

Assessing transparency of the peer-review process at OA journals



Jelte M. Wicherts



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Current Angiogenesis

June 19, 2013 12:25 PM

2 Attachments, 55 KB

Int. J. Intelligent Sci. <ijis@javaemail.org>
To: <j.m.wicherts@uva.nl>
Reply-To: <ijis@scirp.org>
Jelte M. Wicherts: Call for Editorial Board Members and Papers from IJIS

May 20, 2011 11:38 AM



Current Angiogenesis

June 19, 2013

Dr. J.M. Wicherts
J.M. Tilburg University/Netherlands

Dear Dr. Wicherts ,

The journal '*Current Angiogenesis (CAG)*' covers all the latest and outstanding developments in all aspects of clinical and pre-clinical angiogenesis research, including targets and drug discovery. *CAG* is in its first year of publication, and is anticipated to achieve quick success.
Please visit the journal's Web site at <http://www.fscrm.com/cag> for details on Aims & Scope, Instructions for Authors, and Editorial Board page.

Besides publishing regular review articles, the journal aims to publish full- or mini- 'Hot topic' issues (or thematic issues) guest edited by eminent scientists on contemporary topics representing exciting recent developments in the field. The number of expert contributions may vary from 6 to 10 articles for a Full-Hot Topic Issue to 3 to 5 articles for a Mini-Hot Topic Issue. It is ideal that contributing authors are invited from different regions of the world. Such thematic issues tend to be very widely read, and usually receive higher citations compared to the regular journal issues published.

It is a pleasure to invite you to submit a proposal for such a theme issue in a frontier area of your choice for the Editor-in-Chief's approval to sbj40@solsbj-40.com Your proposal must contain your CV and list of publications, 250-words aims & scope of your selected topic, list of names & affiliations of contributing authors, titles of proposed articles, and a tentative submission deadline.

Guest Editors of Hot Topic issues will receive a free online subscription to the journal for one year (of Current Volume only) and two free print copies of the issue, whereas all main contributing authors will receive five free e-reprints of their published paper.

In case you find the task of Guest Editing a complete issue onerous, you have the choice to submit a proposal for a review article online via www.fscrm.com/bsp.cms

All submitted proposals and manuscripts will be peer reviewed prior to a possible decision on acceptance for publication.

We eagerly look forward to receiving your positive response in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Dipak Panigrahy
Editor-in-Chief

This message was sent to [j.m.wicherts@uva.nl]. Unsubscribe by clicking [here](#).



Call for Editorial Board Members and Papers

International Journal of Intelligence Science (IJIS)

Dear researcher,

I am the editorial assistant of the new journal "*International Journal of Intelligence Science*" (*IJIS*) which is to be published by Scientific Research Publishing (SRP www.scirp.org), USA. I am writing to introduce the new journal to you.

Intelligent science is an interdisciplinary subject which dedicates to joint research on basic theory and technology of intelligence by brain science, cognitive science, artificial intelligence and others. The journal will provide an international forum for researchers, scholars, and engineers in above area to publish high quality and refereed papers, disseminate latest theoretical results as well as their applications in this field all over the world.

- Artificial Brain
- Brain-like Computers
- Cognitive Neuroscience
- Emotion
- Intelligent Robots
- Learning
- Memory
- Multi-Agent Systems
- Perception
- Web Intelligence
- Artificial intelligence
- Brain science
- Cognitive science
- Intelligent Computers
- Intelligent Systems
- Linguistic Cognition
- Mind modelling
- Nature of Consciousness
- Thought

Peer Review:

All the submitted papers will be peer-reviewed by our international editorial board members to ensure the quality and fairness.

Open Access:

All the SRP journals are Open Access; all the readers can freely get full text on SRP's website. It can raise visibility and help undeveloped areas to gain scholarly resources without any barrier.

Join Our Editorial Board:

Members of the board are expected to provide support to authors who submit papers, review manuscripts and advise the editors. To apply for a position in our editorial board, please send your **CV** and **Areas of Interest** to ijis@scirp.org .

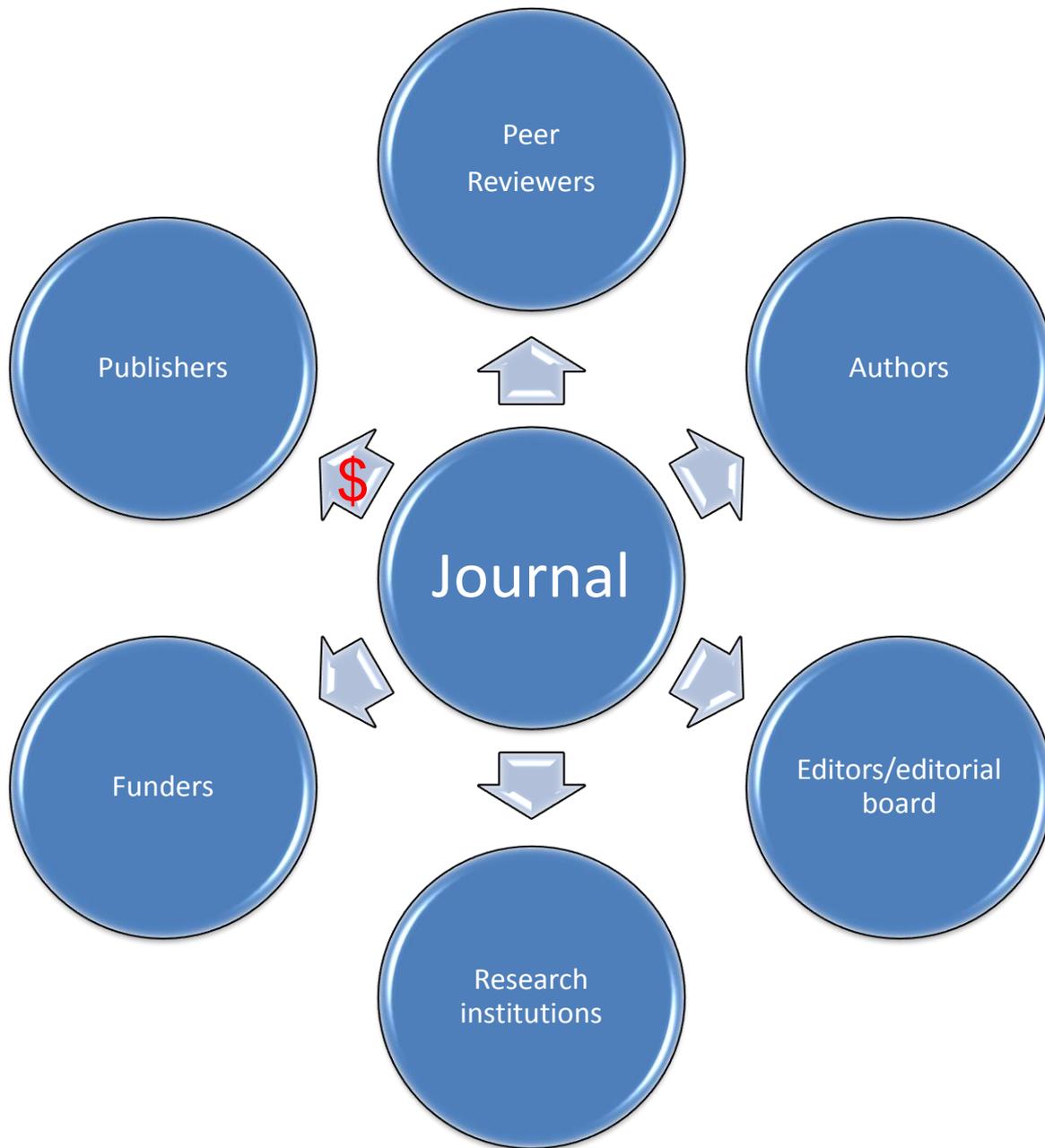
Paper Submission:

To submit your paper, please access IJIS Online Submission System.
For more information of this journal, please access www.scirp.org/journal/ijis/ .

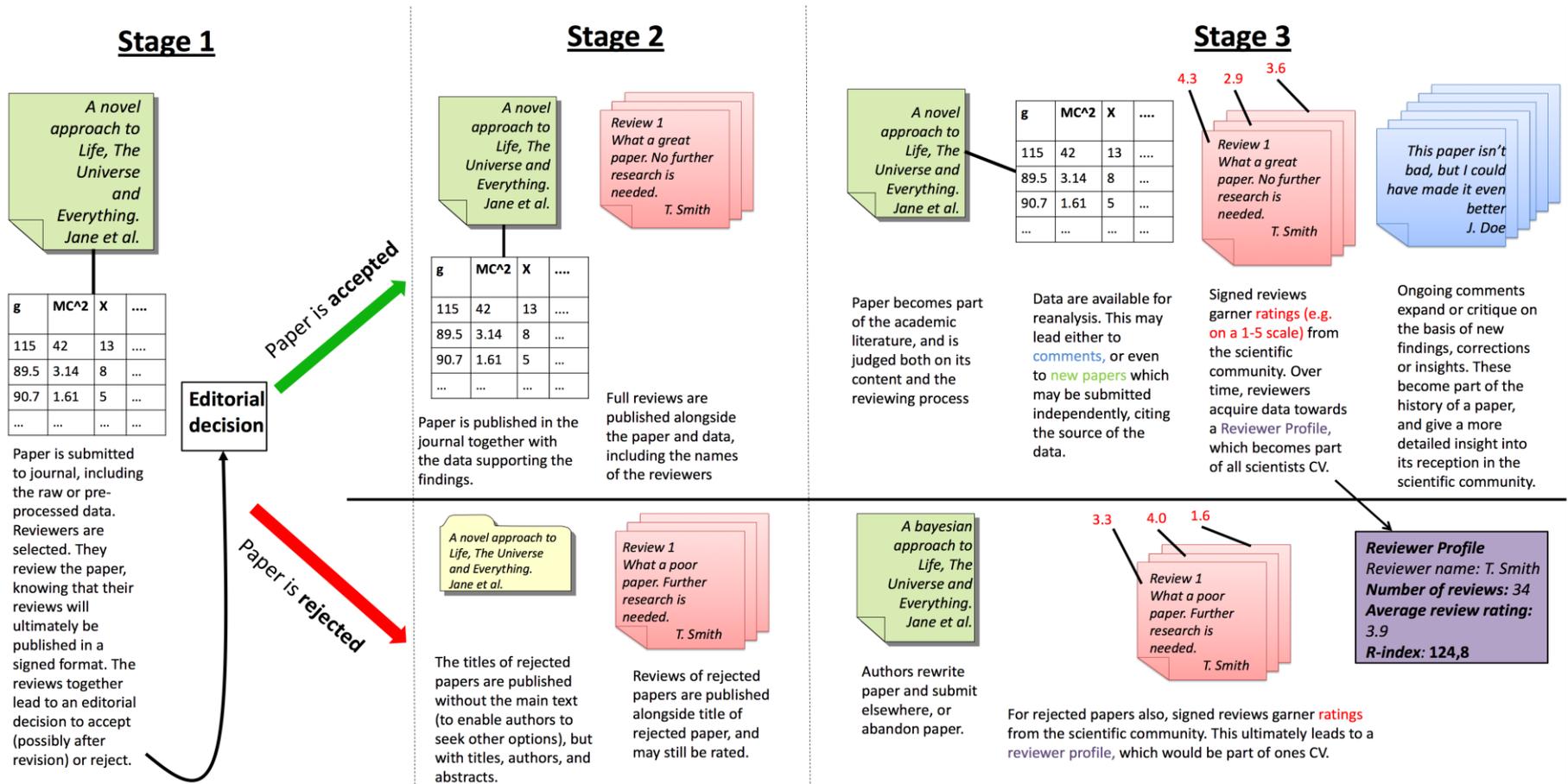
The problem

Young (OA) journals need to establish a name and try to make a profit or at the very least stay in business.

In the OA publication model, publishers generate revenue by accepting many papers, which may lower quality of peer review.



Transparency in peer-review



If signed review reports of all submissions were published, the community would be able to assess quality of peer review at a given journal.

Jeffrey Beall's methodology to find predatory *publishers*

1. Imbalance between no. of journal titles and no. of articles
2. Contact address/location
3. Are there editorial board members listed?
4. Do journals have ISSNs and do articles have DOIs?
5. Are articles listed in Web of Science, SCOPUS, etc.?
6. Quality of website (links, speed, availability, search options)
7. Are publication fees and copyright issues mentioned?
8. Are aims and scope of the journals specific or overly broad?

Our idea

Biased or substandard peer-review processes will not stand full scrutiny by the community.

Hence, transparency concerning the peer-review process can be seen as indicator of good practice.

Lack of transparency

- ✓ Vague criteria cannot be used to reject manuscripts, possibly leading to low thresholds for acceptance.
- ✓ Lack of information on decision-makers and procedures allows papers to be reviewed by a single peer and be accepted by an editorial assistant who often works for the publisher
- ✓ Lack of information on who acted as reviewers and yearly rejection rates impedes assessment of who did the reviewing and how many manuscripts were rejected.

Rating transparency



The respondent is asked to rate the journal on the applicability of characteristics on a five-point scale in which the points pertain to:

- 1: completely fails to apply
- 2: fails to apply
- 3: applies partly
- 4: applies
- 5: applies very well

Goals of the instrument

1. easy to use by readers, authors, reviewers, librarians, editors, and other stakeholders
2. transparent in terms of scoring rules
3. based on criteria that are expected to be acceptable for most stakeholders (authors, editors, librarians, publishers, and funders)
4. applicable to a wide range of fields
5. composed of items that show some convergence across journals (i.e., are relatively homogeneous)

Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association

- Company contact information shall be clearly visible on the web site
- All articles [...] shall be subjected to some form of peer-based review process. **This process and policies related to peer review shall be clearly outlined on the journal or published web site.**
- **Journals shall have editorial boards** or other governing bodies whose members are recognized experts in the field(s) that constitute the scope of the journal.
- **Any fees or charges related to publishing shall be clearly stated** and be easy to find for potential authors.
- [the] **licensing policy [...] shall be clearly stated and visible on the web site.**
- **Instructions to authors shall be available** and easily located from the journal homepage.

Source: <http://oaspa.org/membership/code-of-conduct/>

- A description of peer review processes should be published.
- Editors should require reviewers to disclose any potential competing interests before agreeing to review a submission
- Editors should make decisions on which articles to publish based on quality and suitability for the journal and without interference from the journal owner/publisher.
- Best practice for editors would include [...]
 - publishing submission and acceptance dates for articles
 - respecting requests from authors that an individual should not review their submission, if these are well- reasoned and practicable
 - publishing relevant competing interests for all contributors
 - seeking to acknowledge the contribution of reviewers to the journal

DOAJ - new selection criteria - for public comment - deadline July 15th

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A DRAFT OF THE NEW SUGGESTION FORM FOR JOURNALS WISHING TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DOAJ - THE FORM MUST BE FILLED IN BY THE PUBLISHER. VIRTUALLY ALL FIELDS ARE MANDATORY. Much of the information provided by the publisher in this form will be publicly available, for the public to see what information the journal has provided and to monitor compliance. The information must be updated at least yearly. In the column: "DOAJ seal" the qualifiers for the new DOAJ Seal of Approval for Open Access Journals are highlighted in yellow. Before filling the form please keep in mind that all content of suggested journals must be available immediately upon publication

Mandatory	Field name	DOAJ seal	Response
	BASIC INFORMATION		
*	Title		
EITHER	ISSN		(Enter ISSN without the hyphen "-" eg. 12344321)
OR	EISSN		(Enter ISSN without the hyphen "-" eg. 12344321)
*	Publisher		
*	URL		
*	Contact person		Name
*	Contact person -email address		e-mail address
*	Country		
*	Article Processing Charges (APC)s (in relevant currency)		Yes/No - if Yes: then currency and amount
*	Whether the journal has article submission charges (in relevant currency)		Yes/No - if Yes: then currency and amount
*	Waiver policy (for developing country authors, etc)		Yes/No - if Yes: link to information on the journal homepage
*	Machine readable copyright information	yes	Yes/No
*	Provide DOIs on article level	yes	Yes/No
*	Link to download statistics		Yes/No - if Yes: Url
*	Start year (fulltext content is available online)		Calendar year
*	Keyword(s) (use ',' (comma) as separator)		
*	Language(s) (use ',' (comma) as separator)		
*	Does the journal provide metadata on article level to DOAJ?	yes	Yes/No
*	Does the journal provide references on article level?		Yes/No
*	Does the journal provide full-text in machine readable form on article level?		Yes/No - (PDF is not machine readable)
*	The journal has a digital archiving/preservation arrangement in place	yes	Yes/No - if Yes: then specify: Organization and URL (from 20
*	How many articles did the journal publish in the last calendar year?		Number -(Journals must publish 5 articles/year (does not apply for new journals))
	Editorial board		URL - (The journal must have an editorial board with clearly identifiable members (including affiliation information))
	Please specify the review process for accepted papers - Tick most appropriate below:		URL
	a. Editorial review		
	b. Peer review		
	c. Blind peer review		

	d. Double blind peer review		
	e. Other, please specify:		
	Statement about aims & scope		URL
	Instructions to authors		URL
	Do you have a policy for screening for plagiarism		Yes/No - if Yes: Url
	Please enter the average number of weeks between submission and publication		Number
*	Open Access Policy on journal web site		URL
*	Please state Creative Commons- CC License for journal (if any)		(http://creativecommons.org/)
*	Is the journal registered in SHERPA/ROMEO as a Blue & Green journal		Yes/No - (it is strongly recommended that the journal is registered with Sherpa - http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/)
*	Based on the Open Access Spectrum - How Open Is IT http://www.plos.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/OAS_English_web.pdf : Reader Rights:	Level 1	(Lowest accepted level: Level 1: Free readership rights immediately upon publication (only applies for content published from 2013 onwards))
*	Based on the Open Access Spectrum Reuse Rights:	Level 1	(Lowest accepted level: Level 3: Reuse (no remixing or further building upon....) (only applies for content published from 2013 onwards))
*	Based on the Open Access Spectrum Copyrights:	Level 1	(Lowest accepted level: Level 1: Author holds copyright without restrictions (only applies for content published from 2013 onwards))
*	Based on the Open Access Spectrum Author posting rights:	Level 1	(Lowest accepted level: Level 2: Author may post final version of the peer-reviewed... (only applies for content published from 2013 onwards))
*	Based on the Open Access Spectrum Automatic posting:		No requirements
*	Based on the Open Access Spectrum Machine readability:	Level 2	(Lowest accepted level: Level 4: Article full text, metadata & citations may be crawled... (only applies for content published from 2013 onwards))
	Form submitted by:		
*	Name		
*	Email		

Assessment of the OA tool (1)

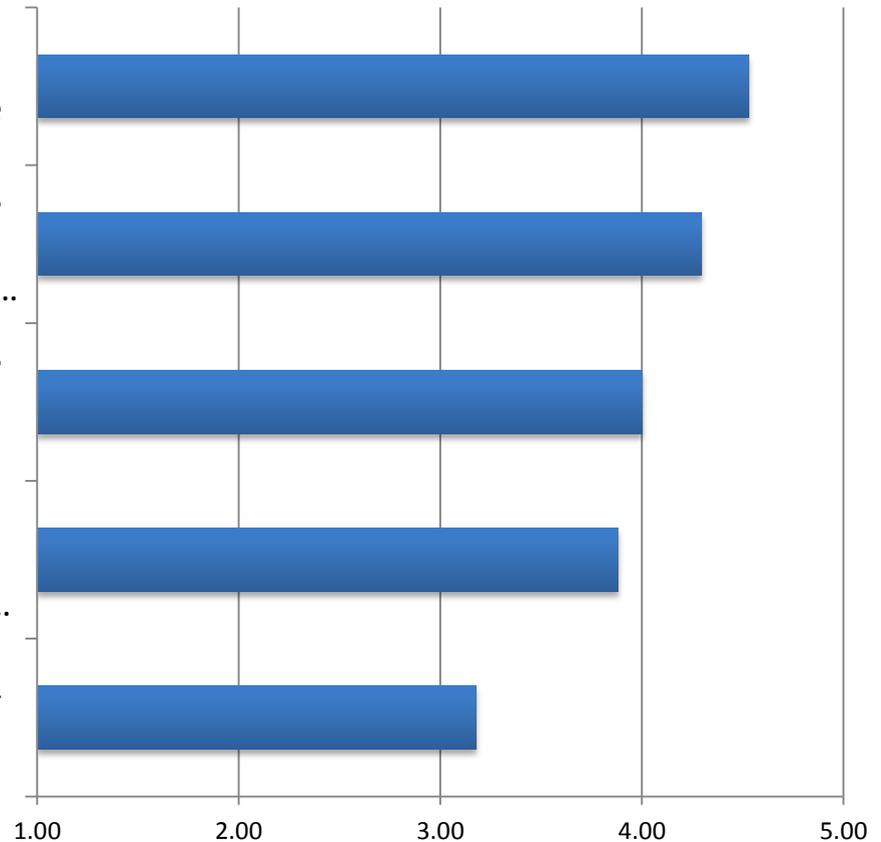
1. Aims, scope, and expected readership of the journal are clearly specified on the journal's website

2. Criteria used by reviewers to rate submissions and types of submissions that are deemed appropriate for the journal are specified on the...

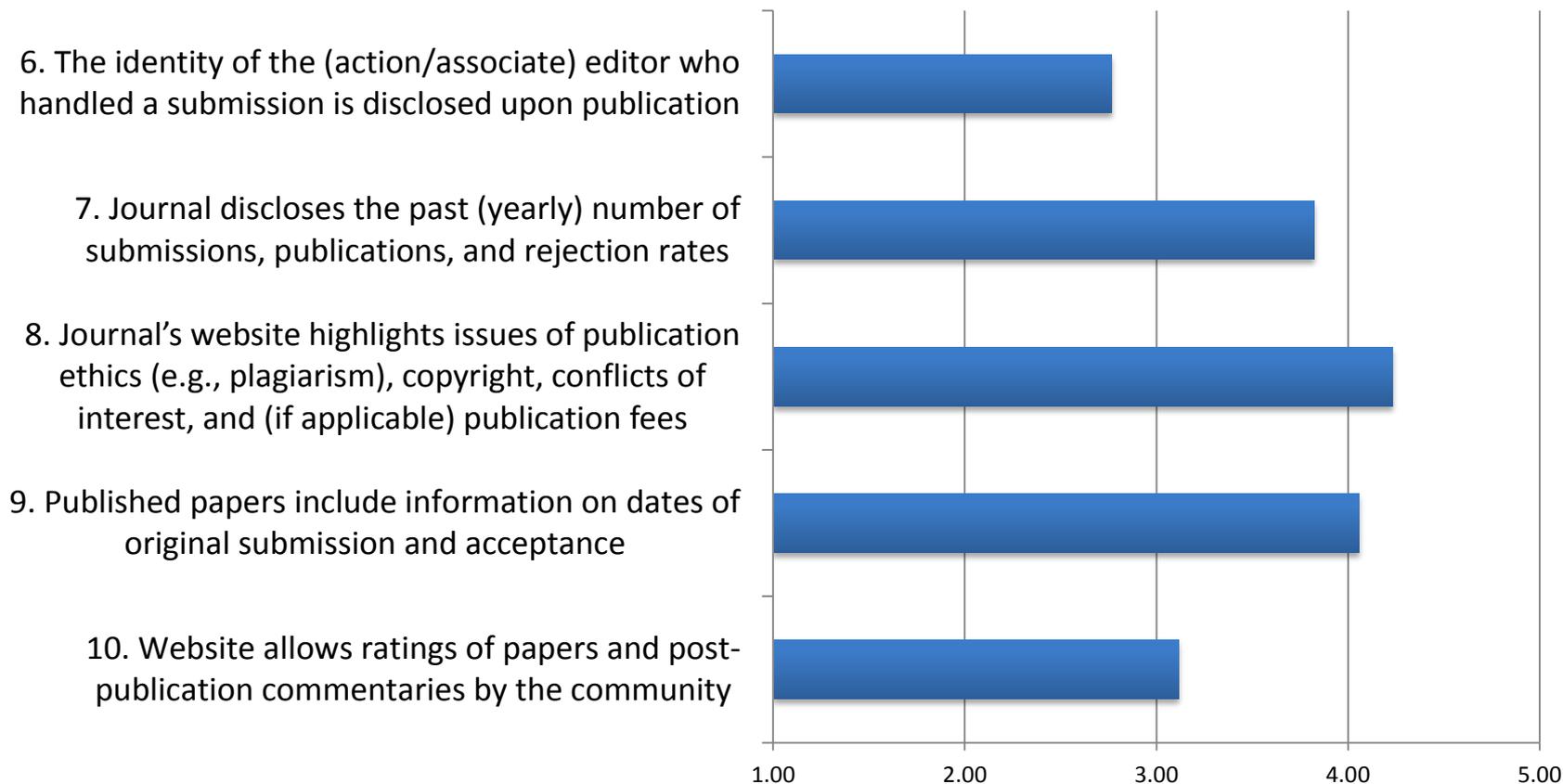
3. The website indicates whether all submissions are sent out for review and who will make final decisions about them (e.g., editor,...

4. The website provides targeted duration of the peer-review process and indicates that authors will be updated concerning the status of submissions...

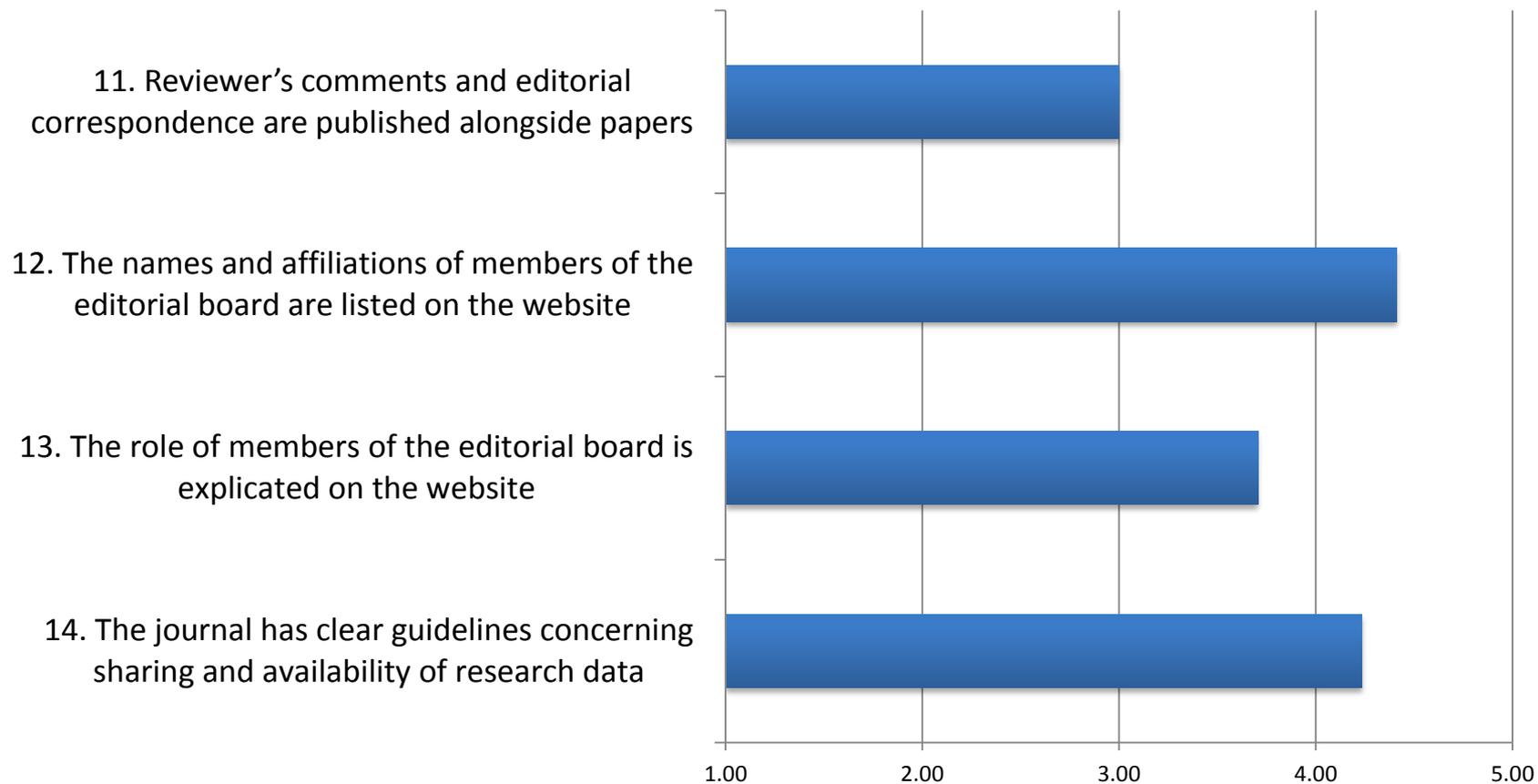
5. Authors are allowed to indicate names of (non-)desired reviewers



Assessment of the OA tool (2)



Assessment of the OA tool (3)



Study 1: survey among authors

We randomly selected 20 established journals from 5 scientific disciplines in a scientometric study by CWTS of Leiden University.

We contacted 20 authors of papers published in these 100 journals (N =221, net response rate 12.4%)



A Vector

This survey concerns the transparency of peer-review process in academic journals.

0% 100%

Core questions

Please rate each description in terms of its applicability to the journal (use the middle point of the scale if you are uncertain about the applicability).

	completely fails to apply	fails to apply	applies partly	applies	applies very well
Aims, scope, and expected readership of the journal are clearly specified on the journal's website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Types of submissions that are deemed appropriate for the journal are explicated on the website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criteria used by reviewers to rate submissions are specified on the website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website indicates whether all submissions are sent out for review and who will make final decisions about them (e.g., editor).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reliability and Validity

- Reliability of the assessment of transparency across items: Alpha = .802
- Author's assessment of quality of peer-review:
(1) The peer-review process was fair and transparent (2) Peer-reviews and editorial comments were rigorous and helpful (3) I would recommend colleagues to submit their work to this journal (reliability .898)
- Correlation between assessment of transparency and ratings of the quality of peer-review was $r = .463$ ($p < .01$)

Study 2: predatory publishers

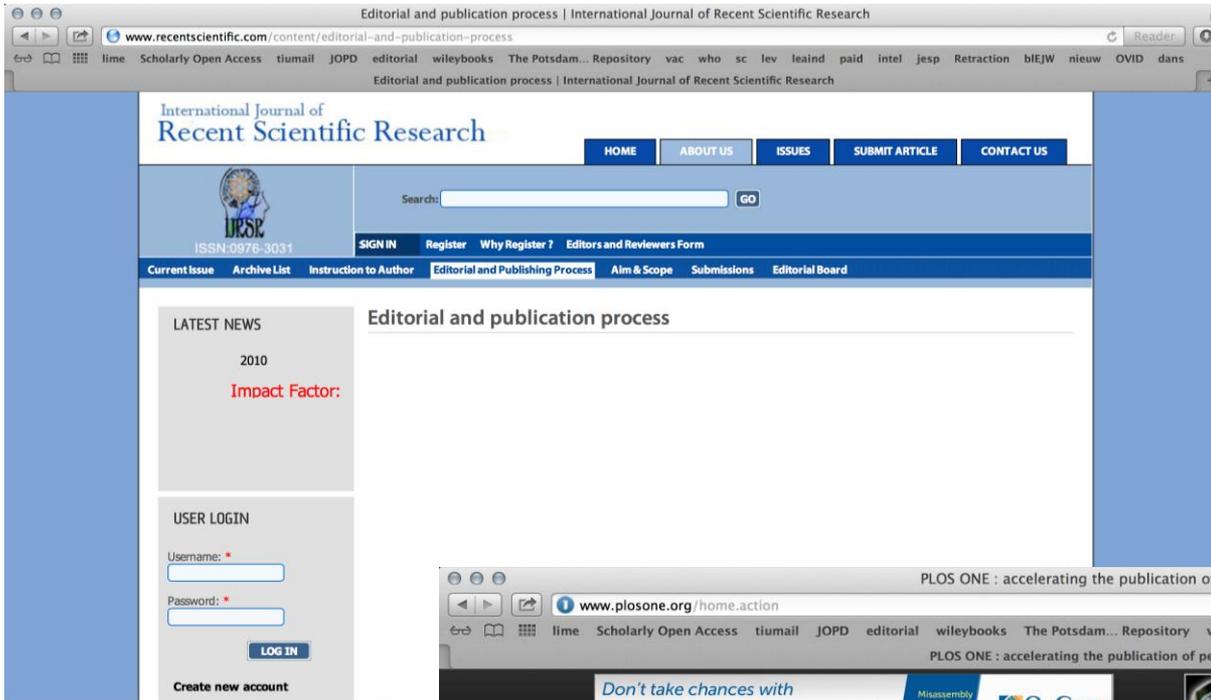
During a meeting (in Rotterdam) of researchers, funders, publishers, and librarians, participants rated a total of 42 journals, of which 17 were “established” journals, 12 OA journals that are part of DOAJ, and 13 OA journals published by publishers on Jeffrey Beals’ list of predatory publishers.

Reliability of the tool was Alpha = .900

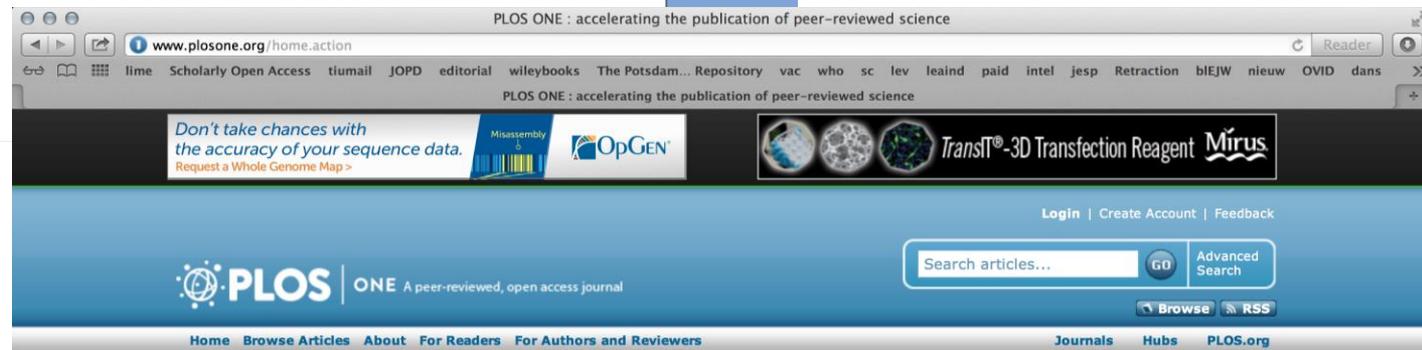


17 Established: $M = 45.4$, $SD = 11.9$
12 OA Established: $M = 54.7$, $SD = 7.7$

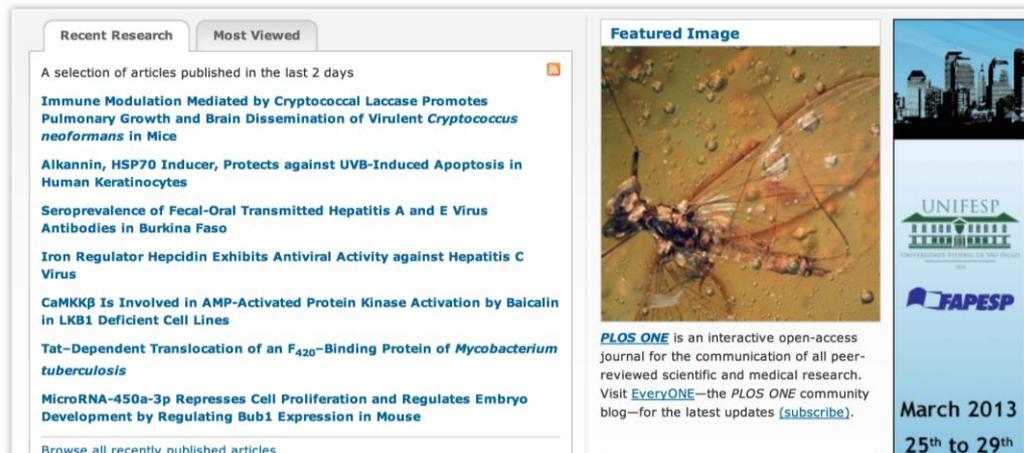
13 OA Predatory: $M = 34.1$, $SD = 6.7$



Score: 24.0



Score: 67.7



Study 3: DOAJ assessment

- We randomly selected 400 journals from the DOAJ list
- 20 raters from (university) libraries in the Netherlands rated a total of 140 journals

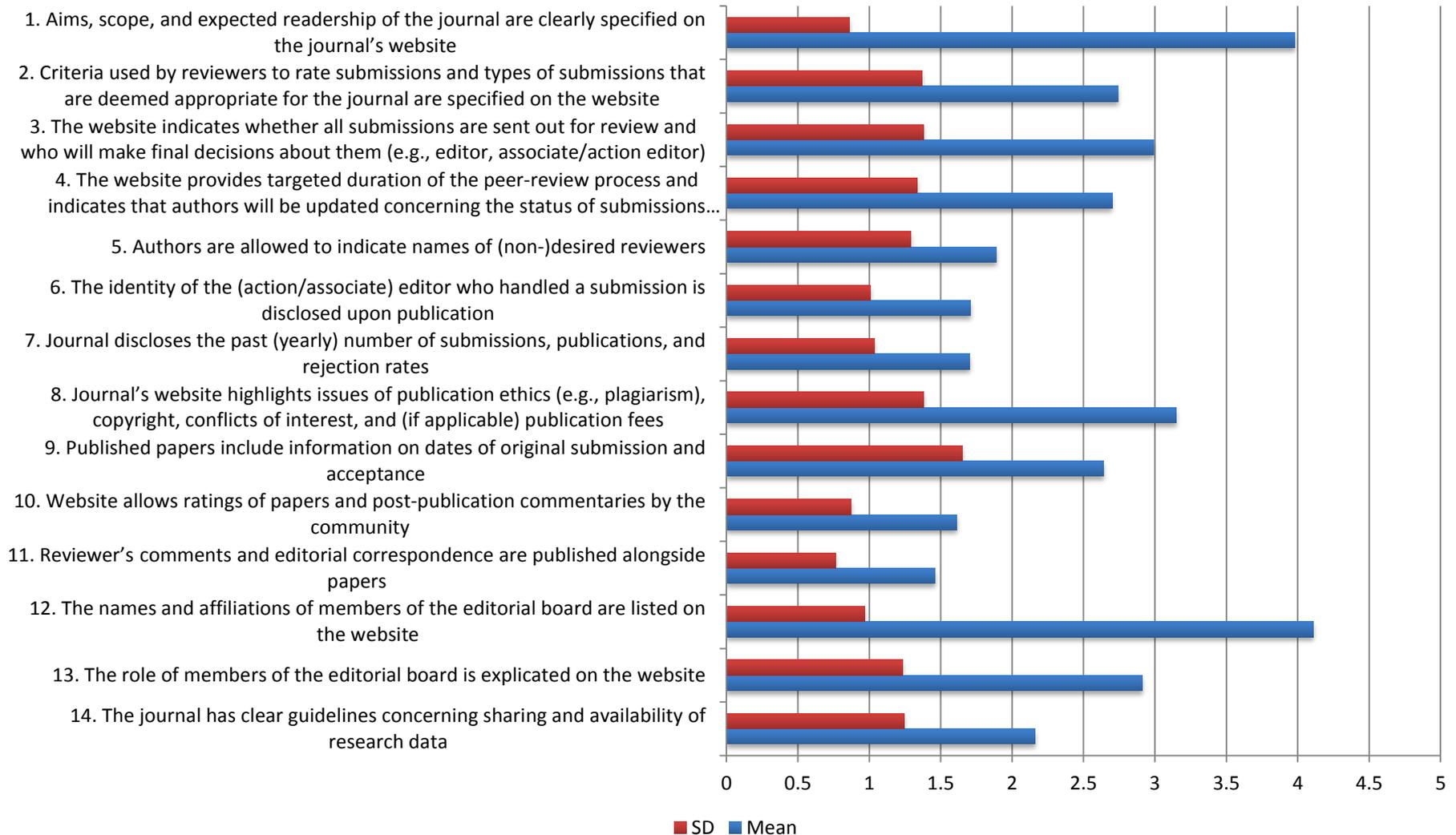
Item/criterion [authors]	Corr.- criter.	Item- rest correl.
1. Aims, scope, and expected readership of the journal are clearly specified on the journal's website	.403	.351
2. Criteria used by reviewers to rate submissions and types of submissions that are deemed appropriate for the journal are specified on the website	.572	.582
3. The website indicates whether all submissions are sent out for review and who will make final decisions about them (e.g., editor, associate/action editor)	.507	.518
4. The website provides targeted duration of the peer-review process and indicates that authors will be updated concerning the status of submissions (e.g., under review)	.639	.615
5. Authors are allowed to indicate names of (non-)desired reviewers	.252	.311

Item/criterion [authors]	Corr.- criter.	Item- rest correl.
6. The identity of the (action/associate) editor who handled a submission is disclosed upon publication	.188	.381
7. Journal discloses the past (yearly) number of submissions, publications, and rejection rates	.239	.274
8. Journal's website highlights issues of publication ethics (e.g., plagiarism), copyright, conflicts of interest, and (if applicable) publication fees	.426	.469
9. Published papers include information on dates of original submission and acceptance	.316	.532
10. Website allows ratings of papers and post-publication commentaries by the community	.292	.431

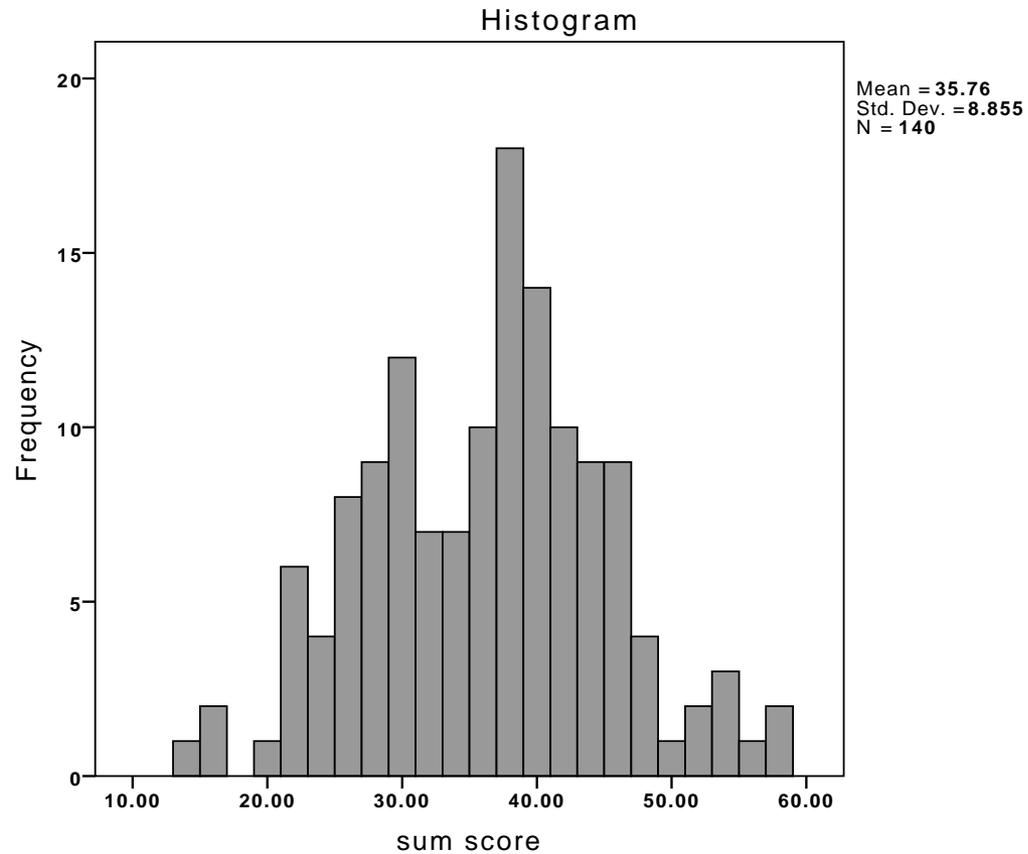
Item/criterion [authors]	Corr.- criter.	Item- rest correl.
11. Reviewer's comments and editorial correspondence are published alongside papers	.337	.486
12. The names and affiliations of members of the editorial board are listed on the website	.381	.322
13. The role of members of the editorial board is explicated on the website	.273	.260
14. The journal has clear guidelines concerning sharing and availability of research data	.293	.418

Alpha reliability: .802

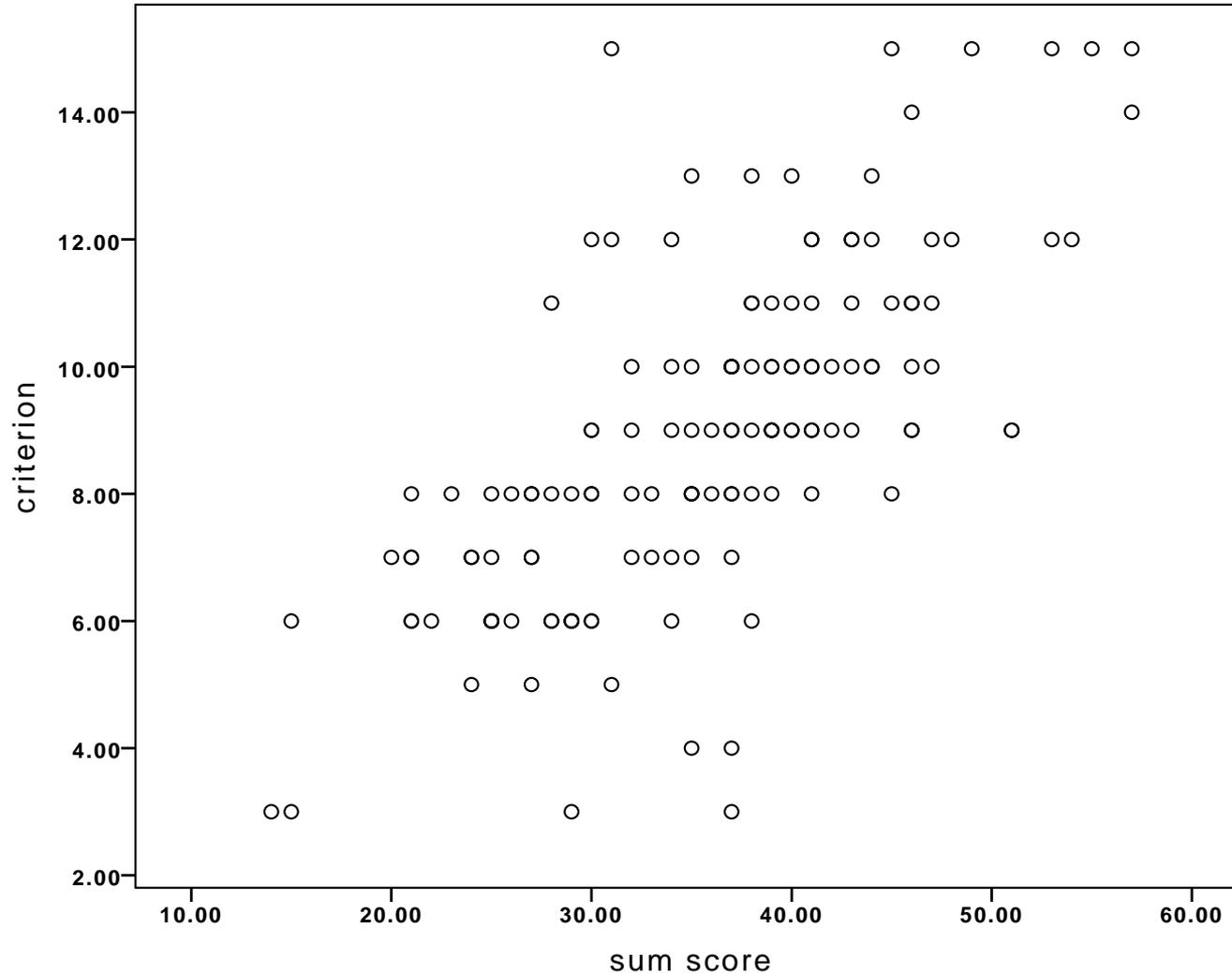
Means and SDs per question



Distribution of total scores



Correlation with general assessment $r = .693$



In sum...

- Transparency of the peer review can be readily assessed
- Ratings show relatively high reliability and correlate reasonably well with ratings of quality of the peer review by authors and general assessment of standards at the journal
- Next step: online implementation.