

JIRSEA Policy on Authorship, Inclusion Standards, and Limitations

Introduction to International Practice on Authorship

In many scholarly fields, including education, there is no universal hard cap on the number of authors on a manuscript. International guidelines require that every person listed as an author must have made a substantial intellectual contribution to the research, participated in drafting or revising the manuscript, and approved the final version. In practice, original research papers in interdisciplinary or multi-site studies can include many authors if each contributes and maintains evidential clarity in their contributions. Thus, the international approach emphasizes the quality and accountability of authorship rather than a strict numerical threshold.

JIRSEA's policy on authorship strikes a balance between **academic rigor** and **equitable opportunity**, explicitly rejecting exploitative practices while upholding the journal's standing through scholarly accountability. The official statement for JIRSEA, as a Higher Education and Institutional Research journal, aligns with most social science, humanities, and education research standards, as outlined by COPE/AERA/APA, rather than ICMJE, while maintaining the 4-author limit. The rationale and official statements are provided in Parts 1 to IV. The 4-author cap ensures *each contributor* provides substantial scholarly input, not just data access or institutional support. These policies strike a balance between the collaborative nature of educational research and rigorous scholarly standards, ensuring that authorship accurately reflects genuine partnership. JIRSEA's policies underpin alignment with international Standards:

- Adheres to AERA's *Code of Ethics* (Section III: Authorship) and APA's *Ethical Principles* (8.12a).
- Mirrors COPE's position on "ghost/gift authorship."
- CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) of the 14 granular roles (e.g., conceptualization, methodology, investigation), transparencies, and accountabilities (Links roles to responsibility for specific content).

On

- **Emphasis on authors' roles:** Clarifies that authors or researchers and administrators/ supervisors must meet *intellectual contribution* standards, not just "access" roles (e.g., "Lead Investigator," "Assessment Designer," "Data Curator").
- **Ethical Enforcement:** Tight authorship links to accountability for ethical educational research.

Two of JIRSEA's primary guiding principles:

- ✓ *JIRSEA's Guiding Principle: "If you didn't write it, design it, or analyze it, you don't own it."* International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), adapted for education research.
- ✓ JIRSEA adheres to the *Helsinki Initiative (2019) on multilingualism*: "Academic credit must reflect labor, not hierarchy."

JIRSEA's authorship philosophy:

- ✓ "Authorship is earned by intellectual labor, not rank or relationship."
– *World Conference on Research Integrity (2023)*

Part I: Authorship and Author Inclusion, and Limits Criteria

To uphold the highest standards of research integrity, accountability, and scholarly transparency, JIRSEA adopts the following policy regarding authorship and the **Affirmation of Genuine Contribution**. These policies reflect our commitment to ethical authorship and to fostering a culture of transparency and accountability within the scholarly community.

1. **Authorship Criteria:**
All individuals designated as authors must have made **substantial contributions** to the study. This includes, but is not limited to, contributions to the conception and design of the work, acquisition and analysis of data, or the interpretation of results; active participation in drafting or critically revising the manuscript; and final approval of the version to be published. These criteria are consistent with internationally recognized guidelines such as those provided by the COPE/AERA/APA and ICMJE.
2. **Maximum Author Limit:**
To ensure clarity in scholarly contribution and robust individual accountability, the maximum number of authors for each manuscript submitted to JIRSEA is limited to four (4). This limit applies primarily to research articles and brief reports. Should a project involve contributions from more than four individuals, authors must provide a clear justification for any additional contributors, and such contributors may be recognized in the acknowledgments section rather than the formal author list.
3. **Implementation and Compliance:**
Manuscripts exceeding this limit without the requisite justification will not conform to the journal's submission criteria. It is the *responsibility of the corresponding author to ensure that the listed authors meet the criteria as mentioned above and that any deviations from this policy are clearly documented in the submission materials.*

Part II: JIRSEA Authorship and Publication Policy in Same-Issue Publication Limits

In our continuous commitment to fostering a diverse, high-quality scholarly environment and ensuring equitable opportunities for researchers, JIRSEA establishes the following policy regarding the publication frequency within a single journal issue:

1. **Same-Issue Publication Limit:** To ensure scholarly diversity and equitable representation, *no author may appear in more than one article per regular issue* of the JIRSEA, whether as lead or co-author.
 - **General Rule:** In order to maintain a varied and balanced representation in every issue, a single author is permitted to publish a maximum of one (1) research article as the primary or corresponding author within the same issue.
 - **Exceptions:** Should an author believe that two distinct pieces of research merit inclusion in a single issue, a written justification outlining the differentiation and unique contribution of each work must be submitted with the manuscript. Such submissions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the JIRSEA editorial team.

2. Editorial Considerations:

- **Diverse Contributions:** This policy is designed to ensure that JIRSEA issues demonstrate a broad spectrum of voices and perspectives, reflecting the dynamic field of education research.
- **Quality Assurance:** Limiting the number of publications per individual allows dedicated editorial attention to be provided to each submission, thereby enhancing overall research integrity and quality, ensuring no single scholar disproportionately occupies limited publication space, and preventing "courtesy inclusions" in multiple papers within an issue.

3. Compliance:

- The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy. Manuscripts that do not meet these requirements may be subject to further editorial review and, if necessary, requests for additional clarification or reorganization of authorship and rejection.

Part III: JIRSEA Authorship Policy on Inclusion of Supervisors' or Faculty Members' Names

In order to maintain the highest standards of research integrity and transparency in scholarly publishing, [Journal Name] adopts the following policy regarding the inclusion of supervisors' or faculty members' names on manuscripts where a graduate student is the primary author and has contributed the majority of the intellectual work:

1. **Substantive Contribution Required for Authorship:**
All individuals listed as authors must have made a *significant intellectual contribution* to the study, including but not limited to the conception and design of the research, data acquisition, analysis, critical revision of the content, and approval of the final manuscript version.
2. **Inclusion of Supervisors/Faculty Members:**
Supervisors or faculty members may be included as co-authors if they have provided direct, substantial contributions beyond routine academic guidance or administrative oversight. Their roles must be clearly documented as having contributed to the conception, critical revision, or interpretation of the work. Suppose the supervisor's input is primarily advisory or supervisory and does not meet the criteria for substantive intellectual contribution. In that case, their role should be recognized in the Acknowledgments section, rather than as second or third author. Key contributions encompass study conception, design, data analysis, and substantial involvement in drafting or revising the manuscript. When a graduate student is the principal author who has written and carried out the research, supervisors or faculty members should be listed as co-authors only when they have directly contributed to the intellectual content of the work beyond routine mentoring or administrative support.
3. **Addressing Potential Ethical Issues:**
The editorial board is committed to preventing practices that may lead to gift authorship or the undue inflation of academic credit. The inclusion of any author should not be influenced by hierarchical status or administrative obligation. In cases where there are concerns about conflicts of interest or misrepresentation of contributions, the journal reserves the right to request further clarification from the authors during the review

process. ***Gift authorship is recognized as an unethical practice*** because it misrepresents the true intellectual input, potentially inflates academic credentials, and blurs accountability. This practice may also introduce a perceived conflict of interest, as the inclusion of a more senior academic could unduly influence perceptions of the paper's quality or fairness in the peer review process

4. Permissible Supervisor Roles in Contributions:

Activity	Authorship Acknowledgments	
Research design input	✓	✗
Theoretical Framing	✓*	✓
Funding acquisition	✗	✓
Data analysis mentorship	✓*	✓
Proofreading	✗	✓
Manuscript drafting/revision	✓	✗
<i>Theoretical framing</i>	✓	✗

✓ = Requires demonstrable intellectual contribution beyond basic guidance

Important Note:

(a) These explicitly DO NOT qualify for authorship:

- Provision of lab access/resources
- General advisory feedback
- Editorial/formatting assistance
- Positional authority (e.g., department chair, supervisors, members of examining or supervisory committee) as it violates academic integrity when supervisors claim work that they did not create ("honorary authorship").

(b) Core Principle:

Authorship = **Intellectual Ownership**, not position-based entitlement.

(c) When to Acknowledge Rather Than Author:

- ✓ If the graduate student performed the bulk of the conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and writing, and the supervisor's role was limited to routine oversight (e.g., approving the proposal, providing textbook-style guidance, or signing off on ethics forms), then the supervisor's name belongs in the Acknowledgments.
- ✓ Similarly, if a faculty member reads a draft and offers only stylistic or copy-editing comments (without reframing arguments or interpreting data), that counts as "editing assistance" rather than "authorship."

(d) Graduate Student Rights

- The graduate student must be the **first author** if the paper derives from their thesis/dissertation, or any research that involves supervisory roles.
- Supervisors must **not** demand inclusion without meeting authorship standards (violations may be reported to institutional research integrity offices).

JIRSEA's Ethical Guiding Principles for Supervisors, specifically the Mentorship Model, states, "If I didn't contribute intellectually, my role belongs in Acknowledgment," which can distort academic merit in the promotion and tenure process. JIRSEA's guidelines to supervisors state that the supervisor must make a **"Substantial Intellectual Contribution."** Supervisors should appear as co-authors only if they have (a) contributed significantly to study conception or design, **and/or** (b) participated in data collection or analysis, **and/or** (c) drafted or critically revised the manuscript.

Part IV: Exceptions Process

Exceptions exceeding four authors require **pre-submission approval** from the Editor-in-Chief. Valid justifications and evidence, including institutional verifications and approval, include:

- Multi-school action research with distinct sites yields unique analytical insights.
- Interdisciplinary projects (e.g., education + neuroscience) requiring non-redundant or replicable expertise.

Submission Must Include:

- a) A **declaration of individual contributions** using APA/AERA roles (e.g., "Lead Investigator," "Assessment Designer," "Data Curator").
- b) A statement explaining why acknowledgments/footnotes are insufficient.
- c) Confirmation and institutional verification and approval that all authors meet AERA's *substantial intellectual contribution* standard.

These policies take effect as of June 1, 2025, and are endorsed by the Editorial Board of JIRSEA.

Editorial Board, JIRSEA