

**Report on MAGAART Workshop on
Publishing in Peer-reviewed/International Journals
10th – 12th August 2016
Organized by MAGAART Project Tribhuvan University**

Venue: Hotel Hill Side Kirtipur

Introduction

The MAGAART project has the objective to enhance capacities of partner universities in the South in developing research networks, knowledge sharing and communication under the general theme of stability, democracy and rights. The current research environment under this project as a continuation of BSU I includes ongoing PhD studies as well as a number of small-scale research projects. The challenge now is to translate the various research findings of PhD study and small grant researches into research articles for national and international peer reviewed journals across disciplines. Both novice and experienced researchers need to become competent authors while also being socialised into the publication process. This is similar to initiation rituals, especially if targeting for esteemed international journals. Many of the young authors are not exposed to the experiences of publishing in international peer reviewed journals. Similarly, even the senior faculties have some misconception about the publication rituals and the politics in it. There is no practices of conducting publication workshops in TU for encouraging the young researchers and authors for publication. This workshop thus aims to provide very practical experiences of publication in esteemed international peer reviewed journal and also to provide idea of upgrading the status of the local journal following the same procedure and the rigor as practiced in international journal.

Generally, the journal publication process can be sub-divided into different phases such as pre-submission, submission, peer review, revision, final editorial decision, proofing and publication. Success and failure can be experienced in any phase of the process, with the frustrating consequences for personal and professional development. In order to train the young researchers, and orient the supervisors, senior faculty and policy people on how an author of an international peer reviewed high ranked journal has to pass across the steps of publication process including the reviewer and editor's roles. MAGAART Project has decided to run a workshop on the ins and outs of the publication process which will include scientific/technical aspects of manuscript production as well as insights into the politics of publication in the globalised journals marketplace. In addition to discussion of illustrative exemplars of the peer review and editorial processes, there will be reflections about how to scale up locally produced journals for wider recognition in the international publication scene.

Objectives

- Orient the senior professors working in policy level and PhD supervision about the journal publication, crediting the authors and ranking of the journals in the present scenario of publication

- Provide knowledge and ideas about the overall process of ins and outs of the authors in the process of getting the article published and the politics inherent in this process.
- Motivate and inspire the young researchers into national and international publications activities with different capacities – author, reviewer, and editor.

Participants

The publication workshop was designed in two types of programme- generic session of lecture with discussion and very technical sessions with workshop mode. Generic orientation based on lecture and discussion was organized for one day (August 10). This programme was open to all. Deans of Institutes and Faculties, Directors of Research Centres, senior professors of TU and higher authorities including editors of local journals, researchers, PhD supervisors and PhD students had participated this programme. Director of Research Division of University Grant Commission Nepal(UGC Nepal) also participated in this programme. The number of participants turned out 60 in this programme. Similarly, other two days (August 11 and 12)programme was more technical and workshop oriented. The participants in this programme were from Tribhuvan University working faculties in different campuses both from Kathmandu valley and outside Kathmandu valley. The selection criteria for the participation in the workshop set by the workshop organizing working group were: active researchers (PhD as well as other), editors, authors, PhD supervisors and senior professors representing different subjects from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculty of Education. The core participants were 30 for this workshop. Out of them, 8 were from outside of Kathmandu valley. In addition, the five members of the working group also participated fully in the workshop as logistic supporter as well as participants of the programme. So, there was 35 participants in the technical workshop run on August 11 and 12 2016. Professor Srikant Sarangi from Alborg University Denmark was the resource person for the workshop.

Workshop Methods

Prof. Srikant Sarangi from the Alborg University Denmark facilitated and resourced this workshop. His long and outstanding experiences as editor of several interdisciplinary, international journals, abundance of experience on publication works as editors and experiences of conducting such workshop in different countries in the world turned out the workshop immensely successful. The method of workshop was designed addressing the culture of learning and the needs of the participants integrating Prof Sri Kant's experience and local experiences from the organizing committee. This was the first workshop of this kind in Tribhuvan University remarked by the participants.

The generic sessions were conducted through lecture and discussion. Lectures were delivered first and discussion and question answer time was offered to the participants. Different queries, issues, experiences from those who had already participated in the publication process of international journal were discussed and inputs on these were provided by Prof. Sarangi and the Director of Research Division in UGC Nepal. The discussion and question answer session was very lively and interactive.

The very technical workshop sessions were conducted providing the exercise sets,(they were so confidential and case based diversification in reviewers' and editors' response to the authors and the authors' response to reviewers and editors) to the participants. The sample articles were provided to the participants as evening assignment to the participants with given exercise sets. The participants read the articles and prepared the review comments on the article and sent to Prof. Srikant in his email. He went through the comments and the next day discussions were made on the presentation of the participants in the plenary. The participants were divided into 6 groups and each group worked collaboratively in the given assignments and presented in the plenary. The participants made presentation on their review of the articles from each group and discussed under the facilitation of the resource person. After discussion made by the participants on the given articles, the real reviewer comments and editors administration to the reviewers' comments were provided in the group as group work to reflect upon whether their comments matched to the real reviewer comments. By this procedure, case base presentations and reflections were made in the workshop. Each day the session was summarized and an assignment was provided to the participants for the next day activities.

Response and Reflection over the Programme

The Vice-Chancellor in his inaugural speech remarked that the contribution made by MAGAART Project by making the possibility of presenting such a highly esteemed scholar, Prof. SrikantSarangi, to run the workshop is noteworthy. He added that such scholars are rarely available and this is the great opportunity to the participants to learn. He inspired the participants to take benefit as much as they can from the resource person. He expressed the best wishes for the success of the programme with highlighting the value of research in higher education and about priority given to research in TU and the great relevance of such programme.

The Rector of Tribhuvan University who looks after the academic programme in Tribhuvan University and the Director of the Research Division from University Grant Commission Nepal expressed that this workshop is highly valuable and relevant to the present context. The Director explained the UGC policy on research in higher education and the new initiative taken to execute the policy among the universities in Nepal in his inaugural speech. He spoke about the publication policy, journal ranking and upgrading of the local journal and requirement of publication for PhD. The notable thing is he has circulated his participation in social media such as facebook is presented below.

Attended the inaugural sessions of the "MAGAART Workshop on Publishing in Peer-reviewed/International Journals" organized by the Tribhuvan University yesterday (August 10, 2016). It's a three-day workshop conducted by Prof. ShrikantSarangi (Aalborg University, Denmark).

I spoke about the policy and programs of the UGC regarding research publication. I shared major policy shift in recognizing the peer-reviewed journals. For example, We do not anymore classify scholarly journals as national journal and international journal. We now distinguish them as ranked (JCR Impact Factor or SJR Ranking) journals and non-ranked peer-reviewed journals. I also shared

about our plan to draft an UGC Guideline for Minimum Standard for Peer-Reviewed Journals and our existing programs to support research publications.

I also had a chance to interact with the guests and the participants. It was encouraging to learn about several reforms the Rector, Prof. SudhaTripathi, is spearheading at the TU.

(Photo courtesy: Man Khattri)



Posted on August 12, 2016

The interesting observation is the commitment, dedication, interest and motivation among the participants. During these three days, from 9 am – 4:30 pm, none of the participants even missed a single second. All participated actively and did all the assignments with due value. The other important situation is that of the composition of the group – senior professors, editors of local journals, young faculties and PhD students, Assistant Deans- a mixed of heterogeneity in academic career path. Usually, to run workshop is such a heterogeneous group is really a difficult task for the facilitator and the organizer but it became possible here in Nepal, was the observation of Prof. Srikant Sarangi. The dedication, commitment, interest and professional needs made this possible. The academic culture so far seen in this workshop is praiseworthy, remarked Prof. Srikant.

The participants' interest was so high and were highly impressed by the presentation and the behavior of the resource person. There was no problem of communication between the participants and the resource person. During coffee/tea break and lunch time, participants circled Prof. Sarangi for discussion and query related to the immediate session. Even a single second was squandered during the scheduled period. The three days were fully utilized and as if it was a short day for the participants. Participants, in their observation remarks to the overall management and contents of the workshop and the way workshop was conducted, expressed that it was amazingly beneficial and there

was hardly to find inadequacies. There was some misplacing of the reading materials, that was also became strategically useful that the workshop was modified accordingly, said the participants.

In the concluding session, four participants as representatives of the group spoke about the programme. They mentioned the best things learned are:

- How complicated things can be delivered making simple through the presentation of Prof. Sarangi, a great learning.
- Simplicity seen in the outstanding personality and his encouraging behavior is imitable for the professional career.
- Confidence boost up for being a good author in the future having the knowledge about the publication process and politics inherent.
- Considered this workshop as 'symbol' of learning for professional career
- Showed commitment to bring the learned knowledge into use in their respective professional life
- Metaphorically expressed that the way they behave in the workshop as they behaved in their school year to their teachers and inspired them to recall the memory of the past school year 'student', learned a lot and saw the ways one need to go ahead as professional.

Prof. Srikant Sarangi, as his own experience of the three days' workshop, expressed that all including himself was the participants and it was awesome event that different professional with diverse in professional ranks became possible to sit in a group and work together in a workshop came out successful is a learning to him. Despite a very heterogeneous group of participants, a workshop like this became possible is one additional learning. The enthusiasm and commitment seen in the group was praiseworthy and this made the workshop possible even in the group of heterogeneity. Prof Saragi conveyed a message in the workshop that he would love to keep in touch in future in organizing such and other type of workshop in Nepal. He further inspired the participants saying that the success of the workshop depends upon the number of publications in international peer reviewed journal that he expect to be made by the people participating in the workshop and hoped to see in future.

The programme schedule is given below.

**Tribhuvan University
MAGAART Project
Workshop On
Publishing in Peer-reviewed/International Journals
10th – 12th August 2016**

Programme

Wednesday, 10 August 2016

- 08.00 – 08:45 Breakfast
- 08:45 – 09:00 Workshop Inauguration
- 09.00 – 10.00 Introduction and scene-setting: The marketplace of international journals
- 10.00 – 10.15 Coffee break
- 10.15 – 11.00 Key milestones in the journal publication journey (impact, impact factors and co-authorships)
- 11.00 – 12.00 Profiling manuscripts and journals: Moving from local/national publishing to international publishing
- 12.00 – 13.00 Lunch break
- 13.00 – 14.00 Brief presentations from participants: publishing experiences and future plans
- 14.00 – 14.15 Coffee break
- 14.15 – 16.00 Pre-submission and submission phases: cases concerning procedural matters
- 16.00 – 16:30 Preparation for assignment 1 and concluding of the day's sessions

Thursday, 11 August 2016

- 08.15 – 09:00 Breakfast
- 09.00 – 10.30 Discussion of assignment 1 (handed out on Wednesday 10 August)
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee Break
- 11.00 – 12.30 The peer review process: doing a manuscript review
- 12.30 – 13.15 Lunch break
- 13.15 – 15.00 Examples of editorial interventions: from submission to publication/rejection
- 15.00 – 15.15 Coffee break
- 15.15 – 16.00 The authorial stance in the review process
- 16.00 – 16.30 Concluding of the day's sessions

Friday, 12 August 2016

08.15 – 09:00 Breakfast
09.00 – 10.30 Discussion of assignment 2 (handed out on Thursday 11 August)
10.30 – 10.45 Coffee break
10.45 – 12.00 Novice and non-native dimensions in international publishing
12.00 – 13.00 Lunch break
13.00 – 14.30 The anatomy of a journal article
14.30 – 14.45 Coffee break
14.45 – 16.00 Discussion of emergent themes
16:00 – 16:30 Concluding of the Workshop