

Editorial

So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye!

Nikhilesh Vaid

Department of Orthodontics, European University Dental College, Dubai Healthcare City, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



*Corresponding author:

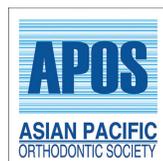
Nikhilesh Vaid,
Department of Orthodontics,
European University Dental
College, Dubai Healthcare City,
Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

apospublications@gmail.com

Received : 23 August 2020
Accepted : 23 August 2020
Published : 18 September 2020

DOI
10.25259/APOS_141_2020

Quick Response Code:



So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye!

“The sun has gone to bed and so must I

So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye”

- Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein – *Sound of Music*.^[1]

This will be my last editorial as the Editor-in-Chief of APOS Trends in Orthodontics, and I pen it down with a bittersweet emotion. I could not have thought of anything other than my favorite goodbye song to start it – *symbolic of a little child's right brain not wanting to go to bed, but his left brain telling him that it is the best thing to do now!*^[2] No activity in professional workspace has given me as much pleasure as seeing this journal conceptualize, come into existence and now blossom. The articles published in the journal have received recognition and citations, and this trend will be on the upswing in times to come. Prof Liou and his team will undoubtedly shepherd the journal to metrics unseen!

As I crystal gaze into the future of orthodontic publications, I do envisage this decade (2020–2030) will see newer formats. We will view scholarly publications in attractive formats and not just read them as PDFs on digital platforms! Digital Technology and Artificial Intelligence^[2,3] driven processes are making a foray into orthodontic diagnostic, mechanical, and calibration methods – file formats that allow viewing data across different interfaces will be commonplace in less than the foreseeable future! A classic case in point is probably having STL files accompanying manuscripts along with 2D images in research papers that are analyzing 3D imaging/scan data.

Research findings for those seeking them will be more accessible. Most journals are tipping toward either a free or a hybrid access platform. Social media groups and Blogs that analyze contemporary literature are another source of scientific conversation that is not just based on empiricism, even though not evidence-based entirely. This trend has rapidly gained popularity and will be integral to scientific interaction! How does this augur for all the stakeholders? The authors/researchers, peer-reviewers, editors, libraries, academic institutions, publishing houses, and often forgotten in these discussions – the specialty and the readers!

The traditional academic publishing business model as it exists has been shouting through the roof, demanding change for some time now. It is “anachronistic in today's digital, connected world.”^[4] Continually increasing publishing costs coupled with continued lack of access to published science for academics and non-academics alike have been strong factors influencing this discussion. I do get asked by colleagues, even today, “I don't have access to this particular research, can you source it for me?” In a world, where technology has made boundaries and

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

©2019 Published by Scientific Scholar on behalf of APOS Trends in Orthodontics

paywalls irrelevant,^[5] why should there be barriers to accessing science? Are we not all about benefitting the care seekers ultimately? Should not every clinician have access to every piece of information that can help them render the best possible peer-reviewed evidence-based care to their patients? These are questions that technological trends are answering, before the stakeholders are. Elbakyan, the founder of Sci-Hub (which is the largest free access repository of published manuscripts-albeit illegally), cites the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “all have the right to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.” Sci-Hub currently hosts more than 50 million manuscripts and dispenses 28 million articles over a 6-month period. It is popular across scientific disciplines and around the world; even at wealthy universities and for scholars who find Sci-Hub more convenient than legally circumventing the often cumbersome paywalls of their university libraries from home or at the office.^[6] APOS Trends, when commissioned by the Asian Pacific Orthodontic Society, was intended to be free access as a commitment to the specialty and has stayed that way since.

Another intriguing development in scholarly publishing over the last few years has apparently made case for “decoupled journals,” something I anticipate will happen in orthodontic publishing too. The functions of scholarly journals are now also done independently by third parties, making the scholarly journal less and less vital to the publication process.^[7] After the manuscript is written, the first step in the publication process is submission. This step can now be handled by posting a pre-print. A growing number of disciplinary repositories accept pre-prints and other manuscripts, as well as offer some kind of version control. The original pre-print server, arXiv.org, has seen incredible growth in recent years, including documents from an expanding number of academic subjects. Support from libraries across the world is helping to ensure its sustainability. After submission, manuscripts are typically reviewed by peers selected by editors or suggested by the authors. Third party peer-review systems and open review processes are now taking this on. Authors can now seek out independent reviewers through services such as Rubriq, Axios, and others. These services coordinate the peer-review (sometimes even paying reviewers!) and authors can take the reviews with them. Open review sites such as PubPeer can provide feedback on papers, allowing authors to make updates and improvements (especially if version control is provided). It will probably be a great idea in future for journals to have decoupled versions of articles that have additional data that is not blinded. Readers can then view reviewers comments, rebuttals, corrections made, and even raw data that enables an in-depth analysis. If there is one breed of stakeholders in this process, who are the unsung heroes that make scholarly publishing meaningful, they are the reviewers. This way

perhaps, their contributions will be recognized too. APOS Trends started to recognize its reviewers by awarding their contributions at the bi-annual journal awards.^[8]

The journal metrics and reputation have always been synonymous with quality of a journal. The ugly truths of some very reputable journals and the impact this notion of quality can have on health care have been exposed very recently due to drug trials published in the heat of the global pandemic.^[9] Control of published information by a cartel is a genuine concern that passes off under the veil of metrics of a reputed journal, or its geographical location. This is another phenomenon that will probably see more democratization in the near future. Trends that explore alternative metric strategies that include article level metrics (pioneered by PLOS) and alternative metrics (*like Altmetric or PlumAnalytics*) are a step in the right direction and will see more development.

Orthodontic manuscripts in the 21st century in general and in the last decade particularly have focused on synthesizing existing evidence. This publishing of synthesis largely, inspired by the desire to improve metrics, has seen many journals solely focus on the tip of the evidence pyramid, and ignore the “evidence funnel concept” or even primary data that might be so integral to a clinical specialty like ours!^[10] The surge in systematic reviews and meta-analysis in orthodontic journals recently is encouraging, however, we also see a trend sometimes, where the number of original prospective trials is outnumbered by the number of systematic reviews published on a given topic. This poses more questions about the relevance of the written word than answers.^[11] Is the metric driven drive to “publish or perish” fuelling this? I sincerely hope not!

As I hang up my editorial gloves, am I writing an early obituary for scholarly journals as we know of them? Of course not! Orthodontics has always been a vibrant specialty with a “*soul*” that has embraced change pro-actively and judiciously amalgamated its written word to address both the “wet fingered clinician” and the “academic pencil pusher” keeping the needs of our patients paramount.^[12] The future will also walk this tight rope judiciously – only the formats that we know of might change!

REFERENCES

1. Available from: https://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/So_Long,_Farewell. [Last accessed on 2020 Aug 18].
2. Vaid NR. Up in the air: Orthodontic technology unplugged? APOS Trends Orthod 2017;7:1-5.
3. Vaid NR. Digital technologies in orthodontics. Semin Orthod 2018;24:373-75.
4. Siler K. Future challenges and opportunities in academic publishing. Can J Sociol 2017;42:83-114.
5. Vaid N. The orthodontic world is flat? APOS Trends Orthod

- 2019;9:65-7.
6. Bohannon J. Who's Downloading Pirated Papers? Everyone. Science; 2016. Available from: <http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/04/whos-downloading-pirated-papers-everyone>. [Last accessed on 2016 Jul 25].
 7. Swoger B. Does the Scientific Journal Have a Future? Scientific American; 2014. Available from: <https://www.blogs.scientificamerican.com/information-culture/does-the-scientific-journal-have-a-future>. [Last accessed on 2020 Aug 18].
 8. Vaid N. Egg tarts and some crystal gazing? APOS Trends Orthod 2019;9:198-200.
 9. Sharav V. Lancet editor spills the beans. Deemagclinic; 2020. Available from: <https://www.deemagclinic.com/2020/06/14/lancet-editor-spills-the-beans>. [Last accessed on 2020 Aug 18].
 10. Vaid NR. Oh-that's just a case report? Clin Orthod 2020;19:7-8.
 11. Krishnan V. Evidence synthesis- curtail, introspect, and transform. J World Fed Orthod.2020;9:99-100. doi.org/10.1016/j.ejwf.2020.07.003.
 12. Bowman SJ. One-stage versus two-stage treatment: Are two really necessary? Am J Orthod Dentofac Orthop 1998;113:111-6.

How to cite this article: Vaid N. So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye! APOS Trends Orthod 2020;10(3):139-41.