

Ethics Policies

[Editorial Board](#) of the Journal of Nursing Investigation (JNI) follows the recommended procedures outlined by the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\) International Standards for responsible research publication for authors and editors](#) when dealing with allegations of misconduct.

All authors are fully responsible for the originality and contents of their submitted manuscripts. All records and data presented in the manuscripts must be accurate, without any research misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism, or any other research or publication misconduct.

Any identified misconduct is subject to investigation by the [Editorial Board](#) of JNI. All misconduct and breach of publication ethics, irrespective of the extent thereof, may result in retraction, publication of formal notice of the misconduct, and formal embargo on future contribution to JNI.

I. Research Misconduct and Publication Ethics

1. Redundant or Duplicate Publication

Authors must submit only original work that is not under consideration elsewhere and has not been previously published, including articles that are in press or online ahead of print. All prior submissions, postings, or similar work that could be regarded as overlapping or related to the submitted manuscript must be fully disclosed and appropriately referenced at the time of submission.

Translation from Other Languages:

Manuscripts that have been previously published in another language and are submitted in English translation may be considered acceptable secondary publications only if they comply with accepted ethical standards and are accompanied by appropriate disclosure at the time of submission. Authors must clearly state that the manuscript is a translated version and must provide the original publication details for editorial review.

Preprint Posting:

JNI does not consider the deposition of manuscripts to not-for-profit preprint servers before submission to the JNI to be redundant or duplicate publication. When submitting manuscripts that have been posted in a preprint server, authors should notify the editor and provide information about preprint posting of the submitted manuscript, which include the digital object identifier (DOI) to the preprint version of their manuscript.

Avoidance of “salami-slicing”:

Authors must not divide the results of a single study into multiple manuscripts for the purpose of increasing publication count or fragmenting data unjustifiably.

Exclusions:

Abstracts or conference posters presented at academic meetings are not considered prior publication and may be cited or referenced as appropriate.

Similarity Assessment:

Manuscripts may be screened for text overlap to assess potential redundancy. [COPE guidance](#) emphasizes evaluating the nature and degree of duplication rather than relying on numeric thresholds.

- Minor, dispersed duplication (e.g., short methodological phrases) may be acceptable, while concentrated duplication requires review.
- Disciplinary norms and article type should be considered; some fields naturally produce similar wording, figures, or tables.
- Student theses or dissertations may be used, provided the journal’s policy on prior formal publication is followed.
- Authors must clarify copyright and intellectual property ownership (student, research team, or institution).

Notification to the Editor:

Corresponding authors must notify the editor of any:

- Previously submitted, posted, or published reports that may be redundant or duplicative.
- Manuscripts containing overlapping data, methods, or findings.
- Copies of related material should be submitted for editorial review.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of others’ ideas, words, results, or figures without proper credit or acknowledgment, including copying or closely paraphrasing content from previously published sources. Authors must ensure that all text, data, figures, and ideas derived from other sources are appropriately cited within the manuscript and fully listed in the References section.

3. Fabrication and Falsification

Authors must not fabricate or falsify research data or results.

- Fabrication refers to creating or inventing data or findings that never occurred.
- Falsification refers to intentionally manipulating or misrepresenting existing data, results, or images.

Minimal image adjustments (e.g., brightness, contrast, color) are allowed only if applied uniformly to the entire image, without altering or omitting any element.

4. Conflicts of Interest (COI)

All authors are required to disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, whether financial or non-financial, that could be perceived to influence the conduct, interpretation, or reporting of the study. If no conflicts of interest exist, this must be explicitly stated in the manuscript.

5. Copyright and Permissions

Authors must obtain permission for and properly cite any copyrighted or previously published material used in the manuscript, including figures, tables, images, and substantial text excerpts.

Failure to obtain permission or to properly acknowledge copyrighted material may violate intellectual property rights, expose authors and the journal to legal issues, and undermine the integrity and credibility of the publication.

6. Authorship Policy

Authorship is limited to individuals who meet the authorship criteria defined by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) in the [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#). Authors must have made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data; participated in drafting the manuscript or critically revising it for important intellectual content; and approved the final version to be published.

Submission and publication are permitted only with the explicit agreement of all listed authors. Individuals who do not meet the ICMJE authorship criteria, including those listed solely as a courtesy or without active participation in the work, must not be included as authors.

II. Handling Allegations of Misconduct

1. Allegations in Submitted Manuscripts

When editors, reviewers, authors, or journal staff suspect ethical misconduct during peer review, they must report it to the **Editor-in-Chief (EIC)**. The manuscript will be placed on hold pending investigation. The EIC will conduct a preliminary review and may request an explanation from the corresponding author. If the response is insufficient or evidence of misconduct is found, the EIC will refer the case to the [Editorial Board](#), which will determine appropriate actions.

2. Complaints and Appeals

Complaints Regarding Journal Policies or Ethical Issues

Complaints regarding journal policies, editorial handling, or staff actions should be sent by e-mail to medical.journal.office@tokushima-u.ac.jp.

Allegations concerning **fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, copyright infringement, authorship disputes, COI breaches**, or other ethical violations must be submitted in writing with supporting evidence.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the EIC will review the case and refer it to the appropriate editors or officials for investigation. The complainant will be kept informed of progress as appropriate.

Appeals of Editorial Decisions

Authors may submit **one formal appeal** if they believe an editorial decision was made in error.

The appeal must clearly explain the reasons and include supporting information. Appeals should be sent to medical.journal.office@tokushima-u.ac.jp.

The EIC and Editorial Board will review the case and may request re-review. The decision following the appeal is **final**.

3. Post-Publication Discussions

Readers may raise concerns about published articles by submitting a **Letter to the Editor**.

The editor may seek expert input and invite the original authors to respond.

If appropriate, both the letter and the author's reply may be published to ensure transparency.

4. Editorial Actions

If any misconduct is found to have been attempted or has occurred without disclosure, the journal will follow procedures in accordance with [COPE Core Practices](#) and [flowchart](#). The editorial office will investigate the case in a fair and transparent manner. Based on the findings, the journal may consider taking appropriate editorial actions. Possible actions could include, but are not limited to:

- Official warning to the author
- Immediate rejection of the submitted manuscript;
- Retraction of the published article;
- Publication of a notice of violation; and/or

- Revocation of publishing privileges within the journal.
- Embargo on future submissions to JN
- Notification to the author's institution

III. Errata, Expressions of Concern, and Retractions

In order to ensure that retractions, errata, and expressions of concern are handled according to industry best practice, JNI follows the [Retraction Guidelines, provided by COPE](#), including:

1. Errata

An erratum may be issued to notify readers of an important error that could mislead the readers, such as incorrect data, terms, typography, figure or table error, omission, or incorrect author/contributor details. An erratum is also issued for the correction of author and contributor information. Authors or readers who identify such an error should notify the Editorial Office. The journal will evaluate whether the error significantly affects the integrity of the article or the reader's understanding and, if so, will publish an erratum linked to the original article.

2. Expressions of Concern

An expression of concern will be issued if the investigation of an issue concerning a published article raises suspicion but does not provide conclusive evidence, and yet the EIC feels the article contains invalid results or has strong concerns that readers should be made aware of potentially misleading information contained in the article. Also, an expression of concern may be issued if the investigation requires a considerable amount of time to reach a resolution.

3. Retractions

JNI may issue retractions to alert the readers of seriously erroneous data that invalidate the conclusion of the study presented in the published article or of ethical misconduct. Retractions are published if the EIC has convincing evidence for the following cases, either as a result of ethical violations or honest error:

1. The findings or data are unreliable or misleading
2. Plagiarism
3. Duplicate publication without permission
4. Unethical research

Retraction Process

JNI adopts the following retraction process:

1. Instances requiring an investigation are brought to the attention of the EIC.
2. The EIC investigates the case following the step-by-step guidelines provided in the COPE flowcharts. The EIC may contact the authors to request an explanation, which will be evaluated.
3. The final decision as to whether to retract is then communicated to the author and, if necessary, any other relevant bodies, such as the author's institution.
4. The retraction statement is then posted online and published in the next available issue of the journal.

Retraction Notice

The retraction will include:

1. Information of the retracted article, such as title and authors
2. Link to the retracted article
3. Reasons for retraction

To preserve the integrity of the published record, the Journal will not remove the retracted article. It will be maintained on the platform. The PDF will be replaced with a version watermarked with the word “Retracted,” but the original text will remain accessible. A retraction notice will also be published in the next available issue.