



# Publishing in Psychology: A description of the current situation in Germany

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# Preview

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- Perspectives
- Accessibility
- Publishing Habits
- Reviewing
- Acceptance of Open Access
- Discussion

# Perspectives

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- The publication situation in Psychology can be viewed from different perspectives:
  1. Authors
  2. Institutions and Libraries
  3. Students and other readers
  4. Publishers
  
- This talk focuses on the perspective of the authors.

# Relevance

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- Publishing is not only about communicating scientific results.
- Publishing is an essential prerequisite of personal scientific success.
- Lang and Neyer (2004) showed that the productivity of a Psychologist in Germany (publications as single author, publication as co-author, citations) significantly predicted
  - the length of staying at Universities at the post-doc level and
  - the probability of becoming a full Professor.

( $N = 579$ ;  $p < .05$ )

# Method

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- To not solely rely on subjective view several **sources of information** were used
  - **Official information** on journal characteristics and impact (American Psychologist, 2006; SSCI)
  - Information gathered **via e-mail** from editors of leading German psychological journals
  - Responses on a **questionnaire** (38 questions) sent to 38 Psychologists working at Universities and Scientific Institutes
- **Sample**
  - 28 questionnaires sent back (76%)
  - 10% female
  - 7% PhD-students, 59% post-docs, 7% Assistant Professors, 27% Full Professors

# Accessibility

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- **Libraries** at Universities and at other institutes hold subscriptions of many psychological journals.
- In last years growing **complaints** of the libraries about costs
  - International journals: € 200 – € 2000
  - National journals: € 100 – € 200
- Anyway, **no severe problems** regarding accessibility can be stated from the point of view of readers and authors.
- **Accessibility** even got better recently due to online access, availability of digital formats and literature services like SUBITO.
- Most authors never (69%) or seldom (10%) made published articles accessible to the public.
- Half of the authors (48%) give articles to others when asked for.
- **No costs for authors** (subscription or publishing)

# Publishing Habits

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- **Language:** 73% English, 27% German
- Submission **format:** 52% online, 15% paper, 33% e-mail
- **Preference:** online ( $Md = 2.5$ ) > e-mail ( $Md = 2$ ) > paper ( $Md = 1$ )  
(0 = very unsatisfied, 1 = rather unsatisfied, 2 = rather satisfied, 3 = very satisfied)
- **Importance** for scientific **success:**  
international publications ( $Md = 3$ ) > national publications ( $Md = 2$ )  
(0 = very unimportant, 1 = rather unimportant, 2 = rather important, 3 = very important)
  
- Most authors (90%) know the **impact factor** of the international journals they submit manuscripts to.
- Most authors (86%) base the choice of journal on its **impact factor**.
- Impact factor of international journals are in general higher and can better be obtained than impact factors of national journals.

# Reviewing

Table  
*Authors view on publication process*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Number of reviewing rounds till acceptance	1.96	0.51
Number of reviews each round	2.90	1.35
Quality of reviews <sup>a</sup>	2.64	0.56
Tone of reviews <sup>b</sup>	2.21	0.73
Duration of reviewing process <sup>c</sup>	7.56	6.47
Publication lag <sup>c</sup>	8.56	4.89
First reactions <sup>c</sup>	2.57	2.20

Note. <sup>a</sup>0 = very bad, 1 = bad, 2 = mediocre, 3 = good, 4 = very good 4 = very good. <sup>b</sup>0 = very unfriendly, 1 = unfriendly, 2 = neutral, 3 = friendly, 4 = very friendly. <sup>c</sup>In months.

## Reviewing contd.

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Table

*Journal data on publication process*

Variable	<i>M</i>
Rejection Rate (international journals)	74%
Rejection Rate (national journals)	64%
Publication lag (international journals) <sup>a</sup>	6
Publication lag (national journals) <sup>a</sup>	17

Note. <sup>a</sup>In months.

# Acceptance of Open Access

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- Majority of the authors (74%) has quite a **positive view** on open access journals, 26% negative
- Anyway, the positive statements were mostly restricted by **concerns**:
  - Open Access only interesting if **reputation** and **quality** will be high and journals are **indexed**
  - Developing **high quality** journals is seen as non-trivial task
  - **Costs** for authors are seen as highly problematic, mostly as unacceptable
  - Most likely a place only for **2<sup>nd</sup> class** papers that cannot be placed elsewhere

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Thanks for your attention

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