

## Answering reviewers

**Reviewer's code:** 01551432

### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

Dear Authors, Thank you for your submitting your manuscript entitled, "Integrity in the editing and publishing process is the basis for improving an academic journal's Impact Factor" in WJG. The manuscript is well written and very nice. The topic is very interesting and timely. However, several criticisms should be addressed as the followings.

1) First of all, I would like to express my congratulations, gratitude and respect for the wonderful development of World Journal of Gastroenterology (WJG). Among other medical journals with a high impact factor, confirm whether there has been a journal in the past that has published self-analyzed and self-evaluated content like your submitted article, and confirm whether it is appropriate to publish this content. Please reconsider it.

**Answer:** Thank you very much for your comments. This article analyzed not only the *WJG*, but also 6 other journals' data. Moreover, this manuscript was peer-reviewed by randomly selected reviewers. We think it's appropriate to publish this content in *WJG*.

2) Overall, I think the manuscript is too long. I think it would be better to describe the *WJG* as it is, and to summarize the remaining six journals in a concise manner and shorten them.

**Answer:** This is a complete story about the integrity in the editing and publishing process. If we only describe *WJG*, the evidence will seem insufficient to draw conclusions. So, we prefer to keep all the data of all the 7 journals. Thank you for your understanding.

3) The peer review and editing system of Baishideng's journals has been fully completed, and it is wonderful that the review and editing process is clear, open and not closed worldwide. This system enables faster peer review and editing of higher quality, and has

greatly contributed to the development of Baishideng's Publishers, which is worthy of admiration.

**Answer:** Thank you for your comments.

4) page 8, Table 2: Regarding the ranking of journal names cited by manuscripts that have been published in WJG: I myself am very interested in this content, but it seems to me that it simply shows the number of citations and the percentage of them in real numbers. What does this table mean? Are there any other analytical or statistical methods other than using real numbers? If so, what is its validity? Can it be compared with journals other than Baishideng's journals? It would be more interesting to know the number of cited manuscripts by publisher and their percentage. For example, is it possible to consider whether there are differences in the journals that authors prefer to cite depending on their country of origin?

**Answer:** Thank you for your comments. We intent to show *WJG's* academic influence through this table. The table shows that the citable articles are not concentrated in one or several specific journals, but authors of journals all around world cited articles published by *WJG*. This is a manifestation of the recognition of the scientific quality of *WJG's* published articles. The data are from web of science, we didn't use other analytical or statistical methods. And, analysis for the Publisher of these journals is difficulty. For "whether there are differences in the journals that authors prefer to cite depending on their country of origin?", we think this topic is very interesting, and we may study it separately in the future, but not in this manuscript.

5) page 9, Table 3: What does this table essentially mean? It seems to me that it makes little or no sense. This is because the record count of each journal is very small, so I feel that the chance factor or other bias is large and there is little meaning in ranking. If posted, please add a full discussion of its implications in the Discussion section.

**Answer:** Thank you for your suggestion. We have deleted this kind of tables.

6) page 16 and 17, Figure 3 and 4: Why are there so many manuscripts submitted or published from these countries? Feel free to comment on why in the Discussion section and add more if you would like to do.

**Answer:** We have made a short comment about this in the discussion (Highlighted in Yellow).

7) page 17, Table 4: To put it bluntly, it's a number-only notation and difficult to be understood for readers in WJG. I think it would be easier to understand if the real numbers (if possible, with percentages) for 2019, 2020, and 2021 from the left for each country were displayed side by side in a bar graph.

**Answer:** Thank you for your suggestion. We have put the data in figures.

8) page 60, line 1 and page 64, line 2: It states that 5.2% of the submitted manuscripts in Baishideng's seven SCIE-indexed journal are not reviewed by external reviewers, but my impression is that there are many manuscripts that are not reviewed by external reviewers. It seems that the ratio is too small, is this true? If my understanding is wrong, please explain a little more clearly.

**Answer:** The ratio is true. We use a different way of preview for manuscripts. If a manuscript meets the requirements in the "Guidelines for Manuscript Type and Related Ethics and Relevant Documents" (<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/287>), it will be sent to external reviewers for peer review. Only the manuscripts which not meet the requirements will not be sent for peer review. We have further discussed this in the "Manuscript preview" in the discussion section (Highlighted in Yellow).

9) page 61, line 3 and page 69, line 1: Who did the English editing for the remaining 38.6% of the papers?

**Answer:** Thank you. For the remained 38.6% of manuscripts, no matter the authors are native speakers or not, the revised manuscript's language has rated Grade A or B by the peer reviewers and the authors have provided a language certificate issued by any of the

professional language editing companies that have been vetted and are recommended by Baishideng, they do not need to be sent to a Baishideng language editor to polish the language. Please refer to the second paragraph in the “(2) Language polishing at second decision” section.

**Reviewer’s code:** 02537773

### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

The paper deals with an important issues related to the integrity and publishing process. The editorial team provide an overview on the current standing of the Journals published by Baishideng Publishing Groups with an impact factors. As an author and review, I believe that those points are helpful to keep the track on the quality of the journals as well as to contribute to high scientific standards and further strategic developments.

**Answer:** Thank you very much for your comments.

The authors provide a valuable assessment of various steps during the publishing process that will lead to further improvement of already high standards of the Journals. The work provides furthermore the insights related to very transparent review process. The table with rank and record count of the journals with Impact factor >10 for example 3 makes primary focus on the Impact factor. An alternative way of presenting the data could be also the focus on the number of citations in top journals for instance: Hepatology, GUT and Gastroenterology and the top journals that cite WJG. If the authors indeed would like to focus on IF - the current view is perfect, however, if the authors would rather focus on the top citing journals with IF over 10, that the sorting according to citation number may be the preferred option.

**Answer:** Thank you very much for your comments. We decided to delete this kind of tables according to the reviewer #01551432’s suggestions.

The number in Figures (for example Figure 12) are quite small in relation to the size of the

figure. Here the size (of the number and letters) and bold format may be adapted to improve visibility.

**Answer:** The figures has been revised and updated.

One point related the reviewer process may be included/considered. The publisher uses IDs that can be referred to particular reviewers. However, matching the IDs with the names published along the work, the data can be used to identify the reviewers making actually the reviewer process "fully" open - therefore the authors can track the reviewers following publication. To my view therefore it is rather a semi-blinded peer review process and not a fully single-blind peer review process (4.2 Manuscript peer review and first decision).

**Answer:** Thank you for your comments. Firstly, the search of reviewers using IDs is not open to the authors, secondly, we only list the reviewers' abbreviated name at the end the manuscript after the manuscript is accepted for publication.

**Reviewer's code:** 05392001

#### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

Wang et al. summarized the integrity in the editing and publishing process is the basis for improving an academic journal's Impact Factor. They found that establishing, promoting and actively practicing processes that safeguard and bolster the integrity of the editing and publication process also help to improve the academic influence of academic journals, which itself is the cornerstone for improving JIF. This review is well organized and written.

**Answer:** Thank you very much for your comments.

**Reviewer's code:** 05115000

#### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

This paper is wonderfully written and I am happy to given the opportunity to assess the quality of the paper.

**Answer:** Thank you very much for your comments.