

Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences: A Step Forward towards an International Journal

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Abstract

In 1986, the Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences (MJMS) began as the small and newly established journal *Diagnosa*, established by the Universiti Sains Malaysia School of Medicine. After 28 years in the publishing industry, we have received the honor of a listing as a local journal in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) created by Thomson Reuters (TR) to spotlight emerging high-quality scientific publications. The editorial team of MJMS looks forward to the next step in the march of progress toward the status of an international journal.

Keywords: Thomson Reuters, audit, international, journal, plagiarism

Introduction

The year 2014 marked the substantial growth of the Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences (MJMS) as one of the emerging journals in Malaysia as well as internationally. MJMS began publication in 1987 with one issue per year (1). The number of issues per year, as well as the number of articles, has since gradually increased from one year to the next. Therefore, we take justifiable pride in the achievements demonstrated by MJMS. Furthermore, we receive hundreds of articles each year reporting varied findings and new discoveries from all over the world. The publication of novel findings will, we expect, attract more readers and researchers to MJMS and stimulate them to cite MJMS articles in their own work. Such discoverability can increase and enhance the visibility and citability of our journal. In the SCI Imago Journal and Country Rank public visibility-discoverability marketplace, MJMS was ranked sixth of 15 medical journals in Malaysia (2). Each year, we work unceasingly to ensure that MJMS will remain competitive with other Malaysian and international journals.

New Citation Index: Emerging Sources Citation Index

The Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) was launched by Thomson Reuters (TR) as a new collection of journals that extends and deepens the coverage provided by the publications traditionally embedded in the TR Web of Science product. The new product was created to ensure that Web of Science covers emerging high-quality scientific publications even if they have not yet garnered international impact status (3).

The Malaysian Citation Centre has proposed 50 local journals that meet the publication criteria, procedures, policies and standards of the Thomson Reuters (TR) family of companies. It is fervently hoped that these journals will be admitted to membership in an ISI database. In this context, TR has agreed to index the selected journals in the ESCI database. ESCI certification is provided by TR to a journal before it is indexed in the Web of Science™ Core Collection.

MJMS is honored to be included among the 23 local journals (46% of the 50 seeking to qualify) that been accepted and listed in ESCI.

The journal is required to maintain performance and management quality in compliance with the ethics of scientific publishing to remain in the SCI database for at least one more year before it is granted indexing status in the Web of Science™ Core Collection.

Manuscript Submissions 2011–2014

Every year, MJMS receives hundreds of manuscripts to be process prior to publication in the journal, which appears 6 times per year. The submission pattern from 2011 through 2014 shows that the number of manuscripts submitted to the journal has generally increased from year to year (Table 1). In 2013, however, total manuscript submissions decreased 8% from the previous year (4). Although the number of submissions decreased in 2013, MJMS still produced 6 issues per year within the time specified by the journal’s procedures, standard,s and governing business plan.

In all, 264 manuscripts were received by the journal during calendar year 2014. As in the previous year, the majority of submissions were original articles rather than other types of manuscripts. Table 1 shows the breakdown of these submissions by category. A total of 136 (51.51%) original articles were submitted, followed by 81 (30.68%) case reports, 22 (8.33%) review articles, 11 (4.16%) editorials, 10 (3.79%) brief communications, and 4 (1.51) special communications. The highest number of submissions per month was the 38 articles received in September 2014 (Figure 1). On average, MJMS received 22 articles per month in 2014. In addition, MJMS strongly encouraged authors to submit original articles and review articles rather than case reports, as an overwhelming number of case reports were being submitted.

As shown in Table 2, authors from Malaysia contributed a higher number of submissions in 2014; other countries offered a total of 102 (38.63%) submissions. Malaysia was followed by India with 67 (25.37%) submissions, Iran with 42 (15.9%) submissions, and Nigeria with 11 (4.16%) submissions. Surprisingly, in 2014 MJMS received submissions from new countries, including Ireland, Denmark, Indonesia, and New Zealand. The pattern of submissions by geographical region remained unchanged from 2011 through 2014 (4–6).

MJMS is pleased to receive increasing numbers of articles from researchers worldwide who thereby offer their expertise, skills, and new discoveries. As medical science and technology develop, they offer the hope of improving the health of people in specific countries where there is a need for medical attention. Hence, the sharing of information via the reading material published by MJMS will also help improve the

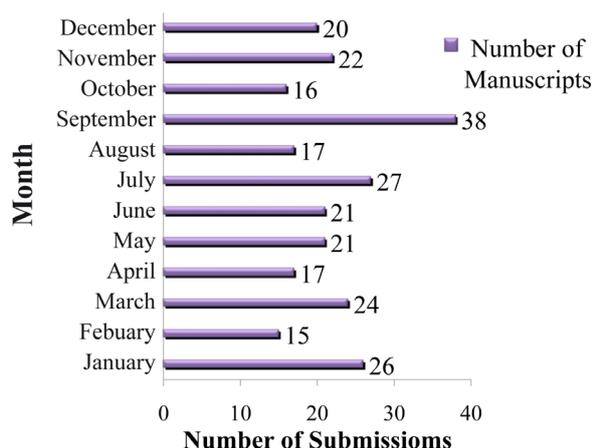


Figure 1: Number of submissions, 2014, grouped by month.

Table 1: Number of Manuscripts Submitted, 2011 through 2014

Manuscript Type	Year			
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Brief Communications	8	9	7	10
Case Reports	53	71	63	81
Editorial	3	5	5	11
Original Articles	117	123	115	136
Review Articles	10	9	13	22
Special Communications	4	6	2	4
Total	195	223	205	264

quality and expertise of the health product in the fields of biomedicine and allied health and clinical sciences.

Table 2: Distribution of Manuscript Submissions by Geographical Region, 2014

Region	n	%
Southeast Asia		
Malaysia	102	38.63
Thailand	1	0.378
Indonesia	8	3.03
East Asia		
Japan	1	0.378
China	1	0.378
South Asia		
India	67	25.37
Bangladesh	5	1.89
Pakistan	3	1.13
Europe		
United Kingdom	1	0.378
Denmark	1	0.378
Greece	1	0.378
Ireland	1	0.378
North America		
United States	2	0.75
Southwestern Pacific		
New Zealand	1	0.378
Middle East		
Turkey	5	1.89
Saudi Arabia	5	1.89
Iran	42	15.9
Iraq	1	0.378
Africa		
Ethiopia	2	0.75
Nigeria	11	4.16
Libya	1	0.378
South America		
Brazil	1	0.378
Colombia	1	0.378
Total	264	100

Editorial Decisions on Articles, 2014

Acceptance-Rejection-Revision-Manuscript

Table 3 shows that 7 articles received by MJMS were rejected due to inappropriate content. Inappropriate content refers to a high percentage (> 50%) of plagiarism detected in the manuscript. It is known that more than 70% of submitted manuscripts containing plagiarized material are detected with plagiarism software. Accordingly, we immediately reject such manuscripts through ScholarOne Manuscript Central, and we do not give notice to the authors in such cases.

High-quality writing is the key to early publication; problematic (poor) writing in manuscripts serves no one's interests. Prior to an editorial decision, manuscripts must also be subjected to peer review for content, statistical and data analysis, and results credibility. The MJMS rate of manuscript acceptance in 2014 was 4.2%; in 2013, the rate of acceptance was 1.46%.

Plagiarism and its avoidance; rejected articles

Manuscripts submitted to MJMS undergo a pre-review process in which the production editor checks the format of the manuscript and checks the content for plagiarism. MJMS has received a substantial number of articles whose content is more than 50% similar to that of one or more papers previously published in journals. We, of course, appreciate that writing a scientific paper is difficult. However, we must emphasize that, although such duplication of content may be culturally acceptable at present for within-

Table 3: Number of Manuscripts and their Status, 2014

Manuscript Status	#Manuscripts	Percentage
Accept	11	4.2%
Major Revision	81	30.7 %
Minor Revision	31	11.7 %
Reject	79	29.9 %
Reject - Inappropriate	7	2.7 %
Withdrawn	55	20.8 %
Summary	264	100.0 %

country publication in certain jurisdictions, the international standard is that using content published elsewhere without proper citation and attribution violates one of the most fundamental principles of international scientific ethics. Therefore, any individual or nation seeking international recognition and visibility for its researchers and research would be well advised to acknowledge the key guiding significance of this traditional and near-universal ethical standard, which has existed for centuries precisely to facilitate harmony and balance in the international scientific enterprise. Articles found by the editors of MJMS to show at least 50% similarity to previously published material are automatically rejected without any notification to the authors. In these cases, the authors must rewrite the literature review and all other applicable portions of the manuscript before resubmission.

To avoid repeated rejections and the need for repeated resubmissions, authors must read the Guidelines for Authors and follow all requirements stated in the guidelines. In the past, most authors have not followed the requested formats, especially for figure and image submissions. Such flawed manuscripts will delay the completion of the editorial checklist and impede the assignment of the manuscript to reviewers. We hope to receive more interesting articles in the future.

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