

# Editorial

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*S Mahadevan, Chief Editor*

For a scientist, integrity is an attribute that is as important as intelligence. The entire scientific enterprise is built on trust and honesty. In every report of scientific data, it is implicitly assumed that the generation and interpretation of the data are carried out scrupulously. It is very easy for an unscrupulous individual to abuse this trust by faking or forging results. Irreparable damage can result if the trust is breached by individuals or organizations. The history of science is replete with examples of individuals who have tried to shortchange the system. The recent incidence of the Korean stem cell fiasco is probably still fresh in our minds. The motivations for these transgressions are many - fame, glory and in many cases, even monetary benefits. Through the checks and balances in the system, these do eventually come to light. But by then, considerable damage to the credibility of science would have already been done. Sadly, even the scientific greats are not immune to this malady. In her article on Robert Koch, the founder of medical microbiology, Jaya Tyagi describes how this pioneer reported in 1890 the discovery of a cure for TB even though the results were too premature and unsatisfactory. This is all the more shocking, considering the fact that only a few years back, Koch had castigated the great Louis Pasteur for prematurely reporting a vaccine for anthrax.

Closer to home, we assume that every article submitted to *Resonance* is original. However, it is extremely disturbing to discover that a substantial number of these are products of plagiarism. Don't these authors know that this is dishonest and unethical? By mistake, if any of these are published, the reputation of the journal can be seriously undermined. Therefore, one can never be guilty of overemphasizing the quality of integrity for scientists both young and old.



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