International Journal of Childbirth

Author Guidelines

The International Journal of Childbirth welcomes the submission of basic, patient-oriented, or population-based original research; review articles, clinical case studies, or clinical trials related to childbirth. We also welcome perspective, opinions, and commentaries related to childbirth issues; professional issues; and education or competency validation. Any other types of manuscripts may be appropriate for The International Journal of Childbirth which is a quarterly, peer-reviewed publication. The journal is published for midwives, nurses, physicians and other professionals who care for childbearing women. While the focus is childbearing; the journal also welcomes manuscripts that discuss neonates and postpartum care. Submissions may have indirect or direct clinical relevance that the journal’s readers. The journal desires manuscripts that inform readers to impact maternal, fetal, and/or neonatal outcomes. Personal narratives or other anecdotal reports will not be accepted for review.

Submitting a Letter to the Editor

A Letter to the Editor may be submitted when it includes concise comments regarding a published article and the APA formatted reference to the article. The Letter to the Editor should be no longer than 300 words and must include references that support, explain, or endorse the author(s) viewpoint(s).

Submitting Your Manuscript for Review

United States English spelling will appear in the published manuscript. The American Psychological Association (APA) manual provides the desired reference format (www.apa.org). Springer Publishing encourages authors to consult an English expert and the APA Manual prior to submission of their manuscript.

Word Count: Manuscripts should be double spaced and there is no specific word count. However, 15 to 20 pages (not including references) is ideal.

Submit the manuscript and cover letter electronically at www.editorialmanager.com/ijcbirth. Also attach any supplemental digital content and appendices. Photographs, drawings, graphs, and other images should be submitted in jpg, tiff, or eps graphics file formats. Graphs created in Excel are acceptable. Digital images should include the figure number in the file name. Also display images at the end of the manuscript after the reference list and tables. If you encounter any problems with the Editorial Manager system, please contact Megan Larkin at mlarkin@springerpub.com.
The Cover Letter

Please address your cover letter to Michelle L. Murray, PhD, RNC-OB, Editor-in-Chief, *International Journal of Childbirth*. Include the date on the letter. Your letter should:

1. Specify whether or not your submission is to be reviewed in the research tract or the clinical practice tract or another focus that may be of interest to reproductive healthcare professionals.

2. Specify whether or not the study is original and if it is qualitative or quantitative research. For quantitative research, specify whether it is a primary data analysis or a secondary data analysis of an original research study. If the study is not original but it is a secondary data analysis, please provide the publication reference where the original research study manuscript was published.

3. Methods section:
   If you are submitting a secondary data analysis, your submission must address the research concepts related to designing a new study and the techniques used to analyze the data again; the protocol for identification and evaluation of the data set; any revised research questions; data management; a power calculation for quantitative research; and the results. The researcher must carefully consider if the existing data set's available power and data quality are adequate to answer the proposed research questions.

4. Address any supplemental digital content, appendices, or tables you are submitting with your manuscript.

5. Disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest.

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Manuscript Preparation

1. Utilize the Sixth Edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Copyright 2010) or a more recent publication of the APA Manual when it is available for the style, format, text, references, and tables.
2. Submit no more than 25 pages, double spaced. Large tables of data should be submitted in an appendix to the manuscript as separate content that should be offered to readers online but not in the main publication. Publication of the appendices will be at the discretion of the editors.

3. Submit any supplemental digital content in a format that can be uploaded for internet access.

4. Submit a title page that includes all of the authors, their credentials and/or academic degrees, mailing addresses, and email addresses.

5. If the research was financially supported, submit the funding source contact information. Include the funding source’s representative’s name, address, email address, and other relevant and contact information.

6. Identify any potential conflicts of interest or sources of bias, such as recall bias, interviewer bias, or other bias that may decrease the internal validity of the study and should be addressed in the study design section of the manuscript.

7. For research manuscript preparation, consult the Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT). For systematic reviews consult Stroup, et al. (2000). It may also be helpful to consult EQUATOR (The Enhancing the Quality of Transparency of Health Research), a portal with more than 350 guidelines. Visit www.equator-network.org to learn more.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research Manuscripts

The manuscript should include the following:

A. Abstract

1. Length should be no more than 250 words. Include the study’s purpose; design; major findings; and main conclusion.

B. Introduction

1. Include the research question and purpose of the study.
2. Specify keywords on title page or abstract.

C. Literature Review (or Systematized Review or Systematic Review)

1. Include any protocol used to identify literature.
2. For systematic reviews and meta-analyses, consult PRISMA.

D. Sample

1. Include inclusion and exclusion criteria.
2. Include subject protections, including any institutional review board approval.
E. Materials and Methods
   1. Include ethical considerations.

F. Results

G. Discussion
   1. Include clinical applications

H. References
   1. Do not include footnotes.
   2. All references should be in APA format.

Pre-clinical and Clinical Articles

This section is not all inclusive and authors are encouraged to submit translational research papers as well as other clinical research papers such as case studies.

Case studies should share clinical knowledge and include references that support current physiology and/or evidence-based practice. Case study manuscripts should include a narrative style that describes a global (holistic) or single clinical case of a single subject, single group of patients, family, event, program, decision, implementation process, clinical unit, department, health care agency, organizational change. The goal should be to promote understanding and knowledge through the case narrative and to share the experience with others.

The manuscript should include the following:

1. Abstract: A limit of 250 words is best.
   A. Length should be no more than 250 words. Include a description of the subjects, major findings, and main clinical application.
   B. Include the purpose of the case study: explanatory, descriptive, or explorative.
   C. Specify key words.

2. Introduction
   A. Include the objective or purpose of the study: explanatory, descriptive, or explorative.
   B. Explain if the study is holistic or a single type of case and/or the clinical need.

3. Case Data or Description
   A. Include the context and/or background of the clinical setting.
   B. Provide an overview of the case and/or clinical or state of clinical and/or technological approaches.
   C. Acknowledge any biases or threats to internal validity such as selection bias, performance bias, detection bias, attrition bias, or reporting bias.
4. **Summary or Discussion**

   A. Include clinical relevance and potential application(s) and if applicable, comparative assessment(s).
   
   B. If possible, make a connection to a theory or other relevant research.
   
   C. If applicable, discuss future directions and potential clinical impact.

5. **References**

   A. Do not include footnotes.
   
   B. All references should be in APA format.


10. For observational studies, consult STROBE (Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology) at [www.strobe-statement.org](http://www.strobe-statement.org). This is applicable to cohort studies, case-control studies, and cross-sectional studies.

11. For human or animal studies, please state in the Methods section that the research was approved by an ethics committee or institutional review board. Include a protocol number when possible.

**Manuscript Peer Review**

The journal’s peer review process is double-blind, which means that we blind reviewers to the name(s) of a manuscript’s author(s) and corresponding institution affiliations. Likewise, you will be blinded from the reviewers’ names and identities. To help maintain such blinding, please do not include any identifying information in your manuscript file.

Prior to sending the manuscript for peer review, an initial review will be conducted by the editorial office. Manuscripts will be rejected if the editor(s) identify scientific misconduct, overlapping publications, or plagiarism.

Please be aware that the journal uses iThenticate plagiarism detection software. Both plagiarism and self-plagiarism are considered serious offenses. “Whereas plagiarism refers to the practice of claiming credit for the words, ideas, and concepts of others, self-plagiarism refers to the practice of presenting one’s own previously published work as though it were new” (APA, 2010, p. 170).

Further, the journal adheres to the Committee on Publication Ethics guidelines ([http://publicationethics.org](http://publicationethics.org)), and significant ethical breaches will be managed according to the guidelines.

After the manuscript is authenticated, it will be sent to the Editor-in-Chief for selection of a review panel and alternates and/or assignment to an associate editor. Once reviewers submit their recommendation, the Editor-in-Chief will notify the corresponding author of a decision to accept; revise; or reject the manuscript.
References


