

## Dental Journalism in Pakistan

*Inayatullah Padhiar*

The modern day of dentistry took its flight from the foot driven engine of 1930's & 50s to the electric driven motors of 1960's & 70's and then 1980's of the turbine era and from then on progress is non-stopping. Dentistry in Pakistan has excelled and the treatment that is provided here by a number of dentists can be compared with any advanced country. So far so good but when it comes to research and publication, we do not have much to offer comparable to other countries even to our neighbors.

Dental Journalism in Pakistan has a very chequered history. Not too many journals were published and to-date only three dental journals have survived namely Pakistan Oral and Dental Journal (PODJ), Journal of the Pakistan Dental Association (JPDA) and Pakistan Orthodontic Journal (POJ). I acknowledge the efforts and dynamic leadership of Prof. Ahmad Iqbal who in 1981 launched the Pakistan Oral and Dental Journal and up till now is being published continuously. Prof. Iqbal gave two valuable things to dental profession – one is the establishment of Khyber College of Dentistry and the second one is the Pakistan Oral and Dental Journal. Journal of the Pakistan Dental Association was launched in 1985 with Dr. Arif. R. Alvi as its chief editor and myself as its editor to provide a platform for the dentist to get their work published. Editorial and financial independence are utmost important requirement

for smooth running of any periodical and is true for Medical and Dental Journal especially those run by institutions. Constant interference in editorial contents hinders smooth publication workflow. This was what that happened to one of the dental journal and it ceased its publication in 1991. Restarted again in 1996 and then through ups and downs, in the year 2000, the Journal was re-launched with complete editorial and financial independence and is still in publication to date.

The quality of the manuscripts and the topics addressed still have lot of areas of improvement; the manuscripts we receive for publication reflect the quality of research status in our country and hence it has to be upgraded from the grass-root level. The research aptitude and culture in the clinical sciences need our utmost attention. On clinical side, majority articles are KAP studies/In Vitro/In Vivo and limited Clinical Trials that represent mostly re-inventing the wheels. One of the objections raised by our medical brother is very genuine that even after 30 and 40 years of publication, none of the dental journal has any impact factor nor both journals are indexed with PubMed. Indeed, a very sorry state of affairs calls an urgent attention of the dental fraternity. Our renowned scholars and researchers prefer their quality work to be published in international journals, while our local impact factor journals are ignored most of the time. The local dental journals however reflect the major work done and published with the need of promotion from one tier to another and not for boosting the research culture or for reflection of research aptitude in any institute. Only a hand full of scholars publishes their work for satisfaction and to claim their impact factor and Citation index for employment benefits. In addition, most of these manuscripts are just frequency studies or descriptive studies while lacking work on clinical trial, material sciences or

**How to Cite This:** Padhiar I. Dental Journalism in Pakistan. *Biomedica*. 2020; 36 (4): 327-8. doi:<https://doi.org/10.51441/BioMedica/5-71>.

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Inayatullah Padhiar, SI (Sitara-e-Imtiaz)

Patron in Chief

Journal of the Pakistan Dental Association

Email: [ahsan\\_inayat@hotmail.com](mailto:ahsan_inayat@hotmail.com)

- Received for publication: 19-11-2020
- Revision received: 16-12-2020
- Accepted for publication: 21-12-2020

population based studies.<sup>1</sup> There are many reasons for this worsening status of dental research; lack of research facilities, funding, ownership and training of the stake-holders are a few of those. In Pakistan, Higher Education Commission is the only institute, which provides financial support for launching the journals. The dental equipment and material manufacturers and traders along with the pharma industries may be mobilized in supporting the journals without generating a conflict of interest. The dentists are not in a habit of reading or subscribing the journals. The need of the hour is that the eminent and senior dental scholars, the research institutes and the professional bodies should work together and plot the strategies to strengthen a research oriented mind-set and guidance for the future students so that quality of research, both at clinical and basic sciences levels, is improved and publications in the national

journals may be encouraged for uplifting their status in the international journalism.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None to declare.

### **GRANT SUPPORT & FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**

None to disclose.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Khan N, Hasan A, Ali A, Hussain M, Iftikhar S. Profile of dental research in Pakistani dental journals in last ten years (2003-2012). *AnnJinnah Sindh Med Uni.* 2015; 1 (1): 2-6.

*Dr. Inayatullah Padhiar is a Patron-in-Chief of the Journal of Pakistan Dental Association that is printed regularly and being distributed to almost all dental colleges, some medical institutes of Pakistan and in a few foreign countries also. He was the founder Editor of Pakistan Dental Association Newsletter in the year 1983. He is also the Chairman of the Ethical Review Board of Fatima Jinnah Dental College Karachi, Pakistan where he is currently associated as a Clinical Advisor, Associate Trustee, and Member of the Governing Body of the Institute as well. He remained the driving force behind many memorable Pakistan Dental Association Congresses held at Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Hyderabad from time to time. In 2019, the Government of Pakistan awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Civil Award) to him for his services rendered to the dental profession.*