



The Long and Winding Road in the Cross-Process among Authors and Editors must not Fall into Pandora's Box: The Role of Reviewers

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Opinion

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Abstract

This opinion note summarizes the role of editors with many drafts sent to a same journal being unaccepted after passing successive rounds. The Editor's previous knowledge of the reviewer's subject matter due to the lack of reviewer's specialists in mind about the topics addressed may usually fall in a self-deception problem for authors. This behaviour drives in that many authors do not publish every one of its manuscripts that, although them being good, falls in its pandora's own box of the authors.

Keywords: Editors; Reviewers; Journals; Authors; Pandora's box

Introduction

Martínez-Abraín [1] considers a topic theme in the peer-review process based in the fact that some manuscripts are immerse in a deep stochastic process because the authors are self-confident in the luck of their success, usually falling in a non-stop road of submissions and afterwards ends falling the manuscript into a pandora's box. Most scientists are based in one of the Day's premises [2] on which the final fate of a research shall be the publication. All good manuscripts have great possibilities to be accepted on a first round. This is not usually the case due to some constraints: (1) the existence of flaws (2) absence of good hypotheses (3) absence of novel and brilliant ideas and (4) speed in presenting results (5) bad use of language. Brilliant ideas are not unique in all human beings, so this derives from working jointly in social groups to enhance better ideas.

Results

My own experience falls within the context of that some good papers usually have not a definitive acceptance. I present the example of the peer review tracking process of the Manuscript (Peiro unpublished). The tracking process is depicted in Table 1. This Manuscript remained in a tentative staycation states Journals on which I had other previously accepted papers. In fact, I find a positive trend among other previous drafts sent and manuscripts accepted in the same journals (Spearman-r correlation, $r_5 = 0.530$; $P = 0.358$; table 1). This point shows that some Editors are more skeptical from first authors and more conservative towards peer reviewed authors with previous success within the same journal. This self-deception could fall in the author's behaviour to blind showiness of previous referees to the Editor which have yet been peers of the paper in other journals. This could fall in

disadvantage for themselves due to a previous knowledge of the Editor of the mistakes of the manuscript. This allows Editors to enter in Evolutionary Stable Strategies (EES) on where they could act on behalf of the most accepted authors

and not on behalf of science per se. A demonstration of this fact is the fact that in the Manuscript sent on a second round to a same journal Table1 was noticed by the peer reviewer's comments of another previous draft.

Name of Journal	N	Date of Sending (dd-mm-yyyy)	Date of Reception (dd-mm-yyyy)	Comments of Editor in Chief
A	4	04-05-2008	03-05-2008	Definitively unaccepted without resubmission
B	4	05-09-2008	23-10-2008	Unaccepted but subject to new consideration
C	3	31-10-2008	18-11-2008	Definitively unaccepted without resubmission
B	4	24-11-2008	31-12-2008	Definitively unaccepted without resubmission
D	1	09-01-2009	17-01-2009	Definitively unaccepted without resubmission
E	1	23-01-2009	19-03-2009	Definitively unaccepted without resubmission

Table 1: Results of the tracking process of submission and editor's choice of Peiró's unpublished manuscript. N explains the number of previous drafts sent during 1991-2009. Names of Journals have been hidden for obvious reasons.

I think that the main problem of unsuccessfully manuscripts is the lack of significant statistical inference falling in Fisherian mathematical models that are yet strongly more fixed in most conservative Journals than Bayesian mathematical models. The latter should firmly be taken into account because there is a robust part of the main Einstein's models of the mechanical models of the universe. Einstein's publications were all published in unknown journals. This turns in mind that non-ISI Thomson Reuters journals chose highly cited authors in order to give them plenty of diffusion.

Conclusions

Finally, I consider that the behaviour conduct of acceptance of the Editors is an honest and subsequently costly signal and that in some cases is based in the election of non-specialist's reviewers which, in some cases, have not enough knowledge of the matter and usually revoke in not well revisions and subsequent acceptance of articles with observational flaws because science is sometimes not enough informed due to the lack of observational data [3]. I think that, in parallel to Day's ideas [2], that good reviewers make good science and that, in consequence, the appropriate

choosiness of good and specialized reviewers will facilitate the final Editor's choice. Although sometimes almost impossible, they should always keep in mind potential additional reviewers with a profound previous experience in the subject to improve the quality of the revisions and the Editor's choice.

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