EDITORIAL

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Research and the Philippine Journal of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery: Engaging Artificial Intelligence and Avoiding Natural Dumbification

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Research (from the Old French "*recercher*", which means to "seek out, search closely"),[1] has slowly but surely contributed to the growth and advancement of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery in the Philippines over the years. The *Philippine Journal of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery*[2] has published and disseminated our scholarly scientific contributions: Original Articles, Review Articles, Case Reports, Surgical Innovations and Instrumentation, Practice Pearls, Featured Grand Rounds, From the Viewbox, Under the Microscope, Editorials and Letters to the Editor, fostering a culture of scholarship, scientific excellence, and evidence-based practice within the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery (PSO-HNS).

Some of our published research has influenced national and international health policy; for instance, the clinical practice guideline (CPG) on the Management of Isolated Mandibular Body Fractures in Adults[3] is part of the Compendium of Department of Health (DOH)-approved clinical practice guidelines of the Republic of the Philippines (available from: *https://doh.gov.ph/dpcb/doh-approved-cpg/*), and was adopted as part of the care pathway for mandibular trauma by the Integrated Subnet of Health Services South of Bogota, Colombia (*https://www.subredsur.gov.co*).

Filipino otolaryngologists (specialists and trainees alike) must strengthen their contributions to local and global scientific literature by stepping into the so-called scholarly stream -- engaging in basic and clinical research; asking the right questions and systematically employing scientific methods to answer them. This creative, systematic inquiry should produce knowledge that can benefit our readers, their patients and families, and the public as we aim for genuine impact, and not just "impact factor."[4]

Exponential growth and developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) challenge and confront original, innovative and creative thought (in danger of rapidly degenerating into Natural Dumbification)[5,6] and the outcomes will shape our futures and the future of ORL-HNS in the coming decades. We can only hope that researchers and authors, reviewers and

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Use of Artificial Intelligence: The author did not knowingly use AI in the preparation of this manuscript.

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even editors use AI responsibly and ethically, guided by the principles and processes published by such organizations as the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE),[7] the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME),[8] and Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).[9]

To support a shared understanding of how AI should be disclosed in research, the International Science Council (ISC), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM), and the Global Young Academy (GYA) have taken the joint initiative to develop the **Vancouver Standard for AI Disclosure in Research**. This initiative forms the focus track of the World Conference on Research Integrity that was held in May 2026 in Vancouver (*https://www.wcrif.org*), and the World Association of Medical Editors is participating in the consultations.

Meanwhile, the Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors (APAME) 2026 Conference and Philippine Association of Medical Journal Editors (PAMJE) 7th Annual Convention held in Manila last August 20-21 had the theme "Publication Quality and Ethics in the AI Age: Empowering Editorial Excellence in the Asia Pacific" (*https://apameditors.org.au/2026-conference/2026-conference-program/*).

Moreover, the Friends of the National Library of Medicine hosted a webinar on the Ethical Use of AI and LLMs for Medical Journal Authors last October 14, 2026, moderated by George D. Lundberg, MD, former Editor-in-Chief, *JAMA* and Friends of the NLM Board Member, with panelists Christine Laine, MD, Editor-in-Chief, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Annette Flanagin, MSRN, Executive Managing Editor and Vice President, Editorial Operations, *JAMA* and the *JAMA* Network, Charlotte Haug, MD, PhD, Executive Editor, *NEJM AI*, Peter Elkin, MD, Editor-in-Chief, *IEEE Journal of Biomedical and Health Informatics*, and myself as Editor-in-Chief, Philippine Journal of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery and President, *WAME*. The numerous unanswered questions fielded during the open forum prompted the organizers to consider a follow up session, as well as providing our written answers to participants. Meanwhile, the full recording is available on the FNLM website via the following link: *https://wp.me/pcmklU-4rM*.

The question is not whether AI and LLMs will be used; but about how they should be used. The use of AI has already been normalized, so to normalize the disclosure of AI, AI use should be mentioned regardless of the applications. Our greatest challenges and opportunities in promoting research and innovation within our specialty lie with our use or misuse of AI to provide information, misinformation, or disinformation.[10]

I sincerely hope that our young researchers, residents, fellows, and future leaders of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery in the Philippines, Asia-Pacific Region and the world do not surrender their faculties to AI to their detrimental dumbification. If they do not yield, we can envision a meaningful and impactful future of research and academic excellence within the PSO-HNS beyond our Platinum Anniversary.

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