Attitudes of Scientific Journal Editors Towards Open Peer Review

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Introduction

• Changes in the peer review process and acceptance of open peer review - still mostly unchartered territory in Croatia

• Open peer review still not accepted widely - still no change from the mainstream

• Inability of a potential authors to find guidelines of scientific journals (in Croatia and around the world) in substantial numbers offering open peer review or similar process
Open peer review

• Open peer review - still not researched enough - why?

• Not present in scientific community long enough?

• Ross-Hellauer and Görögh (2019): open peer review is „moving into the mainstream, but it is often poorly understood and surveys of researcher attitudes show important barriers to implementation”
Open peer review acceptance

• Implementation of different innovations requires guidelines to guide this implementation in order for it to be widely accepted (Ross-Hellauer and Görögh, 2019)

• Uptake of new models of peer review appears to have been so low compared to what is often viewed as the ‘traditional’ method of peer review (Tennant, 2018)

• For Bali (2015) open peer review is not about speed of its implementation but potential of submitted manuscripts to be improved and published
Research - discovering attitudes of scientific journal editors towards open peer review

• Social sciences and humanities scientific journals

• Online survey + e-mail invitation: July 22nd till September 10th 2019.

• 143 e-mail addresses of Soc. Sci. journals at portal Hrčak (Hamster)

• 93 e-mail addresses of Human. Journals at portal Hrčak (Hamster)

• Return rate: 39 journals in soc. sci. and 24 in humanities.
Results (a selection of)
Role in journal? (N=38;24)

- Administrative staff: 1 Humanities, 1 Social sciences
- Executive editor: 1 Humanities, 2 Social sciences
- Deputy editor: 1 Humanities, 3 Social sciences
- Editor: 21 Humanities, 32 Social sciences
Type of peer review in journal? (N=39;24)

- Open peer review: 1
- Double blind: 24
- Single blind: 2

Categories: Humanities - Social sciences

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Publishing of review next to accepted article (N=39;24)

- Yes, but without reviewer's name: 1
- Yes, with reviewer's name: 1
- No: 24

Social sciences: 37
Humanities: 24
Research data publishing (N=39;24)

- Social sciences: 34 (Yes), 5 (No)
- Humanities: 19 (Yes), 5 (No)
Public comments of published articles (N=39;24)

- No, bad experience: 2
  - Humanities: 0
  - Social sciences: 2

- No, no technical possibilities: 11
  - Humanities: 19
  - Social sciences: 11

- No, no purpose: 11
  - Humanities: 16
  - Social sciences: 11

- Yes: 4
  - Humanities: 0
  - Social sciences: 4
Open peer review characteristics (first 5) (N=34;23)

- Greater accountability of reviewers for the review
- Transparent
- Constructive public opinion about the article manuscript quality
- Two way public communication of authors and reviewers during the review process
- Recognition for the reviewers' efforts

Bar chart showing:
- Humanities: 12, 14, 7, 9, 7
- Social sciences: 21, 20, 16, 15, 14
Open peer review could influence positively communication between authors and reviewers

- **Social sciences**
  - Completely disagree: 5
  - Completely agree: 5
  - In between: 6

- **Humanities**
  - Completely disagree: 12
  - Completely agree: 12
  - In between: 8

Completely disagree

Completely agree
Open peer review could influence positively quality of review

- Social sciences
- Humanities

Completely disagree

Completely agree
Open peer review could influence positively communication between reviewers and editors.

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses from Social Sciences and Humanities regarding the influence of open peer review on communication.

- **Social Sciences**
  - Completely disagree: 6
  - Somewhat disagree: 4
  - Somewhat agree: 7
  - Completely agree: 6

- **Humanities**
  - Completely disagree: 1
  - Somewhat disagree: 2
  - Somewhat agree: 11
  - Completely agree: 0]
Open peer review could influence scientists to send their article manuscripts to the journal

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Completely disagree

Completely agree
Open peer review could improve the peer review process in general

- Social sciences
- Humanities

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Completely disagree

Completely agree
My journal is completely prepared for implementation of open peer review (N=39;24)
Conclusion

• Open peer review still barely present in Croatia

• More promotion of open peer review would improve situation?

• More research about possible benefits of open peer review - difficult taks in a small scientific community