

# Possible Confusion Caused by Journals with Similar Names

## Mögliche Verwirrung durch Zeitschriften mit ähnlichen Namen



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Dear Editors,

there are some relatively new obstetrics and gynecology (OBGYN) journals that have similar names to those having a long history [1]. I previously described the following experience [1]. I received an e-mail from the Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecological Research [2], which is different from the Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Research, the formal journal of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Please notice the subtle difference between Gynecological versus Gynaecology.

I also received a submission invitation from the Archives of Obstetrics and Gynaecology [3]. Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics (AGO) has long been one of my target journals. Some time was required for me to recognize that it was not AGO but another journal with a similar name.

“Obstetrics and Gynecology” and “Gynecology and Obstetrics” are used interchangeably. The German society name is “the German Society of Gynecology and Obstetrics (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gynäkologie und Geburtshilfe)” and the journal name is “Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde” (“Obstetrics and Gynecology”). Many OBGYN journals have names Obstetrics and Gynecology (in this order) rather than Gynecology and Obstetrics. Gynecology is more widely used than Gynaecology. Thus, the two journals’ names with words “Gynecological” and “Obstetrics and Gynaecology” (this order), respectively, may look natural. They may look identical to the older journals, especially for less experienced readers.

I have just received another invitation e-mail from the American Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics [4]. Readers may easily dis-

tinguish it from the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology (AJOG) after hearing this story, but may not before. ► **Table 1** shows examples of journals with similar names. I added some other examples not described in the text.

► **Table 1** Examples of obstetrics and gynecology journals having similar names.

Older	New
Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics	Archives of Obstetrics and Gynaecology [3]
Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Research	Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecological Research [2]
	Gynecology and Obstetrics Research*
American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology	American Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics [4]
Obstetrics and Gynecology	Gynecology and Obstetrics**

The left column indicates the journals with a longer history. The right column indicates the relatively new journals with names resembling the older journals.

\* <https://openventio.org/open-journal/gynecology-and-obstetrics-research-open-journal/>

\*\* <https://www.longdom.org/gynecology-obstetrics.html>

When one names new OBGYN journals, the choice of words is limited: Obstetrics, Gyn(a)ecology, Archives, Annals, International, Research, and others. Thus, it may be, to some extent, unavoidable that the journal's name resembles each other. However, please consider extreme examples. Let us create two other names resembling AGO: "Archives of Gynaecology and Obstetrics" and "Archives of Obstetrics and Gynecology". There will be two AGO and four ARCH. Widening this beyond journal names, how does one feel when one hears Benz-Mercedes or Mercedes-Baenz instead of Mercedes-Benz?

Name resemblance may cause some problems. First, less experienced doctors may consider that they received submission invitations from established journals and not newer journals with similar names. I checked the author guidelines of these new journals: there is no explanation that they are different from the established journals. Second, when one reads an article published in a new journal (in PDF or printed paper), one may consider that it is from the established journal. New journals are usually not PubMed indexed and thus readers are less likely to intentionally retrieve articles published in such journals. However, they are usually open-access and thus may be easily obtainable. Third, evaluating the publication list becomes difficult. I used to be an OBGYN director and senior vice president of a university hospital and had many opportunities to evaluate research proposals and fund applications. Professors check the candidate's publication list. Even OBGYN professors may not always be able to confirm that it is Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics, and not Archives of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, let alone professors of other specialties. I would never discuss which journal, a new or old, is more valuable. I am stating that the name resemblance may cause misunderstanding and confusion.

I will refrain from saying something against such new journals. They may have some special purposes. I am only stating the fact that there are some relatively new OBGYN journals, which have names resembling those of other journals: journals that have long histories and have long been highly respected. I have heard that the same occurs in journals of many specialties other than OBGYN.

Some countries have their own OBGYN journals, which usually accept and publish articles written in both English and their native languages: "Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde" from Germany, "Revista Brasileira de Ginecologia e Obstetrícia" from Brazil, and "Nihon Sanka Fujinka Gakkai zasshi" (Acta Obstetrica et Gynaecologica Japonica) from Japan. Resemblance of the journal names may not occur in these journals. However, almost all doctors of, for example, Germany, Brazil, and Japan may read, submit to, or subscribe to international OBGYN journals having English names.

Does the present situation harm anybody? Should we take some action? This should be widely discussed among readers, journal editors, publishers, and medical societies. Before reaching some conclusion, bearing this issue in mind may be useful for journal readers.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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