EDITORIAL

Artificial intelligence, scientific production, and human responsibility: The position of the Belize Journal of Medicine

Inteligencia artificial, producción científica y responsabilidad humana: postura editorial de Belize Journal of Medicine

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Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly become integrated into the scientific production process. Tools based on generative language models, machine learning systems, and image-generation applications are now increasingly used by researchers, reviewers, and editors. These technologies may support language editing, translation, preliminary organization of ideas, exploratory literature searches, computational analysis, and other activities related to scientific communication. However, alongside these opportunities, significant risks to academic integrity have emerged, including inaccurate information, fabricated references, bias, lack of transparency, confidentiality concerns, and the inappropriate delegation of scientific judgment.

In this context, the Belize Journal of Medicine announces the adoption of its new Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence, available on the journal website: https://bjomed.org/index.php/bjm/AI_policies. This policy adopts a permissive approach with restrictions, grounded in the principles of human responsibility, transparency, scientific integrity, and confidentiality.

BJM's editorial decision aligns with recent international recommendations. The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) states that journals should require authors to disclose the use of AI-assisted technologies in manuscript preparation, both in the cover letter and in the appropriate section of the submitted work. The ICMJE also emphasizes that authors must describe how AI tools were used and remain fully responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the content.[1]

Similarly, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) has stated that AI tools cannot be listed as authors of scientific articles because they cannot assume responsibility for the work, declare conflicts of interest, or manage copyright and licensing agreements.[2]

BJM recognizes that AI may be a valuable tool when used responsibly, particularly for improving language clarity, supporting translation, or facilitating technical tasks. Nevertheless, AI cannot replace critical thinking, scientific interpretation, or the ethical responsibility of researchers. Scientific production requires judgment, public accountability, contextual understanding, and commitment to truthfulness, all of which are inherently human attributes. Therefore, the authors of scientific work must always be human individuals who fulfill internationally accepted authorship criteria.

Our policy requires that any use of AI be explicitly disclosed, including the name of the tool, version if applicable, date of access, and specific purpose of use. When AI is used for writing assistance, disclosure should appear in the acknowledgments section. If AI is used as part of the methodology, data analysis, figure generation, or modeling, it must be described in the Methods section. In all cases, authors retain full responsibility for the final content.

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BJM also establishes clear limits for reviewers and editors. Unpublished manuscripts should not be uploaded to public AI platforms because doing so may compromise the confidentiality of the editorial process. Reviewers must not delegate peer-review reports to automated systems, and editors must not replace editorial judgment with AI tools or rely exclusively on automated detection systems, which may generate false positives and do not alone constitute sufficient evidence of misconduct. This position is consistent with international recommendations promoting the responsible and transparent use of AI in scholarly communication.[3]

Through this policy, BJM reaffirms its commitment to publication ethics, transparency, responsible peer review, and the protection of public trust in science. AI may support scientific communication, but it cannot replace the intellectual and moral responsibility of authors. At BJM, science will continue to be a human endeavor, supported by technological tools, but guided by ethical principles, methodological rigor, and commitment to scientific truth.

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