

Introduction

Jefore Ethiopian Journal of Applied Sciences is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal published by Wolkite University, Ethiopia. As a double-blind peer-reviewed journal, the Journal ensures the utmost impartiality and fairness in the publication process. This means that both authors and reviewers remain anonymous to each other, ensuring an unbiased evaluation of each manuscript.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the double-blind peer-review process is to provide editors with the information needed to reach a fair and evidence-based decision. Review reports should also provide suggestions to authors on how to improve the quality of their manuscripts, and identify any errors to be corrected such that they may be accepted for publication.

Peer-review Procedure

Invitation to Review

Immediately after submission, the Journal's editors will perform a technical pre-check, known as a desk review, of the manuscript. Only those manuscripts that qualify the desk review will be sent for the peer review process.

The Journal editors select and invite potential reviewers based on their expertise in research areas and academic background relevant to the manuscript under consideration. The selected reviewers will receive an invitation to the peer review via email. The paper's abstract will be attached to help the reviewers decide whether they wish to do the review. Ideally, two reviewers will be invited for the peer review, and a third one will be added if the editors cannot make a decision based on the recommendations of the two reviewers.

At the invitation stage, the reviewers should consider if:

- the manuscript they are being invited to review matches their expertise;
- they have time to review the manuscript, and
- there is any potential conflict of interest.

The reviewers will accept or decline any invitations as soon as possible. The reviewers may suggest alternative reviewers if an invitation must be declined.

The reviewers who agree to review will immediately access the full-length manuscript. When the reviewers accept the invitation, they will receive an email with a link to the article and a proposed deadline. Newly invited reviewers should also create an account at this stage.

Guidelines for Reviewing

The following are some of the general guidelines for examining the manuscript under consideration.

In reviewing a full-length research article, the reviewers shall consider the following points for the evaluation and reflection:

- Relevance and contribution of the research question addressed in the manuscript to the addition of knowledge to scientific literature or field

- Originality of the manuscript
- Suitability and feasibility of the methods and/or materials described in the manuscript
- Replicability of the results based on the details given in the methods section
- Readability of the manuscript (e.g., the quality of the written language, the construction and logic of arguments, organization, figures and tables, etc.)
- Alignment of the results with the research questions/objectives and research methods and/or materials
- Consistency of the conclusions with the results and arguments presented
- Discussion and description of the significance of the findings in relation to what was already known about the problem
- Suitability of the statistics (if any) to the purpose
- Relevance and recentness of the cited references (within the last 5 years)
- Checking ethical aspects if the work involves patients or animals

In reviewing a review article, the reviewers shall consider the following points for the evaluation and reflection:

- Relevance of the topic of the review to the field
- Originality of the review
- Recentness of most of the cited references (within the last 5 years) but also include the historical literature in the field (Note: Excessive self-citation and honorary citation (excessive citation of another author's work) are discouraged.)
- Accuracy of the interpretation of the results of the reviewed works
- Readability of the review (e.g., the standard of the language, the structure and flow of the review, etc.)

Review Report

The reviewers, after carefully reading and scrutinizing the manuscript, should submit a review report. In writing the review report, the reviewers ought to keep the author (instead of the editor) in mind as the comments will be sent to the author. The comments in the review report should also be detailed so that the authors may correctly understand and address the points the reviewers raise. Confidential messages to the editor are also welcome as they may enable the editors to make informed decisions. However, the comments in the confidential message to the editor must not contradict the main points in the review report for the authors.

Recommendation

The reviewers' recommendations shall be one of the following:

- Reject (with an explanation of the reasons in the review report)
- Accept without revision
- Revise and resubmit (with a suggestion either revision is major or minor and a detailed explanation of the revision that is required)

Final Decision

The editor-in-chief will ultimately decide whether to accept or reject the manuscript based on the comments and recommendations of the reviewers.

Major Flaws

The reviewers may recommend an immediate rejection of the manuscript if they find one of the following major flaws:

- Inappropriate research design to the purpose of the study
- Improper statistics
- Data fabrication or manipulation
- Over interpretation of the results
- Unexplained shift from the standard practices and research methods
- Institutional, geographic, racial, and gender bias

General Guidance to the Reviewers

- Read the article fully
- Respect the confidentiality of the process
- Conduct the review objectively
- Avoid personal criticism of the author in the review report
- Request a deadline extension as soon as possible in case more time is required to provide a comprehensive report.