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#### AIMS AND SCOPE

The **Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research (LJHER)** aims to publish new discoveries from the social sciences and humanities, business and public policy, mathematics, science and technology, which provide practical and cutting edge solutions to problems and issues confronting higher education. **LJHER** is multidisciplinary and international in character as evidenced by an editorial board whose members are sourced from the Philippines and abroad. Contributions have come from many universities and independent research agencies. Articles have tackled the problems and issues of teachers, students, planners, administrators, and other stakeholders.

A precondition for publication of a research article is the transfer of copyright from the authors to the **Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research**.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

In this issue of the “*Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research, Vol 19(1)*,” we showcase a rich tapestry of scholarly works bridging diverse fields and subjects of inquiry.

In the wake of the global pandemic, educators worldwide have struggled with the challenge of digital inclusion, as explored in “*Digital Inclusion among Educators: An Examination of Salience in Public and Private Schools within City Centers in Metro Manila*.” This research sheds light on the disparities in online skills among educational workers, underscoring the implications for digital inclusion and exclusion within the educational landscape.

In the domain of arts education, “*Student Performance in Online Music Classes in a Pandemic Setting*” examines the factors influencing student success in virtual learning environments. Through a comprehensive causal-comparative analysis, this study expounds on the multifaceted determinants of student performance in online music classes, offering valuable insights for curriculum development and pedagogical practices in music education.

“*Perceived Effectiveness of Internal Control Systems in a Private Higher Education Institution*” probes into the complexities of organizational governance and financial management within academic institutions. Through rigorous empirical inquiry, this study highlights the influence of internal control components on the effectiveness of university systems, providing a roadmap for enhancing operational efficiency and regulatory compliance.

Turning our attention to environmental concerns, “*Ambient Water Analysis of Cagayan de Oro River, Philippines*” investigates the water quality of a vital natural resource. Through meticulous spectroscopic analysis, this study highlights the importance of monitoring physicochemical parameters and total coliform counts, revealing insights into the ecological health of the Cagayan de Oro River and the pressing need for conservation efforts.

Finally, in the realm of scientific innovation, “*Bacterial Fabricated Ultrasonic Sterilization of Culture Media*” presents a pioneering study on ultrasonic sterilization techniques for microbial analysis. By assessing the efficacy of fabricated ultrasonic devices in inactivating *Escherichia coli*, this research contributes to advancements in laboratory practices, offering insights into novel approaches for microbial sterilization with potential applications in various fields.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the authors for their exemplary contributions to this issue, which exemplify the journal’s commitment to fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and advancing scholarly knowledge.

**Prof. Dr. Ma. Florecilla C. Cinches**  
Editor-in-Chief

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research (LJHER)* maintains listing and indexing with esteemed agencies such as the ASEAN Citation Index, Philippine E-Journals, Google Scholar, EBSCO Publishing, Crossref, and Gale: Cengage Learning. These affiliations underscore *LJHER's* commitment to scholarly excellence and global dissemination of research findings.

*LJHER* welcomes contributions from scholars worldwide seeking publication in a rigorously peer-reviewed journal. Interested authors can access submission guidelines and relevant information on the journal's website: [www.asianscientificjournals.com](http://www.asianscientificjournals.com). The Editorial Board actively engages guest editors and peer reviewers, both locally and internationally, for each issue to ensure scholarly rigor and diversity in perspectives.

Regarded as a leading journal in the field, *LJHER* specializes in publishing peer-reviewed higher education research. Its audience comprises scientists, academicians, graduate students, and other stakeholders invested in advancing research boundaries. The primary criterion for publication in *LJHER* is the substantial contribution an article makes to the existing body of knowledge.

The editorial review process's efficiency and effectiveness hinge on the collaborative efforts of authors and reviewers. Authors are accountable for meticulously preparing their research papers for evaluation by independent reviewers, which involves subjecting the manuscript to rigorous scrutiny and necessary revisions before submission. It is important to note that the review process does not serve as a means for preliminary feedback or guarantee publication acceptance.

Reviewers and editors provide constructive and timely feedback on submitted research papers based on their scholarly significance, analytical rigor, and presentation quality. Their contributions uphold *LJHER's* standards of excellence and contribute to fostering a vibrant scholarly discourse in higher education research.

## **Open Access and Copyright Policy**

The *Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research (LJHER)* operates as an open-access journal, granting unrestricted access to all published content without cost to users or institutions. Readers are permitted to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of articles without prior authorization from the publisher or authors. The presentation of contributions to *LJHER* is facilitated through copyright transfer from authors to *LJHER*. Moreover, all elements of the journal, including its name, structure, and organization, are safeguarded by copyright and are the property of Liceo de Cagayan University.

## **Policy on Retraction**

Retraction is the process initiated by the editorial office to remove a published article from the digital archive. This action is taken in response to the discovery of fraudulent claims in the research, instances of plagiarism, or significant errors in methodology that were overlooked during the quality assurance process. Retraction is prompted by complaints from third-party researchers, which are thoroughly validated by the editorial board before initiating the retraction process. It is important to emphasize that retraction procedures begin only after informing the authors and providing them with an opportunity to present their perspective, thus ensuring adherence to due process standards.

## **Policy on Digital Preservation**

Digital Preservation involves systematically storing electronic files in multiple formats such as compact discs, cloud computing, Google Drive, email accounts, and external hard drives. This preservation strategy aims to safeguard files against potential risks, including web server crashes, natural disasters, fires, and other human-induced destructions.

## **Policy on Handling Complaints**

Upon receiving a complaint alleging copyright infringement, intellectual property rights violations, inaccuracies, libelous content, or other unlawful material in any contribution to the journal, *LJHER's* editorial board undertakes a thorough investigation. This process may entail requesting substantiation of claims from involved parties. The editorial board of *LJHER* will then determine

whether to remove the disputed material in good faith, documenting its investigation and decision-making process. If found liable after investigation, the article may be subject to retraction.

### **Policy on Conflicts of Interest**

*LJHER* mandates that authors disclose all potential conflicts of interest before publication.

### **The Peer Review System**

**Definition:** Peer review, also known as refereeing, involves subjecting an author's scholarly work, research, or ideas to scrutiny by experts in the same field. This normative process, essential for both grant funding and scholarly publication, ensures adherence to disciplinary standards, facilitates the identification of weaknesses, and encourages improvement.

**Type:** The journal employs the double-blind review process, wherein both the reviewer and author remain anonymous to each other.

**Recruiting Referees:** The editorial board assumes responsibility for selecting referees, who must possess exemplary credentials and expertise in the relevant field. Authors may suggest potential referees subject to editorial approval, with strict adherence to criteria ensuring impartiality and expertise.

**Manuscript:** Referees are chosen based on their track record in research, awards, and peer review experience while avoiding conflicts of interest. The editorial board may consider authors' recommendations for potential referees, prioritizing expertise and impartiality.

**Peer Review Process:** The editorial board conducts an initial review of manuscripts, requiring revisions as necessary before external review. Manuscripts are then distributed to expert referees for evaluation, typically comprising two specialists in the research topic and one experienced in research methodology and statistics. Referees provide constructive feedback and recommendations for improvement, which the editorial board considers in its decision-making process. Reviewers' identities remain undisclosed to authors to ensure impartiality, except under special circumstances.



## Criteria for Acceptance and Rejection

A manuscript undergoes a rigorous evaluation process to determine acceptance or rejection based on specific criteria:

1. Endorsement by 2 or 3 referees recommending publication.
2. Substantial compliance with reviewers' instructions.
3. Originality score of at least 80 in plagiarism detection tests.
4. English readability score below 60 in the Flesch Reading Ease test and a Gunning Fog Index of at least 12.
5. Correctly formatted literature citations verified by reference checker software.
6. Valid formulas confirmed by formula checker software, and adherence to spelling and grammar standards verified by "Grammarly" software and human academic writing experts.

## Editorial and Paper Acceptance Decisions

After a thorough evaluation of the papers, there will be four (4) decisions to arrive at, as follows:

### 1. Acceptance with Minor Revision (25%):

- Paper mostly meets academic and research requirements.
- Sound and publishable with minor corrections, like adding citations or refining arguments, discussions, recommendations, and implications.
- Changes should be marked for reviewer attention, but no major alterations are needed.

### 2. Conditional Acceptance with Major Revision (50%):

- Academic and research fundamentals are sound, but significant improvements are required.
- Needs substantial changes in literature, theory, research model, methodology, and argument enhancement.
- Authors must provide a detailed response to reviewers' comments.
- The paper undergoes another round of review with a chance of acceptance.

### 3. Deferred Acceptance:

- Addressable issues (70% of the paper) through major revisions.
- If major revisions may resolve concerns related to academic quality, novelty, or contribution, deferment is recommended.

- Requires a new submission and review process should the researcher desire so. The editor retains the right to reject if revisions are insufficient.

#### 4. Rejection:

- Manuscript lacks the necessary quality, novelty, or significance for publication.

In cases of substantial disagreement among referees regarding a manuscript's quality, the editorial board employs various strategies to reach a decision:

- Soliciting additional reviews as tie-breakers when receiving vastly opposing reviews.
- Inviting authors to respond to referee criticisms and allowing compelling rebuttals to influence decision-making in tie situations.
- Seeking input from the original critic referee or engaging authors and referees in a constructive dialogue, without allowing referees to confer with each other.

The goal of these deliberations is not consensus but a thorough and fair assessment of the manuscript's quality and scholarly contribution, ensuring alignment with *LJHER's* standards and objectives.

### Editorial Policy Enhancements

**English Writing Readability.** Readability tests gauge the comprehension difficulty of academic English passages. To aid educators and researchers in selecting articles appropriate for varied comprehension levels, contributors are advised to utilize the Flesch Kincaid readability test, specifically the Flesch Reading Ease test. The interpretation of scores is as follows:

90.0 – 100.00: Easily understood by an average 11-year-old student.

60.0 – 70.0: Easily comprehensible by 13 to 15-year-old students.

Below 30.0: Best comprehended by university graduates

The Gunning Fog Index, developed by Robert Gunning in 1952, assesses English writing readability by estimating the years of formal education needed for initial understanding. A fog index of 12 corresponds to a reading level akin to a US high school senior (approximately 18 years old) or a first year university student in the Philippines.

**Plagiarism Detection.** Authors are encouraged to use plagiarism detection software to increase acceptance probabilities. The editorial office employs licensed software for screening research articles, with an 80 percent originality standard to pass the plagiarism test.

**Appropriateness of Citation Format.** Contributors should adhere to citation formats specified by the American Psychological Association (APA) and relevant disciplines. Software tools for different style formats facilitate adherence.

**Citation Strength for Quality of Reference.** Citation strength reflects the frequency of a reference's citation by other authors, indicating credibility. Authors can verify citation counts through Google Scholar to ascertain a source's reliability.

**Traceability.** Online sources are preferred for improved traceability, allowing editors to access original content via provided URLs. Authors must include URLs and the date of retrieval for online sources, along with Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs).

example: to be placed inside the Bibliographic Entry

Dalman, J.T. (2017). Adolescents' Attitudes Towards People with HIV/AIDS. *Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research*, 13(2). Retrieved on December 2017 from <http://asianscientificjournals.com/publication/index.php/ljher/issue/view/102>, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7828/ljher.v11i1.960>

**Word Count, Spelling and Grammar Checks.** Authors are advised to conduct word counts for abstracts (around 250 words) and full texts (approximately 5000 to 8000 words). Spelling and grammar checks using tools like Grammarly are required before submission.

**Journal Impact Factor and Author's Research Track Record.** The editorial office monitors article and author citations on Google Scholar monthly, computing Journal Impact Factors two years from publication. The author's research track records in recognized indices like Clarivate (ISI), Scopus Elsevier, Google Scholar, Open Researcher, and Contributor I.D. (ORCID), and the Hirsch Index are valued, influencing selection for editorial board roles, peer review, and journal contributions.

## **Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice**

The journal upholds stringent publication ethics, prohibiting self-plagiarism and duplicate publication. Authors must disclose conflicts of interest. The journal ensures objective double-blind peer review and addresses any conflicts promptly and transparently under the Editor-in-Chief's oversight.

**LJHER** is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity throughout the publication process, encompassing the roles of authors, peer reviewers, and editors.

**Authors** submitting their manuscripts are expected to adhere to the following guiding principles:

- Originality by ensuring that their work is unpublished, both in partiality and totality.
- Simultaneous submission of the same manuscript to multiple journals is considered unethical, as is any form of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, or duplication.
- Declaration of any conflicts of interest and provide clear acknowledgments of data sources, data availability, reproducibility, citations, and references used in the manuscript development.
- Any modifications made to the manuscript after submission must be promptly communicated to the Editor-in-Chief.

**Peer Reviewers** are tasked to do the following with utmost confidentiality and ethical manner:

- Providing constructive comments based on the intellectual content of the paper, without consideration of factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenship, or political values of the authors.
- Maintaining confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interest during the 'double-blind' review process.
- Justifying publication acceptance or rejection decisions clearly, objectively, and constructively to the Editor.

**Editors** uphold integrity in scholarly research and its publication by adhering to the following:

- Fairness and impartiality in evaluating manuscripts, regardless of authors' personal characteristics or beliefs.
- Confidentiality of manuscripts and reviewers' identities is paramount,

as is the avoidance of conflicts of interest and protection of intellectual property.

- Responsibility for publication decisions based on reviewer evaluations, ensuring compliance with ethical policies, legal constraints, and overseeing the peer review process and journal management.
- Handling of post-publication discussions, corrections, and any ethical oversights, ensuring accountability and transparency throughout the process.

By incorporating these principles into its operations, Asian Scientific Journals like *LJHER* aims to maintain the trust and credibility of the scientific community while upholding the highest standards of publication ethics. This commitment underscores the journal's dedication to fostering integrity, fairness, and transparency in scholarly publishing.

## GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

The *Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research* is one of the professional research journals of Liceo de Cagayan University. The journal is published twice a year in June and December. For paper submission, the paper must be an original copy, about 5,000 to 8,000 words, single-spaced, and with tables and figures. The research abstract must have 250 words and at least 5 keywords or phrases.

### Manuscript Preparation

1. Organize the paper following these major headings: **Title, Author(s) and address(es), Abstract, Introduction, Framework, Objectives of the Study, Methods** (These include the procedures in data gathering, including hardware, laboratory apparatus and equipment, original laboratory resources, customized materials, and other related instrument for data gathering) or **Methodology** (Description of procedures and techniques employed to identify, select, process and analyze information to answer the research problems), **Results & Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations** (optional).
2. **Literature Cited.** The Literature Cited should substantially consist of articles published in current content-covered or peer-reviewed journals. Minimize citations of unpublished reports and theses.
3. Type the entire manuscript double-spaced on a short white bond paper (8.5x11 in) on one side only with 2.5 cm margins all around using a Times New Roman font size of 10.
4. References, Acknowledgments, Table Titles, Figures, and Plates. Legends should be typed double-spaced. Number consecutively all pages including title page, Tables, Figures, and Plates.
5. Leave two spaces before and after the major headings and two spaces before and after the sub-headings. Do not use footnotes. Rather, use end notes if the discipline needs such.
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9. Use the metric system only or the International System of Units. Use abbreviations of units only beside numerals (e.g. 6 m); otherwise, spell out the units (e.g. kilometers from here). Do not use plural forms or periods for abbreviations of units. Use the bar for compound units (e.g. 1 kg/ha/yr.). Place a zero before the decimal in numbers less than 1 (e.g. 0.25)
10. When preparing Tables, Figures, and Plates, consider the journal's printed page of 5.75 in x 8.5 in and the reduction that will be necessary. Titles of tables and captions of Figures and Plates should be as short as possible and understandable without referring to the text. Captions of Figures and Plates should be typed double-spaced on a separate sheet. Figures should consist only of simple line drawings, computer-generated graphics or good quality colored photographs. Label of Figures and Plates should be written below the image and should be of such a size so that these are still legible even after reducing the size by as much as 50%. Preferably use Adobe Photoshop CS, Adobe InDesign CS and or PDF computer-generated graphics.
11. Cite references in the text as author (year). Writing of et al. in-text citation is allowed, but complete author names should be indicated in the literature cited in the reference list. Cite references in press as (author, in press) and unpublished reference as (author, unpubl. data or author, pers.comm.). If two or more references are cited, arrange them by year.
12. The manuscript should be as concise as the subject and research method permit, generally about 5,000 to 8,000 words single-space.
13. To promote anonymous review, authors should not identify themselves directly or indirectly in their papers or in experimental test instruments included in the submission. Single authors should not use the editorial "we".
14. A cover page should show the title of the paper, all authors' names, titles and affiliations, email addresses, and any acknowledgments.
15. The first author or primary author is the person who conducted most of the work described in the paper and is usually the person who drafted the manuscript. The "senior author" is usually the last person named and is generally the one who directed or oversaw the project. The names of the "contributing authors" appear between the primary and senior authors, and the order should reflect their relative contribution to the work.

**Pagination:** All pages, including tables, appendices, and references, should be

serially numbered. Major sections should be numbered in Roman numerals. Subsections should not be numbered.

**Numbers:** Spell out numbers from one to ten, except when used in tables and lists, and when used with mathematical, statistical, scientific, or technical units and quantities, such as distances, weights, and measures. Percentage and Decimal Fractions: In nontechnical copy, use the word percent in the text.

**Hyphens:** Use a hyphen to join unit modifiers or to clarify usage. For example: a cross-sectional equation; re-form. See Webster's for correct usage.

**Keywords:** The abstract must be followed by at least three keywords to assist in indexing the paper and identifying qualified reviewers.

**Data Availability:** A line immediately following the Keyword identifiers should indicate whether the data are available.

### **Abstract/ Introduction**

An abstract of about 250 words should be presented on a separate page immediately preceding the text. The Abstract should concisely inform the reader of the manuscript's topic, its methods, and its findings. Keywords and the Data Availability statements should follow the Abstract. The text of the paper should start with a section labeled "Introduction", which provides more details about the paper's purpose, motivation, methodology, and findings. Both the Abstract and the Introduction should be relatively nontechnical yet clear enough for an informed reader to understand the manuscript's contribution. The manuscript's title but neither the author's name nor other identification designations should appear on the Abstract page.

### **Documentation**

**Citations:** In-text citations are made using an author-year format. Cited works must correspond to the list of works listed in the "Literature Cited" section.

1. In the text, works are cited as follows: author's last name and year, without a comma, in parentheses.
2. For cited works that include more than one work by an author (or same



co –authors) that is published in the same year, the suffix a, b, etc., is to follow the date in the within-text citations and in the “Literature Cited” section.

3. When the author’s name is mentioned in the text, it should be listed in the references.
4. Citations to institutional works should use acronyms or short titles where practicable.
5. If the paper refers to statutes, legal treatises, or court cases, citations acceptable in law reviews should be used.
6. All authors should be correctly cited.

## **Conclusions**

Conclusions should briefly answer the objectives of the study. They are not repetitions of the discussions but are judgments of the results obtained.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendation is optional, allowed only when results warrant a recommendation.

## **Literature Cited**

Every manuscript must include a “Literature Cited” section that contains only those works cited within the text. Each entry should contain all information necessary for unambiguous identification of the published work. The style format is based on the American Psychological Association.

## **Submission of Manuscripts**

Authors should note the following guidelines for submitting manuscripts:

1. Manuscripts currently under consideration by another journal or publisher should not be submitted. The author/s must state upon submission that the work has not been submitted or published elsewhere. The author/s must submit a duly signed Copyright Transfer.
2. For manuscripts reporting on field surveys or experiments: If the additional

documentation (e.g. questionnaire, case, interview schedule) is sent as a separate file, then all information that might identify the authors(s) must be deleted from the instruments.

3. Manuscripts should be submitted via [Online Registration of Research Articles for Journal Publication](#). Please submit separate files for (1) the manuscript's title page with identifying information (not forwarded to reviewers), (2) the manuscript with title page and all other identifying information removed, and (3) any necessary supplement files such as experimental instructions and/or response memorandum on invited revisions. A copy of the research questionnaire or tools is encouraged for submission. The editors and the reviewers need to refer to these tools.
4. Revisions must be submitted within 2 months from the decision letter inviting a revision.
5. Vital information is available at this website: [www.asianscientificjournals.com/new](http://www.asianscientificjournals.com/new).

## Comments

The *Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research* welcomes the submission of comments on previous articles. Comments on articles previously published in the journal will generally be reviewed by two reviewers, usually an author of the original articles (to assist the editor in evaluating whether the submitted comment represents the prior article accuracy) and an independent reviewer. If a comment is accepted for publication, the original author will be invited to reply. All other editorial requirements, as enumerated above, apply to proposed comments.