

The situation of psychology publications in Lithuania

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Abstract

There are only few journals in psychology published in Lithuania that are available for publications. There are also few other journals from other disciplines published in Lithuania that are accepting psychology studies for publications. Even though there are only few journals available for publications, these journals are very popular among scholars; psychology scholars are actively publishing their own work in these journals. Having publications in these journals are becoming more and more important for their scientific career. Only some scholars publish also in European or international journals. All the journals offer the possibility to publish in English, but not many scholars prefer to write studies in English. Thus, Lithuanian language is the main language for scientific publications in psychology in Lithuania. The language, time and rejection issues play a role in choosing Lithuanian journals of psychology over international journals.

Key words: psychology; scientific communication; information dissemination; journals; language; Lithuania

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The situation of psychology publications in Lithuania

Lithuania is a rather small country, thus, there are only few journals in psychology published in Lithuania that are available for publications. There are few other journals from other disciplines published in Lithuania that accept psychology studies for publications. However, these journals are mainly known for other specific topics. It seems there are not too many opportunities to choose where to publish. Even though psychology programs that encourage scientific research at the universities in Lithuania have quite long traditions, scientific journals available for publications in psychology do not have very long traditions. The reason for this could be that Lithuania was a part of the Soviet Union for a very long time. And it became an independent country less than two decades ago. Since then, Lithuanian scientific community started to establish various scientific journals and follow the western practice of publishing scientific work. Thus, it is understandable that there are not many journals available for publications in a rather small and young country.

Even though there are only few journals available for publications, these journals are very popular among scholars; psychology scholars are actively publishing their own work in these journals. All the printed journals available in Lithuania are distributed by the universities where they are published. There is always the possibility of subscribing the journal at the post offices that have a contract with the universities. Thus, people or students from further towns have a possibility to subscribe to various journals. However, very seldom do people subscribe to psychology journals. For the most part, journals of psychology subscriptions are popular among Lithuanian academics living abroad. Why academics in Lithuania are seldom subscribing to journals of psychology? One reason is that many publications are available online for free. Many articles of three main psychology journals are online for free, while some social sciences or medical journals where psychologists publish their studies from time to time do not have free access online. Even though the cost of subscription could be quite high, many of these journals are subscribed by universities or even public libraries. Some journals could be found in various registered data basis such as PsychINFO, Index Copernicus, or EBSCO (Academic search complete). Thus, it seems that all the journals are accessible for students and scholars at the universities, libraries, or online.

The publishing cost of existing journals is much higher, sometimes, according to the editors, three or four times, than a subscription rate. The price difference is covered by the universities where these journals are published. It seems it is not useful to have scientific psychology journals, but, according to scholars working at the universities, it is prestigious to have a journal at the university and it helps during universities evaluation and ranking procedures to get a better evaluation for the university. As it was mentioned above, private people very seldom subscribe to psychology journals, because many published articles could be found online for free or could be found at libraries. Thus, financially it is not profitable for the universities to publish; however, it is an important work for scientific community and students. Journals of psychology do not charge authors for publications or there are no author's fees. Every author gets an issue of the journal where his or her article is published for free. Even though journals of psychology do not charge authors for publications, some journals of other disciplines have a fee for authors from psychology or other disciplines that are not the same as the discipline of the journal. Thus, authors could be charged in some situations, but not others.

Submission and review processes in Lithuanian journals are similar to submission and peer-review processes in international journals. Authors could submit their papers online to some journals, while for others a hard copy of the paper should be sent in. Scholars in psychology could submit their studies for publication any time when they want, but the reality is that many journals are published only twice a year. Thus, researchers usually submit their studies three or four months before the volume of the journal is going to be published. Sometimes there are deadlines on the official website of the journal for publications of the forthcoming issue. Authors are welcomed to submit their studies in various topics of psychology. All the authors should follow author's guidelines for submitting a study. Only few journals accepted APA format, while other journals have their own format that should be followed. There could be a special issue of the certain journal available for certain psychology topics. The practice to have a special issue is not a common practice in Lithuania. The reason could be that many researchers are interested in their own topics and do not have topics in common with other researchers. On the average, the review process could take from three to four months. This time period is much shorter than a review process in many international journals, thus, young researchers could prefer Lithuanian psychology journals over international peer-review journals. Many existing journals in Lithuania have reviewers from other countries such as USA, England, Sweden, Poland, and other countries. Reviewers from other countries usually review five to ten percent of all submitted publications. All the reviewers (from Lithuania or from other countries) should have a PhD in the social sciences. It is understandable that most reviewers are scientists from Lithuania, because of the language issue. Even though the whole review process could take three month, reviewers usually are asked to write a review in a few weeks. Only reviewers from other countries could get a longer period of time to write a review. All the reviewers get to review studies that are close to their own scientific interest. Scholars have mentioned that reviewers present high scientific quality and detailed reviews with some good suggestions for improving the paper. Around 20% of all submitted publications are rejected after the first review process. Of course, this percent could vary according to the journal. Percentage of rejected studies is much lower than in international journals. Thus, one more reason to publish in Lithuania. Editors from various journals have mentioned that it could take about six months from a submission date to an accepted paper for publication. Considering that the first review could take around three months and then the author has a chance to improve the paper if the paper is not rejected, the second review could take one month maximum. Sometimes there is no second review process, so it would take a shorter time period from a submission to a publication. Even though the review process is similar to the same process on the international level, the period of the time that would take for the process is much shorter and the rejection possibility is much lower in Lithuania.

The main language for publications in psychology is Lithuanian. However, it is possible to submit articles to all the journals in psychology in Lithuanian and English. It seems that researchers in psychology prefer to write in Lithuanian. On the one side, it is much easier for many scholars. On the another side, as one of the reasons to publish in Lithuanian that scholars are mentioning there is no requirement from the universities to publish in English. However, almost every published article in Lithuania has an abstract in English or sometimes also in other languages such as German or French. Thus, at least from the abstract it is possible to have a picture what the study is about for English speaking scholars.

All the psychology journals existing in Lithuania do not have an impact factor. Even though people from Lithuania cite various articles published in Lithuanian journals, but there is no possibility for scholars from other countries to cite Lithuanians' studies because of the language issue. Also, very seldom authors cite internationally Lithuanian articles that are published in English. Unfortunately, there is no official record of Lithuanian articles that are cited internationally or even nationally. But taking into account that only 10 or 15 percent of all publications in Lithuania are in English, citations internationally could occur quite seldom. Considering that impact index is calculated based on citations internationally, Lithuanian journals could have a long way to go before they will have an impact factor.

Some of the psychology journals available in Lithuania are very new journals, thus they do not have any reputation among psychology scholars in Lithuania yet. Even though there are not many scientific journal is psychology in Lithuania, some of them already have a good reputation among researcher in Lithuania. Having publications in these journals are becoming more and more important in scientific career. However, only some scholars publish not only in Lithuanian journals, but also in European or international journals. Some universities in Lithuania already started to encourage their researchers to publish in Lithuanian and also in international journals.

There are only three journals in psychology available for publications. One of the journals with the longest traditions and the best reputation is a *Psychology* journal. This is one of the main journals for psychology articles. Also, this is one of the oldest journals in Lithuania. According to academics and psychologists working in practice this journal is the most prestigious journal in psychology in Lithuania. It seems it is also known among scholars from certain psychology fields in other European countries, especially among psychophysicists. *Psychology* is open for various psychology topics. However, the largest percentage of all submitted or published articles are studies in psychometrics and psychophysics. The authors are encouraged to submit original empirical as well as theoretical articles, with diverse methodology and methods of statistical analysis, which would expand the knowledge in the field of psychology, and (or) have practical implications. The authors are also encouraged to submit book reviews. It is a bilingual journal: articles in Lithuanian and English are published. It is published twice a year. Thus, at least one journal available for publications has a very good reputation among psychologist in Lithuania.

The second journal in psychology is *Educational Psychology*. This journal was established for educational psychology purposes. However, nowadays it is a journal for various psychology topics. The authors are encouraged to submit empirical as well as theoretical articles especially in educational or developmental psychology. The aim of the journal is to expand the knowledge in the field of psychology and have practical implications. It is a bilingual journal: articles in Lithuanian and English are published. It is published once a year.

There is one more a very new journal in psychology (*International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychological Approach*) in Lithuania that is going to be published by two universities: Vytautas Magnus University and University of Nebraska at Kearney. The ownership of the journal is shared equally between University of Nebraska at Kearney, USA and Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania. *International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychological Approach* is aimed to publish studies that are dealing with the phenomena of human mental processes and behavior, it is based on the viewpoint that both mind and behavior originate, develop and function due to close interaction of biological and

psychological factors with social environment. Such holistic understanding of mental phenomena as well as human behavior stresses the necessity of integration of different branches of science. Therefore, the priority of this journal is given to the topics, analyzing psychological issues within the broader context, including biological, psychological, and social aspects. It seems that it could be a journal oriented more to cognitive psychology, but time will show what kind of journal it is going to be. This is one of the first journals that encourages discussions between scientists and academic communities of Lithuania, USA and other countries, strives for collaboration of scientists, representing various scientific fields and branches, in order to promote the development of psychology, and to expand practical implementation possibilities enabling to find the most appropriate solution of problems faced both by the individual and the community within the rapidly changing social milieu. The authors are encouraged to submit original empirical as well as theoretical articles, with diverse methodology and methods of statistical analysis, which would expand the knowledge in the field of psychology, and have importance for practical psychologists. *International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychological Approach* has two sections: one is designed for peer reviewed theoretical and empirical research, and the other is for publishing articles of practical psychologists, selected articles of psychology students, book reviews, dissemination of information about ongoing projects, scheduled conferences and other relevant events. It is a bilingual journal: articles in Lithuanian and English are going to be published. It is going to be published twice a year. The advantage of this journal is the distribution in the US. Thus, work of Lithuanian scholars could have a better chance to be seen on the international level.

There are some other journals that are accepting studies in psychology for publications; however, these are other disciplines' journals. *Medicine* willingly accepts studies of clinical or health psychology; *Social Work* and *Social Education* accept various studies in psychology; *Pedagogic* accepts studies related to educational psychology; *Social Sciences* accepts studies related to any topic of psychology; the *Baltic Journal of Management* willingly accepts studies related to work or organizational psychology. The *Baltic Journal of Management* is one of the prestigious journals among work or organizational psychologists. The *Baltic Journal of Management* encourages authors to contribute to an understanding of different management cultures and provides readers with a fresh look at emerging management practices and research in the countries of the Baltic region and beyond. The journal seeks to highlight the best practice and research of developed and rapidly growing countries in the Baltic region. This journal particularly encourages academics, researchers and practitioners from the Baltic region (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia as well as Poland, Russia and the other countries around the Baltic Sea) to share their experience, knowledge and practices with an international audience. Papers from the other regions of Europe and the rest of the world that focus on issues and research which will affect and inform management studies in the Baltic countries are also welcome. The journal encourages well-written articles with the focus on interdisciplinary, international and comparative standpoints on contemporary management issues. Thus, it seems there are possibilities for psychology scholars to publish their own work in various fields of psychology.

Taken together, there are possibilities in Lithuania to publish scientific work in psychology; however, these publications are very seldom known by researchers in other countries. Even though all the journals offer the possibility to publish in English, not many scholars prefer to write studies in English. Thus, Lithuanian language is the main language

for scientific publications in psychology in Lithuania. On the one side it is easier to publish in Lithuanian, but on the other side Lithuanian publications are not known in other countries if they are published in Lithuanian. Besides the language issue, there is a time issue and a rejection possibility that plays a role in choosing Lithuanian journals of psychology over international journals. Young scholars have mentioned that they do not have any practice in publishing on the international level. There are no scientific writing courses during their PhD programs and the form of the theses – monograph – does not encourage young scholars to try to publish internationally. In addition to scientific publications in psychology journals, there are also psychology publications in popular magazines or journals of popular psychology. However, these published articles are adjusted to population and are not always based on research data. Psychology scholars are also actively publishing various books in psychology, handbooks, or guidelines for students in various topics of psychology. Thus, even though publications of Lithuanian psychology scholars are not well known on the international level, psychology scholars are active in publishing on the national level. Although, there is no official track or data base of existing publications even on national level. Having the data base of Lithuanian articles would help young scholars and students to be more familiar with existing research in their own country.