
Letter to the Editor

Quality of a Medical Journal: where do we stand?

Madam, M. Hanif Shiwani has done well to highlight the factors which contribute to the poor quality of journals in Pakistan. I would like to make a couple of points.

What plagues majority of Pakistani journals is the 'part time' approach to publish the journals. This means that the editors do not have adequate infrastructure including the proper number of trained staff to ensure timely publication of the journals. The editors, with all due respect, do the job in a parttime fashion as well as they find it difficult to devote enough time to the journal due to their multifarious involvements in clinical, administrative and educational activities. It is fair to say that editing is almost a full time job. In the absence of this, the result is that barring a few journals, the rest either bring out the issues irregularly or start combining the volumes but still lagging behind the required schedule.

Poor visibility of journals is also a factor in the poor quality, as it does not attract sufficient good quality manuscripts, especially if the journal happens to be a speciality journal. While indexing in the Medline is an uphill task, the visibility can certainly be increased through going online.

We have had a pleasant experience since we have become visible on the net. National and international contributions have increased manifold. The geographical spread has become very wide and the number of countries has increased to over 30 in the last four years.^{1,2}

The cost of going on the net is not prohibitive and it is certainly worthwhile as the dividends you get are lot more gratifying.

Maqbool Jafary

Chief Editor, Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences,
Karachi.

References

1. Jafary MH, Jawaid SA. Online edition of a journal; A great source of manuscripts and potential regional cooperation. Pak J Med Sci 2006; 22: 107-9.
 2. Jawaid SA. Importance of self audit by a journal to measure quality improvement and planning for future. Pak J Med Sci 2007; 23: 4-8.
-