

Editorial

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Assigning Full -time Managing Editor for Sustainable, Accredited, and Indexed Journal

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In 2019 (2012 E.C.), the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (Former MoSHE) introduced national journal accreditation system to enhance the number of scientific journals that publish quality works. Accordingly, it accredited 16 journals among 34 submitted for accreditation. The Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences and Language Studies (EJSSLS) is one of the first nationally accredited journals. Since its accreditation in December 2020 (2013E.C.), the number of manuscripts contributed to the journal has been increasing and this in turn has increased the burden of the editorial board members in general and the editor-in-chiefs and managing editor's in particular. This editorial focuses on the role the managing editor plays and suggests the importance of assigning a full-time managing editor.

In many local public universities, the journal management burden is shouldered either by the editor-in-chief or the managing editor or by both. In the case of the EJSSLS, practically, for many years the editor-in-chief has been burdened with the responsibilities of discharging the duties of the managing editor, layout editor, language editor, reference editor, and copy editor. Now, after the journal has been accredited, he is working with the current managing editor that is also busy with the teaching, research, and community service responsibilities. To manage the large number of manuscripts submitted online to the journal, to keep the journal accredited nationally, to apply for indexing, and to increase the issue of the journal as well as the number of manuscripts within an issue, assigning a full-time managing editor is compulsory.

The role committed managing editor plays in speeding-up the review process is boundless. Without the help of a full time managing editor, the editor-in-chief and the current managing editor alone cannot discharge their responsibilities successfully. From the manuscript submission to an issue release stages they work hand-in-hand. According to the policy of the journal, at the preliminary review stage, the managing editor checks whether the submitted manuscript is in the scope and policy of the journal. Manuscripts out of the scope and the policy of the journal are automatically subjected to rejection within three days. Within similar days, manuscript contributors must be notified about the arrival of their manuscripts. Next, the managing editor sends the

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manuscripts to the concerned editorial board members for the preliminary review process. However, practically, because of the large numbers of manuscripts submitted to the journal, the burden of the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, and the editorial board members, this could not be actualized within the set three days, or even months. When the manuscript passes the preliminary review process stage, the managing editor sends it to blind peer reviewers. On top of that the managing editor has to remind the reviewers and contributors to speed up the review and amendment process respectively. Accepted manuscripts are sent to layout editor, reference editor, language editor, copy-editor, the editor-in-chief, and the editorial board members. These and other unmentioned managing editor's routine endeavors need full time commitment.

Furthermore, to attract international papers and to enhance publication quality, nationally accredited journals are encouraged to be indexed in well-established indexing agents like SCOPUS, and this calls for committed full time managing editor (s). Otherwise after the journal has been indexed, its chance of being removed from the index is very likely. Nevertheless, it could be removed from the list of journals accredited nationally. Nonetheless, the office term of the editor-in-chief (four years) and the managing editor (three years) are over. The former one has served for more than nine years and the latter for three years. Both of them have appealed for leaving the position. Therefore, to sustain the journal as accredited and to start the indexing process, assigning a full-time managing editor is a must.

The success of the journal is also dependent on the commitment of the editorial board members. With the current living standard these editors need motivational tips (for example work load consideration). In connection to this, to motivate the editor-in-chief and the associate editor (managing editor) taxed 3500 and 2000 Birr are paid respectively on a monthly basis. However, reconsidering this payment is mandatory. Otherwise, expecting sustainable accredited and indexed journal becomes an illusion. This in turn affects the image and rank of Jimma University locally, regionally, and internationally. Therefore, as the journal's office is accountable to the AC of the college, the dean of the college has to present the case to the AC and the office of Vice President for Research and Community Services.

The editor