

Editorial Policy

Focus and Scope

IMCC Journal of Science is an open-access and double-blind peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journal published bi-annually by the Iligan Medical Center College, Iligan City, Philippines. It accepts high-quality original research papers on pure and applied sciences, engineering and technology, history, social science, business, management, education, information technology, and public management.

Peer-Review Process

IMCC Journal of Science adopts the double-blind peer-review process wherein the reviewer and the author do not know each other's identity. The editorial board ensures that the referees are qualified, can perform impartial review, and have expertise on the field of the paper under review. At least two referees and one editorial board member are invited for each research paper. Once a referee accepts the invitation as a peer reviewer, it is understood that the paper will be kept confidential and will not be shared with the referee's colleagues. Within a specified timeframe (not more than 2 weeks), the referees provide feedback. The editorial board evaluates the referees' comments before notifying the decision or referees' comments back to the authors. A paper is accepted when it is favorably endorsed for publication by at least two referees and one editorial board member, the text adheres to the stylistic and bibliographic requirements outlined in the Author Guidelines, the instructions for revision are substantially complied, and the manuscript passes the plagiarism detection test with a similarity index of at most 11%. Otherwise, the manuscript is rejected. Authors are advised to use licensed software for plagiarism detection and to perform spelling and grammar checks prior to paper submission.

Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Policy

IMCC Journal of Science is committed to maintaining the highest standards of publication ethics and to supporting ethical research practices and adheres to the COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers. The journal editors follow the COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Editors and refer reviewers to the COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers as appropriate. Allegations of misconduct are investigated in accordance with the COPE Best Practice Guidelines as far as is practicable.

Authors should present an objective discussion of the significance of research work as well as enough detail and references to permit others to replicate the experiments. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable. Review articles should also be objective, comprehensive, and accurate accounts of the state of the art. The authors should ensure that their work is entirely original, and if the work of others has been used, it should be appropriately acknowledged.

Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. Authors should not submit articles describing essentially the same research to more than one journal. The corresponding author should ensure that there is a full consensus of all co-authors in approving the final version of the paper and its submission for publication.

Editors should evaluate manuscripts exclusively based on their academic merit. An editor must not use unpublished information in the editor's own research without the express written consent of the author. Editors should take reasonable responsive measures when ethical complaints have been presented concerning a submitted manuscript or published paper.

Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviews should be conducted objectively, and observations should be formulated clearly with supporting arguments, so that authors can use them for improving the paper. Any selected referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should notify the editor and excuse himself from the review process. Reviewers should not consider manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the papers.

IMCC Journal of Science will publish research articles involving human subjects only after the author(s) has verified that that he/she/they has/have followed all laws and regulations concerning the protections afforded human subjects in research studies within the jurisdiction in which a research study they describe was conducted, and only after the Editorial Board of the IMCC Journal of Science has determined that sufficient protections have been afforded to the subjects of the study. The research protocol must have been approved by the appropriate institutional review board (IRB). In the case of exempt research, the IRB must have deemed the research protocol exempt and documentation must be made available to the IMCC Journal of Science upon request. Final decision to publish is that of the Editorial Board of the IMCC Journal of Science.

Manuscripts based on Data Set where the last data point occurred more than five years prior to review by the journal will not be considered for publication. This policy is in place to assure the timeliness of results published by the journal.

IMCC Journal of Science will publish articles only after the author(s) has/have confirmed that he/she/they has/have disclosed all potential conflicts of interest, and only if the resolution of conflict of interest is deemed favorable by the editorial board.

Policy for Investigating Complaints and Appeals

If the IMCC Journal of Science receives a complaint that a contribution infringes on copyright or other intellectual property rights or contains material inaccuracies,

libelous materials, or otherwise unlawful materials, the Journal will investigate the complaint. Investigation will include a request that the parties involved substantiate their claims. The Journal will make a good faith determination whether or not to remove the allegedly wrongful material. A decision not to remove material will represent the Journal's belief that the complaint is without sufficient foundation, or if well-founded, that a legal defense or exemption may apply, such as fair use in the case of copyright infringement or truthfulness of a statement in the case of libel. IMCC Journal of Science shall keep on record all documents related to the complaint and the investigation.

Manuscripts that are ultimately rejected by the Associate Editor, may be appealed to the Chief Editor of the journal. However, it is very rare that the Chief Editor will overturn a rejection by an Associate Editor that is based on blinded review.

Corrections, Retractions, and Expressions of Concern

To better serve our researchers, librarians, and others in the academic community, IMCC Journal of Science believes clarity in the publishing record is a critical component of information distribution. Recognizing a published article as a finalized "Version of Record" establishes the expectation that it can be relied upon as accurate, complete, and citable. IMCC Journal of Science defines this Version of Record as the initial article publication for open access journals.

It is presumed that manuscripts report on work based on honest observations. However, occasionally information becomes available with may contradict this. In such situations, IMCC Journal of Science applies Committee on Publication Ethics guidelines on corrections, retractions, and expressions of concern.

Corrections. Errors in published papers may be identified in the form of a corrigendum or erratum when the Chief Editor considers it appropriate to inform the journal readership about a previous error and makes a correction to the error in the published article. The corrigendum or erratum will appear as a new article in the journal and will cite the original published article.

Retractions. Retractions are considered and published when there are severe errors in an article that invalidate the conclusions. Retractions are also made in cases where there is evidence of publication malpractice, such as plagiarism, duplicate publication, or unethical research. According to industry best practice and in accordance with COPE guidelines, IMCC Journal of Science implements the following procedure if a retraction is confirmed:

- A retraction note titled "Retraction: [article title]" signed by the authors and/or the editor, is published in a subsequent issue of the journal and listed in the contents list.
- In the electronic version, a link is made to the original article.
- The online article is preceded by a screen containing the retraction note. It is to this screen that the link resolves; the reader can then proceed to the article itself.
- The original article is retained unchanged save for a watermark on the PDF indicating on each page that it has been "retracted."

Editorial expressions of concern. Where substantial doubt arises as to the honesty or integrity of a submitted or published article, journal editors may consider issuing an expression of concern. However, expressions of concern should only be issued if an investigation into the problems relating to the article has proven inconclusive, and if there remain strong indicators that the concerns are valid. Under some rare cases, an editorial expression of concern may also be issued when an investigation is underway, but a judgement will not be available for a considerable time. The expression of concern will be linked back to the published article it relates to.

Withdrawal. Articles may be withdrawn by corresponding author before accepting for publication. If it is accepted, it could be used only for Articles in Press which represent early versions of articles and sometimes contain errors or may have been accidentally submitted twice. Occasionally, but less frequently, the articles may represent infringements of professional ethical codes, such as multiple submission, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data or the like. Articles in Press (articles that have been accepted for publication but which have not been formally published and will not yet have the complete volume/issue/page information) that include errors, or are discovered to be accidental duplicates of other published article(s), or are determined to violate the journal publishing ethics guidelines in the view of the editors (such as multiple submission, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data or the like), may be “Withdrawn” from the IMCC Journal of Science. Articles which have been published under an issue could not be withdrawn.

Article removal: legal limitations. In an extremely limited number of cases, it may be necessary to remove an article from the online database. This will only occur where the article is clearly defamatory, or infringes others’ legal rights, or where the article is, or we have good reason to expect it will be, the subject of a court order, or where the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk. In these circumstances, while the metadata (Title and Authors) will be retained, the text will be replaced with a screen indicating the article has been removed for legal reasons.

Article replacement. In cases where the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk, the authors of the original article may wish to retract the flawed original and replace it with a corrected version. In these circumstances, the procedures for retraction will be followed with the difference that the database retraction notice will publish a link to the corrected re-published article and a history of the document.

Author Guidelines

General Guidelines

Submission of an article to the IMCC Journal of Science implies that the work has not been previously published except in the form of an abstract in Conference Proceedings or as an academic requirement (thesis/dissertation). The work is also not considered for publication in other journals. All authors should have agreed with the contents of the paper and the author(s) agreed the transfer of copyright to Iligan Medical Center College, the publisher of IMCC Journal of Science.

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these guidelines.

1. The authors declare that the submission has been subjected to ethics review and has been endorsed favorably by the said board or committee.
2. All authors understand that the Corresponding Author is responsible for communicating with the other authors about the status of submitted manuscripts, submission of revisions, and final approval of proofs.
3. The submission does not contain any identifying information (author's name, affiliation, contact details).
4. The submission is in Microsoft Word document file format.
5. The text is double-spaced; uses a 12-point Georgia font; employs italics, rather than underlining (except with URL addresses); and all illustrations, figures, and tables are placed within the text at the appropriate points, rather than at the end.
6. The text adheres to the stylistic and bibliographic requirements outlined in the Author Guidelines.

Specific Guidelines

1. Authors must submit an e-copy of the manuscript to:

Helen S. Tejero, Ph.D.

Chief Editor

IMCC Journal of Science

Center of Research and Development

Iligan Medical Center College, Iligan City, Philippines

E-mail: journal@imcc.edu.ph

2. Received manuscripts will be properly acknowledged and immediately sent off for review if it satisfies the preliminary assessment made by the members of the Editorial Board. If it does not satisfy the preliminary assessment, it will be sent back to the corresponding author for revision. No paper will be sent for peer review unless it strictly follows the journal's author guidelines. All submitted papers in IMCC Journal of Science will be processed in Turnitin plagiarism detection software with

allowable similarity index of at most 11%. All submitted papers which failed to meet this initial requirement of the journal will not accepted to undergo the peer review process.

3. All submissions must include the following attachments:

a. Cover letter (in .pdf format) duly signed by the author/s with certification that the submitted article has not been published before except in a form of abstract in conference proceedings; that the same article is not under consideration for publication in any language elsewhere; that all co-authors if there are, have approved its submission in the IMCC Journal of Science; that all authors will transfer the copyright to publisher upon the acceptance and publication of the article; that the article will not be published in any form or language without the consent of the copyright.

b. Complete manuscript (in .doc and .pdf format) with tables, figures, and references

4. The manuscript should contain only the Title, Authors and Affiliations, Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Methodology (Materials and Methods for Bio-Physical Sciences), Results, Discussion, Conclusion, and References. The manuscript must be in English, no more than 6,000 words excluding the Abstract and References; typewritten using Georgia, font 12; double-spaced, justified on letter (8.5"x11") size paper, with 1" margin on all sides. For manuscripts with Filipino-language (in Tagalog) text, English translation of the title and abstract is required. These manuscripts should contain the following sections: Abstrak, Susing Salita, Introduksyon, Metodo, Resulta, Diskusyon, Kongklusyon, and Sanggunian. All pages should be numbered consecutively at the center of the bottom of the page. Line numbers should be continuous (do not restart at each page).

5. The Abstract should present briefly the focus and scope of the paper, method of analysis, major findings and conclusion of the paper and should not exceed 200 words. It should have a structured format consisting of the objectives, methods, results, and conclusion, but without headings. A list of 3 to 7 keywords should immediately follow the abstract.

6. The main sections may be subdivided into subsections.

7. All tables, figures, and illustrations should be cited in the text, in numerical order. Figures should be of good quality and should have thickness of lines and sizes of lettering and other symbols to allow reduction of their original dimensions up to 50%. High quality-colored photographs should be submitted for clarity.

8. All tables should be cited consecutively in the text and numbered accordingly. The content of tables should include a table number and title above the table, and explanatory notes and legends as well as definitions of abbreviations used. Each table must be self-explanatory being a supplement rather than a duplicate of information in the text. The use of too many tables is discouraged.

9. All abbreviations should be spelled out once, the first time they are mentioned in the text, followed by the abbreviations enclosed in parentheses.

10. All measurements should be in System International (SI) units.

11. If needed, acknowledgments to individuals/groups of persons, or institution/s should be included at the end of the text just before the references. Grants and subsidies from government or private institutions should also be acknowledged.

12. In the text, reference numbers should be placed in square brackets [], and placed before the punctuation; for example [1], [1–3] or [1,3]. For embedded citations in the text with pagination, both parentheses and brackets should be used to indicate the reference number and page numbers; for example [5] (p. 10), or [6] (pp. 101–105). The use of names in the text is discouraged. The References should be typed double-spaced and numbered consecutively in the order they are mentioned in the text in the following form:

a. Journal Articles

Author 1, A.B.; Author 2, C.D. Title of the article. *Abbreviated Journal Name* **Year**, *Volume*, page range.

b. Portion of Book

Author 1, A.; Author 2, B. Title of the chapter. In *Book Title*, 2nd ed.; Editor 1, A., Editor 2, B., Eds.; Publisher: Publisher Location, Country, 2007; Volume 3, pp. 154–196.

c. Book

Author 1, A.; Author 2, B. *Book Title*, 3rd ed.; Publisher: Publisher Location, Country, 2008; pp. 154–196.

d. Journal Article In Press

Author 1, A.B.; Author 2, C. Title of Unpublished Work. *Abbreviated Journal Name* stage of publication (under review; accepted; in press).

e. Personal Communication

Author 1, A.B. (University, City, State, Country); Author 2, C. (Institute, City, State, Country). Personal communication, 2012.

f. Paper from Proceedings

Author 1, A.B.; Author 2, C.D.; Author 3, E.F. Title of Presentation. In Title of the Collected Work (if available), Proceedings of the Name of the Conference, Location of Conference, Country, Date of Conference; Editor 1, Editor 2, Eds. (if available); Publisher: City, Country, Year (if available); Abstract Number (optional), Pagination (optional).

g. Theses and Dissertation

Author 1, A.B. Title of Thesis. Level of Thesis, Degree-Granting University, Location of University, Date of Completion.

h. Online Sources

Title of Site. Available online: URL (accessed on Day Month Year).

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Open Access Policy

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Publication Charge and Process

Currently, IMCC Journal of Science does not charge submission and publication fees.

Step 1. Submission of Paper

The corresponding or submitting author submits the paper to the journal. This is usually via email.

Step 2. Editorial Office Assessment (3 days)

The journal checks the paper's composition and arrangement against the journal's Author Guidelines to make sure it includes the required sections and stylizations. The quality of the paper is not assessed at this point.

Step 3. Appraisal by the Chief Editor (Pre-Review) (7 days)

The Chief Editor checks if the paper is appropriate for the journal and is sufficiently original and interesting. If not, the paper may be rejected without being reviewed any further. Originality of the paper is checked at this stage using a plagiarism detection software. A pre-review result is sent to the corresponding or submitting author. The Chief Editor then endorses the paper to the Associate Editor for peer review.

Step 4. Associate Editor Assigns Editorial Board Member and External Peer Reviewers (1 day)

The Associate Editor assigns an editorial board member and external peer reviewers to the submitted paper.

Step 5. Invitation to Reviewers (7 days)

The Managing Editor sends invitations to editorial board member and external peer reviewers assigned by the Associate Editor. As responses are received, further invitations are issued, if necessary, until all required acceptances are obtained.

Step 6. Response to Invitations (1 day)

Potential reviewers, including the editorial board member, consider the invitation against their own expertise, conflicts of interest, and availability. They then accept or decline. If possible, when declining, they might also suggest alternative reviewers. In case the editorial board member declares conflict of interest, the Associate Editor reviews the paper.

Step 7. Review is Conducted (14 days)

The reviewer sets time aside to read the paper several times. The first read is used to form an initial impression of the work. If major problems are found at this stage, the reviewer may feel comfortable rejecting the paper without further work. Otherwise, they will read the paper several more times, taking notes to build a detailed point-by-point review. The review is then submitted to the Managing Editor, with a recommendation to accept or reject it – or else with a request for revision (flagged as either major or minor) before it is reconsidered.

Step 8. Journal Evaluates the Reviews (7 days)

The Managing Editor sends to the Associate Editor the result of the peer-review process. The Associate Editor then considers all the returned reviews before recommending an overall decision.

Step 9. The Decision is Communicated (7 days)

The Associate Editor recommends the overall decision of the paper to the Chief Editor. The Chief Editor may or may not approve the recommendation of the Associate Editor. The Chief Editor communicates the results to the Managing Editor. The Managing Editor then sends a decision email to the author including any relevant reviewer comments.

If *accepted*, the paper is sent for production. If the article is *rejected* or sent back for either major or minor *revision*, the Chief Editor provides constructive comments from the reviewers to help the author improve the article. At this point, the Managing Editor sends an email or letter informing the outcome of the peer-review. If the paper was sent back for *revision*, the reviewers receive a new version, unless they have opted out of further participation. However, where only minor changes were requested this follow-up review might be done by the Associate Editor.

Step 10. Second Round Review (21 days)

The corresponding or submitting author submits the revised version of the paper to the Managing Editor within 14 days after the receipt of the decision email from the Managing Editor. The Managing Editor checks the revised paper. If the Managing Editor finds that all comments/suggestions are rectified and/or if the corresponding or submitting author justifies the parts in question, the Managing Editor sends to

the Associate Editor the result of the second-round review process. Otherwise, further review and revision are needed. The Associate Editor then considers all the returned reviews and revisions before recommending an overall decision.

Step 11. Production (28 days, depends on the re-review duration)

The Associate Editor recommends the overall decision of the paper to the Chief Editor. The Chief Editor may or may not approve the recommendation of the Associate Editor. The Chief Editor communicates the results to the Managing Editor. The Managing Editor then sends a decision email to the author including any relevant comments.

If *accepted*, the paper is sent for production. If the article is *rejected* or sent back for either major or minor *revision*, another round of review is conducted (Step 10).

The Managing Editor then forwards the accepted papers to the Language Editors for English-language editing.

The Language Editors send the edited papers to the Managing Editor within 7 days after the receipt of the paper.

The Managing Editor then sends the edited papers to the Layout Editor for the design and layout of articles. The Layout Editor then sends the galley proof of the paper to the Managing Editor within 7 days after the receipt of the paper.

Upon receipt of the galley proof of the paper, the Managing Editor then sends it to the corresponding author for approval and/or corrections. If there are corrections received within 2 days after the receipt of the galley proof by the corresponding, the galley proof is sent back to the Layout Editor for further editing. At this stage, the Managing Editor sends the author approval and copyright transfer forms to the corresponding author.

Upon receipt of the approval and copyright transfer forms, the Managing Editor sends the approved galley proof of the paper to the Chief and Associate Editors. The Chief Editor, upon the recommendation of the Associate Editor, then approves the galley proof of papers for publication (online and printed). The Chief Editor signs the certificate of acceptance for publication in IMCC Journal of Science to the authors.

The Managing Editor then sends the approved papers to the Research and Publication Coordinator for printing, delivery, and quality assurance of printed materials. The papers are also sent to the Webmaster for online publication and indexing of journal articles.

The Managing Editor notifies the corresponding author that the paper is available in online and printed forms. The certificate of acceptance and the printed copy of the journal are also given at this stage.

Schedule of Publication and Circulation

IMCC Journal of Science is published in online and print biannually. Both online and print publication shall be scheduled in the second week of June and December. There shall be at least five papers per volume excluding the entries in the Editorial Section.

IMCC Journal of Science is available in printed copy. The dissemination of the journal will be in the form of subscription for public and private institutions and agencies. A complimentary copy will be given to the primary authors, and in-press copies to the co-authors. Articles are published online in the official website of the journal (<https://myjournal.imcc.edu.ph/>).