

Asian Journal of Allied Health Sciences
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INSTRUCTIONS TO THE AUTHORS AND REVIEWERS OF THE MANUSCRIPT

(Base upon Minimum Requirements for Writing and Editing of Manuscripts submitted to the Biomedical Journals of International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)

INTRODUCTION

The new Editorial Board of Asian Journal of Allied Health Sciences decided to follow the “Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals: writing & Editing for Biomedical Publications by International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. A brief account of minimum requirements is given below for assisting the authors, reviewers and editors, the full text can be read at, (www.icmje.org). Moreover, plagiarism policy of ICMJE, Higher Education Commission and PMDC will be observed. It is authors’ responsibility to apprise them of plagiarism in any form including paraphrasing and self-plagiarism. The Plagiarism Standing Committee of Asian Journal of Allied Health Sciences would deal with cases of plagiarism and comprise of staff members, and editors. Those claiming intellectual/ idea or data theft of an article must provide documentary proof in their claim otherwise their case will be sent for disciplinary action.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Title Page

The title page should carry the following information:

1. The title of the article. Concise titles are easier to read than long, convoluted ones. Authors should include all information in the title that will make electronic retrieval of the article both sensitive and specific.
2. Authors’ names and Title of the Program. The names and other relevant information should be on title page only to ensure blind peer review of research article.
3. The name of the department(s) and institution(s) to which the work should be attributed.
4. Disclaimers, if any.
5. Corresponding authors. The name, mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of the author responsible for correspondence about the manuscript.

6. The name and address of the Supervisor / Co-Supervisor (s)
7. Source(s) of support in the form of grants, equipment, drugs, or all of these.
8. Word counts. A word count for the text only (excluding abstract, acknowledgments, figure legends, and references). A separate word count for the Abstract is also useful for the same reason.
9. The number of figures and tables
10. Conflict of Interest Notification Page

2. Conflict of Interest Notification Page

To prevent the information on potential conflict of interest for authors from being overlooked or misplaced, it is necessary for that information to be part of the manuscript. It should therefore also be included on a separate page or pages immediately following the title page.

3. Abstract and Key Words

An abstract (requirements for length and structured format vary by journal) should follow the title page. The abstract should provide the context or background for the study and should state the study's purposes, basic procedures (selection of study subjects or laboratory animals, observational and analytical methods), main findings (giving specific effect sizes and their statistical significance, if possible), and principal conclusions. It should emphasize new and important aspects of the study or observations.

Authors are requested to provide, and identify as such, 3 to 10 key words or short phrases that capture the main topics of the article. These will assist indexers in cross-indexing the article and may be published with the abstract. Terms from the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) list of Index Medicus should be used.

4. Introduction

Provide a context or background for the study (i.e., the nature of the problem and its significance). State the specific purpose or research objective of, or hypothesis tested by, the study or observation; the research objective is often more sharply focused when stated as a question. Both the main and secondary objectives should be made clear, and any pre-specified subgroup analyses should be described. Give only strictly pertinent references and do not include data or conclusions from the work being reported.

5. Material and Methods

The Methods section should include only information that was available at the time the plan or protocol for the study was written; all information obtained during the conduct of the study belongs in the Results section.

(a) Selection and Description of Participants

Describe your selection of the observational or experimental participants (patients or laboratory animals, including controls) clearly, including eligibility and exclusion criteria and a description of the source population. The guiding principle should be clarity about how and why a study was done in a particular way. When authors use variables such as race or ethnicity, they should define how they measured the variables and justify their relevance.

(b) Technical information

Identify the methods, apparatus (give the manufacturer's name and address in parentheses), and procedures in sufficient detail to allow other workers to reproduce the results. Give references to established methods, including statistical methods (see below); provide references and brief descriptions for methods that have been published but are not well known; describe new or substantially modified methods, give reasons for using them, and evaluate their limitations. Identify precisely all drugs and chemicals used, including generic name(s), dose(s), and route(s) of administration. Also describe diagnostic or therapeutic procedures if part of the study design.

(c) Statistics

Describe statistical methods with enough detail to enable a knowledgeable reader with access to the original data to verify the reported results. When possible, quantify findings and present them with appropriate indicators of measurement error or uncertainty (such as confidence intervals). Define statistical terms, abbreviations, and most symbols. Specify the computer soft-ware used.

6. Results

Present your results in logical sequence in the text, tables, and illustrations, giving the main or most important findings first. Do not repeat in the text all the data in the tables or illustrations; emphasize or summarize only important observations.

When data are summarized in the Results section, give numeric results not only as derivatives (for example, percentages) but also as the absolute numbers from which the derivatives were calculated, and specify the statistical methods used to analyze them. Restrict tables and figures to those needed to explain the argument of the paper and to assess its support. Use graphs as an alternative to tables with many entries; do not duplicate data in graphs and tables.

7. Discussion

Emphasize the new and important aspects of the study and the conclusions that follow from them. Do not repeat in detail data or other material given in the Introduction or the Results section. For experimental studies it is useful to begin the discussion by summarizing briefly the main findings, then explore possible mechanisms or explanations for these findings, compare and contrast the results with other relevant studies, state the limitations of the study, and explore the implications of the findings for future research and for clinical practice. Link the conclusions with the goals of the study but avoid unqualified statements and conclusions not adequately supported by the data. Avoid

claiming priority and alluding to work that has not been completed. State new hypotheses when warranted.

8. References

(a) General Considerations Related to References

Although references to review articles can be an efficient way of guiding readers to a body of literature, review articles do not always reflect original work accurately. Small numbers of references to key original papers will often serve.

Avoid using abstracts as references. References to papers accepted but not yet published should be designated as “in press” authors should obtain written permission to cite such papers as well as verification that they have been accepted for publication. Information from manuscripts submitted but not accepted should be cited in the text as “unpublished observations” with written permission from the source.

Avoid citing a “personal communication” unless it provides essential information not available from a public source, in which case the name of the person and date of communication should be cited in parentheses in the text. For scientific articles, authors should obtain written permission and confirmation of accuracy from the source of a personal communication.

For articles published in journals indexed in MEDLINE, Asian Journal of Allied Health Sciences considers PubMed (<http://www.pubmed.gov>) the authoritative source for information about retractions.

(b) Reference Style and Format

The Uniform Requirements style is based largely on an ANSI standard style adapted by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) for its databases. For samples of reference citation formats, authors should consult National Library of Medicine web site.

References should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. Identify references in text, tables, and legends by Arabic numerals in parentheses. The titles of journals should be abbreviated according to the style used in Index Medicus. Consult the list of Journals Indexed for MEDLINE, published annually as a separate publication by the National Library of Medicine.

9. Tables

Tables capture information concisely, and display it efficiently; they also provide information at any desired level of detail and precision. Including data in tables rather than text frequently makes it possible to reduce the length of the text.

Type or print each table with double spacing on a separate sheet of paper. Number tables consecutively in the order of their first citation in the text and supply a brief title for each. Do not use internal horizontal or vertical lines. Give each column a short or abbreviated heading. Authors should place

explanatory matter in footnotes, not in the heading. Be sure that each table is cited in the text.

10. Illustrations (Figures)

Figures should be either professionally drawn or photographed, or submitted as photographic quality digital prints. In addition to requiring a version of the figures suitable for printing, AJAHS ask authors for electronic files of figures in a format (e.g., JPEG or GIF) that will produce high quality images in the web version of the journal; authors should review the images.

For x-ray films, scans, and other diagnostic images, as well as pictures of pathology specimens or photomicrographs, send sharp, glossy, black-and-white or color photographic prints, usually 127 x 173 mm (5 x 7 inches). Letters, numbers, and symbols on Figures should therefore be clear and even throughout, and of sufficient size that when reduced for publication each item will still be legible. Figures should be made as self-explanatory as possible, since many will be used directly in slide presentations. Titles and de-tailed explanations belong in the legends, however, not on the illustrations themselves.

Photomicrographs should have internal scale markers. Symbols, arrows, or letters used in photomicrographs should contrast with the background.

If photographs of people are used, either the subjects must not be identifiable or their pictures must be accompanied by written permission to use the photograph. When-ever possible permission for publication should be obtained.

Figures should be numbered consecutively according to the order in which they have been first cited in the text.

11. Legends for Illustrations (Figures)

Type or print out legends for illustrations using double spacing, starting on a separate page, with Arabic numerals corresponding to the illustrations. When symbols, arrows, numbers, or letters are used to identify parts of the illustrations, identify and explain each one clearly in the legend.

12. Units of Measurement

Measurements of length, height, weight, and volume should be reported in metric units (meter, kilogram, or liter) or their decimal multiples.

Temperatures should be in degrees Celsius. Blood pressures should be in millimeters of mercury, unless other units are specifically required.

13. Abbreviations and Symbols

Use only standard abbreviations; the use of non-standard abbreviations can be extremely confusing to readers. Avoid abbreviations in the title.

14. Drug Name

Generic names should be used. When proprietary brands are used in research, include the brand name and the name of the manufacturer in parentheses after first mentioning of the generic name in the Methods section.

15. Guidelines for Authors and Reviewers

All material submitted for publication should be sent exclusively to the Annals of UNIVERSITY OF LAHORE. Work that has already been reported in a published paper or is described in a paper sent or accepted elsewhere for publication, should not be submitted. Multiple or duplicate submission of the same work to other journal should be avoided as this fall into the category of publication fraud and are liable for disciplinary consequences, including reporting to Higher Education Commission. A complete report following publication of a preliminary report, usually in the form of an abstract, or a paper that has been presented at a scientific meeting, if not published in full in a proceedings or similar publication, may be submitted. Press reports of meetings will not be considered as breach of this rule, but additional data or copies of tables and illustrations should not amplify such reports. In case of doubt, a copy of the published material should be included with a manuscript for editors' consideration.

Authors can submit their articles by post or by E-mail to the Editor, Asian Journal of Allied Health Sciences. Article can also be submitted by post or by hand on a Compact Disc (CD) with three hard copies. Articles submitted by E-mail are preferred mode of submission and do not require any hard copy.

All authors and co-authors must provide their contact telephone/cell numbers and E-mail addresses only on the title page of manuscript.

A duly filled-in author's certification proforma is mandatory for publication. The duly signed ACP must be returned to the AJAHS office as soon as possible. The sequence / order of the authors on ACP once submitted shall not be changed at any stage.

It is mandatory to provide the institutional ethical review board / committee approval for all research articles, at the time of submission of article. The editors reserve the right to edit the accepted article to conform to the house-style of the Journal.

16. General archival and linguistic instructions

Authors should submit the manuscript typed in MS Word. Manuscripts should be written in English in British or American style/format (same style should be followed throughout the whole text), in past tense and third person form of address. Sentences should not start with a number or figure. Any illustrations or photographs should also be sent in duplicate. Components of manuscript should be in the following sequence: a title page (containing names of authors, their postal and Email addresses, fax and phone numbers, including mobile phone number of the corresponding author), abstract, key words, text, references, tables (each table, complete with title and footnotes) and legends for illustrations and photographs. Each component should begin on a new page. The manuscript should be typed in double spacing as a single column on A4 (8-1/2" x 11" or 21.5 cm x 28.0 cm), white bond paper with one inch (2.5 cm) margin on one side.

Sub-headings should not be used in any section of the script except in the abstract. In survey and other studies, comments in verbatim should not be stated from a participating group. Acknowledgements are only printed for financing of a study or for acknowledging a previous linked work.

From January 2016, all randomized trials should also provide a proof of being registered at the **International RCT Registry**.

17. Material for Publication

The material submitted for publication may be in the form of an Original research (Randomized controlled trial - RCT, Meta-analysis of RCT, Quasi experimental study, Case Control study, Cohort study, Observational Study with statistical support etc.), a Review Article, Commentary, a Case Report, Recent Advances, New techniques, Debates, Adverse Drug Reports, Current Practices, Clinical Practice Article, Short Article, KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices) study, An Audit Report, Evidence Based Report, Short Communication or a Letter to the Editor. Ideas and Innovations can be reported as changes made by the authors to an existing technique or development of a new technique or instrument. A mere description of a technique without any practical experience or innovation will be considered as an update and not an original article. Any study ending three years prior to date of submission is judged by Editorial Board for its suitability as many changes take place over the period of time, subject to area of the study. Studies more than three years old are not entertained. In exceptional cases, if Editorial Board is of the view that data is important, an extension of one year may be granted. AJAHS also does not accept multiple studies/multiple end publications gathered/derived from a single research project or data (wholly or in part) known as 'salami slices'.

Original articles should normally report original research of relevance to clinical medicine. The original paper should be of about 2000-2500 words excluding abstract and references. It should contain a structured abstract of about 250 words. Three to 10 keywords should be given for an original article as per MeSH (Medical Subject Headings). There should be no more than three tables or illustrations. The data should be supported with 20 to 25 references, which should include local as well as international references. Most of the references should be from last five years from the date of submission.

Clinical Practice Article is a category under which all simple observational case series are entertained. The length of such article should be around 1500 - 1600 words with 15 - 20 references. The rest of the format should be that of an original article. KAP studies, Audit reports, Current Practices, Survey reports and Short Articles are also written on the format of Clinical Practice Article. Evidence based reports must have at least 10 cases and word count of 1000 - 1200 words with 10 - 12 references and not more than 2 tables or illustrations. It should contain a non-structured abstract of about 150 words. Short communications should be of about 1000 - 2200 words, having a structured abstract of about 250 words with two tables or illustrations and not more than 20 references. Clinical case reports must be of academic and educational value and provide relevance of the disease being reported as unusual. Brief or negative research findings may appear in this section. The word count of case report should be 800 words with a minimum of 3 key words. It should have a non-structured abstract of about 100 - 150 words (case specific) with maximum of 5 - 6 references. Not more than 2 figures shall be accepted.

Review article should consist of critical overview/analysis of some relatively narrow topic providing background and the recent development with the reference of original literature. It should incorporate author's original work on the same subject. The length of the review article should be of 2500 to 3000 words with minimum of 40 and maximum of 60 references. It should have non-structured abstract of 150 words with minimum 3 key words. An author can write a review article only if he/she has written a minimum of three original research articles and some case reports on the same topic.

Letters should normally not exceed 400 words, with not more than 5 references and be signed by all the authors-maximum 3 are allowed. Preference is given to those that take up points made in contributions published recently in the journal. Letters may be published with a response from the author of the article being discussed. Discussions beyond the initial letter and response will not be entertained for publication. Letters to the editor may be sent for peer review if they report a scientific data. Editorials are written upon invitation.

Between 3 to 10 key words should be given for all the category of manuscripts under the abstracts as per mesh [medical subject heading].

18. Thesis Based Article

An article, based on dissertation, approved by Advanced Study and Research Board of University of Lahore, which was submitted as part of the requirement for any examination of the UOL or any other University, can be sent for publication provided the data is not more than three years old. A copy of approval letters of synopsis and thesis obtained from University must be submitted with the research paper.

Thesis based article should be re-written in accordance with the journal's instructions to the author guidelines.

Article shall undergo routine editorial processing including external review based upon which final decision shall be made for publication. Such articles, if approved, shall be published under the disclosure by author that 'it is a Thesis based article'.

19. Ethical Considerations

If tables, illustrations or photographs, which have already been published, are included, a letter of permission for re-publication should be obtained from author (s) as well as the editor of the journal where it was previously published. Written permission to reproduce photographs of patients, whose identity is not disguised, should be sent with the manuscript; otherwise the eyes will be blackened out. If a medicine is used, generic name should be used. The commercial name may, however, be mentioned only within brackets, only if necessary. In case of medicine or device or any material indicated in text, a declaration by author/s should be submitted that no monetary benefit has been taken from manufacturer/importer of that product by any author. In case of experimental interventions, permission from ethical committee of the hospital should be taken beforehand. Any other conflict of interest must be disclosed. All interventional studies submitted for publication should carry Institutional Ethical & Research Committee approval letter.

Ethical consideration regarding the intervention, added cost of test, and particularly the management of control in case-control comparisons of trials should be addressed: multi-centric authors' affiliation may be asked to be authenticated by provision of permission letters from ethical boards or the heads of involved institutes.

20. Authorship Criteria

As stated in the Uniform Requirements, credit for authorship requires substantial contributions to (a) the conception and design or analysis and interpretation of the data, (b) the drafting of the article or critical revision for important intellectual content, critical appraisal of findings with literature search and actual write up of manuscript, (c) final approval of the version to be published. Each author must sign a statement attesting that he or she fulfills the authorship criteria of the Uniform Requirements.

The Journal discourages submission of more than one article dealing with related aspects of the same study. The journal also discourages the submission of case reports unless unreported from Pakistan. Unusual but already reported cases should, therefore, be submitted as letters to the editor.

21. Copyright

AJAHS is the owner of all copyright to any work published by the journal. Authors agree to execute copyright transfer of their Forms-ACP (Authors Certification Proforma) as requested with respect to their contributions accepted by the journal.

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except for abstracts, no part of the data has been published or will be submitted for publication elsewhere before appearing in this journal. The Editorial Board makes every effort to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of material printed in the journal. However, conclusions and statements expressed are views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Board or the AJAHS. Publishing of advertising material does not imply an endorsement by the AJAHS.

22. Proofs

Page proofs will be emailed, without the original manuscript, to the corresponding author for proof correction and should be returned to the editor within three days. Major alterations from the text cannot be accepted. Any alterations should be marked, preferable in red.