

An aspect to the publication ethics subject in the open access online journals

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In recent years, there is an increase in the number of national and international open access journals. Most of them are not authentic peer-review journals and do not have reviewers. They accept and publish each submitted paper within a short time such as only 20 days after the corresponding author makes the payment. This short publishing time particularly attracts young academicians, and they are tempted to send their original manuscripts to these journals because they wish that the number of their published studies be increased as soon as possible. Because they submit a written article to publish in a hurry, they are not interested in the journal's prestige, reliability, and periodicity. This publication process may result in too many suspicions from a scientific perspective about the reliability of study findings even though the study is well planned and its results are valuable. Because most open access journals are not ranking continuously in the international indexes, academics are going to be appointed. After that, author often submits the same study to another indexed journal. An important problem is whether resubmission is acceptable or is not regarding the principles of publication ethics in this situation. We believe that all journal editors would experience with this world-wide event in the near future. Thus, we felt a necessity for discussing this subject because of an event which we have met recently.

CASE: Editor-in-Chief of Anatolian Journal of Cardiology has received an electronic message from a junior academic. It is about a scientific paper published in an online open access journal quoted at the International indexes almost two years ago. However, she noticed that this journal was left out international medical indexes after attaching it to own academic file. And now, she wants to ask if her original article may be submitted to another international or national journal ranking in the scientific indexes. Our journal's editorial office sent this case to me for evaluation regarding principles of publication ethics. When I read all electronic messages between the young researcher

and the journal which is being talked about, I determined that it is a peer-review clinical journal and all papers are being sent to three independent reviewers for review process, and two reviewer's approval is necessary to accept for publishing. In addition, in the first message sent by the publisher to the author, it was mentioned that this journal was quoted at the PubMed, Thomson Scientific ISI Web of Knowledge, EMBASE/Excerpta Medica, and Scopus indexes. After that, I detected that this journal had IF of 1.10. Although the journal invoiced as it was a peer-review, no editorial board list was present in the journal information page, and making a payment was necessary to proceed with the publishing steps. Moreover, I found that this journal had been sold to another publisher in the year of 2013 and had left out international indexes after publishing the October number in 2014. Searching by authors' name and article title, the full text of their study could be found on another website for scientific researches on the internet. Finally, I have commented that resubmitting of this paper to the Anatolian J Cardiology or another similar journal would be a duplication event and wrote my suggestions to the Editor-in-Chief.

There are many papers discussing the important problems in the field of publication ethics by depending on the evidences and awaking researchers against scientific fake situation, and also, paying attention to the reliability of information published on the website of open access journals (1, 2). Recently, some international prestigious journals have published editorial papers written about the harmful effect of open access journals on the scientific literature in which most of them accept a paper with no real peer review (2-4). Some publishers have nothing to do with the scientific aspect; additionally, the extremely poor use of language on website and unprofessional electronic messages also attract attention. Another important point regarding the reliability of these journals is that the editorial office and the bank to which payment fee will be sent are located in different places even in

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different countries (4). During evaluation of open access journals, nevertheless, I encountered a Turkish Journal ranking in the fake publishers and journals list which are mainly interested in money and not interested in science. I read unpleasant assessments and explanations in an article about the Turkish publisher and also the journal (5). Scientists studying in my country have immediately attempted to publish fake journals without falling behind. If foreigners do they can do, and they have to prove how smart they are for doing the best. Then, I eagerly visited the website of this medical journal. I noticed that it began to publish in 2015; however, the current and archived numbers are not available yet, and interestingly the “coming soon” invoice is only written on the journal page (6). I cannot say this surprised me but the TUBITAK logo that appeared in the promotional website of another open access payment journal published by the same publisher has very much surprised me. Its first publication year is 2015, same with the first one. Publisher has invoiced that all papers would be published with independent reviewer evaluation within 20 days following submission. When I read this explanation, I have felt too bad myself because our reviewer evaluations generally cannot reach to Anatolian Journal of Cardiology Editorial Office so shortly. At the end, I could not decide if our reviewers are too slow or the publisher which is being talked about is very fast. It did not take a long-time to realize that money is the most effective and main variable in this equation with many unknowns. However, I could not yet define other variables which create significant differences between journals in scientific publishing process. Now, I have some questions about it. First, how the authors act when they could not reach their paper on the internet, considering that they send original study to the national or international journal with payment fee to increase the number of publications in their academic file in a short time but fail to achieve the intended result. Second, could they contact any journal editor or publisher to communicate in this regard? Lastly, does TUBITAK, which is a Government organization established with the principles of support and provides the development of science in Turkey, monitor the publishers and journals which add the TUBITAK logo and name on the promotional website?

As discussed here, a view which I encountered in scientific publications in the result of a submission to the Anatolian Journal of Cardiology’s Editorial Office, unfortunately points to fake

publishers and journals are going to increase gradually. They are not interested in whether the publication continues or the journal is ranked in the international indexes because it is only a source of income for the publisher. As a result of an uncontrolled increase in the number of universities in our country, a significant increase in the number of academics has occurred. Most young academicians make an effort to publish their papers as soon as possible to complete the academic upgrading criteria in any way without needing to comply with ethical rules. However, during online publishing process in the fake journals, they generally lose money and waste time, similar to the case described here.

Regarding this case, we have to discuss why academics tend to fall for such unintended consequences. I believe that the main reason for choosing this option is the academic upgrading criteria, which also cause the subordination of the national peer-reviewed medical journals published in Turkish and English in our country. It is undeniable that knowledge is universal; however, knowledge would be more valuable when it is true and spreads from own source. As the academic promotion criteria would not change, junior academics should be well trained on the scientific and publication ethics to prevent the tendency for such an act. Taking guidance from the qualified faculty members in the universities is important to provide training to young academics regarding the reliability and scientific respectability of published articles.

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