AFRICAN JOURNAL OF APPLIED AND THEORETICAL ECONOMICS
AJATE | www.ajate.org | ISSN 0795-33x

Publication Ethics & Malpractice Statement

Based on the COPE Core Practices and the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing

Version 1.0 | Effective 5 November 2026

The *African Journal of Applied and Theoretical Economics* (AJATE) is committed to the highest standards of publication ethics. The journal follows the guidance of the **Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)**, including its Core Practices and flowcharts (https://publicationethics.org). This statement sets out the responsibilities of everyone involved in publishing with AJATE: authors, editors, reviewers and the publisher.

1. Duties of Authors

1.1 Originality and plagiarism

- Authors must submit entirely original work and properly cite or quote the words, ideas, data and figures of others.
- Plagiarism in any form is unacceptable. This includes copying text without attribution, paraphrasing without citation, presenting another person's work as one's own, and **text recycling** (reusing substantial parts of one's own published work without citation).
- All submissions are screened with similarity-detection software. The editor considers the context and location of any overlap, not just the overall percentage.

1.2 Multiple, redundant or duplicate publication

- Authors must not submit a manuscript that has already been published, or is under review, elsewhere.
- Authors must not publish the same research (the same data, analysis and conclusions) in more than one journal or in more than one issue of AJATE.
- "Salami slicing" (dividing one study into several minimal papers) is discouraged; related papers by the same authors must be cited and disclosed to the editor.
- Translations or secondary publications are accepted only with the agreement of both journals' editors and must cite the original publication.

1.3 Authorship

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a **significant contribution** to the conception, design, data collection, analysis or interpretation of the study, who drafted or critically revised the paper, who approved the final version, and who agree to be accountable for the work. Others who contributed should be acknowledged. Gift, ghost and guest authorship are not permitted. Changes to authorship after submission require a written request signed by **all** authors and the approval of the Editor-in-Chief. AJATE encourages the CRediT taxonomy to describe contributions.

1.4 Data, accuracy and reproducibility

- Authors must present their methods and results accurately and honestly. **Fabrication, falsification or selective manipulation of data or results is serious misconduct.**
- Data sources must be fully identified, and authors should retain raw data and code and make them available to the editors on request.
- Fabricated, inaccurate or unverifiable references are not acceptable.

1.5 Research involving people

Surveys, interviews, experiments and other research involving people must have been approved by an appropriate ethics committee (or an explanation must be given of why approval was not needed), and must have obtained informed consent from participants. Participants' privacy and confidentiality must be protected, and identifying data must not be published without explicit consent.

1.6 Disclosure of conflicts of interest and funding

Authors must disclose all financial and non-financial interests that could influence, or appear to influence, their work (for example, employment, consultancies, grants, shareholdings, or personal and political relationships), together with all sources of funding. Authors complete the AJATE *Declaration of Interests and Authorship* form.

1.7 Use of generative AI

AI tools cannot be authors. Any use of generative AI in research or writing must be declared in the manuscript, and authors remain fully accountable for all content (see the Author Guidelines, Section 8).

1.8 Errors in published work

If authors discover a significant error in their published work, they must promptly notify the editor and cooperate in publishing a correction or retraction.

2. Duties of Editors

- **Fair play:** manuscripts are evaluated solely on their intellectual merit, without regard to the authors' race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic origin, citizenship, institution or political views.
- **Confidentiality:** editors do not disclose information about a manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers and the publisher, as appropriate.
- **Conflicts of interest:** editors withdraw from handling manuscripts where they have a conflict of interest (e.g. a co-author, colleague in the same department, student or relative). Unpublished material is not used in an editor's own research without the author's written consent.
- **Publication decisions:** the Editor-in-Chief is responsible for deciding which articles are published, guided by the reviewers' reports, the journal's policies and legal requirements on libel, copyright and plagiarism.

- **Independence:** editorial decisions are not influenced by the submission fee, advertisers or the publisher's commercial interests.
- **Investigations:** editors act on reasonable suspicions of misconduct, whether raised before or after publication, following COPE flowcharts.
- **Citation practice:** editors do not ask authors to cite AJATE articles or the editors' own work except where scientifically justified.

3. Duties of Reviewers

- **Contribution:** peer review helps the editor make decisions and helps authors improve their work.
- **Promptness:** reviewers who feel unqualified, or cannot complete the review on time, should notify the editor and decline promptly.
- **Confidentiality:** manuscripts are confidential documents. They must not be shared, discussed with others, or uploaded to generative AI tools or other public software.
- **Objectivity:** reviews should be objective and constructive. Personal criticism of the authors is inappropriate.
- **Acknowledgement of sources:** reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited, and alert the editor to any substantial similarity or overlap with other work.
- **Conflicts of interest:** reviewers should decline manuscripts in which they have a competing interest, and must not try to identify the authors.
- **No coercive citation:** reviewers must not require authors to cite the reviewer's own work without scientific justification.

4. Duties of the Publisher

- Ensure that editorial decisions are independent of commercial considerations.
- Provide the resources and infrastructure needed for peer review, publishing, permanent article identifiers and long-term digital preservation.
- Publish corrections, clarifications, expressions of concern and retractions when needed.
- Ensure that all journal policies, fees and contact details are clearly and accurately stated on the website.

5. Handling Allegations of Misconduct

Anyone may raise a concern about possible misconduct in a manuscript or published article by writing confidentially to the Editor-in-Chief at editor@ajate.org, giving supporting evidence. AJATE will:

1. acknowledge the concern and keep the identity of the person raising it confidential where possible;
2. gather evidence (e.g. similarity reports, data, correspondence) and follow the relevant COPE flowchart;

3. give the authors a fair opportunity to respond;
4. where necessary, contact the authors' institutions, funders or other journals involved;
5. decide on an outcome proportionate to the seriousness of the misconduct.

Severity	Possible outcomes
Minor (e.g. honest error, limited citation omissions)	Explanation to the authors; correction of the manuscript or published article.
Moderate (e.g. undisclosed text recycling, undeclared conflict of interest)	Rejection of the manuscript; publication of a correction or expression of concern; formal warning letter.
Serious (e.g. plagiarism, duplicate publication, data fabrication or falsification, review manipulation)	Retraction of the article; notification of the authors' institutions; a ban on submissions to AJATE for a stated period.

Corrections and retractions are made under the AJATE *Corrections, Retractions and Appeals Policy*.

6. Other Ethical Concerns

- **Citation manipulation:** excessive self-citation, or arrangements between authors, reviewers or editors to cite each other's work, is prohibited.
- **Peer-review manipulation:** suggesting fake reviewers or using fake reviewer email addresses is serious misconduct.
- **Paper mills:** manuscripts produced or sold by third-party "paper mills", or authorship bought or sold, will be rejected or retracted, and institutions will be informed.
- **Image and data integrity:** figures and data must not be altered in ways that obscure, remove or misrepresent information.

> Contact for ethics concerns: the Editor-in-Chief, editor@ajate.org. AJATE intends to apply for COPE membership.