



SHIBLI NATIONAL ACADEMIC JOURNAL

SNAJ

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Editorial Policy Manual

Policies · Standards · Procedures · Guidelines

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CHAPTER 1

Journal Profile

1.1 About the Journal

The **Shibli National Academic Journal (SNAJ)** is a multidisciplinary, multilingual, open-access, peer-reviewed national academic journal established under the aegis of **Dept. of Teacher Education, Shibli National Post Graduate College, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, India**. SNAJ is committed to advancing knowledge across disciplines by providing a rigorous, transparent, and inclusive platform for scholars, researchers, practitioners, and academicians.

SNAJ is published in both print and online formats and maintains a robust digital presence through its official website **www.snaj.org.in**.

1.2 ISSN & Identifiers

Identifier	Details
ISSN (Online)	3139-3284
Publisher	Dept. of Teacher Education, Shibli National Post Graduate College, Azamgarh
Website	www.snaj.org.in
Chief Editor	Dr. Mohammad Zahid
Frequency	Bi-annual (January–June & July–December)
Language	English, Hindi, Urdu (Multilingual)
Access Model	Open Access (Diamond/Gold OA)
DOI	Registered via Zenodo

1.3 Contact Information

Chief Editor: **Dr. Zahid Azmi** | Email: chiefeditor@snaj.org.in

Institution: Dept. of Teacher Education, Shibli National Post Graduate College, Azamgarh – 276001, Uttar Pradesh, India

1.4 Founding Philosophy

SNAJ was founded with the conviction that quality research should transcend institutional boundaries, linguistic barriers, and geographic limitations. The journal occupies a distinctive niche by publishing research in English, Hindi, and Urdu — making scholarly knowledge accessible to academics across India's diverse intellectual communities.

CHAPTER 2

Vision, Mission & Objectives

2.1 Vision

To be a **leading national academic journal** that fosters interdisciplinary research, upholds the highest standards of scholarly integrity, and bridges the gap between academic knowledge and societal application — inclusive of India's multilingual intellectual heritage.

2.2 Mission

- To publish original, peer-reviewed, high-quality research across multiple disciplines.
- To provide an open-access platform that democratises knowledge dissemination.
- To promote scholarly dialogue through rigorous, ethical, and transparent publication practices.
- To support emerging researchers, particularly from underserved academic communities.
- To uphold and advance the standards set by UGC, COPE, and international best practices.

2.3 Core Objectives

- Maintain a double-blind peer review process ensuring impartiality and academic rigour.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research publication.
- Advance open access to knowledge without financial barriers to readers.
- Build a diverse, distinguished, and geographically representative editorial board.
- Register all published works with DOIs for permanent digital citation.
- Align all publication practices with COPE, OASPA, and UGC-CARE standards.

2.4 Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

SNAJ actively welcomes contributions from scholars regardless of gender, caste, religion, institutional affiliation, or geographic location. The journal is committed to publishing research that addresses issues of social justice, equity, and inclusion alongside mainstream disciplinary themes.

CHAPTER 3

Aim & Scope

3.1 Aim of the Journal

SNAJ aims to serve as a credible, high-impact national platform for the dissemination of original research, critical reviews, theoretical contributions, and applied studies across a broad spectrum of academic disciplines. The journal aspires to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of knowledge, policy discourse, and professional practice in India and beyond.

3.2 Disciplinary Scope

SNAJ publishes research across — but not limited to — the following disciplines:

Domain	Subject Areas
Humanities	History, Philosophy, Literature, Linguistics, Cultural Studies
Social Sciences	Sociology, Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Education
Islamic Studies	Islamic History, Theology, Comparative Religion, Arabic Studies
Languages	Urdu, Hindi, Arabic, Persian, English Literature & Linguistics
Education & Pedagogy	Curriculum Studies, Teacher Education, Educational Technology
Law & Governance	Constitutional Law, Policy Studies, Human Rights, Governance
Management	Business Administration, HRM, Marketing, Entrepreneurship
Science & Technology	Applied Sciences, Environmental Studies, ICT in Education
Interdisciplinary	Women's Studies, Media Studies, Development Studies

3.3 Types of Manuscripts Accepted

- **Original Research Articles:** Reporting new empirical, theoretical, or applied findings.
- **Review Articles:** Systematic, narrative, or meta-analytic reviews of existing literature.
- **Conceptual/Theoretical Papers:** Advancing theoretical frameworks or conceptual models.

- **Case Studies:** In-depth analyses of specific phenomena, institutions, or programmes.
- **Short Communications:** Brief reports of significant preliminary findings.
- **Book Reviews:** Critical evaluations of recently published academic books.
- **Conference Papers:** Extended versions of presentations at recognised academic events.

3.4 Language Policy

Manuscripts are accepted in **English, Hindi, and Urdu**. Authors are responsible for ensuring linguistic accuracy; the editorial office may require professional language editing for manuscripts that do not meet clarity standards. Abstracts in English are mandatory for all submissions, irrespective of manuscript language.

3.5 Geographic Focus

While primarily a national journal, SNAJ welcomes international contributions that have relevance to Indian academia, policy, or societal concerns. Comparative studies involving India and other nations are particularly encouraged.

CHAPTER 4

Editorial Governance

4.1 Governance Structure

SNAJ operates under a transparent and hierarchical editorial governance framework designed to ensure academic rigour, ethical compliance, and operational efficiency. The governance structure comprises the following bodies:

- **Chief Editor:** Apex academic authority; oversees all editorial decisions, policy formulation, and journal direction.
- **Executive Editor:** Manages day-to-day editorial operations, submission tracking, and reviewer coordination.
- **Associate Editors:** Discipline-specific oversight; initial manuscript screening and reviewer assignment.
- **Editorial Advisory Board:** Senior scholars providing strategic guidance and quality assurance.
- **Editorial Board Members:** Subject experts conducting peer review and contributing to editorial decisions.
- **Managing Editor:** Handles production, formatting, DOI registration, and publication workflow.

4.2 Editorial Independence

The editorial decisions of SNAJ are made entirely on academic merit, free from commercial, institutional, or political influence. The Chief Editor holds final authority over acceptance, rejection, and retraction decisions. No member of the publishing institution's administration may override an editorial decision.

4.3 Decision-Making Process

All manuscripts undergo a structured decision pathway: initial screening by the Chief/Executive Editor → desk rejection or assignment to Associate Editor → double-blind peer review → editorial decision → revision cycle (if applicable) → final acceptance or rejection → production and publication.

4.4 Editorial Meetings

The Editorial Board convenes formally at least twice per year (January and July) to review journal performance, update policies, discuss indexing progress, and plan upcoming issues. Minutes of meetings are maintained and archived.

4.5 Conflict of Interest in Governance

No editorial board member may participate in decisions regarding manuscripts authored by themselves, their current students, direct collaborators, or family members. Such submissions are handled by an alternate board member designated by the Chief Editor.

4.6 Term of Appointment

Editorial Board Members are appointed for a term of **three years**, renewable upon mutual agreement and satisfactory performance review. Appointments are formalised through official certificates issued by the Chief Editor.

CHAPTER 5**Editorial Board Roles & Responsibilities****5.1 Chief Editor**

- Defines and enforces the intellectual direction and policy framework of SNAJ.
- Takes final editorial decisions on all manuscripts.
- Represents SNAJ in all external academic, regulatory, and indexing matters.
- Appoints and removes editorial board members.
- Signs and issues editorial board appointment certificates.
- Ensures compliance with UGC, COPE, and all applicable regulations.

5.2 Executive Editor

- Manages the submission portal and tracks manuscript status.
- Coordinates communication between authors, reviewers, and editors.
- Conducts initial plagiarism checks and desk screening.
- Maintains editorial records and correspondence archives.

5.3 Associate Editors

- Conduct in-depth screening of manuscripts in their discipline.
- Identify and invite qualified peer reviewers.
- Synthesise reviewer comments and make recommendations to Chief Editor.
- Assist authors with revision queries.

5.4 Editorial Board Members

- Conduct double-blind peer review of assigned manuscripts within stipulated timelines.
- Provide constructive, detailed, and impartial review reports.
- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding manuscript content and author identity.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest before accepting review assignments.
- Contribute to journal promotion within their academic networks.

5.5 Advisory Board Members

- Provide strategic guidance on journal growth, scope, and indexing.
- Lend credibility and visibility to the journal through their association.
- Participate in editorial policy review at least annually.

5.6 Reviewer Responsibilities

- Complete reviews within **21 days** of acceptance of review invitation.
- Provide specific, evidence-based, constructive feedback.
- Recommend: Accept / Minor Revision / Major Revision / Reject.
- Immediately notify the editorial office if unable to complete the review.
- Maintain absolute confidentiality; do not share or use manuscript content.

CHAPTER 6

Double-Blind Peer Review Policy

6.1 Principle

SNAJ employs a rigorous **double-blind peer review** process in which both the authors and the reviewers remain anonymous to each other throughout the review process. This model is adopted to eliminate bias, ensure objectivity, and uphold the integrity of the scholarly evaluation process.

6.2 Review Process — Step by Step

- **Step 1 — Submission:** Author submits manuscript via the official SNAJ submission portal or email.
- **Step 2 — Initial Check:** Executive Editor verifies formatting compliance, scope fit, and basic quality. Plagiarism check via iThenticate/Turnitin is conducted (threshold: <15%).
- **Step 3 — Anonymisation:** All author-identifying information is removed from the manuscript before dispatch to reviewers.
- **Step 4 — Reviewer Assignment:** Associate Editor identifies and invites a minimum of two qualified external reviewers with relevant expertise.
- **Step 5 — Review:** Reviewers evaluate the manuscript using SNAJ's standardised peer review form and submit their report within 21 days.
- **Step 6 — Editorial Decision:** Chief/Associate Editor evaluates reviewer reports and communicates one of four decisions: Accept, Minor Revision, Major Revision, or Reject.
- **Step 7 — Revision:** Authors address reviewer comments and submit a point-by-point response letter along with the revised manuscript.
- **Step 8 — Final Decision:** Revised manuscripts are re-evaluated and a final decision is communicated.
- **Step 9 — Acceptance & Production:** Accepted manuscripts proceed to copy-editing, formatting, proofreading, and publication.

6.3 Review Criteria

Reviewers assess manuscripts on the following dimensions:

Criterion	Description
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Originality	Novelty and contribution to existing knowledge
Relevance	Alignment with SNAJ's scope and disciplinary focus
Methodology	Soundness and appropriateness of research design
Literature Review	Adequacy and currency of cited literature
Analysis	Rigour and accuracy of data analysis or argumentation
Conclusions	Validity and logical derivation from findings
Presentation	Clarity, organisation, and language quality

6.4 Timeline Standards

- Initial Editorial Decision (Desk Review): within **7 working days**.
- Peer Review Completion: within **21 days** of reviewer acceptance.
- Editorial Decision Post-Review: within **5 working days** of receiving all reports.
- Author Revision Period: **30 days** (extensions available on request).
- Total Turnaround Target: **60–90 days** from submission to decision.

6.5 Appeals Process

Authors who believe their manuscript was rejected on insufficient grounds may submit a formal appeal to the Chief Editor within 30 days of the rejection decision. Appeals must be accompanied by a detailed rebuttal. The Chief Editor may commission an additional independent review if warranted.

CHAPTER 7

Publication Ethics (COPE-Aligned)

7.1 Framework

SNAJ adheres to the publication ethics guidelines established by the **Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)**. All stakeholders — authors, editors, reviewers, and the publisher — are bound by these ethical standards.

7.2 Duties of Authors

- **Originality:** Authors must ensure that submitted work is original and has not been published elsewhere.
- **Accurate Reporting:** Data must be presented accurately without fabrication, falsification, or selective omission.
- **Acknowledgement:** All sources must be properly cited; significant contributions by others must be acknowledged.
- **Multiple Submission:** Simultaneous submission to multiple journals is strictly prohibited.
- **Authorship:** Only those who meet the ICMJE criteria for authorship should be listed as authors.
- **Disclosure:** All funding sources, conflicts of interest, and relevant affiliations must be disclosed.
- **Errors:** Authors must promptly notify the journal of significant errors in published work and cooperate in corrections or retractions.

7.3 Duties of Editors

- Evaluate manuscripts solely on their academic merit without discrimination.
- Maintain confidentiality of submitted manuscripts and reviewer identities.
- Disclose and recuse from decisions involving conflicts of interest.
- Investigate allegations of misconduct rigorously and impartially.
- Pursue corrections, retractions, or expressions of concern as required.

7.4 Duties of Reviewers

- Conduct reviews objectively, constructively, and within stipulated timelines.
- Maintain absolute confidentiality of manuscript content.

- Declare conflicts of interest and recuse from review if necessary.
- Alert editors to any potential ethical concerns in the manuscript.
- Not use unpublished material from reviewed manuscripts for personal research.

7.5 Allegations of Misconduct

SNAJ follows the COPE flowcharts for handling allegations of: plagiarism, data fabrication/falsification, duplicate publication, undisclosed conflicts of interest, authorship disputes, and inappropriate reviewer conduct. All complaints are investigated confidentially, and outcomes are communicated to all parties.

7.6 Post-Publication Ethics

SNAJ remains committed to the integrity of the published record. Errors identified post-publication will be addressed through formal correction notices, editor's notes, or retraction, as appropriate and in accordance with COPE guidelines.

CHAPTER 8

AI & Generative AI Policy

8.1 Policy Statement

SNAJ recognises the growing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Generative AI (GenAI) tools in academic research and writing. This policy establishes clear, principled guidelines for the use of such tools in manuscripts submitted to SNAJ.

8.2 AI Authorship

AI and GenAI tools (including but not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot) **cannot be listed as authors** under any circumstances. Authorship requires accountability, which AI systems cannot assume. Authors bear full responsibility for all content, whether AI-assisted or not.

8.3 Permitted Uses

- Grammar checking and language proofreading.
- Literature search and summarisation (*with independent verification*).
- Data visualisation assistance.
- Code generation for data analysis (*must be disclosed and verified*).
- Translation assistance (*accuracy must be independently verified*).

8.4 Prohibited Uses

- Generating substantial portions of the manuscript text without disclosure.
- Fabricating or hallucinating citations, data, or quotations.
- Using AI to circumvent plagiarism detection systems.
- Submitting AI-generated content as original human scholarship without disclosure.

8.5 Disclosure Requirement

Authors must disclose all significant use of AI tools in the manuscript's **Acknowledgements** section, specifying the tool used and the nature of its application. Non-disclosure of AI use constitutes an ethical violation subject to retraction.

Example disclosure: 'The authors used [Tool Name] for grammar checking and language refinement. All intellectual content, analysis, interpretations, and conclusions are solely the work of the authors.'

8.6 Review of AI Policy

Given the rapid evolution of AI technologies, this policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually by the Editorial Board to ensure continued relevance and appropriateness.

CHAPTER 9

Research Integrity & Misconduct

9.1 Commitment to Integrity

SNAJ is unequivocally committed to the highest standards of research integrity. The journal expects all authors, reviewers, and editors to conduct and report research with honesty, accuracy, transparency, and respect for the rights of all parties involved.

9.2 Forms of Research Misconduct

- **Fabrication:** Making up data, results, or any aspect of the research that did not actually occur.
- **Falsification:** Manipulating research materials, equipment, processes, or altering data to misrepresent results.
- **Plagiarism:** Appropriating another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without proper attribution.
- **Duplicate/Salami Publication:** Publishing the same or substantially similar research in multiple journals.
- **Ghost/Gift Authorship:** Including individuals as authors who did not contribute, or excluding those who did.
- **Undisclosed Conflicts of Interest:** Failing to disclose financial, personal, or professional relationships that may bias the research.
- **Ethical Violations:** Conducting research on human or animal subjects without appropriate ethical approval.

9.3 Reporting Misconduct

Any individual — author, reviewer, editor, or reader — may report suspected research misconduct to the Chief Editor at chiefeditor@snaj.org.in. All reports are treated with strict confidentiality. Anonymous reports will be considered but may be harder to investigate without corroborating evidence.

9.4 Investigation Procedure

- Receipt and acknowledgement of complaint within 5 working days.

- Preliminary assessment by the Chief Editor to determine credibility.
- If credible: formal investigation by a committee of senior editors.
- All parties are given the opportunity to respond to allegations.
- Decision communicated in writing with reasons.
- Actions may include: retraction, correction, ban from future submission, or referral to the author's institution.

9.5 Whistleblower Protection

Individuals who report misconduct in good faith will be protected from retaliation. SNAJ will not reveal the identity of complainants without their consent.

CHAPTER 10

Plagiarism Policy

10.1 Definition

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's work, ideas, data, or expressions as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement. This includes self-plagiarism (reuse of one's own previously published material without citation) and paraphrasing without attribution.

10.2 Detection

All manuscripts submitted to SNAJ are subject to plagiarism screening using industry-standard tools including **iThenticate**, **Turnitin**, or equivalent software. Screening is conducted at the point of initial submission and again before final acceptance.

10.3 Similarity Thresholds

Similarity Level	Action
< 15%	Acceptable — proceed to peer review
15% – 25%	Borderline — author asked to revise and reduce similarity
25% – 40%	High — manuscript returned; major revision required before resubmission
> 40%	Unacceptable — desk rejection; author notified; institution may be informed

10.4 Post-Publication Plagiarism

If plagiarism is discovered in a published article, SNAJ will issue a formal retraction notice, update the article's online record, and notify the author's institution. The retracted article will remain visible with a clear retraction watermark.

10.5 Self-Plagiarism

Authors must ensure that their submission does not substantially replicate their own previously published work. Any overlap with prior publications must be disclosed at submission and properly

cited. Conference papers submitted for journal publication must have been substantially extended (minimum 30% new content).

CHAPTER 11

Authorship & Contributorship Policy

11.1 ICMJE Criteria for Authorship

SNAJ adopts the authorship criteria recommended by the **International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)**. To qualify as an author, an individual must meet **all four** of the following criteria:

- Substantial contributions to conception, design, data acquisition, or analysis and interpretation.
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content.
- Final approval of the version to be published.
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work, including investigation and resolution of accuracy or integrity questions.

Individuals who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged in the Acknowledgements section, not listed as authors.

11.2 Corresponding Author

One author must be designated as the **Corresponding Author** responsible for: managing all communication with the editorial office, confirming accuracy of the author list, submitting declarations and ethical statements, and distributing proofs and correspondence to co-authors.

11.3 Prohibited Authorship Practices

- **Ghost Authorship:** Listing individuals who made no intellectual contribution.
- **Gift/Honorary Authorship:** Including senior colleagues, supervisors, or heads of department solely on the basis of their position.
- **Coercive Authorship:** Pressuring junior researchers to include supervisors who did not contribute.

11.4 Author Sequence

The order of authors reflects the relative contribution to the manuscript, by convention. SNAJ does not prescribe a particular ordering convention but requires that all authors agree to the listed order before submission.

11.5 Changes to Authorship

Requests to add, remove, or reorder authors after submission must be submitted in writing, signed by all current authors, and approved by the Chief Editor. Such requests will not be entertained after acceptance.

CHAPTER 12

Conflict of Interest Policy

12.1 Definition

A conflict of interest (COI) exists when an individual's personal, financial, professional, or other interests could inappropriately influence — or appear to influence — their judgement, decisions, or actions in relation to a manuscript.

12.2 Author Disclosures

All authors must disclose at submission: funding sources, grants, fellowships, or other financial support; advisory board memberships, consultancies, or employment relationships; personal or professional relationships with individuals or organisations relevant to the manuscript; any other circumstances that could be perceived as a conflict of interest.

12.3 Reviewer COI

Reviewers must decline a review assignment if they: are a recent co-author of the submitting authors (within 5 years), are at the same institution as any author, have a personal relationship with any author, or have a financial stake in the research outcomes.

12.4 Editor COI

Editors who have a conflict of interest with a manuscript must recuse themselves from all editorial decisions regarding that manuscript and must not discuss it with the handling editor.

12.5 Disclosure Statement

All accepted manuscripts must include a **Conflict of Interest Statement** immediately before the References section. If no conflict exists, authors must state: *'The authors declare no conflict of interest.'*

CHAPTER 13

Data Sharing & Reproducibility

13.1 Principle

SNAJ supports the open science movement and encourages authors to share research data, code, and materials to enhance reproducibility, transparency, and the advancement of knowledge.

13.2 Data Availability Statement

All research manuscripts must include a **Data Availability Statement (DAS)** specifying where and how underlying research data can be accessed. Acceptable statements include:

- Data available in a public repository (provide DOI/URL).
- Data available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.
- Data not available due to privacy/ethical restrictions (explain briefly).
- No data was generated or analysed (for theoretical/review papers).

13.3 Recommended Repositories

- General: **Zenodo, Figshare, OSF (Open Science Framework)**
- Social Sciences: **Harvard Dataverse, ICPSR**
- Institutional repositories of the author's affiliated institution.

13.4 Code Sharing

Authors who use custom code or software for data analysis are encouraged to share code via GitHub, GitLab, or Zenodo with appropriate documentation. Code-sharing details must be included in the Methods section.

13.5 Reproducibility Standards

Quantitative studies must report sufficient methodological detail to allow replication. Statistical methods, sample sizes, software versions, and analytical parameters must be clearly documented. Raw data or summary statistics must be available upon request.

CHAPTER 14

Copyright & Licensing

14.1 Copyright Policy

Authors of manuscripts accepted by SNAJ retain copyright of their work. By submitting to SNAJ, authors grant the journal a **non-exclusive licence** to publish, reproduce, distribute, transmit, and display the article in all current and future formats and media.

14.2 Creative Commons Licensing

All articles published in SNAJ are published under the **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)** licence, unless otherwise specified. This licence allows:

- Sharing: copying and redistributing the material in any medium or format.
- Adapting: remixing, transforming, and building upon the material for any purpose, including commercial.
- Requirement: appropriate credit must be given, a link to the licence provided, and any changes indicated.

14.3 Author Rights

Under the SNAJ copyright policy, authors retain the right to: post the accepted manuscript to personal/institutional websites or repositories; present the work at conferences; reuse figures, tables, and data in future publications (with citation to the original SNAJ publication); include the work in a thesis or dissertation.

14.4 Third-Party Content

Authors are responsible for obtaining written permission from copyright holders for the reproduction of any third-party material (figures, tables, photographs, extended quotations) in their manuscripts. Proof of permission must be submitted along with the manuscript.

14.5 Copyright Infringement

SNAJ will take appropriate action in cases of copyright infringement, including retraction of the infringing publication and notification of relevant authorities.

CHAPTER 15

Open Access Policy

15.1 Open Access Commitment

SNAJ is a fully **Open Access (OA)** journal. All published content is freely and permanently available online without subscription or pay-per-view charges. SNAJ operates on a **Diamond Open Access** model — no charges are levied on authors or readers.

15.2 Benefits of Open Access

- Increased global visibility and citation potential for published research.
- Immediate and unrestricted access for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.
- Compliance with open access mandates of funding agencies.
- Greater societal impact of research findings.

15.3 Self-Archiving & Preprints

SNAJ supports the posting of preprints on recognised servers (SSRN, OSF Preprints, SocArXiv, etc.) prior to or concurrent with submission. Authors must disclose any preprint postings at the time of submission. After publication, authors may post the final published version with attribution to SNAJ.

15.4 Indexing

SNAJ is actively pursuing indexing in UGC-CARE, Google Scholar, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), Crossref, and other major academic databases to maximise discoverability of published content.

CHAPTER 16

Retraction, Correction & Expression of Concern

16.1 Corrections

When a published article contains an error that does not affect the overall findings or conclusions, SNAJ will publish a formal **Correction Notice** (Erratum or Corrigendum). The notice will specify the error, its location, and the corrected text. The original article will be updated with a link to the correction.

16.2 Retraction

SNAJ will retract a published article if it is found to contain: fabricated or falsified data; plagiarised content; duplicate publication; serious methodological errors that invalidate the findings; undisclosed COI that affected the study; or ethical violations.

Retracted articles will retain their original DOI and will be clearly marked with a **RETRACTED** watermark. The retraction notice will specify the reason for retraction and will be permanently linked to the original article.

16.3 Expression of Concern

An **Expression of Concern (EoC)** is issued when: an investigation is ongoing and its outcome is uncertain; there is evidence of possible misconduct but proof is inconclusive; or the reliability of the research is questioned but retraction is not yet warranted. An EoC does not prejudge the outcome of the investigation.

16.4 Process

- Investigation initiated upon receipt of credible complaint or editor's own finding.
- All relevant parties are notified and given opportunity to respond.
- Decision made by Chief Editor in consultation with the Editorial Board.
- Notice published and linked to original article; indexed databases notified.
- Records retained permanently in SNAJ's archives.

CHAPTER 17

Archiving & Digital Preservation

17.1 Commitment to Preservation

SNAJ is committed to the long-term preservation and accessibility of its published content. Digital preservation ensures that published research remains accessible even if the journal ceases operations or undergoes significant technical changes.

17.2 Archiving Strategy

- **Zenodo:** All published articles are deposited in Zenodo (CERN's open repository) with permanent DOIs.
- **Institutional Repository:** Content is archived at Dept. of Teacher Education, Shibli National Post Graduate College's institutional digital repository.
- **LOCKSS/CLOCKSS:** SNAJ intends to register with LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) networks for distributed preservation.
- **Internet Archive (Wayback Machine):** Journal website is registered for periodic crawling and archiving.

17.3 Formats

All articles are preserved in **PDF/A** (archival-quality PDF), XML (JATS format where applicable), and HTML formats to ensure long-term readability across software generations.

17.4 Continued Access

In the event that SNAJ ceases publication, all archived content will remain permanently accessible through Zenodo and associated repositories, ensuring the scholarly record is never lost.

CHAPTER 18

DOI & Metadata Standards

18.1 Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

SNAJ assigns a unique **Digital Object Identifier (DOI)** to every published article through **Zenodo / Crossref**. DOIs provide permanent, stable links to published content and are essential for academic citation, indexing, and discoverability.

18.2 DOI Structure

SNAJ DOIs follow the standard format: **10.XXXXX/snaj.YYYY.VV.II.NNN** where YYYY = year, VV = volume, II = issue, NNN = article sequence number.

18.3 Metadata Requirements

All published articles must have complete and accurate metadata deposited, including:

- Article title, abstract, and keywords (in English for all submissions).
- Full author names, affiliations, and ORCID iDs (where available).
- Volume, issue, and page numbers.
- Publication date and DOI.
- Funding acknowledgements and COI statements.
- Creative Commons licence information.

18.4 ORCID

SNAJ strongly encourages all authors to register for a free **ORCID iD** (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) at orcid.org. ORCID iDs must be provided for the corresponding author and are encouraged for all co-authors. ORCID integration enhances author disambiguation and research discoverability.

18.5 Metadata Updates

The Managing Editor is responsible for ensuring that metadata is deposited within 7 days of publication and updated promptly in the event of corrections or retractions.

CHAPTER 19

APC & Waiver Policy

19.1 Article Processing Charges (APC)

In alignment with its **Diamond Open Access** commitment, SNAJ currently does **not charge** any Article Processing Charges (APC) or submission fees. Publication in SNAJ is free for authors, and access is free for readers. This model is sustained through institutional support from Dept. of Teacher Education, Shibli National Post Graduate College.

19.2 No-Fee Guarantee

SNAJ guarantees that no fees will be levied at any stage of the publication process — submission, peer review, revision, or publication — without prior notification and policy revision. Any future changes to this policy will be announced prominently on the SNAJ website with a minimum notice period of **six months**.

19.3 Waiver Policy

Should APCs be introduced in future, SNAJ commits to maintaining a robust waiver programme for: authors from low- and middle-income countries; independent researchers without institutional affiliation; researchers from institutions without APC funding; authors who demonstrate genuine financial hardship.

Note: Waiver requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will not affect the editorial decision on the manuscript. Waiver decisions are made independently of editorial decisions.

CHAPTER 20**Privacy & Confidentiality Policy****20.1 Data Collected**

SNAJ collects personal data from authors, reviewers, and editorial board members for the purpose of managing submissions, communications, and publications. Data collected includes: name, institutional affiliation, email address, ORCID iD, and manuscript-related correspondence.

20.2 Use of Personal Data

Personal data collected by SNAJ is used exclusively for: processing manuscript submissions; facilitating peer review; communicating editorial decisions; publishing author information alongside accepted manuscripts; maintaining editorial records.

20.3 Confidentiality During Review

Manuscripts under review are treated as strictly confidential documents. Editorial board members and reviewers must not disclose manuscript content, author identity (in the double-blind process), or reviewer identity to any third party. Reviewers may not share manuscripts with colleagues without explicit permission from the editorial office.

20.4 Data Retention

Submitted manuscripts and related correspondence are retained for a minimum of 7 years. Published articles and associated metadata are retained permanently. Personal contact data of non-publishing authors may be deleted upon request after 3 years of inactivity.

20.5 Right to Access & Deletion

Authors, reviewers, and board members may request access to their personal data held by SNAJ, or request deletion of their data (subject to legal retention obligations), by contacting chiefeditor@snaj.org.in.

CHAPTER 21**Website & Publishing Standards****21.1 Official Website**

The official SNAJ website (www.snaj.org.in) serves as the primary digital interface for the journal. It provides: submission guidelines, author instructions, editorial board listing, published issues and articles, policies and ethics statements, contact information, and indexing details.

21.2 Website Content Standards

- All information on the website must be accurate, current, and updated within 30 days of any policy change.
- Published articles must be posted with full metadata, abstracts, DOIs, and downloadable PDFs.
- The website must comply with WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards.
- ISSN numbers, editorial board, and scope must be prominently displayed.

21.3 Article Formatting Standards

Published articles must conform to SNAJ's house style, which includes:

- Font: Times New Roman 12pt (body), 10pt (footnotes).
- Line spacing: 1.5 (body), single (abstract and references).
- Margins: 1 inch on all sides (A4 paper).
- Referencing: APA 7th Edition (default); other recognised styles accepted by discipline.
- Abstract: 150–250 words; 5–8 keywords.
- Page limit: typically 6,000–8,000 words (excluding references and abstract).

21.4 Anti-Predatory Standards

SNAJ is committed to distinguishing itself from predatory journals by: maintaining transparent editorial processes, publishing complete editorial board details, following COPE guidelines, having a rigorous double-blind peer review, not charging submission or publication fees, and registering DOIs for all published content.

CHAPTER 22**Publication Workflow (Flowcharts)****22.1 Overview**

The following flowchart describes the complete publication workflow of SNAJ from manuscript submission to final online publication.

22.2 Submission to Decision Workflow

Stage	Action	Responsible	Timeline
1. Submission	Author submits via portal/email	Author	Day 0
2. Acknowledgement	Auto-acknowledgement sent	System	Day 0–1
3. Initial Screening	Format check, scope, plagiarism	Executive Editor	Day 1–7
4. Desk Decision	Accept for review or desk reject	Chief Editor	Day 7
5. Anonymisation	Remove author details from manuscript	Managing Editor	Day 7–8
6. Reviewer Invite	Identify and invite 2+ reviewers	Associate Editor	Day 8–10
7. Peer Review	Double-blind review by 2 reviewers	Reviewers	Day 10–31
8. Editorial Review	Synthesise reports; draft decision	Associate Editor	Day 31–36
9. Decision	Accept/Minor Rev/Major Rev/Reject	Chief Editor	Day 36
10. Revision	Author revises and resubmits	Author	30 days
11. Re-review	Revised manuscript reviewed	Reviewers	14 days
12. Final Accept	Final acceptance communicated	Chief Editor	Day 5 post-resubmit
13. Proofing	Copy-edit, format, proof to author	Managing Editor	7 days
14. Publication	Online publication, DOI activation	Managing Editor	7 days post-proof

22.3 Post-Publication Workflow

- DOI registered and activated within 48 hours of publication.
- Metadata deposited to Crossref/Zenodo within 7 days.
- Article added to journal website, issue, and volume pages.
- Social media and newsletter announcement (where applicable).
- Indexing database notification sent.

CHAPTER 23

Forms & Templates

23.1 Manuscript Submission Checklist

Authors must ensure the following before submission:

#	Item	Verified
1	Manuscript formatted per SNAJ guidelines (font, margins, spacing)	■
2	Abstract: 150–250 words; 5–8 keywords provided	■
3	All author details on separate Title Page only	■
4	Author-identifying information removed from main manuscript	■
5	References formatted in APA 7th Edition	■
6	Plagiarism self-check conducted (<15% similarity)	■
7	All authors have contributed as per ICMJE criteria	■
8	Conflict of Interest statement included	■
9	Funding acknowledgements included (or stated 'None')	■
10	Data Availability Statement included	■
11	AI tool use disclosed (if applicable)	■
12	Ethical approval details provided (if applicable)	■
13	Covering letter addressed to Chief Editor attached	■
14	Manuscript not simultaneously submitted elsewhere	■

23.2 Peer Review Report Template

Reviewers are required to submit structured reports using the SNAJ Peer Review Form. Key sections include:

- **Section A — Summary:** Brief summary of the manuscript's aims and methodology.

- **Section B — Major Comments:** Substantive issues requiring author attention (numbered list).
- **Section C — Minor Comments:** Presentational, linguistic, or minor factual corrections.
- **Section D — Recommendation:** Accept / Minor Revision / Major Revision / Reject.
- **Section E — Confidential Note:** Comments to the editor not for author communication.

23.3 Author Declaration Form

All corresponding authors must submit a signed declaration confirming: authorship compliance, originality, no simultaneous submission, COI disclosure, and consent to SNAJ copyright and licence terms.

23.4 Copyright Transfer / Licence Agreement

Authors must sign SNAJ's Publication Agreement confirming the non-exclusive licence grant and CC BY 4.0 terms before final publication of their manuscript.

23.5 Revision Response Template

Authors submitting revised manuscripts must include a **Point-by-Point Response Letter** addressing each reviewer comment individually, specifying: the comment, the action taken, and the location of changes in the revised manuscript (with page/paragraph references).

CHAPTER 24

Appendices

Appendix A — SNAJ Author Guidelines Summary

- Manuscript length: 4,000–8,000 words (excluding abstract and references).
- Abstract: 150–250 words in English; 5–8 keywords.
- Font: Times New Roman 12pt; 1.5 line spacing; 1-inch margins.
- Referencing style: APA 7th Edition (default).
- File format: MS Word (.docx) for submission; PDF for final publication.
- Figures and tables: High-resolution (300 dpi minimum); numbered and captioned.

Appendix B — Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
SNAJ	Shibli National Academic Journal
COPE	Committee on Publication Ethics
ICMJE	International Committee of Medical Journal Editors
UGC	University Grants Commission
ISSN	International Standard Serial Number
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
OA	Open Access
APC	Article Processing Charges
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor ID
CC BY	Creative Commons Attribution
COI	Conflict of Interest
DAS	Data Availability Statement
GenAI	Generative Artificial Intelligence

Appendix C — Key References & Resources

- COPE Guidelines: publicationethics.org
- ICMJE Recommendations: icmje.org
- UGC Regulations & CARE List: ugc.ac.in
- Creative Commons Licences: creativecommons.org
- Zenodo Repository: zenodo.org
- ORCID: orcid.org
- DOAJ: doaj.org

Appendix D — Version History

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	January 2026	Initial edition — SNAJ Editorial Policy Manual