

Challenges of retractions

Profile

- Since 2013 looking at misconduct
- Since 2020 Identified 2300+ paper mill papers
- In 2022 in collaboration with Retraction Watch created ‘Retraction Watch Hijacked Journal Checker’

CASE 1: Submission by a paper mill

- Tanu.pro creates unique emails to submit papers
 - discrepancies between the country domains and authors' affiliations
 - Identified over 60 suspicious emails like tanu.pro
- Identified 1,517 papers published in 380 journals
- Paper mill uses fake peer reviewers to publish papers.

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Challenges

- How to deal with papers submitted by a paper mill?
- Problematic email may not be the reason for retraction, even if there is evidence that it belongs to a paper mill;
- When suggested fake peer reviewers were not used, little space for COPE-compliant action;
- We need more guidelines regulating submissions by paper mills
 - Such papers should be retracted.

CASE 2. Does it matter who submits the concerns?

- It seems, yes!

Questions about, or suspicions of, misconduct in research should be brought to the attention of the provost for confidential counseling and possible informal resolution.

Allegations of misconduct shall be presented to the provost in writing. Anonymous reports will not be accepted. The provost will acknowledge allegations in writing to the claimant.^[3]

- When not anonymous, publishers also seem to care who submits an application.

The same journal, the same paper mill, different applicants

Case example 1: International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning

As we were scanning the literature trying to find potential matches, we found a Russian freelance site known as freelancehunt that was seeking a writer for one of the titles we scraped from the mi123.ru website. The freelance posting indicated that the “authors of the article” were from Beihang University and Russian State Vocational Pedagogical University.

Follow up

I support the decision to retract the papers according to the request of Dr.Perron but there are also other papers originating from this paper mill not mentioned in the retraction notices:

1. Blended Learning Environments in Inclusive Education at the University

(The offer #722). <https://web.archive.org/web/20200229041809/http://123mi.ru/1/>

2. Effectiveness of the partial implementation of a cloud-based knowledge management system

(Offer #549). <https://web.archive.org/web/20191212061356/http://123mi.ru/1/>

3. Emerging Technologies for Developing Cross-Cultural Competency

Internet Technologies in Distance Education

(Offer #365) <https://web.archive.org/web/20190419230048/http://123mi.ru:80/1/>

4. New Technologies in Educational Solutions in the Field of STEM: The Use of Online Communication Services to Manage Teamwork in Project-Based Learning Activities

(Offer #1644) <https://web.archive.org/web/20210304155822/http://123mi.ru/1/?n=1644>

5. Online Learning Platforms: Reconstructing Modern Higher Education

(Offer #545)

<https://web.archive.org/web/20191112095001/http://123mi.ru/1/>

6. Overcoming Gender Stereotypes in the Process of Social Development and Getting Higher Education in Digital Environment

(Offer #405) <https://web.archive.org/web/20190827162209/http://123mi.ru:80/1/>

7. Predictors of the Use of ICTS in Higher Education: Relevance and Readiness of Universities for Their Implementation

(Offer #1367)

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200929004332/http://123mi.ru/1/?n=1367>


8. Use of Microblogging, Social Networking, and Short Messages in E-learning for Information Culture Building

(Offer #1362)

Reaction

Would you please tell us on whose behalf and from which institution you are writing to us.
Regards,

Case 3. Offer for sale as evidence

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Applied Model of E-Learning in the Framework of Education for Sustainable Development
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Abstract
Education for sustainable development is an evolving concept aimed at providing an understanding of the relationship between sustainable development issues and the development of knowledge, skills, perspectives and values, which will enable people of all ages to commit themselves to creating a sustainable future. The aim of the study is the development of a widely applicable model of e-learning, which consists of seven consecutive levels of professional and personal development and is conceptually associated with a self-regulation strategy. The methodological core of such model creation is the theory of niche construction. Its application to the understanding of

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Recommendations

- All applications with evidence should be investigated
- Papers submitted by paper mills should be retracted
- An offer for sale has more than enough evidence to retract a paper
- Publishers should make an audit of the papers that have been already published