

# Anecdote from Editors Desk

## Anecdote 7- The Dilemma with Un-named Payments

SUNANDA DAS<sup>1</sup>, AARTI GARG<sup>2</sup>**Keywords:** Author instructions, Online transaction, Publication charges

This anecdote is about a technical aspect of the association between a journal and its authors. The manuscript instructions and related information to guide authors are always available on every journal's website. There are certain untold directives which are thought to be of common knowledge and hence get no mention in print or online. One such matter is related to the online payment for article publication charges. Transacting money online requires some specific and important identifiers. These are to identify the payee and reason for payment. At times depositors forget to write the accompanying matter that would help the receiver trace the payment and link it to the specific account. This leads to a lot of unnecessary task on the part of the receiver. It requires an extensive search and often some assumptions too. In today's world of M-commerce, typographical errors and inadvertent exclusion of identifiable information are not unusual. A user would tap into his mobile and finish off the transaction without realising the slips that he made, until much later. In JCDR, authors have to pay publication charges after the article is accepted for publication and there are no Article Processing Charges (APCs).

To quote from a latest incident, we received a payment from an account which was not registered with JCDR. The name mentioned as payee also did not exist among the author list. The account section of the journal office had to dedicate one staff for half a day, solely to trace the amount to the respective article. Still, we could not link the payment to the article. The IT team, then ran a code to find the name among authors of past and on-going submissions. This resulted into one match and the author was found to have published with us two years back. Finding no other way and needing respite from this mystery, we called up this author to confirm. We assumed that he might be among the co-authors (only corresponding authors' names are tagged with every manuscript). But, soon we were back to where we left, since the author denied having any submission under process with us. The matter is still unresolved and we pray that the depositor would call us soon to know about the status of article and thus bringing an end to the anonymity.

Another incident was when a new name popped up in the account department that had paid international charges. This however, could be resolved within a week, when the author called up asking for status of his article. He amused us by saying that the name is not registered in JCDR, since it was his friend who paid the amount on his behalf.

As a protocol, we mention in the mail (acceptance for publication) that the authors must fill the 'Payment Details' on Author Dashboard. By doing so, the account section automatically gets an update about the amount, name of payee, article ID and transacting bank details. Alternatively, if the author sends us details in email, then also we link it to the correct manuscript. Some authors attach a screenshot of the transaction page to their mails. Not so rarely, we receive payments which are untagged, have no ID (JCDR creates Unique IDs for every submission) and even via non-corresponding author accounts.

Such payments with no identifiers cause inadvertent delay in publication. No matter how fast and timely all the steps are followed and even the most diligent of authors would not help an article, if the ultimate publication charges remain untraced. Besides this, a journal faces a risk of being named negligent. An author might not even know the reason, why the article was not published even after timely payment. It lies on the table of the editorial and remains stationary unless the author first makes a move.

In JCDR, we have faced this situation quite a number of times. Majority of the incidences were when the payments were done from another person's account whose name was not registered with us or was not among the authors. Adding to our woes, the corresponding author did not fill in the necessary details in the respective article account dashboard, neither inform us about the payment. Retrospectively, we found that it happened at least one or two times a month in the last year. Thus, it becomes imperative for us to write this anecdote to inform about the lapse and what difficulties, it is associated with. This is for both, the authors and the editorials, and from the latter we would like to know about their experience or suggestions on the matter.

**PARTICULARS OF CONTRIBUTORS:**

1. Senior Editor and Head of Editorial Services, Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, New Delhi, India.
2. Deputy Editor in Chief, Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, New Delhi, India.

**NAME, ADDRESS, E-MAIL ID OF THE CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:**

Sunanda Das,  
Senior Editor and Head of Editorial Services, Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, New Delhi, India.  
E-mail: drsunandadas24@gmail.com

**ETYMOLOGY:** EditorialDate of Submission: **Jun 15, 2020**

Date of Peer Review: -----

Date of Acceptance: -----

Date of Publishing: **Jul 01, 2020**