

Description

Journal rejections are common, irrespective of the researcher's academic career. The acceptance rate of scholarly journals is an important selection criterion for authors when choosing where to submit their manuscripts. However, information about the acceptance (or rejection rates) of individual journals is seldom available.

There are significant differences between the fields of science, with biomedicine having higher acceptance rates compared to for instance the social sciences. Open access journals usually have higher acceptance rates than subscription journals. This is particularly true for so-called OA mega-journals, which have their peer review criteria focusing on sound science only. Let us find out some more about journal acceptance rates.

Can Rejection Rates/Acceptance rates of Journals Be Calculated?

Unfortunately, the journal industry does not have a set standard on calculating rejection rates/acceptance rates. Few things that journals can possibly have an impact on the journal acceptance/rejection rates are:

- The reputation of the journal (the acceptance rate is lower rate for reputed international journals as compared to local journals)
- The total amount of papers sent to them
- Only papers within their aim and scope (One can look at the website to understand the aims and scope of the journal. One can also read previous issues to get the sense of successful papers that have been published.)
- The amount of papers they sent for peer review

Studies Related to Finding Journal Acceptance/ Rejection Rates

One of the studies was done by Thomson Reuters (2012) on this aspect of journals in the publishing industry, leveraging on the massive amounts of data collected in their ScholarOne submission and publishing system. This system, used by over 4,000 journals from over 300 different publishers,

Copyright: Enago Academy under the CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license

includes commercial publishers, scholarly societies, and university presses. The study provides global averages across manuscripts, and it included data about over three million manuscripts submitted in 2005-2010. From 2005 to 2010 the overall acceptance rates decreased slightly from 40,6% to 37,1%. The major reason is probably the increased share of submissions from countries like China and India, which typically have a lower chance of acceptance.

The acceptance rates among corresponding authors across different countries is in fact particularly interesting. The 2010 rates for the best performing countries (USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, Switzerland and Sweden) were in the narrow range 46,8–51,9%, whereas the worst performers (China, Taiwan, India, Brazil and Turkey) in the range 18,7–26,8%.

With respect to OA journals, one of the studies finds that acceptance rates are significantly higher in OA journals. They report differences of 4-16% for the five different fields. If the number of journals in the fields they cover is used to weight the acceptance rate, the overall rate for the OA journals would be 41% and for the non-OA journals 33%. It is problematic to compare the overall rates of all traditional and all OA-journals. This is because OA journals are on average much younger. Also, OA-journals have spread more rapidly in biomedicine, where the acceptance rates are generally higher, than in the social sciences.

How to Locate Rejection Rates/Acceptance Rates?

Determining acceptance rates for individual journals or for specific disciplines can be difficult, yet is necessary information for promotion and tenure activities. Journals with lower article acceptance rates are frequently considered to be more prestigious and more “meritorious”.

The method of calculating acceptance rates varies among journals. Some journals use all manuscripts received as a base for computing this rate. Other journals allow the editor to choose which papers are sent to reviewers and calculate the acceptance rate on those that are reviewed that is less than the total manuscripts received. Also, many editors do not maintain accurate records on this data and provide only a rough estimate. Furthermore, the number of people associated with a particular area of specialization influences the acceptance rate. If only a few people can write papers in an area, it tends to increase the journal’s acceptance rate.

Resources or Ways to Find Journal Acceptance Rates

a few useful tips and resources on finding journal acceptance rates below.

- **Contact the Editor of the Journal**

Try contacting the editor of the journal to see if s/he will share the acceptance rate.

- **Google the Journal Name**

Some societies also publish acceptance rates for their journals on their home pages. A Google search using the name of the journal or the name of the society will usually take you to the journal home page.

- **Cabell’s Directory of Publishing Opportunities**

Copyright: Enago Academy under the CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license

Acceptance rates for some journals can be found in this database. Currently over 1200 journals, primarily in Educational Technology, Educational Curriculum and Educational Psychology are available within this database but other discipline journals may also be included.

- **American Psychological Association (APA) Journal Acceptance Rates**

APA provides statistics which include number of manuscripts received, accepted and percentage of rejected manuscripts annual from 2004 to 2013.

Should Your Decision to Publish Depend on Acceptance & Rejection Rates of Journals?

Along with rejection rate/acceptance rate, you might want to consider the impact factor when choosing a journal. Impact factor refers to the amount of citations an article receives over time. High impact journals frequently have high rejection rates but they can be still be high for lower impact journals. If you publish your work in a low impact journal, it might have an impact on your job or research grant applications so it's important to find a balance between rejection rate and impact. Therefore, choose wisely and make sure you don't regret your choice of journal.

For more help in journal selection, you can check out Enago's Journal Selection services. Our team of experts holds extensive experience in peer reviewing and editing for international journals in your field of study. Simply send us your criteria, and we will present you with the top 3-5 journals best suited to your manuscript and preferences. What's more: By using Enago's Journal Selection Service, you will get vital feedback for your manuscript, including suggestions on how to improve your paper.

Category

1. Publishing Research
2. Selecting Journals

Date Created
2020/11/05
Author
editor

Copyright: Enago Academy under the CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license