

# Simultaneous Submission of a Manuscript to More Than One Journal: Challenges and Solutions

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**Abstract** In this study, the challenges and solutions related to the simultaneous submission of a manuscript to more than one journal were investigated. Always, the found challenges exist and occur consciously or unconsciously. Unfortunately, an applicable solution has not been offered in this regard so far. I have introduced a new way, for the first time, that provides all publishers with a controllable submission process. The provided solution is an application programming interface that is linked to a central database and could save critical information of all submitted manuscripts such as title, authors' information, abstract, keywords, date of first submission and history of referee's comments. All publishers throughout the world can join this database, enable its advanced features for their journals and try to providing a controllable submission system against this important publishing challenge.

**Keywords** Application programming interface · Central publishing database · Manuscript submission process · Publishing ethics · Simultaneous submission

I want to publish my manuscript quickly and conveniently. Should be the rights of the publishers and journals violated here?

Publishing the achievements of researches and scientific studies in journals is an important task academically. Usually, the authors tend to publish their papers in

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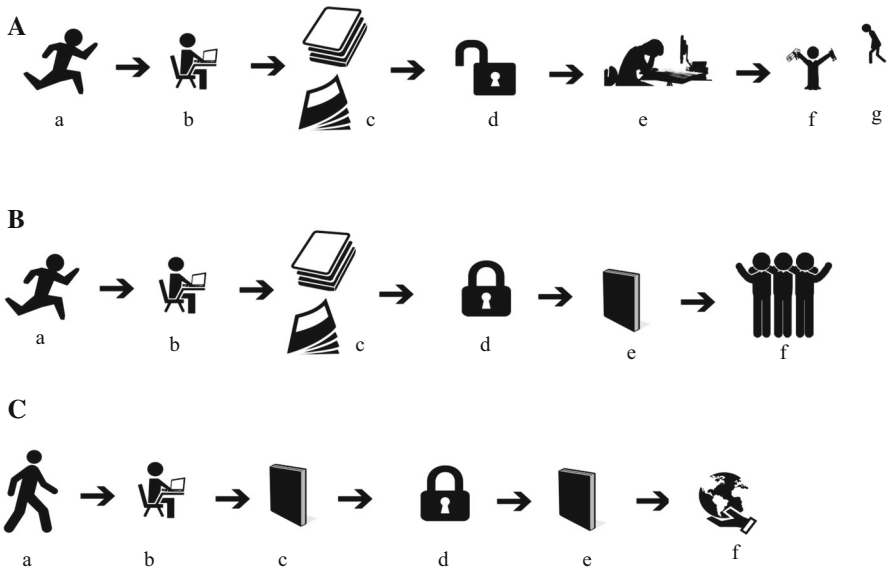
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journals that are more prestigious from the viewpoint of indexing, preferably without publication charge and more quickly. Most of the times, the authors are not very concerned about reviewing and publishing duration of their manuscript and wait for the referee's report from journals even more than 6 months. Sometimes, they do not have enough knowledge about publishing ethics or even in some cases with knowledge of publishing ethics but because of the academic challenges on behalf of scientific institutes, they are forced to publish their papers faster; Finally, deliberately or perforce, the authors tend to publish their manuscript more quickly and choose simultaneous submit of a manuscript to more than one journal, as a solution. Unfortunately, this is one of the nowadays publishing challenges in scientific journals. All prestigious journals have posed this important point in their copyright rules and the authors are committed but unfortunately, these commitment are insufficient and are not respected, and it is also difficult and even impossible to detect the rules were not respected. Wasting time and efforts of the journals and managing systems in review of the manuscripts and also violation of the international publishing ethics are some of the challenges of this wrong academic method. This is certainly amoral and violates the rights of scientific publishers and journals. Another challenge related to this amoral action, which recently done by non-professional authors, is submitting a poor manuscript to a high quality journal; the authors do not aim to publish their manuscript in that journal, and their main aim is sending the manuscript to review through journal and finding the referee's report that can help them to improve the manuscript's quality and then submit the improved manuscript to another journal. Maybe it is an easy task for editors to diagnose this, about really poor manuscripts, but eliminating this challenge in diagnosing the author's intent, never is an easy task. In some cases, both the manuscript and the journal where the manuscript is submitted are high quality, but the aim of the author from the beginning is publishing the manuscript in another journal after performing the referee's comments. Despite the strict rules about this challenge, the editors really do not know that the received manuscripts are just submitted to this journal at the moment. Sometimes, the authors do not reply to revisions requests after the review of manuscript and this challenge exists almost in all publishers. Even though all prestigious journals use antiplagiarism services recently, sometimes, we still see the cases of publishing one paper in two journals; this is due to that, in some journals no version of manuscript be published in time interval between acceptance and publication of the paper, and it is possible that the manuscript be reviewed and accepted in another journal in this time interval. The publishers that have realized this issue publish an initial accepted manuscript; which has both positive and negative aspects. The negative aspect is publishing the manuscript in a poor template in terms of publication quality standards until final publication time. Today, for the first time in the world I want to introduce a system to eliminate the publication challenges in this area permanently. My plan is creating a central database to avoid all the challenges posed. All the publishers and journals should be joined to this database. The database records important characteristics of the submitted manuscripts such as title, abstract, key words, submitted date, authors, title of the journal where the manuscript is submitted and other items, as a usable history. Hereafter every author who wants to submit a manuscript to any journal,



**Fig. 1** Schematic workflow of manuscript submission process to more than one journal. **A** (a) an author with multiple submissions aim; (b) submission process; (c) select more than one journal and try submitting; (d) uncontrollable multiple submissions process; (e) Abused journal that was used as a bait; (f) egocentric author and individual success; (g) offended editor. **B** (a) an author with multiple submissions aim; (b) submission process; (c) select more than one journal and try submitting; (d) controllable multiple submission process; (e) submit and follow/review manuscript only in one journal; (f) a successful community in terms of scientific publications. **C** (a) an author with developed mind against multiple submission; (b) submission process; (c) select one journal and try submitting; (d) controllable multiple submission process; (e) submit and follow/review manuscript in related journal; (f) successful world in terms of scientific publications

first will be investigated via this database and the resulting report will be send to the related editor in chief. The relation between journals and database is possible via application programming interface (API). We have in use this system in our publisher at the moment and we offer this service for free to all publishers in order to promote the international scientific activities quality. A very important features of this advanced system which is provided for the community of researchers are as the following:

1. Possibility of instant recognition of the manuscript which is submitted to another journal simultaneously
2. Preventing submission of the manuscript to another journal if it is under review at the moment.
3. Possibility of instant recognition of the manuscript status if it is submitted to another journal and refereed before. This item can motivate researchers to do not waste the time and efforts of the publishers and journal's editorial members, in order to improve the quality of their manuscript.

4. Ability to show the manuscripts which not followed by authors after review/revision request. The authors who have abandoned process of tracking the status of their manuscript are identifiable.
5. One of the challenges currently publishers faced with is that some authors abuse in using the names of prominent researchers next to their name in the manuscript in related field in order to entice journals editors toward their manuscript. By using this central database and curriculum vitae check of the manuscript's authors, it is possible to detect abuse easily.
6. The annual results of this service can provide a comprehensive report of different countries approach in violation of publishers' right.
7. By this service, the possibility of submitting manuscript can be suspended for trespasser authors for a specified time interval.

The process of simultaneous submit of a manuscript to more than one journal and it's consequence are depicted schematically in Fig. 1.

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