



THE UNIVERSITY OF
**WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**

Graduate Research School

Write a Journal Article Workshop

Dr Jo Edmondston
Graduate Education Officer



Workshop Objectives

1. To introduce the concept of a publishing (and post-publishing) and writing strategy
2. To explore the pre-writing stage
3. To describe a drafting strategy, including the drafting of a preliminary abstract
4. To examine a number of editing considerations
5. To provide advice about the publication process

Graduate Education Officers

The Graduate Education Officers provide a range of academic writing support to Higher Degree by Research students at UWA, including workshops, writing spaces and writing retreats.

Read more here: <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources>

Find writing event dates here: <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources/events>



Dr Michael Azariadis

6488 1726

michael.azariadis@uwa.edu.au

Dr Krys Haq

6488 2095

krys.haq@uwa.edu.au

Dr Jo Edmondston

6488 7010

joanne.edmondston@uwa.edu.au

Download an e-copy of this workshop booklet here:

<http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources/?%20a=517866>

Resources

General reading

- Belcher. 2009. Writing your journal article in 12 weeks: A guide to academic publishing success. SAGE, Thousand Oaks, California. Available online from the UWA library and hard copy in the GRS G16 Resource Room.
- Write that journal paper in 7 days <https://www.slideshare.net/ingermewburn/write-that-journal-article-in-7-days-12742195>
- Kallestinova. 2011. How to Write Your First Research Paper. Yale Journal Biology and Medicine. 84(3): 181. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3178846/>
- Stoilescu and McDougall. 2010. Starting to Publish Academic Research as a Doctoral Student. International Journal of Doctoral Studies. 2: 79
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/215888326_Starting_to_publish_academic_research_as_a_doctoral_student
- The Structure, Format, Content, and Style of a Journal-Style Scientific Paper
<http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWsections.html>
- 10 tips for writing a truly terrible journal article <https://www.elsevier.com/authors-update/story/publishing-tips/10-tips-for-writing-a-truly-terrible-journal-article>

Websites with handy tips

- Writing for Research <https://medium.com/@Write4Research>
- Enago Academy <https://www.enago.com/academy/>

Specific issues

- Maximizing Productivity and Recognition, Part 1: Publication, Citation, and Impact. Science 2007: <http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2007/11/maximizing-productivity-and-recognition-part-1-publication-citation-and-impact>
- Citations, Altmetrics and Researcher Profiles - UWA library Workshops for Researchers & LibGuides <http://guides.library.uwa.edu.au/rim>
- Understanding submission and publication fees <http://www.aje.com/en/arc/understanding-submission-and-publication-fees/>
- 8 Ways to Identify a Questionable Open Access Journal <http://www.aje.com/en/arc/8-ways-identify-questionable-open-access-journal/>
- Publishing negative results. Rice. 2011. Negative results are important: Research Europe. Science in Balance. <http://curt-rice.com/2011/07/21/negative-results-are-important-research-europe/>

Articles provided as examples

- Taken from Springer's "Change the World, One Article at a Time" initiative. Scientific findings published in 2016 likely to have greatest impact on most pressing global issues.
<https://www.springernature.com/gp/researchers/campaigns/change-the-world>

1. Developing a writing & publishing strategy



When and where will you write your paper? What will your writing schedule be?
How will you avoid distraction?

1.1 Publishing facts



STM Report. An overview of scientific and scholarly journal publishing - Celebrating the 350th anniversary of journal publishing http://www.stm-assoc.org/2015_02_20_STM_Report_2015.pdf

- ~34,550 active scholarly peer-reviewed journals (6450 non-English)
- ~2.5 million articles published a year and increasing ~3% per year
- ~270 articles are read by researchers per year
- ~30 minutes spent reading an article
-

1.2 Types of publications



Editage. Six article types that journals publish. <https://www.editage.com/insights/6-article-types-that-journals-publish-a-guide-for-early-career-researchers>

1. Original research
2. Review article
3. Clinical case study
4. Clinical trial
5. Perspective, opinion, commentary
6. Book review

1.3 Publication strategies



Glover et al. 2016. A Pragmatic Approach to Getting Published: 35 Tips for Early Career Researchers <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpls.2016.00610/full>



The Balanced Researcher: Strategies for busy researchers
<http://www.ithinkwell.com.au/ebook-the-balanced-researcher>

2. Pre writing stage

The length of the paper, the structure of the paper and the nature of the paper will change according to the journal you choose to publish in, so deciding this early in publication can improve writing efficiency.

HOW TO SELECT THE RIGHT JOURNAL

AIMS & SCOPE

- Publishes research similar to yours
- Accepts research that may be: (a) multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or intradisciplinary (b) applied or theoretical (c) clinical or laboratory
- Considers novelty and potential impact of the research
- Accepts your article type (e.g. case report, review article etc.)

READERSHIP

- Covers broad or specialized topics
- Region-specific or international in nature
- Audience covered is wider or smaller, including peers or researchers in your field
- Offers both online and/or print mode of publication
- Has sufficient citations previously

ACCESSIBILITY

- Open access (gold, green or hybrid) or subscription-based in nature
- Allows submission to pre-print databases
- Frequency of publication of the journal
- Publication delay between online and print versions of the article
- Copyright ownership for publisher and author

DISCOVERABILITY

- Included in abstracting and indexing (A & I) services such as Scopus, DOAJ etc.
- Maintains metadata of articles
- Articles indexed by popular search engines
- Present actively on social media
- Available in electronic databases (subject-specific or multidisciplinary)

QUALITY

- Publisher is established or well-known
- Peer-reviewed
- Neither too long nor too short turnaround time
- Effective editorial board
- Ranking based on journal metrics
- Association with professional societies like COPE

enago academy
Learn. Share. Discuss. Publish.

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Enago Academy
Infographics

https://www.enago.com/academy/category/enago-academy-creatives/infographics/?utm_source=EA-Homepagetab



31 things to consider when choosing which journal to submit your paper to <https://medium.com/@write4research/thirty-one-things-to-consider-when-choosing-which-journal-to-submit-your-paper-to-b353bf2949e1>

<https://medium.com/@write4research/thirty-one-things-to-consider-when-choosing-which-journal-to-submit-your-paper-to-b353bf2949e1>



Google Scholar Metrics

<https://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/metrics.html>



What's the best journal for my paper? – Journal finder for Elsevier publishing house

<https://www.elsevier.com/connect/w-hats-the-best-journal-for-my-paper-new-tool-can-help>

3. Write a draft abstract - focus on the key message in your paper

Writing a very rough abstract for the paper before you start will help you help you understand what you want to say & what the main message of your paper may be. This may change during the drafting process – you may strengthen or change your message as your understanding of the research develops during the writing process. This rough abstract does not need to be written in an academic style (or even in sentences).



What type of paper are you writing?

- Original research - data driven, methods development
- Review article
- Clinical case study
- Clinical trial
- Perspective, opinion, commentary
- Book review



What is the aim of your article?

- Fill a gap
- Extend existing research
- Explore controversial area



Is your research

- A particular case
- Potentially generalizable
- General



What are you researching and why?



How did you go about the research? What did you do?



What did you find?



What can you say from your findings? What is your main message?



Who will read your article? What level of understanding can you presume your reader will have? How will you adapt your paper to address the needs of your reader?



Have you considered the best way to tell your 'story'? Can you re-organise / re-order information (without misrepresenting your data) to provide a clearer illustration of your research?

4. Write a full rough draft to develop your understanding

You do not need to draft your article in IMRAD order. The following order is considered to be the most efficient:

1. Results
2. Methods
3. Discussion
4. Introduction
5. Abstract
6. Title

If you struggle with getting started – write your methods first.



Sollaci and Pereira. 2004. The introduction, methods, results, and discussion (IMRAD) structure: a fifty-year survey. *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 92(3): 364
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC442179/>



Tips for Writing Scientific Journal Articles
<http://jultika.oulu.fi/files/isbn9789514293801.pdf>



The Structure, Format, Content, and Style of a Journal-Style Scientific Paper
<http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWsections.html>

4.1 Results

1. Layout your visual elements – tables, figures – in a logical order (chronological, as per order of aims, as per methods, most important to least important).
2. Copy and paste in any existing text (but acknowledge that re-purposed text often requires heavy editing)
3. Create a dot point skeleton of your results, focussing on your aims and the most relevant findings. The results section may not need to include every result obtained.
4. Write the results section in more detail – fill out the dot points into rough paragraphs
5. Shift introductory material or discussion of the results (unless you are combining the results and discussion) out of the results section and into the relevant sections.

4.2 Methods

- Find a journal article similar to yours and use the methods as a guide for writing your own.
- Methods are often **chronologically ordered**
- Describe the procedures for your study in sufficient detail that other researchers can verify your findings and/or repeat your work - You do not need a step-by-step protocol as you might see in a lab manual but you need to describe what and how experiments were run, what, how much, how often, where, when, and why equipment and materials were used. You may be able to reduce text by referring to another paper that has followed a similar protocol.
- Consider whether you need to justify your choice of methods – do you need a methodology section?



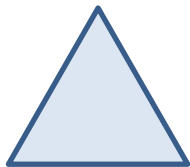
Kallet, R. 2004. How to write the methods section of a research paper. *Respiratory Care*. 49(10): 1229. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15447808>



Paradigms, methods and methodology
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273135528_Research_dilemmas_Paradigms_methods_and_methodology

4.3 Discussion

The discussion section tells the readers what was accomplished in the study, where it fits with the existing understanding of the area, and what research should be done next.



The Discussion can be visualised as an upright triangle – the reverse structure of an introduction or literature review. In the discussion you start from the specific and work to the general.

- What are the major findings of your study? Support your answers to this question with reference to your results, but synthesise the results rather than repeating or summarising them. Ensure this section matches the research questions posed in your introduction.
- How do your findings fit with the existing literature? Support your answers with your results and references to similar studies.
- Are there any alternative explanations for your findings? Were any findings unexpected? Address each of these areas with confidence.
- What is the relevance of the findings for your area of research?
- What were the limitations of the study? Avoid apologising or implying the limitations could have been addressed prior to starting the research.
- Where should / could future research be directed towards?



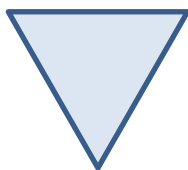
Hess, D. 2004. How to write an effective discussion. *Respiratory Care*. 49(10):1238-1241. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15447810>



Hindle, A. 2015. How to write about your study limitations without limiting your impact. Edanz editing blog <https://www.edanzediting.com/blogs/how-write-about-your-study-limitations-without-limiting-your-impact>

4.4 Introduction

This can be the most difficult part of a paper to structure – but drafting your results and discussion first will help substantially with focussing the introduction.



The structure of the Introduction is often an inverted triangle - the broadest part at the top representing the most general information, tapering down to the apex which describes the specific problem addressed in the paper and the aims of the study.

- State the broad theme or problem, and why the research area is important
- Summarise the literature
- Indicate the gap, inconsistency and/or controversy
- Stating the research problem/question/aims, the specific objective(s)
- Providing an outline of the structure of the paper (optional)



Writing a Good Journal Paper Introduction:

<http://edinburghfireresearch.blogspot.com.au/2011/06/writing-good-journal-paper-introduction.html>

4.5 Abstract

Start writing the abstract by writing a sentence for each of these areas. You can cut and paste from the text you have used in the main body of the paper.

1. What is your research area and why does this area require further research?
2. What is your research question?
3. How did you attempt to answer this question?
4. What was the answer to your research question?
5. What does your research answer mean for your research area?

Your abstract can be shorter than the word limit (Berry et al. 2011. J Phys A 44:492001):

**Can apparent superluminal neutrino speeds be explained
as a quantum weak measurement?**

M V Berry¹, N Brunner¹, S Popescu¹ & P Shukla²

¹H H Wills Physics Laboratory, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol BS8 1TL, UK

²Department of Physics, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, India

Abstract

Probably not.



Carnegie Mellon University. How to Write an Abstract

<https://users.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/essays/abstract.html>



UNC Writing Centre Abstracts- describes various types of abstracts

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/abstracts/>



Editage Insights. How to write an effective title and abstract and choose appropriate

keywords <http://www.editage.com/insights/how-to-write-an-effective-title-and-abstract-and-choose-appropriate-keywords>



Writing for Research. Writing informative abstracts for journal articles.

<https://medium.com/advice-and-help-in-authoring-a-phd-or-non-fiction/writing-informative-abstracts-for-journal-articles-9cf929c6bd75>

4.6 Title

A title of a paper should provide a condensed summary (that incorporates key words as this is important for search engine algorithms particularly if the journal does not request keywords).



Why do academics and PhDers carefully choose useless titles for articles and chapters? Six ways to get it wrong, and four steps to get it right.

<https://medium.com/@write4research/why-do-academics-and-phders-carefully-choose-useless-titles-for-articles-and-chapters-518f02a2ecbb>

4.7 Create a Reverse Outline

Review the main points in your paper by creating a structural overview of the paper using a Reverse Outline. Underneath each heading create a numbered list with a dot point for each paragraph. Summarise the main topic of each paragraph for each dot point in the list. Talk your friend / family member / supervisor / ?pet through your list to test the structure & content of the paper.



Explorations of Style - Reverse Outlines

<http://explorationsofstyle.wordpress.com/2011/02/09/reverse-outlines/>

From Belcher.
2009.

Writing your
journal article in
12 weeks: A guide
to academic
publishing
success.

SAGE, Thousand
Oaks, California.

Sleep Habits, Prevalence, and Burden of Sleep Disturbances Among Japanese Graduate Students (Pallos et al 2004)

- I. Abstract
- II. Introduction (2 paragraphs, no subheads)
 - A. Sleep disorder is a common problem.
 - B. Sleep disorder among graduate students is rarely studied.
 - C. The purpose of this study is to:
 1. estimate rates of sleep disturbance among graduate students in Japan
 2. determine if these sleep disturbances have an adverse affect
 3. find if affected students seek help from physicians
- III. Methods (5 paragraphs, 3 subheads)
 - A. Study design and subjects
 1. dates of study
 2. setting of study
 3. population studied
 4. survey implementation and analysis
 - B. Questionnaires
 1. their use of the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI)
 2. the questions they asked about sleep
 3. the questions they asked about demographics
 4. the questions they asked about attitudes and consequences
 - C. Statistical analysis
- IV. Results (4 paragraphs, 4 subheads)
 - A. Sample characteristics
 1. states the number of respondents and their gender
 - B. Prevalence rates of sleep disturbances and hypnotic medication use
 1. table of rates
 2. rate findings
 3. no significant differences in rates found between the genders
 - C. Sleeping characteristics of graduate students
 1. table of characteristics
 2. findings
 3. no significant differences in characteristics found between the genders
 - D. Consultation rate and the adverse consequences of sleep problems
 1. rate findings
 2. consequences findings
- V. Discussion (6 paragraphs, no subheads)
 - A. The purpose of the study was to learn the rate of sleep disturbances among Japanese graduate students.
 - B. Why were these students less sleepy than others their age?
 1. prevalence rates were similar to what other researchers found
 2. except regarding gender (speculation on why that might be)
 3. perhaps students were less sleepy than other young adults because they might be taking naps
 - C. Why aren't these students consulting doctors about sleep disturbance?
 1. sleep medications were not used much, perhaps because students did not consult doctors about the problem
 2. why didn't students consult doctors?
 3. further research should investigate this lack of consultation
 - D. Literature review of related studies
 1. literature review of studies on undergraduate students' sleep habits shows similar findings to these findings on graduate students
 2. limitations of the study
 3. conclusion: hypothesis rejected: graduate students do not suffer more frequently from sleep disturbances than does the general Japanese young adult population.



Examine a selected paper

What proportion of text is allocated to each section of the paper in the abstract?

Look at the title. Do they provide a descriptive or analytical title? Is the title a good reflection of the paper?

Examine the methods section. Is a rationale for the chosen methods provided (methodology)? How are the items ordered in this section? Is the source of equipment, reagents and materials indicated? Do the authors refer to other methods?

How are the results structured? Have the authors focussed exclusively on presenting results? How are the results ordered? How effective are the figures and tables?

How is the discussion started? What results are noted within the discussion? Have they referred back to previous studies? How clear is the significance of the study and how confidently do the authors assert their claims? How do they acknowledge the limitations of the study? How many suggestions do they have for future research?

5. Edit your paper taking into account the needs of the reader and the instructions to authors



How do you read a paper? What order do you read the sections in? How do you think this might impact on how you write a paper?

- Understanding how a journal paper is read by your audience will help you identify what you need to spend extra time on
- Take a break and let your ideas percolate.
- Avoid the ‘mystery format’ – ensure your structure and arguments are clearly signposted.



Pain. 2016. How to (seriously) read a scientific paper. Science.

<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2016/03/how-seriously-read-scientific-paper>



Seven upgrade strategies for a problematic article or chapter.

<https://medium.com/advice-and-help-in-authoring-a-phd-or-non-fiction/seven-upgrade-strategies-for-a-problematic-article-or-chapter-3c6b81be9aa2>

5.1 Abstract

While abstracts only represent ~3-5% of the total length of a paper, they will be read 10-500 times more than the complete paper. So they need to be short, they need to accurately summarise the content of the paper, and they need to help the reader decide whether to read the entire article (and hopefully cite it in their own work). Importantly they need to ‘stand-alone - the word abstract is derived from the Latin word ‘abstractus’, which means to draw away.

- Ensure the abstract is a true reflection of the paper. Do not include information that does not appear in the article.
- The abstract should ‘stand-alone’ – avoid unfamiliar terms but define all unique terms, abbreviations, acronyms, symbols if necessary.
- Keep the text within the word limit in the guidelines and shorter if possible. Do not repeat the title.
- Avoid citing references in the abstract unless absolutely necessary.
- Do not refer to figures and tables in the main text.
- Tables, diagrams, equations, or formulae are generally not included in abstracts.
- Consider the journal audience and write accordingly. Within these constraints, consider how you can broaden your paper to maximise your readership.
- The order and proportion of the text in the abstract should approximate the order and proportions of the text in the paper.

5.2 Methods

- Identify the source of any specific equipment, samples, reagents, or organisms (supplier, country, possibly even catalogue number).
- Draw a sketch of your methods in the order you have written to assess if the methods are complete and logically ordered.



The Structure, Format, Content, and Style of a Journal-Style Scientific Paper

<http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWsections.html>

5.3 Results

- Consider how to best represent the data. The raw data and/or tables and figures initially generated by your research output may not be the best way to present the data. Do not report raw data if it can be summarized. Understand how to best present tables and figures.
- Refer to every Figure and Table in the text.
- Use past tense when referring to your results – but use present tense when referring to results presented in figures and tables
- Be as factual and concise as possible in reporting your findings. Do not use phrases that are vague or non-specific. Avoid words such as clearly, essential, quite, basically, rather, fairly, really, virtually
- Consider how you present your numbers. How precise do they need to be? Are your number of significant figures consistent. What level of accuracy is credible? What level of precision is easiest for your reader to understand?
- Know the rules for reporting numerals.
- If reporting differences, include the direction and magnitude of the difference.



GRS Writing Group Presenting Tables and Figures Resource Sheet

<http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources/communities#writinggroup>



Writing for Research. How to report data in a way that readers need to know

<https://medium.com/advice-and-help-in-authoring-a-phd-or-non-fiction/how-to-report-data-in-a-way-that-readers-need-to-know-c0a1edb47f86>

For more advice about reporting statistics see:



Purdue OWL Writing with Statistics <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/672/1/>

Illinois State University Reporting Statistics in APA Style

<http://my.ilstu.edu/~jhkahn/apastats.html>

5.4 Discussion

- Do not include sentences that purely restate results.
- Do not include any results that have not been detailed in the results section.
- Consider the strength you attribute to statements (do you need to hedge?)
- Do not ignore unexpected results – address them confidently.
- Do include new references if required – you'll often need to cite studies you have not cited in the introduction to support your interpretation of your results.
- Remember to shift the reader between your work & conclusions and the work & conclusions of others by changing tense.
- And as always, make it reader-friendly, concise and specific.
- Don't adopt an apologetic style when describing the limitations of the study & don't write about the imitations in a way that suggests you shouldn't have done the study in the first place (the reviewer will reasonably believe that if the study was fatally flawed it shouldn't be published).
- Don't make suggestions for future research that could easily be included in your study - reviewers could very reasonably ask you to undertake this additional research prior to publication.



Unilearning. Expressing Opinions. Modal verbs and adverbs.
https://unilearning.uow.edu.au/academic/4aiii_2.html

6. Navigating the publication process



Do you have any experience in publishing? How well were you mentored in the publication process? What was your submission outcome? How did you find the peer review process? How did you decide on authorship? How did you manage the co-writing process? How did you manage to control multiple versions of the paper?

Common reasons for outright rejection independent of quality of research and writing:

- Lack of relevance to journal
- Not adhering to journal format / instructions to authors

Common reasons for rejection related to quality of research and writing:

- Lack of focus, poor indication of significance
- Lack of consideration of readership with regard to presumed knowledge (too technical)
- Lack of structure
- Proofing problems, particularly missing references

Tips:

- Do not submit the same manuscript to more than one journal at any one time
- Comply with every guideline set out in the instructions to authors
- Make your submission anonymous if you are submitting to a journal that has 'double-blind' review
- Submit a cover letter if appropriate but keep the letter brief, unless the paper is being resubmitted
- Be patient when waiting for a response from a journal - if contact with the journal is necessary, use the administrative contact details on the website – only contact the editor directly as a last resort
- 'Revise and resubmit' is not a guarantee that your journal article will be published but if your responses to the rejection letter are appropriate and timely, this will significantly increase your chance of publication – so revise your paper as quickly as possible with an accompanying cover letter that indicates how each of the reviewers comments are addressed in the revised paper
- Do not take criticism from reviewers personally – often easier said than done!
- If you do not agree with a criticism from a reviewer you can choose to argue that a suggested change to a paper is not required – but this will need to be a strong argument and it is an argument you are likely to lose. Acknowledge that if a reviewer does not understand your paper it is likely the academic writing needs improving.
- If your paper is rejected outright, it is unlikely that the paper will ever be accepted by the journal so do not revise and resubmit the paper to that journal – revise where appropriate and submit the revised paper to another journal



Boellstorff. 2011. Submission and acceptance: Where, why, and how to publish your article. *American Anthropologist* 113(3): 383-388
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1548-1433.2011.01348.x/full>



Hutchinson. 2010. Surviving the review process. *IEEE Robotics and Automation Magazine*. Dec 2010: 101-104. <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?arnumber=5663683>



Pannell. 2002. Prose, persistence and psychopaths: Personal perspectives on publishing. *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics* 50(2): 101-116.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1744-7976.2002.tb00422.x>



Co-writing strategies
<https://patthomson.net/2016/12/15/co-writing-strategies-or-what-could-possibly-go-wrong/>



Coauthors gone bad – how to avoid publishing conflicts
<https://www.elsevier.com/connect/co-authors-gone-bad-how-to-avoid-publishing-conflicts>



Thesis Whisperer. Managing conflicting feedback on your thesis.
<https://thesiswhisperer.com/2015/09/30/do-you-really-own-your-thesis/>

Journals are increasingly requiring more information including author contribution:

nature International weekly journal of science

Home | News & Comment | Research | Careers & Jobs | Current Issue | Archive | Audio & Video | For Authors

Research > Letters > Article

NATURE | LETTER

Vigorous lateral export of the meltwater outflow from beneath an Antarctic ice shelf

Alberto C. Naveira Garabato, Alexander Forryan, Pierre Dutrieux, Liam Brannigan, Louise C. Biddle, Karen J. Heywood, Adrian Jenkins, Yvonne L. Firing & Satoshi Kimura

Affiliations | Contributions | Corresponding author

Nature (2017) | doi:10.1038/nature20825
 Received 05 April 2016 | Accepted 10 November 2016 | Published online 30 January 2017

PDF | Citation | Reprints | Rights & permissions | Article metrics

Contributions

A.C.N.G. and A.F. designed and conducted the data analysis, with contributions from P.D. and L.C.B. L.B. designed and conducted the idealized model experiments. K.J.H. led the JR294/295 research cruise. All authors contributed to the scientific interpretation of the results.

You are also likely to be required to make a number of declarations:

Table of Contents ^

- Abstract
- Background
- Implementation
- Results & discussion
- Conclusion
- Declarations
- References

Acknowledgements

Authors are grateful to participants in health inequality monitoring workshops in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, and the WHO Region of the Americas and others who reviewed HEAT and provided valuable feedback and suggestions. This toolkit is the product of collaboration between the Gender, Equity and Human Rights Team and the Department of Information, Evidence and Research at the World Health Organization. The views expressed in this Article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of WHO.

Funding

Funding for this work came from the World Health Organisation.

Availability of data and materials

HEAT is available as an online application and as a standalone version for use offline. Both versions can be accessed at www.who.int/gho/health_equity/assessment_toolkit/en/. Disaggregated data for HEAT is sourced from the WHO Health Equity Monitor Database, available at <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.HE-1540?lang=en>.

Authors' contributions

AH outlined the manuscript. DN wrote the first draft. AH and AS conceptualized the toolkit and coordinated its development. DDR and ZR provided inputs to the conceptualization. DDR developed the software prototype. ZR developed the final application. All authors read the draft, provided critical comments and approved the final manuscript.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Ethics approval and consent to participate

The Health Equity Assessment Toolkit contains the disaggregated data that are publicly available via the WHO Health Equity Monitor database. HEAT has been cleared for dissemination and use by the World Health Organisation. Consent to participate in the workshops was not applicable, as there was no research done. The workshops described here were for training and capacity building purposes only.

Taken from Hossein et al. 2016. Health Equity Assessment Toolkit (HEAT): software for exploring and comparing health inequalities in countries. BMC Medical Research Methodology. 16:141. https://bmcmmedresmethodol.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12874-016-0229-9?utm_source=Other&utm_medium=Other&utm_campaign=ctw_2017_bmc_5

Pre-publication or copyright concerns?



See the UWA library advice regarding Copyright and Publishing:

<https://www.uwa.edu.au/library/help-and-support/copyright-and-publishing>

6.1 Sample Response to Revision Request

Adapted from advice from Obstetrics & Gynaecology Journal
journals.lww.com/greenjournal/documents/sampleresponsetorevisions.pdf

Date

Re: Resubmission of manuscript *Primary Cesarean Delivery Among Pandas*, **ONG 13-XXXX**

Comment: Include the manuscript number given to you when you submitted the article the first time.

The Editors
Obstetrics & Gynecology
409 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024-2188

Dear Editors:

Thank you for the opportunity to revise our manuscript, *Primary Cesarean Among Pandas*. We appreciate the careful review and constructive suggestions. It is our belief that the manuscript is substantially improved after making the suggested edits.

Comment: Turn off track changes as you revise the manuscript but do "compare document" to the original submission at the end

Following this letter are the editor and reviewer comments with our responses in italics, including how and where the text was modified. Changes made in the manuscript are **marked using track changes**. The revision has been developed in consultation with all coauthors, and each author has given approval to the final form of this revision. **The agreement form signed by each author remains valid.**

Comment: Submit the author agreement form with the initial submission, or as early as possible. as this is a common delay delay in publishing of an accepted paper.

We agree with the classification of the paper as Level III evidence. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name & Contact details

REVIEWER #1:

- 1a. The abstract might better differentiate among the three categories.
- 1b. The data in the abstract don't support the conclusions in the abstract.
- 1c. Probably should rewrite this part so that the methods are reflected in the results that then support the conclusions.

Thank you for these observations. We have rewritten the abstract to better differentiate among the objectives and edited so that the methods are reflected in the results and the data support the conclusions.

2. Given that you cite obesity as related to the higher cesarean rate in the introduction, you might want to spend a paragraph discussing your findings regarding BMI in the discussion.

We agree that the association of obesity with higher cesarean rate is important, but this relationship has already been explored in detail in another publication [Doe AB, Rae CD, Me EF, et al. Panda body mass index: a strong association with delivery route. Panda Obstet Gynecol. 2010;100(1):X-Y]. We have added this as a reference, but chose not to devote an entire paragraph to discussing BMI, given the prior work and space limitations. If the editor would like us to expand, we can do so.

Comment: If reviewer does not include comment numbers, group similar comments together

Comment: Make a clear argument if you do not wish to follow the reviewers requests- but indicate you may be open to further changes

REVIEWER #2

This study is a secondary analysis of a large, multisite prospective observational cohort. The current analysis aimed to identify national indications for panda cesarean delivery, characterize contributing factors to panda CD, and identify opportunities to reduce the panda CD rate. This study adds valuable information re: the state of panda CD in the U.S. While generally well written, this study has several methodological issues that need to be addressed prior to consideration for publication.

1. The type of study should be listed under methods.

We agree with the reviewer and have added that this is a retrospective cohort study to the methods section of the abstract (lines X-X).

2. The introduction is well written, but does not inform the reader as to the reasons why we should seek to reduce the high rate of cesarean delivery among pandas. In the first paragraph, the authors should briefly summarize the risks associated with CD. The implications of primary CD on risk of subsequent accreta spectrum disorders, a major source of morbidity/mortality related to CD, should be mentioned.

We agree with the reviewer and have added the following sentences in the introduction (lines XX-XX): "Cesarean delivery in pandas is associated with higher morbidity and mortality than vaginal births. Cesarean delivery also increases the risk of abnormal placentation in subsequent pregnancies, which can lead to uterine rupture, placenta accreta, hemorrhage, hysterectomy, and maternal death."

Comment: Include everything the reviewers write, even if you don't need to reply to it.

Comment: Include line numbers wherever applicable.

Comment: In addition to line numbers, the quoted text helps (the lines will shift if the tracked changes to the manuscript are accepted)

REVIEWER #3

This manuscript contains important information about the panda cesarean delivery that is useful for other states and countries.

1. It was a good decision to include in the analysis of the work, the criterion of 6 cm to define active phase of labor, because it is part of elements proven to reduce the rates of caesarean delivery.

Thank you.

Comment: Thank reviewers for positive comments

STATISTICAL EDITOR COMMENTS

The Statistical Editor makes the following points that need to be addressed:

1. A clear and complete statement of how the sample size was determined was not included in the original manuscript. Please address this in your revised manuscript.

We revised the methods section (lines XX–XX) to include this information: “To obtain the cohort for this study, the 228,562 deliveries in the panda database were limited to first-recorded deliveries (n=208,695) to avoid intra-panda correlation. Pandas who had a vaginal delivery (n=142,592) or underwent a repeat cesarean delivery (n=27,619) were excluded, leaving 38,484 pandas who had a primary cesarean as the study population.”

2. The conclusions drawn from the statistical analysis are justified, insofar as the study was retrospective, non-randomized and limited to pandas that had a primary CD within this large cohort. Therefore it represents a description of the medical histories, demographics, and indications for CD etc. among pandas undergoing a primary CD within the institutions cited. Potential means to decrease CD rates were identified as areas where there was non-compliance with established recommendations/standards.

We concur.

EDITOR COMMENTS

The Editor makes the following points that need to be addressed:

1. The précis is in no way specific to this manuscript (and is self-evident). Please rewrite.

Thank you. The précis has been rewritten: “Conservative management of the latent stage and second stage of labor is an important strategy to lower the panda cesarean delivery rate.”

2. Abstract, results: The first sentence is not useful and should be removed. The recommendations of Reviewer 1 should be incorporated into a revised abstract.

The abstract and results have been rewritten, taking into account your critique and the critique of Reviewer 1.

3. Table 6 and Figure 1 are not necessary, as their information is adequately covered in the text.

We removed table 6 and figure 1 as recommended and have ensured that the information is now included in the text.

4. The level of evidence for your study has been classified as III based on the system listed below. In your cover letter, please indicate whether or not you agree with this rating. If you feel the score is incorrect, indicate the proper classification and your rationale for listing it as such.

- I: A randomized, controlled trial.
- II: A cohort or case-controlled study that includes a comparison group.
- III: An uncontrolled descriptive study including case series.

We agree with this classification.

5. Your manuscript is currently 25 pages. Please shorten your manuscript. Because of space limitations, it is important that your revised manuscript adhere to the following length restrictions: original research reports should not exceed 22 typed, double-spaced pages. Stated page limits include all numbered pages in a manuscript (i.e., title page, précis, abstract, text, references, tables, boxes, figure legends, and appendices).

We condensed the discussion and removed results from the discussion section. We also removed figure 1, and tables 5 and 6. Our current manuscript now is 22 pages.