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Moral Bullying/Harassment In Scientific Publication

Silva-Junior, Geraldo Oliveira

Faculdade de Odontologia, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro/RJ, **Brasil**

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Abstract The purpose of this editorial is to signal why moral harassment occurs in what surrounds the relationship of the chief editors of emerging scientific journals versus co-authors of renowned scientific publications and, also, managers of large research and teaching institutions and what can be done to avoid such behavior.

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Editorial

Moral Bullying/Harassment In Scientific Publication

It has been observed in many researches that moral harassment in the various organizational spheres has been increased with the process of mercantilization within the scientific publication in Brazil.

This process is part of a scenario of devaluation of the figure of scientific editors configured in the injury of their legal exercise and their functional activities, exalted from the conception victimized by the authors when their manuscripts were negative. In this sense, it opens space for moral harassment practices in the co-authors/editors relationship.¹

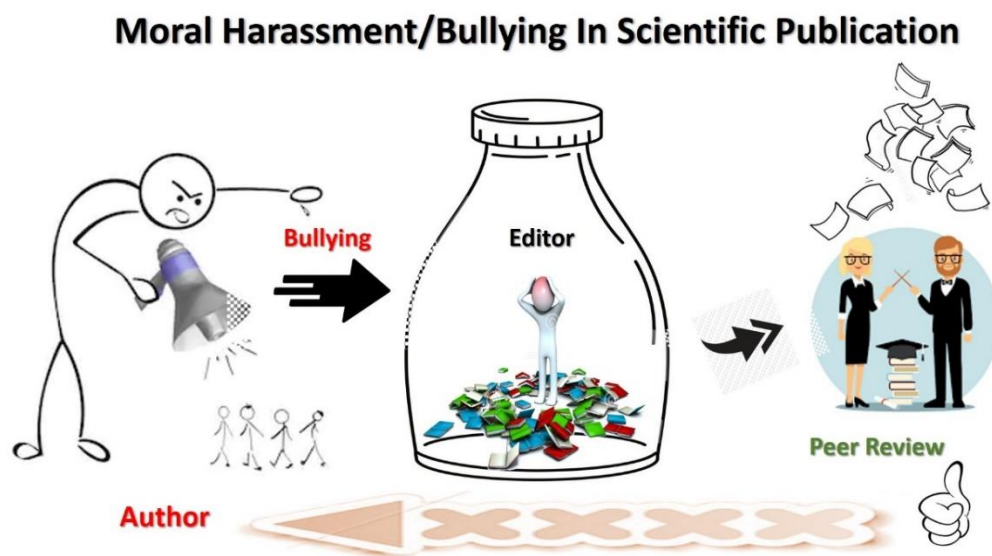


Figure 1. Cartoon representing the relationship between predatory authors versus editors of emerging journals, supported by peer reviewers in combating bullying from predatory authors.

The purpose of this editorial is to signal why moral harassment occurs in what surrounds the relationship of the chief editors of emerging scientific journals versus co-authors of renowned scientific publications and, also, managers of large research and teaching institutions and what can be done to avoid such behavior.

As an editor still in the process of certification and seeking to constitute and consolidate the ethics of good publication practices constantly disseminated by highly indexed scientific journals, I frequently come across indelicate attacks from corresponding authors when their manuscript receives, at that moment, the indication of rejection for publication in the journal that submitted their manuscript.

My question is whether this occurs with other editors of the most renewed scientific journals, which follows the light of science as a reference to the peer-review process and the fight against manuscripts of high similarity. Emerging journals are going through a great struggle to establish indexations and to comply in an ethical way with the transparency of the publication flow and to abolish any kind of lack of ethics.

Another interface opens when the editor is questioned about the merit of the articles that exist in his journals and a disparaging comparison is made that the quality of what is published by the journal is of low quality when the negative is not accepted by the author. This is a daily practice coming mainly from great researchers who feel the light of knowledge mostly exempt from peer reviews and that its name itself represents an exponent or maximum criterion for indexation and metrics that the emerging journal can achieve in the future.

The practice of moral harassment is not new. In fact, perverse action has been taking place for a long time in Brazil, as in the period of slavery, for example. What is relatively new is a search for discussion, punishment, criminalization,² understanding of the triggering event, remedial actions and, especially, others that prevent or avoid harassment, in addition to extensive simultaneous coverage in academic, journalistic, organizational, union, political, medical and legal circles.^{2,3}

We understand and agree and assume, as described by Freitas,²⁰⁰⁷ that moral harassment is abusive, intentional, frequent and repeated conduct aimed at diminishing, humiliating, vexing, embarrassing, disqualifying and psychically demolishing an individual or group, degrading their working conditions, affecting their dignity and compromising their personal and professional integrity.⁴

We propose to broaden the view about moral harassment in the author/editor relationship, in order to disseminate the scientific production of good practices to educate these interrelationships with total demerit for science, to promote the advancement of debate and the raising of relevant issues.

Geraldo Silva-Junior - Editor-in-Chief, Brazilian Journal of Dentistry/Revista Brasileira de Odontologia.

ORCID: 0000-0003-0987-2684

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Moral Bullying/Harassment In Scientific Publication

Geraldo Oliveira Silva-Junior

Department of Diagnosis and Therapeutics, School of Dentistry, Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ), Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Abstract

The purpose of this editorial is to signal why moral harassment occurs in what surrounds the relationship of the chief editors of emerging scientific journals versus co-authors of renowned scientific publications and, also, managers of large research and teaching institutions and what can be done to avoid such behavior.

Keywords: Moral Bullying; Harassment; Scientific Publication

Bullying/assédio moral na publicação científica

Geraldo Oliveira Silva-Junior

Departamento de Diagnóstico e Terapêutica, Faculdade de Odontologia, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil

Resumo

O objetivo deste editorial é sinalizar por que o assédio moral ocorre no ambiente que cerca a relação dos editores-chefes de revistas científicas emergentes versus coautores de publicações científicas renomadas ou gerentes de grandes projetos de pesquisa e instituições de ensino; também procuramos fornecer respostas sobre o que pode ser feito para evitar tal comportamento.

Palavras-chave: Assédio moral; Publicações científicas