

IS THIS A NEW JOURNAL?

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ABSTRACT

In this editorial, I give a background and history of Telangana Journal of Psychiatry, the challenges it faces, and provide suggestions to improve its standards.

Keywords: Division of society; new journal; Journal in transition; Challenges; Way ahead

On 02 June 2014, the erstwhile united state of Andhra Pradesh was divided into Andhra Pradesh state and Telangana state.^[1] Following the division of the ‘**erstwhile Indian Psychiatric Society-Andhra Pradesh (IPS-AP)**’, Indian Psychiatric Society-Telangana (IPS-TSB) state branch was formed; thus, IPS-TSB now happens to be the official state branch of the national body (Indian Psychiatric Society).^[2,3] The Andhra Pradesh Journal of Psychological Medicine (AP J Psychol Med) that was the asset (like any other asset) of the ‘**erstwhile IPS-AP**’ was given to IPS-Andhra Pradesh state branch.^[2,4] It was also decided that the IPS-TSB ‘would be starting a journal with a different name. However, it will share the heritage of The Andhra Pradesh Journal of Psychological Medicine (AP J Psychol Med), including its legacy, long publication history.... The same would be mentioned on the mast head of the journal and the society.’^[2,4,5,6]

Thus, came into existence, the Telangana Journal of Psychiatry (TJP), following the division of ‘erstwhile IPS-AP’ and is the official journal of IPS-TSB.^[6] Coming back to the title of my editorial, ‘is this a new journal?’ No way! This is not a new journal; ‘**TJP is a journal in transition**’ and shares the history and legacy of AP J Psychol Med.^[6] This should be communicated at various levels; the ISSN, the authors, reviewers, prospective editorial board members, publishers, the indexing authorities, etc.

The way forward:

Being a journal in transition, the TJP faces lot of challenges. A journal focuses on authors, reviewers and

editorial board members. It wants good and quality manuscripts from high profile authors; however, reputed authors look for highly placed journals which are indexed in prestigious databases.^[7] The most important factor in my opinion is the peer reviewers^[5] Reputed researchers and academicians hesitate to associate with a journal as reviewer or editorial board member if it is not highly placed; failing to remember that it is more challenging to raise a journal’s standards and to give proper direction. Thus, it is a tricky situation for all those associated with a new journal/journal in transition; this especially puts lot of pressure on the editor. We, at TJP are honoured to have reputed scholars who joined our journal as editorial board members; thus, raising its standards.

It may also happen to a new journal/journal in transition, that in view of paucity of manuscripts or because of their own career requirements, many submissions may be from the editor, or the editorial board. This raises potential conflicts of interest (COI) in the form of publication bias. Special mechanisms should be in place ‘**from the very beginning**’ to handle such a potential COI.^[8,9,10] I do not buy the argument that as our journal is in infancy we should ignore this important issue right now. From the very beginning, we should tackle this problem because this is an important criterion which indexing authorities look into. Explicit guidelines are there internationally. As the editor of AP J Psychol Med, I could handle this. I did not have any original article submission which is one of the criteria for faculty promotion as per Medical Council of India. For other types of articles, I was not the handling editor. In fact, one of my manuscripts was rejected. We should primarily focus on quality rather than quantity, because quality ultimately matters. We may publish thousands of articles, but they may not make sense, if they fail to deliver. We also need to tackle publication ethical issues such as, duplicate submission, plagiarism, etc. These violations should be taken seriously. The editorial board and the society should back the editor in dealing with such conflicting situations, especially in relation to ‘powerful, influential and intimidating’

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authors. We need to devise and adopt mechanisms to raise the standards of a regional journal to the national and international level.

We have the responsibility to establish editorial independence/ freedom,^[11] at TJP, which is one of the mandatory attributes of a good journal;^[12] poorly understood and not frequently talked about in the developing world.^[7]

Dai et al,^[13] proposed the following to improve the standard of journals, i) “optimize the process of peer review, ii) utilise open-access publishing models actively, iii) find ways of saving costs and getting revenue, iv) deal with research fraud or misconduct, v) maintain sound relationship with pharmaceutical companies, and vi) prove useful in clinical practice and research realm”.

CONCLUSION

Telangana Journal of Psychiatry is not a new journal, but, a journal that came into existence after the division of IPS-AP, and belongs to IPS-TSB. It shares the legacy and heritage of AP J Psychol Med. Hence, ‘**TJP is a journal in transition**’ and should be viewed in that perspective. All stakeholders including the editor, the editorial board members, the publisher and the society have a responsibility to raise its standards. We should remember that a journal is the asset of the society; but, serves beyond its society.^[14,1] I am sure; the TJP will rise to the occasion, will live up to the expectations and will be one of the most sought after journals in near future.

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