AFRICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ISSUES (AJOSI)

Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement

African Journal of Social Issues (AJOSI) is a peer review international journal that not only upholds the ethics of publication as one of its core values but adheres strictly to internationally accepted publication ethics. In accordance to this, the Journal (AJOSI) insists on the double-blind peer-review process for all articles / papers reviewed. The rationale for double-blind peer review process is to validate the integrity and originality / novelty of the research work presented to it and to eliminate malpractice. This process adopted by the journal acts as a filtering / sieving ground and thus increases the quality of research submitted for publication. The process not only helps the author(s) to critically re-examine the submission(s) but assists to remove any errors or gaps in manuscript(s) mistakenly overlooked and included initially. It also assists in enriching the research work, thereby making it more applicable in real time as well as current.

The journal adopts the COPE guidelines on publication ethics.

To ensure the achievement of this in proper terms, there are responsibilities on all involved:

1. **Authors’ Responsibilities that Must Be Adhered to:**
   - The submitted manuscripts must be the original work of the author(s). Author(s) should guide against plagiarism of any kind;
   - Only manuscripts not submitted elsewhere should be submitted;
   - Any conflict of interest must be clearly stated by the author(s);
   - The author(s) should acknowledge sources of data used in the development of the manuscript(s);
   - It is the responsibility of the author(s) to swiftly communicate to the Editor all errors discovered in the manuscript(s) after submission.

2. **Reviewers’ Responsibilities:**
   - Reviewers are expected to evaluate a manuscript for critical analysis, comparative analysis and for integrity and novelty / originality of the research work and to avoid malpractice.
   - All individual manuscripts are reviewed fairly based on the intellectual content of the article without prejudice to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenry or political values, ideology and inclination of author(s);
   - Any observed conflict of interest during the review process must be promptly communicated to the Editor;
   - All information pertaining to the manuscript is kept with utmost confidentiality;
   - Any reason(s) for the rejection of a manuscript for publication must be communicated to the Editor.

3. **Editors’ Responsibilities:**
   - All individual manuscripts are evaluated fairly based on the intellectual content of the paper / article without prejudice to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenry or political values, ideology and inclination of authors;
   - Information pertaining to manuscripts are kept with utmost confidentiality;
   - Any observed conflict of interest pertaining to manuscripts must be disclosed to the author(s).

4. **Editorial Responsibilities:**
   - The Editors have complete responsibility and authority to reject / accept an article / a paper when reasonably certain and convinced. Decisions for publication are based on the paper’s relevance to the
journal’s scope, its academic quality, reviewers’ objective judgments, the research’s innovation, originality, contribution(s) to knowledge and clarity of purpose, the experiment’s validity, etc. The Editorial Board of the journal takes responsibility for taking final decisions for publication for submitted manuscripts based on the reviewer’s evaluation of the manuscript, policies of the journal’s Editorial Board and legal restrain on plagiarism, libel and copyright infringement.

- Editors and the editorial staff should guarantee the confidentiality of the submitted papers which should only be disclosed to the authors, the reviewers, the adviser from AJOSI Editorial Committee, and the publisher if necessary before publication. On no account should the submitted paper(s) be used for the editors’ and the editorial staff’s own research without the authors’ written authorization / permission.
- Editors should have no conflict of interest with respect to articles they reject / accept. The policy of reservation of anonymity of reviewers should be maintained at all times.
- Editors are to adhere to the double-blind review in the peer review process.
- When errors are found, the Editorial Board should promote publication of correction or retraction.

5. Publishing Ethics Issues and Malpractice Statement:

- It is un-academic to condone plagiarism and use of fraudulent data.
- When a case of plagiarism and fraudulent data is formally exposed / observed after the paper’s publication in AJOSI, a preliminary investigation will be conducted by AJOSI, and the author(s) informed. If the plagiarism is confirmed, AJOSI will contact the author’s institution and/or funding agencies and will mark the plagiarism paper obviously on the PDF of the paper or formally retract the paper.
- Crosschecking and double-blind peer reviewing must be conducted for each paper to avoid academic misconduct and malpractice, and all the files related to each paper submitted should properly be preserved.
- The Editorial Board has the priority to monitor / safeguard publishing ethics.

6. Guidelines for Retracting Articles / Papers:

- Retracting article will be considered if there is clear / established evidence that the findings are unreliable, either as a result of misconduct (e.g. data fabrication) or honest error (e.g. miscalculation or experimental error), or if the findings have previously been published elsewhere without proper cross-referencing, permission or justification (i.e. cases of redundant publication), or if the paper constitutes plagiarism, or if the paper reports unethical research.
- The major purpose of retractions is to correct the literature and ensure its integrity rather than to punish authors who misbehave.
- The retracted paper will not be removed from the AJOSI online issues (and hard copies if already published). But notices of retraction will be promptly published and linked to the retracted article, accurately stating the information of the retracted article, the reason(s) for retraction, and who retracts the article, which will be freely available to all readers.
- Articles may be retracted by their author(s) or by AJOSI or issued jointly. AJOSI has the final decision about retracting articles. It will retract publications even if all or some of the authors refuse to retract the publication themselves if the unethical behaviour is confirmed.

7. Maintenance of the Integrity of the Academic Record

- All the authors will make a commitment of the integrity of the academic record, including the integrity of the data and figures in the paper. The crosscheck and peer review will help the editors to verify the originality and integrity of the submitted paper.
- Business needs should be precluded from compromising intellectual and ethical standards.
When an author discovers fundamental errors in the published works, it is the author’s obligation to notify the editor promptly by e-mail. The editors and the editorial staff should always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies when needed.