

Publication Ethics, Corrections, and Retractions

L&H Scientific Publishing

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L&H Scientific Publishing, is committed to maintaining the highest standards of scholarly integrity, transparency, and ethical publishing. The publisher expects authors, reviewers, editors, and the publisher to uphold principles of honesty, accountability, fairness, and professionalism throughout the publication process.

L&H Scientific Publishing follows internationally recognized standards of publication ethics, including the Core Practices of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and the Recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), adapted as appropriate to the subject area and publication type.

This policy applies to all journals, books, book chapters, and conference proceedings published by L&H Scientific Publishing. References to an article or journal procedure apply to the corresponding work and editorial process. The responsible journal, volume, series, or proceedings editor performs the editorial role, with publisher coordination where needed. Conference participation alone does not imply publication by L&H.

1. Ethical Principles

All participants in the publication process are expected to:

- Conduct and report research honestly and accurately.
- Present data truthfully without fabrication, falsification, or inappropriate manipulation.
- Properly acknowledge the contributions of others.
- Disclose relevant conflicts of interest.
- Respect confidentiality during peer review.
- Comply with applicable ethical, legal, and professional standards.
- Cooperate with editorial investigations when concerns arise regarding submitted or published work.

Scientific publication serves to create a permanent scholarly record. Authors, reviewers, editors, and the publisher share responsibility for maintaining its accuracy and reliability.

2. Responsibilities of Authors

2.1 Originality

Submitted work must be original and not previously published, except in forms explicitly permitted by the publication (such as conference abstracts, theses, or preprints where allowed). Authors must identify any related manuscripts, preprints, or substantially overlapping publications at the time of submission.

Submissions may be screened with similarity-checking tools and editorial review. A similarity score alone is not a finding of misconduct; context, attribution, quotation, methods text, and legitimate reuse are considered.

2.2 Accuracy of Reporting

Authors must present an accurate account of the research performed and provide sufficient detail - including data, methods, software, and materials - to permit evaluation and replication where appropriate. A data availability statement should be included, or legitimate restrictions explained.

2.3 Data Integrity

Authors shall not:

- Fabricate data.
- Falsify results.
- Submit fabricated citations, cite non-existent sources, or otherwise misrepresent the scholarly literature.
- Manipulate images, figures, or datasets in a misleading manner.
- Selectively omit findings for the purpose of misrepresenting conclusions.

Authors may be requested to provide original data, laboratory records, computational files, or supporting documentation for editorial review. Underlying records should be retained for a period appropriate to the field.

2.4 Authorship

Authorship should be limited to individuals who have made substantial scholarly contributions to study conception or design, data collection, analysis or interpretation, and manuscript preparation or revision. All authors must approve the submitted version and accept accountability for the work. Individuals who contributed but do not meet authorship criteria should be acknowledged appropriately.

2.5 Duplicate and Redundant Publication

Authors must not submit the same manuscript simultaneously to more than one publication. Manuscripts substantially overlapping with previously published work must clearly disclose the relationship to the earlier publication.

2.6 Citations and Acknowledgment

Authors must appropriately cite relevant prior work, provide accurate and verifiable references, and obtain permission for use of copyrighted material. Authors are responsible for verifying that every cited source exists, is accurately represented, and genuinely supports the statement it is attached to - including references generated with the assistance of AI writing tools.

2.7 Conflicts of Interest

All financial, professional, institutional, or personal relationships that could influence the research or its interpretation - including funding sources - must be disclosed at submission.

2.8 Research Ethics Compliance

Where applicable, authors must confirm compliance with institutional requirements, government regulations, human-subject protections, animal welfare standards, and data privacy requirements, including informed consent and relevant study registrations. Appropriate approvals must be obtained before the research is conducted.

2.9 Use of Artificial Intelligence

Generative AI tools cannot be listed as authors, as they cannot accept responsibility for the work. Authors remain fully accountable for all submitted content and must disclose material use of generative AI in writing, data analysis, coding, image generation, translation, or reference generation, except for routine spelling and grammar assistance. AI-generated or AI-altered images, data, and citations must not misrepresent results or cite sources that do not exist or do not say what is claimed.

2.10 Notification of Errors

Authors must notify the responsible editor promptly upon discovering a material error in their own work, whether before or after publication.

3. Responsibilities of Reviewers

Reviewers are expected to:

- Provide objective, constructive, and professional evaluations.
- Decline reviews when unqualified, conflicted, or unable to complete them promptly.
- Maintain confidentiality of manuscript materials and not place them into third-party AI services without explicit authorization and appropriate safeguards.
- Avoid using unpublished information for personal advantage.
- Declare any competing interests.
- Report suspected ethical concerns, including plagiarism, duplication, image manipulation, fabricated or unverifiable references, and research misconduct.

4. Responsibilities of Editors

Editors make publication decisions based on scientific merit, originality, technical quality, relevance to the publication's scope, and ethical compliance. Editors shall:

- Treat manuscripts fairly and without discrimination.
- Preserve reviewer confidentiality.
- Manage conflicts of interest and recuse themselves when one exists. Editors must also preserve manuscript confidentiality and must not place confidential manuscript content into third-party AI services without explicit authorization and appropriate safeguards.
- Investigate allegations of misconduct.
- Take corrective action when concerns regarding published work are substantiated.

Editorial decisions are not influenced by commercial, institutional, personal, or political considerations. Acceptance is never contingent on an author purchasing open-access fees, subscriptions, reprints, or other services.

5. Research Misconduct

L&H Scientific Publishing considers the following to be serious ethical violations:

- Data fabrication or falsification.
- Plagiarism, including unattributed copying of text, ideas, data, or figures.
- Self-plagiarism or redundant/duplicate publication.
- Citation manipulation, including fabricated or deliberately misrepresented references. Unverifiable references require investigation; an unsuccessful search alone is not proof of misconduct.
- Undisclosed conflicts of interest.
- Manipulation of the peer-review process.
- Fraudulent authorship practices.
- Use of unauthorized or fabricated reviewer identities.
- Unethical research practices, including missing required approvals.

Allegations may be raised by readers, reviewers, editors, institutions, or third parties, and are assessed fairly, confidentially, and without retaliation.

6. Editorial Investigations

When concerns are raised regarding a submission or published work, L&H Scientific Publishing conducts a fair, confidential, evidence-based investigation. The publisher may:

- Contact the corresponding author.
- Request supporting data and documentation.

- Independently verify a sample of, or all, cited references against original sources when reference integrity is in question.
- Consult editorial board members or independent experts.
- Notify authors' institutions or funders when appropriate.
- Seek guidance from COPE or comparable publication-ethics bodies.

The publisher does not determine legal guilt; investigations focus on protecting the integrity of the scholarly record while ensuring procedural fairness for all parties.

7. Corrections and Post-Publication Updates

7.1 Author Corrections

Minor errors that do not affect the scientific validity of the work - typographical errors, author affiliation corrections, funding statement corrections, or metadata corrections - may be corrected through an editorial notice.

7.2 Corrigenda

A corrigendum may be issued when authors identify significant errors requiring correction but the overall findings remain valid. This includes cases where a limited number of peripheral references are found to be inaccurate, mis-cited, or unverifiable but do not support the paper's central hypothesis, methodology, or conclusions.

7.3 Errata

The publisher may publish an erratum to correct significant errors introduced during editorial production or publication.

All correction notices are linked to the original work, remain permanently accessible, and clearly describe the nature of the correction.

Scientific errors and omissions may be corrected when they do not invalidate the main conclusions. Requests are not excluded solely because of the time elapsed since publication.

8. Expressions of Concern

An Expression of Concern may be issued when serious allegations are under investigation, evidence is inconclusive, an institutional investigation is ongoing, or immediate notification to readers is warranted. An Expression of Concern is not a final determination. The outcome is recorded in a linked correction, retraction, or resolution notice, with the original notice retained as part of the publication history.

9. Retraction Policy

The purpose of retraction is to correct the scholarly record and inform readers that a publication contains findings or content that should not be relied upon. Retraction is intended to preserve research integrity rather than punish authors.

Grounds for Retraction

L&H Scientific Publishing may retract an work when there is clear evidence that:

A. The Findings Are Unreliable

This may result from:

- Major methodological errors,
- Serious computational mistakes,
- Invalid analyses,
- Fabricated or falsified data,

- Significant image or figure manipulation.

B. Plagiarism Has Occurred

Including:

- Unattributed copying of text,
- Unauthorized use of ideas,
- Misappropriation of data or figures.

C. Redundant Publication Exists

The work substantially duplicates previously published work without appropriate disclosure or justification.

D. Peer Review Was Compromised

Examples include:

- Fabricated reviewer identities or fake reviewers,
- Manipulation of reviewer recommendations,
- Paper mill involvement,
- Attempts to improperly influence editorial decisions.

E. Serious Ethical Violations Are Identified

Including:

- Lack of required ethics approvals,
- Violations involving human participants,
- Violations involving animal welfare,
- Other forms of significant ethical misconduct.

F. Fabricated, Misrepresented, or Unverifiable References

L&H Scientific Publishing treats reference integrity as a core component of the scholarly record. The following concerns require evidence-based assessment, including their extent and effect on the reliability of the work:

- References shown by evidence to be fabricated, including sources invented or hallucinated by generative AI tools, whether or not that use was disclosed. Inability to locate a source, a broken link, or absence from a particular database alone does not establish that a source was fabricated.
- Cited sources exist but do not contain or support the claims, data, or findings attributed to them (misrepresented or "tortured" citations);
- Reference lists contain systematic, large-scale inaccuracies consistent with paper mill activity, citation-for-hire schemes, or coordinated citation manipulation intended to inflate the apparent evidentiary basis of the work or the citation counts of specific authors or journals;
- The fabricated or unverifiable references form part of the "backbone" of the work - for example, providing the stated justification for the hypothesis, the theoretical basis for the method, or support for the reported results or conclusions - such that removing or correcting them would undermine confidence in the paper's validity.

Where fabricated, misrepresented, or unverifiable references play only a minor, peripheral role and can be removed or corrected without affecting the argument or validity of the results, the responsible editor will generally address the matter through a corrigendum (see Section 7.2). Retraction is warranted where the evidence establishes that the reference problems undermine confidence in the work, or another ground for retraction in this policy is established. The responsible editor makes this determination following the evidence-review process in Section 10.

10. Retraction Procedures

Preliminary Assessment - The responsible editor or a designated editor reviews the concern and gathers available evidence, including independent verification of any references alleged to be fabricated, mis-cited, or unverifiable.

Author Notification - The corresponding author is notified and given an opportunity to respond, including an opportunity to substantiate the existence and accuracy of any challenged references.

Evidence Review - The publisher evaluates author explanations, original data, relevant documentation, reference-verification results, and independent expert opinions where appropriate.

Institutional Consultation - Where warranted, the responsible editor notifies or consults relevant institutions, funders, or regulatory bodies.

Editorial Determination - The responsible editor, in consultation with the editorial board and the publisher (L&H Scientific Publishing) when necessary, determines the outcome: no action, correction, expression of concern, or retraction.

Publication of Notice - If retraction is warranted, the publisher publishes a formal retraction notice linked to the original work.

11. Retraction Notices

Retraction notices will:

- Be freely accessible regardless of the work's original access status.
- Be linked to the original work.
- Clearly identify the work being retracted.
- State the reason(s) for retraction, including, where applicable, the specific references found to be fabricated, unverifiable, or misrepresented.
- Identify who is issuing the retraction (the editor and/or publisher), and identify any institutional findings on which the decision relies.
- Distinguish misconduct from honest error whenever possible.

The publisher avoids inflammatory or speculative language and presents factual information supported by available evidence.

12. Status of Retracted Articles

- Retracted works generally remain available online.
- Each work landing page and available PDF is clearly marked "Retracted" in addition to its existing access-status and license notice (Creative Commons license or original copyright notice, per Section 14).
- Readers are directed to the retraction notice.
- Metadata is updated to indicate retracted status.
- Removal of published content occurs only in exceptional circumstances involving legal, regulatory, privacy, safety, or court-ordered requirements.

13. Appeals

Authors may appeal editorial decisions related to corrections, expressions of concern, or retractions. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the editorial office, present substantive evidence, and identify any factual inaccuracies in the findings. The responsible editor may seek additional independent review before issuing a final decision. If the complaint or appeal concerns that editor or presents a conflict of interest, it may be sent to the publisher for referral to an unconflicted editor or independent reviewer.

14. Copyright, Access, and Licenses

Publication landing pages must state their access status and applicable license or copyright terms. Works carrying a Creative Commons license are governed by the stated CC terms. Publicly readable legacy content without a Creative Commons license retains the copyright notice stated on the work itself. This policy does not change an existing publication's license or access rights.

15. Publisher's Commitment

L&H Scientific Publishing is committed to:

- Maintaining editorial independence.
- Protecting the integrity of the scholarly record.
- Investigating concerns responsibly and fairly.
- Applying publication ethics consistently across all journals, issues, special issues, books, chapters, and conference proceedings published by L&H.
- Following internationally recognized best practices in scholarly publishing (COPE, ICMJE).

Contact Information

For publication ethics concerns, correction or retraction requests, or appeals concerning books, chapters, proceedings, or publisher-level matters, contact albertluo@lhscientificpublishing.com. Identify the publication, DOI or other identifier, the concern, and supporting evidence. Journal-specific concerns may also be sent to the relevant journal editorial office listed on its contact page.