Joint statement on redundant (duplicate) publication by the Editors of the undersigned cardiothoracic journals

The co-signatory Editors hereby declare that they adhere to a process of information exchange and cooperation aimed at eliminating redundant (duplicate) publication in their journals. Briefly, redundant publication is a paper that overlaps substantially with one submitted elsewhere or published without adequate cross-referencing and justification.

We consider redundant publication to be unethical for the following reasons: The author unjustifiably receives 2 or more citations for only 1 article; the time of unpaid peer reviewers and editors is wasted on duplicate submissions; the burden of extra work slows the peer review process; the already extensive scientific literature is further inflated making literature search even more cumbersome; valuable journal pages are wasted. Furthermore, meta-analysis of multiple studies may become flawed when the same material is published repeatedly.

We intend to combat redundant publication by: using electronic search applications to identify potential duplications; sending doubtful papers for review by other journal editors; exchanging information about conference submissions and joint collaboration in programme committees; publishing joint statements exposing offenders in clear cut cases; imposing bans where necessary; and following up on potential copyright infringements.

For the purposes of this declaration, redundant publication is defined as follows:

1. The numbers or sample sizes are similar.
2. The methodology is identical or nearly so.
3. The results are similar.
4. At least 1 author is common to both reports.
5. Little or no new information is made available.

To classify as redundant publication all of points 1-5 must apply. Exceptions may include publications in local or regional journals, abstracts at scientific meetings, or original publication in a language other than English. The authors must bring these exceptions to the Editor's attention. The Editor's judgment decides if points 1-5 apply for a specific case. The authors will be informed, and will be given the opportunity to respond. Because redundant publication constitutes serious academic misbehavior, instances may be reported to specialty society ethics committees for review and possible disciplinary action.

We hope that the authorship of our journals and the scientific community at large will support us in this endeavour, which we believe to be in the best interests of all.

Editor, A. Sampath Kumar
Asian Cardiovascular and Thoracic Annals

Editor-in-Chief, Friedhelm Beyersdorf
European Journal of Cardio-Thoracic Surgery, and
Interactive CardioVascular and Thoracic Surgery

Editor, Harold L. Lazar
Journal of Cardiac Surgery

Editor-in-Chief, A. Robert Denniss
Heart, Lung and Circulation

Editor, G. Alexander Patterson
The Annals of Thoracic Surgery

Editor-in-Chief, Richard D. Weisel
The Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery

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