For Qur'anic Studies
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Peer Review Policy

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مَركزُ بَراثا للدِّراساتِ وَالبُحوثِ
بيروتْ ـ بَغدادْ

1. General Principles of Peer Review:

Tabyin Journal employs a double-blind peer review process to evaluate research submitted for publishing. This ensures the independence and objectivity of the assessment, maintains the confidentiality of the procedures, and prevents personal or institutional considerations from influencing scholarly judgments.

Submissions are evaluated based on specific academic criteria, including scholarly originality, methodological soundness, the accuracy of reasoning, the value of the findings, and the research's contribution to the advancement of knowledge within the journal's scope.

The journal upholds the principle of equality among all researchers throughout the peer review process, regardless of their institutional or academic affiliations, nationality, professional position, or intellectual orientation, provided that their work meets the established scholarly requirements and publishing policies.

2. Initial Editorial Screening:

All submissions undergo an initial screening by the editorial board (or its designated representatives) to ensure they meet the fundamental requirements for publishing, including:

a. Relevance of the research topic to the journal's scope and scholarly interests.

b. Compliance with academic writing standards and submission/ publishing requirements.

c. Clarity of the research problem, objectives, and methodology.

d. Adherence to the principles of academic integrity and proper citation/ documentation.

e. Verification that there are no apparent violations of research and publishing ethics.

f. Removal of any information that reveals the researcher's identity from the version sent to the reviewers.

The editorial board reserves the right to return a manuscript to the author to address formal or methodological requirements. It may also decline to send a manuscript for review if it falls outside the journal's scope or fails to meet essential criteria, in which case the reasons will be communicated to the researcher.

Passing the initial screening does not constitute approval for the publishing of the research.

3. Selection of Academic Reviewers:

Manuscripts that pass the initial editorial screening are referred to specialized academic reviewers. These reviewers are selected by the journal, either from among the editorial board members or from external researchers and academics, based on the nature and subject matter of the research, as well as the requirements for scientific evaluation.

In selecting reviewers, the journal considers their relevant academic expertise, professional competence, research experience, independence, and objectivity. It also ensures the absence of any conflicts of interest and verifies the reviewer's ability to complete the evaluation within the specified timeframe.

Each manuscript is referred to at least two independent reviewers. A third reviewer may be consulted, if necessary, particularly in cases where there is a significant discrepancy between the reviewers' reports.

All reviewers, whether they are members of the editorial board or external experts, are subject to the same standards and obligations regarding the confidentiality, integrity, and independence of the review process.

4. Double-Blind Peer Review System:

The journal maintains the anonymity of both parties involved in the review process, in accordance with the following guidelines:

a. The researcher's identity and personal identifying information are not disclosed to the reviewers. 2. The identities of the reviewers shall not be disclosed to the researcher.

b. Research papers shall be sent to reviewers only after removing information that would allow for the direct identification of the authors, with reasonable measures taken to minimize the possibility of indirect identification.

c. Review reports and related correspondence shall be kept within the journal's editorial records.

d. Reviewers may not communicate directly with the researcher regarding the paper under review.

e. All correspondence concerning the review process and any subsequent revisions shall be conducted through the Editor-in-Chief or the authorized editorial body.

Should scientific necessity require a discussion between reviewers regarding certain aspects of the research, a request must be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief, who will facilitate such communication in a manner that preserves the confidentiality of the process and the independence of the evaluation.

5. Responsibilities of the Scientific Reviewer:

A scientific reviewer is expected to read the research paper carefully, evaluate it according to objective academic standards, and provide clear, constructive feedback that contributes to enhancing the paper's scientific quality. Their responsibilities include:

a. Ensuring that the research topic falls within their area of scientific expertise before accepting the review assignment.

b. Verifying their ability to complete the evaluation within the specified timeframe.

c. Declining the review assignment if there is a conflict of interest or any other impediment that would prevent an independent evaluation.

d. Maintaining the confidentiality of the research paper and its contents, and refraining from sharing them with any unauthorized party.

e. Refraining from using any unpublished information, ideas, or findings contained in the research paper for personal gain or for their own research purposes. 6. Provide precise, scholarly feedback, avoiding personal judgments or offensive language.

f. Identify areas of weakness or flaws, and suggest necessary revisions to address them.

g. If a recommendation to reject a manuscript is made, provide clear, scholarly justifications for this decision.

k. Notify the Editor-in-Chief if there is any suspicion of plagiarism, manipulation of sources or data, or any other significant breach of research ethics.

l. Do not involve third parties or input the manuscript–or any parts thereof–into external tools, including artificial intelligence (AI) tools, without explicit permission from the journal and assurance that confidentiality will be maintained.

6. Criteria for Research Evaluation:

The journal employs a set of scholarly, methodological, and linguistic criteria for evaluating research, including:

a. Academic Integrity: The accurate attribution of ideas and texts to their original sources, precise documentation, and respect for intellectual property rights.

b. Originality: The novelty of the research problem, approach, or findings, and the value of the knowledge contribution offered by the research.

c. Title and Content: The accuracy of the title in reflecting the research topic, and its alignment with the research problem, content, and findings.

d. Abstract: The clarity of the abstract and its ability to concisely present the research problem, objectives, methodology, and key findings.

e. Introduction and Research Problem: The clarity and significance of the research problem and its objectives, as well as the definition of the questions the research seeks to address.

f. Research Methodology: The suitability of the methodology for the subject matter, the soundness of its application, and the alignment of research tools with the stated objectives.

g. Scientific Structure: The coherence of the research sections and their subheadings, the logical sequence of ideas and arguments, and the absence of unjustified repetition.

h. Scientific and Analytical Level: The depth of the analysis, the precision of concepts, the soundness of reasoning, and the ability to critically discuss opinions, texts, and evidence.

i. Sources and References: The relevance of the sources to the topic, their scholarly value, the accuracy with which they are cited, and their sufficiency for addressing the research problem.

j. Language and Style: Linguistic correctness, the precise use of terminology, clarity of expression, and adherence to academic writing conventions.

k. Results: The extent to which the results are grounded in the analysis and evidence, their alignment with the research problem and objectives, and their scholarly value.

l. Length of the Research: The appropriateness of the length in relation to the topic and the requirements of scholarly inquiry, as well as compliance with the limits established by the journal.

In their report, the reviewer shall identify areas of deficiency and specific sections requiring revision, clarifying the nature of the necessary changes whenever possible.

7. Duration of the Review Process:

The journal allocates a period of fifteen days for the completion of the scholarly review, commencing from the date the reviewer accepts the assignment and receives the research paper.

The reviewer is obligated to notify the editorial board if they are unable to complete the evaluation within the specified timeframe, allowing the board to take appropriate action, such as granting an extension or assigning the review to another reviewer.

The total duration for processing a research paper may vary depending on the responsiveness of the reviewers, the nature of the required revisions, and whether additional rounds of review are necessary.

8. Outcomes of the Scientific Peer Review:

Each reviewer shall submit a report containing a scientific assessment of the research and detailed observations, along with one of the following recommendations:

a. Suitable for publishing: The research meets the fundamental scientific requirements and does not require substantive revisions.

b. Suitable for publishing after minor revisions: The research requires limited corrections or improvements that do not affect its core scientific structure.

c. Reconsideration after substantive revisions: The research requires addressing fundamental aspects related to its methodology, analysis, structure, or findings; following such revisions, it shall be subject to re-evaluation, as determined by the editorial board.

d. Unsuitable for publishing: The research contains significant scientific

or methodological shortcomings that preclude its acceptance for publishing in its submitted form.

Recommendations must be based on clear scientific grounds and be consistent with the observations provided in the review report.

9. Discrepancies Between Reviewer Reports:

In the event of a substantive disagreement between the reviewers' recommendations, the editorial board shall review the reports to determine the nature and scientific basis of the discrepancy.

The board may consult a third specialized reviewer to provide an independent assessment or request further clarifications from the original reviewers, while maintaining the confidentiality of the process.

Scientific reports shall serve as the basis for the editorial decision, with due consideration given to the strength of the arguments presented and their alignment with the established evaluation criteria.

Discrepancies between reports shall not be resolved merely by counting the number of recommendations for or against publishing.

10. Revisions and Re-evaluation:

Reviewers' comments shall be communicated to the author through the authorized editorial body, without disclosing the reviewers' identities.

The author is required to address the requested scholarly revisions and submit a revised version of the manuscript, accompanied by a statement detailing the changes made and providing a justification for any comments that were not incorporated.

The editorial board shall review the submitted revisions and may return the manuscript to the original reviewer or assign it to a new reviewer, depending on the nature of the revisions.

An additional round of revisions may be requested if necessary to meet scholarly standards; such requests shall be specific and justified.

Addressing the reviewers' comments does not guarantee automatic acceptance of the manuscript, as the final decision depends on the extent to which the manuscript meets scholarly requirements following the revisions.

11. Final Publishing Decision:

Reviewers' reports and recommendations serve as the scholarly basis for publishing decisions. The Editor-in-Chief, in accordance with the journal's established authority, shall issue the final decision after reviewing the evaluation results and ensuring that all publishing requirements have been met.

The decision is based on the quality and originality of the research, the soundness of its methodology, and the author's responsiveness to scholarly feedback, while also taking into account the journal's scope and editorial policies.

The author shall be notified of the decision through official, approved channels, with the inclusion of any scholarly feedback deemed appropriate for disclosure.

Any conflict of interest on the part of the individual responsible for the decision must be disclosed, and the final determination regarding the manuscript shall be referred to an independent editorial authority, where necessary.

12. Objections to Review Decisions:

An author may submit a reasoned academic objection to a decision to reject their manuscript, provided the objection is based on a substantive academic error in the evaluation process or a procedural breach of the journal's established review protocols.

The Editorial Board shall review all submitted objections. Members who previously evaluated the manuscript in question, as well as any member with a conflict of interest that could compromise the impartiality of the decision, shall be excluded from the deliberations and voting process regarding that objection.

A quorum for reviewing an objection is reached when two-thirds of the Editorial Board members (as listed by the journal) are present, with any fractional number rounded up to the next whole number. If a quorum cannot be met due to the exclusion of certain board members, the journal may appoint temporary academic members from outside the Editorial Board to fulfill the required number. Such individuals must possess the necessary academic expertise, maintain impartiality, have no conflicts of interest, and must not have previously participated in the evaluation of the manuscript under objection.

These temporary academic members are granted the right to participate exclusively in the deliberations and voting concerning the specific objection at hand; this does not confer upon them permanent membership in the Editorial Board.

Once a quorum is established, the Board shall decide whether to accept or reject

the objection based on a majority vote of the eligible participants. In the event of a tie, the position supported by the Editor-in-Chief shall prevail, unless the Editor-in-Chief has been excluded from the process due to a conflict of interest. If an objection is accepted, the research paper shall be referred to a new, independent academic reviewer, one who has not previously participated in the evaluation of the paper or in the vote regarding the objection. The report provided by this new reviewer shall be decisive in determining the paper's suitability for publishing, and the author shall be required to implement any academic revisions requested by said reviewer.

The author shall be notified of the outcome of the objection and the subsequent decision through the journal's official channels. The decision reached following this re-evaluation shall be considered final, and no further objections shall be entertained under the journal's established procedures.

13. Academic Integrity and Conflicts of Interest:

The journal is committed to ensuring that the peer-review process remains free from personal, institutional, financial, or intellectual interests that could compromise the objectivity of the evaluation.

Reviewers are required to disclose any relationship or interest that might affect the independence of their academic judgment. The editorial board shall take the necessary measures to address any identified conflicts of interest.

Allegations of plagiarism, scientific misconduct, or breaches of research ethics shall be handled in accordance with the journal's established publishing ethics policy.

14. Confidentiality of Records and Independence of the Review Process:

Manuscripts, peer-review reports, and related correspondence shall be maintained within the journal's editorial records, with access restricted to individuals authorized based on their specific responsibilities.

The journal is committed to protecting the confidentiality of unpublished research data and ensuring that such information is not used outside the scope of the evaluation and publishing process, except as required for the investigation of academic misconduct or to fulfill relevant legal obligations. The journal ensures that decisions regarding peer review and publishing remain independent of any administrative, financial, or institutional interference that is not based on legitimate scientific or editorial considerations.