

EDITORIAL

Results of OSJ survey about publishing

In order to better understand factors that researchers consider when choosing journals for submitting their scientific paper, Open Science Journal (OSJ) editorial board decided to conduct a short survey among the visitors of OSJ website. Survey was conducted between June 2016 and June 2017. Survey consists of 14 questions and we were using Google Forms to collect responses. We posted the link for survey on OSJ webpage and included it in one of our newsletters that we published (or sent) at the beginning of 2017.

A total of 813 scientists from all over the world participated in the OSJ survey about publishing. Researchers from all continents were represented. Most respondent were from Asia (42.31%), and the least represented were from Australia and Oceania (0.98%) (Table 1). When it comes to countries, those with the highest number of surveyed scientists were from India, Nigeria, USA, Brazil and Russia. The survey contained 11 questions, most of which were multiple-choice type of question.



Citation: (2018) Results of OSJ survey about publishing. Open Science Journal 3(1)

Published: 2nd January 2018

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Funding: The author(s) received no specific funding for this work

Competing Interests: The authors have declared that no competing interests exists.

Table 1. Continents represented in the survey

Continent	Number of individuals	Percentage
Asia	344	42.31%
Africa	171	21.03%
Europe	164	20.17%
North America	45	5.54%
South America	81	9.96%
Australia and Oceania	8	0.98%

First question was the current status of the participant. Most numerous were PhD students and Post- Docs (30.14%), and Senior researchers (30.99%), while the least numerous were Undergraduates (6.02%) (Table 2). Category "Other" contained a variety of responses (e.g. Lecturer, retired from University, Professor...)

Table 2. Current status

Category	Number of individuals	Percentage
Mid career researcher (4-10 years of research experience)	150	18.45%
PhD students and Post- Doc	245	30.14%
Senior researcher	252	30.99%
Undergraduate	49	6.02%
Other	117	14.39%

The second question considered participant's field of sciences. Social sciences and Engineering and technology were most prevalent (25.46% and 23.12%). Humanities and art make the smallest proportion of the total sample (7.5%) (Table 3). Most of the participants responses in "Other" (e.g. Environmental sciences, Economics, Chemistry, Microbiology, etc.) could be sorted into one of the categories from Table 2.

Table 3. Field of sciences

Category	Number of individuals	Percentage
Natural sciences	125	15.37%
Engineering and technology	188	23.12%
Medical and health sciences	93	11.43%
Agricultural sciences	67	8.24%
Social sciences	207	25.46%
Humanities and art	61	7.5%
Other	72	8.85%

In the third question participants were asked if they have any affiliation (membership) with any professional or researchers association/organization. Most of the scientists left this question blank (33.82%), and the ones who answered it, enlisted various organizations such as Universities, Scientific societies and associations, Scientific journals, Institutes...

In the fourth question participants were asked to state the number of peer-reviewed publications they published in the last 3 years. Most of the participants responded with 3 (12.17%) and 11- 20 publications (13.28%). Scientists that published 9 publications in the last 3 years make the smallest proportion of the total sample (2.46%). Participants with no publications, and 21- 30 publications share the same percentage (3.81%) (Table 4). Surprisingly, just a few participants with no publications were Undergraduates, others were PhD students and Post-Docs, Mid career, and Senior researchers.

Table 4. Approximate number of peer-reviewed publications you have published in the last 3 years

Number of publications	Number of individuals	Percentage
0	31	3.81%
1	56	6.88%
2	79	9.71%
3	99	12.17%

4	66	8.11%
5	77	9.47%
6	63	7.74%
7	25	3.07%
8	33	4.05%
9	20	2.46%
10	70	8.61%
11-20	108	13.28%
21-30	31	3.81%
>30	55	6.76%

In the fifth question participants were asked to rate the importance of 12 factors when choosing a journal to publish their research. The results showed that factors that have the most influence on the choice are Indexing (52.89 %), followed by Reputation of the publisher and/or of the journal (47.35 %), and Impact factor (38.86 %). Amount of publication charges (APC), Fast review and publication process, and Peer review, were also pointed out by the participants as very important. The factors that seem least crucial are Supervisor/ Head of department recommendation and Colleague recommendation (Table 5).

Table 5. Rating of the importance of each factor when choosing a journal to publish

Factor	Most important		Very important		Important		Slightly important		Not important	
	No. ind.	%	No. ind.	%	No. ind.	%	No. ind.	%	No. ind.	%
Impact factor (IF)	316	38.86%	233	28.65%	198	24.35%	51	6.27%	15	1.38%
Amount of the Publication Charges (APC)	269	33.08%	238	29.27%	163	20.04%	93	11.43%	50	6.15%
Open Access Policy	189	23.24%	256	31.48%	211	25.95%	103	12.66%	54	6.64%
Fast review and publication process	295	36.28%	280	34.44%	166	20.41%	52	6.39%	20	2.46%
Journal restrictions (e.g. words limit, figure limit)	66	8.11%	167	20.54%	254	31.24%	212	26.07%	114	14.02%
Peer review	314	38.62%	304	37.39%	139	17.09%	37	4.55%	19	2.33%
Reputation of the publisher and/or of the journal	385	47.35%	256	31.48%	132	16.23%	35	4.3%	5	0.61%
Indexing (e.g. PubMed, Scopus, WoS,...)	430	52.89%	230	28.29%	110	13.53%	27	3.32%	16	1.96%
Journal Editorial Board	145	17.83%	234	28.78%	262	32.22%	113	13.89%	59	7.25%
Article Level Metrics (ALM)	79	9.71%	219	26.93%	302	37.14%	130	15.95%	83	10.20%
Supervisor / Head of department recommendation	53	6.51%	147	18.08%	228	28.04%	210	25.83%	175	21.52%
Colleague recommendation	41	5.04%	158	19.43%	282	34.68%	201	24.72%	131	16.11%

In the sixth question participants were asked to select the sources of funding used to cover the Article Processing Fee for your publication(s). Most researchers use Personal funds for covering the APC. For some, this is the only source of funding, others use it in combination with other (Faculty/University/Institute

funds, Funds from a grant/contracting agency who funded the research/scholarship on which the article was based, were sources that were most common in combination with Personal funds). Most of the researchers which are using only Personal funds comes from developing countries, just a few of them are from developed countries such as USA, Germany, Russia. When it comes to respondents who stated that they use Faculty/University/Institute funds, majority of them come from USA, European countries and India. Most of the Mid career and Senior researchers stated that they never had to pay, because they choose journals that does not charge APC.

Table 6. Sources of funding used to cover the Article Processing Fee for recent publication(s)

Source	Number of individuals	Percentage
Personal funds	321	40.17%
Faculty/University/Institute funds	71	8.88%
Funds from a grant/contracting agency who funded the research/scholarship on which the article was based	19	2.37%
Government funding based on a national policy that funds open access publishing fees.	4	0.5%
The fee was waived	18	2.25%
I never had to pay because the journal(s) in which I published my last paper(s) does not charge APC	87	10.88%
Multiple sources	279	34.91%

In the seventh question participants were asked to state the APC that they had to pay (in US dollars) in past 3 years. The results show that most researchers pay between 50 and 100 USD, and 100- 200 USD. Participants that pay over a 1000 USD make the smallest percentage of the total sample (3.81%) (Table 7). Prices that participants listed in the category "Other" ranged from 0 to 7000 USD, but most of them stated that they do not publish in the journals that charge APC. Most of the researchers that pay less than 50 USD come from India, Pakistan and USA. Category "Over 1000 USD" contains researchers from various countries (both developing and developed ones).

Table 7. The average APC (in US dollars).

Average APC	Number of individuals	Percentage
<50 USD	138	16.97%
50- 100 USD	158	19.43%
100-200 USD	158	19.43%
200- 500 USD	153	18.81%
500-1000 USD	61	7.5%
>1000 USD	31	3.81%
Other	114	14.02

In the eight question the participants were asked to state the average time from submission to acceptance of their paper for publication. According to their answers most usual average time is 2- 4 months (25.46%). Least prevalent average time was less than 2 weeks (5.41%). Engineering and Technology and Social sciences were most prevalent field of sciences in this category. When it comes to the category "More than 6 month" most of the researchers were from the field of Natural Sciences, Medical and Health Sciences, and Engineering and Technology. The longest period that participant stated in the category "Other" was 2 years. This participant comes from Kyrgyzstan and his field of science is Humanities and Art.

Table 8. Average time from submission to acceptance of the paper

Average time	Number of individuals	Percentage
<2 weeks	44	5.41%
2- 4 weeks	134	16.48%
1-2 months	173	21.27%
2-4 months	207	25.46%
4-6 months	127	15.62%
>6 months	106	13.03%
Other	22	2.7%

The ninth question considered participants interest in learning more about the journal publishing process. Most of them (75.64%), stated that they are interested in learning about the process, 15.62% responded negatively, and 8.73% were indecisive.

Tenth question was optional. Participants were able to leave any comment about the survey or question about the Open Science Journal. Most comments were compliments to Open Science Journal and the survey. There were few comments regarding APC and some regarding technicalities.

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