

Peer Review

Review of: "Navigating the Madness of Academic Publishing"

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I like this paper. All the scholars should reflect on the paradoxes of the publishing game and voice for a substantial change. My observations below are not requests to change the paper, but suggestions for further improvements.

The authors stress the problem of APC, which is a critical component of a system where the publisher gets money from both the providers (authors) and the clients, does not pay reviewers, and asks authors for “producing” the paper in the desired format, as a kind of co-producers without costs. Something is wrong.

Tactically, the authors could give strength to a proposal of “progressive” APC, for example, lower at the submission, or no APC, and higher at the end. In this sense, I appreciate the idea of giving back APC to the authors when the downloads increase over a level.

Another suggestion is the segmentation of APC depending on the authors’ role (e.g., PhD students vs. old professors) and/or on the authors’ countries, that the paper takes into account.

Generally, I think the final responsibility for this system is in the hands of valuation entities, universities (private and public), and central research valuation agencies. They are the final users of this system and could push for substantial changes in the logic shown in the paper.

Many colleagues have claimed that the valuation process should be based on effective peer review and the valuation of the articles “only-after-reading,” not based on the (ab)use of ranking journals and bibliometric data like now. Only in this way can open access journals get the same dignity as top current journals.

Ultimately, we are responsible for this system, and the real question is why all this system has so far been accepted by us.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.