

Enhancing Transparency and Comprehensiveness of Scholarly Articles by the Use of Reporting Guidelines

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Biomedical research is an ever evolving field. The integrity and impact of research work depends heavily upon transparent reporting. It is crucial for Nepalese Heart Journal to emphasize the significance of adhering to robust reporting guidelines. These guidelines are not just a checklist of items like requisites but now they are the foundation of scientific publications that assure clarity, reproducibility, and credibility.

Authors bear the responsibility of writing a narrative of their findings through adherence to reporting guidelines. Clear articulation of background and introduction, study design, methods, results, and interpretation and discussions empowers our readers to validate, and build upon our work. Simultaneously, our editors and reviewers play a pivotal role in endorsing these standards, ensuring that published content meets the benchmarks of excellence set forth by international reporting guidelines. However, the common fallacies in research reporting in healthcare are inability to properly conduct, write and publish the research article. Sometimes, entire studies are either not reported or are reported long after research is completed. Other times, studies are incompletely reported with crucial components being left out like who the study participants were, what interventions were used etc., or data and results are selectively reported and outcomes are omitted. Additionally contain inaccuracies like inconsistencies between abstracts and main text, statistical errors, harms are inadequately reported, data and graphs are confusing or misleading, and there is misinterpretation of results. The research becomes useless and falls victim to bad reporting.

Elevating the Standards

By consistently incorporating reporting guidelines into our research endeavors, we elevate the standard of our research articles. This ensures our readers, reviewers, and researchers that our methodologies are designed as per standards, our analyses are accurate and our findings are presented with clarity. In doing so, we reinforce the credibility of our authors and the Nepalese Heart Journal as a beacon of excellence in biomedical research and publication.

Every scientific study is a narrative that describes what research question it aims to answer. To ensure its trust and contribution to the scientific literature, we must adopt and adhere to established reporting guidelines. The CONSORT guidelines for clinical trials, STROBE for observational studies, and CARE for case reports are the common guidelines and invaluable tools. These tools are tailored to amplify the transparency and completeness of research findings. Embracing these guidelines is not a constraint but an investment in the enduring impact of our contributions. Though these reporting

guidelines were initially meant to be used by authors while preparing to write the final article, or even used as checklists before submission, we at Nepalese Heart Journal suggest that authors use these checklists while planning for the research and while writing the research proposal.

The EQUATOR Network and Beyond

The EQUATOR (Enhancing the QUALity and Transparency Of health Research) Network is an international initiative that seeks to improve the reliability and value of published health research literature by promoting transparent and accurate reporting and wider use of robust reporting guidelines. It is the first coordinated attempt to tackle the problems of inadequate reporting systematically and on a global scale; it advances the work done by individual groups over the last 15 years.

As we advocate for the adoption of reporting guidelines, we align ourselves with the global movement promoted by the EQUATOR Network. This consortium offers more than 600 resources and guidelines for various study designs and methodologies. Nepalese Heart Journal endorses the use of an appropriate reporting guideline when writing any health research manuscript. You can find the most commonly required reporting guidelines at <https://www.equator-network.org/>, which also provides general information on how to choose the correct guideline and why guidelines are important.

At minimum, your article should report the content addressed by each item of the identified checklist or state that the item was not considered in the study (for example, if you did not use blinding, your article should specify this). Meeting these basic reporting requirements will greatly improve the value of your manuscript, may facilitate/enhance the peer review process, and may enhance its chances for eventual publication.¹ We also highly recommend using tools like <https://www.goodreports.org/> for easing the writing process and using the checklist.²

These guidelines have been incorporated in practice not only in the international journals but also in our national journals.³

In the domain of biomedical research, reporting guidelines are not constraints but catalysts for scientific advancement. They express our commitment to precision, transparency, and the relentless pursuit of knowledge. Let us, as contributors to the Nepalese Heart Journal, embrace these guidelines as instruments that fortify our scholarly legacy, enrich our academic discourse, and propel our research to global acclaim. Together, let's create a narrative of excellence that resonates far beyond the pages of our journal.

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