

Letter to Editor

Letter to editor manuscript: What's more?

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Received: 10 July 2023

Accepted: 26 February 2024

Published : 30 March 2024

DOI

10.25259/IJPP_376_2023

Quick Response Code:



Dear Editor,

Healthcare professionals should constantly update existing scientific knowledge in medical science and should actively deliver their concepts and ideas for publication in scientific journals.^[1] In the teaching institution set-up, even though health professionals may have a workload (busy managing patients, teaching students and hospital administration), persistence, perseverance and desire are key factors for being successful in publishing all categories of articles in scientific journals.^[1] The healthcare professionals in non-teaching institutions should sacrifice a few hours (initially 30–60 min and later two h in a day) to read scientific articles pertaining to their speciality and may deliver their vision as opinion pieces and constructive comments pertaining to literature as correspondence or letter to editor articles. Letters to the editor are scientific articles which may offer valuable comments on a recent publication or a subject matter of interest to the journal's readership.^[2] They should be brief, structured and purpose-specific in delivering a message worthy of publication and it may stimulate intellectual discussion.^[2]

Journal clubs are conducted in medical schools to improve evidence-based medicine skills and confidence in medical students.^[3] From a historical perspective, the first formal journal club for undergraduates at McMaster University was pioneered by Sir William Osler in 1877, which is still the golden standard for discussing the science of debate.^[4] A journal club may meet the following objectives in medical education: a) increased exposure to recent medical literature b) guidance for clinical practice c) foster research acumen in young researchers.^[5] Moreover, writing letters to the editors as a method to teach and support learning in the journal club sessions is promising, and it has a censorious role in integrating the high standards of academic publishing.^[6] Inquiry-based learning and collaborative learning approaches are employed to enhance the young researcher's interest in drafting constructive comments as a letter to the editor manuscript for the discussed journal article.^[6] The lecture and an assignment model were proposed to help students understand the importance of letters, and this will help to create a new generation of journal editors, reviewers and readers in academic publishing houses.^[7] The mode mentioned above of learning may instill critical appraisal skills in learners so that they become a careful reader and creative writers.^[8,9] They also augment younger researchers to learn peer reviewing and may be useful in the later stages of their lives as senior faculty in medical and dental schools as peer reviewers of reputed medical and dental journals around the globe. Medical students from the United Kingdom are publishing letters to the editor in medical education journals to procure PubMed ID for foundation programme applications.^[10]

In Asian academic settings, letter-to-editor manuscripts are not counted for promotion and career advancement, and this has to be rectified and it has to be given equal status to other manuscript types.^[11] In the Indian competency-based medical curriculum of undergraduate and postgraduate medical education, writing letters to the editors as a method to teach and support learning in the

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journal club sessions may be implemented, and it may also be utilized for student foundation programme applications.

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How to cite this article: Shamim T. Letter to editor manuscript: What's more? *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 2024;68:100-1. doi: 10.25259/IJPP_376_2023