

Training on Academic Writing for Internationally Indexed Journals at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan, Indonesia

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Abstract. Scientific publication in internationally indexed journals has become an important indicator of academic performance for lecturers and students. However, many academics still face difficulties in understanding manuscript structure, selecting appropriate journals, and navigating the submission process. This community service program aimed to improve academic writing skills for publication in internationally indexed journals among lecturers and students at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan. The activity was implemented through an interactive training workshop involving lectures, discussions, and practical guidance on manuscript preparation and journal submission strategies. A total of 70 participants attended the program. The results indicate that participants gained better understanding of scientific writing standards, journal selection strategies, and publication procedures in reputable international journals. Participants also demonstrated increased motivation to produce and submit scholarly manuscripts. This training contributes to strengthening academic publication capacity and supports institutional efforts to improve international scientific visibility.

Keywords: academic writing; international journal publication; lecturers and students; scientific manuscript; community service

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INTRODUCTION

Scientific publication in internationally indexed journals has become an essential indicator of academic performance in higher education institutions. Universities increasingly emphasize the importance of publishing in reputable journals to enhance institutional reputation, academic visibility, and global knowledge exchange. For lecturers and graduate students, the ability to produce scholarly manuscripts is not only a professional requirement but also a fundamental component of academic development. Publications in reputable journals contribute significantly to career advancement, institutional ranking, and the dissemination of research findings within the international scientific community.

Despite its importance, academic writing for publication in internationally indexed journals remains a challenging task for many academics. Writing scientific manuscripts requires mastery of academic language, understanding of research article structures, familiarity with journal standards, and the ability to present data and arguments in a clear and systematic manner. Numerous studies have highlighted that many university students and early-career academics experience significant difficulties in academic writing due to limited experience, inadequate training, and insufficient guidance in scholarly communication (Bolsunovskaya & Rymanova, 2020; Nurkamto et al., 2024). These challenges often lead to low confidence, writing apprehension, and difficulties in completing publishable manuscripts.

Academic literacy, which includes the ability to write scientific articles, analyze research findings, and engage with scholarly discourse, plays a crucial role in higher education. Castillo-Martínez et al. (2023) emphasize that academic literacy development is closely related to students' ability to participate in scientific communities and produce knowledge through research publications. Similarly, Jin (2021) explains that writing research articles requires the ability to organize arguments, interpret data, and construct coherent discussion sections that align with international publication standards. Without sufficient training in these skills, many academics struggle to transform research results into publishable manuscripts.

Academic writing is often perceived as a complex and demanding process. Students and lecturers frequently encounter challenges related to language proficiency, argument development, and adherence to journal formatting guidelines. Studies have shown that academic writing difficulties may arise from limited understanding of rhetorical structures, lack of experience in scholarly writing, and inadequate exposure to academic publishing practices (Toprak & Yücel, 2020; Wubalem, 2021). As a result, many researchers face obstacles when preparing manuscripts for submission to international journals.

Another major challenge is the lack of knowledge about the publication process itself. Writing a manuscript is only one part of the scholarly publishing cycle. Authors must also be able to identify appropriate journals, understand submission requirements, prepare cover letters, respond to reviewers' comments, and revise manuscripts according to editorial feedback. Many novice researchers have limited understanding of these processes, which increases the likelihood of manuscript rejection or submission to inappropriate journals.

Recent developments in digital technology and artificial intelligence have also influenced the academic writing process. The emergence of generative artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT has created new opportunities for supporting academic writing and research productivity. Several studies suggest that AI-based tools can assist researchers in organizing ideas, improving language quality, and enhancing writing efficiency (Garg et al., 2024; Mahyoub et al., 2023). However, other scholars highlight that excessive reliance on AI tools may also create concerns related to academic integrity, originality,

and critical thinking in scholarly writing (Fatima et al., 2024; Werdiningsih & Rusdin, 2024).

Furthermore, the integration of generative AI in academic writing has been widely discussed in recent educational research. Bouzar et al. (2024) found that the use of AI tools can increase students' confidence in academic writing while also influencing their dependence on technological assistance. Similarly, Kong et al. (2024) propose pedagogical frameworks that integrate generative AI tools into academic writing instruction through structured learning stages, including planning, drafting, peer review, and revision. These developments indicate that academic writing instruction must adapt to technological changes while maintaining academic authenticity and critical engagement.

Previous research has also demonstrated that structured writing instruction and guided training programs can significantly improve academic writing skills. For example, (Bin-Hady et al., 2020) reported that process-genre approaches in writing instruction help students develop stronger writing competence by integrating writing processes with genre awareness. In addition, collaborative learning approaches and academic workshops have been shown to support the development of writing skills and academic communication abilities among university students and researchers (Jolly et al., 2021; Motlhaka, 2020).

However, despite the growing body of research on academic writing pedagogy, many higher education institutions still face challenges in providing systematic training programs that specifically focus on scientific manuscript preparation for international publication. This issue is particularly relevant in developing academic environments where access to international publication resources and academic mentoring may be limited.

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (UIN Gusdur) Pekalongan is one of the higher education institutions that faces similar challenges. Based on preliminary observations and communication with academic staff and students, it was identified that many lecturers and graduate students have not yet developed sufficient skills in writing manuscripts that meet international journal standards. Several key issues were identified, including limited understanding of manuscript structure, difficulties in selecting appropriate journals, lack of experience in manuscript submission procedures, and insufficient familiarity with responding to peer

review feedback.

These challenges affect the number and quality of scientific publications produced by academics at the institution. Consequently, there is a need for capacity-building programs that can provide practical guidance and training in academic writing and scholarly publishing. Training activities focusing on manuscript preparation, journal selection strategies, and publication procedures are expected to improve participants' understanding and skills in producing internationally publishable research articles.

In response to these challenges, a community service program was designed to provide academic writing training for lecturers and students at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan. The program aimed to enhance participants' understanding of scientific manuscript structure, academic writing conventions, and publication strategies for internationally indexed journals. In addition, the training also provided insights for journal managers regarding strategies for improving journal quality and achieving international indexing standards.

Therefore, the objective of this community service activity was to improve academic writing skills for publication in internationally indexed journals among lecturers and students at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan through structured training, discussion sessions, and practical guidance on manuscript preparation and submission procedures.

METHODS

The community service activity was implemented in the form of an interactive workshop aimed at improving academic writing skills for publication in internationally indexed journals. The program employed a participatory learning approach that combined lectures, discussions, hands-on practice, and mentoring sessions. This approach was designed to provide participants with both theoretical understanding and practical experience in preparing scientific manuscripts that meet international publication standards. The workshop specifically focused on equipping lecturers, researchers, and postgraduate students at Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (UIN Gusdur) Pekalongan with the necessary competencies to write and submit scholarly articles to reputable international journals, particularly journals indexed in Scopus.

The speakers involved in the training were academics and researchers with extensive

experience in publishing scientific articles in internationally indexed journals. Their expertise enabled participants to gain practical insights into manuscript preparation, journal selection strategies, and the peer review process. The training materials covered several important aspects of academic writing, including manuscript structure, academic language usage, journal selection strategies, and best practices in responding to reviewer comments.

The implementation of the community service program was conducted through three main stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation.

The preparation stage involved several important activities to ensure the effectiveness of the training program. These activities included the identification of participant needs, coordination with institutional partners, preparation of training materials, selection of expert speakers, and determination of the workshop schedule and venue. The organizing team also coordinated with the partner institution to ensure the availability of facilities, including seminar rooms, multimedia equipment, and participant registration systems. This stage aimed to ensure that the training program would be conducted effectively and address the actual needs of the participants.

The implementation stage consisted of a one-day workshop conducted on Tuesday, June 8, 2025, from 08.00 to 16.00 at Campus 2 of UIN Gusdur Pekalongan, located at Jl. Pahlawan Km. 5, Rowolaku, Kajen, Pekalongan Regency, Indonesia. The activity was attended by 70 participants consisting of lecturers and university students. The workshop was officially opened by the Dean of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTIK) UIN Gusdur, Prof. Dr. H. Muhlisin, M.Ag., who emphasized the importance of improving academic publication capacity among lecturers and students.

The workshop activities were structured into several sessions designed to provide comprehensive understanding of academic writing for international publication. The program began with participant registration and an opening ceremony. The first session presented techniques for writing manuscripts for reputable international journals, focusing on manuscript structure, research article components, and academic writing standards. The second session discussed publication standards for journals indexed in Scopus, including journal selection strategies, indexing systems, and publication ethics.

The afternoon sessions focused on practical experiences and best practices in submitting manuscripts to international journals. The third session provided insights into the process of submitting manuscripts in scientific disciplines, including manuscript preparation, journal scope analysis, and the peer review process. The fourth session discussed best practices in submitting manuscripts in the humanities field, highlighting strategies for selecting appropriate journals and preparing manuscripts according to journal guidelines. The workshop concluded with a question-and-answer session and a discussion that allowed participants to clarify their understanding and share their experiences related to academic writing and publication.

The evaluation stage aimed to measure the effectiveness and impact of the training program. Several indicators were used to assess the success of the activity. First, participant attendance and engagement during the workshop were observed as indicators of participation and interest. Second, the level of interaction during discussion sessions, including the number and quality of questions raised by participants, was used to evaluate participants' understanding of the presented materials. Third, participants' responses and feedback regarding the usefulness of the training were considered as qualitative indicators of the program's effectiveness.

The evaluation process also considered the potential outcomes of the training, such as participants' motivation to produce scientific manuscripts and their readiness to submit articles to internationally indexed journals. The workshop activities were documented through photographs and video recordings, and the results of the activity were disseminated through institutional reports, online media publications, and scholarly community service journals. Through these stages, the training program aimed to strengthen academic publication capacity among lecturers and students and contribute to the development of a stronger research and publication culture at the university.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service program aimed at improving academic writing skills for publication in internationally indexed journals was successfully implemented at Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (UIN Gusdur) Pekalongan. The activity involved lecturers and university students who participated in an intensive workshop designed to enhance their understanding of scientific manuscript preparation and international publication standards. The program was organized as part of the Community Service Program of the Graduate School of Universitas Negeri Semarang in 2025, with the primary objective of strengthening academic publication capacity among higher education communities.

The workshop was attended by 70 participants consisting of lecturers and students from various academic backgrounds at UIN Gusdur. The activity began with an opening session delivered by the Dean of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTIK) UIN Gusdur, Prof. Dr. H. Muhlisin, M.Ag. In his opening remarks, he emphasized the importance of improving academic writing competence among lecturers and students, particularly in the context of increasing institutional academic performance and international visibility. According to him, the ability to publish research findings in reputable international journals has become an essential academic requirement for lecturers in higher education institutions.

Prof. Muhlisin also highlighted that many lecturers still face challenges in preparing scientific manuscripts that meet international publication standards. Therefore, training activities such as this workshop are considered important in supporting lecturers and students in developing their academic writing skills. He expressed his hope that participants would be able to apply the knowledge gained from the training in their future academic writing activities and contribute to increasing the number of

international publications produced by the institution.

The opening session of the workshop is presented in **Figure 1**, which illustrates the formal inauguration of the training program by the Dean of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at UIN Gusdur.



Figure 1. Opening session of the academic writing training workshop at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan

Following the opening ceremony, the workshop continued with a series of training sessions delivered by experienced academics from Universitas Negeri Semarang who have extensive experience in publishing scientific articles in internationally indexed journals. These speakers shared practical knowledge and strategies related to manuscript preparation, journal selection, and the publication process.

The first training session focused on techniques for writing manuscripts for reputable international journals. This session introduced participants to the fundamental structure of scientific articles, including the introduction, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion sections. Participants were also introduced to the importance of writing clear research objectives, presenting data systematically, and discussing research findings in relation to existing literature. Through this session, participants gained a better understanding of how to organize their research findings into a coherent and publishable manuscript.

The second session discussed publication standards for journals indexed in Scopus. This session provided participants with information about journal indexing systems, criteria for selecting appropriate journals, and strategies to avoid predatory journals. Participants were also introduced to several international databases and journal indexing platforms that can be used to

identify reputable journals relevant to their research topics. This knowledge is considered important because many researchers often experience difficulties in selecting appropriate journals for their manuscripts.

The third and fourth sessions focused on best practices in submitting manuscripts to internationally indexed journals. These sessions provided participants with practical insights into the submission process, including how to prepare manuscripts according to journal guidelines, write effective cover letters, and respond to reviewers' comments. The speakers also shared their personal experiences in publishing articles in international journals, which provided valuable insights for participants who are preparing their manuscripts for publication.

The detailed schedule and structure of the workshop sessions are presented in **Table 1**, which outlines the sequence of activities conducted during the training program.

Table 1. Workshop Program Schedule for Academic Writing Training at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan

Time	Activity
08.00 – 08.45	Participant registration
08.45 – 09.30	Opening session by the Dean of FTIK UIN Gusdur
09.30 – 11.00	Session 1: Techniques for writing manuscripts for reputable international journals
11.00 – 12.00	Session 2: Publication standards for Scopus-indexed journals
12.00 – 13.00	Break (ISOMA)
13.00 – 14.00	Session 3: Best practices in submitting manuscripts in scientific disciplines
14.00 – 15.00	Session 4: Best practices in submitting manuscripts in humanities disciplines
15.00 – 16.00	Discussion, question-and-answer session, and closing

During the workshop, participants actively engaged in discussions and demonstrated strong interest in learning about academic publication strategies. Many participants raised questions regarding manuscript preparation, journal selection, and strategies to respond effectively to reviewers' comments. This interactive atmosphere created a collaborative learning environment that

encouraged knowledge exchange between participants and speakers.

The active participation of the attendees served as one of the indicators of the success of the training program. Participants showed enthusiasm in discussing their experiences and challenges related to academic writing. Several participants also expressed their interest in submitting their research manuscripts to internationally indexed journals in the near future.

Another important aspect of the workshop was the opportunity for participants to receive guidance regarding their research manuscripts. The training team invited participants to share examples of their manuscripts for review and feedback. Although most participants had not yet prepared complete manuscripts during the workshop, they expressed their willingness to continue the mentoring process after the training program. The organizing team therefore offered further consultation opportunities to support participants in preparing manuscripts suitable for international publication.

The participation of lecturers and students from different academic backgrounds also enriched the discussions during the workshop. Participants from scientific disciplines and humanities fields shared different perspectives regarding research writing practices and publication strategies. This multidisciplinary interaction helped create a more comprehensive understanding of academic writing across different fields of study.

The participants attending the training workshop are shown in **Figure 2**, which illustrates the active involvement of lecturers and students during the academic writing training session.



Figure 2. Participants attending the academic writing training workshop at UIN Gusdur Pekalongan

In addition to face-to-face interactions during the workshop, the activity was also documented through video recordings and online media coverage. The documentation of the activity was

disseminated through online media platforms, including news coverage and social media publications. This dissemination effort aimed to expand the impact of the program beyond the workshop participants and promote awareness of the importance of academic writing and international publication.

The training activities were also recorded in a video documentation that can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Anj8lxgGtp>. The implementation of the community service program was also reported in an online news article published by Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), highlighting the collaboration between Universitas Negeri Semarang and UIN Gusdur in strengthening academic publication capacity.

Beyond the descriptive presentation of the workshop activities, it is essential to evaluate how the objectives of the community service program were achieved. The primary objective of this program was to improve participants' understanding and practical skills in writing scientific manuscripts for publication in internationally indexed journals. The achievement of this objective can be observed through several indicators, including participants' engagement during the workshop, their increased understanding of academic writing principles, and their motivation to prepare manuscripts for international publication.

One of the key indicators of success in the implementation of the program was the high level of participant participation throughout the workshop sessions. The workshop was attended by 70 participants consisting of lecturers and students from various academic disciplines. Participant attendance remained stable from the opening session to the closing discussion session, indicating sustained interest and engagement in the training activities. Active participation was particularly evident during the discussion and question-and-answer sessions, where participants raised questions related to manuscript preparation, journal selection strategies, and publication procedures.

The interactive nature of the workshop also contributed to the effectiveness of knowledge transfer during the program. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences and challenges in academic writing, which created opportunities for collaborative problem-solving and peer learning. Collaborative and interactive learning environments are widely recognized as effective approaches for developing academic

writing competence, particularly in higher education contexts where academic literacy development plays a central role in scholarly communication (Shayakhmetova et al., 2020; Walková & Bradford, 2022). Through discussions and practical explanations provided by the speakers, participants gained a clearer understanding of the steps involved in preparing scientific manuscripts suitable for international publication.

Another important indicator of the program's success was the improvement in participants' awareness of academic publication standards. Prior to the training, many participants were not fully familiar with the structural components of scientific articles, such as the importance of a clear research gap in the introduction, methodological transparency, and critical discussion of research findings. Research on academic writing has consistently shown that many university students and novice researchers encounter difficulties in organizing arguments, structuring research papers, and developing coherent academic texts (Cahusac de Caux, 2021; Mustafa et al., 2022). Through the training sessions, participants were introduced to internationally recognized manuscript structures and publication practices. This knowledge is expected to help participants organize their research findings more systematically and prepare manuscripts that meet international journal standards.

The workshop also provided participants with practical knowledge regarding journal indexing systems and strategies for selecting appropriate journals for manuscript submission. Understanding journal indexing systems, such as Scopus and Web of Science, is an important aspect of academic publishing. Many novice researchers often experience difficulties in distinguishing between reputable journals and predatory journals. Through the training program, participants learned how to evaluate journal credibility, analyze journal scope, and identify suitable journals for their research topics. Developing this form of academic literacy is essential for improving research publication quality and avoiding common pitfalls in academic publishing.

In addition, the workshop emphasized the importance of language accuracy and academic style in scientific writing. Several studies indicate that non-native English speakers frequently experience difficulties related to grammar, academic vocabulary, and sentence structure when preparing manuscripts for international journals (Birhan, 2021).

Digital tools such as grammar-checking software have increasingly been used to support academic writing improvement. Research conducted by Abu Qub'a et al. (2024) demonstrated that the use of automated writing support tools such as Grammarly can significantly improve the linguistic quality of academic writing. Similarly, computer-based feedback systems have been shown to assist students in identifying errors and improving their writing performance (Alnasser, 2022).

Recent technological developments, particularly the emergence of artificial intelligence tools, have also transformed the landscape of academic writing. Artificial intelligence applications such as ChatGPT and other generative AI tools have been increasingly used to assist in drafting, paraphrasing, and editing academic texts. Several studies highlight that AI-assisted writing tools can help improve writing efficiency and provide language support for non-native English writers (Li et al., 2024; L. Wang & Ren, 2024). Participants in the workshop were introduced to these emerging technologies as complementary tools that can assist in academic writing when used responsibly.

However, the use of artificial intelligence in academic writing also raises ethical and methodological concerns. Some researchers emphasize that excessive reliance on AI tools may reduce critical thinking and academic originality (Anghelescu et al., 2023; Ugwu et al., 2024). Therefore, the workshop also discussed the importance of maintaining academic integrity and ensuring that AI tools are used as supportive instruments rather than substitutes for scholarly thinking. Discussions regarding ethical considerations in AI-assisted writing were particularly relevant given the growing influence of AI technologies in research and academic communication (Malik et al., 2024; Peres, 2024).

Participants also expressed strong interest in the potential role of artificial intelligence tools in supporting their academic writing processes. Research has shown that students generally perceive AI-assisted writing tools as useful for improving writing quality and generating ideas during the writing process (Rafida et al., 2024; Q. Wang, 2024). Nevertheless, it is important for educators and researchers to ensure that these technologies are integrated into academic writing practices in ways that preserve originality, academic ethics, and scholarly rigor.

Another important outcome of the program was the strengthening of institutional

collaboration between Universitas Negeri Semarang and UIN Gusdur Pekalongan. Academic collaboration between institutions is widely recognized as a key factor in strengthening research productivity and academic networking. Collaborative initiatives such as writing workshops and joint mentoring programs can contribute significantly to the development of research culture in higher education institutions.

Despite the positive outcomes achieved during the workshop, several challenges were also identified during the implementation of the program. One of the main challenges was the varying levels of participants' prior experience in academic writing. Some participants had already prepared research manuscripts and were familiar with journal publication procedures, while others had limited experience in writing scientific articles. Differences in writing proficiency and research experience are commonly reported challenges in academic writing education (Mustafa et al., 2022).

Another challenge encountered during the workshop was the limited time available for hands-on manuscript review and mentoring. Ideally, academic writing training should include intensive manuscript feedback sessions where participants receive detailed comments on their draft manuscripts. Research has shown that structured feedback and iterative revision processes are crucial components of effective academic writing instruction (Tran, 2025). However, due to the limited duration of the workshop, most participants had not yet prepared complete manuscripts that could be reviewed during the session.

Nevertheless, the organizing team addressed this limitation by offering follow-up mentoring opportunities for participants who wish to receive further assistance in preparing their manuscripts. Such mentoring programs may include peer-review sessions, writing clinics, and collaborative manuscript development workshops. Studies indicate that structured mentoring systems can significantly improve researchers' academic writing productivity and publication success (Nguoi et al., 2022).

Another challenge identified during the program was related to participants' access to international scientific literature. Limited access to journal databases may restrict researchers' ability to conduct comprehensive literature reviews and identify relevant research gaps. Improving access to digital academic resources therefore remains an important component of

strengthening academic writing capacity in higher education institutions.

In addition to identifying challenges, the workshop also revealed several opportunities for further development of academic writing programs. Integrating digital writing tools, collaborative learning environments, and continuous mentoring programs may significantly enhance researchers' writing competence. Research also suggests that combining human feedback with AI-supported writing assistance may produce more effective learning outcomes in academic writing education (Usher & Amzalag, 2025; Williams, 2024).

The results of this community service program indicate that academic writing workshops can serve as effective strategies for improving researchers' understanding of scientific publication processes. Through structured training sessions, participants gained knowledge about manuscript preparation, journal selection, and publication strategies that are essential for publishing in internationally indexed journals. The workshop also helped strengthen participants' motivation and confidence in engaging with academic writing activities.

Furthermore, the experience gained from implementing this program provides valuable insights for future community service initiatives related to academic capacity building. Training programs that combine theoretical explanations with practical mentoring can play an important role in supporting researchers in developing high-quality scientific publications. With continued collaboration between institutions and sustained mentoring support, similar programs have the potential to significantly enhance academic writing competence and international publication productivity in higher education institutions.

CONCLUSION

The community service program in the form of an academic writing workshop successfully improved participants' understanding and skills in preparing scientific manuscripts for publication in internationally indexed journals. The training provided practical knowledge regarding manuscript structure, journal selection strategies, and the submission and peer review processes. As a result, lecturers and students at UIN Gusdur gained greater awareness of international publication standards and increased motivation to produce scholarly articles. One of the strengths of the program was the interactive training approach

that combined lectures, discussions, and practical guidance, which enabled participants to actively engage in the learning process. However, the limited duration of the workshop restricted the opportunity for intensive manuscript review and individual mentoring. Therefore, future programs should incorporate extended mentoring sessions and continuous academic writing support to ensure that participants can successfully transform their research into publishable manuscripts. Expanding similar training programs and strengthening institutional collaboration may contribute to improving research productivity and international publication performance in higher education institutions.

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