

Corrections or retractions for published articles

Initiating corrections or retractions for published articles is a critical process that requires careful consideration of various factors, including the nature and severity of errors or misconduct, the impact on the validity and credibility of the research, and ethical considerations. Here's guidance on when and how corrections or retractions should be initiated, including reasons for retraction and ethical considerations:

1. Reasons for Retraction:

- a. **Fabrication or Falsification of Data:** Articles may be retracted if investigations reveal that data have been fabricated, falsified, or manipulated to support the study's conclusions.
- b. **Plagiarism or Duplicate Publication:** Retractions may be warranted if articles contain significant instances of plagiarism (e.g., verbatim copying of text without proper attribution) or if the same research findings have been published elsewhere without proper acknowledgment.
- c. **Ethical Violations:** Articles may be retracted in cases of serious ethical violations, such as undisclosed conflicts of interest, unethical research practices, or breaches of patient confidentiality or human subjects' rights.
- d. **Serious Errors or Inaccuracies:** Retractions may be considered for articles containing significant errors or inaccuracies that invalidate the study's conclusions or significantly impact the interpretation of the research.

2. Initiation of Corrections or Retractions:

- a. **Internal Review and Assessment:** Corrections or retractions may be initiated following internal review and assessment by the editorial team in response to concerns raised by readers, authors, reviewers, or editorial staff regarding the integrity, validity, or ethical conduct of published research.
- b. **External Complaints or Allegations:** Corrections or retractions may be prompted by external complaints, allegations, or evidence of misconduct or errors brought to the attention of the editorial office by readers, institutions, funding agencies, or regulatory bodies.
- c. **Author Cooperation and Disclosure:** Authors are expected to cooperate with the editorial team in the investigation of concerns and to disclose any relevant information or documentation that may assist in assessing the validity or integrity of the research.

3. Ethical Considerations:

- a. **Transparency and Accountability:** Retractions should be conducted transparently, with clear communication to readers, authors, and the research community regarding the reasons for retraction, the nature of the concerns, and any actions taken to address them.
- b. **Protection of Scientific Integrity:** Retractions are intended to preserve the integrity and credibility of the scholarly record by addressing instances of misconduct, errors, or ethical breaches that undermine the validity or reliability of published research.
- c. **Fairness and Due Process:** Authors should be given the opportunity to respond to allegations or concerns raised regarding their research before decisions regarding corrections or retractions are finalized, ensuring fairness and due process in the resolution of disputes.
- d. **Minimization of Harm:** Retractions should be carried out with sensitivity to potential harm to authors' reputations and careers, as well as to the broader scientific community. Efforts should be made to minimize harm while upholding the principles of scientific integrity and ethical conduct.

4. Notification and Dissemination:

a. Notification to Stakeholders: Authors, reviewers, editorial staff, institutions, funding agencies, and relevant stakeholders should be notified promptly and transparently regarding corrections or retractions, with clear explanations provided regarding the reasons for the action taken.

b. Dissemination of Notices: Notices of corrections or retractions should be disseminated prominently in the journal, on the journal's website, and through other relevant channels to ensure broad visibility and awareness among readers, researchers, and the public.

c. Retraction Statements: Retraction statements should clearly articulate the reasons for retraction, describe the nature of the concerns or errors identified, and provide context and background information to assist readers in understanding the decision to retract the article.

By adhering to these guidelines and ethical considerations, journals can effectively manage corrections or retractions while upholding the integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the scholarly literature.