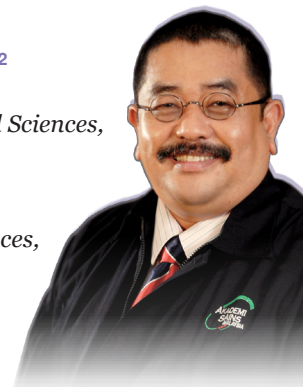




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## Abstract

The *Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences* has in its 25 years "Silver Jubilee" achieved another milestone of being visible to the biomedical community when it was accepted in PubMed. The journal aim to increase its readership so as to increase impact in the biomedical field amongst its Asian readers despite having a high rejection rate. This was done to maintain quality of the manuscripts published over the years. PubMed listing should enable more manuscripts to be cited as its the leading biomedical journal for the Asian community.

**Keywords:** database, reviewer, statistic, manuscript, publishing

## Introduction

The *Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences* (MJMS), better known as Diagnosa has grown tremendously as one of the national medical journals in Malaysia. In 2012, MJMS celebrated its "Silver Jubilee" of 25 years as a journal that published manuscripts on all aspects of medicine and health with focus on the biomedical and clinical sciences with contributions from all parts of the world, particularly from developing countries.

MJMS has undergone various changes in its history, the most obvious was the electronic system of manuscript submission in June 2009 (1). Adoption of an online system accelerated the production process and led to a repository of authors' data and reviewers' details.

SCImago Journal & Country Rank (2) ranked MJMS as one of the top 5 biomedical journals in Malaysia. This means that the manuscripts submitted to MJMS should continue to achieve the required quality and originality leading it to being indexed in PubMed (3), SCOPUS, Bioline International, the British Library, EMBASE and other international databases (1). The significance of being indexed in these high-visibility medical databases would allow speedy retrieval of the journal's manuscripts and providing scientific authors access to the full manuscripts and its references. In addition,

indexing allows benefits of full open access to the international scientific community and new-comer-researcher in particular so that, MJMS articles can be read without any charges.

## Submission Patterns

Four years of adopting the ScholarOne™ Manuscript (Manuscript Central) system, has improved the quantity and quality of MJMS's manuscript submissions in this day.

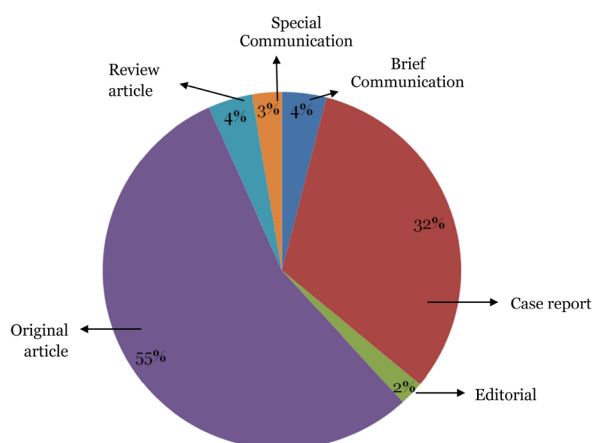
MJMS publishes eight types of manuscripts; editorial, original article, review article, case report, brief communication, special communication, letter to the editor, and letter in reply. Table 1 shows manuscript submissions to MJMS via ScholarOne™ Manuscript between 1st January to 31st of December 2012. The total number of submissions was 223 which was 14.35% higher than the previous year 2011 (3). Comparing with period between June 2009 to May 2010, the huge number reported is 48.67% more than what was reported by Ilma et al (1). More submissions can at least partly be attributed to the use of the online submission system and the indexing of MJMS in PubMed.

Original articles contributed more than one-half (55%) of submissions in the year 2012 followed by case reports (32%), brief communications (4%), review articles (4%), special communications (3%), and editorials (2%)

(Figure 1). *MJMS* emphasises the production of original articles relative to other manuscript types so as to maintain good journal metrics.

### Distribution of Geographical Region Submission

Throughout 25 years of implementation as a journal that contributes research articles in the field of biomedical sciences; *MJMS* has mainly focused on all aspects of biomedical sciences



**Figure 1:** Percentage of submission according to manuscript type from January 2012–December 2012 for *Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences*.

and clinical sciences from developing countries. Table 2 shows the seven regions that have made contributions to us in the year 2012.

Most of the submissions came from South-East Asian countries, 42.15%. Malaysian authors contributed the most submissions, accounting for 40% of the total overall submissions in the year 2012. Similar to the period of 2009–2010 and 2011 (1,3), Malaysian authors also contributed more manuscript submissions followed by India (23.77%), Iran (11.66%), and other countries (Table 2).

### Editorial Decision

#### *Accepted-rejected-revision of manuscripts*

Overall, *MJMS* accepted 5 (2.8%) manuscripts after peer-review without any primary revision (Table 3). The manuscripts had excellent content and were submitted in corrected format as stipulated in the Guidelines for Authors. The rejection rate of the manuscripts was 68 (37.8%) after the pre-review and peer-review scoring. Andrew (4), noted that rejection of manuscripts were higher due to plagiarism, duplicated publication, multiple submission, authorship disputes, scientific fraud and article retractions. Intending authors should read the guidelines as offered in *MJMS* website and also highlighted again during first sign up as an author using the ScholarOne™ manuscript format.

**Table 1:** Submission of manuscript to *Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences* via ScholarOne™ Manuscript between January 2012–December 2012 (one year)

Month	Types of Manuscript								n
	Editorial	Original Article	Review Article	Case Report	Brief Communication	Special Communication	Letter to the Editor	Letter in reply	
January	1	15	–	2	–	–	–	–	18
February	–	8	–	5	3	–	–	–	16
March	1	3	–	6	–	–	–	–	10
April	–	10	1	6	–	–	–	–	17
May	–	13	2	7	1	1	–	–	24
June	–	12	–	6	1	–	–	–	19
July	–	12	1	8	4	–	–	–	25
August	–	11	1	5	–	2	–	–	19
September	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	2
October	1	6	–	8	–	–	–	–	15
November	2	23	3	12	–	2	–	–	42
December	–	10	–	5	–	1	–	–	16
<b>Total</b>									<b>223</b>

During pre-review, *MJMS* had advised and gave strict comments if the authors kept submitting uncorrected manuscripts leading to *MJMS* to withdraw the obstinate manuscript so as to sustain the quality of manuscripts and allow time for other better quality submissions.

Most manuscripts underwent major revisions as decided by the Editor. After manuscripts were peer-reviewed, decision by the Editor to send

for major revision was mainly due to inaccurate statistical analyses.

## Future Plans and Recommendation

Increasing numbers of manuscript submissions demonstrate increased demand from authors for publication in *MJMS*. This has posed huge challenges to the *MJMS* production committee.

*MJMS* cannot publish in the period of time in accordance with authors' wishes as the quality of the manuscript needs to be properly scrutinised. In this regard, any manuscript will undergo a strict filtering process prior to acceptance for publication. Time to publication will depend on the quality of the manuscript submitted. If the manuscript has to undergo numerous revisions it can take months for that final manuscript to be published.

*MJMS* has its own goals to achieve and strive as an excellent and prestige biomedical journal in Asia. After being listed in PubMed, *MJMS* is looking forward to being indexed in Medline and ISI. Although it seems to be a huge challenge for a relatively small journal to be indexed in an extremely well-known and large database, the required terms would be accomplished by *MJMS* so as to be one of the South East Asian biomedical journals indexed in Medline and ISI this is a worthwhile goal. *MJMS* also has mooted the idea of joining a few more databases as this can assist our frequently cited manuscripts to be more often "citable".

USM Press the publisher that oversees the journal will provide electronic-publication (E-pub) facilities making it convenient as readers would rather prefer to download or read the journal using smart phones, thus making it more

**Table 2:** Distribution of manuscripts to *Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences* by region/countries between January 2012–December 2012

Region	n
South–East Asia	
Malaysia	90
Singapore	2
Thailand	2
East Asia	
Japan	1
Hong Kong	2
South Asia	
India	53
Bangladesh	5
Europe	
Germany	1
Spain	1
Middle East	
Iraq	2
Iran	26
Saudi Arabian	4
Egypt	7
Oman	2
Pakistan	3
Turkey	3
United Arab Emirates	2
Syrian Arab Republic	1
Africa	
Nigeria	10
Mozambique	2
Oceania	
Australia	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>

**Table 3:** Manuscript decision based on all manuscript whose submission date is between January 2012–December 2012

Manuscript decision	Number of manuscript	Total (%)
Accept	5	2.8
Major Revision	86	47.8
Minor Revision	21	11.7
Reject	64	35.6
Reject-Inappropriate	4	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>

applicable than having a manuscript printed. Android application is also one of *MJMS* future plan so as to be produce more user friendly.

Given that submissions have been increasing year by year, the four issues published annually cannot accommodate the number of accepted manuscripts. The current Chief Editor has increased the number of publication issues per year. Overall, we note that tremendous growth within *MJMS* has been completely due to the achievements over a 25 years period being established as a biomedical journal of quality. We hope in future, *MJMS* can be at the fore front of other prestigious Asian biomedical journals.

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