

Editorial

The editor's throne of thorns!

Purvi Raj Bhagat¹

¹Department of Ophthalmology, M and J Western Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.

The editor's job is one of extremely high responsibilities, apparently very prestigious but an unrewarded one. Few can visualise the thorns sitting amidst the precious gems which adorn the editor's throne.

From a pile of submissions received, some extremely meticulously written and based on rigorous scientific work while some written as casual write-ups, not even close to being called an article, the task of the editor is to ensure that the latest, highest quality scientific research gets disseminated with a possibility of influencing health care/medical education/further research.

The quality of writing in the manuscripts received is highly variable, mainly because many authors, especially the budding researchers, do not have sufficient writing and publication experience. The perfectionist papers are evidently prepared with great care, whereas a manuscript loaded with grammatical and typographical errors and clumsy content clearly points to the fact that the painstakingly drafted 'instructions to authors have been well ignored, also raising an alarm about the science behind such manuscripts. Editors can do nothing beyond reminding the authors to follow the journal instructions and majorly revise the article. In fact, many articles undergo a desk rejection just due to their poor writing.

The game is also not just about scrutinising for the best, good and average manuscripts. It is also about carefully selecting the appropriate and skilled reviewers and pushing them to revert with their (justified) comments and suggestions on time. The field's best available experts (again willing to work voluntarily without any rewards or remunerations) are selected avoiding any conflicts of interest, to render a just decision promptly and obtain insightful and fair reviews. This is perhaps the editor's greatest challenge and task. The editor also needs to review the reviewer's comments and if necessary, edit them – to correct writing errors, soften harsh comments, eliminate non-relevant comments and highlight the opportunities for manuscript improvement.

If this is not enough, reminders need to be sent to authors to address the reviewer comments and proofread their final files and adhere to the deadlines. It is not uncommon for authors to disagree with some of the reviewer's criticisms and suggestions, in which case some back-and-forth communications may again prevail. Some authors in a hurry to have their article 'accepted', ignore the reviews, withdraw and resubmit to another journal. This can be quite disheartening for the reviewers and editors who voluntarily invest their time and effort in the submission and make recommendations to strengthen the manuscripts.

All authors should volunteer to serve as reviewers to experience the world on both sides of the green!

The story does not end with acceptance, rejection or withdrawal. Editors experience and acknowledge the weak links in the entire process and collaboratively work with publishers, editorial board members, reviewers, authors and the most important critics, the readers, to effect improvements.^[1] Avid readers read critically and often point to the errors/imperfections which may have gone undetected by the editorial and publication teams or write back in response to controversial or provocative articles.^[2] Publication process is all about the spiral of learning!

Having mentioned all of this, we are not to forget the frequent nudges sent by the publishers, coping with the financial burden on the journal for sustainability, facing the permanently engraved tattoo on each journal's torso, reading 'what is the journal indexing??' and the lurking predators around.

Fortunately, the entire publication process, despite its numerous opportunities for errors and corrections, is ultimately a step in the direction of scientific advancement. Our journals are at the core of this intricate process with their primary goal being to serve with integrity and authority. It is definitely not one person's job but is a teamwork including

*Corresponding author: Purvi Raj Bhagat, Department of Ophthalmology, M and J Western Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. managingeditor@gjcsro.com

Received: 08 December 2022 Accepted: 08 December 2022 Published: 24 February 2023 DOI: 10.25259/GJCSRO_28_2022

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, transform, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms. ©2022 Published by Scientific Scholar on behalf of Global Journal of Cataract Surgery and Research in Ophthalmology

innumerable people on either end of the publishing tunnel who collectively strive to pick out the thorns from the throne.

REFERENCES

1. Bartley GB, Liesegang TJ. Just because it's published doesn't mean it's perfect: The continuing evolution of the peer review

- process. *Ophthalmology* 2015;122:1958-9.
2. Liesegang TJ. Peer review should continue after publication. *Am J Ophthalmol* 2010;149:359-60.

How to cite this article: Bhagat PR. The editor's throne of thorns! *Glob J Cataract Surg Res Ophthalmol* 2022;1:91-2.