

Peer Review

Review of: "Navigating the Madness of Academic Publishing"

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The article addresses a highly relevant topic for the academic community by discussing the challenges of scientific publishing, particularly regarding the economic model of publishers and the impact of open access. The exposition highlights the contradictions and challenges of the current publishing system, providing a clear and accessible overview. However, the approach could be further developed in terms of empirical aspects, incorporating quantitative or comparative data demonstrating the practical consequences of different publishing models. For example, it would be helpful to present statistics on the number of articles published in open-access journals versus subscription-based journals, comparing citation rates, average publication times, or the geographical distribution of authors affected by financial barriers. Additionally, an overview of variations in APC fees across different disciplines and regions could provide a stronger foundation for the argument.

The argument progresses well, from the author's personal experience to the structural analysis of scientific publishing. However, depending on the target audience, some sections could be further elaborated, particularly regarding the proposed solutions. The mention of preprints and journals controlled by scientific societies is valid but still lacks a more critical discussion on these alternatives' practical challenges and limitations. Some key questions to address include the acceptance of preprints in academic evaluation processes, the difficulties in ensuring high-quality peer review in these repositories, and the risks of disseminating unverified information. Including examples of fields where preprints are widely accepted (such as physics and biology) and others that still face resistance (such as humanities and social sciences) would be interesting.

Regarding journals controlled by scientific societies, the article could expand the discussion on the financial viability of these models and their competitiveness against major publishers. While some societies have balanced reduced costs with academic impact, others struggle to attract submissions

due to the absence of high-impact factors. A deeper exploration of this point, with concrete examples, would strengthen the analysis.

Although the argument is relevant and well-structured, the references used to support the discussion remain limited. Moving beyond widely known perspectives would be beneficial, as would incorporating recent studies on editorial policies and the impact of open access in different contexts. For instance, the adaptation of major publishers to the open-access model could be explored in greater depth, highlighting their strategies and their impact on the academic community, including financial analyses and data on how profits from APCs are distributed.

The article suggests that one possible solution is to promote journals controlled by scientific societies and the use of preprints. While this is a viable approach, considerations about its acceptance within the scientific community and its financial sustainability are lacking. Including examples of scientific societies that have successfully implemented such models would strengthen the argument, as would a more in-depth discussion of editorial policies that could reduce dependence on high APCs. Additionally, initiatives offering recognition or incentives for reviewers could be discussed, given that peer review, an essential component of science, remains an unpaid effort.

Overall, the article discusses essential issues related to the challenges of academic publishing clearly and engagingly, contributing to the debate on the democratization of access to knowledge. However, to strengthen its contribution, it is recommended that the authors include empirical and comparative data, deepen the analysis of the challenges of preprints and society-controlled journals, and expand the discussion on the financial and structural impact of open-access models.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.