

COPE European Seminar 2014

It was my great pleasure to attend the COPE seminar “European perspectives on publication ethics” in Brussels, Belgium on 14 March 2014. Sixty-two delegates from various geographical locations participated and shared their editorial experience, explaining how they are managing conflict of interest, plagiarism and ethical issues. The day began with a talk from Simon Godecharle from the University of Leuven, Belgium, who talked about guidance on research and publication ethics in Europe. This was followed by Professor Ana Marusic, University of Split School of Medicine, who discussed differences in publication ethics in Central and Eastern Europe. Later the seminar continued with a talk from Professor Christopher Baethge, chief editor of the *German Medical Journal*, on conflicts of interest. The final scientific presentation was given by Professor Debora Weber-Wulff, Professor for Media and Computing, University of Applied Sciences, Berlin, on plagiarism detection.

Southeast Asian countries have made significant contributions to scientific publications. Most Asian journals are published by individual publication portals rather than private publication companies. Large publishers, such as Elsevier and Medknow, have their own sets of guidelines and regulations to ensure the quality of manuscript submissions and publications. But when it comes to individual/private journals, who is going to ensure the quality of submissions? Many association and institute journals prefer individual publication portals because they are non-profit journals, and also to avoid copyright issues, minimise the cost of publication and make scientific content open access.

As an editor of *Journal of Young Pharmacist* (an official quarterly journal published by Inpharm Association and indexed with PubMed, PubMed Central and Scopus), I also face some of the issues discussed at the COPE seminar, such as plagiarism detection, conflicts of interest and duplicate submissions.

We have major problems with plagiarism and citations in manuscript submitted to our journal. Annually, approximately 20–25% of papers submitted to the *Journal of Young Pharmacist* are rejected because of issues of plagiarism and conflict of interest. We have observed that our tertiary people are very good at scientific research, but there are problems with presentations and citations. Most of the time authors are unable to understand the correlation between their results

and existing knowledge, and how to cite these paper in their manuscript. Often authors copy the scientific content without the citation, sometimes because of poor understating of scientific write-up and literature search.

From the seminar I gained knowledge on how to use open source software or programs to detect plagiarism. We have started implementing these systems in our journal to detect plagiarism. The seminar also described the biomedical ethical system in Europe, which may be helpful for us when handling manuscripts from Europe.

This was the first time that COPE organised a seminar outside of London; hopefully they will continue to implement this in the future to spread awareness of publication ethics among different people and countries. I sincerely acknowledge the COPE staff for their personal communication, hospitality in Brussels and helping me to get the travel grant to attend the COPE seminar in Brussels.

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