

Letter to the Editor



The Necessity of Preserving the Research System in Emergency Eras

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The emergency of the all-society-inclusive coronavirus outbreak has cast a shadow over research and scientific journals. In the pandemic era, the time from submission to publication of related articles has exceptionally decreased by a remarkable reduction in peer-review process time.¹ Shortening the time between receipt and acceptance to six days² is helpful but should not compromise the quality of studies or the quality of studies a journal publishes, as was the case with reputable medical journals.³ Undermining the long-established existing rules and regulations in research and journals would have unfathomable consequences. Providing ineffective services (e.g., manuscripts on treatment of a disorder during the pandemic without examining patients and only by repeating results previously published) will confuse researchers in subsequent epidemics. Publication of articles has external effects, which publishing journals editors should consider.

A trial aimed at demonstrating a drug's effectiveness should have a high-quality methodology and fully explain the patient demographics due to the broad spectrum of COVID-19 symptoms severity. Even in a high-quality study, avoiding jumping to conclusions is necessary. A statistically significant result is not necessarily clinically significant - as a consequence of effect size and method bias.⁴ When methodologies are not heeded, conducting a high-quality study with a large sample size calls conclusion of all previous studies into question, as happened with hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19.⁵

During the ongoing coronavirus pandemic affecting all the society, people are directly following SARS-CoV-2-related studies from scientific journals. Public awareness is helpful, but people may not have a completely accurate understanding of scientific articles. Addressing people directly through the media prompted requests and created illicit and black markets for drugs with inconclusive effects and raised expectations of possible vaccines. In addition, retraction of articles in dependable medical journals raised public concerns about journals and articles' credibility.⁶ Another important issue here is that retracted articles

are still cited by researchers to support the findings and claims, even in reputable journals.⁷

The creation of new subtypes of viruses resulting from their biological phenomenon of reassortment indicates that subsequent epidemics are not far-fetched.⁸ The need to preserve the long-established science-centric system in research and journals in the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent emergency eras is undeniable.

Authors' Contribution

AS wrote the manuscript. SA edited the manuscript. Both authors approved the final version.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

The authors have no conflict of interests.

Ethical Statement

None.

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