
Ethical considerations when publishing scholarly journals

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Perspective

Specialist OA scholarly publisher (20 y)

- 50 open-access journals
- All disciplines
- 4000+ submissions & 2000+ articles
- Partner with universities & societies
- Gold and Diamond open-access models



Corrigenda & Retractions (5 years)

	Corrigenda	Retractions
2017	22	
2018	13	
2019	31	
2020	10	
2021	78	3

Retractions 2021

- 1: *JAMBA*: “**Duplicate publication**”
- 2: *HTS Theological Studies*: “**Plagiarism**”
- 3: *SA Journal of Oncology*: “**Invalid & misleading**”

Ethical issues in scholarly publication

- Plagiarism & Duplicate publication
- Unethical research
- Fabrication & Falsification
- Authorship misconduct
- Conflict of interest

AOSIS - Main issues

- Authorship
- Author affiliation
- Similarity and Plagiarism
- Simultaneous submission
- Editorial Freedom

Authorship – AOSIS Policy

*Anyone that has made a **significant contribution** to the research and the paper must be listed as an author. Contributions that fall short of meeting the criteria as stipulated in our policy should rather be mentioned in the **‘Acknowledgements’** section of the manuscript.*

Authorship criteria – ICMJE

1. Made a substantial contribution to the conception and design, **or** acquisition of data, **or** analysis and interpretation of data. (+)
2. Drafted the manuscript **or** critically revised it for important intellectual content; (+)
3. Approved the final version to be published.

Author contribution statement

- *A paragraph briefly summarising the nature of the contributions made by each of the authors.*

Authorship problems

- All qualifying contributors not listed (complaints)
- Corrections
 - before publication (procedure)
 - after publication (corrigendum procedure)

Everyone must agree to any changes

Author Affiliation – AOSIS Policy

The affiliations of authors must reflect their situation during the funding, conducting and completion of the research, i.e. where the research was carried out.

Author Affiliation Problems

- Requests for change (before and after publication)
 - Authors relocate (allow additional affiliation)
 - Funder requirements
 - DHET Subsidy requirements (international)

Originality – AOSIS Policy

Submitted work should be original and has not been published elsewhere in any language without express citation and acknowledgement of the previously published work;

Similarity checking

- **Ithenticate®** (submission & acceptance)
- Internal checking (database of authors, titles)
- Unpublished work (thesis)
- % similarity in context (discipline)

Similarity Problems

- **High similarity index** (*can be corrected*)
 - Self-plagiarism (e.g. Salami publication)
 - Unpublished work (thesis)
 - Not proper citation (own work)
 - Not using “inverted commas” for quotes
- **Plagiarism** (complaint) -> *retraction*

Salami publication

- Publication of many articles in different journals derived from a single study
- Data collected from a single study split into several segments
- Form of self-plagiarism

Why is salami publication problematic?

- Distort publication record -> inappropriate influence on decision-making
- Artificially enlarge credit to authors, citations
- Wasting of publishing resources (redundant)
- Difficult to detect (low text similarity, different journals)

Dealing with salami publication

- Seek explanation from author
- Pre-publication – correction or reject
- Post-publication
 - Minor: correction, referencing the primary article
 - Major: retraction

Simultaneous submission

- *The researcher chooses to approach several publishers with the same manuscript, in a short period, without waiting for acceptance or rejection letters.*

Why is simultaneous submission problematic?

- Same research might be published several times
- Waste of reviewers' time
- Waste of journal resources (cost)
- Breach of the submission agreement
- Sanction: *Rejection, Retraction*

Editorial Freedom for Editors (WAME)

- Full authority over the editorial content
- Decisions based mainly on the validity of the work and importance to readers
- Critical but responsible views, without fear
- Free from influencing interests (eg. advertising)

Curing the pandemic of misinformation on COVID-19 mRNA vaccines through real evidence-based medicine - Part 1



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Background: In response to severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), several new pharmaceutical agents have been administered to billions of people worldwide, including the young and healthy at little risk from the virus. Considerable leeway has been afforded in terms of the pre-clinical and clinical testing of these agents, despite an entirely novel mechanism of action and concerning biodistribution characteristics.

Aim: To gain a better understanding of the true benefits and potential harms of the messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) coronavirus disease (COVID) vaccines.

Methods: A narrative review of the evidence from randomised trials and real world data of the COVID mRNA products with special emphasis on BionTech/Pfizer vaccine.

Results: In the non-elderly population the “number needed to treat” to prevent a single death

Journal Article Insights

836,000 views



Original Research

Curing the pandemic of misinformation on Covid-19 mRNA vaccines through REAL evidence-based medicine.

Part ①



Visit: insulinresistance.org

<https://doi.org/10.4102/ijr.v5i1.71>

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Questions to publisher

- Anti-vax author?
- Author not an epidemiologist?
- British author publishing in SA journal?
- Personal bias?

Publishers viewpoint

- Editorial freedom of the editor
- Properly peer-reviewed
- Not personal, but science
- Invite objectors to refute the article by publishing

Dealing with publication misconduct

- Clear policies for journal
- Seek author explanation
- Editor decision -> editorial board + COPE advice
- Remedy – correction, retraction
- Report to institution



Thank You for Your Time

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

ASSAf Research Repository

<http://research.assaf.org.za/>

B. Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) Events

I. Other

2022-11

Annual National Scholarly Editors' Forum (NSEF) Meeting

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11911/259>

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