



Birth of a Publication

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Editorial

The main face of every journal is its 'Contents of papers'. Each issue takes shape with papers which are results of assiduous research. Journals play a key role in assessing and assisting the authors in disseminating their research findings. Each day scientific papers are published in innumerable journals including Pharmacology and Pharmaceutics. Research is a continuous process. Before a paper is published it passes through several stages. The choice of a topic for research depends on the facilities in the institution, equipment, experimental animals and a competent guide and committed team. Clearance of Ethical Committee is necessary.

Choice of Research Problem

Research progresses in institutions on same, related or new problem. PGs (PG) submit a Thesis as part of Examination. Now 'Thesis' has been moderated making it a 'Dissertation' or 'Review' resulting in only a few papers.

Publication

Publishing papers is obligatory in Research and PG Institutes but optional in Medical Colleges for promotions or awards. For PGs it may be one time activity in career. Pharmaceutical firms publish to promote their products. Awards or Fellowships require PubMed listed papers, 'Impact factor' and 'Citation index'. Quality of papers is evaluated with help of agencies like PubMed, ResearchGate.

Why I Published for Over 60 Years?

I was always curious, not accepting everything in print, felt stimulated and eager to explore whenever an observation does not fit to traditional views. At each visit to another laboratory in India or abroad I noted new problems, avenues for research, fresh observations, novel techniques and methods.

I noted research problems as and when they struck me. On a priority basis, assessing the prospects of success with available apparatus, I completed many such problems and published papers. There are still some problems, which I could not complete or take up for want of time and facilities for others to carry on the quest. My papers are compiled in the form of a book "Seeds of Enquiry Fruits Research" available with me as CD and in www.indphar.org

In the present era, our papers and results are read by many others (not known to us) with a feedback from individual scientists and citation in their papers. There is a fast dissemination, expansion of knowledge and interaction among scientists. Published papers give one stature, status, confidence, thrill and pride.

Previous Literature

Collection of previous or related research is now fast, extensive and inexpensive without visits to libraries. With Internet Google Scholarly articles are available on MEDLINE and PubMed by topic or author for a specific span of years, even indicating full 'Free' papers. Full papers can also be obtained from other sources.

Manuscript

Drafting a paper after reaching a definitive stage of conclusion is a craft. Though the final draft appears in the order-Title, Authors, Abstract/summary, Key words, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgement and References. Practically manuscript is drafted in a different sequence. First with Results, followed by Method and Materials, Discussion, Introduction References and Abstract. Does nature create the baby with skin and hair first? They are added last!

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distributed under the Creative
Commons Attribution License, which
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cited.

I learnt the craft of preparing a paper from Professor W, Feldberg, Head, Division of Physiology and Pharmacology, National Institute for Medical Research, London. Short conclusion of results is drafted after a set of experiments. First 'Results', the core of the paper, is completed supported with photos, graphs with help of artists and statisticians with modern advances. 'Methods Materials' follow giving animals used experimental procedures and statistical methods. Later 'Discussion' compares results with related papers with references. A short 'Introduction' gives background. 'Abstract/Summary' should be brief and precise. It may be the only part read or indexed. Lastly 'References' are listed as given in 'Author instructions'.

Choice of Journal for Submission

Authors choose a journal for submission based on its 'Impact factor', quality of papers, indexing status and chances of acceptance. Online papers have early visibility. Since scientific information is available on internet and PubMed, few libraries and individuals subscribe for printed issues. Some journals charge for Full Paper reprints. PubMed indicates full 'FREE' papers. To offset the costs of publication, publishers levy a charge: 'Processing fee' depending on popularity of the journal and its 'Impact factor'. Authors can meet this financial levy only with Institutional funding. Small institutions find it difficult with International Journals with limitation of foreign exchange.

Publishers

Journals are published by concerned National or International societies. While some societies supply print issues FREE to members, others charge additional journal subscription. Gradually Journals are handed over to Professional Publishers handling many allied journals. They provide 'Online submission' and tracking releasing Editors to concentrate on their main function of screening the papers.

Editorial Process

Papers submitted pass through several stages. Journals with large circulation and low acceptance rates have first level screening to send a polite 'regret' note to authors that the paper is not suitable or interesting to its readers. Then the paper is sent to 'Reviewers'. It is not always possible to find reviewers familiar with the special nature of the submitted paper. A 'Peer' in one area may not be a 'Peer' in another area. Honest referees decline, while others accept as a matter of prestige. Biased referees often recommend rejection, while others are constructive suggesting changes. Dr. Feldberg, a reviewer for J. Physiol (Lond) and Brit. J. Pharmacol was extremely helpful for good papers, inviting the authors over the weekend- even from continent - correct the paper and recommend its publication. The referees' remarks are communicated for revision/rejection to help authors for resubmission.