The editor's bookshelf

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EDITORIAL PROCESS

Cleary M, Walter G, Daly J. **Dealing with peer review: what is reasonable and what is not?** *Collegian* 2013;20(3):123-125
Peer review is a central process in publishing. Carefully constructed peer reviews are likely to result in a substantially strengthened article. Thus peer reviewers play a vital role in the advancement of knowledge and do so for little recognition or reward: many editors, editorial board members, and reviewers provide their services voluntarily. They ensure that no poor-quality manuscripts are published, thereby maintaining the reputation of the journal and the quality of scientific knowledge.
doi: 10.1016/j.colegn.2013.06.004

Paolucci M. Grimaldo F. **Mechanism change in a simulation of peer review: from junk support to elitism.** *Scientometrics* epub February 2014
In this work the authors developed a computational model as an heuristic device to represent, discuss, and compare theoretical statements and their consequences. Employing a theoretical approach supported by agent-based simulation, they examined computational models of peer review, performing the replication of simulations using different mechanisms. Plausible changes showed that peer review can withstand a substantial amount of cheats, causing just a graceful decline in total quality.
doi: 10.1007/s11192-014-1239-1

ETHICAL ISSUES

Amos KA. **The ethics of scholarly publishing: exploring differences in plagiarism and duplicate publication across nations.** *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 2014;102(2):87-91
This study explored national differences in plagiarism and duplicate publication in retracted biomedical literature. The national affiliations of authors and reasons for retraction of papers accessible through PubMed that were published from 2008 to 2012 and subsequently retracted were determined. While the United States retracted the most papers, China retracted the most papers for plagiarism and duplicate publication. Rates of plagiarism and duplicate publication were highest in Italy and Finland, respectively. Unethical publishing practices cut across nations.
doi: 10.3163/1536-5050.102.2.005

Brookes PS**. Internet publicity of data problems in the bioscience literature correlates with enhanced corrective action**. *PeerJ* 2014;2:e313
Data integrity is a common discussion topic, with a widely held assumption that publicity surrounding such matters accelerates correction of the scientific record. This study aims to verify whether such public discussion of data integrity has actually had any effect. The results show that it is correlated with greater levels of subsequent actions to correct the scientific record by enhancing the motivation of journals, authors or institutions.
doi: 10.7717/peerj.313

Gasparyan AY, Ayvazyan L, NAkazhanov NA, *et al.* **Conflicts of interest in biomedical publications: considerations for authors, peer reviewers, and editors.** *Croatian Medical Journal* 2013;54:600-608
This article overviews evidence on common instances of conflict of interest (COI) in biomedical publications. Financial relationships of research institutions and their investigators is the most conspicuous source of COI. Comprehensive policies on disclosure of financial and non-financial COIs in scholarly journals are presented as proxies of their indexing in evidence-based databases, and examples of successful medical journals are discussed in detail. The article emphasizes the importance of adhering to the guidance on COI from learned associations such as the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). It also considers joint efforts of authors, peer reviewers, and editors as a foundation for appropriately defining and disclosing potential COIs.
doi: 10.3325/cmj.2013.54.600

Godecharle S, Nemery B, Dierickx K. **Guidance on research integrity: no union in Europe.** *The Lancet* 2013;381(9872):1097-1098
The authors retrieved and analysed 49 national guidelines addressing research misconduct and promoting scientific integrity, published by 19 European countries. They found a highly heterogenous picture within and between European countries resulting in a confusing situation. In addition, they had great difficulty in retrieving the guidelines of 12 countries. The harmonization of those guidelines is therefore necessary.
doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(13)60759-X

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Diekhoff T, Schlattmann P, Dewey M. **Impact of article language in multi-language medical journals - a bibliometric analysis of self-citations and impact factor.** *PLoS One* 2013;8(10):e76816
This article analyzed the influence of English-language articles in multi-language medical journals. The findings suggested that a larger share of English articles in multi-language medical journals is associated with greater international visibility and recognition. Fewer self-citations were found as they are not needed to artifactually increase the impact factor with a greater share of original articles in English.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0076816

PUBLISHING

Bould MD. Hladkowicz ES, Pigford AE, *et al.* **References that anyone can edit: review of Wikipedia citations**

in peer reviewed health science literature. *BMJ* 2014;348:g1585
This article evaluates the prevalence of Wikipedia citations in indexed health science journals, identifies those that publish articles with Wikipedia citations, and determine how it is being cited. International guidelines lack editorial guidance on how this resource should be used. The authors suggest that editors and reviewers insist on citing primary sources of information where possible.
doi: 10.1136/bmj.g1585

Marušić A, Malički M, von Elm E. **Editorial research and the publication process in biomedicine and health: Report from the Esteve Foundation Discussion Group, December 2012.** *Biochemia Medica* 2014;24(2):211-216
The article presents results from a discussion group of editors and experts organized by the Esteve Foundation. The report includes the findings of past editorial research, discusses the lack of competitive funding schemes and of specialized journals for dissemination of editorial research, and reports on the great diversity of misconduct and of conflict of interest policies, as well as adherence to reporting guidelines. It also reports on the reluctance of editors to investigate allegations of misconduct or to increase the level of data sharing in health research.
doi: 10.11613/BM.2014.023

RESEARCH EVALUATION

Lancho-Barrantes BS, Guerrero-Bote VP, de Moya-Anegon F. **Citation increments between collaborating countries.** *Scientometrics* 2013;94(3):817-831
International collaboration enhances citation impact. Collaborating with a country increments the citations received from it. The authors observed a certain tendency for these increments to be lower in countries with greater impacts, and differences in the behaviour of the countries between the various scientific disciplines, with the effects being greatest in Social Sciences, followed by Engineering.
doi: 10.1007/s11192-012-0797-3

Saragiotto BT, Costa LCM, Oliveira RF, *et al.* **Description of research design of articles published in four Brazilian physical therapy journals.** *Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy*; e-pub 2014
One important step in accessing high-quality clinical research in evidence-based physical therapy is the identification of the research design used and knowing where the research design is ranked in the hierarchy (or levels) of evidence. This article aims to describe the research design used in articles published in Brazilian scientific journals that are relevant to physical therapy or physical medicine and rehabilitation. Journals that are freely available and have high Qualis rankings were evaluated over the most recent 7-year period (2005 to 2011).
doi: 10.1590/S1413-35552012005000136

SCIENCE

Glasziou P, Altman DG, Bossuyt P, *et al.* **Reducing waste from incomplete or unusable reports of biomedical research.** *The Lancet* e-pub Jan. 8, 2014
Most publications have elements that are missing, poorly reported, or ambiguous. Reporting guidelines such as CONSORT, STARD, PRISMA, and ARRIVE aim to improve the quality of research reports, but all are much less adopted and adhered to than they should be. Suggested immediate actions to improve the reporting of research are: changing the current system of research rewards and regulations to encourage better and more complete reporting, and funding the development and maintenance of infrastructure to support better reporting, linkage, and archiving of all elements of research.
doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(13)62228-X

Yoneoka D, Hisashige A, Ota E, *et al.* **Are Japanese randomized controlled trials up to the task? A systematic review.** *PLoS ONE* 2014;9(3):e90127
The number of published randomized controlled trials (RCTs) is rapidly increasing worldwide. This study identified the number of all Japanese RCTs published in Japan in 2010, it assessed their general characteristics and quality and analyzed factors related to their quality. Despite a considerable number of RCTs conducted in Japan, in some domains, quality is not satisfactory. On the other hand, there are high-quality, non-indexed RCTs. The full disclosure of trial information and quality control of clinical trials are urgently needed in Japan.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0090127

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Schwitzer G. **A guide to reading health care news stories.** *JAMA Internal Medicine* e-pub May 05, 2014
A team of reviewers from HealthNewsReview.org. evaluated the reporting by US news organizations on new medical treatments, tests, products, and procedures. They graded most stories unsatisfactory on 5 of 10 review criteria. They established that the stories often emphasize or exaggerate potential benefits, minimize or ignore potential harms, and ignore cost issues. These findings can help journalists improve their news stories and help physicians and the public better understand the strengths and weaknesses of news media coverage of medical and health topics.
doi: 10.10001/jamainternmed.2014.1359

Watts S. **Society needs more than wonder to respect science.** *Nature* 2014;508(7495):151
According to the author, there is a fundamental difference between science communication and science journalism: researchers are well placed to explain concepts, but journalists bring the critical scrutiny needed to integrate science in society. Science journalism should weigh up the values and vices of science. A journalist needs to be persistent and brave enough to find out things that people don't want the world to know.
doi: 10.1038/508151a

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