

Authorship Criteria Policy

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1. Purpose

The Authorship Criteria Policy defines who qualifies as an author, outlines the responsibilities of authors, and ensures transparency, fairness, and accountability in scholarly publishing.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent unethical practices such as ghost authorship, guest authorship, or gift authorship, and to promote integrity and credit where it is legitimately earned.

The journal adheres to the principles of honest contribution, accountability, and transparency in authorship.

2. Definition of Authorship

Authorship implies significant intellectual contribution to the research and accountability for its content.

According to the ICMJE recommendations, to qualify as an author, an individual must meet all of the following four criteria:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work.
2. Drafting the work or critically revising it for important intellectual content.
3. Final approval of the version to be published.

4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work, ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Individuals who meet all four criteria should be listed as authors. Those who contribute to only one or two aspects of the work should be acknowledged (see Section 7).

3. Author Responsibilities

Each listed author must:

- Ensure that their contribution is genuine, verifiable, and substantial.
- Review and approve the final version of the manuscript before submission.
- Accept collective responsibility for the content of the published article.
- Disclose any conflicts of interest (financial or non-financial).
- Cooperate with editors in responding to questions or concerns raised during peer review or after publication.

Authors share joint responsibility for maintaining the ethical integrity and scientific accuracy of their published work.

4. Corresponding Author

- The Corresponding Author serves as the main point of contact between the journal and the co-authors during submission, peer review, and publication.
- Responsibilities include:
 - Ensuring that all authors have reviewed and approved the manuscript.
 - Handling all correspondence with editors and responding to reviewers' comments.
 - Managing communication regarding copyright, licensing, and proofs.
 - Ensuring compliance with journal policies and ethical guidelines.

The corresponding author also ensures that authorship order and contributions are agreed upon by all co-authors before submission.

5. Author Order and Contribution Transparency

- The order of authorship should reflect the relative contribution of each individual to the research and writing process.
- The authors themselves must agree on the sequence before submission.
- The journal will not mediate disputes over author order after submission.
- Each manuscript must include a Contributor Statement (or “Author Contribution Statement”) clearly indicating the specific roles of each author, such as:
 - a. Conceptualization
 - b. Methodology

- c. Data Collection
- d. Data Analysis
- e. Writing – Original Draft
- f. Writing – Review & Editing
- g. Supervision or Project Administration

This promotes transparency and accountability for every contribution.

6. Changes in Authorship

- Any addition, removal, or rearrangement of authors after initial submission must be approved by all authors (including the added or removed author).
- The corresponding author must submit a formal request explaining the reason for the change and include written consent from all co-authors.
- Changes will not be allowed after the manuscript is accepted for publication, except in exceptional cases with editorial approval.
- The editorial board reserves the right to reject any change that appears unethical or unjustified.

7. Acknowledgment of Non-Author Contributors (Optional)

Individuals who contributed to the research but do not meet all four authorship criteria should be recognized in the Acknowledgments section. Examples include:

- Advisors or mentors who provided general supervision.
- Individuals who assisted in data collection, technical support, or statistical analysis.
- Those who provided funding acquisition, administrative help, or proofreading.

Acknowledged individuals must give written consent to have their names included. Their roles should be clearly described (e.g., “technical assistance,” “editing support,” “statistical advice”).

8. Institutional and Group Authorship

- If research is conducted by a group, consortium, or institution, the group name may appear as the author, provided that individual members who meet authorship criteria are also listed and identifiable.
- One or more members should take responsibility for the integrity of the work on behalf of the group.
- The journal requires a clear explanation of group contribution in the author contribution statement.

9. Ghost, Gift, and Guest Authorship

The journal strictly prohibits unethical authorship practices:

- **Ghost Authorship:** Excluding individuals who made significant contributions (e.g., data analysis or manuscript writing).
- **Gift Authorship:** Listing individuals who did not contribute significantly, often as a favor or for prestige.
- **Guest Authorship:** Including well-known individuals who had no real involvement in the research.

If detected, such practices may result in manuscript rejection, retraction, or institutional notification.

10. Authorship Disputes

- Disputes regarding authorship (e.g., inclusion, exclusion, or order) should be resolved among the authors before submission.
- The journal will not intervene in authorship conflicts except to request written clarification or evidence of mutual agreement.
- In serious or unresolved cases, the journal may refer the matter to the authors' institutional ethics committee or follow COPE guidelines for authorship disputes.

11. Multi-Disciplinary and Multi-Center Studies

For studies involving multiple disciplines or collaborating institutions:

- Each participating group must designate at least one responsible author for communication and data integrity.
- Contributions from each institution or research center must be clearly defined in the author contribution statement.
- The manuscript **MUST** be related to the scope of the journal.

12. Authorship and Ethical Accountability

Each author must take responsibility for:

- The integrity of their contribution.
- Ensuring that all co-authors approve the final version of the manuscript.
- Correcting any errors or ethical concerns that arise after publication.

Failure to adhere to these principles may result in editorial action, including retraction or correction of the article.

13. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

- AI tools (ChatGPT, Deep Seek, language models, or automated writing assistants) cannot be listed as authors.
- Authors remain fully responsible for the content, originality, and accuracy of their work.

14. Policy Review and Updates

This Authorship Criteria Policy will be reviewed as required to align with evolving international authorship and ethical standards (International Commission of Medical Journals Editors- ICMJE, Committee of Publication Ethics- COPE).

Any updates will be posted on the journal's website and applied to all future submissions.