

From Foundation to Future: 75 Years of PAFMJ and Its Global Aspirations

From Modest Beginnings to National Prominence

The PAFMJ is one of the few South Asian biomedical journals that was created within the original framework of military and civilian collaboration within the medical field.¹ The first volume of the PAFMJ was published with very few resources and personnel; however, it laid the foundation for a strong future. By the time it completed its first decade of publication (1950-1965), the PAFMJ had already published over one hundred scientific papers in a wide variety of newly emerging areas of medicine, such as pathology, virology, and tropical medicine.² These early contributions were made by a small group of people, usually done on typewriters, and demonstrated an enormous amount of perseverance and curiosity that has led to the success of the PAFMJ today.

Between the years 1970 to 2000, PAFMJ transitioned from an institutional newsletter to an organized, nationally recognized medical journal. The establishment of the Army Medical College and Department of Basic Medical Sciences in the late 1970s created the foundation for the journal's institutionalization. In addition, the 1990s witnessed dramatic changes that significantly improved the quality and credibility of PAFMJ. These changes included the establishment of an Editorial Advisory Board, under the direction of Surg Gen DGMS(IS), and adherence to best practices for medical journals (e.g., adoption of Vancouver style for references and implementation of a strict policy of double-blind peer-reviewed evaluations to eliminate bias in manuscript evaluations. In keeping with these changes, PAFMJ expanded its publication cycle to a regular quarterly format, whereas, before this, it was published sporadically. Thus, by 2005, PAFMJ had become a regular, and therefore a mainstay, scientific journal in the biomedical sciences of Pakistan with four issues published each year by following the ICMJE and COPE standards for editorial processes.³

Originally, PAFMJ was only accessible through institutional libraries, but now has adopted an open-access policy for articles published online from the year 2000 to 2005 and has seen a significant increase in readership and citations during that period. Since then, an increasing number of authors from different parts of the world have cited PAFMJ in their own publications, and there has also been an increase in

downloads from various locations. Additionally, since 2015, PAFMJ has adopted a system of publishing bi-monthly (every 2 months) and publishing special issue(s). The increased volume of publishing has contributed to a continuity of PAFMJ's activity. A major step in modernizing editorial practices occurred in 2019, when PAFMJ migrated to an online editorial management and submission system (OJS), which has improved the experience of authors submitting manuscripts and reviewers evaluating submissions. In addition, PAFMJ has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the ethical standards of publishing and maintaining integrity in editorial work.⁴ PAFMJ adheres to the standards outlined by COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) and the ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors), which set out the international benchmarks for Ethics in Medical Journalism. From 2006 thru 2021, PAFMJ reached many milestones on their goal of being an ongoing organization; their primary focus is always delivering a quality improvement to their end-users in conjunction with developing their worldwide relationships. From an initial position of limitation in a developing nation in 1947 to its current status as a respected, global reference journal of scientific inquiry (indexed in multiple databases), PAFMJ has demonstrated through seventy-five years of tenacity and progress. The organization has weathered through times of scarcity; adapted to changes in medical science and publishing; and continued to fulfil its respect and honor to the founders, editors, reviewers, and authors of the journal. The period between 2006-2021 saw incremental indexing growth, as PAFMJ has achieved national and international recognition for its quality of academic research. PAFMJ has received accreditation from Pakistan's HEC and various professional accreditation organizations such as PM&DC and CPSP, establishing the quality of PAFMJ in the Pakistani academic environment. Most importantly, PAFMJ is included in many international databases; PAFMJ is indexed in Scopus, among databases (for example, DOAJ and HINARI). The fact that PAFMJ is listed in these databases confirms its acceptance and provides global access to PAFMJ's articles. Overall, there has been a significant increase in the profile and credibility of PAFMJ, thus allowing authors access to a much larger audience for their research. As PAFMJ continues to

evolve, it must now take the next step to elevate the journal to an even higher level of achievement through its ongoing commitment to providing high-quality, relevant content in accordance with the highest international standards of scientific publishing and to fostering global collaboration in research. As such, the Journal will continue to serve its mission of establishing itself as an open-access,⁵ peer-reviewed publication based on the principles of evidence-based medicine, ethical conduct and scholarly integrity. The Mission of PAFMJ is dependent upon these principles.

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