

Where do I Publish My Paper?

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To teach is an art. Medical Education is a field in which novice require direction in which he should go. In Continuation of editorial in previous volume, here is a second editorial from Dr. Avinash Supe- Editor NJIRM [Supe A. NJIRM 2012; 3(4) : 1-3]

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Once your research is complete, it is a major dilemma for many - which is an appropriate journal for publication of your research? Should we publish in an Indian journal or send it abroad? This article will discuss various factors that guide you in deciding appropriate journal.

Indexed Journals : Everyone would like to see that his/ her paper is read by many. This happens if you publish in an Indexed Journal. There are many international indices, commonly used is PUBMED. In addition to Pubmed there are many indexes that are used extensively such as Sciences citation, Indmed etc. Few years ago, many Indian journals were not indexed in Pubmed, but today there are many. Hence once published in Pubmed your paper will be read globally. If it is read and available freely – then it is cited more. Citation of your paper is more valuable than only publishing an article.

Indian or International: If the topic of your paper is "action research" or contextually more relevant to our country – Indian Journal otherwise – International journal.

Open access or closed access: These are two groups are journals. Open access journals allow everyone to access full text of your article freely. Closed access will be accessed on by passwords. The acceptance rates of open access journals are low. Some of the open access journals charge for article. Most of us find this costly and hence paid journals are not chosen.

Impact Factor : This is a well known but controversial parameter of a journal's reputation. Impact factor of a journal depends on number of citations of articles published. If your article is in

High Impact factor journal, then you have more chance of getting job or grants. Many Indian journals have a low impact factor. However, today your articles are well cited than before.

Prestige factor: Scientists who regularly publish papers 'know' which journals contribute significantly to advancement in their area. These journals may not necessarily have the highest impact factors. These are journals, which most scientists in the discipline consider as very influential. These are journals that young researchers hope to publish in to let the peers know that they have arrived.

General Journal or specialty journal : If your article is related to one specialty – better to publish in specialty or association journal, as it will have good readership. Medical Education articles can be published in both types. Some journals (Medical Education) only publish research or reviews while some may publish viewpoints, teaching guides (The Clinical Teacher) as well as reviews.

Editorial Board : One of the important criteria to judge a journal is by the people associated with its peer review process. An experienced and reputed global editorial board adds to the prestige of a journal.

Focus: It may be worthwhile scanning a recent issue of a journal to know the kind of papers that are published. Is the focus of the journal broad or narrow? Which disciplines are most frequently represented? What's the journal's orientation – for example, is it clinical or basic, theoretical or applied, or a mix of some? Is it a journal that most medical researchers scan regularly? And there are certain

'core' journals for each specialty that most people in the field automatically browse every time a new issue comes out.

Do you have to always publish in the journal that most closely matches the topic of your article? Not necessarily, especially if your paper is also likely to be of interest and relevance to non-core readers. For example, a paper in basic sciences could be sent to a more clinically oriented journal if you wish to emphasize the clinical relevance of your work. Remember that wrong choice of journal could mean burial of the paper forever, as only selected few may access the paper.

Manuscript acceptance rate : Is the journal very selective, or does it publish most of the submitted manuscripts? Are the journal's standards so high, that you will be wasting time submitting it to that journal? You can sometimes determine acceptance rate by contacting the editors; you can also ask more experienced researchers in the field for their general impression.

Punctuality: Many journals from India and other developing countries are not published on schedule. It is always helps to look at the latest issue of the journal before submitting a paper to the journal.

Format of your paper: Make sure that the journal you select has a policy of accepting articles of the form (e.g. brief communication, rapid communication, or full communication) that you will be writing. On a related note, a few journals are now emerging that is produced only Web, and no printed copy is available. Web Journals are fine but make sure your promotion committees accept that. If you have prepared questionnaires or methods – it is worth publishing it in web Portals such as MedEdPortal or ASME sites.

Time to print: An author wants to get his article in print as soon as possible. It is worthwhile checking the length of a particular journal's publication cycle i.e. the time taken for review process and, once the article is accepted, for publication. You can often figure this out by looking at the articles the journal has published in a recent issue. Many journals spell out the policy. For others, one needs to look at the dateline - "date submitted" and "date accepted".

Most journals today have online site where articles are published ahead of Print.

Final Decision: When more than one journal is being considered, some critical variables can help make the final choice. It is likely that no single journal will have all the features one is looking for; therefore, decide which features are the most important and which you are willing to compromise on. Indexed journal is your first choice. Indian Journals today are also good if you want to publish faster and have good visibility.

Selecting the most appropriate (best) journal can take some time and experience. But it is worth the effort since it will determine whether your paper gets read, gets read by the right authors and influences progress of science. Publication in a good journal will give a positive impression among your peers.

Finally, consider the advice Dr Satyanarayanan once gave to us: "If you don't get a manuscript rejected once in a while, you are not aiming high enough."

List of General Journals where Medical education articles can be published

- Medical Education
- Academic Medicine
- The clinical Teacher
- Medical Teacher
- Education for Health
- Journal of Rural & Remote Health
- Teaching & Learning in Medicine
- BMC– Medical Education
- National Medical J India
- Journal of Postgraduate Medicine

Specialty Journals

- Academic Emergency Medicine
- Academic Psychiatry
- Advances in Physiology Education
- Cell Biology Education
- Family Medicine Journal
- J. General Internal Medicine
- Indian Journal of Pediatrics
- Indian Journal of Gastroenterology
- JAPI
- FOGSI

Following are list of Major Clearing Houses or Web Portals

1. AAMC: Repository for Peer Reviewed Educational Materials: www.aamc.org/members/gea/cube.htm
2. Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine Educational Tools: www.im.org/AAIM/tools/default.htm
3. Society of Teachers of Family Medicine: www.edserv.musc.edu/prn/resource
4. American Physiologic Society: www.the-aps.org/education
5. Association of Surgical Educators: www.surgicaleducation.com/educlear/index.htm
6. Association of Professors of Ob/G: www.apgo.org/resourcenetwork
7. Council on Medical Student Education in Pediatrics: www.unmc.edu/community/comsep

So, you need to bear all these issues in mind when considering when and where to publish. Have a happy publication.