DOI: 10.5455/msm.2017.29.228-230

Received: November 1 2017; Accepted: November 14, 2017

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EDITORIAL

Mater Sociomed. 2017 Dec; 29(4): 228-230

An Editorial View on Authors' Malversations

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1. AUTHOR'S MALVERSIONS

Materia Socio-Medica (Mater Sociomed) is peer review journal with open access, which publishes original research papers, reviews, viewpoints, news notes, letters and other items on topics related to public health, epidemiology, social medicine and health care organization, health management & economics. From the year 2009 plagiarism check of manuscripts was introduced and the journal has been published as an official journal of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Bosnia & Herzegovina (1).

The magazine has a long tradition, and the first issue was printed in 1978. The journal has been indexed in PubMed and PubMed Central and a number of other databases, and as such is one of the most important magazines in the field of public health and preventive medicine on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in the wider region. Editorial Board consists of leading experts in the field of public health and medicine from the Balkan countries, with addition of several eminent names from European and countries from other continents. The Journal is a target of many authors. Although there was some controversy about the ethics of the Editorial Board itself, some authors consciously commit numerous offenses even though they declare with their signature to follow the ICMJE and COPE guidelines.

Several examples are presented below:

1. The author, from Bosnia and Herzegovina, submitted a manuscript to the journal, and signed the Copyright Assignment Form (CAF) and Author Statement for Publication (ASP). After the work had been processed through the double blind review process, the authors get the manuscript for audit and finalization in accordance with reviewers' remarks and recommendations. The Editorial Board was informed by e-mail that the manuscript had been withdrawn because it was simultaneously submitted and accepted for publishing in another journal. At the end of the month the paper was published in the journal Medical Bulletin, which is also published on the territory

of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The author no longer answered e-mail messages;

2. An eminent expert in Bosnia and Herzegovina (the title of full professor) submitted a manuscript and signed the Copyright Assignment Form (CAF) and Author Statement for Publication (ASP). After the review process, the paper was returned to the author for Major Revision. The author retreated the manuscript, and informed the Editorial Board that the paper will be published in an American journal, and will not be available for continuation of the communication. The paper was published in another journal;

3. The Iranian authors (on several occasions) submitted manuscripts to our journal. After two revision processes, the paper was ready for publication. The authors were asked to pay a publication fee, which covers the costs of the editorial process itself. After such mail was sent, authors informed Editorial Board that they are not able to financially cover the costs and they are withdrawing their paper. They refused to fulfill the Copyright Assignment Form (CAF) and Author Statement for Publication (ASP) and they do not appear anymore for e-mail communication;

4. Manuscript submitted to the journal was proceeded for undergoing a review. After two revisions of the paper, two days before its publication, authors informed the Editor to add an additional author to the paper, indicating that in case their request wouldn't be accepted they would committed withdrawal of the paper. After rejecting the request, the authors no longer reply to e-mails.

5. During the submission of manuscript authors sent empty Copyright Assignment Form (CAF) and Author Statement for Publication (ASP). The manuscript was proceeded for review, and before the electronic processing of the article itself, it was understood that the authors are not aware of the process of publication of the paper at all.

6. A number of editing agencies are processing manuscripts that can be seen by repeating the same mail with all authors. It's not ethical behavior, and Editors are under constant watch.

Figure 1. Distribution of published articles in Materia Socio-Medica during 2017 in relation to its type (81.6% are original scientific research papers).

7. Authors submitted an article under the name of a corresponding author. Before the publication itself, the corresponding author is requested to be changed. After rejecting the request, the authors no longer appear.

8. The article was published on the journal's website. After the publication of the work, the authors request revision of the references. After rejecting the request, the authors request a return to the publishing fee and withdrawal of the work.

9. The work is published on the magazine's website. After the publication of the work, the authors request the addition of another author. After rejecting the request, the authors requested the publishing fee to be returned followed with withdrawal of the paper.

10. A clinical trial for publication was submitted, but without an exact registration number. Such work was automatically eliminated.

An essential question about possible solutions of above-mentioned cases appear. Such cases, otherwise, existed sporadically and earlier, but this year are becoming more and more frequent. The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) was established in 1997 and since then has been fighting a number of issues. Creating the basis of the names of the authors who violates ethics imposes itself as imperative, but withheld many questions of ethics and the morality of making such a base. Identifying the ORCID ID author, and placing ORCID ID in the list, is imposed as a solution. ICMJE is doing a very good job, and each journal should follow their guidelines, but authors should certainly pay attention to the ICMJE guidelines. A database containing perpetrators of such things would only be accessible to editors, who would renew their subscription annually, and have an insight into the profile of the author/s. The sanctioning of the author should be considered, but surely it should be done in cooperation with the author's institution and his University. If they stand behind him, the author should have a reverence on the author's own career (2-4).

2. REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND PUBLISHED ARTICLES IN MSM IN 2017

During 2017, four issues of the Materia Socio-Medica Journal were published, with a total number of 60 papers. Of the total number of published articles, 81.6% were articles classified as original research (Figure 1). During 2016, this percentage was 64.5%.

REVIEWERS	COUNTRY
Alimorad Heidari Gorji	Iran
Branka Aukst Margetic	Croatia
Christina Marvaki	Greece
Doncho M. Donev	Macedonia
Ferid Krupic	Sweden
Georges Aoun	Lebanon
Hasan Siamian	Iran
Istvan Szilard	Hungary
Izet Masic	B&H
Josipa Kern	Croatia
Ljiljana Cvejanov Kezunovic	Montenegro
Mahira Jahic	B&H
Maja Malenica	B&H
Natasa Trifunovic	B&H
Nurka Pranjić	B&H
Olivera Batic Mujanovic	B&H
Selma Uzunovic	B&H
Selma Skrbo	B&H
Soheila Kabir	Iran
Theodora Kafka	Greece
Zahra Kiani	Iran
Zijo Begic	B&H
Osman Sinanovic	B&H
Edin Begic	B&H
Salih Tandir	B&H
Muharem Zildzic	B&H
Snjezana Milicevic	B&H
Lejla Zunic	B&H
Naser Ramadani	Kosovo
Enver Roshi	Albania
Armin Skrbo	B&H
Nizama Salihefendic	B&H
Jadranka Bozиков	Croatia
Gordana Pavlekovic	Croatia
Elena Varavikova	Macedonia
Faina Linkov	Bulgaria
Momčilo Babic	Serbia
Anant Kumar	India
Dajani Khulud	Albania
Lidija Georgieva	Macedonia
Kamran Tavakol	USA
Aziz Sukalo	B&H
Genc Burazeri	Albania
Nabil Naser	B&H
Sefik Hasukic	B&H
Francis Roger France	Belgium

Table 1. List of reviewers of manuscripts submitted to Materia Socio-Medica during 2017

A total of 185 papers have been submitted to the journal in 2017 (two are in the review process). Of the 183 papers, 60 were published (the acceptance rate of the journal in 2017 was 32.7%, while the acceptance rate in 2016 was 35.7%).

All papers go through a double blind peer review process. The reviewers who participated in the review process and evaluation of the manuscripts submitted to the journal during 2017 are shown in Table 1.

The average time for review of manuscript from the first notification to the author is about 14 days. All manuscripts first go through the analysis of the Editorial Board, and after the first evaluation and selection the promising articles are sent on a double blind peer review process.

Google Scholar analysis of the journal in 2017 indicates that the h5 index of the journal is 14, and the h5 median 26 (for the period until 2015, the h5 index for *Materia Socio Medica* was 8 and h5 median was 9).

3. FUTURE ACTIVITIES IN 2018

The development of the journal has to be continued, aiming toward additional indexation of it in Scopus and Web of Science (5). The Editorial Board invests efforts to respect the highest ethical standards in the world of publishing. Special emphasis would be placed on creating journal sections for students and ongoing researchers who in 2018 will get their share in the journal. The education of young researchers through various forms of continuous education is priority goal of the Editorial Board. Further internationalization of the journal is imperative. Broad adoption and stick to the principles and guidelines of the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), the Council of Science Editors (CSE), the European Association of Science Editors (EASE), ICMJE and COPE by all parties in the scientific community, first of all from young scientists and all potential authors, as well as from reviewers and Editorial Board members, is necessary for improvement of the quality of any journal in general (6-10). Devoted work in accordance with those principles is the ultimate path for improvement the quality of published papers and visibility of *Materia Socio Medica* in the future.

- Conflict of interest: None
- Author Contribution: D.M.D, I.M. and E.B. designed the draft of the study, participated in data collection and writing. Doncho M. Donev revised it critically and gave final approval of the version to be submitted.

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