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Rivista svizzera di scienze dell'educazione
Revue suisse des sciences de l'éducation

Publication guidelines

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1. General Information

1.1. Aims and Scope of the Journal

The *Swiss Journal of Educational Research (SJER)* is the official journal of the Swiss Society for Research in Education (SSRE). It is an international and multidisciplinary forum dedicated to research in educational and training sciences. The SJER publishes articles in English, French, German, and Italian. The journal welcomes international research in education and also serves as a platform for research conducted in Switzerland, particularly in connection with debates that engage the educational community.

The journal publishes works that align with various epistemological, theoretical, and methodological perspectives. It welcomes different types of contributions that shed light on the theories, models, methods, and tools used to design and understand educational policy, pedagogical practices and learning environments that can support learning in diverse contexts, including:

- Editorials written by internationally recognized experts
- Articles based on empirical or theoretical research
- Special issues featuring a collection of coordinated articles that explicitly align with the journal's editorial policy
- Book reviews on recent works addressing education or training issues

1.2. Principles for Manuscript and Proposal Submission

Manuscripts may be submitted as *Varia* at any time. The Journal generally publishes one thematic issue per year. If you wish to serve as Guest Editor for a thematic issue, please consult the Call for Issues published on the Journal's website. When a thematic issue is planned, a Call for Papers is published.

Authors are kindly asked to read carefully and comply with all the following guidelines and instructions before submitting their manuscript. Articles submitted as part of a thematic issue must also meet the requirements of the corresponding Call for Papers. All articles that meet the Journal's editorial standards are subject to double-blind peer review.

Manuscripts may be submitted in English, German, French, or Italian. The title, abstract, and keywords of each article are published in all four of these languages.

1.3. Originality and Ethics

The SJER adheres to the COPE guidelines on research ethics.

Submitted texts must be original. They must not have been published anywhere else, and must not be simultaneously submitted to another journal, even in one or more different languages. Preprints are not permitted before the completion of the evaluation process. Any instance of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, duplicate publication, or submission of a translation of previously published work constitutes grounds for immediate rejection.

The use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools must be transparent and responsible. A GenAI tool cannot be considered an author. Full responsibility for all content, including text, data, images, and references, rests exclusively with the authors. The use of GenAI tools for language correction, rephrasing, translation, or text structuring is permitted, provided that the authors reread, correct, and validate the entirety of the generated content. Any other use of GenAI tools (assisted writing, image generation, etc.) must be explicitly declared in the manuscript, specifying the tool's name, version, and purpose.

The fabrication of data or references by GenAI, the inclusion of sensitive data, particularly without anonymization, in tools that may record such data, or any undeclared use of GenAI tools constitute violations of research ethics and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

1.4. Anonymization Policy

The Journal follows a double-blind peer review process. An anonymized version of the manuscript must be submitted, without any mention of the authors in the text, the bibliography, or the document metadata.

2. Criteria for Admission to Peer Review

Before being sent for external review, each manuscript is assessed by the Editorial Committee according to specific formal and scientific criteria detailed below. A major failure to meet these criteria may result in a desk reject, at the discretion of the Editorial Committee. To ensure the diversity of its publications, the SJER systematically rejects any manuscript in which at least one of the authors has been published in one of its issues within the previous year.

2.1. Formal compliance

Compliance of the manuscript with the formal requirements set out in this document, including:

- Adherence to formatting guidelines and APA (7th edition) standards.
- Accepted file formats: *.doc*, *.docx*, *.rtf*, or *.odt*.
- Fully anonymized text, including the bibliography and document metadata.
- Title, abstract (maximum 800 characters including spaces), and five keywords in all four languages of the Journal upon submission.
- Use of gender-inclusive language.
- Maximum length of the text: 45,000 characters (including spaces and bibliography, excluding title, abstract, keywords, and appendices).
- Illustrations meeting Journal requirements (resolution, format, permissions).
- Inclusion of the ethical compliance form.

Note: If at least one formal criterion is not met, a formal issue will be indicated, and the authors will be granted a single opportunity to bring the manuscript into compliance. If at least one formal criterion remains unmet in the revised version, a desk rejection is automatically issued.

2.2. Scientific Relevance

- Topic within the field of educational sciences.
- Clearly identifiable contribution to the scientific community.
- Absence of significant weaknesses (e.g., lack of a research question, incomplete theoretical and/or methodological framework, outdated or refuted references, insufficient scientific grounding).
- Internal coherence and readability of the text.

2.3. Ethical Aspects

- Original submission
- Absence of plagiarism
- Compliance with research ethics (see COPE guidelines)
- Mandatory inclusion of the ethical compliance form with the manuscript

3. Manuscript Writing

3.1. Formal aspects

Length of manuscripts

Contributions must not exceed 45,000 characters (including spaces, tables, figures, and references, but excluding title, abstract, keywords, and biographical note).

Title

The title should clearly and concisely reflect the content of the article. Upon submission, it must be provided in all four languages of the Journal (English, German, French, and Italian).

Abstract

An abstract not exceeding 800 characters (including spaces) must accompany the submission, in all four languages of the Journal.

Keywords

Five keywords must be provided, in all four languages of the Journal, separated by semicolons (;). They should refer to specific and widely recognized concepts within the academic community, ensuring accurate indexing of the article.

Biographical note

Each article must be accompanied by a short biographical note for all authors (maximum 500 characters including spaces), including the following information: current academic position, research areas, and professional postal and email addresses.

ORCID

To facilitate digital identification, all authors must enter their personal ORCID ID in their user account.

Standards

Manuscripts must follow the latest APA standards (7th edition).

References to datasets should follow the following model:

Author(s) of the data. (Year). *Title of the data* (Version) [Data set]. Data publisher. DOI

Text structure

Headings and subheadings should be numbered, including the introduction, conclusion, and reference list (maximum of three levels).

Numbers

Numbers from zero to nine are written in words; numbers from 10 upwards are written as numerals. However, when numbers below and above ten are compared in the same sentence, all should be expressed in numerals (e.g., “scores were 3, 8, and 12, respectively”). Any number appearing at the beginning of a sentence or heading should be written in words. Large numbers with decimals are written as follows: 7,355.65. Centuries are written in Arabic numerals (e.g., 21st century).

Quotation marks

English double quotation marks “…” are used for uncommon, coined, or ironic expressions and terms,

for all direct quotations, or to indicate the title of a chapter or article inserted into a sentence. English single quotation marks '…' are used only to indicate the part of a direct quotation that is itself a quotation made by the author being referred to.

Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviations should be introduced in full at first mention, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses; thereafter, only the abbreviation should be used.

Footnotes

Footnotes are intended for brief explanatory or bibliographic comments that would interrupt the flow of reading in the main text. They should be as concise and limited in number as possible. Superscript Arabic numerals should be used.

Tables and figures

Tables and figures must be placed in the main text at the appropriate position, numbered, and provided with clear titles.

DOI

For sources with a DOI, include it in the reference list in URL format (https://doi.org/).

3.2. Gender-Inclusive Language

The Journal encourages the use of inclusive, non-discriminatory language. Authors should:

- Prefer gender-neutral terms where appropriate (e.g., *chair*, *chairperson*, *spokesperson*; use *students/they* rather than *he/she*).
- Use plural nouns and pronouns or rephrase to avoid gender bias (e.g., "Students must submit their papers on time").
- Make gender explicit only when relevant to the content or research context.

3.3. Submission and Publication

Anonymisation

Manuscripts must be anonymised prior to submission. No references to the authors should appear in the text, bibliography, or document properties. Replace all occurrences of author names with "Author 1", "Author 2", etc., and remove any personal metadata from the file.

Submission

The manuscript must be submitted in *.doc*, *.docx*, *.rtf*, or *.odt* format via the Journal's OJS platform ("Make a submission"). The following documents must be uploaded:

- The original manuscript (including title, abstract, keywords in all four languages, and author biography/biographies),
- The anonymised manuscript,
- The ethical compliance form,
- All illustrations in *.jpg* or *.png* format, at the highest resolution possible (min. 300 dpi).

Galley proofs

Once the article has been accepted for publication, galley proofs will be sent to the authors in PDF format for correction within 15 days. No substantial modifications are allowed at this stage.

Editorial corrections

Before publication, all articles (including multilingual abstracts) are proofread by native speakers. For reasons of consistency and linguistic accuracy, the Editorial Committee reserves the right to make necessary corrections to any part of the article.

Copyright

All articles are published under a Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0 licence.

4. Manuscript Formatting

To ensure editorial consistency, a manuscript template is provided. Authors must prepare their submissions in accordance with this template, which includes the following main features:

- Hierarchical headings and subheadings, with a maximum of three levels
- In-text citations and reference list following APA (7th edition) standards, including DOIs where available
- Tables and figures numbered consecutively and inserted at the appropriate place in the text
- Use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language throughout the manuscript
- Title, abstract, and five keywords provided in all four languages of the Journal
- A biographical note for each author

The original manuscript must strictly follow the specifications of the template, including the structure, layout, and formatting of all document components (title, abstract, keywords, author names and affiliations, biographical notes, etc.).

5. Peer Review Process and Editorial Decisions

5.1. Selection of Reviewers

A member of the Editorial Committee oversees the peer review process and is responsible for inviting two reviewers. Reviewers are selected according to the following criteria:

- They must be qualified experts in the relevant field, normally holding a doctoral degree or, where appropriate, in the process of completing one.
- They must have no conflict of interest with the authors, which includes belonging to a different institution and not being involved in any joint research projects.
- Members of the Journal's Scientific Committee are given priority.

Potential reviewers are expected to confirm their availability or decline the invitation within one week. Once they have accepted, they are normally expected to submit their review within two months via the Journal's online submission platform. These deadlines may be adjusted at the reviewer's request and at the discretion of the editor.

5.2. Manuscript Evaluation

Reviewers assess manuscripts based on the following criteria:

- Relevance, timeliness, and originality of the topic
- Quality and clarity of the theoretical framework
- Soundness and appropriateness of the methodological approach and its implementation
- Structural coherence and formal quality of the manuscript

A structured review form is provided through the online submission system. Reviewers are expected to provide constructive, detailed comments that help authors improve their manuscripts.

Reviewers must maintain strict confidentiality regarding all manuscripts they evaluate. They may not upload or input any part of the manuscript (text, figures, or data) into GenAI tools, except with the explicit authorization of the Journal and only if the tool guarantees no data retention or reuse.

GenAI tools must never be used to conduct or write a review or to formulate a judgment on the scientific quality of a manuscript. Their use is only tolerated for minor language editing, provided that such use is declared to the Editorial Committee, and the final content of the review fully reflects the reviewer's own opinion. All editorial decisions remain entirely human and may not rely on automated systems.

5.3. Editorial Decisions Following Peer Review

If the peer reviews are deemed complete and coherent**,** five possible outcomes are foreseen:

1. **Both reviewers accept the article without any revisions.**

   The article is accepted; no revisions are required.

2. **Both reviewers accept the article, with at least one requiring minor or major revisions.**

   The article is accepted under the condition that the necessary revisions are made.

3. **One reviewer rejects the article, and the other accepts it without any, or with minor revisions.**

   The article is sent to a third reviewer. If this reviewer accepts the article (without, with minor, or with major revisions), the article is accepted under the condition that the necessary revisions are made. If this reviewer rejects the article, the article is rejected.

4. **One reviewer rejects the article, and the other accepts it with major revisions.**

   The article is rejected.

5. **Both reviewers reject the article.**

   The article is rejected.

In all cases, the editor retains full authority to invalidate a peer review decision if it is clearly irrelevant, insufficiently substantiated, or shows that the reviewer has not properly engaged with the article. In such borderline cases, the editor has full discretion to arbitrate, confirm, or overrule reviewers' recommendations, ensuring that the final decision reflects both the integrity of the review process and the Journal's editorial policy and standards. Whenever a review is invalidated, it will be replaced by a new evaluation commissioned from another qualified expert.

Authors who are requested to revise their manuscript must submit a revised version with all changes visible ("Track Changes mode" activated), and a detailed response table addressing each reviewer's comment. These documents should normally be submitted within two months from the date of the editorial decision requesting revisions. The editor evaluates whether the revisions requested by the reviewers have been adequately addressed. If the revisions are deemed insufficient, further modifications may be requested before a final decision is made. If the revised manuscript differs substantially from the original submission, the editor may initiate a second round of peer review, preferably involving the original reviewers who requested the revisions, to ensure the continued validity of the evaluation. In cases of doubt or difficulty, the editor may consult the Editorial Committee and/or the reviewers.

6. Book Reviews

A review should contain approximately 8,000 characters (including spaces) and must be submitted in one of the following file formats: *.docx*, *.doc*, *.rtf*, or *.odt*. Each review includes a descriptive section presenting the book or, in the case of an edited volume, its various contributions, and constructive and critical discussion of the content, assessing its significance, audience, and contribution to current scholarly debates. Reviews must comply with APA (7th edition) citation standards.

As a general rule, reviews are published within one year of the book's publication.

Reviews proposals in English should be submitted to thomas.ruoss@ehb.swiss, or manuel.perrenoud@unige.ch.

The book under review must be referenced at the beginning of the text in the following order:

Surname(s) of the author(s); initial(s) of the given name(s); year of publication (in parentheses); the indication *(Ed.)* when applicable; full title in italics; publisher; indication of reprint, if relevant (*reprint*); and total number of pages.

Examples:

Dolorem, I. (2015). *Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet: Reflections on training and knowledge*. Editio Magna. (reprint 2012). 248 p.

Amet, L., & Consectetur, A. (Eds.) (2020). *Adipiscing elit and contemporary pedagogy*. Universal Press. 372 p.

At the end of the text, the author's signature appears in italics as follows: *first name, last name, institution, and city (unless the city is already included in the institution's name, e.g., University of Bern).*

7. Editorials

An editorial is a short, argumentative, and position-based text intended to introduce, question, or contextualize an issue considered important for educational research, and particularly for educational research in Switzerland.

It is built around a central idea supported by relevant academic literature. An editorial may:

- express a scholarly position,
- stimulate debate,
- offer a theoretical or methodological perspective,
- or provide a critical reflection on current developments in educational research.

Formal characteristics:

- Maximum length: 8,000 characters including spaces (excluding references).
- Language: one of the official languages of the journal.
- The topic of an editorial is free in Varia issues. For thematic issues, it follows the issue's topic.

In Varia issues, editorials are written by:

- a member of the Scientific Committee,
- a member of the Editorial Committee,
- or an invited scholar selected by the Editorial Committee for their recognized expertise in the topic addressed.

In thematic issues, the editorials are written by the Guest Editors.

Editorials undergo the following internal review process designed to ensure both scientific rigor and editorial coherence:

1. The Editorial Committee appoints two of its members as reviewers.
2. The reviewers critically assess the manuscript, paying particular attention to:
    - clarity and coherence of the argument,
    - scientific relevance,
    - grounding in the literature,
    - interest for the scholarly community.
3. The reviewers present their recommendations to the Editorial Committee.

4. The Editorial Committee collectively decides whether to accept the editorial, request revisions, or reject the manuscript.

8. Appendices

8.1. Ethical Compliance Form

Ethical Compliance Form for the Submission of Manuscripts to the Swiss Journal of Educational Research

The Swiss Journal of Educational Research is committed to respecting ethical principles in research. In accordance with the standards in force in the field, authors are required to ensure that their work complies with ethical principles and conditions of access to the field. This form must be completed and signed by the first author when submitting the manuscript.

In particular, the Swiss Journal of Educational Sciences identifies five fundamental ethical principles (American Psychological Association, 2016):

- **Beneficence and Nonmaleficence**. The activities carried out must avoid any damage, whether psychological, social, cultural or institutional.

- **Fidelity and Responsibility**. Researchers must honour the commitments they have made to the individuals and institutions concerned. Furthermore, researchers must take full responsibility for their actions and decisions, being transparent about their methodological choices and the limits of their interventions.

- **Integrity**. Integrity is at the heart of any scientific endeavour. Researchers must avoid any form of deception, manipulation or fraud. Data must be collected, analysed and reported honestly. Furthermore, the objectives and intentions of the research must be explicitly communicated to the participants, without ambiguity or deliberate omission.

- **Justice**. The principle of justice requires equal treatment in the implementation of activities and interventions. All participants must benefit from the same quality of education. No discrimination or inequality of treatment should arise, whether linked to social status, gender, age or any other criterion.

- **Respect for People's Rights and Dignity**. Respect for the rights and dignity of participants is an absolute priority. This includes protecting the confidentiality of data, obtaining free and informed consent, and respecting privacy. Researchers must ensure that participants are fully informed of the objectives, methods and implications of the research, while offering them the opportunity to withdraw at any time without negative consequences. In addition, particular attention must be paid to vulnerable populations to ensure that they participate voluntarily and respectfully.

1. Assessment by an ethics commission

Has the project been assessed by an institutional ethics committee, which has issued a certificate of compliance?

☐ Yes

Reference number:

_____

Issuing institution:

_____

☐ No

→ Please fill in the following **checklist**.

2. Research ethics compliance checklist

Please tick the items that apply to your project:

Ethical principle	Elements to check	Conformity	Observations
Justice and nonmaleficence	The study does not discriminate or stigmatise anyone; participants were treated in accordance with the ethical principles in force.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Does not apply	_____
Informed consent	The participants' consent was obtained in a free, informed and explicit manner.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Does not apply	_____
	In the case of **children** or **persons under guardianship**, the **written consent** of their **legal representatives** was obtained.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Does not apply	_____
Data protection	Personal data is processed in accordance with the laws and ethical principles in force (anonymisation, secure storage, restricted access).	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Does not apply	_____
Access to the field	Field access authorisations have been obtained from the relevant authorities.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Does not apply	**Authorisation reference(s)**: _____ **Issuing authority(ies):** _____

3. Declaration of honour

On behalf of all the authors, I, the undersigned, certify that the information provided in this form is sincere, accurate and complete. I declare that the ethical principles mentioned above have been respected in the context of this research, as well as the ethical rules applicable to our research. I confirm that all the guidelines of the Swiss Journal of Educational Research have been fully observed in the preparation of this manuscript. I also confirm that all authors have made a significant contribution to the work presented in the manuscript and have approved the final version submitted to the journal.

Place: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

8.2. Manuscript Formatting Template

Title

Author 1, Institution

Author 2, Institution

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Table 1

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5. Title

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Keywords: lorem; ipsum; dolor; sit; amet

Titel auf Deutsch

Zusammenfassung

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Schlagworte: lorem; ipsum; dolor; sit; amet

Titre en français

Résumé

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Mots-clefs: lorem ; ipsum ; dolor ; sit ; amet

Titolo in italiano

Riassunto

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Parole chiave: lorem; ipsum; dolor; sit; amet

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8.3. Structured Review Form

Scientific criteria for the evaluation of manuscripts submitted to the SJER

Two types of texts may be submitted for publication: *Theoretical work* (reviews, critical essays, etc.) and *empirical work* (contributions, in which the results of studies, text analyses, experiments, evaluations, meta-analyses etc. are reported and discussed).

Both types of texts are largely evaluated according to the same criteria. The only difference made is in relation to the "suitability of the methodological approach and quality of implementation": for theoretical work, only two of the eight criteria (3.1 and 3.8) are applicable. The other six criteria, which are exclusively suitable for empirical work (3.2 to 3.7), are specially marked.

Title of the article

1. Relevance, topicality and originality
1.1 Significance of the contribution for the topic and the scientific field at large and and relevance to the theme of the issue (if the contribution is being evaluated as part of a thematic issue) 1.2 Topicality of the presented theses or results 1.3 Originality of the contribution (introduction, expansion or new accentuation of scientific discussions; novel methodological approach)
Comments or recommended changes:

2. Quality of the theoretical framework
2.1 Explicit scientific and/or conceptual frame of reference 2.2 Consideration of the current state (national and international) of research in the field 2.3 Formulation of an appropriate research question 2.4 In-depth discussion of the problem in focus and clarification of the used concepts
Comments or recommended changes:

3.	**Suitability of the methodological approach and quality of implementation**	
3.1	Relevance of the methodological approach in relation to the stated research question	
3.2	Description of the methodological instrument used	The criteria 3.2 to 3.7 apply exclusively to empirical work
3.3	Presentation of the research material or data collected	
3.4	Rigour in the methodological treatment and analysis of the data	
3.5	Clarity in the presentation of the results	
3.6	Coherence between the presentation of the results and the interpretation of the data	
3.7	Consideration of the validity framework of the results and their limitations	
3.8	Discussion of the implications of the results for educational research	
Comments or recommended changes:		

4.	**Structural Coherence and Formal Quality**
4.1	Coherence of the overall organization of the text and articulation between its different sections
4.2	Presence and relevance of a clear guiding thread; coherence and consistency of the argumentation
4.3	Linguistic quality (spelling, syntax, style, and clarity of expression)
Comments or recommended changes:	

Further comments and overall assessment:

Recommendation
☐ The manuscript should be published without change.
☐ The manuscript should be published with minor changes.
☐ The manuscript should be published with major changes.
☐ The manuscript should be declined.