

Editorial

THE ACADEMIA – a need-based multidisciplinary bilingual journal

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The mankind has been to accelerate the pace of expansion of our knowledge base. Prior to the 19th century, the doubling interval might have been measured in centuries or even millennia. In the early 1900s, the knowledge doubling interval was estimated at about 100 years, reflecting relatively linear scientific progress, but by the mid-1900s, with the advent of modern technologies like the printing press, telecommunication, and more formalized research, the interval shrank to around 25 years. IBM's 2006 estimate claimed that knowledge was doubling approximately every 11 months, driven by technological advancements and data growth, while a 2011 study by McKenzie (2011) and others suggested that human knowledge was doubling at an accelerating pace, with estimates ranging from 2 years to 12 months depending on the field, reflecting the exponential nature of knowledge expansion in the digital era (McKenzie, 2011). The exact data, definition and relevance of such knowledge can be debated, but it is a fact that the pace of generation of knowledge has become faster.

Experiments and research works are primary drivers of the generation of the human knowledge. As the human knowledge is facilitated by an organized language (Chomsky, 1965), so is by the communications and related publications (Bourdieu, 1993). The accompanying increase in the number of journals and other publications supports this idea.

In the early 20th century, the number of scholarly journals worldwide was relatively modest, with only about one thousand journals being published. However, as scientific research flourished and technological advancements in communication and printing technologies emerged, the number of journals began to rise. By the mid-20th century, around the 1950s, this number had increased to approximately ten thousand journals (Garfield, 1979). This was a period marked by the professionalization of research and a growing interest in scientific inquiry across disciplines.

The acceleration of scholarly publishing continued through the latter half of the century. By 1990, the number of academic journals had surged to over twenty-five thousand, a trend driven by global communication advancements, the increased volume of research being conducted worldwide, and the ease of distributing printed materials (Larivière, et al., 2015). This period saw the rise of specialized journals in

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various fields of study, which contributed significantly to the explosion of knowledge and scholarly collaboration across national and disciplinary boundaries.

The advent of digital publishing and the rise of the open access movement at the end of the 20th century and into the early 21st century marked another transformative phase in academic publishing. Digital platforms allowed for faster distribution of research, while the open access model made scholarly publications more accessible to a wider audience, including researchers in developing countries and the general public. One notable example of this trend is the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), which, since its inception in 2003, has grown from a few hundred journals to over seventeen thousand open access journals (Suber, 2012). This shift reflects the growing importance of accessibility and democratization of academic knowledge.

Similarly, PubMed, a key database for biomedical literature, illustrates the tremendous increase in the quantity and accessibility of research in specialized fields. In the 1990s, PubMed indexed around four lakh articles; by 2023, it had expanded to include over 35 million articles, highlighting the exponential growth of research output in the life sciences and medicine (DOAJ, 2023). This rapid increase reflects both the accelerating pace of scientific discovery and the corresponding rise in the volume of published literature.

The exponential increase in the number of scholarly articles published each year further demonstrates the growth of academic knowledge. According to Elsevier (2019), a major academic publisher, the number of scholarly articles published annually reached approximately 3 million globally by 2019. This marked a dramatic rise from the two lakh articles published annually in 1950. The surge in academic publications can be attributed to various factors, including the proliferation of digital publishing platforms, the global expansion of research funding, and the growing need for scientific information across industries.

Our scholars want to be part of such a process, for which they need an opportunity to publish their works. Although there are thousands of journals as mentioned above, getting articles is quite difficult, especially those written in English as a second language, or in Nepali. As a response we have decided to publish THE ACADEMIA as a multidisciplinary, bilingual journal of National University Teachers' Association of Nepal, Central Committee. As the journal is being published online, writing in either of Nepali or English do not add extra costs to the readers of the other language. We hope this initiative helps to address to some extent the rapidly growing need for publication of articles of its members and other academicians in diverse fields. This peer-reviewed journal provides a platform for scholars to publish meaningful insights into the multiple issues. This journal is published online with non-profit motif to bring research works in the frontline, and we are sure it is an ongoing initiative in this field.

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