

From the desk of Chief Editor

Editorial

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THE BEGINNING

It all started with a raving idea of incepting a medical journal that promoted research among the youth. I discussed a potential health science journal with Salman Kazmi (SK) and we went to Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) Lahore, Pakistan with this idea. Pakistan Journal of Surgery and Medicine (Pak J Surg Med) was approved on 22 August 2019. PMA Lahore President Ashraf Nizami and General Secretary Malik Shahid Shaukat agreed to be patrons of this journal. The next step was piecing together a diverse editorial board and reviewer board. I reached out to a few students who had the spark of research in them. Zouina Sarfraz (ZS) was the first student editor to join our editorial board. Azza Sarfraz (AS), Kanwal Zahra (KZ), and Safia Firdous (SF) joined us within the first week. ZS and AS drafted our author certification Pro-forma and non-disclosure agreement forms. SF and ZS finalized the logo. I chose the name and started reaching out to eminent medical professionals. SK played a paramount role in formulating the editorial board. I did thorough research for journal hosting solutions and found Frontier Science Associates(FSA). It was a symbiotic relationship from the start. While FSA worked on the website and open journal system (OJS), my team and I worked on the editorial board. We used our social networks and reached out to eminent medical professionals who knew us personally. And thus the editorial board of Pak J Surg Med materialized. Although we had put together an editorial board, yet many members were timid towards the entire venture while others were under the impression that Pak J Surg Med could potentially be a predatory journal. We continually worked. I, SK, ZS, AS, SF, and KZ finalized the author instructions, and a call to articles was opened. As soon as the editorial board was finalized, the next most important step was appointing an ombudsman as per recommendations of the

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).[1] The job description of the ombudsman of a biomedical journal has already been elaborated by The Lancet in 1996 when this prestigious journal established the position of the ombudsman.[2] On the same lines, I intended to appoint an ombudsman for my journal. After thorough research, I reached out to Muhammad Iftikhar Hanif, who was then serving as Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at MAHASA University Malaysia, to join us as the ombudsman, and he graciously accepted. I had a lot of help from my seniors in establishing and running Pak J Surg Med. We were using semi-structured review forms in the beginning.

When I sent an article for review to one of my teachers, Muhammad Idrees Anwar (Dean Surgery and Allied, Rawalpindi Medical University), he was kind enough to design our peer review guidelines and structured forms. When I discussed the methodological peer reviewing system, Sadiq Naveed (Institute of Living, Hartford, CT) came up with the idea of a dedicated peer review board. I needed the editorial board to be made as per Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan guidelines. Arif Rasheed Malik (then Chairman Forensic Medicine and Toxicology King Edward Medical University), Shahroona Masud (Professor of Physiology, Akhtar Saeed Medical & Dental College Lahore), and Wajida Perveen (Sialkot Institute of Health Sciences) played a key role in streamlining the editorial board of the journal. By tradition, editorial and peer review functions are kept secret by journals and are regarded as the “black box” of the journal.[3] Our peer review board is openly accessible from <http://pjsm.com.pk/board-of-peer>. Peer reviewer registration was launched through Google forms and a



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permanent bit.ly identifier was registered. The peer reviewer registration forms can be accessed from <http://bit.ly/pjsmpeer>. Our review board has a dedicated section for student reviewers; this has been done to familiarize the students with the process of critical review. AlGhamdi et al reported that 88% of medical students were unable to research due to lack of training courses and 84.7% due to lack of professional supervisors.[4] Additionally, medical students who participated in research activities during their academic careers published more as compared to those who did not participate.[5] I hope that with this initiative, the medical students will engage in ethical publication practices. All reviewers are required to submit a curriculum vitae (CV) for journal record verification purposes.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Chief Editor assisted by Managing Editors (AS and ZS) and Associate Editors (KZ, SF, and SK) are responsible for day to day running of the journal. Section Editors are renowned specialists in their fields. Section Editors are lead editors for articles submitted to the journal and are assigned as per the specialty of the editor. They are omnipotent in deciding the fate of the article. The section editors of this journal are;

1. Arif Rasheed Malik (BSc, MBBS, M.Phil (Haematology), FCPS (Forensic Medicine and Toxicology), CMT)
2. Ehsan Ullah MBBS, MPhil (Histopathology), PhD (Biomedical Science).
3. Muhammad Idrees Anwar (MBBS, FRCS (GLAS), DCPS (HPE) CPSP, MHPE (KMU))
4. Naqeebullah Achakzai (MBBS, FRCS, FCPS.)
5. Owais Hameed (MBBS, FCPS.)
6. Rahat Ali Tauni (MBBS, MRCP, MRCP (Endocrinology & Diabetes), FRCP (G), FHEA, MAcadMed, Certificate in Medical Education.)
7. Sadiq Naveed (MBBS, MD, Diplomat American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology)
8. Shahroona Masud (MBBS, MPhil)
9. Shazia Majid Khan (MBBS, FCPS.)
10. Shafi Muhammad Nizamani (MBBS, MCPS, LLB, MFFLM)
11. Wajida Perveen (BSpt, M.Aud, tDPT, MS (OMPT), CMT.)

Advisory board members have privileges like section editors and are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the journal. Our Advisors include;

1. Arif Pervez (MBBS, MS)
2. Imran Ahmed Moinuddin (MBBS, Diplomate American Board of Internal Medicine.)

3. Muhammad Ahmad (MBBS, FCPS)
4. Shahzad Shams (BSc, MBBS, FRCS, FCPS)
5. Muhammad Furrakh Maqbool (MBBS, FCPS)

Assistant editors are responsible for proofing, desk review and fact-checking. The assistant editors include;

1. Ahmed Zafar (MBBS, FCPS)
2. Imran Altaf (MBBS, MS)
3. Javaria Siddiq (MBBS)
4. Kiran Iftikhar (MBBS, MPhil)
5. Muhammad Ammar Amjad Sheikh (MBBS)
6. Noor ul Huda Maria (MBBS)
7. Qazi Muhammad Irfan (MBBS, FCPS)
8. Sabih Nofal (MBBS, FCPS)
9. Syed Ahmad Faizan (MBBS, FCPS)

“The failure to invest in youth reflects a lack of compassion and a colossal failure of common sense.” Not only we have a dedicated student review board, but also, one of our managing editors is a final year medical student at Fatima Jinnah Medical University (FJMU). We have a dedicated student editorial board who have the same responsibilities as assistant editors. The student editors who joined Pak J Surg Med in its infancy are;

1. Aleeha Zulfiqar (FJMU)
2. Sawaira Ahmad (Gulab Devi Educational Complex, Lahore)
3. Mohammad Ashraf (University of Glasgow, Wolfson School of Medicine)
4. Sajjad Ali (Ziauddin university, Karachi)
5. Uzzam Ahmed Khawaja (Jinnah Medical & Dental College Karachi)

PUBLICATION PROCESS

We utilize Publie for manuscript processing. When a manuscript is submitted to the journal, a number is assigned to the manuscript. In addition to author certification Pro-forma, authors are required to submit a photograph, ORCID, and Twitter ID. Once the documentation is complete, the manuscript is deidentified and run through iThenticate or Turnitin for similarity index screening. Any manuscript with a similarity index of more than 20% is rejected at the desk. To date, 5 articles have been retracted before publication on request of authors and 53 manuscripts have been rejected. The average days to the first editorial decision are 19 days. Final acceptance of submission is in 107 days from submission of the manuscript. The rejection rate is 47% with a desk reject rate of 26% and after review rejection rate of 21%.[6] The most common rejection was by the Section Editor. The most common reason of desk rejection was either high plagiarism or lack of novelty. All published articles have been subjected to a double-blind peer-review

process. Before Publie, Google forms were utilized for the review process but from Volume 1 Number 2, all processing of manuscripts is being conducted through Publie. Once the manuscript clears the initial desk review, grammatical corrections and bibliographic corrections are completed, section editor is assigned and requested to check the manuscript. The managing editors or I then send the manuscript for external peer review. Our review process has significantly improved since we started and we have seen tremendous growth in our peer review board. Each manuscript is subjected to 2 rounds of reviews with 4-6 reviewers in each round. Each review round lasts 2 weeks. If 2 or more reviewers Recommend "Reject Submission" during any review round, the manuscript is rejected along with reasons for rejection. We are partnered with ReviewerCredits for acknowledgment of the review process. After review, the manuscript is double-checked for bibliography and grammatical corrections. The section editor is notified through Publie and all record is emailed to section editor for final decision. Accepted manuscripts are then sent to copyediting. In this stage, I or managing editors update the metadata of the article, as there were some technical problems with previous issues when we had to utilize a 3rd party for this process. The copyedited file is uploaded to the website, converted into PDF, and , and sent to authors for final review. Once the author gives the green signal, the QR code is generated, and the article is sent for production. We are working on "Online First" mechanism and will be starting that from the next issue for the convenience of authors. We have started a rudimentary article level metric (ALM) system and can be seen on our website on "article stats" page. Every month, a journal citation report is uploaded for the record. As of 4th March 2021, Pak J Surg Med has been cited 20 times by national and international journals.[7]

This is an Open Access online journal is only printed upon request of authors. Authors have to pre-book at the time of submission for print copies.

UNIQUE FEATURES OF THIS JOURNAL

Pak J Surg Med is one of the few regional journals that have these features;

1. Publication of Author Picture, ORCID and Twitter ID
2. QR code linked manuscripts
3. Electronic Opinion (E-OP)
 - All articles are linked to an online form where the reader can comment on articles. These

comments are published as E-OP in the next edition.

4. Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT)

- From Volume 1 No 3, we have started using CRediT taxonomy for authorship credit. This taxonomic method is simple, fast, and universal and is being adapted by reputed journals.

5. We encourage our authors to declare a conflict of interest, acknowledge those who helped them during the research process and provide institutional review board certificates for those studies that involve human subjects. This is being done to inculcate an idea of ethical research among our local authors.

THANK YOU PEER REVIEWERS

My Editorial Board and I are thankful to the following reviewers who have critically reviewed Volume 1 of Pakistan Journal of Surgery and Medicine.

A:

Abat Khan
Abrar Ullah Khan
Abdul Ghafoor Khan
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Ahmad Ali Naqvi
Allauddin Mian
Ali Imam Awan
Ali Niyaf
Ammar Bin Ahsan
Anum Khan
Aitzaz Bin Sultan Rai
Arshia Kanwal
Asim Andrabi
Asma Arshia
Atiqa Khalid

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Heba tul Noor

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Kashif Aziz Ahmad

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Muhammad Mohsin Ali

Muhammad Rafaih Iqbal

Muhammad Usman

Muhammad Zeshan

Muna Malik

N

Nabeeha Khalid

Neguemadji Ngardig Ngaba

Niaz Ahmed Baluch

Q

Qurat Ul Ain

R

Raahim Ahmed

Rahman Gul

Raheel Khan

Razi Zaidi

S

Sadaf Shafique

Safdar Ali Amur

Salman Shahzad

Sanna Salam

Shahid Hamid

Shoaib Malhi

Shoaib Muhammad

Sundus Ali

Syed Shaheer Haider Bukhari

T

Tahira shaheen

Taimoor Hassan

Tehreem Fatima

Tuba Ahmed

U

Umaima Wasim

W

Wajid Ali

Wanessa Figueiredo Matos

Waqas Mehdi

Z

Zaka Ullah Khan

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AUTHOR CREDIT

AA: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

E-OP

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