

Review of: "[Commentary] To Publish Scientific Journals: For Some, the Big Business of the Century"

Yuki Yamada¹

¹ Kyushu University

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I fully agree with the author that reviewers should be financially rewarded. On several occasions, I have served as a reviewer for journals that paid me rewards for reviewing, regardless of the content or direction of the evaluation. Although it sometimes was a small amount, like a day's wages, I was still satisfied to feel that my reviewing work was not disrespected, and I would accept it again if I were asked to review in the future. Thus, keeping the reviewer's self-efficacy is important in the current situation where the asymmetry between submission and peer review is extremely large.

Apart from such psychological effects, paid peer review can also have effects on the division of labor and diversity of researchers. For example, if reviewers are able to earn a level of remuneration that allows them to make a living from their peer review work alone, a situation may arise in which experienced reviewers more actively take on reviewing assignments. The reason why inappropriate reviewers are currently often assigned to review manuscripts is that the experience as a reviewer only serves as reciprocation for someone else's review in the past, and accepting a large number of review requests leaves them feeling nothing but exhaustion, making it difficult for experienced reviewers to accept new requests. Moreover, it is nearly impossible to undertake a large number of peer reviews while performing many university duties. However, if excellent reviewers could make a living from their reviewing alone, they would not necessarily have to simultaneously work in academia. This may also reduce excessive competition for fewer academic positions.

Yet, merely increasing the opportunities for rewards will undoubtedly lead to a flood of satisficers (cheaters trying to gain maximum rewards with minimum effort), so both the availability of peer-review history tied to individuals and an evaluation system for individuals will have to be established. This may require major reforms, but it will also generate major benefits.