

Trends of Public Health Research Studies by Pakistani Authors in National Journals during last Ten Years

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Objective: To find the trend of public health research studies published during the last ten years by Pakistani authors in national journals.

Methodology: All the original articles of the national journal were reviewed for fields of studies and specialties from: PakMedinet. The articles of year 2000, 2004 and 2008 of having first author affiliation with Pakistan were recorded. The information noted down from each article were: organization, type of institute, province, index/non-index journal, any funding, type and field of research

Results: More than two thousand articles were reviewed for the study. The majority of the articles were from JPMA, JCPSP, JAMC, and AKEMU. About one-fifth of the articles were related to public health research. Internal medicine and surgery were the main fields of interest among the authors. Nine out of ten publications were printed from public institutions.

Conclusions: The study revealed that there was increasing trend of publication of public health research in the national journals.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of a public health research is to prevent rather than treat a disease. Few reviews have been published to determine the trend of public health researches in their respective countries. However, no data are available to show the trend of public health researches in Pakistan. Therefore, we studied the trends in the public health research output from Pakistan during last 10 years.

METHODOLOGY

Pakmedinet is a database search engine which provides abstract of Pakistani Medical Journals. All the original articles which were available online on Pakmedinet or related sites of journals were reviewed for the

year 2000, 2004 and 2008. The articles with first author affiliation as Pakistani were studied. The classification of original article was made as described by the journal itself. The information noted down from each article were: type of research, topic, field of research, type of organization/institute, country of organization, province of organization, funding status of article and indexing of the journals.

Type of Research: All the research papers were classified into basic research, clinical research and public health research which were further sub-divided into different categories based on their objective research work and conclusion. Basic research was further divided into pure research and applied research.

Clinical research includes experiment on patients or materials, which was further divided into four types of research. 1) Patients series/management, 2) Laboratory investigation and Clinical Examination, 3) Clinical trials, 4) Clinical Epidemiology and Public health research was further classified into epidemiological research/behavioral/environmental/social research and health system/policy research.

Topic: This assessment was based on the topics covered by the article whether it was disease specific, concerned with health system and policy or aims to produce any output for the improvement of health.

Field of research: Field of interest of the article was reviewed based on the objective and methodology implied by the examiner.

Type of Organization/Institute: This evaluation considered work done in organization whether it is public, private, public & private (mixed) or Non Government Organization (NGO).

Country of Organization, Pakistani Province, Funding Status and Indexing of Journal were also noted for the reviewed article.

Fifty two journals were reviewed out of 66 names appeared on PakMediNet. The remaining journals either do not have their publication on the journals website or started publications after 2008.

RESULTS

Total reviewed articles were 2318. Only 19% of the total articles were devoted to the field of public health and 2% were from basic sciences. The rest of the articles were clinical based. Most of the articles (72%) were published from public health institutes. JCPSP, JPMA, JAMC and AKEMU were the leading journals in publications. Publication of original article rose dramatically in year 2004 but in 2008 this number went down. Gradual

increase in public health researches but a significant decline was noted in number of clinical and basic researches. About 79% of the health researches were clinical based and percentage of basic researches is almost negligible. Majority of these clinical researches were conducted in the field of community medicine, internal medicine, obs and gyne and surgery. A downward trend in these fields was observed in the health researches except in internal medicine.

CONCLUSIONS

There is an encouraging sign that the number of publications have increased during the last decade. Internal medicine shared the largest percentage among the manuscripts published..

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