

From piqued to published

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THE TITLE WAS
ACTUALLY
SUGGESTED BY
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OUI LANGUAGE
CONSULTANT.

It's often time-consuming and frustrating but eventually rewarding. And by 'it' I mean writing and publishing scientific articles, an important part of research work.

Getting an article published in a peer-reviewed journal involves many steps and a good deal of waiting. First, of course, one has to come up with the initial idea for the manuscript. In my own research on indigenous peoples in international politics, the starting-point has often been a certain irritation or disturbing feeling I have had about something in my research material, indicating that there is a need to take a closer look at the issue

The writing process itself involves countless drafts, seminars and conference presentations and, most importantly, colleagues reading and commenting on the text. Choosing the right journal to submit to is important, not only in terms of its scope, but also its specific requirements, which are useful to check beforehand. Since my doctoral dissertation is written in English and I have submitted articles to international journals, getting a language check done on the manuscript is part of the preparation process. Normally, the person doing the language check does two rounds of corrections and this also involves a lot of clarifications on the level of individual words and sentences – a tedious but necessary stage in getting the paper ready for submission.

In the best-case scenario, once the paper is submitted to the journal, the reviewers' comments and editors' decision arrive within a few months. The fastest decision that I have ever received was within a week – the editors rejected the paper because it did not fit the scope of the journal – and the slowest process has taken over two years so far, including my resubmitting a revised version that now awaits the editors' (hopefully) final decision.

I LIKE THIS
DETAIL HERE.

I have received all kinds of decisions from editors. Usually, the best one can hope for is that they ask you to revise the paper according to the reviewers' suggestions and then resubmit it. This is the decision that I have received most often. At this point, there is still no guarantee that the paper will eventually be accepted for publication, and it will usually go for another round of reviews. Thus, there is still plenty of work ahead, but good reviewer comments are motivating in the revising work. My experience with reviewer feedback is mostly positive. I have received comments that have benefited my research and writing ever since. For example, it has become my guiding principle, following one reviewer's substantial yet very practical comments, to always clearly state what the paper that I am writing claims, what it builds on and what it offers. I have been impressed by the amount of time, thought and work that most of the reviewers have taken in reading and commenting on my papers. Like most authors, I have also had papers rejected. Even though a rejection is always disappointing, it has to be taken as part of the job. I have found rejections easier to deal with now that I have experience of the publication process and more confidence in my work.

THIS WAS
IMPORTANT
ADDITION TO
THE FIRST
DRAFT.

Usually a lot of time passes between the acceptance of an article and its actual publication. I have sometimes felt that the article is outdated in parts by the time it comes out because I have already moved on with my research. However, persevering with the process and having the published article in your hands is rewarding. It is also one of the rare occasions as a researcher when you can actually see the product of your work.