



An Overview of Global Responsible Research Assessment



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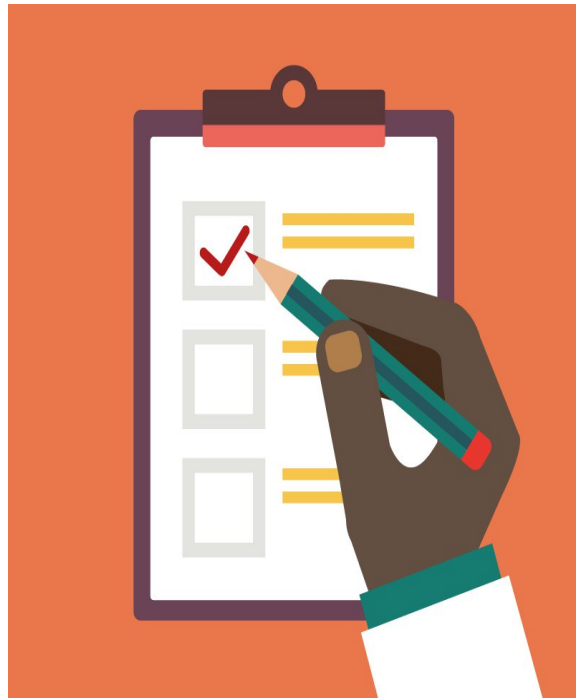
Federal University of Technology, Minna-Nigeria
LIBSENSE Lead for Research Assessment Reforms

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WACREN/CVCNU Leadership Engagement Meeting on
Research Policy and Practice



Presentation Outline



Responsible Research
Assessment



Research assessment practices
in some Nigerian universities



Unintended outcomes of the current
paradigm on research integrity &
open science



Global research assessment reforms
shaping research excellence



Call to Action

Responsible Research Assessment

“**INTEGRITY,**
THE CHOICE BETWEEN
WHAT'S CONVENIENT
AND WHAT'S RIGHT.”
-Tony Dungy, *Uncommon*

AllProDad.com

- The trust of the academic community to solve some of society's biggest issues is based on **integrity**.
- Researchers are expected to conduct researches that are **transparent, replicable, high quality, and innovative**. They are also expected to be accountable to the public about their research processes, methodologies and outputs to advance science and policy.
- However, there is an increasing recognition and concern that the current focus of research assessments may compromise the quality and integrity of researches, especially with the use of artificial intelligence tools in research.

Responsible Research Assessment

- The conventional reliance on journal impact factor (JIF) as the **main** metric for research assessment is no longer deemed adequate in capturing the true value, quality and impact of research and researchers in academia.

What's ***NOT RIGHT*** about the existing research assessment within the academic community?

WHY?

- Assesses *where* and *how much* people publish rather than *what* they publish, while stifling innovation and encouraging the use of large commercial publishing platforms to the detriment of high quality yet smaller or research community-owned platforms.
- The dominance of JIF and similar metrics overlooks factors such as openness, transparency, collaboration, stewardship and innovation which are important for advancing 21st century science.

What is Responsible Research Assessment (RRA)?



RRA is an approach that ensures that assessments are based on research transparency in terms of work input, robustness and openness of methodologies and the reproducibility of results, and other research contributions and activities in addition to quantitative metrics.

- RRA encourages funders, research community & publishers to also focus attention on other fundamental aspects of research assessments like **methodologies, systems, context and culture**.
- Although, RRA principles, frameworks and examples may have wider application, it is sensitive to local and particular context and has to be negotiated and agreed on with the stakeholders who are involved in a given assessment process. (Curry *et al.* 2020)

Research Assessment Practices in some Nigerian Universities

Research assessment practices for promotion and tenure in some selected universities revealed the following:

- There were indications of '*potential for impact*' and '*research excellence*', but publishing in commercial indexed journals were the proxy for measuring these metrics.
- Incentivisation of quantity of published articles without recourse to robustness and openness of methodologies and the reproducibility of results, and other research contributions .
- There were indications of fostering collaborations across disciplines, but the journal title where the article is published is more recognised, than an assessment of contributions to the research output.
- Some universities don't take cognisance of conference organisation practices between disciplines; commercial indexed conference proceedings are also the proxy for quality in some instances.
- Incentivisation of the impact factor of journals and citation counts which in recent times have been marred by malpractices.

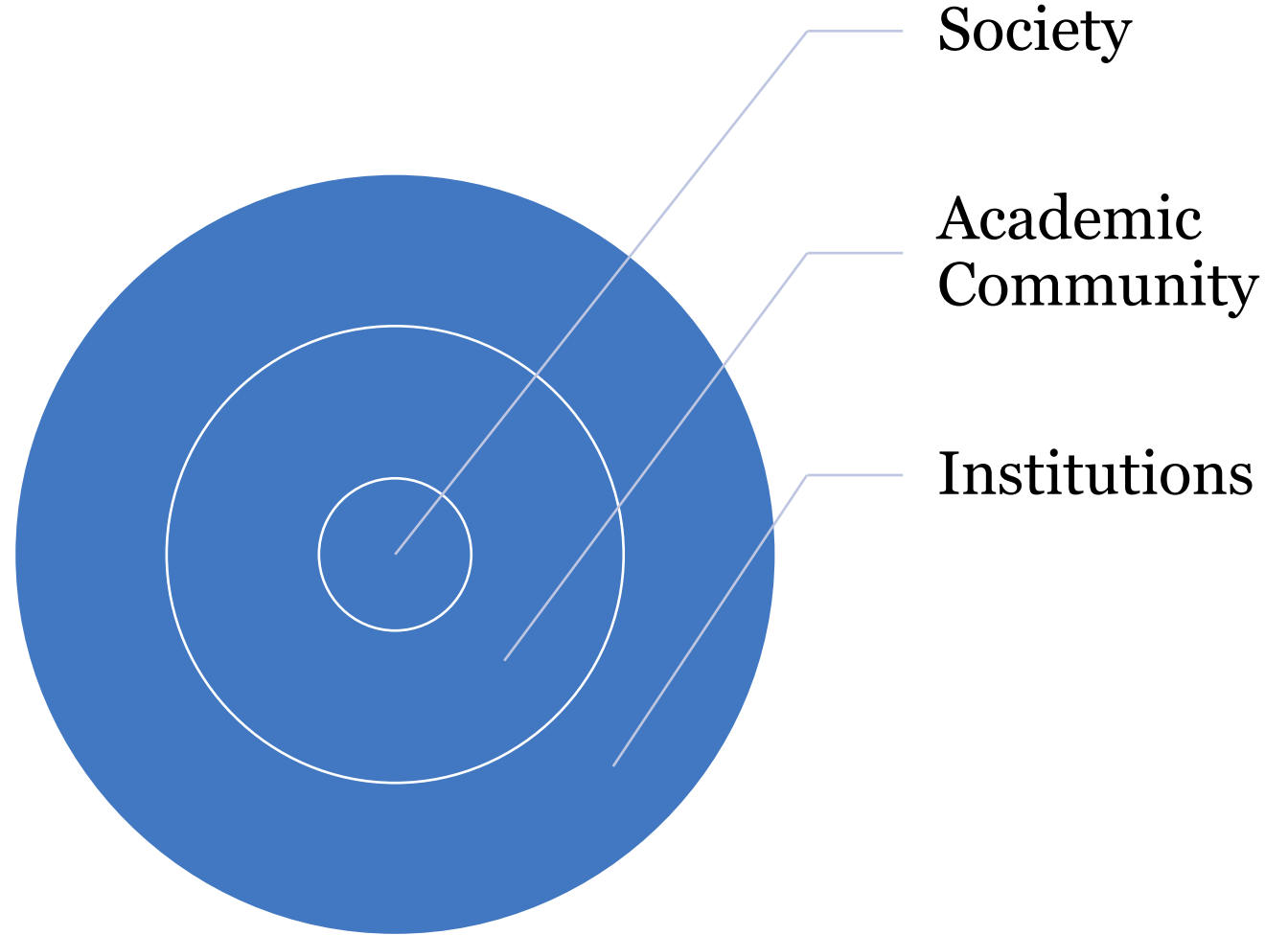


Unintended outcomes of the current paradigm on research integrity & open science



Unintended outcomes of the current paradigm on research integrity & open science

Research assessment is central to ethical research culture, so, we can say that some conventional research assessment practices are driving the unethical research culture among the academic community.



Unintended outcomes of the current paradigm on research integrity & open science



Society

1. Disconnect between academia and practice because the obsession with where to publish is shaping what we publish.
2. Economic cost of research misconducts
3. Loss of public trust in science and research.
4. Inaccessibility to useful researches because they are behind paywalls. Since a lot of libraries no longer subscribe due to high subscription cost. Article publishing charges (APCs) now fall on researchers to pay to make them accessible OR readers must be ready to pay for access or access researches through 'pirate sites'(Sci-Hub)

Unintended outcomes of the current paradigm on research integrity & open science

1. Compromised research quality (e.g., put my name syndrome, '*Salami slicing*', selective reporting of results, data falsification).
2. Longer publication time due to the number of articles to be peer-reviewed; low participation of academics in the review/publication process due to the time constraints, and insufficient recognition of these roles in research assessment.
3. Limited focus on collaborative & interdisciplinary researches.
4. There is a perception of the weakening of quality control of rigorous journals to expand publication outputs to increase the value of their portfolio and get more profits.



Academic communi
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Unintended outcomes of the current paradigm on research integrity & open science



Loss of credibility and reputation

Institutions

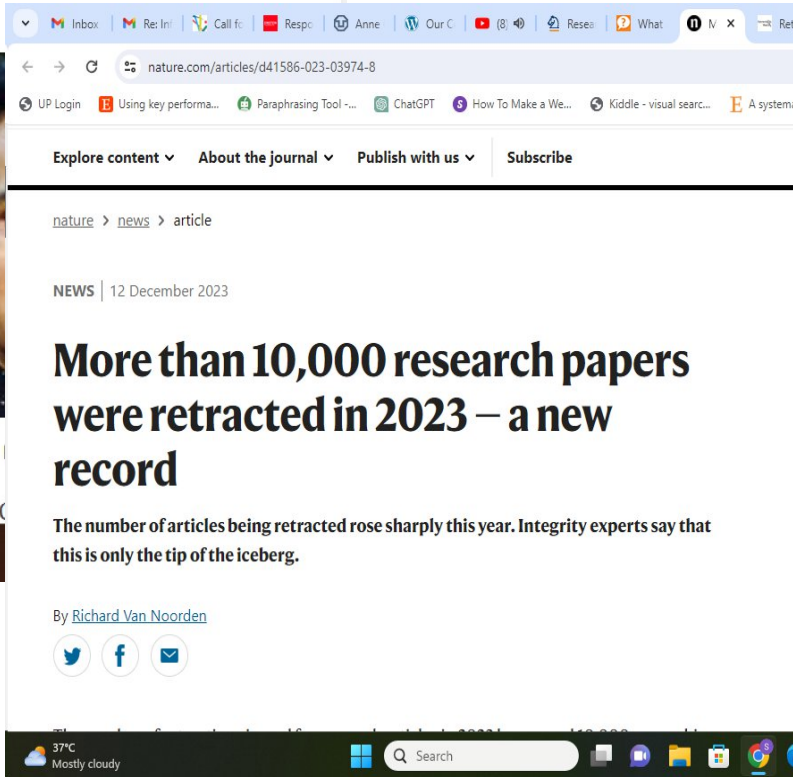
Screenshots of news of unintended outcomes from the research community



Elsevier investigating geology journal after allegations of pal review

Elsevier is investigating the journal *Geoscience Frontiers* after a PubPeer thread flagged an editorial advisor whose articles in the journal were edited by his frequent co-authors.

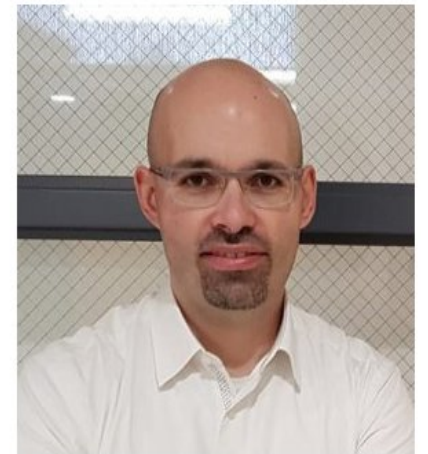
The editorial advisor, M. Santosh, is a professor at the University of Adelaide in Australia and a “Highly Cited Researcher” with more than 1,500 published articles, according to



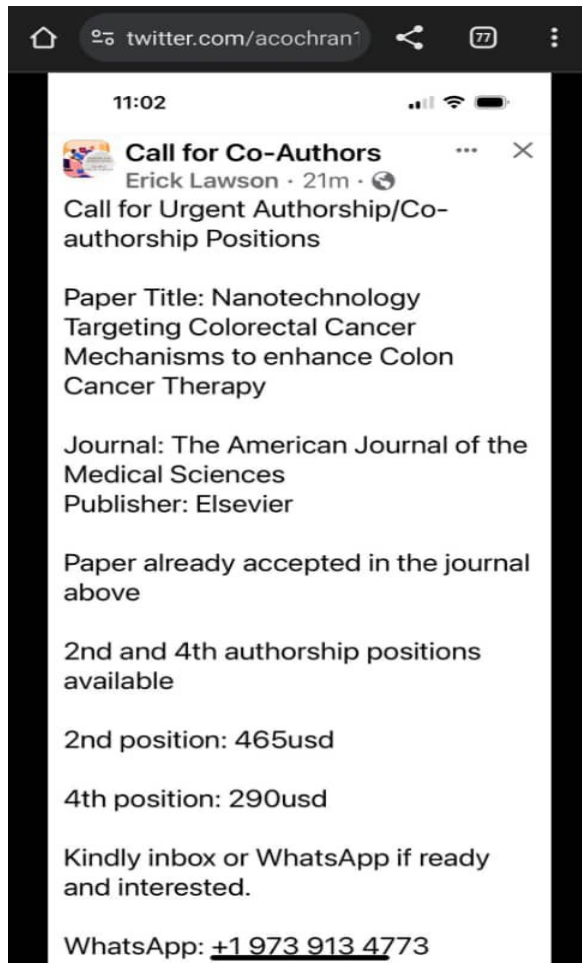
Norway university committee recommends probe into the country's most productive researcher

In 2019, Filippo Berto was hailed as Norway's most productive researcher, publishing a new study on average every two to three days.

Five years on, a committee appointed by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), where Berto, a



Screenshots of news of unintended outcomes from the research community



11:02

Call for Co-Authors
Erick Lawson · 21m · 🌐

Call for Urgent Authorship/Co-authorship Positions

Paper Title: Nanotechnology Targeting Colorectal Cancer Mechanisms to enhance Colon Cancer Therapy

Journal: The American Journal of the Medical Sciences
Publisher: Elsevier

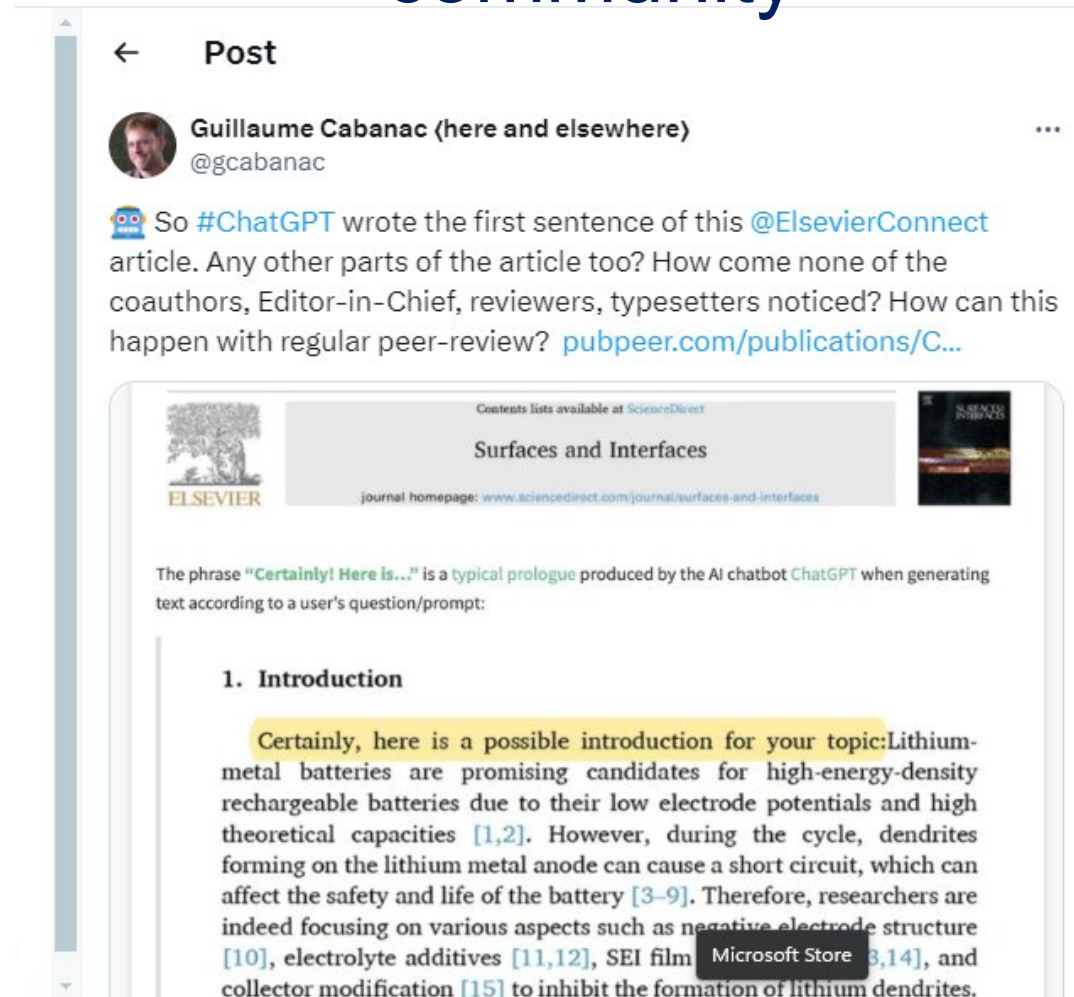
Paper already accepted in the journal above

2nd and 4th authorship positions available

2nd position: 465usd
4th position: 290usd

Kindly inbox or WhatsApp if ready and interested.

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Guillaume Cabanac (here and elsewhere)
@gcabanac

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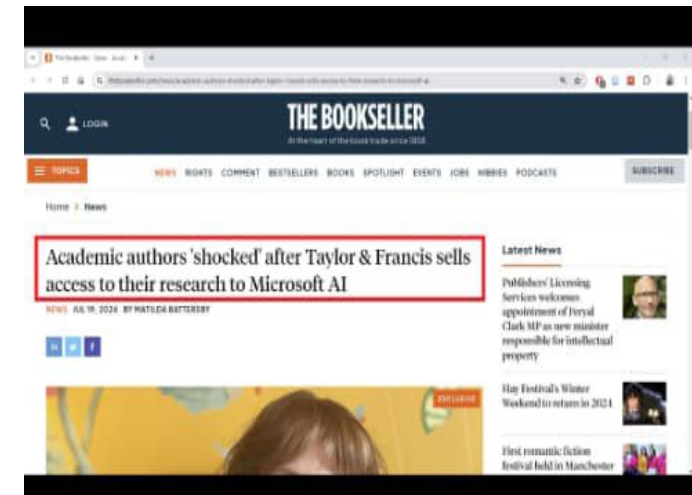
Surfaces and Interfaces

journal homepage: www.sciencedirect.com/journal/surfaces-and-interfaces

The phrase "Certainly! Here is..." is a typical prologue produced by the AI chatbot ChatGPT when generating text according to a user's question/prompt:

1. Introduction

Certainly, here is a possible introduction for your topic: Lithium-metal batteries are promising candidates for high-energy-density rechargeable batteries due to their low electrode potentials and high theoretical capacities [1,2]. However, during the cycle, dendrites forming on the lithium metal anode can cause a short circuit, which can affect the safety and life of the battery [3–9]. Therefore, researchers are indeed focusing on various aspects such as negative electrode structure [10], electrolyte additives [11,12], SEI film [Microsoft Store](#) [3,14], and collector modification [15] to inhibit the formation of lithium dendrites.



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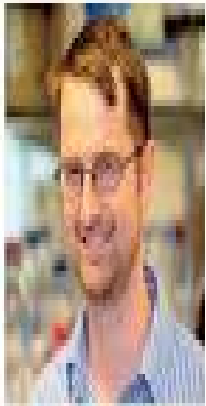


Global research assessment reform initiatives shaping research excellence



Global research assessment reform initiatives shaping research excellence

WORLD VIEW
A personal take on events



How will you judge me if not by impact factor?

Stop saying that publication metrics don't matter, and tell early-career researchers what does, says John Tregoning.

In response to a research culture that have become overly reliant on quantitative indicators for research assessment, some academic communities, funders and institutions have come up with initiatives to reform the existing research assessment criteria/guidelines.

Global research assessment reforms shaping research excellence

Academic bodies & Associations



HONG KONG PRINCIPLES

Governing board of the World Integrity Conferences Foundation (and the steering committee of the REduce research Waste And Reward Diligence Alliance)

Leiden Manifesto (LM)

10 principles to guide research evaluation [Diana Hicks](#) and [Paul Wouters](#) from Georgia Institute of Technology and Leiden University

The Latin American Forum on Research Assessment (FOLEC-CLACSO) has taken the lead in formulating policies and practices for research assessment processes in their region.

Global research assessment reforms shaping research excellence

Funding Agencies (Public & Private)

BILL & MELINDA
GATES *foundation*

- Revised policy says the foundation will no longer pay article processing charges for publication of funded researches.
- Grant recipients must share manuscripts as preprints in selected open preprint servers.



Global research assessment reforms shaping research excellence



Netherlands



Spain



China

- The recognition and rewards reform programme focuses on the content of what researchers themselves see as their best achievements and skills, like teaching and collaboration.
- Assessments will no longer consider only the impact factor of the journals but also details such as whether the research reaches non-academic audiences through news reports or government documents.
- Assessors will consider papers published on non-commercial, open-access publishing platforms that don't charge publishing fees.
- The government of China research assessment reforms seeks to commercial indexing platform indicators, balance internationalisation with domestic needs, and include qualitative peer review with its traditional quantitative evaluation methods.

Global research assessment reforms shaping research excellence

These initiatives advance practical and robust approaches to research assessment reforms globally and across all scholarly disciplines. **Summarily, they advocate for:**

1. valuing complete reporting of the research process with emphasis on the quality, rigor, and ethical standards of research.
2. supporting and rewarding open science practices, like the use of research data and preprints to provide access to research findings, and also funding of non-commercial open-access journals that don't charge APCs.
3. consideration of the contributions of all researchers, irrespective of geographic location gender, career stage, or disciplinary background.
4. incentivisation of a broad range of research activities like commitment to collaboration and policy engagement.
5. recognition of essential other non-traditional research tasks like peer review and mentoring.



Implementation examples of some research assessment reform initiatives



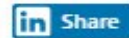
Implementation examples of some research assessment reform initiatives

Asia Hub SDGs Hub Transformative Leadership Special Reports Partnersh

GLOBAL-AFRICA

Renowned journal rejects papers that exclude African researchers

Maina Waruru 03 June 2022



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Respected global medical journal *The Lancet* will continue to reject papers with data from Africa that fail to acknowledge African collaborators, in the interest of building African research and of promoting integrity, equity and fairness in research collaboration, according to Senior Executive Editor Dr Sabine Kleinert.

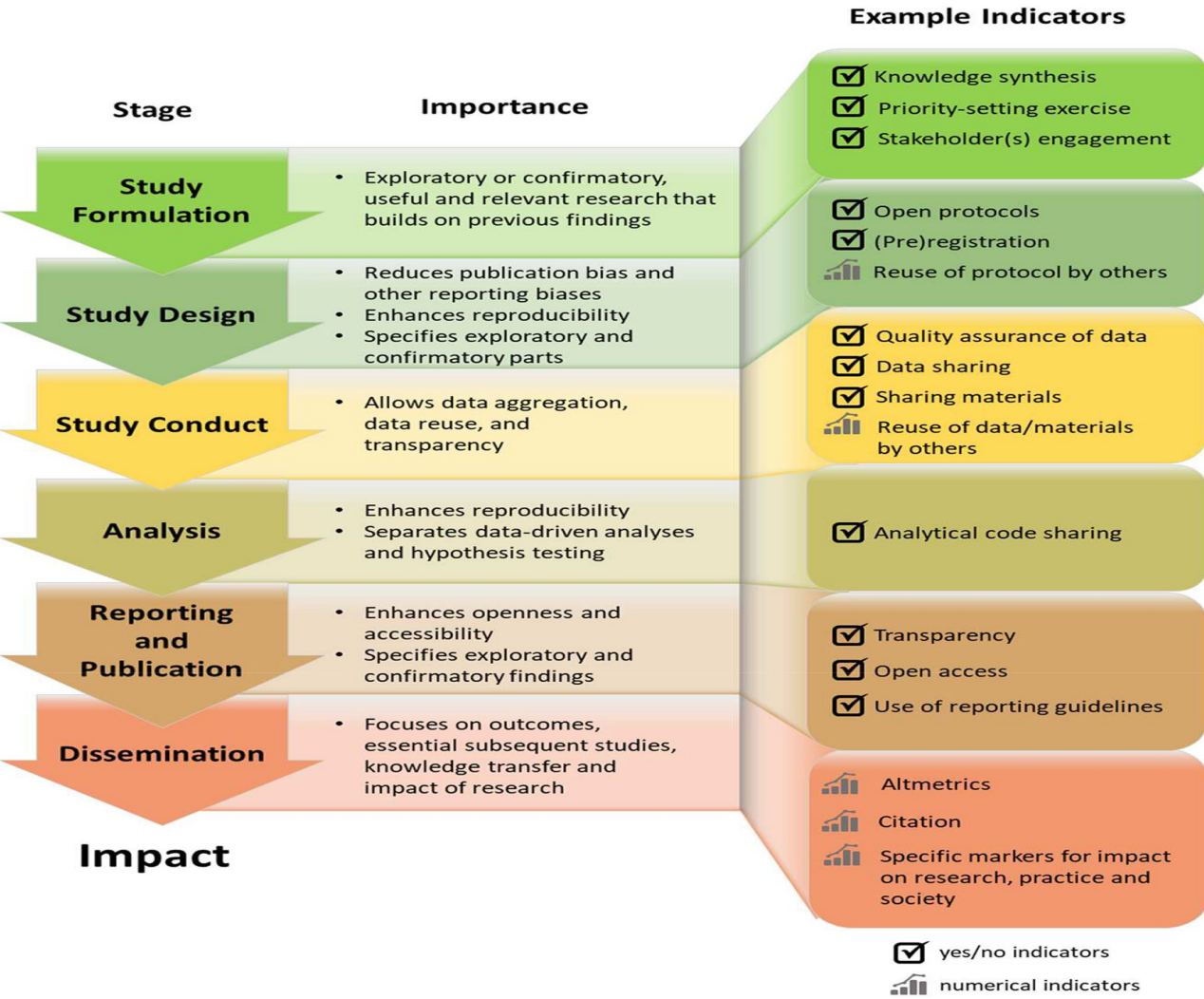
The journal made the decision after coming across manuscripts submitted by researchers from outside Africa and with data collected from the continent, but with no mention or acknowledgement of a single African collaborator, she told the 7th World Conference on Research Integrity (**WCRI 2022**) held in Cape Town from 29 May to 1 June.

“We are now rejecting such papers because when you bring us such a paper you probably had a local researcher collecting data for you or you ‘helicoptered’ to Africa, but you chose not to recognise them, which is not acceptable.”

Implementation examples of some research assessment reform initiatives

HONK KONG PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH PRACTICES

Indicators of responsible research practices







Global research assessment reforms shaping research excellence

10

The Funders commit that when assessing research outputs during funding decisions they will value the intrinsic merit of the work and not consider the publication channel, its impact factor (or other journal metrics), or the publisher.



Examples of Principle #10 in Practice

Responsible research assessment and evaluation	Before	After
 Attitudes	Competition	Collaboration
 Journals	Reputed for prestige & publisher	Reputed for fast & fair reviews
 Research	Highly selective Flashy, newsworthy	Solidly reproducible Robust
 Evaluation	Only articles matter Quantitative metrics & Impact Factor Opaque	All outputs & contributions matter Qualitative metrics & intrinsic merit Transparent

Global research assessment reforms shaping research excellence

Some Assessment Practices in Nigerian universities that align with these initiatives

1. Mandatory deposit of research outputs into institutional repositories.
2. Inclusion of reviewers' comments of articles to show that the article has gone through peer review which aligns with research openness.
3. Self-assessment/declaration impact and contribution to knowledge in cases of multiple-authored articles and multi-disciplinary researches.
4. Acceptance of diverse research outputs for assessment such as:
 - i. Radio/Television Documentaries/Programmes
 - ii. Curriculum Development Review/Instructional Materials
 - iii. Variety and Livestock Breeds Releases
 - iv. Evidence of marketable research outputs
 - v. Letters to the editor, short notes, open education resources -Faculty would determine quality and acceptance.



We want a new alternative to the obvious academic colonialism, but we are too incentivised individually so we rather stick to the status quo

(Arash Abizadeh, 2024).



Call to Action



Funders

1. National open scholarly publishing infrastructure to provide better community-driven governance and infrastructure for coherence and sustainability. Pilot with reputable university-based or academic association journals that are consistent and recognised for upholding ethical practices.
2. Depending on the content and context, mandate the open publishing of publicly-funded researches in reputable national journals and fund the publication process.
3. Promote publishing and research on indigenous knowledge.

Call to Action



Academic community

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1. The academic and research community must take responsibility for determining how we assess the value of our scientific contributions.
2. Have working groups that would initiate and discuss metrics on how we can contextually reform the current assessment to better support high-quality research and innovation and promote responsible research assessment practices that align with global standards and addresses local challenges.
3. Build the capacity of members on research integrity.

Call to Action



Institutions

1. Incentivise and reward the editorial and peer review processes of these journals. These positions should be reserved for ethical and responsible academics. Their performance should be rewarded and celebrated on evaluation. Also reduce their workload to enable them concentrate on this role.
2. Improve the infrastructure of university-based journals by leveraging open infrastructure, indexing them in non-commercial platforms and use of Persistent Identifiers (PIDs) for the articles.
3. Strengthen institution's ethics review board to include transparency metrics like sharing of research data.

Call to Action



Institutions

4. Leverage and make better use of institutional repositories to be interoperable and well-functioning. Repositories should be handled as part of the research infrastructure in institutions.
5. Incentivise open science practices as part of research assessment guidelines.
6. Build the capacity of different stakeholders responsible for conducting, producing and disseminating research and its outputs on research integrity.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the goal of research is to generate knowledge that improves society and the life of people.

Therefore, it is imperative that **'WE'** from time to time:

- Redefine our evaluation processes and criteria.
- Resist research malpractices.
- Commit our efforts towards ensuring the integrity and accuracy of research assessment. (Schmid 2017)



*Thank
you*

