Cabell International also provides information about the impact factor of various journals. Overall, the aim of Cabell is to connect scholars, publishers, and libraries to the journals they need[1].

Strategies of Writing a Journal Article

Regardless of the journal selected for submission of an article, the strategies of accomplishing this task are the same. For any journal article, strive for *accuracy* and *clarity*. Clarity is achieved through good organization and a standardized format. Accuracy is attained by writing simply and directly; a journal article explicates an intricate problem that warrants a solution (Bem, 1987). A good article answers the following questions: (a) What is the problem or issue being investigated? (b) Why is the issue of significance or concern? (c) How was the study of the problem or issue undertaken? (d) What are the results? (e) What are the implications of the results? (f) Arising from the findings, what do you recommend for further study?

Many authors have suggested the order in which the writing of a good journal article should proceed. Belt, Mottonen,and Harkonen (2011) have suggested a sequential order that has the following steps: initial outlining of introduction; initial outlining of theory; writing the research elements (results & analysis); research process; finalizing theory; introduction; conclusions; abstract; title; and revision. While the order of writing is important, it bears noting that the order does also correspond to the typical sections that are found in many empirical journal articles in social and behavioral sciences. The sections are as follows: (a) Title, (b) Abstract, (c) Introduction, (d) Theory/Literature Review, (e) Research Method/Process, (f) Results (sometimes divided into results and analysis), and (g)

Conclusions. A good strategy for writing a journal article that neatly corresponds to the above sections is the Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussions (henceforth, IMRaD), as seen in Figure 10.1.

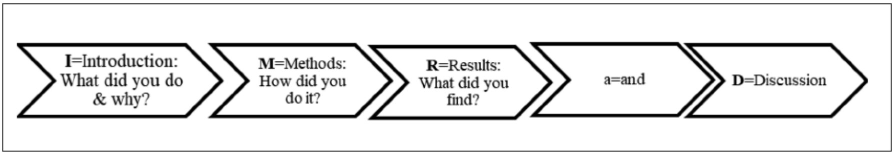

Figure 10.1: The IMRaD Pattern
Source: Self-generated by the Authors

The IMRaD organizational pattern provides the best approach to writing an article because it ensures that all critical elements are covered and addressed sufficiently. An excellent summary table of the key attributes of IMRaD from the abstract to the conclusion can be seen in Cappellen (n.d.). We will briefly review each section including other ancillary sections here.

Title: although not part of the IMRaD, a title provides the first window of what the topic covered is. A good title also ensures visibility of the article especially on the Internet where journal editors want their articles to sell. The title should be succinct, to the point, and unencumbered by unnecessary clutter. A long title throws the reader off as it fails to reveal the true content of the article. Equally, avoid abbreviations in the title. A good title should be between eight and 15 words (Kotze 2007). Citing Grobler, Kotze (2007) suggests the following structure of a title: Main theme or research topic: Research design + population + geographical area. Consider the following illustrations of a good and bad title: *Bad* – 'A Study of Psychological Capital, Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior as Management Tools for Healthcare Workers: An Investigation of Nurses in Public Hospitals in Eastern Cape of the Republic of South Africa'. *Good* – Psychological Capital, Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior among Nurses in Public Hospitals, Eastern Cape, South Africa'.

Abstract: the abstract is a microcosm of the entire study. With a word length of 200-250, it is the first point of contact between readers and the entire article. A decision whether to read the entire article or not is usually made after reading the abstract. A good abstract should answer the following five questions according to Belt, Mottonen and Harkonen (2011): (1) What is the large thematic area your article corresponds to? (2) What is the purpose of the article? (3) What methodology was used in the study? (4) What are the key findings? (5) What are the implications of the study (and how can these findings be beneficial to policy-makers and practitioners)?

It is advisable to write the abstract after the article has been written. The abstract should be a single paragraph. The abstract is usually followed by four to five keywords depending on the journal. These keywords help capture the main focus of the article and aid library databases to create accurate search results.

Introduction: the task of this section is to introduce the reader to the background and nature of the issue under investigation. It justifies the importance of the study and connects the work to previous research. A funnel structure of introduction is recommended where the author proceeds from general issues to the more specific aspects of the study. Bem (2003) recommended that authors move from a broad opening in which aspects related to the study are highlighted and sentence-by-sentence, paragraph-by-paragraph, the text proceeds onto narrower details. It is only when the author is concluding the introduction that the purpose of the study is presented which provides an excellent transition to the methods section that follows immediately.

This funnel structure allows the reader to place the article in the context of other studies related to the field. The non-specific nature of the opening sentences also allows for non-specialists to appreciate the focus of the study. The following are examples of a bad and a good opening statements of an introduction: *Bad* – Recently, the structural effects of marketization and internationalization of higher education have become evident in the number of scholarly studies examining the nexus between the academy and capitalism in the neoliberal era. *Good* – Of the many changes that have come to characterize the university in the 21st century, none is, perhaps, more transformative than the linking of the university to the marketplace. This shift in the mode of financing higher education has generate ripple effects that has shaped not only the missions of the universities but also how they conducted teaching, research and community service.

A good introduction should be between 500-1,000 words. The key to a good introduction is the evidence of the following attributes: (a) first, identify the broad theme of the study; (b) next, state the significance of the study; (c) review and summarize the pertinent literature; a thematic or chronological approach will suffice; (d) highlight gaps, inconsistencies and / or controversies evident in extant literature; (e) indicate the purpose of the study/key research questions to be addressed; and (f) outline of the structure of the rest of the article (Source?).

A literature review is crucial to linking a study to an existing body of works. However, the work still needs to be anchored in a storyline. This is the work of the theoretical framework of the study. A theory is an explanatory statement that helps to make logical links between the observations of phenomena observed during the study. Put differently, it guides the research study and permits the researcher to organize his/her ideas. It is also important to revisit the theoretical framework during the discussion part of the article.

Methods: otherwise known as research methodology, this section should be between 500-1000 words in length. It includes details of the steps the researcher took in conducting the research. At the beginning of the section, the researcher will describe the research design adopted for the study and a justification for its use. We cannot stress enough the importance of being very detailed and specific in describing the steps used in conducting the study; it is this description that will enable the journal editor and reviewers to assess the scientific basis of the research and the justification of the results. The methods section should consist of the following subsections, all explained in detail: (a) research design and justification; (b) sampling procedure and sample size; (c) target population, research context and unit of analysis; (d) sampling strategy (procedure); (e) respondents' profile; (f) data collection methods; (g) data gathering instruments; (h) validity and reliability (quantitative); credibility & trustworthiness (qualitative); (i) data analysis technique(s); and (j) positionality and reflexivity, if necessary, for qualitative designs.

Some authors such as Bem (1987) recommend concluding the methods section with a brief summary of procedure and its overall purpose in the context of the study. Given the limitation of space for most journals, it is not a recommendation we would encourage.

Results: this section presents the findings of the study in a write-up that should be between 1,000 to 1,500 words in length. The key to a good results section is to present the findings as concisely as possible without omitting details that would invalidate the conclusions delineated. Generally, it is important to report the central findings first before proceeding to report the more peripheral ones. This ensures there is a logical flow of the results as the idea of the article is built around the key findings of the study. This is akin to the funnel principle whereby the article proceeds from the general to the more specific issues.

The key findings will usually be highlighted visually using tables, graphs, diagrams, etc. Using these visual illustrations for major findings ensures that anyone who skims through the article will focus on the key results and get a feel of your findings. In addition, they are a much more efficient way of presenting your findings. Tables and figures should only be used for detailed findings and avoid repeating the information in the tables and figures in the narrative. At best, consider having 3-5 tables and 1-2 figures in the entire article. Illustrative examples of results sections can be seen in Bem (1987) and Kotze(2007) in addition to many published articles in the social sciences and humanities disciplines.

Discussion: this is the final major section that the article reader will see and should be anywhere between 1,000 to 1,500 words in length. Being the last section, it may actually be the most important part of the article. It means stating explicitly what the results of the study mean. Many good manuscripts are rejected because the discussion section is weak, failing to tie up the findings with the extant literature and theoretical framework.

While the introduction section proceeds in a funnel-shaped fashion, the discussion section proceeds in an hourglass-shaped fashion. The author moves from specific issues related to the findings of the study to more general matters such as methodological strategies and to the broadest generalization of the findings. The characteristics of a good discussion include the following: (a) restates the main purpose of study; (b) makes only statement/declarations supported by the results; (c) avoids unspecific expressions such as 'highly significant', 'low correlation; instead, use quantitative expressions (0.5%; $p<0.05$); (d) avoids new concepts and ideas; these belong to the introduction; (e) speculations on possible interpretations of the results should be based on facts and need to be linked to these questions: What is the relationship between the results and the original research questions or objectives in the introduction? To what extent are the results consistent with what other researchers have established? Are there discrepancies and inconsistencies? If so, why could this be the case? What alternative explanation of the results might exist?

It is imperative to end with a strong conclusion (Bem 1987). Suggesting areas of further study is common but can also be boring if not well structured. Mahlomaholo, for instance, dramatically ends his article in the following manner:

> Archer's theory is not without limitations in developing the understanding we were looking for, but under the circumstances it was the most useful compared to others such as Anthony Giddens's structuration, Jacques Lacan's post-structuralism, and others… Seemingly, we cannot blame the situation or the context or history anymore, because we are capable of interpretation and acting according to our own understanding of the situation. We can still create history even if this is not under conditions of our own choosing (2015:242).

Conclusion: finally, write a brief conclusion. In some journals, the conclusion is part of the discussion (usually titled as 'discussion and conclusions'); in others, it is a separate section. If the conclusion is a separate section, relate the work to the introduction (research question or hypotheses), summarize the evidence supporting each conclusion and provide the implications, significance of the results, or any other practical applications. It is important, if you write a separate conclusion, to avoid repeating issues presented in the discussion section.

Reacting to Reviewers: based on the reviewer(s) comments, the journal editor may decide to: (a) accept the article as it is, (b) recommend minor revisions and resubmission, (c) recommend major revision and resubmission, or (d) reject the article. Where revisions are recommended, we see these as a positive indication that the work will be published if suggested corrections are affected. It is time to work and correct the work. The best strategy that has proved to be highly effective is to revise the work using a point-to-point format and resubmit the article accompanied by a separate response explaining, point-to-point, the changes made and the page number where these revisions can be seen. This strategy allows the editor to cross-check the revisions for a quick decision.

Writing the Scholarly Book: Turning your Thesis/Dissertation into a Book

In some cases, a very good doctoral research study can be turned into a scholarly book. However, an excellent scholarly dissertation/thesis does not easily translate into a manuscript that publishers would want to feature in their publication catalogue.

An excellent dissertation/thesis is, principally, good for the candidate and his/her committee of advisors and examiners. Its reach is very narrow and counts little for an academic career. It is what you do with the thesis/dissertation once it is completed that has enormous implications on your career and impact on the discipline. Only when you translate it into a valuable commodity in the academic labor market – journal articles, books, grants, etc. – does it begin to serve you. It serves you even better when you transform it into a book published by a major publisher. In a humorous description, Germano (2005) describes the radical shake up that a dissertation/thesis needs in order to be a book:

> When a dissertation crosses my desk, I usually want to grab it by its metaphorical lapels and give it a good shake. "You know something!" I would say if it could hear me. "Now tell it to us in language we can understand!" It isn't the dissertation I want to shake, of course, it's the dissertation's author. The "us" I want the author to speak to isn't just anyone, either, but the targeted readership that will benefit from a scholarly book. The recalcitrant garden-variety dissertation – lips sealed, secrets intact – will find a readership among two hundred library collections at best. Most won't make it even that far, but linger at the ready in electronic format waiting for some brave soul to call for a download or a photocopy (Germano 2005).

How do you ensure that your excellent dissertation/thesis is revised into a book that has wide readership and promotes your career in the academy? Norton (2004), a development editor, refers to the process as 'developmental editing', a 16-step procedure. Developmental editing is an expensive affair that entails a publishing house hiring a development editor who works with the dissertation/thesis author to write the book. Not many publishers undertake these projects and the few that do so will be university presses such as the University of Chicago Press, the University of California Press, among others. The 16 steps are the following: (1) assessing the market goals, (2) shifting the focus, (3) creating a content summary, (4) distinguishing between theses and subject, (5) distinguishing between theses and theoretical framework, (6) choosing a main thesis, (7) creating a working title, (8) brainstorming the outlines, (9) choosing and fine-tuning the outline, (10) responding to scholarly reviews, (11) adding chapter theses, (12) weighting chapters equally, (13) creating transitions, (14) integrating narrative and theory, (15) drawing conclusions and placing them, and (16) cutting the length.

Revising a dissertation/thesis can be a lonely and scary proposition, like venturing into the turbulent sea without navigational equipment. You will be working without the safety net provided by the dissertation/thesis committee. We shall briefly review some of these steps as a means of providing a compass to navigate these tempestuous waters. Prior to that we briefly highlight the need for an inquiry letter to the publishing house as a way of introducing your dissertation/thesis and its potential.

Inquiry Letter

The best way to sell your publication idea is through the inquiry letter to the acquisition's editor of the publishing house with which you seek to work. The first paragraph of the letter should briefly introduce the work, its scope, and a proposed working title. Indicate that the book will arise from a recently concluded dissertation/thesis. The second paragraph of the letter should focus on the key themes/topics that the book will cover. A bullet listing of these themes/topics will suffice.

In the third paragraph, address briefly the market potential of the book. Who among the reading public will be interested in the dissertation/thesis that has been turned into a book? A brief statement on what current books in this field lack will provide the much-needed punch for the market potential of the work. Conclude the inquiry letter with a short description of your qualifications and suitability to write the book in this area. Once your project is accepted and a development editor assigned, the writing of the book can begin in earnest.

Assessing Market Goals

Assessing the market goals involves exploring all the categories of readers who would be interested in the work. If your work was on the technology diffusion in universities in Africa, for instance, the target group would include policy-makers at the ministries of education, university administrators, university directors of technology, scholars in the field of information technology (henceforth, IT), and trade and academic journals in the field of IT. Each of these will have an interest in the work from its own vantage point. It is important to ensure that the revised work will appeal to as many interested groups as possible.

In assessing the market needs, the author needs to segment the market groups from the specific to the general. The very specific innermost circle will be the academics in universities or research institutes. The middle circle will include policy-makers and practitioners, and practical users of the issues raised in the book. The outer circle includes technology users in other fields such as manufacturers, business people, and those with a general interest in technological evolution. The book must be reviewed widely in order to reach all these groups and generate a sizeable market.

Shifting the Focus

The next stage is to explore the dissertation/thesis table of contents and work to shift its focus from purely scholarly to one that has a broader appeal. Rather than focus on what the researcher read and how he/she conducted the study, the storyline should now focus on what the results of the study mean. It means that the shirt has been worn inside out and that must be corrected.

Eschewing the scholarly focus means moving from a few long chapters to more brief ones, deemphasizing the scholarly sources and theories in chapter titles; removing dates from landmark primary sources; and avoiding quotations as part of the titles. Technical terms and words that betray the author's intension should also be omitted. Words like "contested" conveys the ideas that the author is simply going to present multiple debates on the issue without taking a position. Non-academic readers do not wish to be left in this type of limbo. In Table 10.1, an illustrative example of a revised table of contents using the new university model is presented.

Table 10.1: Example of a Revised Table of Content

Thesis/Dissertation Content	Revised Book Content
Part 1: The Contested University Where has the university gone? In search of liberal educational	Part 1: The New University The market university Incorporating liberal education in the new university

Source: Self-generated by the Authors

Creating Content Summary

Read any dissertation/thesis and the contents proclaim loudly and clearly that it is not for non-specialists in the field. The long-winded abstract is written in highly specialized and technical language that only makes sense to the community of specialists in the discipline. The first one-third of the thesis/dissertation itself addresses theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the research which is of minimal interest to the general reader with an interest in the subject. It is only after these sections do the more germane issues begin to reveal themselves.

The revision of the content summary should eschew the long methodological section. Writing it entails the courage to discard the research, the structure and the prose in order to reframe the subject afresh. A 2-3-page non-specialist content summary that places the general reader at the forefront is what will reveal the market potential of the book, thereby making it attractive to publishers.

Distinguish between Theses and Subjects

Usually the focus of dissertations/theses is on themes, if not theoretical implications of the study. Hidden in the background are the subjects involved in the study. For instance, in a phenomenological study of the lived experience of grade retention in primary (elementary) school, a researcher's focus will be to distill the findings into a coherent set of themes through a process of open, axial and selective coding that involves emic (subject voices) and etic (researcher) voices.

To make the written book more appealing to the reader, it is advisable to select each subject or groups of subjects and generate statements that have a conceptual relevance to the reader. While technical specialists in the discipline can make this conceptual maneuver without assistance, the non-specialists will need the assistance – hence, the necessity of revising the dissertation/thesis for conversion into a book. Using the lived experience of grade retention, an example of the disaggregation of subject and thesis including theoretical (for the next section) is presented as follows:

Subject X: Lived in the southside, a blue-collar working-class neighborhood

Possible thesis: show the link between grade retention & poverty

Theoretical Framework: socio-economic status

Subject Y: Lived in Vajona village, a tribal homeland.

Possible thesis: grade retention and culture.

Theoretical Framework: culturally-responsive teaching

Distinguish between Theses and Theoretical Frameworks

The next task is to see to which theoretical framework link the subject and thesis belong to as shown in the example in the previous section. All theses and theoretical frameworks are tentative; some hold good promise and will be retained while others show little promise and will be discarded as the book development proceeds. The linking of subject, theses, and theoretical framework is done in the context of exploring for a single thesis, one large enough to embrace most, if not all, of the others.

Choosing a Main Thesis

In the final analysis, you will discover that you have identified numerous concepts that can very well serve as the main thesis that ties the work together. This calls for narrowing the list further down by eliminating concepts that are not broad enough to encompass the whole work. In narrowing down the promising thesis statements, ask yourself the following question: Is there one that is broad enough to that would allow for a universal expression? For instance, in a grade retention study, an overarching thesis statement would be along these lines: The increase in grade retention practices has been supported by federal policies that emphasize student achievement and reinforced by individual developmental and motivational factors along with some family conditions. Long-term, retained students show less competence, do not learn more than those socially promoted and experience a myriad of psycho-social adjustment issues in adulthood.

Creating a Working Title

Having identified the overarching thesis, the next step is to find a working title. A working title is just that: a working title, not a perfect one. It is a title that signifies the emphasis of the book so that the chapter titles will also flow logically. For our study on grade retention, we would suggest the following working title: *Retained for Life: How Grade Retention Fails the Academic and Social Score*. This working title is dramatic and reflective as it encapsulates all that we desire both in school and in life. It is a good working title from which the book chapters will flow.

Brainstorming the Outlines

According to Norton (2004), most scholarly books employ either one of these two narrative strategies: (1) chronological development or (2) thematic development. Given that a dissertation/thesis deals with the development of a concept, and this is what attracts a university press to consider the work for publication, a good strategy is to have a proportional balance between a chronological sequence and a narrative story-telling one. It is this combination that will also attract a wide diversity of readers, thereby increasing the book's market potential.

A good approach to achieve this balance is to map a chronological timeline against conceptual themes. For instance, in the study of elementary (primary) school retention, one could look at the developmental and motivational impetus propounded by educational authorities to support the practice. One could also explore the out-of-school reinforcing decisions such as policy developments and family structure support. These analyses could be contrasted with the counter-narratives that contemporary research has revealed against grade retention. The same balancing of theme and chronology strategy could be used in a survey of secondary (high) school retention and also for adult life experience.

Choosing and Fine-tuning an Outline

This stage involves working with the development editor closely to get the right outline that balances both the contextual and interpretive factors and the findings and discoveries made in the course of the research. It will be an intense conversation involving written E-mail correspondence and even phone discussions. It is important to achieve the right balance so that the writing phase will proceed smoothly. It is at this stage that a modified overall thesis can be reformulated to capture the agreed changes. It is at this juncture that the author and the development editor send the manuscript proposal for external review.

Responding to Scholarly Reviews

Your manuscript proposal will usually be sent to two or three reviewers in your field for expert assessment. All credible publishers will require letters of support from reviewers concurring that the work is of acceptable standard, contributes to the field, and is publishable.

The reviewers will most likely raise issues that warrant revision. The publisher will require you to respond to the reviews explaining in detail how you are going to address the errors, gaps, and revisions suggested. If you disagree with any aspect of the review, be ready to support your decision with substantive reasons; particularly, how your rejection to the reviewers' comments does not substantively compromise the quality of the work and its market potential.

Adding Chapter Theses

Following the reviewers' recommendations and reactions to them, it is now time to embark on the writing process. The next step requires you to develop a thesis for each chapter of the proposed book. This step may seem to be an impediment or delay in the writing process but makes the writing much easier if one takes time to plan. It is akin to developing an article outline before starting to write. Taking time to bring each chapter into conceptual focus will pay off in the long-run by making the writing process much easier. Working with the development editor is the best way to fine-tune the addition of theses to the various chapters. This step should not be ignored nor taken for granted.

Weighting Chapters Equally

Look at any dissertation/thesis and an immediate organization feature strikes you: the unequal weighting of the various chapters. The first chapter (introduction), the third (methodology) and the fourth and fifth (discussion and conclusion respectively) may be smaller than the rest of the work. In revising the dissertation/thesis for publication into a book, chapters need to be weighted equally. This is a labor-intensive activity that requires the author to figure out what content belongs to which chapter.

To undertake this exercise, the author needs to go through the draft manuscript earmarking passages and assigning working subheadings while noting the length of each. The narrative sections will be easier to situate than the conceptual pieces. The back-and-forth restructuring of the manuscript should, in the end, lead to an equally weighted chapter organization that is less formulaic and more satisfying.

Creating Transitions

Once you have authored the chapters of the new manuscript, it is time to edit the work by attending to the most challenging aspect of editing after converting a dissertation/thesis into a book. This is the task of managing the opening and closing of each chapter. There may be instances where sections of the original work may serve the purpose but, overall, the opening and closing section must be authored anew. Some chapters may open with details that are in tandem with the main thesis, others with a description of the context surrounding its main focus. In a similar vein, some chapters will end with an explicit summation of events, others with a plot development or even a cliff-hanger. It all comes down to what the author and development editor feel serves the manuscript well.

Integrating Narrative and Theory

After writing the entire manuscript, it is time to review it to ensure that the narrative material is well integrated with the scholarly theory. This is a careful editing process that warrants a great deal of input from the development editor. There may be occasional disagreements but in the long run, a coherent integration of both narrative and theory is the ultimate goal of the project. This should be done with the clear understanding that editing, like other life endeavors, is the art of compromise.

Drawing Conclusions and Placing Them

This may be the most challenging part of writing the manuscript. It involves the proper integration of 'scholarly discourse and narrative to draw proper conclusions and place them to advantage' (Norton 2004:65). Norton avers that scholars will spend time and energy gathering evidence through research but are reluctant to make definitive conclusions because late discoveries can shed new light on a theory, completely revising it, and so err on the side of letting others draw the conclusions (Norton 2004). However, for a book to be availed to the general public, it is imperative that the author arrives at definitive conclusions. Three to four strong concluding stands will help solidify the stature of the author as well as the book's market potential.

Cutting the Length

Publishers work on a budget for each book they plan to release. The budget considers the length of the book. It may turn out that your revised dissertation/

thesis is longer than the budget available to produce it into a book. In making the required cuts in order to achieve the desired book length, focus on two aspects: (1) passages that are expendable without affecting the substance of the book and (2) multiple examples and illustrations of the same passage. In doing the cuts, ensure that you retain the right balance between narrative and theory.

Writing the Professional Book: Turning Your Thesis/Dissertation into a Book

Most doctoral level research in the social and behavioral sciences deals with theoretical and academic issues that may have minimal real-life applications. However, there are occasions when a social science doctoral research discovers an innovative and real-world application that can be used to solve a current problem that has confronted a particular professional area. Supposing your doctoral research involved studying an intervention that improves the outcomes of teacher professional development in schools that leads you to design and develop a highly-quality in-service, school-based professional development that is both effective and efficient. Converting such research findings into a book for the professional market falls in the realm of professional publishing.

The number of publishers of such works are few and far between. In the United States, for example, the most well-known publisher of such works is Jossey-Bass which has, over the years, built a reputation for publishing books for the practitioners in a variety of professional areas. Professional publications '…translate challenging ideas into forms that are useful and appealing to the people best positioned to put those ideas into practice', according to Vondeling (2004:212). Professional publications use research findings to make practical difference. It is, at its most basic, knowledge transfer.

The two prominent distinctive features of professional publishing include the following, according to Vondeling (2004): (1) translates theory and best practices into a language understandable by the practitioners and (2) it is defined less by the nature of its content than by its practical benefits to the practitioners. It is imperative that in revising a dissertation/thesis into a professional book, the author takes into account that the work is not for members of a dissertation/thesis committee who are grounded in theoretical and conceptual thinking. Rather, it is for hands-on professionals who deal with every-day realities of their work and seek solutions to immediate challenges. Publishers of professional books will evaluate manuscript proposals based on whether the content meets the criteria of 'need-to-have' by professionals in the field. In other words, Do the potential readers need this information to perform their work better or is it merely a 'nice-to-know' type of information? The latter will lead to rejection of the manuscript just like the one based on advocacy – a 'should-be-doing/thinking' approach.

It is also important to understand the nature of the professional book reader. Again, Vondeling's (2004) characterization of the reader is instructive: (a) looks for specific information applicable to work-related situations, (b) favors a broad discussion of the general principles coupled with a few practical examples and case studies which will permit them to extrapolate practical applications for their own situational contexts, and (c) loathes jargon and expect writing that is transparent and democratic. Authoring books for this type of audience need special skills and specific knowledge in the field area. The conventions of writing professional books are specific and unique. We consider them using these sub-sections: (a) tone and content, (b) writing the book proposal, (c) attracting professional publishers, (d) selecting the book format, (e) working with the editor, and (f) developing the project. These sub-sections have been developed using the convention suggested by Vondeling (2004) and are captured in Figure 10.2.

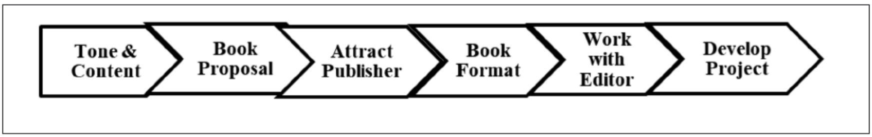

Figure 10.2: Steps in Revising Dissertation/Thesis to a Professional Book
Source: Self-generated by the Authors

Content and Tone

Conventional books will have a predictable format: foreword, preface, acknowledgments, introduction, conclusions, afterword, bibliography and resources. It should not be a surprise if you scan through professional books and discover some of these 'necessities' missing. Instead, publishers and acquisition editors of professional books are more concerned with writers being categorical on the benefits of the work to the readers. Central to this are the content and the preface. The Table of Contents displays the information in the book and also serves as a marketing tool for catalogs, reviews, and online sites. The preface frames the scope, sets the tone, and demonstrates the benefits of the book to the reader. The preface does this by stating the purpose of the book, identifying the audience, explains how the books should be used, and provides a preview of the content. Thus, the Table of Contents and preface provide a clear indication of what the reader can expect upon reading the book.

There is room for flexibility in terms of tone; the needs of the audience and the level of content will definitely shape its tone. A book on on-site in-service professional development for high school teachers will differ from a similar one for deans of schools and colleges in universities. In all situations, however, professionalism and objectivity should be the standard tone evident in all professional books.

The Book Proposal

Prior to writing the book proposal, investigate publishers who publish for the particular audience you seek to reach. There exists a broad array of such publishers including, but not limited to, trade associations, professional associations with in-house publishing divisions, and commercial publishing houses. Examine their proposal guidelines and adhere to them as you write your book proposal.

Writing the book proposal requires observing the following principles in order to make the work attractive to potential publishers:

a. Identify the 'need-to-have factor in the work: having no publication in the field is no guarantee publishers will see your proposed book's value. You have to demonstrate it. Identify the need the in the community you hope to serve – goals not being met, gaps in training, professional development or organizational knowledge and practice, etc.

b. Explain how your research addresses the needs of the community: identify the needs and interests of individual target readers, not everyone. A general broad audience means your research information ceases to be 'need-to-have'. It translates into a book that is too generic to be of use to any professional.

c. Identify competing publications: Merely indicating there are no other books in this area is no guarantee that your proposed book will be published. It may very well indicate a risk to the publishers. Instead, indicate how your book compares to other related publications in the same field.

d. Professional competence: a published writer is more attractive than a novice. Include information about your previous publications – books, book chapter, journal articles, and other periodicals. These demonstrate your writing ability and reading market that you have begun creating.

Attracting the Publisher

Books are expensive to produce and authors who have a clear understanding of the economic nuances of publishing make good clients for publishers. We cannot ignore the marketplace concerns. Besides the 'need-to-have' rationale for adopting a book, publishers will be attracted to authors who are prominent in their disciplines and give public presentations, write reviews, and provide professional development services such as in-service teacher training and professional development. Such venues become critical platforms for promoting the book.

Therefore, you must enhance your book project's attractiveness to publishers by developing a robust multipronged platform that can be leveraged to promote and market the book. This will, in the long-run, translate into higher sales and greater impact to the professional community. Include this rich and diverse array of professional connections in your book proposal.

Selecting the Book Format

It is good to remember that readers of professional books eschew academic-oriented books that tend to be text-based expositions with some graphics and statistical analyses for further illustrations. What they are looking for is knowledge transfer: a format that is quite distinct from the menu served in academic books. Authors are encouraged to think beyond the academic box when crafting the format of their proposed books. Sometimes a workbook format may work well for those seeking to have the book adopted for training. In other instances, integrating an electronic online component may work well for a book that emanates, for example, from an innovation derived from a new method of on-site in-service teacher professional development.

Working with the Editor

Once your project has been accepted by the publisher and an editor assigned, be sure to establish clear and common goals for the project. The two of you should be on the same page. Do not hesitate to ask questions and seek clarifications. Be clear about the timelines and also possibilities of extensions. Also seek clarifications on any contractual obligations on your part as well as that of the publisher.

Developing the Project

Real work begins upon securing the book contract. Each publisher will have a convention on how you will work with the acquisitions editor as you craft the draft. After the draft is completed, external review is undertaken in order to ensure the quality of the work in terms of knowledge transfer. In most cases, three to four professional peers will be asked to review the manuscript draft. Most publishers will seek reviews from both the academic and professional communities.

The author will then receive, from the editor, a synthesis of the reviewers' assessment of the manuscript along with recommendations. The task of the editor is to distill the recommendations into usable actions and to guide the author in using them to revise the manuscript. The editor also helps in determining which of the reviewers' recommendations merit considerations and those that will not necessarily improve the substance of the book. This gatekeeping role is central to the success of the book.

Conclusion

Academics all over the world place emphasis on research and publications, not only because it is presumed that research enriches both teaching and the learning process as well as contributing to the body of knowledge, but also because it is a major determinant of institutional prestige. To the academic staff, therefore, publishing achieves that dual purpose of enhancing both one's position and the status of the institution.

However, scholarly publishing in Africa is still struggling to keep pace with the rest of the world. Various reasons for this have been discussed in this chapter. We have also highlighted the issue of predatory or standalone journals which are trying to take advantage of challenges in scholarly publishing to exploit the African scholar or writer. As one of the solutions to this problem, we suggest that scholars in Africa should take advantage of the opportunities and benefits of open access journals (OAJ). These provide unlimited access to online peer-reviewed scholarly research works. They are also digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions.

Note

1 Cabell Internationa can be accessed at the following URL: https://www.cabells.com/

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