Assessing the Efficacy and Fairness of Traditional and Open Peer Review in Academic Publishing

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Abstract

This report investigates the prevailing attitudes toward traditional and open peer review systems among researchers in computer science. Through an analytical survey conducted with a diverse group of participants, including faculty members and students with varying publication records, we explore the perceived efficacy, fairness, and quality of both review processes. Particular attention is given to the consistency of respondents' answers, examining the correlation between their general opinions on peer review and their specific experiences with comment quality. The study aims to assess whether open peer review can address the shortcomings of the traditional system, taking into account the role of respondent and their experience in research.

Introduction

Peer review stands as the cornerstone of quality control in academic publishing, yet it is not without its critics. The process has been historically opaque, leading to calls for more transparency and accountability through open peer review systems. This report presents findings from a survey that was methodically crafted based on the detailed interviews with four researchers. Their firsthand accounts and reflections on their experiences with peer review in journals and conferences were instrumental in shaping the survey questions, allowing us to capture a wide range of perspectives within the academic community.

The introduction of open peer review has been posited as a solution to the issues plaguing traditional methods. By unveiling reviewer identities or fostering community engagement in the review process, proponents argue that open peer review can

enhance the objectivity and quality of feedback. However, this approach is not without its detractors, who raise concerns about potential biases and the impact on reviewer candor.

In our investigation, we examine the nuances of these arguments, seeking to understand the complex dynamics at play. We analyze the survey data for consistency and contradiction, noting instances where negative sentiments toward the peer review process may contrast with positive perceptions of comment quality. Our analysis takes into account the academic standing and publication volume of our respondents, as these factors may significantly influence their perceptions.

This report aims not only to present a snapshot of current opinions but also to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about how peer review can evolve to better serve the academic community. Through our findings, we seek to inform policymakers, journal editors, and the academic community at large, offering insights that may guide future reforms in scholarly communication.

Individual Interviews

Prior to developing the survey, a series of structured interviews were conducted with a cohort of researchers to delve into their experiences with the peer review process in academic journals and conferences. The insights garnered from these discussions were instrumental in shaping the survey, which aimed to extrapolate more generalizable results from the qualitative data.

Interview Protocol

During the interviews, a set of comprehensive questions was posed to elucidate various aspects of the peer review experience:

1. Recency of the last peer review encounter.
2. Nature of the feedback received (positive or negative).
3. Incentives driving the open peer review model.
4. Volume of publications as the lead author.
5. Prior involvement in conducting peer reviews.
6. Field of expertise related to the reviewed papers.
7. Proportion of papers accepted after the initial submission and the number of review cycles undertaken.
8. Quality and reputation of the publication venues.
9. Distinction between journals and conferences regarding the peer review process.
10. Frequency of major revisions required by journals.
11. Comparative comfort level with open versus traditional peer review methods.

12. Detailed account of the publication process.
13. Perception of the quality of the feedback from reviewers.
14. Degree of trust in the current peer review system.
15. Frequency of being matched with reviewers possessing the requisite expertise.
16. In-depth examination of a specific, positively-reviewed paper, including the publication venue.

These questions were meticulously crafted to capture a holistic view of the peer review process, from the frequency and nature of reviews to the researchers' trust in the system. The responses provided a nuanced understanding of the current state of peer review and informed the subsequent survey design aimed at gathering broader empirical evidence to support or challenge these initial findings.

Synthesis of Interview Responses

The following summarizes the insights obtained from individual interviews with four researchers, offering a snapshot of their experiences and perceptions of the peer review process within academic journals and conferences.

Researcher #1: A Data Science Perspective

- **Publication Record:** Authored 7 papers while pursuing a PhD in Data Science and AI.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Received the last peer review in April 2023 for a paper published at ICML.
- **View on Traditional Peer Review:** Described as poor, citing randomness and lack of reviewer expertise in the specific topic area.
- **Reviewing Experience:** Has reviewed 9 papers, with a 50% acceptance rate; however, none were accepted on the first submission.
- **Open Peer Review Stance:** Expressed concerns that open peer review could introduce bias due to the visibility of reviewer identities.
- **In-Depth Case Analysis:** Discussed the ICML paper's review, highlighting constructive aspects that improved the manuscript's clarity but also noting a discrepancy between positive reviewer feedback and a marginal acceptance decision.

Researcher #2: Insights from Software Engineering

- **Publication Record:** Completed PhD with 17 publications in Software Engineering and Testing.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Accepted paper at PROFES in March 2023.
- **View on Traditional Peer Review:** Criticized as unfair, often involving reviewers who misunderstood the paper’s content.
- **Reviewing Experience:** Reviewed 5 papers, with a 25% acceptance rate on the first submission.
- **Open Peer Review Stance:** Skeptical of its effectiveness due to open participation, yet sees potential merit if decisions were voting-based.
- **In-Depth Case Analysis:** Reflected on a submission to TOSEM, noting the benefit of a flexible deadline but lamenting the added complexity and low-quality feedback from immature reviewers.

Researcher #3: The Intersection of Software Engineering and System Architecture

- **Publication Record:** Holds a PhD and has contributed to 36 papers.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Latest acceptance was in November 2023 in IST.
- **View on Traditional Peer Review:** Remained neutral, recognizing both the pros and cons.
- **Reviewing Experience:** As a reviewer for roughly 30 papers, observed a 75% acceptance rate on initial submissions.
- **Open Peer Review Stance:** Neutral but acknowledges that identifiable reviews could promote accuracy and reduce subjectivity.
- **In-Depth Case Analysis:** Discussed the reasonable timeline and constructive feedback received, which did not excessively complicate the paper.

Researcher #4: A View from Data Science and Artificial Intelligence

- **Publication Record:** DSAI PhD student with 7 papers, the most recent accepted in November 2023 at ICBD.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Only 20% of papers were accepted from the first submission.
- **View on Traditional Peer Review:** Harbors distrust, citing reviewer incompetence and nonsensical feedback.
- **Reviewing Experience:** Reviewed 8 papers, with a 62.5% acceptance rate.
- **Open Peer Review Stance:** Favors the responsibility it imposes on reviewers due to identity disclosure, though criticizes the potential for indiscriminate public commentary.
- **In-Depth Case Analysis:** Voiced a preference for open peer review, highlighting a greater trust in its transparency over traditional methods.

These narratives reveal a complex landscape of peer review, characterized by a critical need for expertise and transparency. The varying degrees of acceptance rates and trust in the review process underscore the subjective nature of peer review and the potential for open peer review to instill a greater sense of accountability and fairness in scholarly communication.

Interviewees' answers summary

Based on the notes from the interviews, here are the summarized reports for each interviewee:

Researcher #1 Summary:

- **Background:** PhD student in Data Science and AI with 7 published papers.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Last paper accepted in April 2023 at ICML.
- **Opinion on Peer Review:** Negative, citing randomness and reviewer unfamiliarity with the subject matter.

- **Reviewing Experience:** Reviewed 9 papers (1 journal, 8 conferences) with 50% acceptance rate, none from the first trial.
- **Open Peer Review:** Against it, citing potential bias due to reviewer identity disclosure.
- **Specific Case Discussion:** Positive review experience with constructive feedback from ICML, despite an inconsistency between positive comments and borderline acceptance decision.

Researcher #2 Summary:

- **Background:** Completed PhD in Software Engineering and Testing with 17 papers.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Last paper accepted in March 2023 at PROFES.
- **Opinion on Peer Review:** Negative, pointing to frequent misunderstandings by reviewers.
- **Reviewing Experience:** Reviewed 5 papers, accepted 1 conference paper.
- **Open Peer Review:** Skeptical, sees open participation as problematic but approves of decision by voting.
- **Specific Case Discussion:** Mixed feelings about a TOSEM submission; appreciated the flexible deadline but criticized the poor quality of comments and non-rational decision-making.

Researcher #3 Summary:

- **Background:** Completed PhD in Software Engineering and System Architecture with 36 papers.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Last paper accepted on November 17, 2023, in IST.
- **Opinion on Peer Review:** Neutral, accepts both positive and negative aspects.
- **Reviewing Experience:** Reviewed approximately 30 papers, with a 75% acceptance rate on the first trial.
- **Open Peer Review:** Neutral comfort compared to traditional review; positive about comment quality and trusts open peer review more.

Researcher #4 Summary:

- **Background:** DSAI PhD student with 7 papers.
- **Recent Review Experience:** Last paper accepted in November 2023 at ICBD.
- **Opinion on Peer Review:** Negative, citing incompetence and inadequate review effort.
- **Reviewing Experience:** Reviewed 8 papers, accepted 5.
- **Open Peer Review:** Supports it due to accountability but criticizes open participation; trusts open peer review over traditional methods.

These summaries provide a snapshot of each researcher's experiences and views on peer review processes. Each response reveals individual preferences and concerns, which could be valuable for understanding the broader sentiments in the academic community about peer review practices.

Interviewee Overview on Peer Review Experiences

This section shows the consolidated overview of the interview responses:

Backgrounds:

- Interviewees included PhD students and researchers with backgrounds in Data Science, AI, Software Engineering, and System Architecture.
- Collectively, they have published between 7 to 36 papers each.

Peer Review Experiences:

- Last peer reviews received ranged from April to November 2023, with venues including prestigious conferences like ICML and PROFES.
- Experiences with peer review were predominantly negative, with common criticisms about the randomness, perceived unfairness, and a lack of reviewer expertise.
- Instances of reviewer misunderstanding and irrelevant comments were frequently mentioned, suggesting a disconnect between reviewer expertise and the content of papers.

Reviewing Histories:

- The interviewees have experience reviewing papers, ranging from 5 to approximately 30 reviews conducted, with acceptance rates varying widely.
- There was a consensus that many papers do not get accepted on the first trial, with percentages ranging from 0 to 75%.

Opinions on Open Peer Review:

- Opinions on open peer review were mixed. Some were against it due to potential bias, while others appreciated the transparency and accountability it might enforce.
- Concerns were raised about the 'open participation' element of open peer review, suggesting that unqualified commentary could be detrimental.
- Trust levels in open peer review were higher for some, as it was seen to encourage more responsible and professional reviews.

Specific Cases and Comments:

- Positive review experiences were noted for their constructive nature, particularly when the feedback led to significant improvements in paper presentation.

- Negative aspects included shallow comments, decisions not based on rational argument, and inconsistency between positive feedback and decision outcomes.
- The quality of comments received varied, but there was a sentiment that high-quality, constructive feedback was rare.

Overall Sentiment:

- There is a general dissatisfaction with the traditional peer review system, mainly due to the perceived randomness, lack of reviewer expertise, and unfairness.
- The interviewees expressed a spectrum of comfort with open peer review, from negative to neutral to positive, indicating a division in perceived benefits and drawbacks of this system.
- Trust issues pervade both traditional and open peer reviews, but there is a tentative preference for the accountability that open peer review could provide.

This overview captures the shared experiences and sentiments of the researchers interviewed, providing insights into the prevailing attitudes towards peer review processes in their academic fields.

The Survey

Now I designed the survey as the following

Survey Title: **Exploring Peer Review Practices in Research**

Introduction:

This survey aims to understand experiences and perspectives regarding traditional and open peer review processes in academic publishing. Your responses will contribute to a study on improving transparency and fairness in peer review. The survey consists of multiple-choice and rating questions and should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Section 1: Background Information

1. Field of Study:
    - Data Science and AI
    - Software Engineering and Testing
    - System Architecture
    - Other: _____
2. Academic Status:

- PhD Student
- Postdoc
- Faculty
- Industry Researcher

3. Number of Published Papers as First Author:

   - 0-5
   - 6-10
   - 11-20
   - 21-30
   - 31+

Section 2: Peer Review Experience

4. Time Since Last Peer Review Received:

   - Less than 6 months ago
   - 6-12 months ago
   - 1-2 years ago
   - More than 2 years ago

5. Outcome of Last Peer Review:

   - Accepted without revisions
   - Accepted with minor revisions
   - Accepted with major revisions
   - Rejected

6. Your Role in Peer Review Processes:

   - Have reviewed papers
   - Have not reviewed papers

7. Type of Venues You've Published In:

   - Journals
   - Conferences
   - Workshops
   - Others

Section 3: Opinions on Traditional Peer Review

8. Overall Opinion on Traditional Peer Review:

    - Very positive
    - Somewhat positive
    - Neutral
    - Somewhat negative
    - Very negative

9. Level of Trust in Traditional Peer Review:

    - Complete trust
    - Moderate trust
    - Neutral
    - Slight trust
    - No trust at all

10. Perceived Quality of Reviewer Comments:

    - Very high quality
    - High quality
    - Average quality
    - Low quality
    - Very low quality

11. Percentage of Papers Accepted on First Submission (Estimate):
    - 0-25%
    - 26-50%
    - 51-75%
    - 76-100%

Section 4: Perspectives on Open Peer Review

12. Comfort Level with Open Peer Review Compared to Traditional Review:

    - Much more comfortable
    - Somewhat more comfortable
    - About the same
    - Somewhat less comfortable
    - Much less comfortable

13. Perceived Fairness of Open Peer Review:
    - Much fairer
    - Somewhat fairer
    - About the same
    - Somewhat less fair

- Much less fair

14. Level of Trust in Open Peer Review:
    - Complete trust
    - Moderate trust
    - Neutral
    - Slight trust
    - No trust at all
15. Impact of Reviewer Anonymity on Quality of Reviews:
    - Greatly improves quality
    - Somewhat improves quality
    - No impact
    - Somewhat reduces quality
    - Greatly reduces quality

Section 5: Detailed Experiences (Optional)

16. Briefly describe a positive experience with peer review, focusing on the aspects that made it beneficial.

17. Briefly describe a negative experience with peer review, focusing on the aspects that were problematic.

Conclusion:

18. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the peer review process in your field?

    - Very satisfied
    - Satisfied
    - Neutral
    - Dissatisfied
    - Very dissatisfied

Demographics (Optional):

19. Age
20. Gender
21. Country of Residence

Survey Control Variables

We have three control variables in this survey which are

- Field of Study
- Academic Status
- Number of Published Papers

These control variables can help us account for differences in perspective based on a respondent's experience level and field. As well as giving more value and weight for the participant depending on the experience in the reviewing process.

Survey Results:

The survey targeted the Chalmers CSE department, particularly the divisions of Data Science and AI, and Software and Interaction Design, garnering 24 responses. An analysis of the data follows, with a focus on participants' academic affiliations, statuses, publication records, review experience, and preferred publication venues.

Background Information

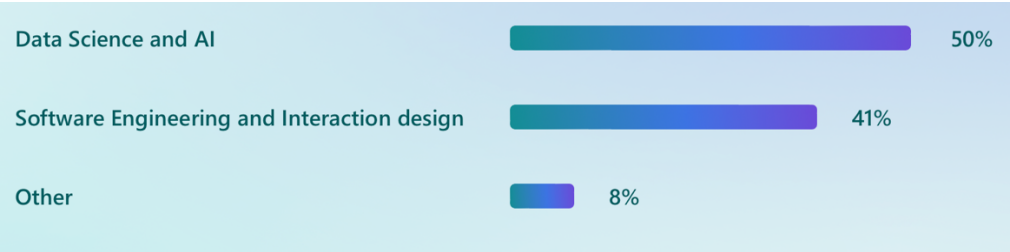


Figure 1 Field of Study

Figure 1 presents the distribution of participants across academic divisions. Notably, half of the respondents are affiliated with Data Science and AI, indicating a balanced divisional participation within the survey.

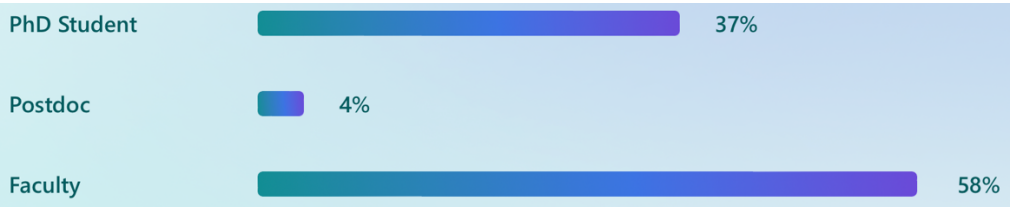


Figure 2 Academic Status

According to Figure 2, PhD students constitute 37% of the respondents, with an interdisciplinary representation from both Data Science and AI, and Software Engineering and Interaction Design. Predominantly, faculty members make up the majority with 14 responses, distributed across Data Science and AI (6), Software Engineering and Interaction Design (7), and one from Computer Science. Additionally, a post-doctoral researcher from Data Science and AI has contributed to the survey.

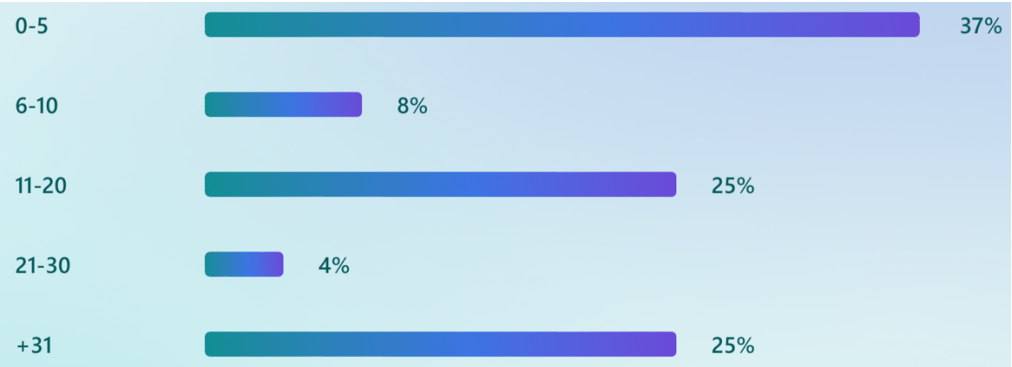


Figure 3 Number of published papers as first author

Figure 3 categorizes participants by their publication count as first authors. The data reveals that 9 participants have authored up to 5 publications, predominantly PhD students with one faculty member, suggesting a nascent stage in their research careers. In the bracket of 6 to 10 publications, there are 2 respondents, including one PhD student and one post-doctoral fellow. A distinct increase in publication volume is noted among faculty members, with 6 respondents reporting between 10 to 20 publications, and one respondent within the 21 to 30 range. Notably, 6 faculty members have published over 31 papers, with a substantial representation from the Software Engineering and Interaction Design divisions. This trend underscores the more extensive research experience and output among faculty members compared to the PhD students. It also reflects the disciplinary dynamics, where faculty members in Software Engineering and Interaction Design benefit from a broader spectrum of publication venues and potentially less stringent publishing criteria compared to their counterparts in Data Science and AI.

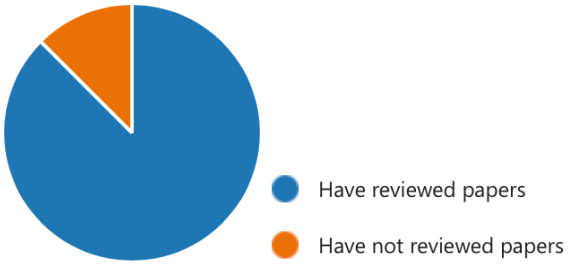


Figure 4 Role in Peer Review Processes

The pie chart in Figure 4 elucidates that a significant majority of participants have prior experience in reviewing papers, with only 3 respondents lacking this background. This detail is crucial for our analysis, as it suggests a foundation of practical understanding that may enrich the reliability and consistency of the survey responses.

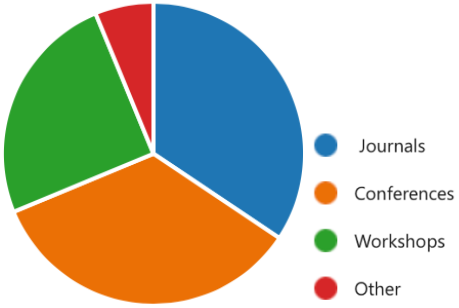


Figure 5 Type of Venues Published

In Figure 5, we observe a preference among participants for disseminating their research in conferences and journals, with 22 respondents indicating a history of publication in these venues. This preference underscores the traditional routes of scholarly communication favored by the department's researchers.

Participants' Peer Review Experience and Opinion

This section elucidates the experiences of survey participants with traditional peer review, highlighting recency, outcomes, and perceptions.
Figure 6 delineates the timeframe of the most recent peer reviews received by participants (upper bar chart), along with the outcomes of these reviews (lower bar chart). A significant 75% of respondents reported receiving their last review within the past six months, underscoring their active engagement in research. Notably, only a fifth of the reviews resulted in rejection, suggesting a relatively high rate of acceptance or requests for revision among the surveyed cohort.

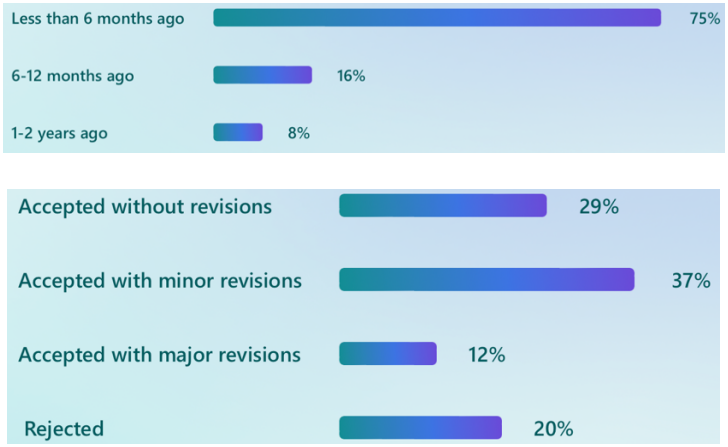


Figure 6 Time since last peer review received and the outcome

Figure 7 probes into the participants' opinions of and trust in the traditional peer review process, predicated on their individual experiences. Overall, there is a discernible ambivalence towards traditional peer review, with only one faculty member from the Software Engineering and Interaction Design division expressing very positive sentiments and complete trust. This particular respondent, while appreciative of the comments' quality, refrained from rating them as very high. Intriguingly, seven participants, predominantly faculty members and one PhD student from Data Science and AI, conveyed discomfort and distrust towards the traditional peer review. This subset of respondents, with four from the Software Engineering and Interaction Design division, have substantial reviewing experience and a higher rate of publications as first authors, which may inform their critical perspective.

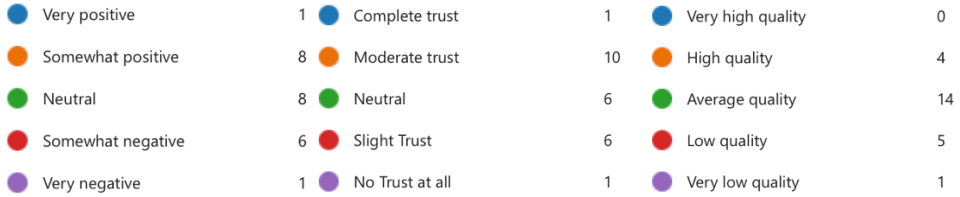


Figure 7 Overall opinion, level of Trust, and quality of comments in traditional peer review

When assessing the quality of review comments (third sub-figure to the right), a majority of participants perceive them to be moderately average. This indicates a potential area for improvement in the peer review process, as the perceived mediocrity of feedback could impact the overall satisfaction with the review process.

Figure 8 Percentage of papers accepted on the first submission

An additional facet of the survey addressed the acceptance rate of papers on the first submission. The data reveals a sobering statistic: a mere 25% of papers were accepted in the initial round, indicating that most submissions undergo revisions or face rejection before eventual acceptance.

Perspectives on Open Peer Review

This section details participants' attitudes towards open peer review, as reflected in the survey responses.

Figure 9 indicates a generally favorable disposition towards open peer review, with 8 participants, including 6 faculty members, expressing greater comfort with this system over the traditional model. Notably, two respondents who held a positive view of traditional peer review also expressed comfort with open peer review, suggesting some overlap in approval for both systems. As for perceptions of fairness, a majority of 10 respondents advocate for the greater fairness of open peer review compared to the traditional method. In contrast, 6 participants dissented, and 8 viewed both systems as comparably fair.

Regarding trust, the survey reveals a propensity towards open peer review, with 11 participants placing their trust in it. This figure surpasses the 6 who favor traditional peer review and the 7 who maintain a neutral stance. This trend underscores a shifting confidence towards transparency in the peer review process.

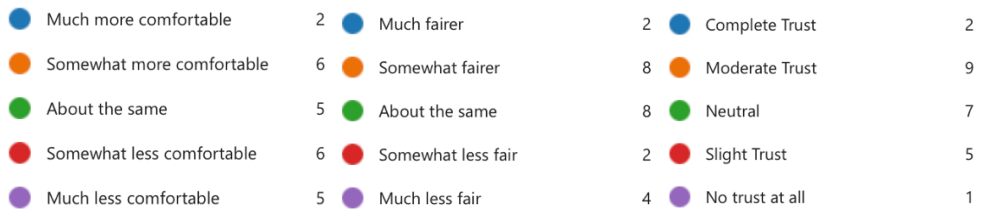


Figure 9 Comfort level, fairness, and level of trust in with open peer review compared to traditional

Figure 10 examines the conjectured impact of revealing reviewer identities on the quality of reviews. A segment of 12 participants anticipates that this disclosure would enhance the quality of comments, indicating a belief in increased accountability. Conversely, 6 participants speculated that such transparency might detract from the quality. In terms of subjectivity, 6 participants surmise that identifying reviewers could diminish it, while 7 suggest that it would positively affect fairness. A substantial 15 respondents believe that open identification would compel reviewers to deliver more rigorous and responsible critiques.

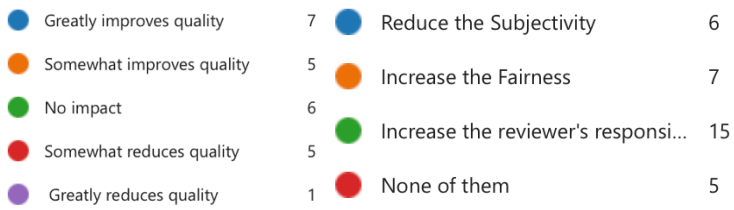


Figure 10 Impact of Reviewee's identity on Quality of Reviews

Detailed Experiences

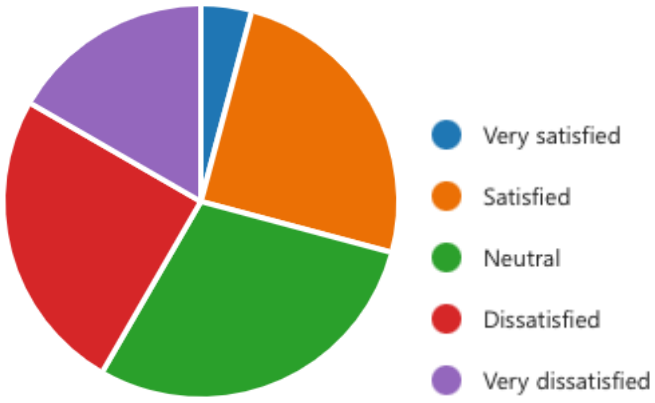
Briefly describe a positive experience with peer review, focusing on the aspects that made it beneficial.

Sometimes one gets extremely helpful comments (even if critical). In general, I see the point of reviews more in gatekeeping science (i.e., assess thee work) than in providing constructive feedback to the authors. I think for the latter better mechanisms exist.	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
expert reviewer giving it highest grade	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
Some review comments can be very genuinely constructive.	Data Science and AI	Faculty
Good discussion between authors and reviewers in rebuttal phase	Data Science and AI	Faculty
I generally like the journal review process, where there are multiple rounds of feedback and you can have a discussion/debate with the reviewers.	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
Some reviewers are good and come with great insights. I have gotten reviews which point me to other important work which we have missed in our literature review and similar things.	Data Science and AI	PhD Student
Open peer review can improve review quality or at least cut down in the overly negative comments.	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
When one gets reviews from folks who actually spent time to understand the paper and findings, and they are knowledgeable in the field, reviewers can provide quite valuable feedback for improving the paper and research. However, the quality of reviews varies a lot, and I think a lot of it is more due to it being something we are expected to do "in addition" to our research, and for free. So naturally some people don't put as much effort as others. I think this should be paid work, and having a double-blind but eventually de-anonymized reviews will improve review quality.	Data Science and AI	Faculty
The quality of reviews varies a lot. Few are excellent, many are mediocre, and still others incompetent.	Others	Faculty

Briefly describe a negative experience with peer review, focusing on the aspects that were problematic.

Of course I have received reviews that I found unfair or incorrect (everybody has). But systematically I don't consider this an enormously large problem - you are always allowed to submit elsewhere after all. However, there is (what I consider) a negative trend in computer science to put more and more load on the shoulders of reviewers to produce longer and more "helpful" reviews in shorter and shorter time. I think ultimately the quality of reviews w.r.t. their core responsibility (assessing correctness of research) suffers from this. I would love if we could go back to a world where peer review is for summative feedback, and the formative feedback is given through other means (e.g., explicit mentoring tracks, etc.).	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
less knowledgable reviewer rejecting the paper for strange reasons	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
Some review comments are not constructive, i.e., do not help authors to understand how to improve their papers.	Data Science and AI	Faculty
Ignorant reviewers skimming the paper and setting a low score. Refuse to update after rebuttal	Data Science and AI	Faculty
Often feels like reviewers have not read the paper thoroughly, comments often feel arbitrary, reviewers often seem to start from "reject" and look for reasons to reach that verdict	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
Like many others, I have received reviews that are more or less vacuous. Quick summaries with questionable comments and requests for improvements. Some seem to have hardly even read the paper. It is a function of the amount of papers in the field unfortunately.	Data Science and AI	PhD Student
However, there is a clear risk for more junior reviewers that senior authors might (unconsciously) not treat them fairly, after getting negative review comments. I haven't seen a good proposal to address this.	Software Engineering and Interaction design	Faculty
I've had a reviewer call my work "bullshit" which I don't think is a very constructive comment.	Data Science and AI	Faculty
Again, some people don't seem to read the paper and maybe like they threw a review together in 10 minutes just because they had a deadline. This can be quite frustrating, especially for students writing their first paper who have not yet had a "good" experience with peer review.	Data Science and AI	Faculty
A person without competence within a specific field make uninformed assessment and is protected by anonymity.	Other	Faculty

Overall satisfaction with peer review



Meta Analysis

Faculty members are the predominant participants in the study, numbering 14, with six specializing in Data Science, seven from software engineering and interaction design, and one form other division. Their insights are particularly valuable since they are all experienced reviewers with over 31 publications collectively. Among them, six have a negative view of traditional peer review, and four are neutral, with the negative sentiments primarily emanating from those in software engineering and interaction design.

Regarding trust in the traditional peer review, there's a distribution of confidence: six participants have moderate trust, three are neutral, and five have slight trust, including two from the fields of Data Science and AI. Interestingly, there's a discrepancy where three participants acknowledge the high quality of traditional reviews despite one having a negative view with neutral trust in the process. Notably, a Data Science and AI faculty member with only five publications perceives the quality of traditional peer reviews as generally high.

Turning to Open Peer Review, eight participants favor it over the traditional method, including two PhD students and four from DSAI, who hold somewhat negative views of traditional peer review. Five participants see no difference between the two methods, while 11, including five faculty members (three from software engineering and two from Data Science and AI) and six PhD students, feel less comfortable with open peer review. Among these, nine have prior experience reviewing papers, and one exhibits inconsistent views.

ten participants, three of whom are PhD students, believe open peer review to be fairer, whereas six others, including four PhD students and one postdoc, disagree. Trust in open peer review is higher, with 11 faculty members endorsing it compared to four who trust traditional peer review.

In the aggregate, there appears to be a division in preference for the type of peer review based on academic status. Faculty members demonstrate a proclivity towards open peer review, potentially indicative of their confidence and established reputation in their respective fields. In contrast, PhD students exhibit a tendency to favor the traditional peer review system. This inclination may be attributed to their relative inexperience with the publication process, particularly during the initial phases of their doctoral research. The public nature of open peer review could pose a deterrent, as early-career researchers may harbor apprehensions about the open critique of their work.

Given the expressed reservations concerning the peer review process, the provision of open peer review as an alternative merits consideration. This would not only cater to varying preferences across the academic spectrum but could also foster a more transparent and constructive review culture.