ISAJE Peer Review Consortium 2015

TOM BABOR

Overview

- An alliance of 'addiction' journals that have agreed to accept manuscript reviews from other ISAJE member journals of the Consortium.

- Goals:
  - support efficient and thorough peer review of original research in addictive behaviors
  - reduce delay of possible publication
  - make the process more efficient by saving the scarce resource of reviewers' time.

Neuroscience Peer Review Consortium

- An alliance of neuroscience journals that have agreed to accept manuscript reviews from other members of the Consortium
- Established in 2008
- Tested in 2009-10
- Adopted as permanent feature in 2011
- Could serve as a model for ISAJE

Procedure

- Several ISAJE member journals agree to share reviews of rejected manuscripts so that other journals in the Consortium could use those reviews to decide whether to publish the manuscript

- ISAJE and/or the journals establish a repository such as Dropbox where the files of publishable but rejected manuscripts are stored

- Consortium editor selects manuscript for consideration and invites author to submit manuscript to their journal along with reviews

Procedure

- The decision (reject) letter by the Editor of the source journal would include an option for the corresponding author authorize the rejecting editor to share the manuscript, the decision letter and the reviews with the Consortium journal group, if they wish.

- The ideal situation would be when a manuscript arrives with reviews that suggest that the manuscript received acceptable ratings in areas related to methods, results, analyses, and significance, but is nevertheless considered not appropriate for declining journal, or not sufficiently competitive with other manuscripts.

Procedure

- Once permission is granted to share the manuscript, member journals would be notified that a manuscript is available, perhaps by an email that provides the names of the authors, the manuscript title and the abstract.
- Reviewers' names would not be identified with the manuscript to preserve their anonymity/confidentiality.
- Consortium editors would have 1-2 weeks to decide whether to consider the manuscript.
- If they are interested they would notify the referring editor that they wish to contact the author. The manuscript would then be withdrawn from the referral pool, e.g., Dropbox.

Procedure

- The recipient editor manages the manuscript through the journal's formal submission process, which could include:

  - a) logging the manuscript into the journal's editorial management system as a new submission

  - b) requesting additional reviews, if necessary

  - c) asking the author revise the manuscript according to the reviewers' comments, and to put the manuscript in the format required by the journal.

- After authors have made revisions, and the manuscript can still be rejected by the recipient Editor

Authors' Roles/Responsibilities

- Authors need to agree to make their manuscript available to the member journals of the ATOD Consortium.
- They could be asked to indicate the priority of the journals they would like to be considered by.
- Once contacted by an interested member journal, they would have the right to decline the referral.
- Their manuscript would then be withdrawn from the Consortium.
- Authors notified that if they do not hear from one of the Consortium editors within two weeks, the manuscript will no longer be eligible for further consideration and the authors are free to submit it to another journal, either within or outside the Consortium

Next Steps

- Need a mix of higher impact and lower impact journals that have similar contents

- Develop a plan

- Develop templates for letters

- Set up a repository

- Process a few manuscripts and compare notes

Issues

- Direction of flow provides little incentive for high impact journals
- Will high impact journals be inundated as first submission target journal, knowing that the reviews will be then passed on if the paper is rejected?
- How much additional work is involved?
- Who will manage the repository and the recordkeeping?
- Could the system be made so simple to operate that it requires virtually no logistical support?