Publication Ethics and Policy of Statistics and Applications

A.   Ethical Guidelines for Authors

All submissions to Statistics and Applications (S&A), the Journal of the Society of Statistics, Computer and Applications (SSCA), should conform to the following and include statements of conflict of interest and confirmation of ethical approval, wherever required. All authors are expected to be aware of the publication ethics of the journal prior to submission of any manuscript.

A.1.   Citation Ethics

The author(s) should ensure that they have written entirely original manuscripts/works, and if the author(s) has/have used the work and/or words of others, the same has been appropriately cited or quoted. The publication(s) that has/have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work should also be properly cited. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. Some of the most common forms of plagiarism can be listed as follows (this list is not exhaustive):

A.1.1.   Copying texts, results, ideas, etc., directly from another source, without giving due credit through citations, references, and quotes
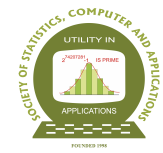
How to avoid

Use quotation marks to include any verbatim text from any other source. Further, the source should be cited and included in the list of references. Even if verbatim quotes are not included, authors must credit all published work that has been used, in any sense, for preparing the manuscript and conducting the study.

A.1.2.   Reproducing copyrighted published materials, like pictures, tables, or figures, without permission

How to avoid

Obtain prior permission from the copyright holder to reproduce any previously published graphs, figures, and tables. Permission can be sought over email or in writing, whichever is possible. If permitted, the source of the tables or figures should be cited clearly and included in the reference section.

A.1.3. Reproducing copyrighted published materials, like pictures, tables, or figures, without permission

How to avoid

If you need to include a discussion on results or methodologies from your previous publications, ensure that the source is clearly cited. Avoid excessive and inappropriate self-citation. If a significant part of a previously published work needs to be included, obtain prior permission from the journal where the work was originally published, according to the copyright agreements.

Authors should also avoid excessive and inappropriate citation arrangements among group authors, as this constitutes deliberate citation manipulation and can lead to rejection of the paper if detected.

A.1.4. Using, applying, or extending ideas and/ or methodologies from other sources without citing the source
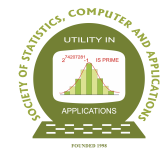
How to avoid

Authors should not use, apply, or extend ideas and/or methodologies from other sources without giving due credit to the source literature. The source should be duly cited and included in the reference section. Paraphrasing the ideas or methodologies, without citation, will still resort to plagiarism. Methodologies from already published work can be used directly only if the application is towards a new objective, or on a new data set/target population. While extending the existing methodology, the literature on the existing methodology should be unambiguously cited and referenced.

Please note: If a submitted manuscript falls within the scope of the journal, the Journal uses iThenticate software to check for plagiarism of the submitted manuscript before initiating the review process. Ideally, the similarity index exceeding 10% may lead to desk rejection of the manuscript.

However, based on the similarity report and the context of overlaps, the editorial board will decide whether to consider the paper for possible publication in S&A or to reject it without review. If considerable overlap (more than 10%) is found later in the review process, the paper will be rejected.

A.2. Data and Code Transparency

The author(s) should present their results clearly, honestly, and without fabrication, falsification, or inappropriate data manipulation and should strive to describe their methods clearly and unambiguously so that their findings can be confirmed by others. The manuscript/paper should contain sufficient details and references to permit others to replicate the findings of the study. To facilitate validation and replication of findings by others, authors are encouraged to either share the data in a supplementary file or deposit the data in a publicly available repository and provide its details/links (either within the text or as a separate statement

before references), or provide links to the source of data in the form of citation and reference with URL (if available online). If the authors are not allowed to publicly share the data due to any legal or ethical restrictions, they can provide a procedural guide in the manuscript, or in a supplementary file, to obtain the data from the primary source.

Authors should upload simulation code as supplementary material or deposit it in an accessible repository (e.g., GitHub, institutional repositories), ensuring accessibility for reviewers and readers. Include the repository link in the manuscript for easy access.

To enhance the reproducibility and transparency of research findings, researchers are required to comply with:

a. • **Code and Data Sharing:** Make all code, data, and analysis scripts publicly available on GitHub or a similar platform. This includes:

   • **Simulation studies:** The full code used to generate and analyse simulated data.

   • **Empirical studies:** The data (de-identified to protect participant privacy) and code used for data cleaning, analysis, and visualization.

b. **Documentation:** Provide comprehensive documentation that includes: A **README** file with an overview of the project and instructions for replicating the analysis. Detailed comments within the code to explain the logic and functionality. An explanation of any data processing steps and analytical methods used.

c. **Licensing:** Apply an appropriate open-source license to the code and data to allow others to use, modify, and distribute the materials.

A.3. Publication Integrity

Author(s) should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical and is unacceptable.

A.4. Authorship Criteria

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, writing, editing, or interpretation of the reported study/research work. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be either acknowledged or listed as contributors. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included in the paper and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication. Authors should take collective responsibility for the submitted work, both pre- and post-publication.

A.5. Conflict of Interest

As per the Cambridge Dictionary, "conflict of interest is a situation in which someone cannot make a fair decision because they will be affected by the result".

Any potential conflict of interest (of any of the co-authors) should be disclosed at the time of submission of the manuscript. A statement on the conflict of interest (or competing interest) should be included in the manuscript, after the conclusion section and before the reference section. Non-disclosure of a potential conflict of interest amounts to unethical practices.

Conflict of interest can arise from financial, personal, professional, political, commercial, or legal association with organizations or people who may have a vested interest in the findings of the research. Some hypothetical examples of conflict of interest can be listed as follows.

a. The author/authors has/have submitted findings on the risk of cancer due to smoking and the study is funded by a cigarette manufacturer.

b. The author/authors is/are employed by the pharmaceutical company or other organization that has sponsored the clinical trial.

c. The author/authors works/work in a research center that receives grants or endowments from an organization that can benefit from the findings of the research.

d. The author/authors holds/ hold financial shares of an organization, or is/are associated with an organization, which can benefit from the results of the study, or from the results being unfavorable for competing organizations.

e. If the objective, outcome, or interpretation of the outcome of the study can be potentially affected by the political, ideological, or religious beliefs or affiliations of an author. For example, consider a situation where the author is an active member of a political organization and the manuscript contains a comparison of demographic parameters, like education level, criminal records, income and assets, etc., of political leaders of different political parties active in a region.

These are only a few of the many other possible scenarios of conflict of interest.

If the authors have no conflict of interest, they can include the following statement in the 'conflict of interest' section.

"The authors do not have any financial or non-financial conflict of interest to declare for the research work included in this article."

A.6. Statement of Funding

Names of all funding sources should be disclosed in a statement, after the conclusion section and before the reference section. A separate statement (section) is required for funding

sources, and it should not be clubbed with the acknowledgment section. If no funding has been received for the study, the authors should mention the same in the statement.

A.7.   Error and/or Inaccuracy

If any error or inaccuracy is noticed by any of the authors in their published work, it should be promptly notified to the Editor or publisher.
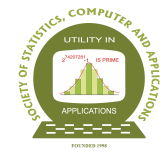
A.8.   Data Privacy

Authors submitting manuscripts to the journal are expected to adhere to stringent data privacy standards. Data privacy encompasses the protection of individuals' personal information collected during research endeavours. Authors should ensure that any data collected, including but not limited to identifiable information, is handled with the utmost care and in accordance with relevant laws and regulations. This includes obtaining informed consent from participants for data collection, processing, and publication. In addition, prior approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Research Ethics Committee should be taken before initiating the data collection process. Authors must take appropriate measures to anonymize or pseudonymize data to prevent the identification of individuals unless explicit consent has been obtained or unless it is necessary for the research purpose. Furthermore, authors should describe in their manuscripts the steps taken to safeguard data privacy and ensure compliance with applicable data protection guidelines. Any potential risks to data privacy should be acknowledged, and strategies to mitigate these risks should be implemented. Upholding data privacy principles not only safeguards the rights and interests of research participants but also upholds the integrity and credibility of scholarly research.

Please note: Authors using data from a clinical trial in India must ensure that the trial is duly registered in the Clinical Trials Registry- India (CTRI) as mandated by the Drugs Controller General (India) (DCGI) (www.cdsco.gov.in) since 15th June 2009.

A.9.   AI Ethics

In line with our commitment to upholding truth, facts, and trust in societal values, authors are expected to adhere to rigorous ethical standards when conducting research involving artificial intelligence (AI). Authors must prioritize the integrity of their work by ensuring that AI technologies are employed in a manner consistent with truthfulness and accuracy. This entails a transparent and honest depiction of AI algorithms, methodologies, and outcomes, allowing for a clear understanding of the research process. Authors should strive to base their AI models and algorithms on factual and reliable data, avoiding the propagation of misinformation or biased narratives. Furthermore, authors must recognize the societal impact of their AI research and take into account the values and principles of the communities affected by their work. Upholding trust in AI technologies necessitates a commitment to fairness, accountability, and privacy. Authors should actively mitigate biases in AI systems due to data imbalance, establish mechanisms for accountability, and prioritize the protection

of individuals' privacy rights. By adhering to these AI ethics guidelines, authors contribute to the advancement of knowledge while fostering a culture of truth, facts, and trust in the societal values underpinning their research endeavors.
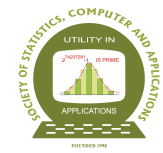
B.   Ethical Guidelines for Peer-Reviewers

The Journal of Statistics and Applications follows a single-blinded review process.
Peer reviewers are expected to strictly adhere to the following ethical guidelines to ensure an impartial review process.

a. If a reviewer does not have the necessary expertise to assess the manuscript, they must immediately inform the Journal and withdraw from the review process.

b. In case a reviewer finds any potential conflict of interest, the same must be conveyed to the Journal before proceeding with the review process. Conflict of interest can arise from financial, personal, professional, political, commercial, or legal association with the author(s), or with the funding agency.

c. Reviewers must respect the confidentiality and copyright of the work included in the manuscript.

d. Reviewers must remain unbiased with respect to the gender, race, religious beliefs, political beliefs, caste, nationality, or any other identities of the author(s) or the scope of the study and its findings. The review report should be prepared with objectivity and proper explanation must be provided to substantiate critiques included in the report.

e. If the reviewer has sought help from someone in the review process, the details of the same must be conveyed to the journal while submitting the report.

C.   Open Access and Free Publishing Policy

S&A provides a transparent and equitable platform to all scholars across the world for freely accessing quality research work published in the journal, without facing financial barriers. All issues of the journal can be accessed by everyone on the journal's official page available on the website of the SSCA [https://www.ssca.org.in/journal.html]. Further, unlike most open-access journals, no Article Publishing Charge (APC) or any other charges are levied for publishing accepted manuscripts. This policy allows researchers to publish their original work without worrying about arranging institutional funding to cover APCs. Institutional funding for research work is not easily available to many promising scholars across the globe, especially those in developing and underdeveloped countries. To be precise, the open access and free publishing policy of S&A aims to provide equal opportunity to all researchers across the globe, regardless of their financial constraints

D. Copyright, Sharing Rights, and Preprints

S&A reserves the copyright of all published articles. Authors retain the right to publicly share the published article only on non-commercial websites. Preprints with Digital Object identifier (DoI) shared on servers like medRxiv and arXiv, can be submitted as manuscripts for peer review. Authors should duly intimate the editor about the preprint during the submission process. However, the accepted version of the manuscript cannot be shared as a preprint in such repositories, or on any other website. Authors are also not allowed to update the preprint with the accepted version of the paper.

Note:

a. A **preprint** is a version of the manuscript which has not been peer-reviewed and has been shared on a preprint server. Preprints are assigned unique DoIs by the preprint servers.

b. **The accepted version** of the manuscript refers to the final revised version of the manuscript which has been accepted for publication in the journal after the peer-review process.

c. **The published article** refers to the version of the article that is published on the website of the journal, under the name of the journal, after necessary formatting and editing of the accepted version of the manuscript.

Note: Publication ethics is not static, and like any other academic parameter it keeps evolving with time. This page on publication ethics may be updated from time to time.

E. Plagiarism check

If a submitted manuscript falls within the scope of the journal, the Journal uses iThenticate software to check for plagiarism of the submitted manuscript before initiating the review process. Ideally, the similarity index exceeding 10% may lead to desk rejection of the manuscript.

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