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Postprint: An Exploration of Enhancing the Academic Impact of *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion*

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Abstract

Reviewing the development history of water conservancy science and technology journals in China, established journals are mostly leading publications, while new journals highlight disciplinary, regional, and column characteristics. The readership and citation metrics of water conservancy science and technology journals in online dissemination continue to grow. Water conservancy science and technology journals play a pivotal role in the development of water conservancy undertakings, serving as a communication platform for grassroots, technical, and research personnel in the water conservancy industry to understand the latest water conservancy engineering technologies and development trends. This article takes the magazine *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* as a research sample, employing bibliometric methods to conduct a quantitative study on the papers published in the journal from 2015 to 2020 from the aspects of articles, authors, and citations, and provides an in-depth analysis. The study shows that the basic indicators of the journal meet the standards of excellent journals, but there remain considerable gaps compared with Chinese core journals. Based on this, corresponding countermeasures are proposed on how to enhance the journal' s academic influence.

Full Text

Preamble

Title: Exploring Strategies to Enhance the Academic Influence of *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion*

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Abstract: This paper reviews the development trajectory of water resources science and technology journals in China, noting that established titles often serve as leading publications while newer journals emphasize disciplinary, regional, and column-specific characteristics. Readership and citation metrics for water resources journals continue to grow in the context of online dissemination. Water resources science and technology journals play a pivotal role in the development of the water sector, serving as a vital platform for grassroots practitioners, technical personnel, and researchers to stay informed about the latest engineering technologies and industry trends. Taking *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* as a case study, this research employs bibliometric methods to conduct a quantitative analysis of papers published in the journal from 2015 to 2020, examining publication volume, authorship, and citation patterns. The findings indicate that while the journal' s fundamental metrics meet the standards for excellence, significant gaps remain compared with Chinese core journals. Based on these results, corresponding strategies for enhancing the journal' s academic influence are proposed.

Keywords: science and technology journals; online dissemination; water resources engineering technology; industry-specific; academic influence

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1. Journal Data Analysis

Water resources science and technology journals play a crucial role in advancing water science and technology and facilitating in-depth water resources research. With the advent of the digital and integrated media era and the impact of new-era water science and technology development, these journals must maintain their distinctive characteristics while pursuing specialization to ensure sustainable development. *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* is a specialized water resources science and technology journal in Henan Province that reports on water resources developments and serves as a comprehensive platform for exchanging water engineering technologies. This study selects issues 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 from the 2020 volume as samples for analysis, offering insights on enhancing the journal' s academic influence through relevant data examination.

1.1.1 Column Statistics Analysis

To comprehensively understand the journal' s editorial characteristics and academic research orientation, this study conducted a statistical analysis of article volume across its regular columns, as presented in Table 1 . The data reveal that the columns with the highest publication volumes are "Construction Technology," "Engineering Construction and Management," "Survey and Design," and "Hydrology and Water Resources," with most contributions submitted by constructors, designers, and managers within the water resources system.

1.1.2 Article Volume Analysis

Article volume represents a key indicator of a journal' s information capacity, referring to the number of discipline-specific papers published within a given period. A higher article volume generally indicates richer information content. The article volume statistics for *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* are shown in Table 2 . The selected sample issues contain 256 articles, representing a slight increase compared with the 2019 volume (231 articles). This reflects the journal' s relatively stable manuscript supply and its ability to maintain consistent, slightly growing publication volume, which also demonstrates its established academic influence and stable author base.

1.2.1 Author Institution Distribution

As a nationally distributed journal, *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* attracts a diverse author pool from across the country. The distribution of author institutions is detailed in Table 3 . The data indicate that the majority of contributors come from survey and design institutes (or companies) and scientific research academies (80 authors), followed by water resources bureaus (or water management stations) with 53 authors. Water resources project management bureaus (or construction bureaus) and reservoir management bureaus (or irrigation district management bureaus) also contribute significantly, with 36 and 34 authors respectively. Other contributors include water resources-related companies (33 authors) and relevant provincial department units (23 authors). These figures demonstrate that frontline water resources practitioners constitute the primary author group, though greater efforts are needed to encourage submissions from universities and research institutions.

1.2.2 Author Regional Distribution

The regional distribution of authors is presented in Table 4 . The data show that 247 of the 369 authors are from within Henan Province, with the remaining contributors primarily from Xinjiang, Guizhou, and Jiangxi. This indicates that while the journal maintains nationwide influence, its author base remains concentrated in its home province.

1.3.1 Citation Type Analysis

The distribution of citation types in the journal is shown in Table 5 . Citations are predominantly drawn from journal articles (881 citations, accounting for 90%), followed by dissertations (41 citations) and books (10 citations). The high citation volume demonstrates authors' rigorous research attitudes and the journal' s robust engagement with existing literature.

1.3.2 Citation Language Analysis

The language distribution of citations is presented in Table 6 . Chinese-language citations total 921, representing approximately 97.56% of all citations, while foreign-language citations number only 23 (2.44%). This suggests that authors primarily reference domestic sources and that capacity to absorb and utilize foreign references and research achievements requires further strengthening.

2. Recommendations for Enhancing Academic Influence

In light of the characteristics of water resources journals, *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* should focus on improving manuscript quality, academic standards, talent teams, reviewer expertise, and digital publishing to enhance its dissemination capacity and international influence. Specific recommendations are as follows.

2.1 Clarify Journal Positioning and Editorial Direction

Industry-specific journals must conduct accurate analysis and judgment of their publication content, direction, and target author and readership groups, formulating practical editorial missions based on their resource endowments. *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* is a specialized water resources science and technology journal in Henan Province that guides water resources work and facilitates technical exchanges. Since its founding in 1956, the journal has adhered to the mission of "publicizing, implementing, and enforcing the Party and state' s water resources policies, laws, and regulations; guiding water resources construction; disseminating advanced technologies; commending outstanding individuals; facilitating domestic and international exchange of water resources management models; actively guiding industry development; exploring new approaches for water resources economics; and serving socialist material and spiritual civilization construction and Henan' s economic development." This clear positioning has enabled it to become a well-known and influential water resources specialty journal, indexed by CNKI, Wanfang, and other databases, and recognized as a "Henan First-Class Natural Science Journal" and "Top Twenty Journal."

2.2 Pursue Professional Development to Expand Influence

Science and technology journals must adapt to contemporary demands to achieve specialization. First, editors must strengthen their knowledge base and continuously improve professional capabilities to enhance their scientific and technological literacy. Second, academic editing and copyediting functions should be separated to maximize value through specialized expertise. Third, strict separation of editing and proofreading must be implemented to ensure quality. Finally, editorial and business operations should be distinguished. *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* conducts biweekly editorial training sessions on the latest proofreading standards and summarizes issues in editorial work. To guarantee manuscript quality, the editorial department strictly adheres to proofreading systems and continuously improves editorial procedures.

2.3 Define Scope and Expand Quality Manuscript Sources

Topic selection represents the concrete manifestation of publication content. Carefully planned topics provide a platform for promoting healthy water resources development. Topic selection should be focused, professional, and highlight key strengths while avoiding being overly broad or scattered. As a water resources industry journal, *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* has established the latest developments in frontline water resources work and scientific research as its central editorial theme. Around this theme, the journal should fully tap into resources from water resources systems, research institutes, schools, and societies, planning topics based on current major events, priorities, and hot issues. Quality manuscript sources can be expanded through various means, including specialized lectures, academic seminars, and thematic solicitation activities.

2.4 Implement Review System to Enhance Academic Quality

In the new era, centered on water resources development goals, the journal must adhere to the principle of "content is king" and "doing some things while refraining from others." It should carefully establish characteristic columns, continuously accumulate manuscript resources, and build a stable author base. All resources and efforts must be concentrated on strict quality control, with rigorous implementation of the review system to build a responsible expert review team. This will continuously improve academic quality and influence, creating distinctive editorial features.

2.5 Optimize Column Design to Highlight Journal Characteristics

Column design reflects a journal's editorial mission. Science and technology journals must not only select appropriate columns but also maintain high-quality columns with long-term stability while emphasizing characteristic columns to

avoid homogenization. Based on its positioning and scope, *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* has optimized its content and established fixed columns including "Farmland Water Conservancy," "Hydrology and Water Resources," "Hydropower," "Construction Technology," "Engineering Construction and Management," "Survey and Design," "Informatization," and "Hundred Schools Forum." Beyond maintaining these fixed characteristic columns, the journal should launch special planning columns centered on hot issues and major projects in the industry, such as "Water Education," "Water Culture," "South-to-North Water Diversion," "Safety Production," and "Most Beautiful Water Resources Professionals."

2.6 Specialize Editorial Team and Improve Proofreading Procedures

The editorial team constitutes the core strength of a journal, with editors' professional and academic 素养 representing a crucial guarantee of quality. A qualified water resources journal editor must possess solid political 素养 and professional competencies. Political 素养 requires adherence to correct political orientation, Marxist publishing perspectives, and socialist core values. Professional 素养 first requires dedicated editors with sound professional ethics and standards. Second, editors must adapt to contemporary demands, continuously improving their professional capabilities and water resources literacy. *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* holds biweekly editorial business meetings to study the latest proofreading standards and summarize editorial issues. To ensure manuscript quality, the editorial department strictly follows proofreading systems and continuously improves procedures.

2.7 Leverage Modern Digital Technology to Enhance Digital Publishing Capacity

In the era of media convergence and digital media, *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* must continuously adapt to media convergence characteristics, understand new media development patterns, and master new media technologies. The journal should actively learn and utilize modern digital technologies for content editing and processing, achieving digitization in content production, management processes, product forms, and dissemination channels. This will provide readers with more professional, diversified, and precise services.

2.8 Establish Professional Reviewer Database

Journal quality plays a vital role in development, and professional reviewers serve as important gatekeepers for manuscripts. As a specialized water resources journal, *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* should select experts and technical professionals who are proficient in water resources disciplines, experienced in reviewing, responsible, fair and objective, and familiar with science and technology journal development patterns. The journal should establish a reviewer database and regularly hold expert meetings to learn and

convey the latest disciplinary information and journal editorial policies, achieving specialization, informatization, and dynamism in peer review.

In summary, facing the rise of new media, water resources science and technology journals in the new era must continuously study the situation, adapt to new environments, and adopt targeted measures to enhance influence while ensuring quality. The analysis of selected 2020 issues of *Henan Water Resources and South-to-North Water Diversion* demonstrates that its recognition and influence are increasing year by year, though gaps remain compared with Chinese core science and technology journals. Therefore, continued efforts in column design, topic scope, editorial teams, reviewer expertise, and digital publishing are necessary to enhance academic influence and establish the journal as a premier platform for showcasing and exchanging water resources science and technology achievements.

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