



Journal Policy Document

Journal of Interdisciplinary Biomedical and Health Sciences

(JIBHS)

Madda Walabu University College of Medicine and Health Science

July, 2026

Robe, Ethiopia

Madda Walabu University (MWU),
College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS), Bale-Goba, Oromia,
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Journal policy of Interdisciplinary Biomedical and Health Sciences (JIBHS)

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**Submitted to Madda Walabu University, Academic, Research, Technology Transfer, and
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Journal of Interdisciplinary Biomedical and Health Sciences (JIBHS) is a peer-reviewed, open access scholarly journal founded by the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Madda Walabu University. It publishes peer-reviewed original interdisciplinary research across all areas of biomedical, clinical and health sciences informing yet moving scientific knowledge forward. In line with the global standards of scholarly publishing JIBHS adheres to promote transparency, editorial independence, ethics and accessibility. The way the journal is composed today allows for compliance with international indexing standards, especially that of the directory of openaccess journal (DOAJ) and Scopus.

JIBHS understands the need to adopt multidisciplinary approaches in tackling the challenges in health care today and therefore, promotes the integration of research in clinical medicine, public health, pharmaceutical science, biomedical sciences and health systems.

2. VISION, MISSION, AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Vision

To become an internationally recognized and indexed journal that contributes to high impact interdisciplinary research in biomedical and health sciences.

2.2 Mission

To produce rigorous peer-reviewed, ethical and policy-relevant research that connects science, clinical practice and population health.

2.3 Objectives

- To maintain high editorial and publishing standards as required by DOAJ and Scopus.
- Promoting open access and equitable knowledge sharing
- To promote international collaboration and diversity in authorship
- To provide transparency in editorial and peer review processes To improve research integrity and reproducibility

3. SCOPE AND CONTENT QUALITY

JIBHS ensures that all published content demonstrates academic relevance, scientific validity, and clarity.

3.1 Scope

JIBHS publishes high quality interdisciplinary research from the field of health and biomedical sciences. The journal focuses on integrative, interdisciplinary, translational, and policy-relevant research in the following broad areas:

- Basic Medical Sciences
- Clinical Sciences
- Public Health
- Health Systems and Policy
- Implementation Science
- Digital Health
- Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Mental Health
- Maternal, Child, and Reproductive Health
- Nutrition and Dietetics
- Global Health
- Nursing and Allied Health Sciences
- Precision Medicine and Genomics
- Infectious Diseases and One Health.

3.2 Content Standards

3.2.1. Present Original, Scientifically Sound Research

- Originality: Submissions must be original works that have not been previously published or are not being considered by another journal. To ensure this, all submissions to JIBHS are checked for plagiarism using the Turnitin software with the maximum acceptable similarity index of 20%.
- Scientific Soundness: Manuscripts are subjected to an initial screening by editors for scientific rigour and scholarly merit, and subsequently undergo a series of review processes. Research should be conducted with scientific integrity, avoiding data fabrication and falsification, and should conform to international ethical standards (e.g., Declaration of Helsinki).

3.2.2. Include Clear Methodology and Reproducible Results

- **Methodological Detail:** The "Methods" section should include enough detail on study design, participants, interventions and measurements so that other researchers could reproduce the study.
- **Data and Code Availability:** Technical editors verify that statements of shared research data and code availability conform to FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable). We encourage authors to share study protocols, datasets and statistical code to promote transparency and reproducible research.

3.2.3. Demonstrate Relevance to JIBHS

- **Alignment with the Journal's Thematic Focus:** Research should be consistent with the journal's focus on interdisciplinary knowledge at the intersection of science, equity, and sustainable development.
- **Scope Suitability:** Submissions are assessed during the initial desk review to see if they relate to core fields such as clinical medicine, public health, epidemiology, biomedical sciences, or health policy.

3.2.4. Contribute New Knowledge or Critical Analysis

- **Innovation and Novelty:** Scientific works that bring noteworthy advances or nobility in their field of study must be presented in manuscripts.
- **Impact on Policy:** JIBHS places special emphasis on research that fills the knowledge gap between science and policy by offering answers to regional, national, or international development issues.
- **Critically critically critically critically critically critically critically critically critically.**

3.3 Language and Accessibility

- Articles are published in English Language
- Abstract must be clear and structured
- Keywords must follow standardized indexing terms (example like MeSH where applicable)

4. EDITORIAL GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

JIBHS maintains complete freedom to control its editorial processes because its editors make their decisions based on academic standards which determine their editorial work according to the journal's established guidelines and its legal obligations. The journal maintains its governance structure to ensure that sponsors and institutions including Madda Walabu University and other outside organizations cannot control its operations while safeguarding academic integrity and institutional inclusiveness.

4.1. Governance Structure and Roles

The journal is managed by a structured editorial team appointed by the university management.

4.1.1. Editor-in-Chief (EiC):

Holds overall responsibility for the journal's strategic vision, final publication decisions, and the resolution of appeals or ethical misconduct cases. The EiC serves a three-year term, renewable once.

The EiC shall:

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for the journal
- Ensure alignment with the journal's aims, scope, and indexing requirements
- Make final decisions on manuscript acceptance or rejection
- Uphold editorial independence and prevent external influence
- Oversee ethical compliance and handle cases of misconduct in line with COPE guidelines
- Lead policy development and periodic review

4.1.2. Associate (Section) Editors:

Manage specific thematic or disciplinary sections. They are responsible for manuscript management, selecting qualified reviewers for the double-blind process, and ensuring scientific rigour. Like the EiC, they serve three-year terms. Their duties include:

- Conducting initial editorial screening (desk review)
- Assigning qualified peer reviewers
- Monitoring the peer review process to ensure timeliness and quality
- Providing recommendations to the Editor-in-Chief based on reviewer reports
- Ensuring manuscripts meet scientific and ethical standards

4.1.3. Technical Editors:

Support the formal aspects of publishing. The technical editor serves a three-year term. Their duties include:

- checking technical accuracy
- screening for plagiarism using Turnitin.
- Checking manuscript formatting and structure
- Verifying references, figures, and tables
- Ensuring compliance with journal guidelines and metadata standards
- Supporting DOI assignment and indexing requirements

- They also verify Data Availability Statements and ensure compliance with open data policies.

4.1.4. Managing Editor

The Managing Editor oversees the administrative and operational aspects of the journal. The managing editor serves a three-year term. Their duties include:

- Coordinating manuscript submission and workflow processes
- Communicating with authors, reviewers, and editors
- Ensuring adherence to publication timelines
- Managing journal records, documentation, and correspondence
- Supporting website updates and publication scheduling

4.1.5. Statistical Editors

Statistical Editors provide specialized review of quantitative research. The statistical editor serves a three-year term. Their duties include:

- Evaluate study design and statistical methodology
- Verify accuracy and appropriateness of data analysis
- Ensure reporting transparency and reproducibility

4.1.6. National and International Advisory Board:

Provides high-level strategic guidance for five-year terms. They advise on global trends, networking, and complex ethical issues.

4.2. Transparency and Open Access

To ensure equitable knowledge dissemination, JIBHS adheres to strict transparency standards:

- No-Fee Model: The journal is full open access and does not charge any fees to authors for publication or to readers for accessing content.
- Public Listing: All editorial board members, their academic titles, institutional affiliations, and official contact details are publicly listed to ensure accountability.
- Clear Disclosures: The journal website must explicitly display its aims and scope, peer review processes, author guidelines, and ethical frameworks.

4.3. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

JIBHS employs a Quality Assurance Policy to maintain its international competitiveness and reputability.

- Annual Reviews: The journal conducts annual policy reviews and benchmarking against other international open-access journals.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): The editorial team systematically monitors metrics such as acceptance and rejection rates, peer review turnaround times (generally 6–8 weeks), and citation impact.
- DEI Commitment: The journal actively promotes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), encouraging submissions from underrepresented groups and ensuring international representation on its boards

4.4. Editorial Board Composition

To maintain scientific rigor, the Editorial Board structure shall include specialized roles: including the Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors, Statistical Editors, managing editors and Technical Editors, are approved by the management team of Madda Walabu University for three-year terms.

- Associate (Section) Editors responsible for managing peer review within specific disciplines
- Statistical Editors to ensure methodological and analytical accuracy
- Technical Editors to oversee formatting, data presentation, and compliance with publication standards. They collectively ensure the journal's editorial integrity and alignment with its mission. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- Policy Guidance: in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Board Chair, they are working on developing editorial policies, strategic initiatives, and journal development, such as expanding indexing or abstracting, thereby enhancing journal reputability.
- Manuscript Evaluation: Participate in manuscript evaluation when consulted by the Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editors, particularly for complex or contentious submissions.
- Ethical Oversight: Support investigations into ethical concerns or misconduct, providing expertise and ensuring adherence to COPE guidelines.
- Journal Promotion: Promote JIBHS within academic and professional communities, encouraging high-quality submissions and increasing the journal's visibility.

4.4.1. Subject Expertise and Academic Standing

All Editorial Board members must be highly qualified scholars or professionals with demonstrated expertise in biomedical and health sciences. Selection criteria include:

- A strong record of peer-reviewed publications
- Active involvement in research and scholarly activities

- Experience in peer review and academic publishing

The journal clearly distinguishes between Editorial Board members (operational roles) and Advisory Board members (strategic roles). The journal maintains an explicit separation between its two governing bodies to ensure organizational transparency: Editorial Board Members: Responsible for operational roles, managing the active workflow of the peer review process, and day-to-day journal operations. Advisory Board Members: Responsible for strategic roles, steering the long-term vision, development, and international alignment of the journal.

4.2.3. Transparency and Public Listing

The journal shall ensure full transparency by publicly listing all Editorial Board members on its official website. The listing must include:

- Full name and academic title (e.g., PhD, MD, Associate Professor)
- Institutional and departmental affiliation
- Country of residence
- Official institutional email address

5. PEER REVIEW POLICY

JIBHS employs a double-blind peer review system, ensuring impartiality and scientific rigor.

5.1 Review Standards

- Minimum of two independent reviewers per manuscript
- Reviewers selected based on expertise and absence of conflicts
- Use of standardized review forms

5.2 Ethical Review Conduct

Reviewers must:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide objective and constructive feedback
- Avoid bias or personal judgment

5.3 Decision Transparency

5.3.1 Justification of Decisions

- Expert & Objective Feedback: For JIBHS, reviewers are explicitly mandated to conduct objective reviews, avoid personal criticism of the authors, and back up their scientific assessments with clear, supportive arguments.

- Scientific Criteria & Editorial Independence: JIBHS guarantees full editorial independence, stating that decisions are based solely on academic merit without any institutional, commercial, or external body interference.
- Removal of Biases: To safeguard transparency when editorial board members or guest editors submit their own papers, both journals ensure they are completely removed from all editorial duties for that manuscript, and an independent editor oversees the peer-review process.

5.3.2. Clear Communication to Authors

- Anonymized Reviewer Comments: Authors are explicitly provided with anonymized reviewer comments to understand the rationale behind the editorial decisions and guide their point-by-point revision responses.
- Systematic Correspondence: The operational workflows utilize standardized communication models through electronic submission channels or Open Journal Systems (OJS) repositories to track and log decisions transparently.

5.3.3. Process Timeliness and Transparency

- Originality and Desk Screening: Compliance with international frameworks (like COPE and DOAJ) requires early screening mechanisms. Originality verification and plagiarism checks via software like Turnitin happen immediately upon submission before entering peer review, allowing fast-tracked desk rejection or progression.
- Formal Appeals Process: In alignment with international publishing ethics, transparency includes a robust dispute resolution framework. Authors who disagree with an editorial rejection can submit a formal written appeal providing supporting evidence. These appeals are meticulously reviewed and referred to independent members of the Editorial or Advisory Board to ensure complete impartiality before the final decision is issued.

6. PUBLICATION ETHICS AND MALPRACTICE STATEMENT

JIBHS strictly adheres to internationally recognized ethical standards to ensure transparency, integrity, and scientific rigour in its publications

6.1. Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

- Malpractice Prevention: JIBHS follows COPE principles to prohibit and address research misconduct, specifically plagiarism, data fabrication, and falsification.

- Originality Screening: All manuscripts undergo mandatory screening using plagiarism-detection software (such as Turnitin) before peer review, with a maximum acceptable similarity index of 20%.
- Sanctions: Any proven misconduct results in the immediate rejection of a submission or the retraction of a published article.
- Dispute Resolution: The journal utilizes COPE guidelines and flowcharts to handle ethical concerns, appeals, and allegations of misconduct impartially.

6.2. ICMJE Recommendations

- Authorship Criteria: To ensure accountability, JIBHS mandates that all listed authors meet four specific requirements:
 - Substantial contribution to the work's design, data acquisition, or analysis.
 - Drafting or critically revising the manuscript for intellectual content.
 - Final approval of the version to be published.
 - Agreement to be accountable for the integrity and accuracy of the work.
- Conflict of Interest: All authors, reviewers, and editors must transparently disclose any financial, personal, or professional relationships that could bias their judgment.
- Clinical Trial Registration: In alignment with ICMJE policy, clinical trials must be registered in a public trials registry (such as ClinicalTrials.gov) before patient enrolment, with the registration number provided in the manuscript.

6.3. Core Research Integrity Standards

- Ethical Approval: Studies involving human participants, biological material, or animals must obtain prior approval from an accredited institutional review board (IRB) or ethical committee.
- Informed Consent: Authors must confirm that participants provided free and informed consent for both participation and the publication of identifiable data.
- The Rule of Assent: JIBHS is very focused on clinical sciences, public health and health of mothers and children. When doing studies with kids, minors under 18 or people who can't give consent JIBHS says researchers must get a formal agreement from the participant. They also need to get written consent, from the parents or guardians.
- Compliance Statements: Research must certify adherence to the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments

6.4 Withdrawal Policy

JIBHS strongly discourages withdrawing manuscripts because it wastes editorial and reviewer resources. Authors should only submit when fully ready. A manuscript is not considered withdrawn until the Editor-in-Chief provides written approval. The formal request must include the title, ID number, a justified reason, and signed consent from all co-authors.

Withdrawal Stages

- Before Peer Review: Generally accepted without penalty, provided there is a valid reason and formal approval.
- During Peer Review: Allowed only under exceptional circumstances (e.g., discovery of major errors or ethical concerns) and requires a detailed explanation.
- After Acceptance: Strictly prohibited, except in rare cases involving proven ethical violations, legal issues, or fatal technical errors, evaluated under COPE guidelines.

Unethical Withdrawal

- Breaches: Withdrawing without valid justification, pulling a paper during/after review just to submit it elsewhere, or ghosting the editors to publish elsewhere are deemed unethical.
- Penalties: Violations can result in immediate manuscript rejection, a temporary or permanent submission ban, and notification sent to the authors' affiliated institutions.

6.5 changing Authors

While the text does not clearly state the rules for adding or removing co-authors JIBHS follows the guidelines set by the COPE and the recommendations by ICMJE. These are mentioned in sections 4.1.1, 4.4 and 6.1.

The COPE guidelines and ICMJE recommendations say that changing authors (, like adding, removing or changing the order of co-authors) must follow a framework that is both legal and ethical.

7. OPEN ACCESS POLICY

JIBHS operates under a full open-access model designed to meet international indexing standards, specifically those of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

The core components of this policy are as follows:

7.1 Access

- Immediate Availability: All journal content is freely accessible to the public immediately upon publication.

- No Embargo: There are no embargo periods, ensuring that research is available to the global scientific community without delay.
- Equitable Dissemination: This model supports JIBHS's objective of promoting equitable knowledge dissemination.

7.2 Licensing

- Creative Commons Framework: Articles are published under Creative Commons(CC) licenses, which define how the work can be reused by others.
- Preferred Licenses: The journal's preferred licenses are CC BY (Attribution) or CC BY-NC 4.0 (Attribution-NonCommercial). The work cannot be used for commercial purposes or financial gain by others
- Usage Rights: Under the CC BY-NC 4.0 license (also used by its sister journal, JESSD), others are permitted to copy, distribute, and adapt the work for non-commercial purposes, provided the original work is properly cited.

7.3 Copyright

- Author Retention: Authors retain full copyright of their own work.
- Publishing Rights: While authors keep the copyright, they grant JIBHS the necessary publishing rights to disseminate the work.

Author Retention of Copyright means

When JIBHS states that authors retain full copyright, it means:

- The author legally owns the work (not the journal)
- The author can:
 - Reuse the article in books, teaching, or future research
 - Share it on institutional repositories or personal websites
 - Grant permissions to others

8. ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGES

In alignment with the standards for Madda Walabu University publications and international indexing requirements (such as DOAJ), the policies regarding Article Processing Charges (APCs) for JIBHS emphasize transparency and equity.

JIBHS Fee Policy

The JIBHS operates under a "diamond" open-access model specifically designed to ensure the equitable dissemination of knowledge.

- No Author Fees: The journal explicitly does not charge any fees to authors for the submission or publication of their manuscripts.

JIBHS does not charge any fees to authors at any stage of the publication process. Specifically:

- No submission fees
- No peer review fees
- No article processing charges (APCs)
- No publication or page charges

Authors can submit and publish their work free of charge, ensuring that financial constraints do not limit scholarly contribution.

- No Reader Fees: Access to all content is free for readers, with no subscription or "pay-per-view" costs.
- Mission-Driven: This no-fee approach is central to the journal's mission of promoting fairness, inclusivity, and resilience in addressing global development challenges

9. DIGITAL ARCHIVING AND PERSISTENCY

To meet international indexing standards and ensure the historical record of research is maintained, the JIBHS has established a comprehensive policy for digital archiving and persistence.

9.1. Long-Term Preservation Systems

JIBHS ensures the long-term availability of its content through multiple redundant archiving strategies:

- Institutional Repository Archiving: All articles are permanently stored within the Madda Walabu University Institutional Repository.
- LOCKSS and CLOCKSS: The journal participates in these international digital preservation initiatives ("Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe" and "Controlled LOCKSS") to provide secure, third-party archiving.
- OJS Preservation Plugins: The journal utilizes the preservation plugins available through the Open Journal Systems (OJS) repository to safeguard digital content.

9.2. DOI Registration

To guarantee persistent access, discoverability, and citation integrity, JIBHS assigns a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) to every published article.

- Registration Agency: For JIBHS, DOIs are registered through CrossRef.

- Purpose: The assignment of DOIs ensures that even if a journal's URL changes or it ceases publication, the articles remain findable and citable via a permanent link.

9.3. Alignment with MWU and International Standards

These archiving measures align JIBHS with the established standards of its sister publication, JIBHS, which also uses redundant systems to ensure content remains accessible despite technical failures or institutional changes. Furthermore, these policies reflect the WHO's recommendation that research journals should deposit content in multiple archives controlled by third parties, such as libraries, to preserve the scholarly record

10. PLAGIARISM AND SCREENING POLICY

The JIBHS maintain a rigorous plagiarism and screening policy as a core component of their publication ethics.

10.1. Mandatory Screening and Verification

All manuscripts must undergo originality verification immediately upon submission and prior to being sent for expert peer review. The primary tool utilized for this screening is the Turnitin plagiarism-detection software. Technical Editors assist in this process by checking for proper citations and flagging any potential ethical concerns for the Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editors.

10.2. Acceptable Similarity Threshold

- Similarity Limit: The maximum acceptable similarity index for manuscripts is 20%.
- Exclusions: For JIBHS, this threshold is calculated by excluding preliminary pages, references, questionnaires, and standard methodological expressions.
- Revision Requirements: If minor textual overlap is found within the acceptable 20% threshold, authors may be required to perform revisions to ensure the text is sufficiently original.

10.3. Handling Misconduct

The journals take research misconduct, including deliberate plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and redundant publication, very seriously.

- Rejection or Retraction: Proven cases of misconduct result in the immediate rejection of a submission or the retraction of a published article. Retracted articles are watermarked to preserve the scholarly record while notifying the community of the breach.
- Sanctions: In serious cases, the journal follows Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines, which may involve:

- Notifying the authors' affiliated institutions or funding bodies.
- Imposing a ban on future submissions to the journal.

This policy ensures that the journals maintain the highest standards of research integrity, accountability, and scholarly trust.

11. WEBSITE QUALITY AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

To meet the critical technical standards for international indexing services such as Scopus and the DOAJ, the JIBHS follows specific website and quality requirements as outlined below:

11.1. Functional Integrity & Publishing Platform:

The website must remain fully operational with error-free submission portals and article downloads. It requires regular updates (for new issues, news, and policy changes), routine monitoring of links/DOIs, and the use of reliable publishing platforms like OJS.

11.2. Navigation, Accessibility, & Transparency:

The site must offer intuitive, mobile-responsive, and globally accessible navigation (especially for researchers in low- and middle-income regions). It must clearly disclose the journal's ownership, funding sources, and commercial partnerships to ensure transparency.

11.3. Visibility of Guidelines & Ethics:

Comprehensive author guidelines (formatting, workflows, APCs, and copyright) must be clearly provided. The site must prominently display its publication ethics explicitly aligning with COPE and ICMJE guidelines and clearly outline its Aims and Scope alongside its double-blind peer review process.

11.4. Publication Frequency & Long-Term Archiving:

The journal's publication frequency must be explicitly stated to demonstrate reliability. To guarantee the permanent digital preservation of the scholarly record, the journal must assign CrossRef DOIs and utilize robust archiving networks like LOCKSS/CLOCKSS. Published articles cannot be removed; any corrections or retractions must follow COPE guidelines and remain linked to the original paper.

11.5.Strategic Indexing Value:

Adhering to these strict technical and qualitative benchmarks is vital for JIBHS to secure and maintain indexing in major international databases (DOAJ, Scopus, Web of Science), ultimately boosting its global visibility, academic credibility, and citation impact.

12. PUBLICATION FREQUENCY AND REGULARITY

The Journal of Interdisciplinary Biomedical and Health Sciences (JIBHS) has established a formal policy regarding its publication frequency and regularity, recognizing that a consistent schedule is a cornerstone of professional scholarly publishing.

12.1. Defined Publication Schedule

According to the journal's policy document, JIBHS is committed to the following:

- Minimum Frequency: The journal must publish at least two issues per year.
- Preferred Target: The primary goal is to achieve quarterly publication to ensure the timely dissemination of interdisciplinary health research.

12.2. Rationale for Regularity

The sources explicitly state that regularity is essential for indexing eligibility.

- Indexing Requirements: Maintaining a predictable and consistent schedule is a mandatory prerequisite for inclusion in prestigious international databases such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Scopus, and the Web of Science.
- Scholarly Trust: Consistency demonstrates that the journal has a stable pipeline of high-quality research and an efficient editorial team. Conversely, erratic publication can cause a journal to be perceived as poor quality, undermining the trust of both authors and readers.
- Technical Standard: Indexing services often categorize "timeliness of publication" as a key measure of production quality.

12.3. Context within Madda Walabu University and the Region

- JESSD Comparison: This policy aligns with and seeks to exceed the standards of its sister publication at Madda Walabu University, the Journal of Equity in Sciences and Sustainable Development (JESSD), which currently publishes biannually in January and June.
- Regional Benchmarking: By striving for a quarterly schedule, JIBHS aims for a higher frequency than regional peers like the Ethiopian Journal of Medical and Health Sciences (EJMHS), which is

issued biannually. It would instead align with long-established publications like the Ethiopian Medical Journal (EMJ), which appears four times a year.

13. INTERNATIONAL DIVERSITY

To meet the critical eligibility criteria for inclusion in international databases like Scopus, the JIBHS strictly promotes international diversity through the following pillars:

13.1. International Authorship

- **Global Submissions:** JIBHS is dedicated to enhancing authorship diversity by actively welcoming submissions from researchers worldwide, regardless of their career stage or ethnic affiliation.
- **Equitable Dissemination:** By operating under a no-fee open-access model, the journal removes financial barriers for authors from the Global South and low-income countries, fostering a truly international pool of contributors.
- **Indexing Requirement:** As noted in the WHO Manual for Editors, major indexing services prioritize journals that demonstrate high diversity among authors of both source and cited articles.

13.2. Global Editorial Board Representation

- **Diverse Composition:** The policy mandates that the editorial board must include members from diverse institutions and countries. These members serve as the journal's representatives to the international scientific community, using their influence to attract global submissions.
- **Strategic Advisory Bodies:** In alignment with MWU standards, JIBHS utilizes a National and International Advisory Board. These members, appointed for five-year terms, provide strategic guidance on expanding the journal's global reach and ensuring it aligns with international standards.
- **Thematic Expertise:** Board members are expected to be highly qualified professional scholars with strong research backgrounds, ensuring that the journal's leadership has the global credibility required for Scopus indexing.

13.3. Cross-Country Collaboration

- **Encouraging Partnerships:** A primary objective of the journal is to enhance international collaboration. This includes promoting research that results from multi-center groups or interdisciplinary, cross-country teams.
- **Visibility in Networks:** The journal leverages its board members' professional networks to foster collaborations and encourage diverse global researchers to engage in joint scientific efforts.

- Policy and Practice: By focusing on interdisciplinary research that bridges science and population health, the journal seeks to inform national and international policy, making it a relevant platform for collaborative global health studies.

14. CITATION, IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND INDEXING STRATEGIES

JIBHS drives scholarly impact by enforcing rigorous peer reviews to ensure highly citable, original research. A dedicated Monitoring Committee actively tracks citation metrics and peer-review speeds to keep the journal internationally competitive. The journal follows a structured three-Phase indexing roadmap path to transition from regional visibility to elite global recognition:

- Phase 1 (Foundation): Targets Google Scholar for universal searchability and AJOL for strong regional credibility in Africa.
- Phase 2 (Open Access): Targets DOAJ by maintaining strict transparency, author copyright retention, and CC BY licensing.
- Phase 3 (Global Elite): Targets Scopus and Web of Science to secure international impact factors, requiring high diversity among authors and editors.

JIBHS secures persistent findability and correct citation tracking by assigning permanent CrossRef DOIs to all published articles, a strict requirement for advanced indexing.

15. QUALITY CONTROL AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The JIBHS implements a rigorous system for Quality Control and Continuous Improvement. This framework ensures the journal maintains high academic standards and remains competitive for international indexing in databases like Scopus and DOAJ. The primary components of this system include:

15.1. Annual Editorial Audits

- Monitoring Committee: JIBHS is mandated to establish a monitoring committee specifically responsible for reviewing editorial practices and ensuring they comply with international standards.
- Performance Indicators: These audits involve tracking and reporting on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as:
 - Acceptance and rejection rates.
 - Peer-review turnaround times to prevent publication lags.
 - Citation metrics to evaluate global reach and impact.
 - Indexing achievements and progress through the phased indexing strategy.

- **Systematic Evaluation:** By systematically evaluating these metrics, the journal can identify weaknesses (such as slow processing times) and prioritize improvements to enhance its reputation.

15.2. Reviewer Performance Evaluation

To maintain scientific rigour, JIBHS and its sister journal JESSD monitor the effectiveness of their external experts through formal evaluations.

- **Evaluation Criteria:** Reviewers are assessed periodically based on specific metrics, including:
 - **Timeliness:** Adherence to agreed-upon deadlines.
 - **Quality of Feedback:** The depth, clarity, and instructiveness of their scientific comments.
 - **Objective Conduct:** The lack of bias and avoidance of personal judgment in their assessments.
- **Rating Systems:** It is recommended that journals use a rating system to identify the most thorough and reliable reviewers, allowing the editorial office to optimize the selection process for complex or high-priority manuscripts.
- **Professional Development:** Evaluation results help the journal identify areas where reviewers may need additional training or clearer guidelines on international standards.

15.3. Policy Updates

- **Annual Rule Reviews:** The journal updates its editorial and ethical guidelines every year to keep up with changing global publishing standards.
- **Ethical Standards of COPE:** It strictly aligns with COPE guidelines to handle research misconduct, such as plagiarism, fabricated data, and authorship disputes.
- **Ethical Standards of DOAJ:** To maintain DOAJ compliance, the journal clearly communicates its publishing fees, outlines author rights, and uses Creative Commons licensing.
- **Global Benchmarking:** It regularly compares its performance against top international open-access biomedical journals to ensure it remains competitive and up-to-date.

16. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

- **Global Compliance:** Guarantees that all journal activities fully conform to DOAJ and Scopus standards, emphasizing transparency, ethical integrity, and global diversity.
- **Editorial Assessment:** Performs methodical workflow evaluations, encompassing yearly editorial audits and assessments of peer-review efficiency to uphold scientific integrity.
- **KPI Monitoring & Reporting:** Tracks and reports on essential performance metrics required by the university structure, particularly:

- Rates of acceptance and rejection.
- Times for peer-review feedback (efficiency).
- Metrics of citation and worldwide influence.
- Tracking achievements and advancements.

17. POLICY REVIEW

To ensure the Journal of Interdisciplinary Biomedical and Health Sciences (JIBHS) maintains its international standing and successfully moves through its phased indexing strategy, its formal policy mandates a regular.

17. 1. Mandatory Annual Review

The JIBHS policy document explicitly states that all editorial and ethical guidelines must be reviewed annually. This requirement ensures that the journal's operations do not become stagnant but instead evolve alongside the rapidly changing landscape of scholarly publishing.

17. 2. Core Objectives of the Review

The primary goal of these annual evaluations is to maintain alignment with two critical areas:

- **Evolving International Publishing Standards:** The journal must ensure its practices remain compliant with current best practices from global bodies such as the COPE and the DOAJ.
- **Indexing Requirements:** As JIBHS aims for inclusion in prestigious databases like Scopus and the Web of Science, the annual review assesses whether current policies meet the rigorous and specific eligibility criteria of these platforms.

17. 3. Integration with Quality Assurance

The review process is a part of the journals plan to keep getting better. JIBHS wants to make sure it is doing a job just like its sister journal, JESSD. So the journal does a things to check itself.

- It compares itself to well-known journals to make sure it is still a good and trustworthy journal.
- It looks at how it's doing each year using things like how many times its papers are cited and how long it takes to review papers to see if it needs to make any changes to be more efficient and well-known around the world.
- It asks the people who write for the journal review papers. Read the journal what they think so it can make the journal better for everyone.

By doing this review every year JIBHS makes sure its rules are always up to date and that it is always doing its best to be honest, transparent and excellent, in its research just like it wants to be. JIBHS wants

research integrity, transparency and academic excellence to always be its priorities. The review process helps JIBHS to keep its policy a living document that really works to safeguard research integrity, transparency and academic excellence.

18. CONCLUSION

JIBHS is an organized, high-integrity open-access journal established by Madda Walabu University. Its primary goal is to elevate regional health research to a global audience by securing indexing in premier databases like DOAJ, Scopus, and Web of Science. JIBHS policy document concluded prioritizing the following Strategic Pillars

- **Equity & Openness:** Operates with a zero-fee model for both authors and readers. It uses Creative Commons licensing and allows authors to retain full copyright, which heavily supports researchers in developing nations.
- **Scientific Integrity:** Enforces rigorous quality control through double-blind peer reviews, mandatory Turnitin plagiarism screening, and strict compliance with COPE, ICMJE, and Declaration of Helsinki guidelines.
- **Technical Excellence:** Utilizes the Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform, issues persistent identifiers (DOIs) for accurate citation tracking, and secures content via long-term digital archiving systems.
- **Reliability & Diversity:** Managed by a specialized board of experts committed to a regular publication schedule and dedicated to building an internationally diverse base of authors and editors.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Conducts annual policy and performance reviews to dynamically adapt and maintain cutting-edge publishing standards.

JIBHS is a transparent, trusted, and globally minded platform designed to publish impactful research that directly improves international health outcomes and policy.

19. REFERENCES

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