

Review of: "Publish or perish: time for a rethink?"

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The article offers a really great overview of the world of publishing, with a wealth of useful statistics and references. It offers an understanding of the links between the pressures to publish and the increase in low quality publications.

I would like to have read more about alternatives such as the 'publish for free and read for free' models and how these could be managed. And I would like to have read a more critical engagement with the suggestion to separate research from teaching. But overall, I found this to be a very useful read.

One minor suggestion is to be cautious of simplistic/deterministic language in a complex social context. I provide two examples of this below.

1. "The aphorism 'publish or perish' has been gaining traction in Academia at an accelerated rate, resulting in more than 1.8 million articles published every year." - I think there is a need to consider the complex drivers of this increase. The causal account that is simply the 'publish or perish' demands that account for it is a bit simplistic and so undermines your very important point.
2. "Much of the published research is proven to have limited value. Worse, the immense pressure on medical teachers and researchers to publish to maintain respect and status in their community forces some to unethical practices" - Again the word 'forces' suggests a deterministic causal relationship. I'd caution against such language. There's always much more complexity to these issues and so using more carefully hedged language acknowledges that there is more to it than simply a matter of being 'forced'.