

Results: Study on impact of increased information volumes on researcher workload

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Elsevier, the large information and analytics company that also serves as a platform for multiple publishing entities, has released the results of a study the company carried out with a charity organization called Sense

About Science. The researchers sent surveys to people in the research field analyzed the results. The goal of the study was to learn more about the impact that increasing volumes of information is having on researchers with regard to their work. After analyzing and compiling the data, the team at Elsevier created a report outlining what they found and posted it online.

In their report, the team at Elsevier outlines the parameters of the first survey— 105,418 surveys were sent out and 1,450 of them were completed and returned. The surveys were estimated to take 17 minutes to complete. It was conducted this past January and February. In a secondary survey in May, 98,160 [surveys](#) were sent out, and 3,133 were completed and returned. Each survey was estimated to take 15 minutes to complete.

In their report, the team found that as more information has becomes available, researchers spend more time looking for articles (four hours on average each week) and reading them (five hours on average each week) than they do conducting research. They also found that researchers do not, as a rule, have a lot of faith in the reliability of the information in the articles they read—just 62 percent regarded all of the articles they read as reliable.

The report also showed that researchers are making up for this by spending more time looking for corroborating information, which is also adding to their workload. The report also showed that a large percentage of the respondents felt that lack of clarity in the peer review process, flaws in methodology and poor interpretation were the main reasons for their lack of faith in the reliability of the articles they read.

The report also showed that many researchers are worried that [public confidence](#) in research results appears to be diminishing (mostly due to misinterpretation of results), but many also felt that improving

communications with the public could improve the situation. Also included in the report are charts showing the demographics of the researchers that responded.

More information: Trust in Research:
www.elsevier.com/connect/trust-in-research

PDF: www.elsevier.com/_data/assets...y_Final_20_08_19.pdf

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