

Why Should You Publish in Ibmossina Journal of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences?

Although this question never disappears from an editor's mind, now and then, an editor decides to address it publicly with the view to formally present a logical argument to help convince potential authors to come forward and submit more good quality manuscripts to that journal.^[1] We think it is a quite healthy exercise and perhaps it is probably overdue that we do this for Ibmossina Journal of Medicine and Biomedical Science (IJMBS). It is better late than never, so we took the 8th birthday of IJMBS as an opportunity to have our go.

THE MISSION

IJMBS was established in 2009 to increase the opportunities for research findings focusing on medicine and related scientific disciplines in the developing countries. This is somewhat predictable. Editors of established journals (defined for this purpose as main stream journals published by mostly western institutions and published by multinational publishing companies) have no time to spend to read, review, correct, and publish articles from developing countries whatever the scientific merit they may have.^[2] As a serious emerging journal, IJMBS has maintained an uninterrupted flow of issues on bimonthly basis since its inception. It has maintained, as its name proposed, a blend of clinical medicine and biomedical sciences, varied educational, research, and practice communications from various parts of the world. Expectedly, lots of the material published over the years came from the developing regions notably the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia.^[3] At no time, however, there was any exclusion policy for any region of the world. With this in mind, the editors have adopted a very patient attitude with young and inexperienced authors, presubmission guidance, prepeer-review counseling, and very tolerant postpeer-review copyediting and language enhancements targeting those who do not master English to the level of scientific writing. These extend to spell checking, editing for grammar, redrawing of figures, and reorganization of tables on occasions. The guiding principle has been "if a manuscript passes the peer-review process successfully, it will get published in its best possible form." The bottom line here is to offer services that extend beyond the standard editorial process provided by mainstream journals. Some of our younger authors will certainly support this if they look at their initial submission and the final product.

OPEN ACCESS THROUGH AND THROUGH

IJMBS has adopted the policy of "open access" from its inception whereby the full text of any all articles

published in IJMBS can be viewed and downloaded free of charge. There are several advantages of the open access publishing.^[4,5] First, it is well established that authors publish their research in the hope of sharing it with all their colleagues and perhaps the general public.^[6] Researchers would surely not like it if their articles cannot be read due to monetary constraints of the reader to pay for journal access. In this manner, open access fulfills the ultimate goal of "disseminating and sharing scholarly information."^[6] To this end, free online articles have been found to be cited more often. Most of the commercial open access is paid for by the authors themselves. However, at IJMBS, the open access is fully covered by the journal from submission to publication. Hence, authors get the advantages stated above without having to pay any charges of any kind (submission, evaluation, publication, or page charges).

INDEXING, IMPACT, AND RELEVANCE

There is an overwhelming interest in the "impact factor." However, journals have to prove themselves in the first few years before they get included in the "Science Citations Index" to get an official impact factor. However, there are now numerous indexing and archiving systems for medical and biomedical publications. Naturally, indexing with as many systems as possible increases the visibility of articles in that particular journal. Although entry into Index Medicus and associated indices remain the indexation - defining event, newer journals can be listed in others in the interim. So far, IJMBS is indexed in DOAJ, EBSCO Publishing Electronic Database, JournalSeek, Google Scholar, Index Copernicus, SCOPUS, Ulrich's International Periodical Directory, and Web of Science. We have applied once to be considered for indexation in PubMed, but we did not score highly enough to be included in that round (March 2016). However, there were several positive comments made by the assessors. It is the intention of the editors to submit a new application by the middle of 2018. From the start of 2017, we have been associated with an international publisher (Medknow) who has many indexed journals on their list and who will hopefully advise the editorial board on this matter.^[7] Notwithstanding, several of our published articles received a remarkable number of citations. Table 1 shows the top six articles with the highest number of citations according to Google Scholar. Looking closely to the content of these articles^[8-13] reflects the importance of relevance of these subjects to the readership of the journal. Just confirming that IJMBS is not just another emerging journal.

Table 1: Articles with the highest number of citations according to Google scholar index

| Year | Theme | Origin | Citations |
|------|---|----------|-----------|
| 2009 | Diabetes and fasting during the month of Ramadan | UAE | 55 |
| 2009 | Needle stick injuries | UAE+NZ | 32 |
| 2010 | Antidiarrheal activity of methanol leaf extract of <i>Bombax buonopozense</i> | Nigeria | 30 |
| 2011 | Experience in dengue in Pakistan | Pakistan | 23 |
| 2011 | Minisymposium: Ramadan fasting and the medical patient | UAE+KSA | 23 |
| 2011 | Role of dissection room in anatomy | India | 16 |

THE AGONY OF PEER-REVIEW PROCESS

Peer-review remains a core principle of modern medical and scientific journalism. Hence, it is the basis of entry to indexation services and recognition as a valuable medical publication. Authors do wish to get their articles published in peer-reviewed journals for recognition as well as for the requirements of the promotion process in most established academic institutions. Due to the online processing system, IJMBS had developed a robust peer-review system with a fair share of international reviewers. Accordingly, each manuscript is reviewed by at least two external experts followed by the internal expert before it is considered for acceptance. We are also attempting to recruit and train young reviewers without prior reviewing experience.^[14] They do learn from the comments of the editors and the senior reviewers. Sometimes, due to poor response rates of reviewers, we have to send several requests and frequent reminders before we meet this essential criterion for making an editorial decision within a reasonable amount of time.

OUR PLEDGE

The IJMBS editors and reviewers have worked over the past 8 years as volunteers. Furthermore, the financing of the hosting of the journal has been personally shouldered by the editors. Their only motive is the quality of the journal, and their only reward is its continued success and further progress.

OUR APPEAL

On the journal's 8th birthday, we are moving from in-house production by the (Ibnosina Medical Association) to an international publisher (Medknow, Pvt. India). However, we affirm our commitments to the continued support to our authors, with the hope to see a high rate of satisfaction with the quality of the publishing process, and we hope that they, in turn, will support IJMBS with the submission of valuable original research and review articles. We also reassure our authors of no change in the financial arrangements, i.e., completely open access for authors and readers. Then, why not publish your best research data and most stimulating intellectual views in IJMBS and add value to your research paper.

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