

institutions' experiences and challenges on ethics of publishing

lessons from 10 years of growth in research output

In December 2013, Nobel Prize-winning physicist Peter Higgs made a startling announcement. “Today I wouldn't get an academic job,” [he told](#) *The Guardian*. “It's as simple as that. I don't think I would be regarded as productive enough.”

Higgs noted that quantity, not quality, is the metric by which success in the sciences is measured. Unlike in 1964, when he was hired, scientists are now pressured to churn out as many papers as possible in order to retain their jobs. Had he not been nominated for the Nobel, Higgs says, he would have been fired. His scientific discovery was made possible by his era's relatively lax publishing norms, which left him time to think, dream, and discover.

The purposes of Scholarly Publishing

Besides the fun of it!!

creation of scholarly writings

evaluation of quality

dissemination to other scholars

preservation of scholarly knowledge

What do these mean?

ALL FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

Success of Scholarly Publishing depends on

high level expertise

research/research funding

peer review – a community of scholars

a publishing industry that is accessible to scholars

scholarly publishing that is accessible

effective data and publishing warehouses

PUBLIC CULTURE THAT ENGAGES SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING

Scholarly Publishing is a SYSTEM of production

national priorities

nature of knowledge project(s)?
what kinds of universities do we want?
is collaboration a good thing?

research funding systems

steering systems
shaping the sociology of research
powerful form of differentiation

organisation of research enterprises

research groups, CoEs, research hierarchies

sustainability of research measures

human capacity, technology and infrastructure base, research funding

CONDUCTIVE CONDITIONS

The experiences of universities

national policy pushes and pulls

- produce more doctorates
- targets for staff with doctorates
- produce more publications – in these journals
- pressure for local engagement
- compete for NRF grants on predetermined conditions

Impact of steering mechanisms

global pressures with local implications

- ratings systems
- research funding
- competition for academics

THESE SHAPE INSTITUTIONAL
CONDITIONS

Lo and Behold...steering has worked!!!!

Tripled research outputs in last 10 years

More than doubled the production of doctorates

BUT NOT WITHOUT SERIOUS CHALLENGES

Perverse consequences

Plethora of incentive schemes

- Neglect of teaching
- Poor publishing habits
- Reports of plagiarism

Plethora of disincentive schemes

- Collaborative publishing
- Articulation across the system
- Inter- and multi-disciplinarity
- Engagement

Quantity, Quantity,
Quantity

What is to be done?

Return to a quality paradigm

Encourage universities to find alternative ways to incentivise research

Incentivise engagement as a site of research and knowledge production

Move towards team-based research funding – in national/international peer-reviewed centres. The development of ethical researchers is an organic journey.

Should we think about training programmes of various kinds for research administrators and researchers.

The Future

We have moved from an elite system to a massified one. What are implications of this?

As a global exercise, should we review peer review mechanisms?

How are we to address the shifting technological terrain?

Quality versus Relevance?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**