

# AuthorAID Workshop Report on Scientific Writing and Publishing



Organised by  
PSD-Nepal  
in collaboration with

International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications,  
[INASP] U.K., The parent organization of Author AID Project, The  
Research Cooperative and CLIMsystems, New Zealand

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## **BACKGROUND**

A workshop was conducted to provide skills in technical aspects of scientific writing, communication, and publishing for Nepalese researchers. The purpose of the workshop was to facilitate an increase in the number of scientific manuscripts submitted by faculty, PhD students and researchers from various institutions in Nepal. To recruit participants for the workshop, an email with a letter of announcement was sent to the email list of PSD-Nepal, which includes emails of researchers, faculty and PhD students of different universities of Nepal. The same email was also forwarded to colleges and institutions affiliated with Tribhuvan University (TU) including hospitals, research centers and laboratories.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

Major objectives of the workshop were to introduce participants to:

- Fundamentals of scientific writing with an emphasis on clear presentation of ideas
- Peer review process and responding to reviewer's comments
- Ethical issues to consider including plagiarism and copyright issues
- Selection of the right journal
- Structure of a manuscript –IMRaD structure

## **PROGRAM COVERAGE**

The workshop was held at the Hotel Orchid located at Tripureshwor of Kathmandu city, Nepal from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Participants from out of Kathmandu Valley arrived on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November. Of the 105 total applicants, 25 candidates, consisting of faculty members, researchers and PhD scholars were selected for the three-day workshop. The workshop was interactive and participants engaged in individual and group activities to enhance their learning. Participants also worked on their manuscripts-in-preparation during the workshop.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Before the workshop, participants were requested to submit a curriculum vitae (CV) and a letter of motivation to the workshop organizer. The motivation letter was used to gauge the significance of the workshop to the participant's research career. CVs and letters were reviewed by the selection committee from PSD-Nepal to select candidates for whom the workshop would be most beneficial. Based on the review process, 25 participants were selected out of a total of 105 applicants for the workshop (Competitive Selection). The selected participants were notified of their selection through email, and sent an official letter of invitation, workshop program and a formal workshop application form to fill up. Information from the application form was used to collect data on research interest of participants, workshop expectation and food requirements. Email

addresses of the selected participants were provided to INASP to carry out pre and post workshop tasks.

## WORKSHOP

Govinda Bhandari, president of Progressive Sustainable Developers Nepal (PSD-Nepal) was the facilitator for the three-day workshop. The workshop provided participants with information about the steps in scientific writing, publication process, peer review and fundamentals of good journal quality through power point presentation, hands-on-activities, group and individual presentations and discussions.

After the workshop, each participant was required to complete the post assessment task that included post assessment quiz and feedback form to assess the quality of the workshop, their plans for implementing the knowledge gained in the workshop, and feedback for future workshops.

The results were entered in an excel spread sheet and figures and tables were generated by using MS Excel 2007.

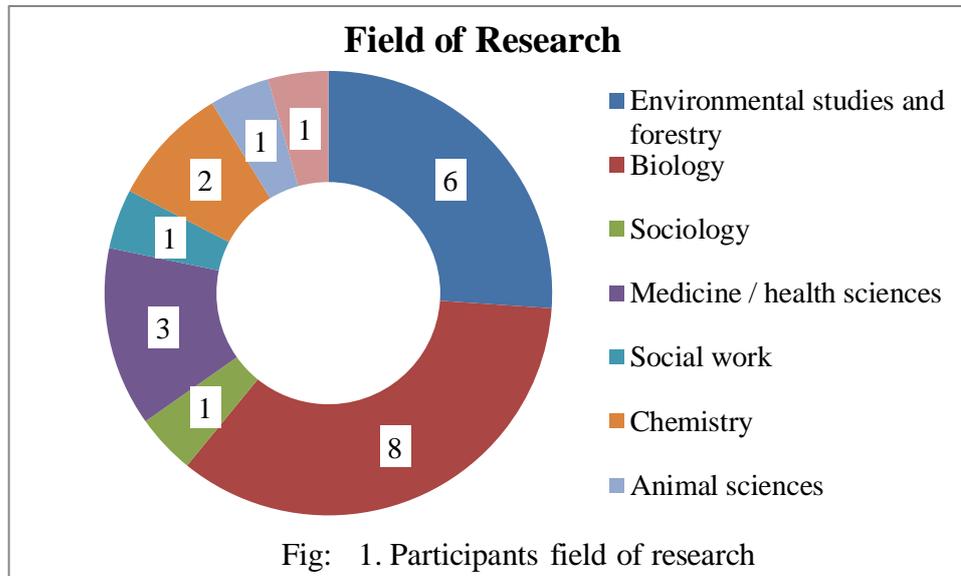
## RESULTS

25 participants (Faculty members, PhD students and researchers) from 20 different institutions were selected and invited to the workshop. Among them 14 (56%) were male and 11 (44%) were female. Majority of the participants completed pre and post workshop tasks before the deadline. Based on their responses, it was noted that 10 participants were early carrier researchers, 7 were PhD scholars, 1 was Master's student, and 7 were faculty members at universities and researchers at research institutions in Nepal. Based on their pre and post assessment scores, majority of them increased their scores and about 60% participants significantly increased their scores to an acceptable level of improvement after attending the workshop.

Post workshop evaluations showed that all the participants, 25 (100%) benefited from the presentations and found the workshop very useful and would recommend the workshop to their colleagues. A summary of pre and post workshop evaluation responses are shown in figures (1-4) and Tables (1-4) respectively; **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.**

## APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS PRE WORKSHOP EVALUATION DATA

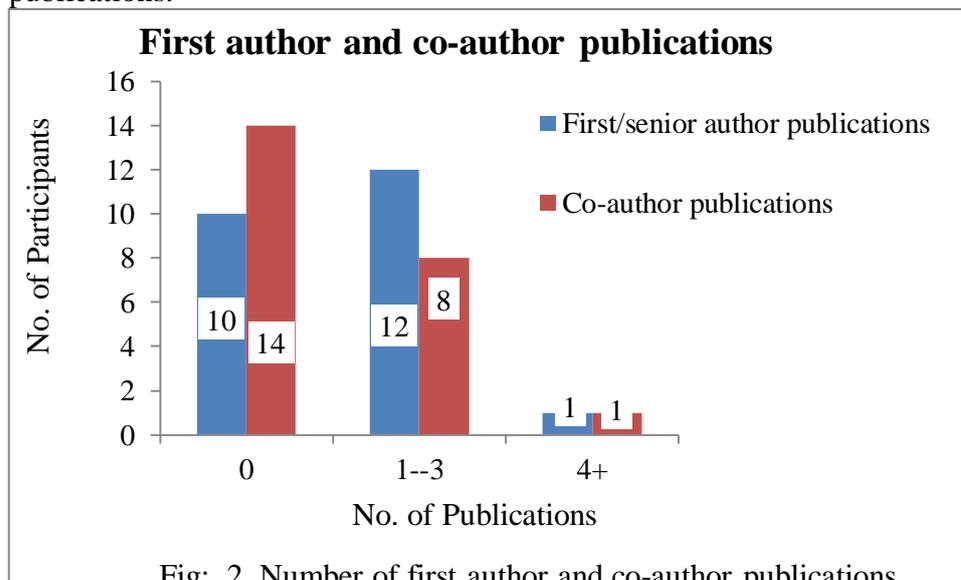
### Participant's field of research



The majority of the participants were involved in biological research.

### Participant's first author and co-author publications

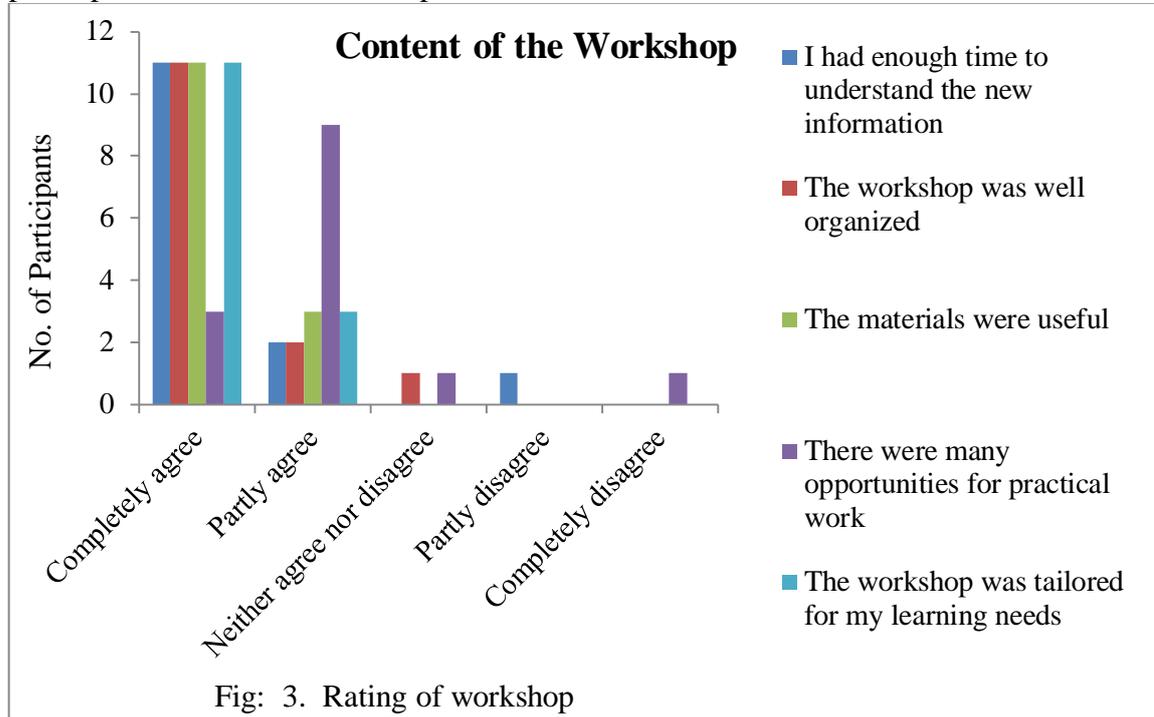
About 50% of the participants had no any publications. However, twelve participants had at least 1-3 first author publications and 8 participants had at least 1-3 co-author publications.



## APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANTS POST WORKSHOP EVALUATION DATA

### Workshop content

Given 5 different choices on the grading of the workshop content as completely agree, partly agree, neither agree nor disagree, partly disagree and completely disagree, participants ranked the workshop content as:



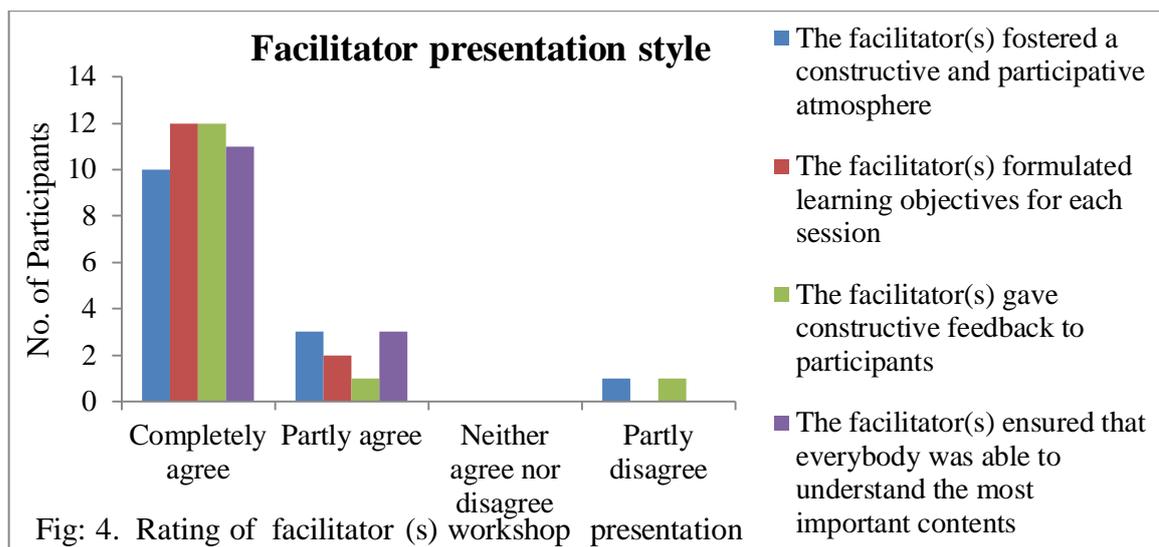
Majority of the participants found that the workshop content was extremely useful and completely agree.

### Comments regarding pre and post workshop tasks

About 11 participants (80%) reported that the pre and post workshop task was clear.

### Presentation style

Given 5 different choices on the grading of the facilitator's workshop presentation style as; completely agree, partly agree, neither agree nor disagree, partly disagree and completely disagree, participants ranked the workshop presentation style as:



Majority of the participants rated the facilitator as an excellent presenter. The facilitator was rated highest in formulating learning objectives for each sessions and giving constructive feedback to participants.

### Participant’s future plan

Participants felt the workshop was crucial in motivating them to publish their research. Furthermore, some participants want to enhance the quality of their own journal and some want to educate their students by arranging similar workshops at their institutions.

**Table 1: Participant’s future plan**

Participant’s future plan	Frequency
Write and publish paper	8
Enhance the quality of my journal of my institution	1
I want to apply on me and share the skills with others	4
Arrange such workshops in my Department in the University	1

Participants felt that some part of the workshop was most important which they would like to immediately follow after they get back to their work.

**Table 2: Most useful part of the workshop**

Most useful part of the workshop	Frequency
Peer review process	4
Research Ethics	2
Activity (IMRaD)	3
Structure of a research paper	5

### **Additional topics (recommendations by participants for future workshops)**

Participants felt that following topics below should be included in the future workshops.

**Table 3: Additional topics**

Topics	Frequency
Assignment	4
Data analysis and statistical tools	1
Grant proposal writing	1

### **Additional Feedback**

The participants gave some additional feedbacks as below:

**Table 4: Additional Feedback**

Type of Feedback	Frequency
Facilitator from different fields	2
Increase time for each sessions	1
Include more activity works on manuscript preparation	3
Workshop should be conducted regularly	1

## **DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION**

As a result of this workshop, the organizer(s) feel that the capacity of Nepalese researchers in writing a scientific paper and publishing their research has increased and all were benefited. Majority of the participants expressed a desire to write and submit papers for journal publication. Although the workshop was limited to selected faculty members, senior PhD students and researchers, the number of participants who did not have any first author and/or co-author publications was high. This reflects the challenges in scientific writing and publishing among Nepalese researchers. The “AuthorAID Scientific Writing and Publishing” workshop highlighted the need and expectation of the participants from across Nepal and it is clear that there is demand for such workshops. PSD-Nepal hopes to widen the coverage of such workshops to other parts of the country in the near future.

## **WRAP UP OF THE WORKSHOP**

Mr. Govinda Bhandari, President, PSD-Nepal acknowledged all the participants for their enthusiastic participation and the workshop partners International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, [INASP] U.K., The parent organization of Author AID Project, The Research Cooperative and CLIMsystems, New Zealand for providing financial support and in-kind cooperation for the workshop.

During the end of the session, participants were asked to present 3 things they plan to do differently based on what they learned in the workshop. Participant responses included:

*“The workshop has been very fruitful to me and I intend to use this knowledge and skills for better manuscripts preparation. Although I was not selected in the previous writing workshop, I would like to thank the organizing committee for selecting me this time and letting me to participate in the workshop. The gentle and energetic nature of Mr. Govinda Bhandari sir is an inspiration to us. I wish such workshop should be conducted more frequently and should include more participants.”*

- Mrs. Anita Shrestha, PhD student, TU.

*“First of all, I would like to thank PSD Nepal and INASP, for conducting the workshop and appreciate the effort put forward by the organizing committee. I would like to correct in the author guidelines of our journal. I would like to review the articles as much as I can for the journals and publish my unpublished research articles in good journals.*

- Mr. Sagar Aryal, Executive Editor, International Journal of Microbiology and Allied Sciences”

*“I would like to strictly choose journal (where I intend to publish) before writing a journal article, follow the author guidelines and take more care about the ethical issues ...”*

- Mr. Roshan Nepal, Volunteer participant, MSc student, TU

At the end, Prof. Dr. Khet Raj Dahal, one of the editorial board members of International Journal of Environment (IJE) concluded the workshop with his closing remarks.

### Appendix-3: Few Glimpse of the Program



Photo 1: Mr. Bhandari introducing himself



Photo 2: Ice breaking exercise: Introduce your new friend



Photo 3: Participants involved in Group activity



Photo 4: Participant, Chandra Mani Kafle presenting outcome of his group activity



Photo 5: Participants reviewing their manuscripts



Photo 6: Presentation of certificates to the participants



Photo 7: Prof. Dr. Khet Raj Dahal, IJE board member concluding the workshop with closing remarks



Photo 8: Group Photo