



The Cost of Quality: Examining the impact of article processing charges (APCs) on the quality of open access publishing

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Introduction:

- Open access (OA) publishing has emerged as a revolutionary approach to disseminate research, making it more accessible and visible to a broader audience.
- However, the high cost of publishing in OA journals through Article Processing Charges (APCs) has raised concerns about equity, access, and the quality of OA publishing.
- This poster explores the impact of APCs on the quality of OA publishing and academics' awareness of available alternatives.

Objectives:

To comprehensively understand the following:

- General perception and degree of awareness about APC's influence on the quality of open science
- Reasons for authors' reluctance in publishing on OA platforms
- Extent of concerns and awareness related to publication funding options

Methodology:

- The survey titled "Awareness About Funding Opportunities for Research and Open Access Publishing and Perceived Attitude towards the "Pay-to-Publish" Model" was launched by Enago Academy in English, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean.
- It was distributed digitally via our email campaigns, social media posts, and newsletters.
- The survey was conducted from October 28, 2022 to January 10, 2023 and received responses from a total of 395 respondents from over 326 universities and 60 countries worldwide.

Key Observations:

Figure 1: The debate on APCs in the scientific community continues; some see them as a threat to open science, while others view them as necessary for sustainability. Balancing financial and accessibility challenges the open science movement.

Figure 2: It can be inferred that the cost of APCs is a barrier to OA publishing, but some researchers pay despite it. Alternative funding models may be needed to address affordability issues and promote accessibility to scientific research. Failure to increase support for OA could perpetuate inequalities and limit scientific progress.

Figure 3: The lack of awareness of available funding options may hinder researchers from publishing in OA journals. Educating researchers through outreach strategies and creating resources could be helpful, in which research institutions and funding agencies could also provide training and support for the application of publication funds.

Results:

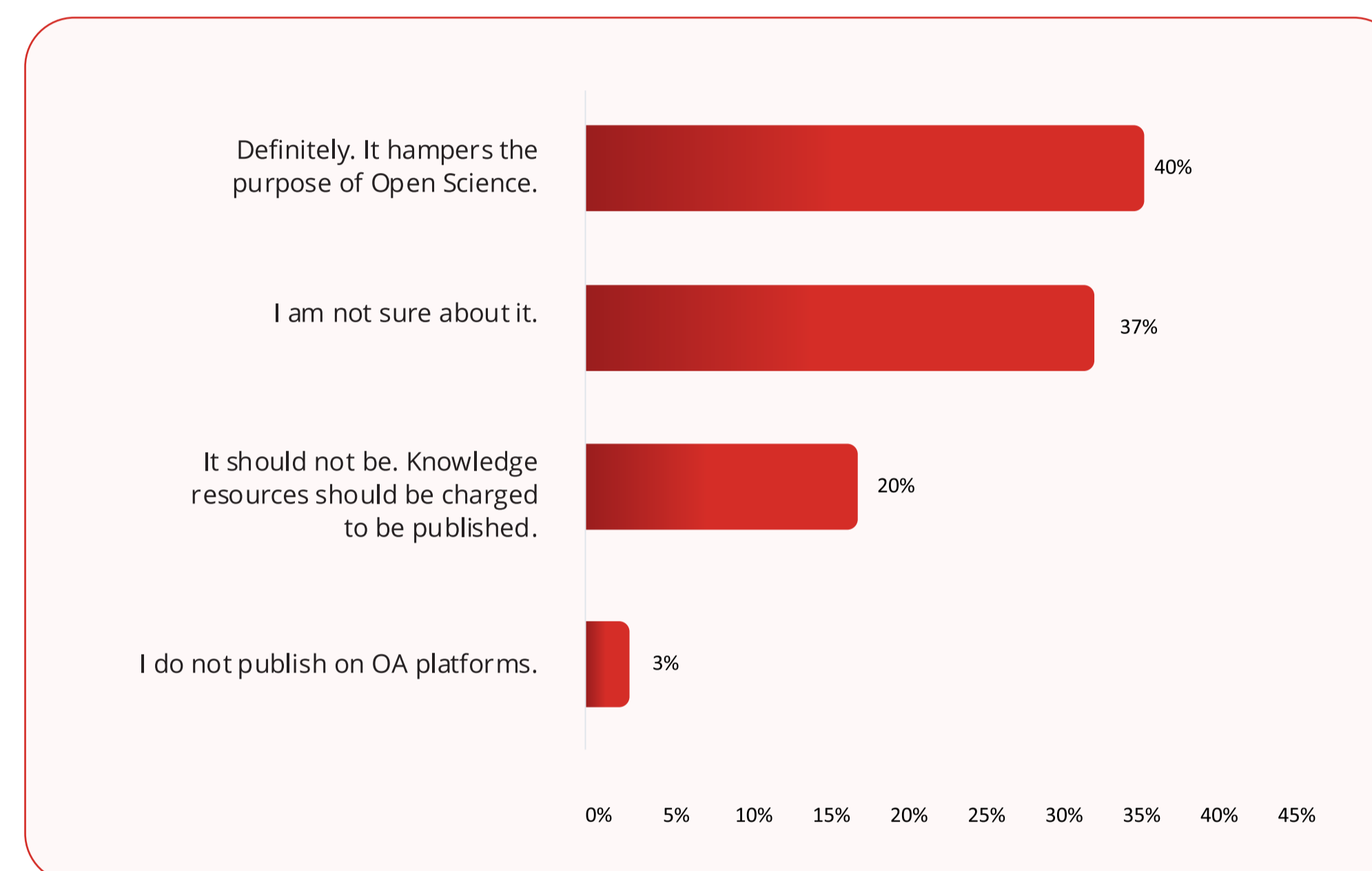


Figure 1: Perception of APCs as a Threat to Open Science

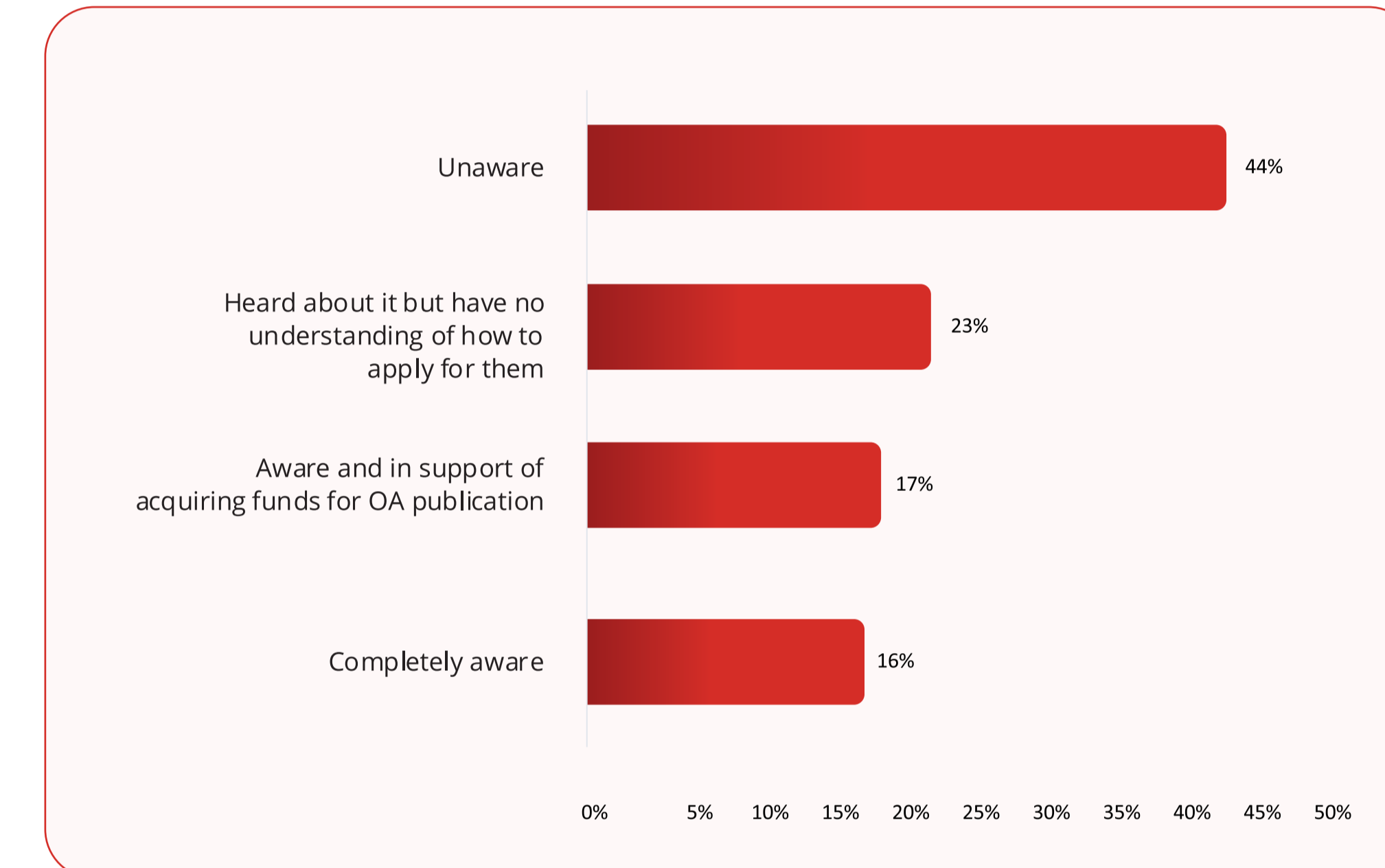


Figure 3: Awareness About Publication Funds

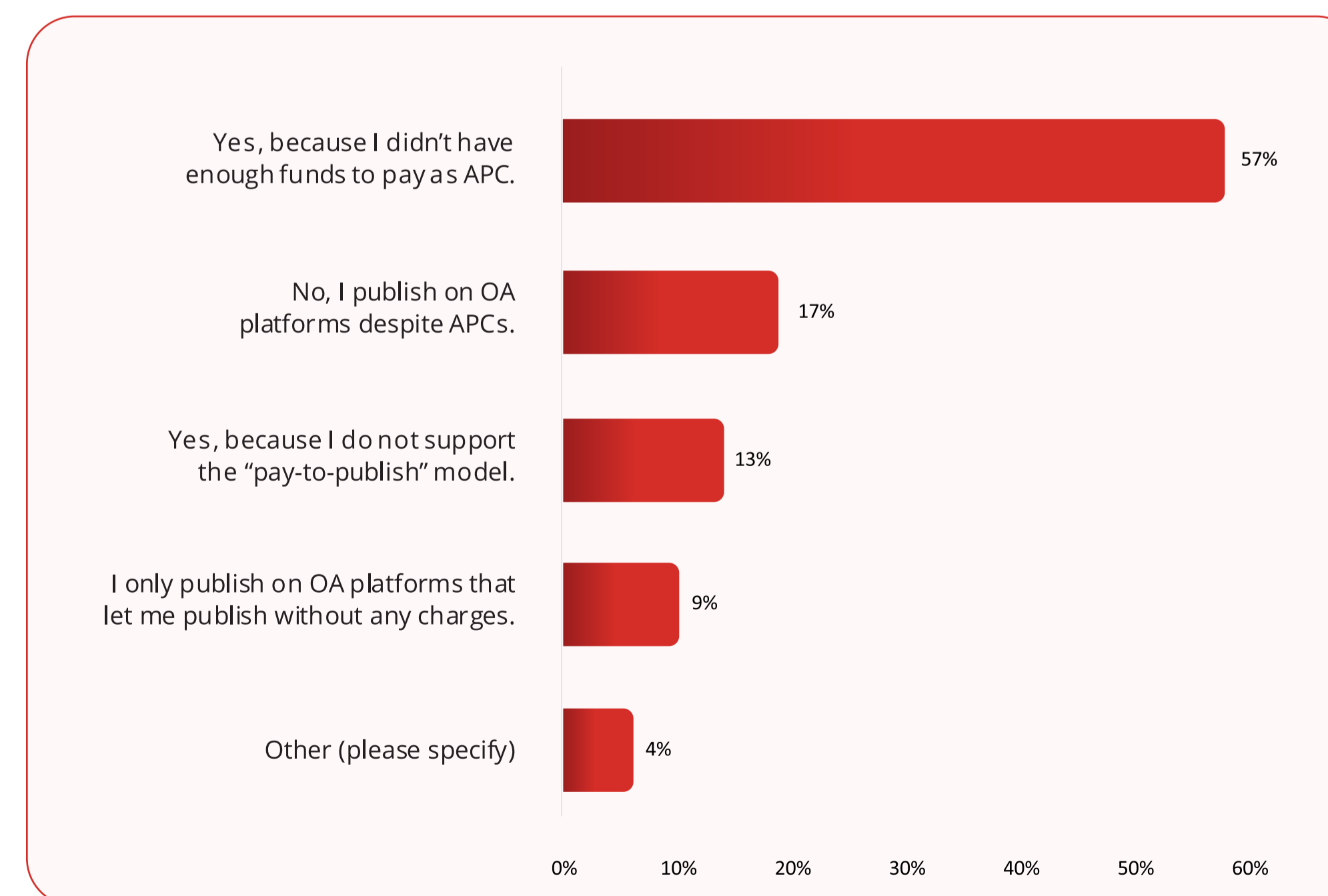


Figure 2: Authors Refraining From Publishing on OA Platforms Due to APCs

Conclusion:

- APCs are viewed as necessary for the sustainability of quality OA publishing by some, while others perceive them as a hindrance to the progress of open science.
- Unaffordable APCs pose a significant barrier to OA publishing, preventing a majority of respondents from publishing in OA journals.
- Despite the financial constraints, a notable proportion of researchers still pay APCs, indicating the need for alternative funding models to improve accessibility to scientific research.
- Limited awareness of available funding options also hinders researchers from publishing in OA journals, emphasizing the undeniable need for educating and creating awareness among researchers and the development of better policies, accessible funding models, and more effective consortia deals.

Future Study Prospects:

We aim to explore the effectiveness of alternative funding models, factors influencing OA publishing, implications of limited funding options, comparative studies across regions/institutions, and interventions to support OA publishing. Enago Academy will strive to be at the forefront of such studies and urge researchers to get in touch with us via email at academy@enago.com.