

Salami slicing

Salami slicing involves inappropriate breaking up or segmenting of a study into two or more publications. The same slice should not be published more than once. Salami slicing constitutes unethical academic publishing.

Consequences of salami slicing

These include:

- Distortion of the literature by leading readers to believe that the data from each slice is derived from a different sample of participants
- Negative consequences on scientific databases used for medical guidelines
- Wastage of editorial and reviewer time
- Manuscript rejection
- Retraction of published articles
- Copyright infringement
- Reputational damage to authors, institutions and funders
- Investigation by professional and regulatory bodies

Salami slicing does not pertain to publications from large studies where each submission addresses different endpoints.

Prior publications that do not present cause for concern

These include:

- Preprints
- Abstracts presented as part of conference proceedings
- Published lectures
- Academic theses or dissertations
- Results in databases and clinical trial registries

Investigations of suspected slice submissions

The measures put in place to deter and detect salami slicing include:

- Screening submitted manuscripts with text and image-matching software
- Requirement that any previously published results are detailed and referenced
- Investigation by institutional research governance and integrity teams
- Investigation by funders

Authors submitting fragmented data for publication should disclose this information.

Further information

Committee on Publication Ethics. Suspected redundant publication in a submitted manuscript: COPE guidance <https://publicationethics.org/sites/default/files/duplicate-publication-submitted-manuscript-cope-flowchart.pdf>

Elsevier Research Academy. Salami slicing https://researcheracademy.elsevier.com/uploads/2018-02/2017_ETHICS_SS02.pdf

Wiley Author Services. Best practice guidelines on research integrity and publishing ethics <https://authorservices.wiley.com/ethics-guidelines/index.html>