
EDITORIAL POLICIES

General Policy

Journal of Surgery Pakistan International is an **Open Access** a peer reviewed biomedical journal brought out from the platform of International College of Surgeons Pakistan Chapter and SAARC Association of Surgeons Pakistan Chapter. Journal of Surgery Pakistan International entertains manuscripts in accordance with the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals. The specific instructions by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors can be found from the URL <http://www.icmje.org>

The Journal of Surgery Pakistan (JSP) International follows **double blind peer review**. It is published **quarterly** in March, June, September and December each year. It entertains articles in all areas of Surgical and allied Disciplines including Surgical Radiology, Pathology, Microbiology, Medical Education, Pharmacology, Bioethics etc. Journal of Surgery Pakistan is an open-access journal distributed under the terms of the **Creative Commons Attribution License**, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. The material can be used for referencing after proper citation of the source. Reader can download and print (non-commercial use) the manuscript.

All material submitted for publication must comply with ethical standards related to biomedical journals. **Multiple, duplicate and, redundant** submission fall under publication misconduct. Similarly **falsification and fabrication** of data are also considered as fraud. **Selective reporting and misleading reporting** as well as **intentional omission of references** are considered unethical. **Tempering of images** also fall into this category. **Salami slicing** of data is not allowed unless clear reason is provided as to why more than one articles are needed to report the findings from single data. Articles already published in other language may be considered for publication after thorough editorial scrutiny with permission of primary publisher.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) / Ethics Review Board (ERB) approval is mandatory before conducting any human subject research. Similarly research on animals must follow set ethical standards. Informed consent must be obtained from study participants. Pictures of patients showing identity of the subject are not appropriate for publication. The identity of the patient must be hidden before submission to the journal. Authors must ensure that permission to use

the photographs of the subject is acquired at the time of data collection. IRB approval letter must be submitted with all the manuscripts even if exemption has been granted by the board.

Authorship criteria as specified by ICMJE must be followed. This include four essential conditions: 1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND 2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND 3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND 4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. No change (the order and number) will be accepted in authorship once article is submitted to the journal. **Gift, Guest and Ghost authorship** is discouraged. Read carefully about contributorship criteria as well.

Corresponding author will be the person with whom all the correspondence will be made. He will act on behalf of other authors and will be responsible for all the required changes to be made in the manuscript in the light of reviewers and editors observations.

Disclosure must be made if funding is acquired for the study. Any other **conflict of interest / competing interest** in professional / personal capacity must be disclosed. In case the study is carved out of dissertation / thesis, must be mentioned in covering letter.

Plagiarism Policy

According to Merriam Webster dictionary plagiarism is defined as “ the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person”. This is considered as misconduct in publication ethics and is dealt with sternly. A more detailed document can be accessed from Higher Education of Pakistan website and from World Medical Association and COPE web pages. Each case will be processed as per guidelines of COPE. Any of the following actions will be taken depending upon the nature of plagiarism. Authors will be asked to provide explanation as to their act. If issue is found to be of minor category then a letter of reprimand will be issue with a warning not to repeat the same conduct. A formal letter may be send to head of the institution. Funding body may be informed as well. If the issue is considered of higher nature a notice of redundant publication or plagiarism may be published. Journal may decide to ban the author for variable period of time from

submitting the manuscript in future. Formal withdrawal or retraction of the paper will be done in cases of copying full length article and the indexing authorities will also be informed. Same will be reported to PM&DC or relevant licensing authorities and Higher Education Commission so that further action might be taken as appropriate.

Journal of Surgery Pakistan checks the submitted manuscript for plagiarism after formal acceptance following review process. This is because the cost is involved in use of plagiarism detecting software. JSP facilitates authors as to how to avoid plagiarism and they can request for guidance in this context. It is emphasized again that verbatim must be avoided and proper attribution to the source must be made. This many a times is because of lack of command on English language however it can not be accepted as a reason to get involved in plagiarism. A detailed document in this regard is available from COPE website at URL http://publicationethics.org/files/COPE_plagiarism_discussion_%20doc_26%20Apr%2011.pdf accessed on January 1, 2016.

Authors are encouraged to run plagiarism check software on their manuscript to detect any similarity. It is expected that no more than 10% similarity is found in the submitted manuscript. We use "Turnitin" software for this purpose.

Manuscript withdrawal Policy

In case authors want to withdraw their article after submission they may do so after sending an official mail signed by all the authors. Without formal withdrawal article cannot be submitted to any other journal. The authors have to pay the processing charges even when the manuscript is withdrawn.

Article Acceptance / Rejection Policy

Articles considered to be of high standard producing new scientific knowledge are easily accepted. The RCT's are encouraged however simple KAP survey and Case Series on common conditions where no new information is reported are not accepted for publication. Such articles are rejected which does not mean that they cannot be entertained by other journals.

Article Retraction Policy

Any article in which serious infringements of professional ethical codes is identified including falsification, fabrication of data, plagiarism etc will be retracted. However a retraction may be done in order to correct errors that is identified after publication. The originally published will then be replaced by corrected version to avoid potential health risk due to incorrect information. The retraction request may be made by authors themselves or by

the editor when issue is identified by readers and after formal investigation into the matter.

A retraction note will be published by the journal in the paginated part of a subsequent issue and will be listed in the contents list. In the electronic version, a link will be made to the original article. The watermark will also appear with the said article and same will be put into PDF format of the article. The HTML version of the document will be removed.

Errata & Corrigenda

Erratum (mistakes made by journal during publication) and corrigenda (correction to be made following identification of deficiency by authors) for previously published articles will be published in print form on a regular page of subsequent issue and in list of contents. Same will appear in electronic format of the article. The information will also be communicated to indexing authorities.

Expression of Concern

An expression of concern about the integrity of a published article will be written by the editor. Same will be the item title. This will be written if there is doubt as to the reliability of the result or an honest error (experimental error in otherwise reliable publication) is supposedly has occurred. Editor will then conduct appropriate inquiry into the matter.

Peer Review Policy

All peer reviewers are expected to disclose their conflict of interest before the process of review. They are expected to follow the ethical guidelines in reviewing the manuscripts. It is expected that they will keep the confidentiality upfront and comply with the time allowed for the review. In case of their inability to complete the review in time, a prompt email must be sent to the editor. Any harsh and sarcastic comments must be avoided. Editors have the right to edit the comments of the reviewers before sending them to authors.

Policy on Integrity

JSP considers the integrity as the most important aspect of any research. Responsible conduct of research is of utmost importance. Similarly it is expected that editorial staff will uphold principles of integrity during process of manuscript scrutiny, its review and subsequent publication. It is ensured that readers in particular and public in general must not be harmed by publication of any research the scientific worth of which is disputed and potential harm can occur to the people. Editors are responsible for deciding as to which of the articles will be finally published. For this editorial policies will be kept upfront. Legal aspects will be taken into consideration. All editors are required to declare their potential

conflict of interest in all the matters related to policy development, manuscript handling, its publication and any issues concerning publisher. Induction of a person in editorial board will also follow the established standard and accepted guidelines which include the scholarly background, documented experience in research with credentials related to academic writing and teaching / training in the background of medical journalism.

Right to Appeal Against Editorial Decision

Authors have the right to appeal to the Chief Editor if they disagree with the editors' decision. They need to send an e mail describing in detail matter under consideration and reasons why they do not agree with editor's position. The decision taken by the Chief Editor will be communicated to the authors in two weeks time.

Journal Ombudsperson

In case of conflict between Chief Editor decision and author's position the case may be send to an ombudsperson for final decision. For this purpose Pakistan Association of Medical Editors (PAME) will be asked to appoint a senior editor from any journal published from Pakistan.

Useful links for the authors, reviewers and editors are given below

- ICJME Recommendations (2013 version)
<http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>
 - Declaration of Helsinki (2013 version)
<http://www.wma.net/en/20activities/10ethics/10helsinki/DoH-Oct2013-JAMA.pdf>
 - Good Publication Practice (GPP2)
http://www.ismpp.org/assets/docs/Inititives/GPP2/gpp-2_2009.pdf
 - WAME Statement <http://www.wame.org/policy-statements>
 - COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Editors (publicationethics.org/resources/?owcharts)
<http://publicationethics.org/resources/code-conduct>
 - COPE Best Practice Guidelines for Peer Reviewers
 - Reporting guidelines of CONSORT, STROBE, PRISMA
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INSTRUCTION TO THE AUTHORS

Submission of Articles

The Journal welcomes the submission of manuscripts that fulfill the general criteria of significance and reports material with excellence. Papers shall be sent for peer review which is usually completed in 3 months.

Electronic submission of manuscripts is strongly encouraged. All material including text, tables, and figures can be sent in a single Microsoft Word file (preferably in Times New Roman font size 12 with figures as attachment in JPEG format with high resolution).

Submit manuscripts as e-mail attachment to the Editorial Office at "jsurgpakistan@yahoo.com". An acknowledgement shall be made on receiving the required material usually within 48 hours.

The covering letter should include the corresponding author's full address and telephone (cell and landline number)/fax numbers. A letter of undertaking (download from website www.jsp.org.pk) must be signed by all authors with mentioning of their degrees, designations, e mail addresses and cell phone numbers. Contribution of each author to manuscript must be mentioned and all will be responsible for the reported material.

Article Types

Types of manuscripts that may be submitted include:

Original articles: These should describe new and carefully confirmed findings. The experimental procedures should be given in sufficient detail for others to reproduce the work.

Short Communications: A Short Communication is suitable for recording the results of small investigations or giving details of new models or hypotheses, innovative methods, techniques or apparatus. The style conform to that of full-length papers.

Reviews: Submissions of reviews are welcomed and encouraged. Reviews should be concise up to 3000 words with maximum of 35 references. Reviews are also peer-reviewed.

Case Reports: A clinically observed rare finding, a new aspect or phenomenon etc can be reported under this category.

Letter to the Editor: On some important aspect to be shared with readers or a comment on published manuscript. The Words count limit is 400 with 3 references.

Other Categories: The journal offer many other categories

depending upon the subject of research and quality of evidence brought forward. Such categories include Short Articles, Clinical Practice Articles, Evidence Based Report, Survey, KAP studies, Autits etc.

Review Process

All manuscripts are assessed initially in an in-house review by one of the members of editorial board. This is for conformity with journal style and importance of subject in relation to latest information available in literature. Following initial assessment the manuscript if judged suitable is send for external review to at least two reviewers. A 3 weeks time is given to reviewers. The final decision is then taken by editorial board following reviewers assessment. Those manuscripts that are judged incomplete or needs clarification are send back for revision.

General Format

All portions of the manuscript must be typed double-spaced and all pages numbered starting from the title page. The length of the paper should not cross 2000 words (excluding abstract and references).

The Title should be a brief phrase describing the contents of the paper.

The Title Page should include the authors' full names and affiliations, the name of the corresponding author along with phone, fax and email information. Present addresses of authors should appear as a footnote. Word count to be mentioned and a brief running title added.

Complete sentences, active verbs, and the third person language should be used. It should be written in the past tense. Standard nomenclature should be used and abbreviations should be avoided. Each abbreviation should be spelled out and introduced in parentheses the first time it is used in the text. Only recommended SI units should be used.

Abstract should be informative and reflect the study conducted. It must be structured for original article including Objective, Study design, Place and duration of study, methodology, conclusion and key words (3 -5). No background is needed. For original article around 250 words abstract is needed.

Introduction should provide a clear statement of the problem, the relevant literature on the subject, and the proposed approach or solution. It should be understandable to colleagues from a broad range of scientific disciplines. Usually three to four paragraphs are expected. Rationale of the study to be provided in this segment. No more than 10 references are needed. References must be in numerical order.

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Methodology should be complete enough to allow experiments to be reproduced. However, only truly new procedures should be described in detail; previously published procedures should be cited, and important modifications of published procedures should be mentioned briefly. Capitalize trade names and include the manufacturer's name and address. Methods in general use need not be described in detail. Study design and methods for analysis of data must be described in detail. Place and duration of study must be mentioned. Sample size calculation where applicable must be provided. Do not put study data in this segment.

Results should be presented with clarity and precision. The results should be written in the past tense when describing findings in the authors' experiments / study. Results should be explained but not discussed and without referring to the literature. Statistical values calculated must be written as only p value less than 0.05 not acceptable. The data described in text must not be put in table and vice versa. Use tables where seems appropriate and same must not be repeated in charts. All charts must be in shades of black and grey with clear distinction between groups.

Discussion part should describe detailed interpretation of data and must not repeat what is already written in result part. Pertinent literature support is needed for any statement and no assumption is allowed. Limitations of the study must be described and future directions mentioned.

Conclusions must relate to the outcome of the study and no recommendations must be put in this section.

Disclosure grants, funds, etc should be mentioned.

Tables should be kept to a minimum and be designed to be as simple as possible. Tables are to be typed double-spaced throughout, including headings and footnotes. Each table should be on a separate page, numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals and supplied with a heading and a legend. Tables should be self-explanatory without reference to the text. The same data should not be presented in both table and graph form or repeated in the text. Tables should be prepared in Microsoft Word.

Figure legends should be typed in numerical order on a separate sheet. Graphics should be prepared using applications capable of generating high resolution JPEG before attaching with the Microsoft Word manuscript file. Use Arabic numerals to designate figures and upper case letters for their parts. Begin each legend with a title and

include sufficient description so that the figure is understandable without reading the text of the manuscript. Information given in legends should not be repeated in the text.

References: In the text, a reference identified by means of a number in superscript style that shall remain constant throughout the manuscript. For articles with more than 6 authors add et al after sixth name. References should be listed at the end of the paper in numerical order. Articles in preparation or articles submitted for publication, unpublished observations, personal communications, etc. should not be included in the reference list. Journal names are abbreviated according to Vancouver style. The number of references must be between 15 – 25. Most of these must be from last five years.

Short Communications They should present a complete study that is more limited in scope than is found in full-length papers. The items of manuscript preparation listed above apply to Short Communications with the following differences: (1) Abstracts (unstructured) limited to 150 words; (2) Word count of 1200 words (3) Maximum of 10 references (4) limited to one table.

Case Reports: An unstructured abstract of 100 words including salient features with key words and main body of text including introduction, report and discussion are required. The word limit is 1000. The number of references must not exceed 10. Only two figures are allowed.

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