Role of regional and national journals in international knowledge flow and transfer

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Factors not related to science influence the decision to accept or reject a manuscript.

- National origin, affiliation
- Use of English
- Balance in topics
- Citability
- Potential media attention
- Ethical issues
Why do journals published in developing countries fail?

**Economics:** Income is insufficient, and public funding is limited.

**Quality:** Good manuscripts and good peer review are hard to attract.

**Anglocentrism:** Databases and research demographics favor English.
“Skewed coverage of the magnitude and gravity of global health problems diminishes awareness and impedes mobilization of attention and resources in rich countries to respond to prevailing conditions.”

“Thus inadvertently publication imbalances adversely affect global health.”

“Medical journals cannot rectify global inequities. Nevertheless, they have an important role in educating their constituencies about the global divide.”

In NEJM between 1997 and 2004, less than 3.0% of original articles, review articles and editorials addressed health issues in the developing world.

Lost citations from developing countries

The impact factors for articles from Latin American countries averaged 66% of the journal’s overall impact factor.


Meneghini R, Packer AL, Nasi-Calò L. Articles by Latin American authors in prestigious journals have fewer citations. PLoS ONE 2008; 3(11): e3804
The developing world needs its own science journals

1. “Research published in international journals might not be relevant to the needs of individual countries.”

2. “By developing the research culture, local health journals can empower societies to be more engaged in the way healthcare is administered.”
The developing world needs its own science journals

3. “In non-Anglophone countries, journals in the locally used language can provide a useful channel to publicize local research that has appeared in international journals.”
The developing world needs its own science journals

4. Preference to publish in prestigious journals in English “will inevitably skew the direction of scientific inquiry.”

Shetty P. Comment: The developing world needs its own science journals. New Scientist 2008;2664:20
Regional journals are

1. essential in building significant and sustainable science capacity

2. indispensable components of truly globalized scholarship

3. Should operate on a not-for-profit (subsidized) economic model

Should regional journals imitate international journals?

Why are non-English journals vital for knowledge transfer at the national level?

1. Adopting English as the language of publication may alienate lay people from the products of science.

2. The local language may lose its ability to depict new concepts and phenomena.

Why are non-English journals vital?

3. “Healthcare professionals and journalists find it easier to access and understand an article if it is written in their native language.”

Both communicate with patients and the general public in their native language.

4. Even as multilingual scholars’ material conditions may hinder their English publishing, the global research community suffers from not receiving their research findings, insights, and methodologies. The result may...an “academic monoculture.”

“Under globalization, the multidirectional circulation of knowledge from academic research has greater potential for benefit than does a unidirectional flow outward from Anglophone countries.”

“Several initiatives now aim to strengthen the impact and quality of national journals with the goal of gaining greater international visibility for articles published in a language other than English.”

Link between Thompson Scientific database and SciELO and other evolving regional databases?

How can journals gain greater international visibility?

1. Full text translation
   - All articles
   - Selected article

2. Title, abstract and key words in English (and other languages)

3. Extended summary in English (and other languages)
How can journals gain greater international visibility?
How can journals gain greater international visibility?

4. Good regional indexing system with user interface in English in addition to regional languages and good technical support

5. Indexing in international systems

6. Equal status for all language versions
To get started with PubMed, enter one or more search terms.

Search terms may be topics, authors or journals.
SciELO website
http://www.scielo.bri
Index Medicus for the Eastern Mediterranean Region

In order to give access to health literature published in or related to the Eastern Mediterranean Region, the Eastern Mediterranean Region Library Network (EMLIBNET) produces an international index to Eastern Mediterranean health literature and information sources using headings according to the Medical Subject Headings MeSH list of the U.S. National Library of Medicine. This index is called Index Medicus for the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region (IMEMR).

Islamic World Science Citation Database (ISC)

The First Citation System in Islamic Countries
Islamic World Science Citation Database

Run by the Islamic Citation Center, Shiraz University

“a science citation index similar to that of Thomson Scientific, which will analyze research performance in Islamic countries with the aim of improving research output and impact”
Islamic World Science Citation Database

Ask your librarian or information scientist about bibliographic databases and journal indexes.
Editorial quality

Use an accurate title, a good abstract, and good key words so that computerized indexes and search engines can find articles easily.
Pay particular attention to the parts that readers look at first:

- Title, abstract, key words
- Tables, figures, conclusions, references
EMAME website
http://www.emro.who.int/EMAME/index.htm

Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors
WAME - www.wame.org
ICMJE - www.icmje.org
EASE - www.ease.org.uk
CSE - www.councilscienceeditors.org
MET - www.metmeetings.org
CONSORT - www.consort-statement.org
EMWA - www.emwa.org
Thank-you very much

AuthorAID in the Eastern Mediterranean
Copyeditor performance

Preferred version, major errors and readability (Number of papers)

Publisher’s version 16
Author’s version 2
Different, neither version 2
equivocally preferred
Equally good 4

For non-native English speakers publication is slower, and there is a higher risk of being misunderstood or ignored if the English or writing are not good.

Don’t give away copyright for all languages including the first language in your setting.

The global spread of English, scientific communication and ESP: questions of equity, access and domain loss

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Ibérica 2007; 13: 7-38