

Peer Review Matters: A Call to Strengthen South African Dental Scholarship

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Behind every credible scientific journal stands a dedicated community of reviewers who quietly uphold the standards of research, clinical relevance, and academic integrity. At the South African Dental Journal (SADJ), peer review is more than a procedural requirement; it is the backbone of our commitment to rigorous, relevant, and ethically sound publication. As we continue to grow, evolve, and respond to the needs of our profession, we issue a sincere call: we need even more competent academic reviewers to join our panel.

Why reviewers matter, especially now

The role of the peer reviewer has never been more important. In a world of rapidly emerging information, the responsibility to ensure that published research is methodologically robust, clinically applicable, and contextually relevant rests heavily on the shoulders of reviewers. Within the South African and broader African context, this responsibility takes on an additional dimension: ensuring that the evidence base reflects our unique clinical challenges, health system constraints, and population needs.

Our reviewers are critical gatekeepers. They help strengthen the scientific quality of articles, identify ethical concerns, and

ensure that the research we publish reflects the evolving standards of academic and clinical excellence, and ensure our papers meet current standards and criteria accepted by the greater academic community. By offering thoughtful critique and constructive feedback, reviewers mentor authors, uphold professional standards, and shape the future of our discipline.

Who should consider reviewing?

We invite clinicians, academics, researchers, and postgraduate students with a strong grounding in their area of expertise to participate in the peer review process. Whether you are an experienced scholar or an early-career academic looking to build your professional profile, peer reviewing is an invaluable opportunity to:

- Stay current with emerging research in your field.
- Refine your own scholarly writing and critical thinking.
- Contribute to the quality and credibility of South African dental literature.
- Play a part in elevating the profile of local research on the global stage.



We are particularly seeking reviewers across all major dental disciplines including Oral Medicine and Periodontology, Prosthodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Community Dentistry, Maxillofacial Radiology and Surgery, Orthodontics, and Dental Education, Dental Public Health, Endodontics, Aesthetics, Pain management, Basic Sciences, and many more.

A Note on misinformation and the integrity of local scholarship

It is unfortunate that in some academic circles, there are those who actively discourage publishing in the SADJ, often based on misinformed or misleading assertions. These types of statements are not only factually incorrect, but also ethically troubling, as it undermines efforts to build strong, credible, African-led academic platforms locally. The SADJ is currently on the DHET accredited journals list and be aware of those suggesting otherwise. The only way to continue to grow Dentistry in South Africa is to participate, and to facilitate development of the academic platforms such as the SADJ.

To be clear, the SADJ does not charge any author publication fees, except in cases where a manuscript significantly exceeds the standard page limits, a policy transparently communicated in our author guidelines and comparable to those of respected journals worldwide. Suggesting otherwise not only harms the journal, but also obstructs the development of a self-sustaining, respected local academic

ecosystem, something we all share responsibility for strengthening.

Why your participation matters

Too often, the work of peer review is undervalued or left to a small number of dedicated individuals. To those we remain deeply grateful. But the responsibility for scholarly integrity must be shared across the profession. By participating in peer review, you are not only giving back, you are investing in the quality, credibility, and future of dental science in South Africa.

Reviewing is also an important part of your own academic journey. It strengthens your reputation, deepens your insight, and reflects a commitment to academic citizenship which is a principle we hope to model for both peers and students alike.

Join us!

If you are ready to contribute to the advancement of dental scholarship in South Africa, we invite you to apply to join our reviewer panel. Please send your academic profile and areas of interest to the SADJ Editorial Office at: sadj@sada.co.za

Together, we can ensure that the South African Dental Journal remains a trusted, respected, and proudly African platform for academic excellence.

