

FROM A PRESIDENCY TO A PUBLICATION

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ABSTRACT

As the Editor-in-Chief of The Journal of Pakistan Psychiatric Society, it is a pleasure to present my vision for the journal. There are five overarching goals designed to improve the journal's impact on the field of Psychiatry and Allied disciplines and three initiatives, two of which are targeted to improve the relevance of JPPS for practitioners, advocates, educators/trainers, and international readers. The third initiative is to have JPPS indexed in Scopus, and fourth is to improve the prevailing culture of research and publication. There are two improvements related to the journals operations and efficiency.

Keywords: Editor's vision, editorship, psychiatry in Pakistan.

It is an honor and a pleasure to write this editorial as the new Editor-in-Chief of The Journal of Pakistan Psychiatric Society (JPPS), the official scientific journal of the Pakistan Psychiatric Society (PPS). I am grateful to the PPS Executives' Committee that has reposed their trust in me to manage the affairs of the journal following my tenure as PPS President. While I am committed to do my best, I am aware that the potential of the journal cannot be realized without the active and enthusiastic participation of the members of the society and the readership of the journal.

As the world reels under the impact of the fourth wave of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic and the phobia of emerging variants, it is time to thank all the Frontline Healthcare Workers, and other professionals who have tenaciously and fearlessly served the local and global communities. Sadly, governments in general and the Government of Pakistan in particular have not appropriately honoured the dedication, services and sacrifices of healthcare workers, but these professionals have succeeded in displaying their valour to the world, and claimed true respect as "Heroes" among citizens of the globe. Despite, the havoc wreaked by COVID-19 Pandemic, this adversity has provided great global research opportunities, and to act locally. This is evident from the COH-FIT study, which is the broadest survey on COVID-19 impact to date, involving over 230 researchers and 120 institutions across the six continents,¹ which include Dr. Afzal Javed and myself as country collaborators from Pakistan.²

The Past Editor-in-Chief, Prof. Brig. Mowadat H. Rana, and his editorial board deserve acknowledgement for their

excellent stewardship of JPPS during the past eight years. The "Handing over of the Baton"³ was delayed due to both the COVID-19 aftermath and my own grave experience of contracting the disease. As a result of Brig. Rana and his team's efforts, the journal thrives at a reputed level as it continues to disseminate and promote the knowledge of Psychiatry and Mental health. Their efforts have maintained the academic health of the journal and its continued status with the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.

This Journal would not have existed were it not for the Founding editor of JPPS, Prof. Saeed Farooq for establishing the journal in 2004. Without the efforts of the former editors and their teams, JPPS would not be the shining medallion of our Psychiatric society.

I am fortunate and grateful to have five excellent and capable scholars who will serve as my managing, associate and deputy editors: Dr. Mian Mukhtar-ul-Haq Azeemi, Prof. M. Irfan, Prof. Asad T. Nizami, Dr. Jawed A. Dars and Dr. Ali B. Mustafa, respectively. We also have two very capable assistant editors: Dr. Nighat Haider and Dr. Amna Asad, and Dr. Saima Akhtar as Senior Publishing Coordinator.

I have five goals for my editorship: First, I will continue building on the commendable foundation laid down by past editors of JPPS since its establishment. As the flagship and official journal of the PPS, JPPS has the pivotal role of promoting the theoretical as well as empirical work in the many subspecialties within the field of Psychiatry and Mental Health, and additionally disseminating the findings from this work. The subspecialties include, but are not

limited to, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Old Age Psychiatry, Psychotherapy techniques etc. which are mentioned in the PPS Special Interest Groups.⁴ As the editor, I will seek to continue JPPS' mission of representing the main scholarly voice of the various areas of Psychiatry and Mental Health. In addition, I am delighted to state that our Editorial Advisory Board shall be diverse with local, global, inter- and multidisciplinary representation, with future collaborative opportunities that may aid in transformation, advancement of Psychiatry and Mental Health theory, de-stigmatisation, research, practice, advocacy, teaching and training.

In pursuit of these goals, I will continue to utilize the existing formats, including those of the innovative, high-quality Original research articles which will continue to serve as the backbone of the journal, along with Editorial, Review Articles, Special Articles, Short communications, Case Reports, Letters to Editor and Creative corner. I shall also remain open to progression in the publication format during my tenure as the Editor-in-Chief. In the future, you will also see special focus on improving the Promotion, prevention, investigation, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, complication, legal and policy-making and care of mental illness, as well as the promotion of mental health globally. Furthermore, papers on evolving topics including novel targets for drug development, precision medicine, big data etc. and many other emerging topics. The emphasis of the journal will also be on the education of the scientific community by publishing excellent reviews on highly relevant topics, as well as treatment guidelines. These guidelines serve as a major tool to promote up-to-date treatment options and to improve treatment for patients worldwide.

Second, we will encourage scholars and researchers from the previously mentioned subspecialties of Psychiatry and allied sciences to submit their work to JPPS, so that the journal will truly reflect the broad diversity of expertise present within the field. During our brief experience with the journal, we noticed the enthusiasm of submission among psychologists, yet lesser keenness among clinicians and physicians which may be attributed to lack of time due to higher quality of clinical care, which is not being adequately translated into published articles, and this is resulting in stagnation and lack of innovation in Psychiatry and Mental Health in Pakistan. Thus, to address the issue, one of our first initiatives is to ensure the presence of the journal's promotional stall at all PPS Conferences. This momentous action was taken with the support of PPS President - Prof. Dr. Imtiaz A. Dogar (also former Managing Editor of JPPS) at the 23rd National Conference held in Lahore, where the JPPS booth was installed and JPPS Special sessions were organized by the new Editorial Board Members. The first session was titled "From Patients to Publication" in order to invigorate the clinicians to strive for

research and publication, which is a gap that needs much filling. The highlight of the session was the presence of the local and global stakeholders of Psychiatry namely World Psychiatric Association (WPA), Pakistani American Psychiatric Association of North America (PAPANA) and College of Physicians & Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP), who reiterated the importance of research and its publication, especially the exploration of newer avenues in Mental Health. They also pledged to assist JPPS in attaining a very prestigious rank among its global counterparts. The second session namely "Express Pathway to Publication" was also organised on the last day of conference to galvanize potential authors and researchers and enfold them in the field of scientific publication.

Third, apart from the commendable work done by previous editors of JPPS, we have come across technical concerns regarding its Impact Factor during the past several years. As you know, the Impact Factor is a measure of how frequently the articles published in the past two years are cited by researchers in the subsequent year. Hence, it represents the level of immediate influence the journal has on the field and related disciplines. Our goals shall include raising the journal's impact factor, ranking in HEC Journal Recognition System (HJRS), and metrics score with the journal's efficient integration of Social Media Platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. for citations. I shall do my best to publish top quality articles that have the potential to be highly cited, and further identify trending and influential topics during the years to come.

Fourth, I believe that the most important component of a journal's operation is the work of the Editorial Board Members and the Advisory Board, whose reviews and recommendations influence the editor's decision. I am very fortunate to have received warm acceptances from prestigious colleagues for membership of the Editorial Board and both National and International Advisory Boards. I believe that these stalwarts of Psychiatry, Mental Health, and other Medical and Surgical disciplines shall provide a strong support and assistance to the board members.

Fifth, I believe that JPPS will remain an organic publication, which will evolve and improve in the years to come. For this process, it will be critical to communicate regularly with the members and the leadership of PPS, members of the editorial board, and other stakeholders to obtain their views on how the journal can be improved. This dynamic discussion can lead to new ideas on the type of articles that shall be published in the journal and other improvements. Hence, I am looking forward to maintaining this open line of communication.

In addition to the above overarching goals, I have several specific initiatives. One initiative is to increase the relevance of JPPS to those clinicians whose primary duties involve patient care, advocacy, and education/training. In the future,

for each article, I will ask authors to include implications for practice, advocacy, education/training, and research. This section of the discussion will be published (with the abstract) on our journal website and Social Media sites, and made available to the general public. I will also ask authors to create a PowerPoint presentation of their articles and a 10-15 minutes video so that educators/trainers can use them in their educational settings. I hope that making this portion of the article available to the public, together with the PowerPoint slides and videos, will increase the utility of the scholarly work published in JPPS among practitioners, advocates, and educators as well as researchers. I also hope that this website will bring more attention to the articles in JPPS increase the frequency of article downloads, and citations. The authors will also be asked to include a short statement of the significance to their research to the public, by describing their findings and why those findings are important to the public, both in English and Urdu languages. I hope that this statement will make the article more interesting and relevant to readers and draw them towards understanding scientific research in Mental Health.

Another initiative I have is to increase the appeal of JPPS for our international readership. With the assistance of our International Advisors which includes PPS Distinguished Global Psychiatrist, Dr. Afzal Javed, President of WPA, Dr. Asim Shah,⁵ Mujeeb U. Shad (President PAPANA) to name a few. My hope is that this will draw more international clinicians to JPPS.

The third initiative is to have JPPS indexed in Scopus. Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature: scientific journals, books and conference proceedings.⁶ It serves as a major source of citations in the health field, including Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and if JPPS is indexed, it will be accessible to more people, globally. The application to Scopus will be submitted in the first half of year 2022.

Our fourth initiative is to promote research and publication culture by organizing frequent seminars and workshops for article formatting and submission process via the Open Journal System. These events shall take place in all provinces of Pakistan, and also international conferences for global collaboration shall be organized by JPPS.

I also want to mention a couple of improvements that shall be implemented to the journal's operation. One is to improve the Jpps.pk (Open Journal System) website for a more comprehensive, smoother and timely submission process. Another improvement that is related to efficiency is shorter turnaround time. I have asked our board members

to ensure that they submit their reviews within the allotted timeframe so that the decision letter can be crafted and sent quickly for initial submission. The fast turnaround is important because authors appreciate having a timely decision, even if their submission is rejected.

To close, I want to reiterate my zeal in assuming the Editor-in-Chief position of JPPS. At the same time, I recognize that with great power comes great responsibility that this position brings. I am determined to optimize JPPS' status globally, and nurture it to further heights of success. In this process, I will need your help. In addition to JPPS being the official scholarly voice of Mental Health professionals, it can also serve as a revenue generator leading to self-sustainability and destigmatisation, where the advertisements will also be purposeful, i.e. having some slogan related to promotion of mental health, preferably in our national Language. Thus, the progression of our disciplines and professions are directly linked to the prosperity of the journal. We hope that collectively, JPPS will be the first choice of local and global authors when considering high-quality publication outlets available, and it will indeed compel researchers to submit their best papers to us, and encourage others to do so as well.

Now, I invite you to enjoy the interesting articles that comprise my first issue as JPPS Editor-in-Chief.

Jazak Allah Khair!

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