

Scientific Medical Publication in Nepal

Dr Rabindra Man Shrestha
Chief Editor

In every discipline of science including medicine and dentistry, scientific publication in the form of journal is vital. Scientific or academic journal is the periodical publication intended to advance the progress of science usually by reporting new research. Scientific journals are highly specialized pertaining to subject-specific articles that are peer reviewed and indexed to ensure standards of quality and scientific validity. Publication or dissemination of the results is an essential part of scientific research. Methodology stated in the published article provides scientific details so that an independent researcher can repeat the experiment in his/her context and results may be valid to adopt in the clinical or real-life situation. Thus the journal article becomes a permanent documentation of the scientific record.¹ Publication of the journal principally appears in print format, besides online is also available for many journals.

The history of scientific journals began in 1665 A.D., when the French publication *Journal des sçavans* and the English publication *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* were first published. In Nepal, *Journal of Nepal Medical Association (JNMA)* is the first medical journal which celebrated golden jubilee of 50 glorious years this year. Founder Chief Editor of JNMA Dr Mrigendra Raj Pandey wrote, "My article was published in *Indian Heart Journal* way back in 1957 and became the first, which inspired me further and ultimately gave birth to JNMA in 1963".² Presently, there are many medical journals published in Nepal; almost every medical specialty societies and medical colleges having their own publication. Among them *Journal of Institute of Medicine (JIOM)*, *Kathmandu University Medical Journal (KUMJ)*, *Health Renaissance* (publication of BPKIHS), *Journal of Nepal Medical College (JNMC)* are leading ones and are indexed. *Journal of Nepal Health Research Council (JNHRC)* encompasses various disciplines of health research.

The history of Nepalese dental publication dates back to 1992 when *Nepal Dental Association (NDA)* published a maiden issue of *Dental Bulletin*. In September 1998, NDA began publishing *Journal of Nepal Dental Association (JNDA)* during its first dental conference. At different times, NDA published *BITES* (2005, 2006) and *Dentistry Nepal* (2008, 2010) as the awareness magazines.³ *Nepalese Academy of Cosmetic & Aesthetic Dentistry (NACAD)* published *Dentistry SouthAsia* during 2006-2009. *Vedic Institute of Smile Aesthetics (VISA)* has been publishing *MICD Clinical Journal* since 2012 in online format.

About Nepalese dental specialty journal; *Orthodontic Journal of Nepal (OJN)* published by *Orthodontic & Dentofacial Orthopedic Association of Nepal (ODOAN)* is the only specialty journal. It began publication in November 2011 during Second Orthodontic Conference of ODOAN.⁴ In November 6, 2013, OJN was indexed with *NepJOL* (*Nepal Journals Online*), for the first time for any Nepalese dental journal. Since then OJN is indexed with *CiteFactor* (*Directory of International Research Journals*), *Google Scholar* and *DRJI* (*Directory of Research Journals Indexing*).

Nepal Journals Online (NepJOL) provides online service to access Nepalese journals. It is a database of journals covering the full range of academic disciplines. *NepJOL* was launched in September 2007. It is an international project supported by *International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publication (INASP)*. *NepJOL* uses the *Open Journals System* created by *Public Knowledge Project* based in Canada. This software is open source and allows the journal content listed on *NepJOL* to be indexed through *Open Archives Initiative* search engines.⁵

Nepalese health science journals listed in *NepJOL* are: *Asian Journal of Medical Sciences*, *International Journal of Infection & Microbiology*, *International Journal of Life Sciences*, *International Journal of Occupational Safety & Health*, *Janaki Medical College Journal of Medical Science*, *Journal of Advances in Internal Medicine*, *Journal of Chitwan Medical College*, *Journal of College of Medical Sciences-Nepal*, *Journal of Institute of Medicine*, *Journal of Kathmandu Medical College*, *Journal of Manmohan Memorial Institute of Health Sciences*, *Journal of Nepal Paediatric Society*, *Journal of Nepal Pharmaceutical Association*, *Journal of Nobel Medical College*, *Journal of Pathology of Nepal*, *Journal of Psychiatrists' Association of Nepal*, *Journal of Universal College of Medical Sciences*, *Kathmandu University Medical Journal*, *Medical Journal of Shree Birendra Hospital*, *Nepal Journal of Dermatology, Venereology & Leprology*, *Nepal Journal of Epidemiology*, *Nepal Journal of Medical Sciences*, *Nepal Journal of*

Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Nepal Orthopaedic Association Journal, Nepalese Heart Journal, Nepalese Journal of ENT Head & Neck Surgery, Nepalese Journal of Ophthalmology, Nepalese Journal of Radiology, Orthodontic Journal of Nepal, SAARC Journal of Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases & HIV/AIDS.

Peer review of an article is a process whereby experts in the relevant topic evaluate manuscripts for potential publication at the request of the journal editor. Reviewers are selected based on their scientific expertise, research area, and lack of bias toward the authors of a given manuscript. Reviewers are often blinded to mask the identity of the authors and usually remain anonymous. The reviewers submit written comments mentioning the weaknesses and required corrections of the manuscript, together with editorial suggestions and recommendations.

Indexation of a journal has been a concern of standards and prestige for any scientific publication. It is considered as a reflection of its quality and appeal superior as compared to non-indexed ones among the readers and in concerned fraternity. Globally, Index Medicus has been the most comprehensive index of medical scientific journal articles since 1879. Over the years, many other popular indexation services like MedLine, PubMed, EMBASE, SCOPUS, EBSCO Publishing's Electronic Databases, SCIRUS have developed. More recently many indexation services have come up; including HINARI, Index Copernicus, Caspur, DOAJ, DRJI, Expanded Academic ASAP, Genamics Journal Seek, Open J Gate, CiteFactor, Primo Central, Pro Quest, Google Scholar, SIIIC databases, Ulrich's International Periodical Directory etc.

Impact factor (IF) of a scientific journal is a measure reflecting the number of citations to the articles published in journal. It is frequently used as a proxy for the relative importance of a journal, with higher impact factors deemed more important than those with lower ones. The impact factor was devised by Eugene Garfield, the founder of Institute for Scientific Information. Impact factors have been calculated yearly since 1975 for those journals that are indexed in Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports.

Globally, World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), Committee on Publication Ethics (CPE) are major organizations of scientific medical publications. In Nepal, Nepal Association of Medical Editors (NAME) was founded in May 11, 2011.

The scientific journal articles should be evidence-based scientific research that would help in development of the related fraternity, contribute to the society and help in policy making and decisions of the country at large. In Nepalese context, publication of quality research and sustainability of the journal have been the major challenges. Many areas of research are lacking in medical and dental fraternity of Nepal, thus the concerned students, faculties, researchers and institutions should perform as many research as possible and publish in the scientific journals.



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