

What Is the Value of a Post-Publication Peer Review?

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Post Url

<https://www.enago.com/academy/value-of-post-publication-peer-review/>

Opportunities for Correction

Authors will argue that articles and manuscripts are always open for correction until the last possible moment.

Colleagues are usually willing to go over your latest version with a fresh set of eyes, and if your website has a large enough readership, they can always be counted on for feedback on any pre-printed material you choose to post.

Once formally submitted, the journal's assigned [peer review team](#) will provide the first formal review of your work (unless you chose to present the work at a conference or seminar prior to submission).

The outcome of the formal peer review is typically a rejection or a "[revise and re-submit](#)." Depending on the journal, this process can take months, and is understandably the greatest source of frustration for researchers eagerly awaiting an acceptance notice or the option to re-submit elsewhere. The lack of transparency exacerbates the frustration since the degree of review by an unknown number of peers remains undisclosed until a retraction implies that it clearly wasn't enough.

Higher Engagement

Pre-publication peer review is primarily a filter to check for accuracy. The decision as to whether the paper is *worthy* of publication ultimately rests with the editor and editorial board, on the assumption that the peer review has screened out any errors or questionable assumptions. Once published, the paper has the opportunity for commentary, but the level of engagement is usually fairly low, partly because the paper is presented as a *fait accompli*, and partly because the lack of interest in publication of [replication studies](#) of the research conducted in the paper will deny readers the opportunity to further discuss validation of the work.

Lack of Publisher Interest?

Journals have little interest in validation of the papers they publish, especially if that validation runs the risk of questioning their internal pre-publication peer review process. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that there has been little interest in post-publication peer review opportunities.

Journals want loyal readers who pay their annual subscription fees in order to access the highly regarded content through the pay wall. Engaging those readers in ongoing communication and discussion about the content that has been published doesn't appear to interest the journals quite as much.

Social Media is not the Answer

Leaving post-publication peer review in the hands of [Twitter](#) and Facebook would open up the serious work of qualified researchers to spammer and trolls. If a published [research paper](#) garners broad media attention, the opportunity for an objective discourse would be overwhelmed by a "trial by Twitter," with anyone and everyone invoking their civil rights of free speech to offer an opinion while providing a link back to their own account or website.

What is needed are venues where experienced professionals can engage in a dialogue that contributes positively to the scientific work that has been conducted. Registered accounts would prevent trolling and spamming. Third-party platforms such as *PubPeer* and *Open Review* have taken the opportunity for [post-publication peer review](#) and presented it in a separate forum away from publisher's websites. Any paper posted is open for feedback and more detailed review.

Other social forum approaches are also starting to gain attention. For example, the BJOG International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology has been hosting the Blue Journal Club (BlueJC) for the past two years as an online community for women's health specialists that encourages discourse and post-publication peer review. The platform holds weekly discussions on [Twitter](#) using the hashtag #BlueJC.

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