

PAKISTAN JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES: Internal audit and self analysis for the Year 2008

Shaukat Ali Jawaid

Internal audit and self analysis of Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences for the Year 2008 reveals that we have made substantial progress. The trend of increased submissions from within the country as well as overseas continues. In fact there has been manifold increase in submission of manuscripts during the last couple of years. In the Year 2004, the total number of manuscripts received was one hundred forty (140) which increased to two hundred nine (209) in 2005, two hundred sixty eight (268) in 2006, three hundred fifty four (354) in 2007 and four hundred twenty seven (427) during the Year 2008. While there has been substantial increase in submissions from Pakistan during the same period the manuscripts received from Islamic Republic of Iran as well as Turkey in particular have also increased. (Table-I) With increased visibility on the net and worldwide readership, Pak J Med Sci is now attracting manuscripts from about forty countries mostly from the Asia-Pacific. Reasons for increased submissions are partly due to availability of the journal online and secondly specific conscious efforts of personal contracts with the authors nationally and internationally by the editors of the journal. All this is indeed a positive development and shows the growing popularity of the journal among the authors in this region. This is in line with our mission to make Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences as the leading peer reviewed medical journal from this region.

Correspondence:

Shaukat Ali Jawaid
Managing Editor
Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences
Karachi, Pakistan.
E mail: pulse@pulsepakistan.com
pjms@pjms.com.pk

Table-I: Manuscript received (2004 – 2008)

Country	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Bangladesh	04	03	07	07	06
Brunei	-	-	-	01	-
Cameroon	-	01	-	-	-
Canada	01	03	-	-	-
China	-	-	01	-	01
Egypt	-	-	02	-	-
India	02	09	04	21	06
Ireland	01	01	-	-	02
Iran	21	74	90	149	169
Iraq	-	02	03	02	04
Jordan	04	08	14	10	04
Kuwait	01	02	02	02	-
Lebanon	01	-	-	-	-
Malaysia	-	-	03	01	03
Nepal	01	01	01	-	-
Netherland	-	-	01	-	-
Nigeria	02	07	16	32	34
Oman	-	-	03	01	-
Pakistan	78	76	90	98	123
Palestine	02	01	05	05	04
Poland	01	01	03	01	01
Qatar	-	01	-	-	-
Russia	-	-	02	-	-
Saudi Arabia	09	10	11	11	21
Thailand	01	01	-	-	01
Tunisia	02	-	-	-	01
Turkey	05	02	02	05	34
UAE	01	-	-	-	04
UK	01	05	08	06	05
South Africa	-	-	-	-	01
South Korea	-	-	-	-	02
Bahrain	-	-	-	-	01
USA	02	01	-	02	-
Total (33)	140	209	268	354	427

The number of manuscripts which were published after peer review has also increased during the last three years. This is evident from the fact that during the Year 2006 we published a total of one hundred twenty (120) papers which increased to two hundred thirty six (236) in the Year 2007 and two hundred three (203) in the Year 2008 (Table-II). This also became possible because we published two additional issues during the last two years to clear the backlog and reduce the publication time of the approved manuscripts.

Increased number of submissions provide us an opportunity to be selective thereby accepting only quality manuscripts for publication which will go a long way in enhancing the image and credibility of the journal. The quest for reducing the processing time also continues with constant increase in the Reviewers

Table-II: Manuscripts Published (2006–2008)

Country	2006	2007	2008
Bangladesh	01	05	05
Brunei	-	01	-
Canada	01	-	-
Holland	01	-	-
India	06	10	05
Iran	38	89	83
Iraq	02	02	01
Jordan	06	07	04
Kuwait	-	02	01
Malaysia	-	01	01
UAE	-	-	02
Nigeria	03	13	21
Nepal	-	01	01
Oman	-	03	-
Palestine	03	02	04
Pakistan	48	81	61
Poland	-	01	-
Russia	-	01	-
Saudi Arabia	06	08	05
Turkey	01	03	02
UK	04	04	05
Sri Lanka	-	-	01
USA	-	02	01
Total	120	236	203

Database which now has one hundred sixty nine (169) reviewers (Table-III) including sixty seven (67) from overseas (till March 30th 2009). In view of the increased number of submissions from Islamic Republic of Iran in particular we have also inducted twenty three reviewers from Iran. Almost all of them have been regular contributors to the journal and they were selected based on the quality of their manuscripts and interest in academics. This is again in line with our policy as we believe that the Muslim world does not lack expertise. God Almighty has also blessed the Muslim countries with tremendous human and material resources. What we need to do is to pool our resources and help each other. It is in this context that we are trying to induct as many reviewers from the Muslim countries and the region as possible instead of always looking towards the West.

Yet another important development took place this year when the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan included Pakistan

Table-III: Reviewer's Database

Total Number of Reviewers	169
* Reviewers from Pakistan	102
* Reviewers from Overseas	67
Overseas Reviewers	
Australia:	1
Bahrain:	2
Bangladesh:	4
India:	6
Iran:	23
Iraq:	3
Jordan:	2
Kuwait:	1
Malaysia:	1
Nigeria:	7
Palestine:	3
Saudi Arabia:	6
UK:	5
UAE:	1
USA:	1
West Indies:	1
Total:	67

Journal of Medical Sciences in the list of journals recognized by CPSP. This means that the postgraduates can publish two scientific papers in Pak J Med Sci after getting the synopsis approved from the CPSP instead of writing a Dissertation to enable them to sit in the FCPS-II examination.¹ The list of CPSP recognized medial journals now includes the following:

1. Journal of College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (JCPSP)
2. Journal of Pakistan Medical Association (JPMA)
3. Journal of Ayub Medical College, Abbottabad.
4. Pakistan Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences
5. Pakistan Armed Forces Medical Journal
6. Journal of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences
7. Journal of Infectious Diseases
8. Pakistan Journal of Medical Research
9. Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences

The situation is now gradually improving as regards promotion of the art of medial writing but still the lack of training facilities and non-serious attitude of the authors is a major problem for the Editors. The problems faced by the Editors of peer reviewed biomedical journals in the developing countries are enormous as editing a journal continues to be a stressful and

at times a frustrating job.² Financial constraints and lack of trained manpower, difficulties in retaining the staff that are trained after on the job training is an uphill task. Grant from the Higher Education Commission to some of the medical journals which it has recognized has been of a great help and one hopes that the HEC will continue to support these journals to enable them to improve their quality and standard further.

Pakistan Medical Journalists Association (PMJA) in collaboration with Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME) with the active support of Pakistan Association of Medical Editors (PAME) has been contributing its share in promoting medical journalism in Pakistan by holding seminars and workshops at various institutions all over the country. As such, it is hoped that in the days to come the situation will further improve resulting in better quality of manuscripts by authors, thus improving the standard of the journals as well as easing the life of the Editors to some extent

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