

Promoting a fair quality control mechanism in specialized publications

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Dear readers,

As a member of the editorial board of a young scientific journal pertaining to the global academia I have noticed that the fundamental principles of research are abandoned in the specialized literature in favour of “publications aimed at shopping around” (Dr Mutlu Özcan, 2009)¹ able to attract considerable funds and flatter some colleagues’ professional vanity.

There are 17,000 higher education institutions in the academic world (according to Rauhvargers, 2011)², and over 1.8 million dentists working around the world (as declared by Worldmapper in 2004)³, as well as an unknown number of dental researchers, while there are just over 6,000 dental journals⁴ out of which only 91 are rated (Web of Science, 2017)⁵. This situation makes it difficult to publish an article, proof to that being my own personal experience alongside the Italian colleagues with respect to an original article that was printed about four years after its “conception”.

To prevent similar situations from happening to Central and Eastern European researchers, in 2013, we launched the Stomatology Edu Journal, together with Professor Jean-François Roulet (University of Florida) and Professor Rolf Ewers (Medical University of Vienna), alongside an enthusiastic group of prestigious editors. The journal has been self-financing since 2016 and is included in the portfolio of the Romanian Academy publications.

The academia is clearly interested in publishing and the competitive spirit of researchers worldwide is being stimulated, but there are increasingly more frequent situations when ethical standards and professional deontology are violated in the “rush” for sponsorship and personal visibility.

The “open review” method allows referees to know the author’s name, which could cause the premature rejection of the manuscript when the referees compete with the authors for the same grants, which distorts their right judgment, causing them to make decisions influenced by institutional or individual rivalry.

In order to promote the referees’ impartiality we have chosen the commonly accepted practice implemented by renowned journals, namely the “double-blind review”, which so far has proven to be the only way to ensure a fair quality control mechanism in specialized publications. As of this year, also as a common working practice of renowned journals, out of respect for your dear readers, besides the two referees unknown by the authors who evaluate each article, before the article you will read reaches the final evaluation by Professor Jean-François Roulet, it will be also assessed by an Academic Editor.

As part of the international collaboration of the journal I contacted Professor Michael L. Glick, Professor and Dean Emeritus, School of Dental Medicine, University at Buffalo, State University of New York, Editor of JADA, the Journal of the American Dental Association which has more than 100 years of tradition and is published monthly in over 170,000 copies.

During the First International Congress in Bucharest, Professor Michael Glick was the guest of honour of the Dean of the Faculty of Dental Medicine, Assoc Prof Dr Paula Perlea; it was an opportunity I used to present to

him the latest issue of the journal.

While acting with the courtesy and professionalism characteristic of a great Editor, Professor Glick made an exacting analysis of the content of the journal. He was appreciative of the fact that the articles published are accompanied by an evaluation form and the journal is also published online, with a monthly average of 5,000 unique visitors, topping over 94,000 readers, including more than 23,000 in the US.

Professor Glick suggested that we should maintain a constant number of online readers; that we should go from two to four annual issues; that we should use the structure of BDJ, JADA, JPD and other major publications, and that each issue should be co-ordinated by two editors whose responsibility would be to avoid unwanted mistakes. As there is nothing accidental about globalization, we had another good friend of ours in Bucharest, namely Professor Adi A. Garfunkel, Dean Emeritus in Jerusalem and Professor Glick's master. For years on end, while he was in Bucharest, Professor Adi A. Garfunkel was so thoughtful that he provided me with a lot of helpful advice during my term as director of the "Professor Dan Theodorescu" OMF Surgery Hospital. With a lot of enthusiasm and generosity, so typical of him, he asked Professor Michael Glick to get involved in promoting the visibility our journal and for each issue to offer 3 items with JADA CE Credits to the US readers.

We are now waiting to see the result of Professor Michael Glick's request addressed to Mr Michael Springer, JADA Publisher, to get the 3 JADA CE Credits articles for the first issue of the Stomatology Edu Journal.

May the forthcoming Easter holiday bring light to the Stomatology Edu Journal readers, members and non-members of the American Dental Association (ADA).

So help us God!

Sincerely yours,

M-V Constantinescu

Editor-in-Chief

References

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