Open Peer Review: A Journal Editor’s perspective

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Managing Editor: Planning Theory
Structure of the presentation

• PT review process

• Joining into the scheme

• How the scheme is implemented

• Debates

• Some early figures.
PT review process

- Three reviewers – double blind review process
- Decision letter together with review reports shared with authors and the reviewers involved
- No significant issues in terms of non-constructive comments
- Some issues around less substantive comments

- Decided to join the Web of Science Transparent Peer Review Program through our publishers – Sage Publishing on a pilot basis.
- New questions inserted in the submission and review forms on Sage Track.
Planning Theory and TPR

How we run the process:

• **Author Opt In**: Allow authors to decide if they want to participate in TPR by having an Opt-in/out option at submission. If the authors opt-out the TPR content won’t be published.

• **Reviewer Opt In**: Eliminate the opt-out option so that all review material is published providing the authors opt-in. This is because If any reviewer opts-out of TPR, the content for the entire peer review process of the article won’t be published, even if the author and other reviewer(s) opt-in.

• **Reviewer anonymity**: Give reviewers the choice for being shown as anonymous or for being signed.
Planning Theory and TPR

• During peer review, the process is double blinded. On publication the reviews can be seen
• Notes to the Editor will remain confidential
• Any eligible articles will be accompanied by a link to the full peer review history
  • Includes the reviews at each stage, author responses, and editor’s decision letters.
• An example of a paper published with a transparent peer review history can be seen [here](#) and [here](#).

I decided that this would be a pilot -
• PT will be able to opt out at any later stage should the initiative prove problematic in any respect.
• PT will review the initiative after one year of implementation and then make the decision to continue or not
Debates

For the journal:

• Enthusiastic support from some: Principle of openness and transparency
• Improved reviews (constructive and substantial)?
  • What is the problem that it tries to solve?
  • Will TPR mean more academics will refuse to review?
  • Will reviewers start to write for an audience, rather than provide a honest review?
  • If names are revealed post acceptance, there could be post-publication exercises of power?
• Acknowledge the contribution reviewers make to a manuscript (Challenge authorial ‘glory’)?
Taking stock

• Came into operation on April 1
• After one month implementation the statistics from Sage Track show
• Authors
  • 6 new submissions – all authors have opted in
  • 2 first revisions submission – authors have opted in
  • 1 second revision submission – author has opted out of TPR
• Reviewers – only reviews for submissions in the last month have been tracked
  • 4 have opted in to share the review, but all have opted out of sharing their identity.
• We continue to keep an eye on the pilot………………