

# Violation of Publication Ethics in Manuscripts Submitted to the Biomedical Journals: Analysis and Perspectives

Authors: Subramani Parasuraman\*<sup>1</sup>, Ramasamy Raveendran<sup>2</sup>, Mueen Ahmed KK<sup>3</sup>.

\*<sup>1</sup>Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Young Pharmacist, Faculty of Pharmacy, AIMST University, Malaysia, email ID: parasuphd@gmail.com / Parasuraman@inpharm.org

<sup>2</sup>Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Pharmacology & Pharmacotherapeutics, Department of Pharmacology, JIPMER, Pondicherry, India,

<sup>3</sup>Editor-in-Chief, Indian Journal of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, and Associate Editor, Pharmacognosy Magazine, India.



Table-1: Status of the manuscript submitted to JPP, JYP and FRA between Jan. 2010 to Dec. 2013

	JPP	JYP	FRA	Total	Percentage
Article submitted to other Journal (Duplicate submission)	27	4	2	33	2.25
Duplicate submission (Resubmission)	23	10		33	2.25
Ethical issue	4			4	0.27
Incomplete submission	1			1	0.07
Not in scope	308	40	39	387	26.40
Not prepared according to journal instruction	45	17	8	70	4.77
Not submitted revised article	80	80	18	178	12.14
Plagiarism	104	105	40	249	16.98
Rejected - recommended by referee	172	200		372	25.38
Suggested to submit association journal	4	20	13	37	2.52
Withdrawn by author	77	20	5	102	6.96
Total number of manuscript analyzed	845	496	125	1466	

JPP: Journal of Pharmacology & Pharmacotherapeutics; JYP: Journal of Young Pharmacist; FRA: Free-Radicals and Antioxidant.

**Aims:** To analyse the frequency of unethical practices in three journals and suggest the possible reasons and remedies.

**Methods:** A retrospective analysis of scientific submissions into the Journal of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics, the Journal of Young Pharmacist and Free-Radicals and Antioxidant with regard to violation of publication ethics was carried out. The manuscripts submitted between Jan. 2010 to Dec. 2013 were included for the study but incomplete submissions and correspondences were excluded from the analysis. Plagiarism checker such as Duplilchecker and iThenticate were used to detect plagiarism. Multiple submissions were detected by checking with the Google and PubMed for published titles which were similar or identical to the manuscripts withdrawn by the authors or rejected by the journal. The submission date of publication elsewhere and the manuscript processing dates in the above journals were compared.

## Results & Discussion:

The total number of submission analyzed was 1466. A total of 249 (17%) manuscripts contained some degree of plagiarism. Multiple submissions were detected in case of 33 manuscripts and an equal number of manuscripts were submitted as new submissions while the identical manuscripts were already in process in the same journal. Four manuscripts dealing with clinical studies did not produce any evidence for approval of the study by the ethics committee.

The major problems with respect to publication ethics is plagiarism and multiple submissions. When the authors were challenged, many of them simply did not reply, wrote back saying that they would like to withdraw the manuscript, claimed ignorance or blamed their lack of English language skill. 'Multiple submissions' is almost impossible to detect while the manuscript is being processed. In our study, the detection was carried out much later. When the manuscript gets accepted in one journal, the authors withdraw the same from other journals stating that the manuscript processing cycle is too long for them to wait.

**Conclusions:** The publication process is built on trust and unethical acts like plagiarism and multiple submissions severely breach it. Though the detection of violation of publication ethics is not easy or always possible, the editors should try their best using all possible methods to achieve good results. Apart from that, educating the authors and reminding them the ill effect of unethical publication practices should also be given importance as it will help reduce the instances of violations, if not eliminate them completely.