



JPPS: THE NEW OUT LOOK

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It is with immense pleasure that we present the Jan-July volume of the Journal of Pakistan Psychiatric Society (JPPS). This issue was made possible through dedicated team effort. We would like to thank the Pakistan Psychiatric Society (PPS) officials for entrusting us with this important task. We also like to pay tribute to Dr. Saeed Farooq, outgoing chief editor, for his contribution.

JPPS is the official journal of the PPS. It represents the aspiration of the psychiatrist working in the country, and outside. It is also the only specialty journal for psychiatrists working in the Pakistan Armed Forces. Any journal is as good as the community it represents, and JPPS is no different. We request the psychiatry faculty in academic ranks, as well as the service cadre to support JPPS. It is through publication of credible research that journals secure indexing in databases, and for this we reach out to our peers in the field of psychiatry. We like to begin with couple of styling and design issues of this edition before highlighting the contents.

The cover and layout of the journal has been changed. The profiling of the journal is expected to increase the (brand) loyalty with ownership of this periodical among our readers. The cover page depicts the globe, an image that signifies the all-encompassing nature of the science we aspire to publish. The title enhances the 'Pakistan Psychiatric Society', thus inviting all the members to acquire subscription. The color and graphics have been kept simple yet attractive. The art work is intended to engage the flair of behavioral science through the depicted illustrations.

Some new sections, which we expect to stimulate research, have been started. Our section on Research Notes is expected to highlight recent developments in the area of research. The current section introduces and critically analyzes the PRISMA guidelines which have been launched to report and interpret systematic reviews and meta-analysis.¹ These guidelines have replaced the previous QUORAM statement.² We hope that this would not only encourage critical appraisal but also develop systematic reviews on the evidence of interventions within the context of Pakistan. JPPS expects to be a recipient of such write-ups. In order to facilitate, we have introduced a series on scientific paper writing co-authored by Dr Fatema Jawad, Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Pakistan Medical Association (JPMA).

The PGME section is commenced to spotlights the odyssey of postgraduate trainee in psychiatry. Given the limited resources, a trainee rides through an uneven path irrespec-

tive of expounded standards. The section contains commentary on 'How to approach post graduate exams' which renders the elementary as well as conceptual need of trainee to pass the exam.

JPPS intends to cover the achievements of the local and international phenomenal figures in Psychiatry. We graciously acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Unaiza Niaz on the life and work of Dr. Eyad el Sarraj in the obituary section.

The work of art is a joy forever. We have started a creative corner which showcases two pieces. The painting by Dr Syed Ali Wasif depicts the melancholy (in Blue) he experiences by the deep seated societal injustice and violation of rights of mentally ill individuals. Dr Wasif's art blossomed under the watch full eye of late Mr. Sadiquan (1930-1987), the illustrious artist known for his calligraphic expressions, human figure drawings and progressive art. The work of Dr Wasif has the same reflective genius as his mentor. A short story, "Dreams Die First", by Syed Hani narrates the plights of a student who attempts to kill himself. The story gives a glimpse in to the highly ambivalent state of mind experienced by the person with ideas of self-harm.

The lead editorial by Dr Rana and Dr Wasay is titled 'Bridging the Gap between Neurology and Psychiatry'. The political idealism is evaluated from the perspective of clinical care, teaching and research. Since hospitals and departments exists in administrative units, which serve administrative convenience more than the actual training or clinic service needs, lots of issues are created in day to day work. The editorial has suggested ways to bridge that gap. We are also presenting the work of our psychology colleagues in this edition. It adds diversity and depth to the local literature. The paper by Inam A. et al highlights the importance of systematically studying the behavioral problems in pre-school children. The paper by Khatoon H. et al gives credible data on the prevalence of anxiety in children exposed to inter-parental violence. This data was collected from two communities using State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) and Children Exposure to Domestic Violence Scale. The paper by Alvi T. et al highlights the caregivers' stress in a short and succinct piece. The study by Shahid M. et al on deliberate self-harm (DSH) in the context of Emergency Department from three tertiary care hospitals provides constructive data on the subject. On parallel, the pattern of child psychiatric emergencies in the tertiary care hospital is also reported by Khan F. et al. The advent of technology has revolutionized the current era of mental health care and research. The validation study by Abbas A. et al highlights the need of mental health research catching up

with the developments in the field of technology. We have also included a review article on the non-pharmacological management of insomnia in clinical practice by Khawaja I. et al. The authors so rightly conclude that “we encourage the physicians and clinicians to consider using these behavioral approaches first before deciding to use pharmacological treatments because of the safety and long-term benefits of these techniques”. A short communication by Saddique I. et al is included which highlights the frequency of depression in Diabetes Mellitus from a District Headquarter Hospital in Pakistan. One case report is also included. The case report by Khan MA et al highlights the medical complications associated with solvent abuse, highlighting the need for more systematic research in this area.

The medical practice in Pakistan neither encourages nor trains clinicians for scientific writing. This is not so different from health care systems outside Pakistan, however systems outside Pakistan are nevertheless more attuned to clinical practice or academic tenure tracks. Then there are those who believe that their pen should only move for the best of science, perfectionists as they are, compelling them to take a reader’s perspective alone when it comes to the business of scientific publishing. Pakistan has only five Medline Indexed journals, which speaks of the quality and quantity of science done in this part of the world (<http://www.pakmedinet.com/>). Some would argue that these are too many.

The original articles represent the quality of research and training in Pakistan. Their selection is contingent on the peer review process, a system not without its perils. The outgoing editor of BMJ has aptly said for the benefit of his prodigy (and scientific audience) that the system is equivalent to the idea of throwing a pile of papers from the top of ladder and selecting the few which land in the basket (of publication) at the bottom.³ The peer review process has its own peculiarities. Contrary to popular belief, editors are generally innocent by-standers between the reviewers and the authors.

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) provides a forum for editors to discuss issues related to integrity of the scientific record, providing them with support and encouragement in reporting and cataloguing investigations in to the issues related to the publication process.⁴ It is a constant struggle to keep a balance between the authors and the reviewers. Though authors are responsible for the authenticity of the published data, process of peer-review is not without perils. Reviewers are also not infallible entities. This leaves the editorial staff negotiating between the two. At times, this can be very ugly – a grim reminder of academic reality - publish or perish forever. This dilemma is not particular to JPPS. It has prompted many editors to pick up their pen. In an editorial, Miranda Robertson, Editor of BioMed Central, Journal of Biology quoted some concerned scientists: “Comments like “reviewers have got completely out of hand in last five years...(Philippa Marrack, University of Colorado, USA)’ to “..something surely needs to be done about the review nightmare that so many people face (Robert Horvitz, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA)” depicts the

prevailing paradox in the United States of America. Brigitta Stockinger, National Institute of Medical Research, United Kingdom also writes “I find it mind boggling what trivia the other reviewers keep throwing up which have little to do with the basic message of the paper but delay manuscripts for months on end”.^{5,6}

It is only through persistence and perseverance that we can achieve excellence in science. The inclusion of young blood in the Editorial Board of JPPS, along with the wisdom of senior psychiatrists, is expected to usher in a new era of progress. JPPS expects to capture the developments going on in the Country. As we sit on the crossroads of conflict and change we have to keep our vision focused on the new horizon of hope and awareness. The cause of mental health needs a public health approach and dissemination through print and electronic media.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite our colleagues in the pharmaceutical industry to join hands with us in promoting the evidence based care of patients. The Federal Drug Authority (FDA) in United States allows Direct To Consumer Advertisement (DTCA) in order to help the patients make informed decision in consultation with their physicians⁷. The scenario should not be any different in the context of Pakistan. Additionally it should be kept in mind that publishing of advertisements should not be considered as endorsement of any sort.

We welcome your comments and suggestions to help improve the journal. Send us your constructive feedback at: jpakistanps@gmail.com.

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