



Pan African Medical Journal (PAMJ)

1st AUTHOR SURVEY (MAY 2011)

Summary of results and conclusions



Purpose and Objectives

- **Purpose**

- To improve PAMJ overall processes (submission, review, publication, dissemination and monitoring) to ensure a user-friendly and customized products and services to all authors;

- **Specific objectives**

- Provide baseline information about PAMJ authors' profile and expectations
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of PAMJ processes (submission, review, publication, dissemination and monitoring)
- Identify areas of PAMJ future development and their potential impact (author's fees, article level metrics)
- Formulate actionable recommendations for improvement.



Methodology

- Inclusion criteria
 - All authors who have submitted manuscripts to PAMJ (published, rejected or in process) from June 2008 to April 2011
- Data collection
 - Online form including 16 questions
 - Survey Monkey
- Duration: May 10th – June 10th 2011

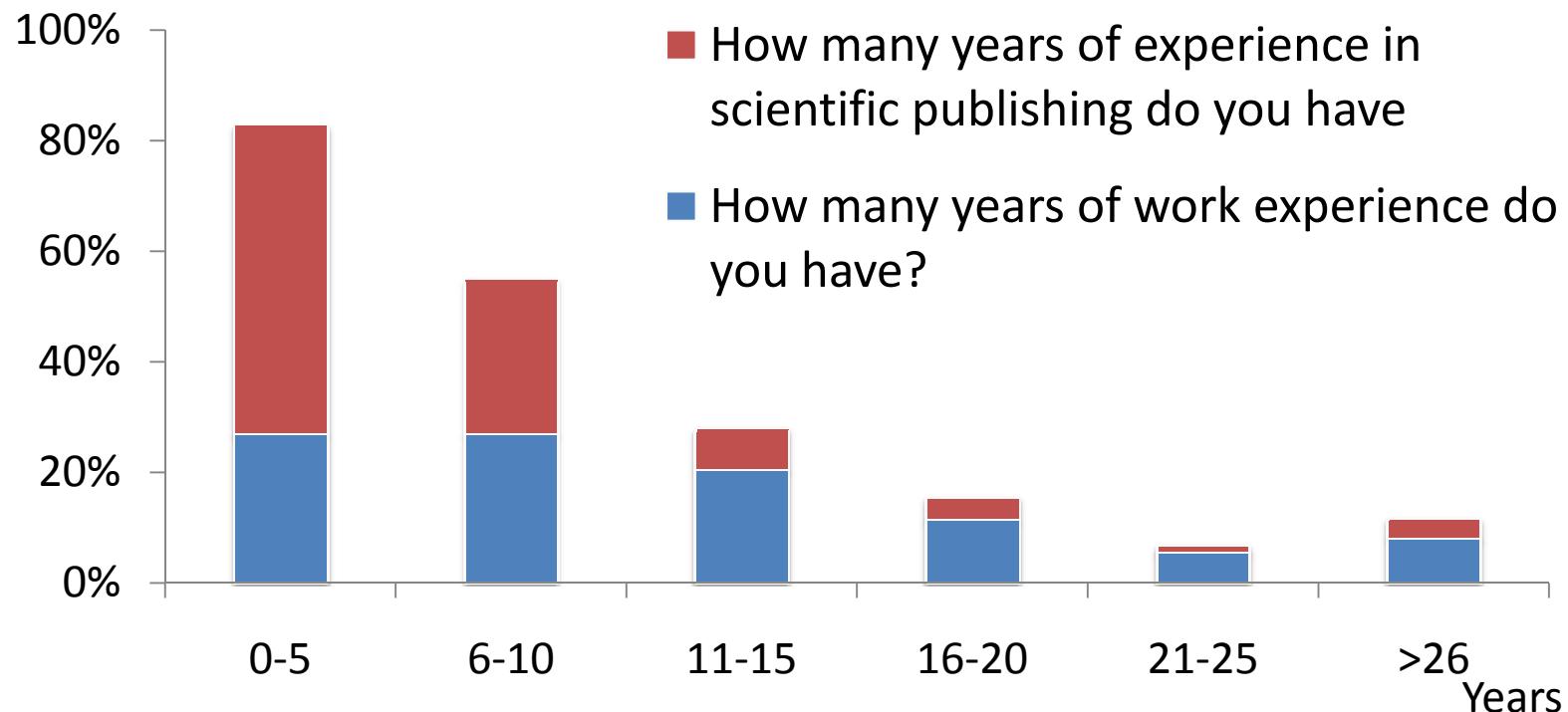


Response rate

- Questionnaire sent to: 346
- Accepted to participate: 237 (68%)
- Opted-out: 2 (1%)
- No feedback: 109 (32%)
- Email bounced: 1 (0.3%)

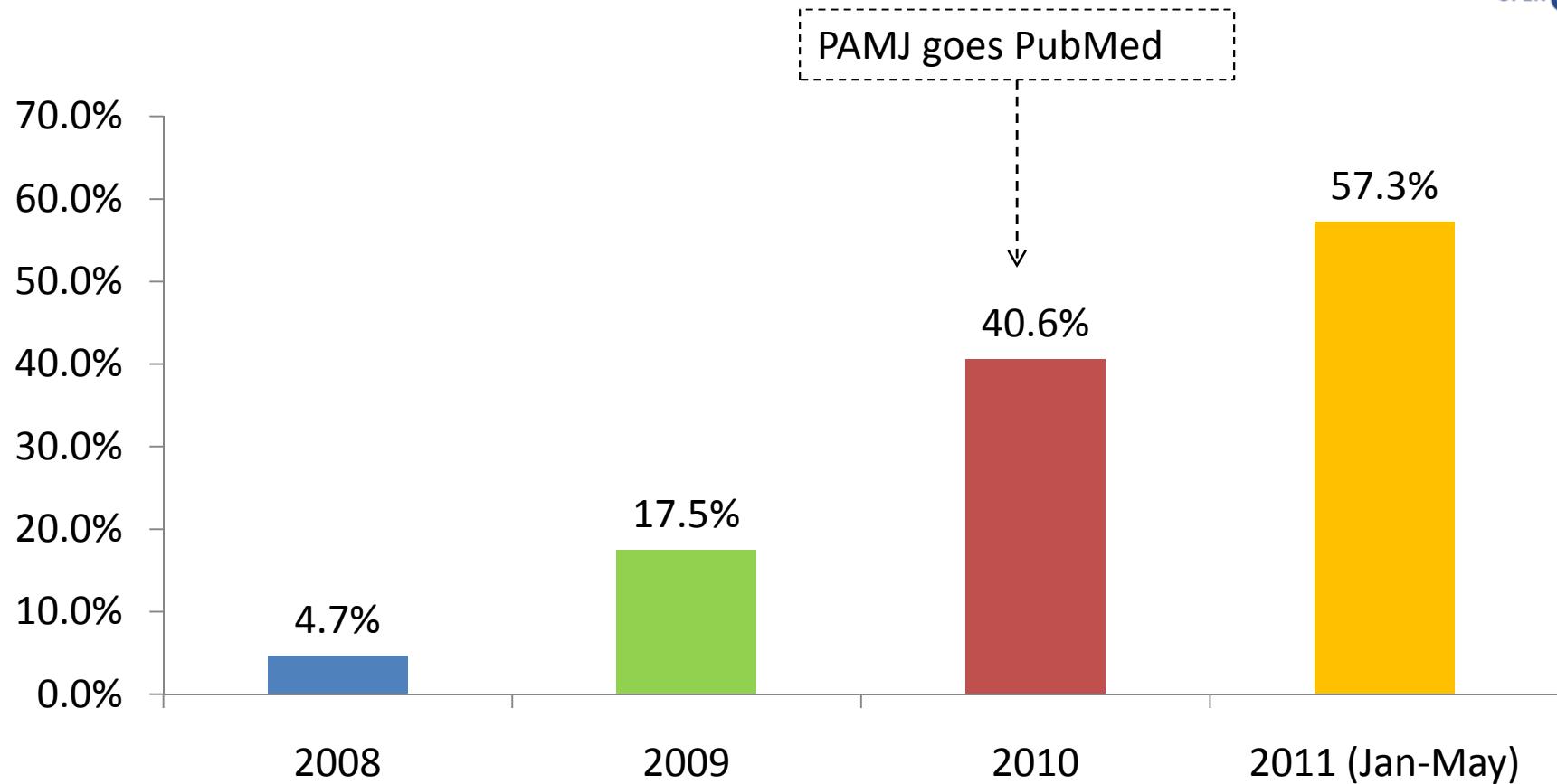


Years of experience (Work and Scientific Publishing)



- Majority (54%) of authors have started working after year 2000,
- Yet, most (57%) authors have less than 5 years of experience in scientific publishing.

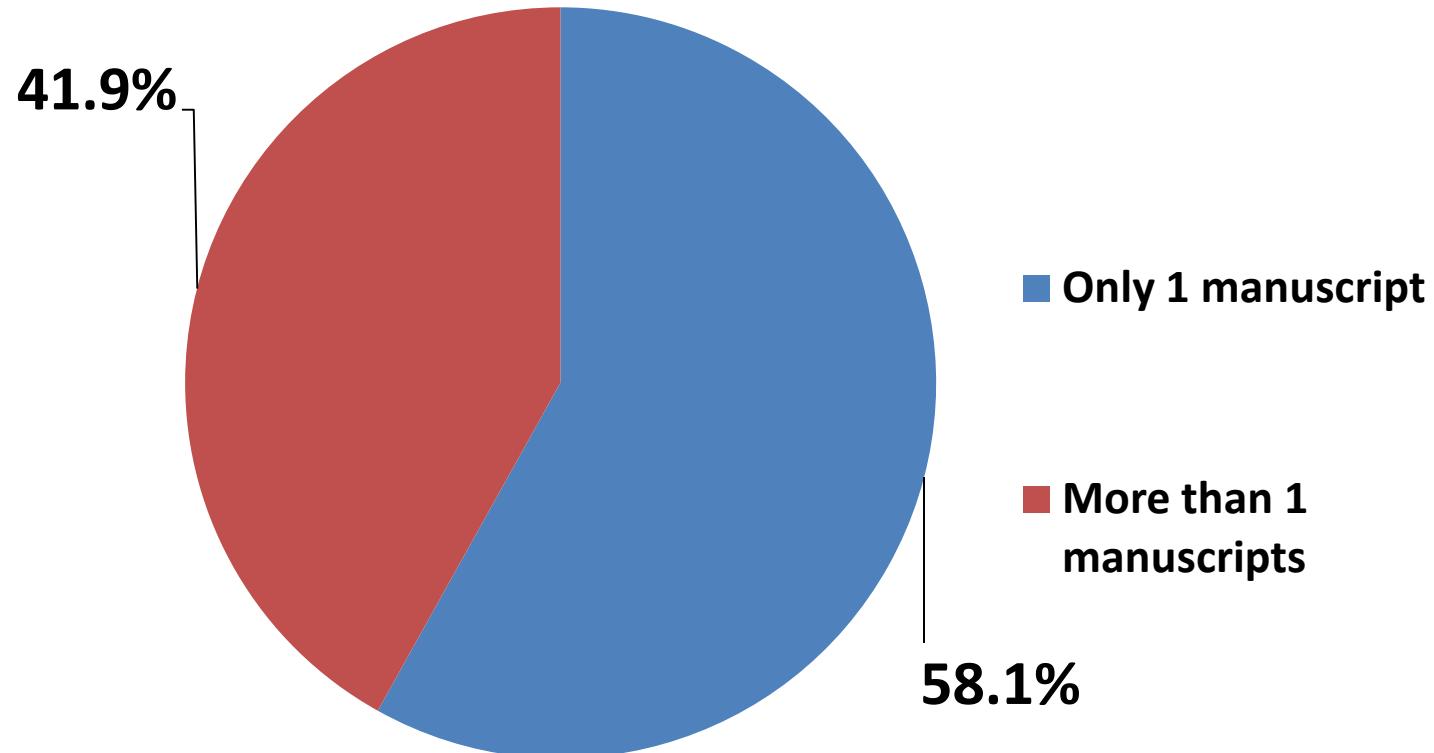
Which year did you submit your manuscript(s) to Pamj?



- Increasing trend in submission in 2010 (PubMed indexation)
- Acceleration in 2011, 57% of the authors submitted in first 5 months of 2011

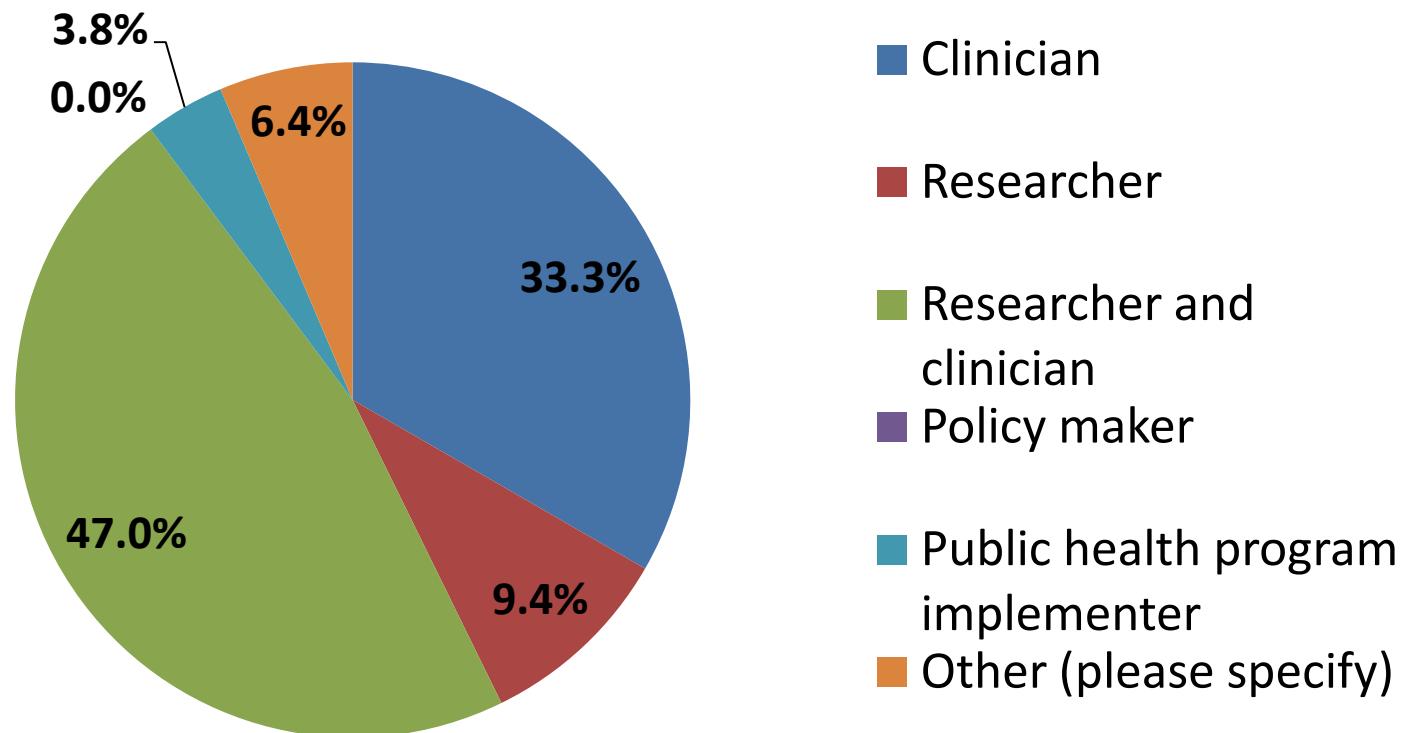


How many manuscripts have you submitted to PAMJ?



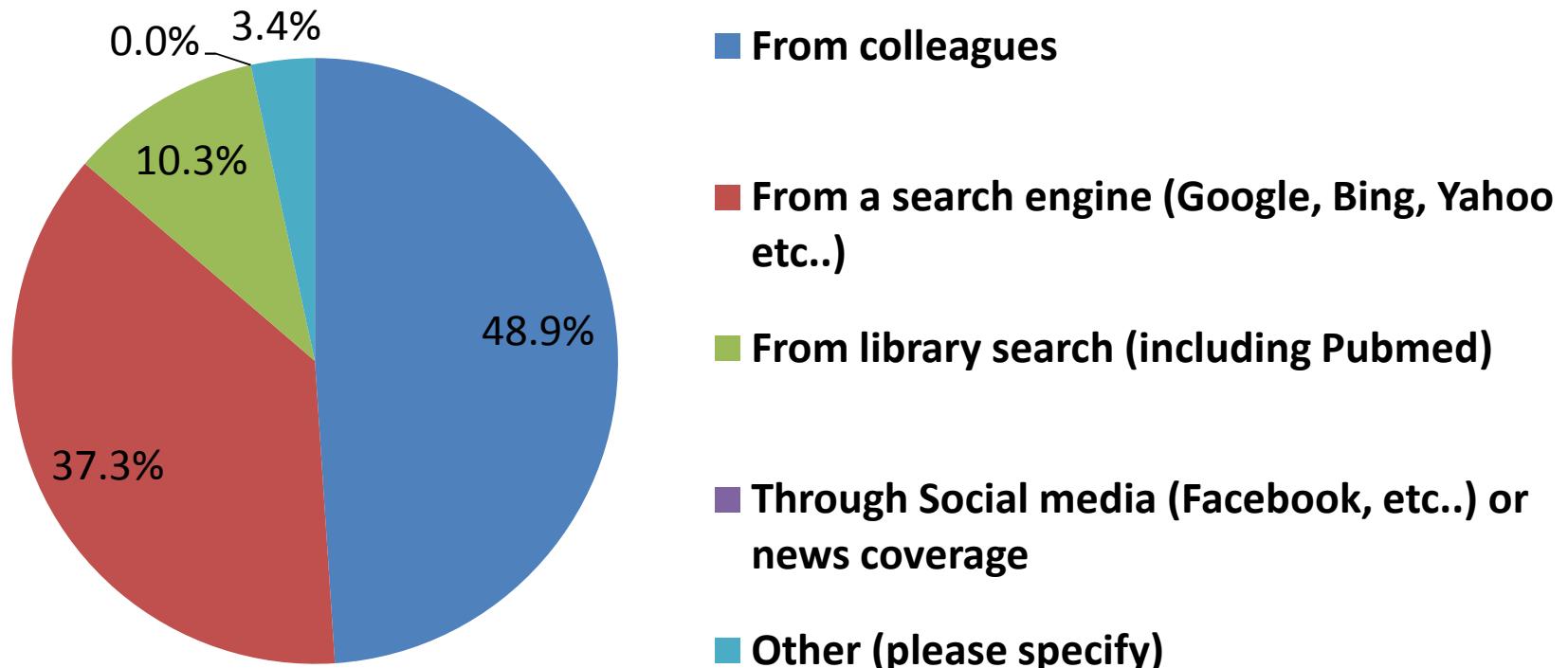
- Majority (58%) are at their first submission experience with PAMJ.
- 42% have more than 1 manuscript submitted.

What is your field of experience?



- Majority are clinician (80.3%), among them more than half are also researchers
- Public Health professional represent only 3.8% of authors surveyed.

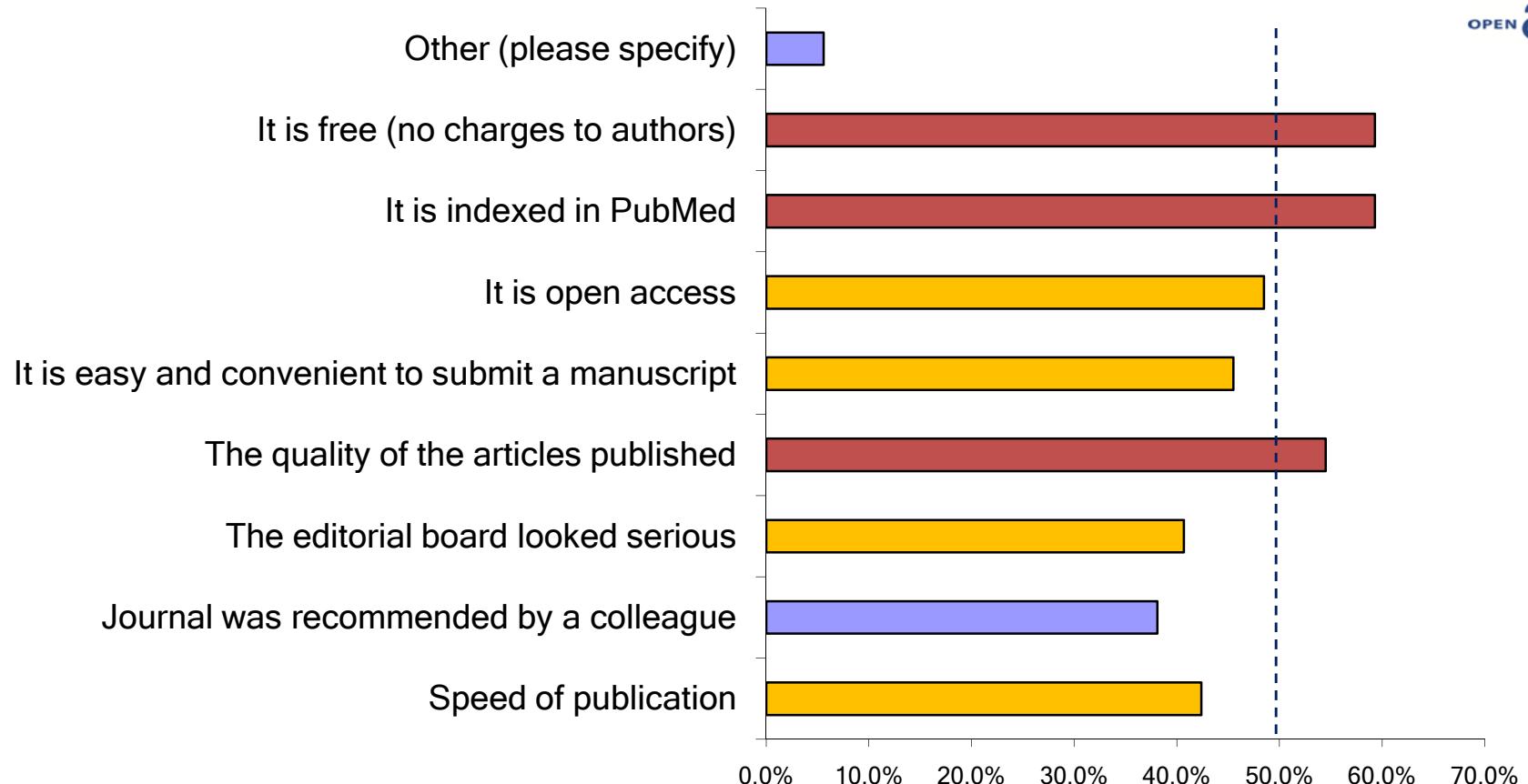
How did you first learn about the PAMJ?



- Most authors learned about PAMJ from colleagues (49%) and search engine (37.3%)
- Library search represents only 10.3%



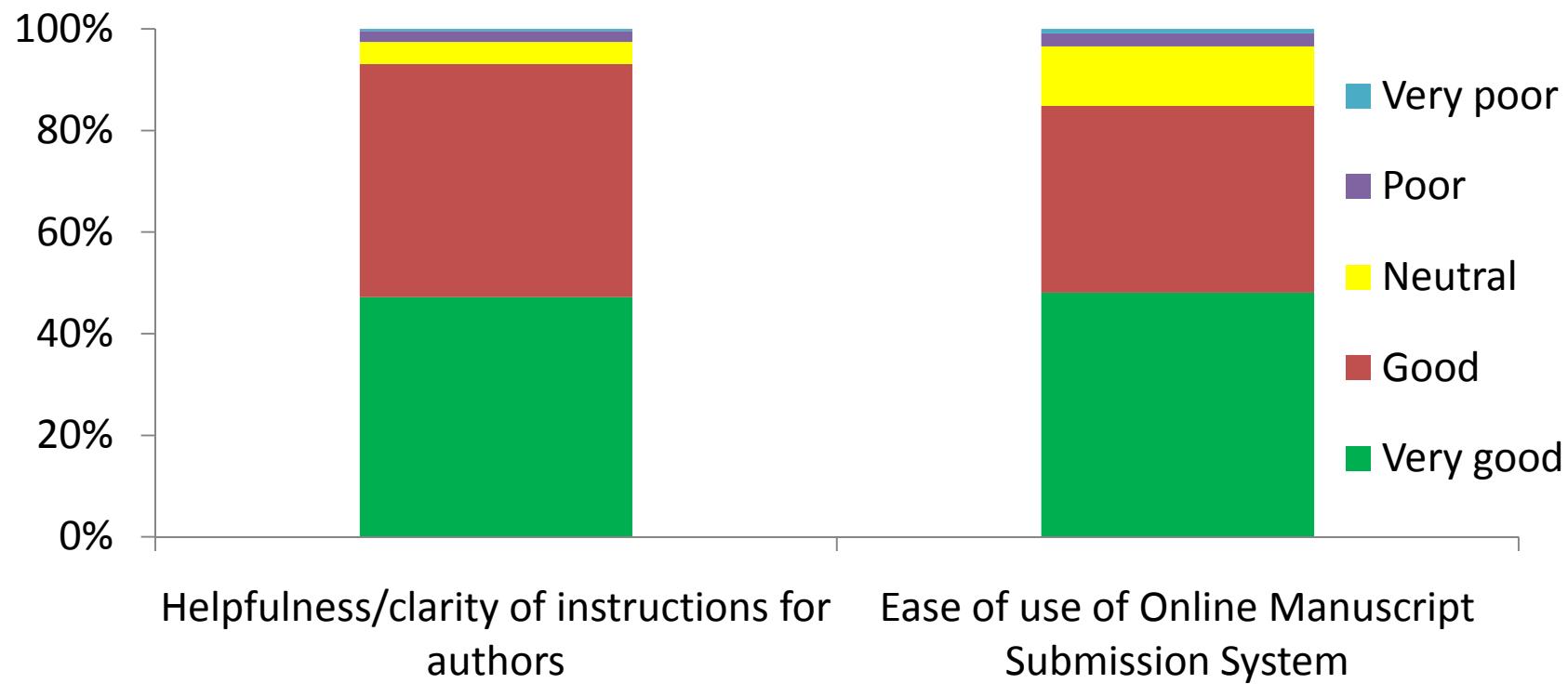
Motivation for submission - predominant drivers



- The main drivers (>50%) for PAMJ submission include: no author charges, PubMed indexation, and quality of published articles



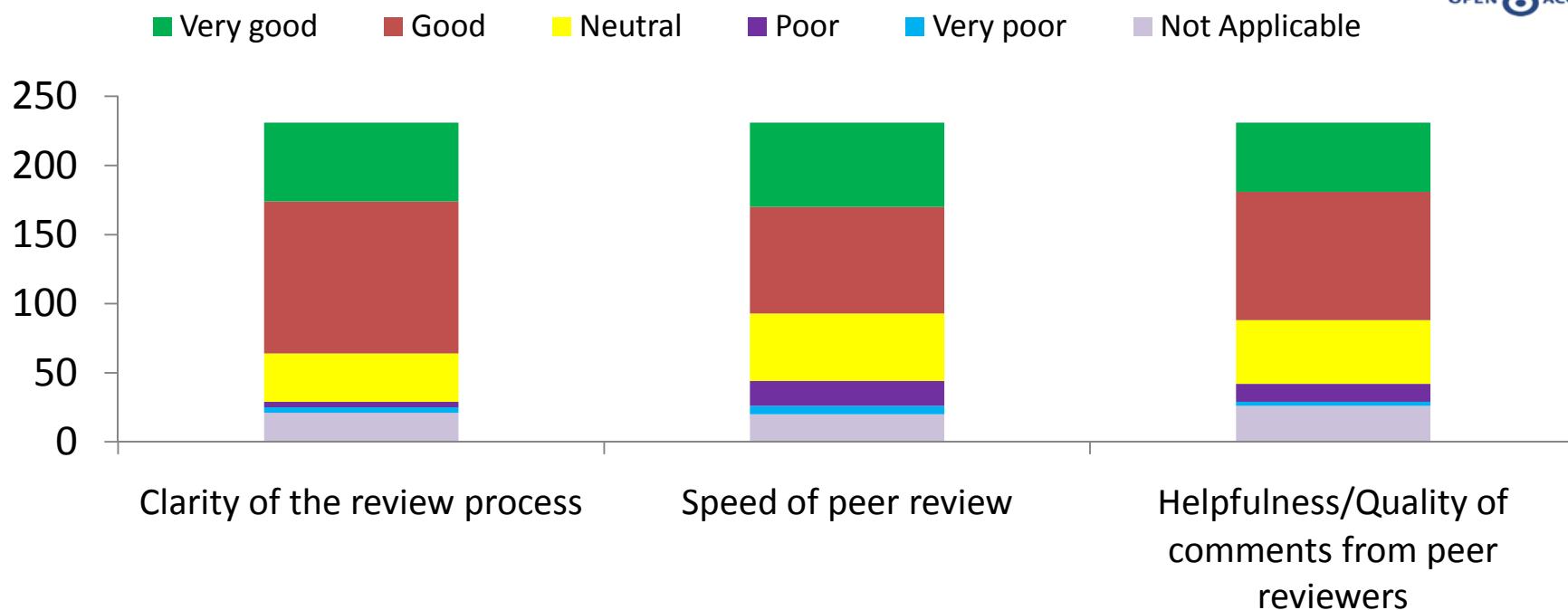
Rate your submission experience with PAMJ



- Overall good submission experience (93% for helpfulness of the instructions for authors and 85% for ease of use of PAMJ Submission System)



Rate your experience with Pamj peer-review process

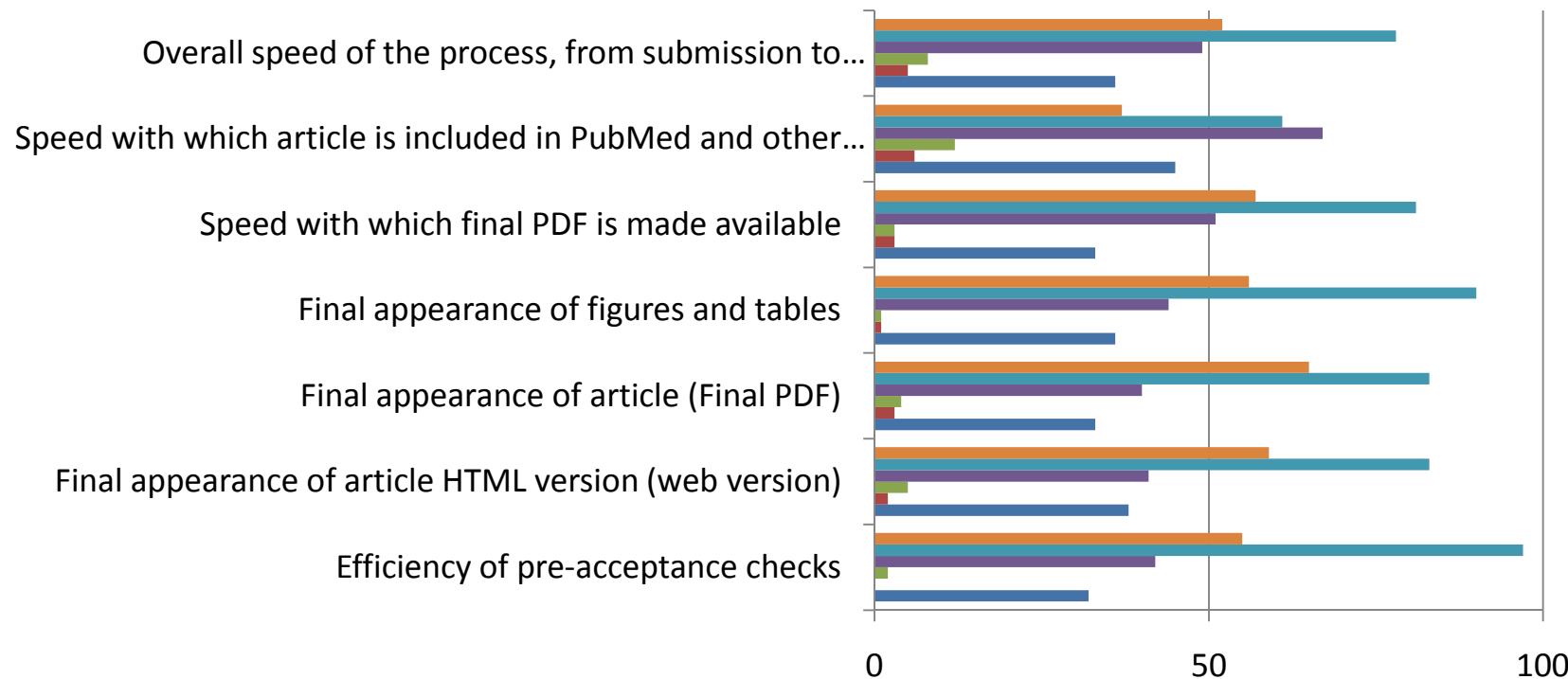


- The clarity and helpfulness of the review process are highly rated
- Speed of the review process needs improvement



Rate your experience with Pamj publication process

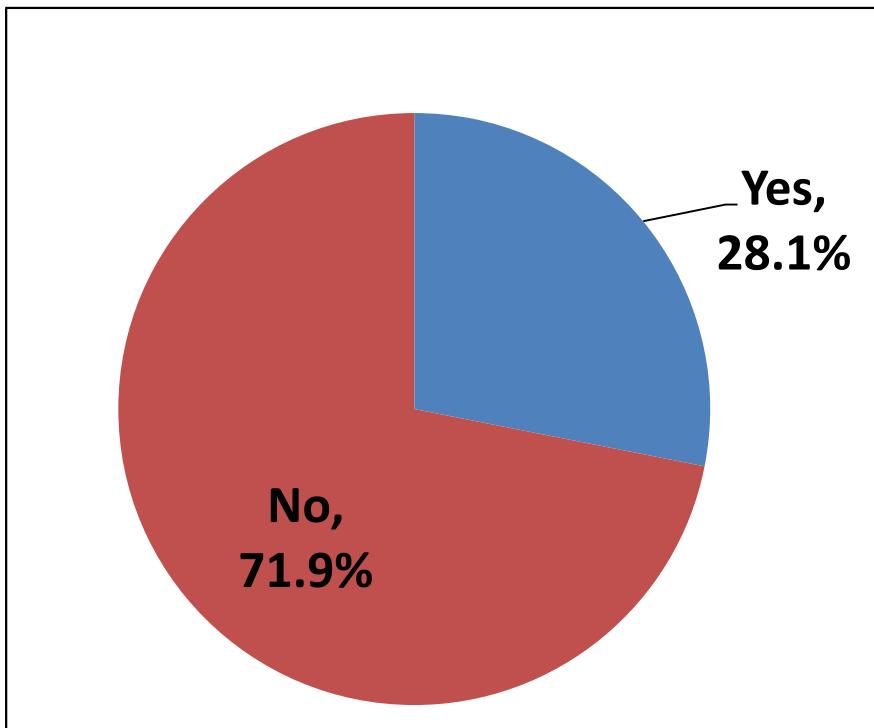
■ Very good ■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ Not applicable



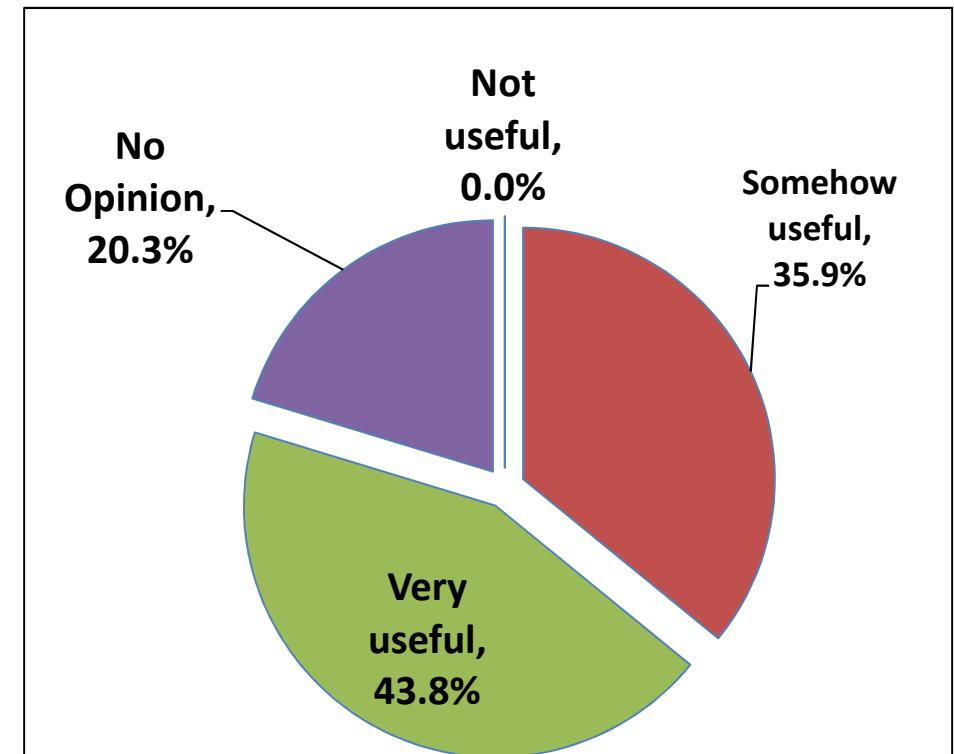
- Overall good experience with Pamj publication process (pre-acceptance checks, final appearance of articles, speed of PDF publication)
- Area of improvements include (speed from submission to publication, and PubMed indexation)

Article-level metrics questions?

Awareness that an article-level metrics (ALM) exists on Pamj?



Usefulness of ALM among those aware



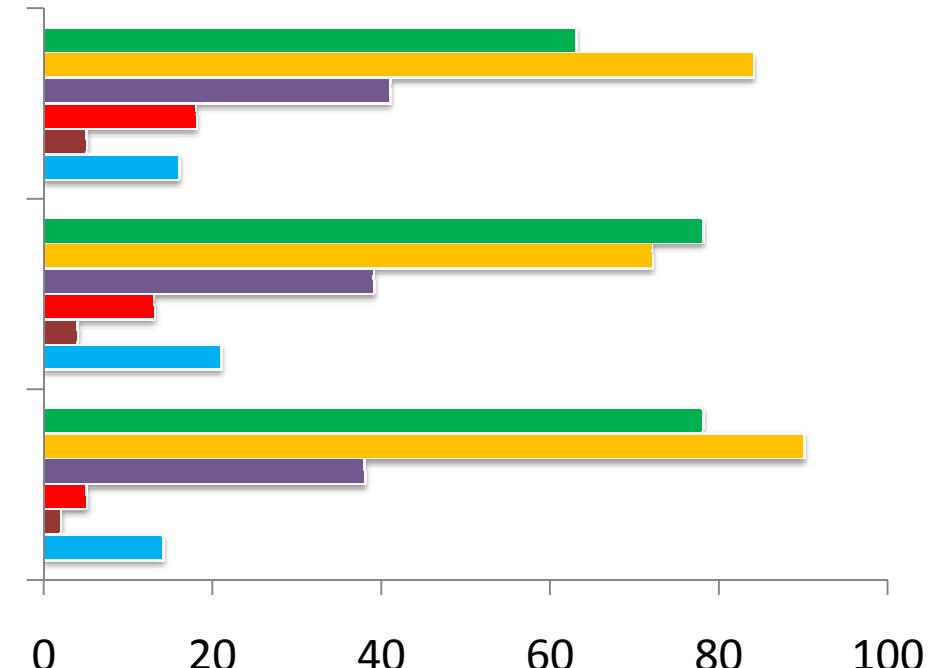
- Only 28% of authors are aware of the ALM and 44% of them think it is very useful



Interaction with the editorial staff

■ Very good ■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ Not applicable

The degree to which you were kept informed throughout the process

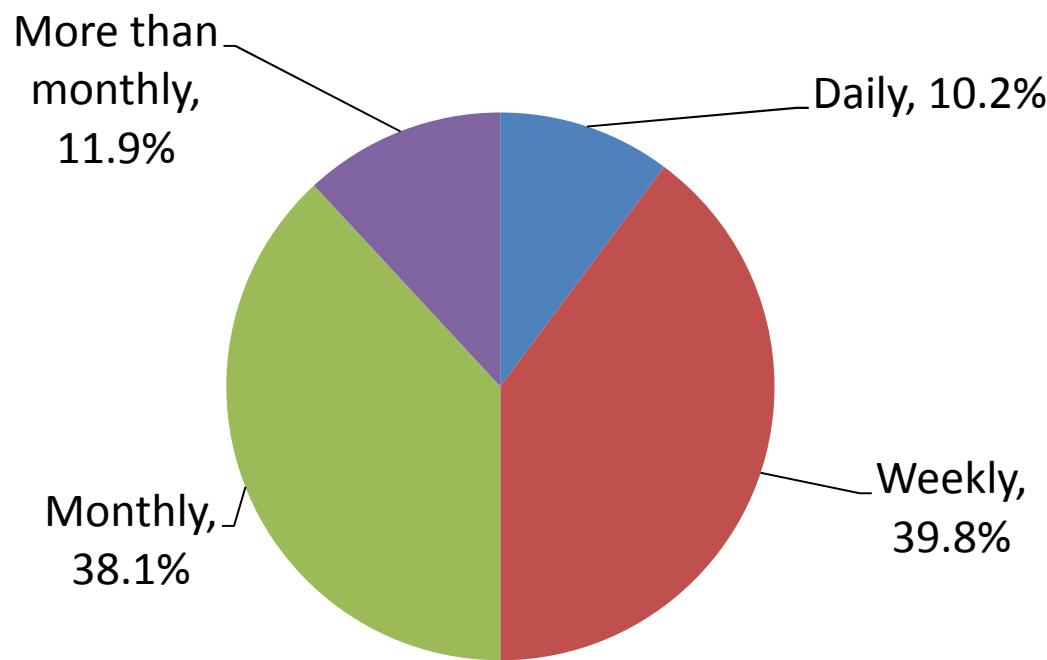


The speed with which editorial staff respond to queries

Helpfulness of editorial staff

- Overall helpful and effective interaction with the editorial staff
- Need to increase degree to which authors are informed throughout the process

On average, how frequently do you visit/read/check articles from this journal?



- Most authors visit/read PAMJ articles weekly or monthly
- Only 10% of the authors visit/read PAMJ articles daily.

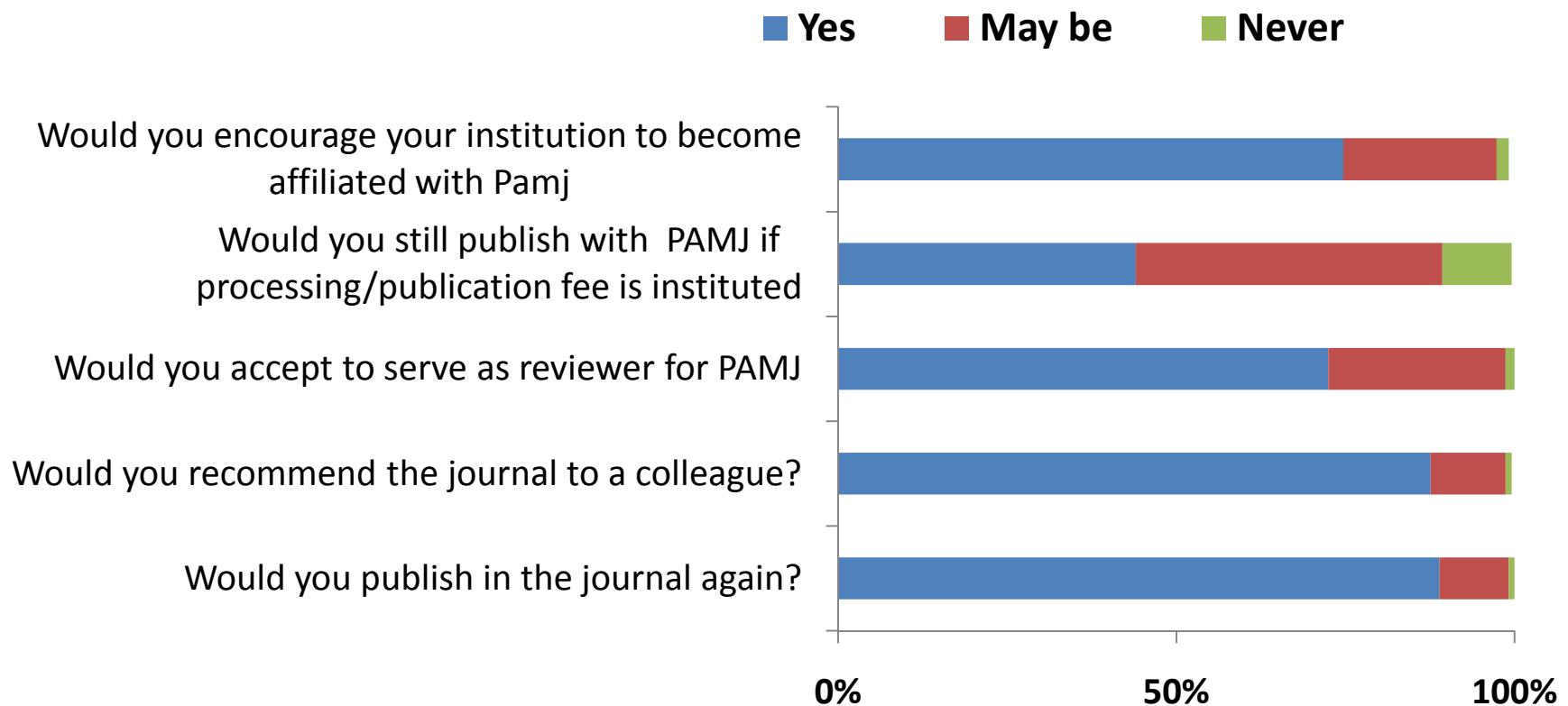
How would you rate your overall experience with Pamj



- Overall good experience with PAMJ (85%),
- Need to track the trend of poor experience (15%)



Authors' Perspectives about PAMJ Development agenda



- Most authors would publish again with PAMJ and are willing to recommend the journal to colleagues
- Most authors are willing to encourage institution affiliation and to serve as reviewers
- Introducing author fees for manuscript processing/publication is not supported by 10% of authors, but may be supported by 45% of them and will not change the behavior of 44% of authors.

Strengths – PAMJ Online Management System (PAMJ-OMS)



- Most (85%) authors had a positive experience with PAMJ-OMS
- The interaction with the editorial office was very helpful and effective for the majority.
- The following components of the OMS were highly rated
 - PAMJ online submission process
 - Helpfulness of the instructions for authors
 - Ease of use of Online Manuscript Submission System.
 - PAMJ article review process
 - Clarity and helpfulness of the review process.
 - PAMJ publication process
 - Pre-acceptance checks
 - Final appearance of articles
 - Speed of provisional PDF publication.

Areas for improvement

PAMJ - OMS



- Processing time for article rated low
 - Long lag time from submission through reviewers' feedback.
 - Long lag time between online publication and PubMed indexation.
- Knowledge of the Article Level Metrics (ALM) remains low
 - Only 28% of authors are aware of the ALM
- Communication with authors is not enough throughout the process



Strengths – PAMJ Authorship

- Diversity of authors' experience and qualification
 - PAMJ attracts all categories of authors (younger and more experienced; clinical, public health, research)
- Authors are increasingly motivated to submit
 - Majority have submitted in last 5 months
 - Motivators: no-cost, PubMed indexation, and quality of publications
- Authors are sharing their positive experience
 - Most authors learned about PAMJ from colleagues
 - Most authors would publish again with PAMJ and serve as reviewers
 - Most authors are willing to encourage institution affiliation
- Authors' fee
 - Introducing author fees will not change the motivation of 44% of authors.

Areas for improvement

PAMJ - Authorship

Pamj – ISSN 1937 8688



- More experienced authors in scientific publishing not submitting with PAMJ
 - Most PAMJ authors have less than 5 years of experience in scientific publishing.
- Public Health authors are less represented than clinicians
- Journal's readership among authors remains limited
 - Only 10% of the authors visit/read PAMJ articles daily.
- Maintaining author's motivation and commitment
 - Majority (58%) of authors are at their first submission experience.
 - Introducing author fees for manuscript processing/publication might pose a challenge for 55% of authors.



Recommendations

- Improve the performance of the PAMJ-OMS where possible
- Keep the author's motivation and commitment
- Attract diversified and more experience authors
- Further assess the feasibility and impact of an author-fee policy



Conclusions

- PAMJ is gaining status as an attractive venue for medical and public health publications on the continent.
- Authors are overall enthusiastic about PAMJ online submission system, article review and processing, communication with the editorial office and quality of the publication.
- The first PAMJ author survey provides baseline information to be monitored on a yearly basis (Next survey in May-June 2012)



Acknowledgements

- PAMJ is grateful to all authors who participated in the survey.

Pamj is published in collaboration with the African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET)



For additional Information, please contact the
PAMJ survey team at editor@panafrican-med-journal.com