

Lengthy Peer Review Times: What should be Done?

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ABSTRACT: *Peer review process is an important step, when it comes to publication of a manuscript and is directed towards facilitating the journal editor in making a decision. Unfortunately a delay in publication due to lengthy peer review processing times not only negatively affects the research potential of individual authors but also delays the publication of novel findings. Steps should be taken to make this process more efficient by taking measures to reduce long peer review times and to ensure well-timed publication of scientific research.*

Peer review process holds the most important place, when it comes to publication of a manuscript and is directed towards facilitating the journal editor in making a decision. Publishing research results in a journal is every investigator's goal but unfortunately, the time period occurring between submissions of manuscript to receiving an editorial decision is typically very long. According to a recent survey report of 3040 authors who had published their research in Web of Science (Thomson Reuters, Philadelphia, US), 38% were displeased with the peer review processing time of their manuscripts (Publishing Research Consortium, 2008). These prolonged processing times have a negative influence on the research results (especially in case of original discoveries) as they can make them out-dated, if rejected completely by a few journals on the basis of suitability to individual journals aim and objectives. Delay in publication, not only negatively effects the research potential of individual authors contending for acknowledgment but also defers the publication of new knowledge, which is a loss to scientific community as a whole (Bornmann & Danielab, 2010).

Reviewership is generally a voluntary (unpaid) job, therefore, it is understandable that the reviewers remain busy with their respective jobs and their efforts in finding time to review the manuscripts are always appreciated. Still, an attempt to fasten the reviewing process must be made by individual journals.

One possible proposal is to offer the reviewers a financial incentive based on the timely return of their review report. Of

course, there are financial constraints and a possible negative effect of hastiness on the reviewing process. Nonetheless, it could result in publishing of suitable manuscripts within appropriate times. Other strategies to shorten the reviewing times include training of reviewers and removal of reviewers from the journals reviewer panel on account of dissatisfactory performance. It should be kept in mind that the above mentioned steps only offer a logical solution to speed up the reviewing process but do not warrant any guarantee.

Peer review process has its benefits and flaws. Therefore, an attempt should be made to make it more efficient by taking measures to reduce long peer review times and to ensure well-timed publication of scientific research and novel findings.

Conflict of interest

None

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