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Universidad de Alicante

Recent news in academic publications: Identifying the cheaters' work

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Defending Academic Ethics

- Academic journals started to identify ..*'manufactured manuscripts submitted to a journal for a fee on behalf of researchers with the purpose of providing an easy publication for them, or to offer authorship for sale'* (COPE and STM, 2022:4)
- Most of them come from '*.. largest providers in scientific publications, which offers its services to publish ready-made articles on a wide variety of topics.... can buy an author's position or an entire article...(the) finished articles are designed for a team of six authors.... And ensure confidentiality of the purchase of article position'* (COPE and STM, 2022:4)

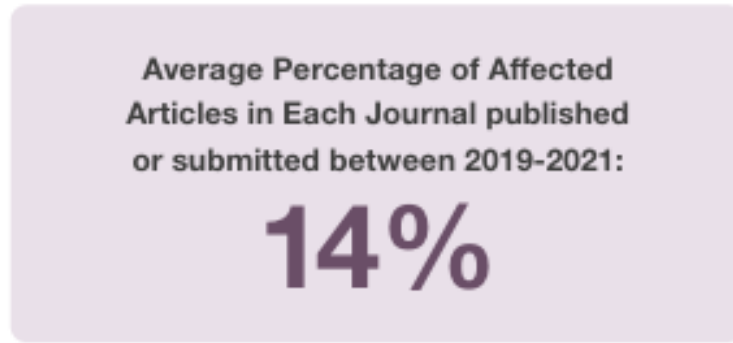
→ Paper mills



Definition

- **Paper Mills** (or "paper factories") are unofficial, potentially illegal, for-profit organizations that produce and sell research manuscripts. These manuscripts are created specifically for this purpose, copied, falsified, or manipulated. They resemble legitimate research but are authored by individuals other than those who ultimately sign them.
- These are services that create customized academic work—ranging from simple essays to complex scientific research—and often guarantee products that pass plagiarism checks, for a fee.
- Motivations and Clients: Students and academics (but also professionals) who face pressure to publish or present research.
- Types of Services:
 - Essay and Assignment Writing
 - Research and Publication in Academic Journals
 - Theses and Dissertations: Writing of undergraduate and postgraduate theses
 - Translation and Editing: Translation and proofreading services for academic work

Scale



Academic impact

- **Academic Integrity:** Paper mills undermine academic integrity by promoting plagiarism and fraud.
 - They provide unfair advantages to users and compromise the quality of education and research.
- **Research Quality:** Low-quality and false research affects the credibility of publications (Publish or perish? Not really).
 - It makes it difficult to identify valid research.
 - **Dishonest Production**
- **Inequality:** Those who can afford to pay for these services gain advantages over those who cannot, exacerbating existing inequalities in the educational system.
- **Doubt about Ethical Principles in Academia – Questioned Credibility:**
 - New editorial and ethical policies (an initiative from PUBLISHERS!!)



Reaction from the Editorial Realm!

- **Codes of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines:** Editorial codes that outline the expectations and responsibilities of authors, reviewers, and editors
 - They emphasize the importance of honesty and academic integrity and the consequences of submitting fraudulent work.
- **Declaration of Contributions and Conflicts of Interest:**
 - Authors are required to disclose their individual contributions to the work and any potential conflicts of interest.
 - This ensures transparency and identifies possible undue influences in the research process.
- **Awareness Campaigns on Academic Ethics:**
 - Campaigns aimed at authors and students highlighting the importance of academic ethics and the consequences of using paper mills.
- **Training Programs for Editors and Reviewers:** Training programs designed to help editors and reviewers identify fraudulent work and data manipulation.
 - These programs improve the detection of irregularities and
 - ensure a more rigorous and effective review process.



Reaction from the Editorial Realm!(2)

- **Collaborations with Universities and Research Institutions:**
 - Primarily to **share information** about cases of academic fraud.
- Participation in Global Initiatives: Alliances **between competing publishers** at a global level.
 - **Two very relevant ones are:**
 - **COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics):** Establishes guidelines for handling cases of misconduct.
 - **Retraction Watch:** Monitors and reports on retracted papers, providing transparency in research publication.
- Technology, Technology, and Technology:
 - Monitoring the Publication Network with AI Methods: Utilizing technological tools to oversee the publication network.
 - Identifying the Origin of Submissions
 - Other Technologies

How and where?

- Plagiarism detection tools
 - Turnitin, Similarity Check (CrossRef) (universities)
 - Plagiarism detection Software (PDS) (journals)
- Rigorous Peer Review Processes:... → The role of the reviewers!
 - Double-Blind Peer Review
 - Data Verification/Replicability
- Writing Style and Authenticity: A second role for reviewers!
- Standardizing Review Processes

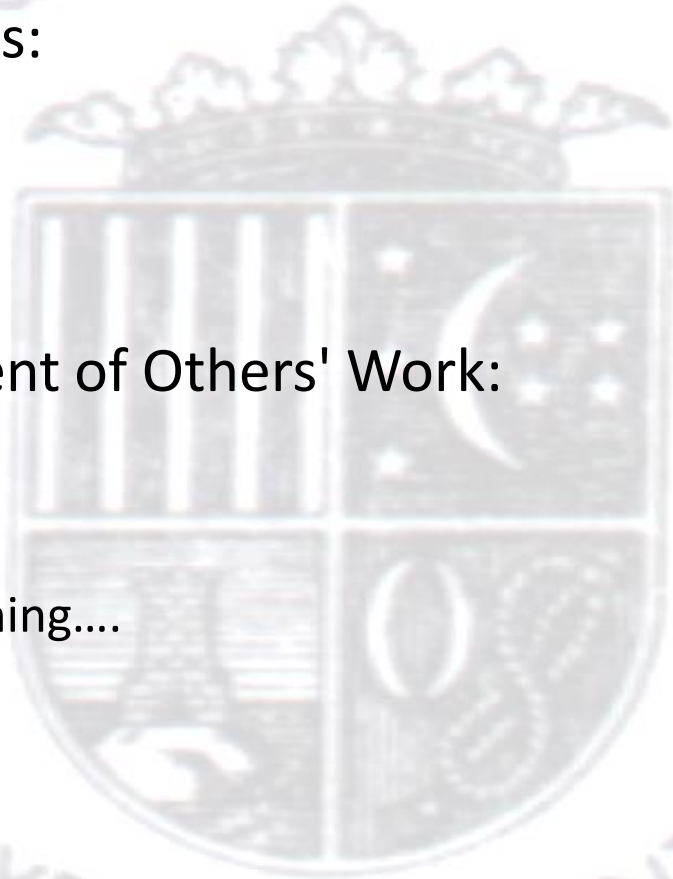


How and where? (2)

- Standardizing Review Processes (Publicationethics.org)
 - [Authorship problems.](#) →
 - [Multiple Submissions of the Same Manuscript to Different Journals](#)
 - [Questions about the Data Used and Scientific Rigor](#) →
 - Many Cases: Published and Unpublished Databases, Poorly Constructed or Misleading Data, Restrictions on Data Publication.... etc
 - [Post-Publication Complaint Management](#)
 - Publication Retraction with a Public Note of the Reasons
 - Proposal for Correcting Errors or Ethical Issues
 - Author Response Space.....
 - [Manipulation of the Peer Review Process](#) →
 - Manipulation of the [images](#), intentional wrong quotations, etc....
 -

Conclusions or recommendations?

- Academic Ethics:
 - Foundations,
 - Review,
- Original Ideas
- Acknowledgment of Others' Work:
 - Citations
- Own Work
 - Training, Training....



- Beal, S (2024), Wiley Launches Paper Mill Detection Tool after Losing Millions Due to Fraudulent Journal Submissions, disponible en <https://www.darkdaily.com/2024/05/06/wiley-launches-paper-mill-detection-tool-after-losing-millions-due-to-fraudulent-journal-submissions/>
- Bhosale, U (2024), COPE Issues Call to Action Against Paper Mills, Unveils United2Act Consensus Statement, disponible en <https://www.enago.com/academy/cope-position-statement-against-paper-mills/>
- COPE & STM (2022), Paper Mills. Research report, COPE & STM ed, <https://doi.org/10.24318/jtbG8IHL>, disponible en <https://publicationethics.org/resources/research/paper-mills-research>
- FEBS Networks, <https://network.febs.org/posts/international-stakeholders-join-in-action-to-stop-paper-mills>
- STM – Advancing trusted research, Research Integrity, <https://www.stm-assoc.org/research-integrity/>
- Publication Ethics.org, documentos de acciones, disponibles en <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>
 - Numerosos documentos
- Retraction Watch (2024) Publisher retracts more than a dozen papers at once for likely paper mill activity, disponible en <https://retractionwatch.com/2024/04/29/publisher-retracts-more-than-a-dozen-papers-at-once-for-likely-paper-mill-activity/>
- Waruru, M (2024), End paper mills menace to protect research integrity, University World News, disponible en <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20240606174901782>



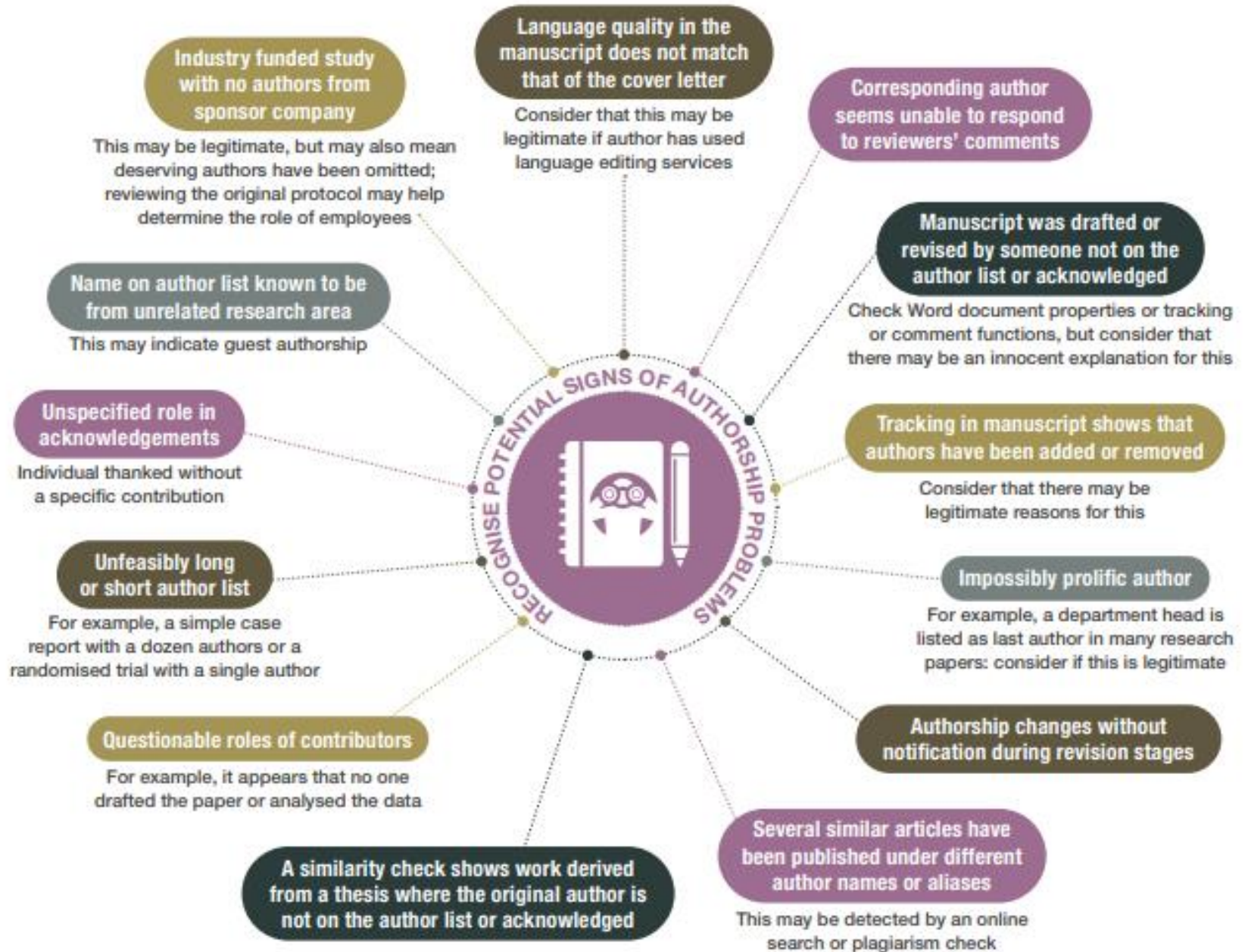
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Thanks for being here!





SIGNS THAT MIGHT INDICATE AUTHORSHIP PROBLEMS





CONCERNS ARE RAISED TO THE DATA PUBLISHER REGARDING THE SCIENTIFIC RIGOR OF AN UNPUBLISHED DATASET

Confirm receipt and state that the issue will be looked into

Contact the corresponding author. Request comments on the concerns, supporting documentation as needed, and information about other affected content



Does the author respond with a satisfactory update to the dataset and/or metadata?



COMPLETE RELEVANT CHECKS & PUBLISH THE UPDATED DATASET



IF ISSUES ARE TOO MAJOR, THE AUTHOR(S) SHOULD WITHDRAW THE DATA DEPOSITION FROM THE REPOSITORY OR THE REPOSITORY SHOULD REJECT THE DATASET

with rigor operation can Editors' recommendations (e.g., Res 6, 6 (2021), 10.1186/109-3 instances poses by dipants' (information), ons for th risks 10.5281/ cases in it is not a journal n published. should ant is.

CONCERNS ARE RAISED TO THE DATA PUBLISHER REGARDING THE SCIENTIFIC RIGOR OF A PUBLISHED DATASET

Confirm receipt and state that the issue will be looked into

Contact the corresponding author. Request comments on the concerns, supporting documentation as needed, and information about other affected content

If there is a manuscript associated with the dataset, contact any implicated journal(s) summarizing the issue and actions to date

Journal(s) evaluate the situation (consulting an expert reviewer if needed) and determine whether a revision to the dataset is possible



Does the author respond with a satisfactory update to the dataset and/or metadata?



PUBLISH AN UPDATED DATASET WITH A NEW VERSION AND/OR DOI. INCLUDE A NOTIFICATION OUTLINING THE CONCERNS AND THE UPDATES IN THE NEW VERSION



Attempt to contact co-authors



POST A NOTIFICATION ON THE DATASET INDICATING CONCERN ABOUT SCIENTIFIC RIGOR ASSOCIATED WITH DATASET



Has the author updated the dataset such that there are no further concerns about the integrity of the publication(s)?



ADD APPROPRIATE CORRECTIONS TO THE PUBLISHED PAPER(S) POINTING USERS TO THE LATEST DATASET VERSION WITH ITS UPDATED DOI

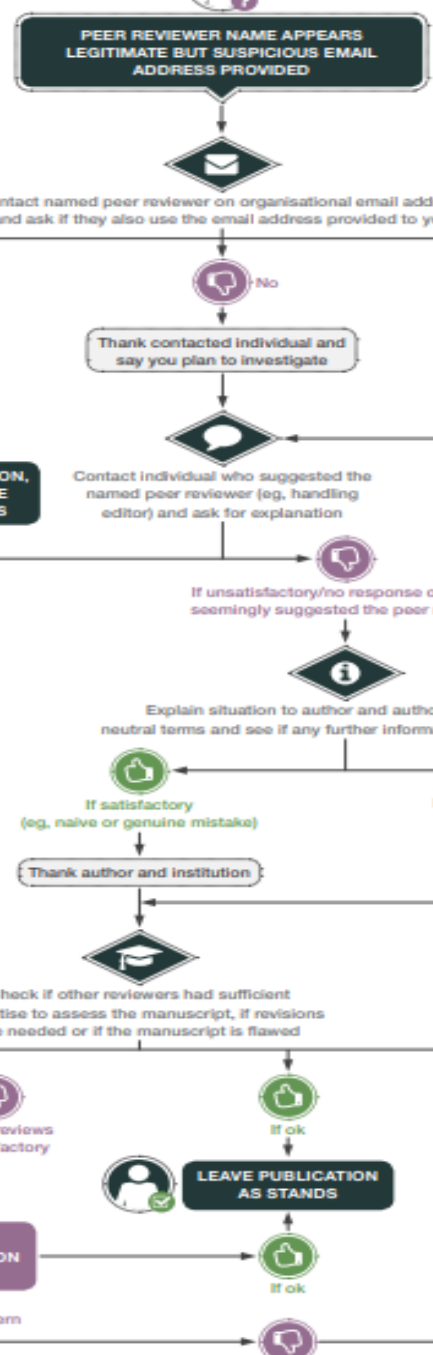
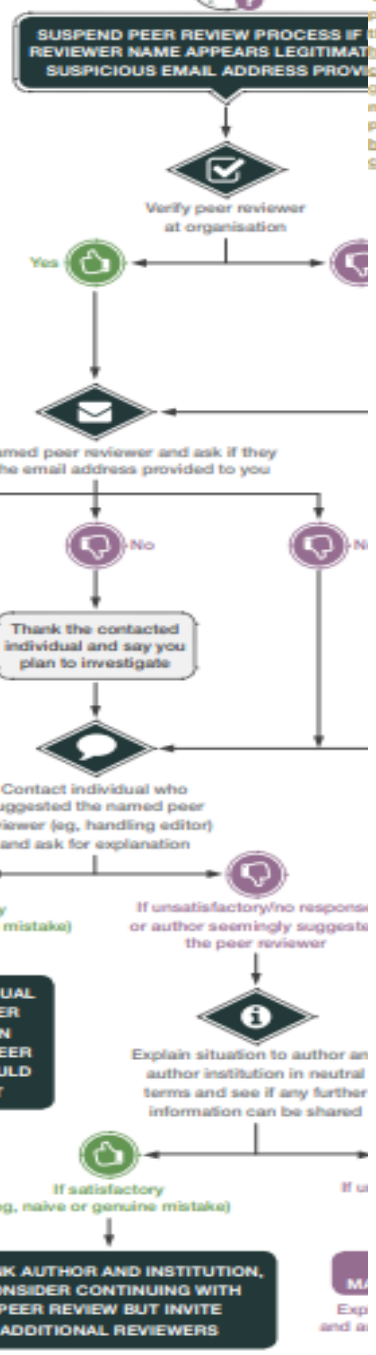


CONSIDER ADDING AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN OR ISSUING A RETRACTION



See also infographic 'How to recognise potential manipulation of the peer review process' <https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.23> and guidance on 'Systematic manipulation of the publication process' <https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.23>.

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If revisions needed or if flawed