



Editorial

Responding to an Article after an Editorial Review

Ankur J. Shah¹ Chandrasekharan Kesavadas²

¹Department of Radiology, Sadbhav Imaging Centre, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

²Department of Radiology, Sree Chitra Thirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India

Indian J Radiol Imaging 2025;35(Suppl S1):S46–S48.

First Submission

Authors usually do not prepare their manuscripts for any specific journal. However, while preparing the manuscript, authors should remember the universal guidelines from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, published in 2010 as the “Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journal.”¹ Still, there can be some variations in every journal. So, before submitting the manuscript, the authors should read the “Instructions to the authors” given in every journal. Regarding the *Indian Journal of Radiology and Imaging (IJRI)*, various types of manuscripts are published in *IJRI*, and authors should adequately choose the category before submitting. They should also check the word limit, as every category has a different word limit.²

Authorship

Regarding authorship, it is essential to follow the authorship criteria.¹ Authorship should be given only to those who have made substantial contributions to (1) conception and design or acquisition of data or analysis and interpretation of the data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically, and (3) final approval of the version to be published. The contributors who have done all three of these should only be given authorship. The order of contributors should be based on their relative contribution to the study and in writing the manuscript. In *IJRI*, the number of authors for a study from a single institute should not exceed six.² If there are more than six authors, a justification should be included. The authors should have done substantial work in that field when writing a review article.

Article Sections

Each section of an original article (title, abstract, introduction, methodology, discussion, etc.) should be prepared correctly so that the chances of its acceptance are high.^{2,3} Figures should be of high quality. The size of every image should be within the range of the journal’s guidelines published in the instructions to the authors.² Take care not to show the patient’s identity. References should be formatted as per the journal style.² The standard levels of evidence for primary research and the reporting guidelines such as STROBE guidelines/CONSORT statement/PRISMA statement need to be followed.² If you take care of all this while submitting the manuscript, the chances of an immediate rejection are reduced.

Editorial Decision

Usually, four editorial decisions can be made: acceptance, major revisions required, minor revisions needed, and rejection. It is extremely uncommon that the first decision of the editorial board is to accept without any revisions. The editor usually sends the manuscript for review to the associate editor, who has expertise in the subject area of the manuscript. The editors decide whether the manuscript needs to be sent for review. Rejection without an external review happens for many reasons, the most common being single case reports without novelty and manuscripts in subject areas without any interest to the journal’s readers. Those manuscripts that need review are sent to two to four reviewers. The decision is made based on the reviewers’ comments. *IJRI* follows a double-blinded review. Both authors and reviewers are blind to each other’s identity. Only the editor/associate editor knows both

Address for correspondence
Chandrasekharan Kesavadas, MD,
Department of Radiology, Sree
Chitra Thirunal Institute for Medical
Sciences and Technology,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India
(e-mail: chandkesav@yahoo.com).

DOI <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0044-1791748>.
ISSN 0971-3026.

© 2025. Indian Radiological Association. All rights reserved.

This is an open access article published by Thieme under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonDerivative-NonCommercial-License, permitting copying and reproduction so long as the original work is given appropriate credit. Contents may not be used for commercial purposes, or adapted, remixed, transformed or built upon. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

Thieme Medical and Scientific Publishers Pvt. Ltd., A-12, 2nd Floor, Sector 2, Noida-201301 UP, India

parties. Two to four reviews received by the editor are evaluated to make the decision. Rarely does one reviewer respond to the review request, making it essential for the editor/associate editor to evaluate the submission. If the majority agree to a revision of the article (major or minor), it is sent for revision to the authors. If most reviewers reject the article, it results in rejection. The editor and associate editors make the final decisions based on reviewer comments. If required, the editors can send the article to more reviewers, especially when they feel that comments from more reviewers are needed or if a review is of poor quality and cannot be counted as a review. The review process may get delayed in such situations.

If minor or major revisions are required, the author must resubmit the manuscript after modifying it based on the reviewer's comments. Usually, the revised manuscript is sent to the same reviewers to assess whether their comments have been addressed satisfactorily. The reviewers are requested to give an opinion about the revised manuscript and its suitability for publication. The reviewer/editor may ask for further revisions. This process continues till the reviewer/editor is satisfied and the manuscript is accepted.

Important Causes of Rejection of Manuscript

The following are the most common causes for manuscript rejection in *IJRI*:

- Copy of thesis: Usually, such manuscripts are not in journal format. There will be an extensive literature review but with a poor discussion of results and their clinical implications.
- Plagiarism: The editors detect a high percentage of similarity based on results from good plagiarism-checking tools.
- Poor manuscript writing, usually due to a lack of mentorship of a senior author. Many of the senior authors would not have read the final version of the submitted article.
- Wrong choice of the journal: The manuscript is good, but the subject area is of no interest to the journal's readership. It is essential to choose the journal of submission correctly.
- Poor language with several grammatical mistakes: It is a common problem when the authors' first language is not English. If possible, have the manuscript reviewed by a native English speaker before submission.
- Lack of originality: The information has already been reported and the study does not present any new finding. A good literature search is required, especially for case reports. There should be some new information in the case report. False claims of "first report" should be avoided. The reviewer may find it is not and this can result in rejection
- Wrong methodology: It is also essential that the "Methods" section is written in detail.
- Inadequate sample size: The first step in any research is to determine the size of a clinically meaningful and required sample for a particular study.
- Lack of clinical relevance: Before doing a study and writing it up for a journal, ask yourself, will the results of the study be of any use in the practice of medicine or add to the scientific literature?
- Repetition: An example is repeating sentences and material written in the Introduction again while writing the Discussion.
- Poorly written discussion and conclusion: The discussion should not be a literature review. The discussion should focus on the important results of the study and how these results can help in practice. There should be a mention of how the study results are similar to or different from previously published articles. Concise communication and take-home points should be there. The conclusion should support the research findings and not be a suggestion or a statement that does not support the study result. Authors may read the article by Ramakantan in this special issue to understand how to write the discussion.³
- Old references only: Citing recent and important references, including research articles, is essential.

Strategies Authors Can Use to Address Reviewer Comments after the Initial Review Process

- Each question/clarification raised should be given importance. They should be answered separately in a sequential order.^{4,5} The reviewer may also want changes to be made to the manuscript based on the suggestion. If so, the suggested modifications should be incorporated in the modified manuscript and changes highlighted.
- The responses should be concise and to the point.
- Questions asked or the changes required by one reviewer may contradict another reviewer. If so, the author should choose the most suitable reviewer suggestion. A polite reply should be given to the other reviewer for not incorporating his or her suggestion.
- A few questions may require to be answered intelligently. For example, the reviewer can mention that the dataset is too small and hence does not answer the research question. The authors can mention it is only a pilot study; the results of this study can be used in developing a hypothesis for a more extensive study, thus contributing to scientific literature. A small dataset can be mentioned as a limitation of the study. The reviewer may agree to your answers. Another option is to do more studies or evaluate more datasets; in that case, you will take more time to submit the results. The journal editor needs to be informed about this so that the possibility of late resubmission may be allowed.
- Get the help of experts like statisticians whenever required to answer questions that need expert help.
- Authors may be asked to rewrite the entire manuscript, incorporating the suggestions given. The editor can also ask for a resubmission. This is usually done when one of the reviewers asks for a rejection. It may go to the same reviewer or a different reviewer. Since it will be a fresh submission, the author can decide whether to submit to

the same or a different journal. If resubmission is being done, it is better to submit early.⁶

- Following the four basic rules for responding to the reviewers' comments is worthwhile: answer politely, answer completely, answer with evidence, and answer with creativity.⁴

References

- 1 Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals: writing and editing for biomedical publication. *J Pharmacol Pharmacother* 2010;1(01):42–58
- 2 IJRI. Instructions to the authors. Accessed September 26, 2024 at: https://lp.thieme.de/open-access-files/229/author_instructions.pdf
- 3 Ramakantan R. Writing the discussion in a research paper. *Indian J Radiol Imaging* 2024;doi:10.1055/s-0044-1790510
- 4 Navarrete-Dechent C, Ashique KT, Ingram JR, et al. The road to publication: advice from journal editors. *J Am Acad Dermatol* 2024;90(04):707–710
- 5 Cushman M. How I respond to peer reviewer comments. *Res Pract Thromb Haemost* 2023;7(02):100120
- 6 Jain P, Patwari AK. Responding to reviewers comments. *Indian Pediatr* 2016;53(12):1093–1095