

Introduction

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences is a multidisciplinary research journal published by the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Central Punjab (UCP) in the field of Political Science, International Relations, Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Governance and Public Policy and Philosophy.

Emphasizing original intellectual work with scholarly insight, the UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences aims to publish innovative proposals by providing a platform for researchers, academicians, and students to publish high-quality peer-reviewed papers that are theoretically informed, empirically rich, and methodologically rigorous on topics of contemporary and historical interest to scholars, policymakers and researchers. The Journal serves as a nexus between academia and policymakers, with a focus on promoting scholarship with practical application to societal challenges.

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Aims & Scope of Journal

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences is an open access and peer-reviewed journal published by the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Central Punjab Lahore, Pakistan. It encourages submissions on broad-based and diverse perspectives, from both national and international authors. The Journal encourages submissions that focus on all perspectives and all subjects pertaining to Political Science, International Relations, Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Governance and Public Policy, Peace and Conflict Studies and Philosophy. The Journal covers all topics in the aforementioned fields and welcomes both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Original, latest and futuristically conceptualized research manuscripts espoused with thoroughness and bearing improvement in already existent mainstream work, is of particular interest.

Peer Review Policy

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences follows the double-blind peer review process. Received manuscripts are kept confidential – anonymized versions of the manuscript are sent to referees. Articles are first considered by the editor after submission. Papers that do not fall within the scope of UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences are 'desk-rejected'. In addition, papers that fail to meet a minimum threshold for quality and originality are also rejected without being sent out to the reviewers.

Papers passing through this initial editorial scrutiny are then typically sent out to minimum of two referees (one national and one international). If one or more of these turn down the invitation to provide a review, other referees will subsequently be appointed. Normally, at least two authoritative reviews are needed before the respective editor can make a decision as to whether to accept, reject, or ask for a 'revise and resubmit' of the submitted paper.

Ethical Guidelines

A: Ethical Guidelines for the Editor

The Editor of a research journal should be responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining quality of the journal by publishing quality papers in his/her journal.
- Promotion of freedom of expression within the cultural, constitutional/legal framework.
- Providing integrity and credibility of the research contributions.
- Maintaining ethical standards of their journal.
- Providing corrigendum for any correction, clarification and apologies where required.
- Encourage new ideas and suggestions of authors, peer reviewers, members of editorial board and readers for improving quality of his/her journal.
- The Editor should only shortlist research papers which have relevance to the scope of the journal clearly stated in the Journal, using his /her judgment, but without any personal bias.
- Apply the process of blind peer review in true letter and spirit.
- Promote innovative findings in respective field and publishing them on priority.
- Promote anti plagiarism policy.
- Educate contributors (authors) about ethical practices in research, and implement the journal's policy without institutional pressure and revise the policy from time to time.
- The Editor must ensure that the Editorial Advisory Board of the Journal comprises prominent scholars of the field who can adequately promote the journal and may appoint members for a prescribed duration and add or revise constitution of the Board if required.
- The Editor should inform new board members about ethical guidelines and their expected role and update the Editorial Board members about development, challenges and any changes made in the journal policy.
- The criteria for the selection of research papers must be impartial and the Editor should select academically and scientifically sound articles.

- The Editor should disregard the discriminating factors, e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, cultural sentiments, political affiliation, seniority and/or institutional association of the author(s) while selecting articles for publication.
- The Editor must ensure confidentiality of the author(s) and reviewers during the process of double-blind peer review.
- Information pertaining to a research paper should not be disclosed by the Editor to anyone except the author(s) and reviewer(s).
- The Editor should prepare clear guidelines about preparing and formatting of a paper and print these guidelines in each issue of the journal.
- The Editor should encourage reviewers to comment on the validity of submitted research paper and identify 'subtle (simply copy-paste)' and/or 'blatant (paraphrasing)' type of plagiarism, if, practiced by the author(s).
- The Editor should confirm plagiarism (carry out objective check through Turnitin) and/or searching for similar titles to the submitted research paper, and
- The Editor should be prepared to publish a corrigendum, remove and retract a plagiarized article if it comes to his/her knowledge subsequent to its publication.
- The Editor must not use any unpublished information/data from the submitted research paper without the permission of the author(s).
- Any information received after the peer review process must be kept confidential and not used for personal gains.

B: Ethical Guidelines for the Author(s)

The following ethical guidelines are obligatory for all author(s) violation of which may result in application of penalties by the editor, including but not limited to the suspension or revocation of publishing privileges.

Reporting Standards:

- It is the author(s)' responsibility to ensure that the research report and data contain adequate detail and references to the sources of information in order to allow others to reproduce the results.
- Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

Originality and Plagiarism:

- It is the author(s)' responsibility to ascertain that s/he has submitted an entirely original work, giving due credit, by virtue of proper citations, to the works and/or words of others where they have been used.
- Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is not acceptable.

- Material quoted verbatim from the author(s)' previously published work or other sources must be placed in quotation marks.
- As per HEC's policy, in case the manuscript has a similarity index of more than 19%, it will either be rejected or left at the discretion of the Editorial Board for the purposes of a conditional acceptance.

Declaration:

- Authors are required to provide an undertaking / declaration stating that the manuscript under consideration contains solely their original work that is not under consideration for publishing in any other journal in any form.
- Authors may submit a manuscript previously published in abstracted form, for e.g. in the proceedings of an annual meeting, or in a periodical with limited circulation and availability such as reports by the Government agencies or a University.
- A manuscript that is co-authored must be accompanied by an undertaking explicitly stating that each author has contributed substantially towards the preparation of the manuscript in order to claim right to authorship.
- It is the responsibility of the corresponding author that s/he has ensured that all those who have substantially contributed in the manuscripts have been included in the author list and they have agreed to the order of authorship.

Multiple, Redundant and Current Publication:

- Authors should not submit manuscripts describing essentially the same research to more than one journal or publication except if is a re-submission of a rejected or withdrawn manuscript.
- Authors may re-publish previously conducted research that has been substantially altered or corrected using more meticulous analysis or by adding more data.
- The authors and editor must agree to the secondary publication, which must cite the primary references and reflect the same data and interpretation of the primary document.
- Concurrent submission of the same manuscript to more than one journal is unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.

Acknowledgment of Sources:

- A paper must always contain proper acknowledgment of the work of others, including clear indications of the sources of all information quoted or offered, except what is common knowledge.
- The author(s) must also acknowledge the contributions of people, organizations and institutes who assisted the process of research, including those who provided technical help, writing assistance or financial funding (in the acknowledgement).

- It is duty of the author(s) to conduct a literature review and properly cite the original publications that describe closely related work.

Authorship Credit:

- Authorship of the work may only be credited to those who have made a noteworthy contribution in conceptualization, design, conducting, data analysis and writing up of the manuscript.
- It is the responsibility of the corresponding author to include the name(s) of only those coauthors who have made significant contributions to the work.
- The corresponding author should ensure that all co- authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication. Others who have participated in certain substantive aspect of the research should be acknowledged for their contribution in an "Acknowledgement" section.

Privacy of Participants:

- Authors must respect the privacy of the participant of research and must not use any information obtained from them without their informed consent.
- Authors should ensure that only information that improves understanding of the study is shared.
- Authors must ensure that in instances where the identity of the participant needs to be revealed in the study, explicit and informed consent of the concerned party is obtained.
- In the case of the demise of a participant, consent must be obtained from the family of the deceased.

Data Access and Retention:

- If any question arises about the accuracy or validity of the research work during the review process, the author(s) should provide raw data to the Editor.

Images:

- The author(s) should ensure that images included in an account of research performed or in the data collection as part of the research are free from manipulation,
- The author(s) must provide an accurate description of how the images were generated and produced.

Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest:

- The potential and relevant competing financial, personal, social or other interest of all author(s) that might be affected by publication of the results contained in the manuscript must be conveyed to the editor.

- The author(s) should disclose any potential conflict of interest at the earliest possible stage, including but not limited to employment, consultancies, honoraria, patent applications/registrations, grants or other funding.
- All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed alongside a brief overview of the role played, if any by the responses during various stages of the research.

Copyright:

Authors may have to sign an agreement allowing the journal to reserve the right to circulate the article and all other derivative works such as translations.

Manuscript Acceptance and Rejection:

- The review period can last between 1-2 months or longer and during this period the author(s) reserve the right to contact the Editor to ask about status of the review.
- Once the review process has been completed, the author will be informed about the status of the manuscript which could either be an acceptance, rejection or revisions. In the case of rejection, the author(s) reserves the right to publish the article elsewhere.
- In case of revisions, the author(s) must provide an exposition of all corrections made in the manuscript and the revised manuscript should, then, go through the process of affirmation of revisions and be accepted or rejected accordingly.
- In case of dissatisfaction over the decision of rejection, the author can appeal the decision by contacting the Editor.

C: Ethical Guidelines for the Reviewers

- The Reviewers should inform the Editor, if they do not have the subject expertise required to carry out the review and s/he should inform the Editor immediately after receiving a request.
- Be responsible to act promptly and submit review report on time.
- Immediately inform the Editor of any possible delays and suggest another date of submission for a review report, and
- Not unnecessarily delay the review process, either by prolonged delay in submission of their review or by requesting unnecessary additional data/information from the Editor or author(s).
- The reviews should be objectively carried out with a consideration of high academic, scholarly and scientific standards.
- All judgments should be meticulously established and maintained in order to ensure the full comprehension of the reviewer's comments by the editors and the author(s).
- The reviewer may justifiably criticize a manuscript but it would be inappropriate to resort to personal criticism on the author(s), and

- The reviewers should ensure that their decision is purely based on the quality of the research paper and not influenced, either positively or negatively, by any personal, financial, or other conflicting considerations or by intellectual bias.
- The data included in the research paper is confidential and the reviewer shall not be allowed to use it for his/her personal study.
- A reviewer must declare any potentially conflicting interests (e.g., personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political or religious). In such situation, s/he will be required to follow the journal's policies.
- If the reviewer feels unqualified to separate his/her bias, s/he should immediately return the manuscript to the Editor without review, and justify to him/her about the situation.
- Reviewers should consider the research paper as a confidential document and must not discuss its content on any platform.
- If the reviewer suspects that the research paper is almost the same as someone else's work, s/he will ethically inform the Editor and provide its citation as a reference.
- If the reviewer suspects that results in the research paper to be untrue/unrealistic/fake, s/he will share it with the Editor,
- If there has been an indication of violating ethical norms in the treatment of human beings (e.g., children, female, poor people, disabled, elderly, etc.), then this should be identified to the Editor.
- **For evaluating originality, the reviewers should consider the following elements:**
 - Does the research paper add to existing knowledge?
 - Are the research questions and/or hypotheses in line with the objective of the research work?
 - The reviewers should read the "Methodology" section in detail and make sure that the author(s) has demonstrated the understanding of the procedures being used and presented in the manuscript.
 - Further questions to be addressed are whether: the organization of the research paper is appropriate or deviates from the standard or prescribed format?
 - The reviewer must explicitly write his/her observations in the section of 'comments' because author(s) will only have access to the comments reviewers have made,
 - For writing a review report, the reviewers are requested to complete a prescribed form (s).
 - It is helpful for both the Editor and author(s) if the reviewer writes a brief summary in the first section of the review report. This summary should comprise the reviewer's final decision and inferences drawn from a full review.
 - Any personal comments on author(s) should be avoided and final remarks should be written in a courteous and positive manner.

- Indicating any deficiencies is important. For the understanding of the Editor and author(s), the reviewers should highlight these deficiencies in some detail with specificity. This should help justify the comments made by the reviewer.
- When a reviewer makes a decision regarding the research paper, it should be clearly indicated as 'Reject', 'Accept without revision', or 'Need Revision' and either of the decisions should have justification.

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- The journal complies with best practices recommended by DOAJ and COPE.

Editorial Policy

Publication Ethical Policy

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences (UCPJHSS) strictly follows the HEC ethical policy of publications. UCPJHSS aims to apply for Cope membership which is committed to educating and supporting editors, publishers and those involved in publication ethics with the aim of moving the culture of publishing towards one where ethical practice becomes a normal part of the publishing culture.

Protecting Intellectual Property

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences is committed to the protection of intellectual property. When supplementary materials are requested during review process, they will be subject to the double-blind review to maintain author's anonymity. Reviewer team members will not use ideas. Sharing of supplementary material is highly prohibited without explicit permission of author through editor-in-Chief or managing editor. Advice regarding specific, limited aspects of the manuscript may be sought from colleagues with specific expertise, providing the author's identity and intellectual property remain secure.

Fair play and Impartiality

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences follows a prescribed criteria for the selection of the research papers, academically and scientifically sound research manuscripts are selected for editorial review. There will be no discrimination on any basis like gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, cultural sentiments, political affiliation, seniority and/or institutional association. Editorial team promptly respond to the author(s) of the papers submitted for publication and assign a specific number to an article submitted for processing; and pay impartial consideration to all research papers submitted for publication keeping merit at the top.

Publication ethics

UCPJHSS is committed to upholding the integrity of the academic record. Its policies prohibits an author from submitting the same manuscript for consideration by another journal and does not allow publication of a manuscript that has been published in whole or in part by another journal. We encourage authors to refer to the Committee on 'Publication Ethics' International Standards for Authors.

Plagiarism

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences (UCPJHSS) believes in a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism.

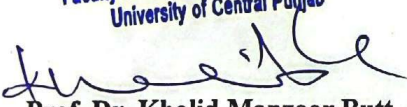
Publication Decisions

The Editorial team only shortlists research manuscripts that have relevance to the scope of the UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences (UCPJHSS). All decisions will be taken by the Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor as the result of the double-blind peer review process without any personal bias.

Disclosure

UCP Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences (UCPJHSS) will not use any unpublished information/data from the submitted research paper without the permission of the author(s), and Any information received after the peer review process will be kept confidential and not used for personal gains.

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25/11/25

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