

Overlapping Publications



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*Bulletin of the World Health
Organization*



COPE

Committee
On
Publication
Ethics

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Links

"Every single case of fraud and misconduct reduces public confidence, abuses the use of public and charitable funds and causes insult and frustration to the vast majority of careful, honest workers." **The Joint Consensus on Misconduct in Biomedical Research, Edinburgh 1999**



Main image

COPE - first 128 cases

CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF CASES
Redundant submission/publication	40
Authorship	20
Falsification of data	16
No informed consent	11
Unethical research	13
No ethics cttee approval	11
Fabrication	11
Editorial misconduct	7
Plagiarism	4
Undeclared competing interest	5
Breach of confidentiality	3
Clinical miscoduct	2
Attack on whistleblowers	2
Reviewer misconduct	2
Deception	1
Failure to publish	1
Ethical questions	3

Overlapping Publications



- ⌘ Duplicate Submissions
- ⌘ Duplicate Publication
 - ☑ Redundant Publication
 - ☑ Acceptable Secondary Publication
- ⌘ Competing Manuscripts
 - ☑ Same study
 - ☑ Same Database
- ⌘ Sibling Publications

Duplicate Submissions



- ⌘ Most journals will not consider simultaneously submitted manuscripts
 - ☑ potential for disagreement over right to publish among journals
 - ☑ possibility of unnecessary duplication of peer review and editing
- ⌘ Is acceptable
 - ☑ when both editors believe it is in the best interest of Public Health
 - ☑ Paper has been rejected by another journal
 - ☑ Full report following submission of abstract

Redundant Publication



- ⌘ Publication of a paper that substantially overlaps with an already published article
- ⌘ Unethical
 - ☑ Wastes time of peer-reviewers and editors
 - ☑ Wastes resources and Journal pages
 - ☑ Leads to flawed meta analysis
 - ☑ Distorts Academic reward system
 - ☑ Infringes on copyright
 - ☑ Inflates scientific literature for no benefit other than to author

Redundant Publication- editorial responsibilities



- ⌘ Prompt rejection of submitted manuscript
- ⌘ If article has already been published
 - ☑ Publication of notice of duplicate publication
- ⌘ Inform other editor/publisher
 - ☑ Possible copyright violations
- ⌘ Inform employer/institution of author
 - ☑ Sanctions against author

How widespread is the problem



⌘ Among articles in 70 Ophthalmologic journals between 1997-2000

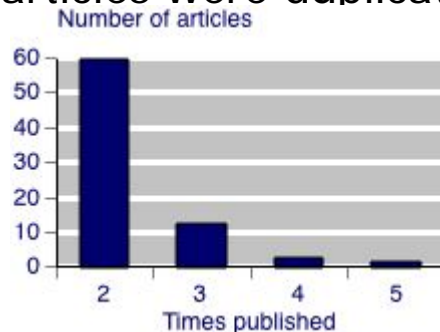
Mojon-Azzi et al. (2003) Nature 421: 209

- ☑ 1.39% were considered redundant
- ☑ 32/70 journals victim of duplicate publication
- ☑ 210 authors were involved
- ☑ No significant difference between impact factor of primary and secondary journal

⌘ However Elsevier reported only 10 cases last year among all their journals

Systematic Reviews

- ⌘ W von Elm et al. JAMA 2004 291: 974-980
- ⌘ 141 systematic reviews screened for duplicate publication.
 - ☒ 42 (30%) reported duplication.
 - ☒ Authors of the other 99 systematic reviews contacted
 - ☒ 14 reported duplicate publication not mentioned in the original review,
 - ☒ 55 did not identify any duplicate publication,
 - ☒ 30 did not respond.
- ⌘ Overall, 56 systematic reviews (40%) with duplicate publication.
 - ☒ 1131 main articles with 129,000 patients.
 - ☒ 103 articles were duplicates (8% of total) with 12,500 patients (9% of total).
 - ☒ Many of the 103 articles were duplicated several times



Taxonomy of duplicate publication



- ⌘ Reproduction of an already published article using identical sample and outcomes (21)
- ⌘ Assembly of two or more articles to produce another article (16)
- ⌘ Reporting on different outcomes from the same study sample (24)
- ⌘ New data added to a preliminary article (11)
- ⌘ Reporting part of a larger trial and reporting identical outcomes (11)
- ⌘ Sample and outcome different from the main article (20)

W von Elm et al. JAMA 2004 291: 974-980.

Acceptable Secondary Publication



- ⌘ Guidelines, another language, commemorative
 - ☑ Approval from editors of both journals
 - ☑ Priority of primary publication is respected
 - ☑ Paper for secondary publication is intended for a different audience
 - ☑ Secondary version faithfully reflects data and interpretations of primary version
 - ☑ Footnote on title page of secondary version states primary reference
 - ☒ "This article is based on a study first reported in the J. ..."

Competing Manuscripts



- ⌘ Disagreement on analysis or interpretation –
Two options
 - ☑ Two papers on same study
 - ☑ Single paper with commentary(ies)
- ⌘ Disagreement on method or results
 - ☑ Publication refused until differences resolved
- ⌘ Manuscripts based on same data sets
 - ☑ Publication may be justified if different analytic approaches used

Sibling Manuscripts



- ⌘ Related papers submitted to different journals with no cross citation.
 - ☑ Fragments science – unhelpful to readers
 - ☑ Journals instruct authors to provide relevant papers including, in press and under review.
 - ☑ Greater likelihood paper will be accepted
 - ⌘ Good publication practice is to provide
 - ☑ Full disclosure, full citation, full discussion of author's related work
- ☒ Szklo & Wilcox (2003) Am. J. Epidemiology 157:281

Prevention



- ⌘ Better education on publication guidelines and ethics.
- ⌘ Introduction of registers for planned and on-going clinical trials.
- ⌘ Change criteria from quantity to quality when papers are used for assessment of posts or grants.