

Writing for



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Objectives

- Describe the two most important resources for writers
- Discuss the differing categories for submitting work to *JPAE*
- Review common publication errors in medical education
- Review commonly encountered concerns with research articles submitted to *JPAE*
- Discuss tips on improving chances for having work accepted for publication in *JPAE*

Necessary Resources for Writers

- <http://www.icmje.org/>
 - Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication
 - Updated February 2006
- *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors, 10th Ed.* by JAMA and Archives Journals
 - \$55.00 list



JPAE General Categories

- Research Articles
- Special Articles
- Communications
- Features
 - Abstracts & Brief Reports

Research Articles

- Original research
- Scholarly reviews
- Reports of educational research
- Educational innovations pertinent to PA students

Common Errors in Published Medical Education Studies

- Of 105 published education articles in *Academic Medicine*, *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, *American Journal of Surgery*, *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, *Medical Education*, and *Teaching and Learning in Medicine*:
 - 84% failed to include a study design statement
 - 68% failed to operationally define the dependent variables
 - 58% failed to indicate IRB approval or participant consent
 - 55% failed to contain a critical literature review
 - 53% failed to operationally define the independent variables
 - 45% failed to present a conceptual framework
 - 27% failed to define the intervention or control groups
 - 24% failed to include a statement of study intent

Cook DA, Beckman TJ, Bordage G. Quality of reporting of experimental studies in medical education: A systematic review. *Med Educ*. 2007;41:737-45.

Citation/Reference Inaccuracy

- A 1996 study of peer-reviewed emergency medicine journals found a 19% citation error rate

Raja UY, Cooper JG. How accurate are the references in Emergency Medical Journal? *Emerg Med J* 2006;23:625-6.

- A 2001 study of citation errors in 11 peer-reviewed nursing journals revealed a citation error incidence range from 22-66%

Lok CK, Chan MT, Martinson IM. Risk factors for citation errors in peer-reviewed nursing journals. *J Adv Nurs*. 2001;34(2):223-9.

Common JPAE Research Manuscript Concerns

- Single program, single class/cohort studies from one academic year
 - Insufficient power to determine true significance
 - Limited/no transferability
 - Difficult/impossible to prove cause and effect
 - Often a better fit for internal self study data/outcomes
 - May meet Abstract & Brief Report inclusion criteria

Common JPAE Research Manuscript Concerns

- Redundant/duplicate publication
 - Differentiate from replication of prior study
 - Suggests inadequate literature review
 - Example: correlation studies of PACKRAT and PANCE scores
- Uncondensed thesis/dissertation work
- Questionnaire-based survey research with low response rates
- Educational initiatives with little attempt at evaluation
- Small studies with insignificant differences

Common JPAE Research Manuscript Concerns

- Likert scale (ordinal) data analysis errors
 - Proper measure of central tendency is median or mode, not mean
 - The arithmetical manipulations required to calculate a mean and standard deviation are inappropriate for ordinal data
 - Proper analyses are with non-parametric tests
 - Chi-square
 - Spearman's Rho
 - Mann-Whitney *U*
 - Example: reporting Likert scale data using means, standard deviations, and ANOVA

Special Articles

- Encompasses a wide range of descriptive, methodological, or scholarly articles relevant to PA education

Communications

- Reports and news from the Physician Assistant Education Association

JPAE Feature Categories

Abstracts & Brief Reports
Academic Law
Accreditation Pearls
Cultural Perspectives
Evidence-Based Medicine
Exploring Medicine Through the Arts
Global Perspectives
Just Ethics
Medical Director Dialogue
PA History
Problem-Based Learning
Technology and Education

Suggestions for Getting Started

- Secure an experienced faculty mentor
- Collaborate with other faculty in other programs
- Contact Feature Editors
- Review work of interest to you and note "additional research is needed in..." comments
 - Contact author(s) and ask if they want collaborators
 - Consider replicating earlier published work
- Review and strictly adhere to the "Instructions for Authors"
- Assure thorough review of the literature performed
 - Schedule consultation with biomedical librarian to update database search skills
- Individually confirm all citations
- Consult a biostatistician to determine if sample size is adequate and correct analyses are selected
- Submit an abstract to PAEA for poster presentation
 - Accepted poster abstracts are published in JPAE

Why Manuscripts Are Rejected

- Google: 1,610,000 hits

My Favorite Quote

- There is no good writing. There is only good rewriting.

(attributed to many people)