Analysis of publication trends in two internationally renowned ophthalmology journals

Editor,—International journals represent a forum for exchange of current information with contributions from all over the world. High standards are essential. In this report, we compared the publishing trends of two internationally renowned ophthalmology journals—the British Journal of Ophthalmology (BJO) and the American Journal of Ophthalmology (AJO).

Method and Results

Using the public Medline facility provided by the National Institutes of Health, the numbers of prospective studies and case reports published in the AJO and the BJO from January 1980 to December 1999 were determined. These were done using the following keyword searches: “prospective” and “case report.” The countries of origin of the articles were counted manually for the years 1990 and 1999, and were taken as the addresses of the corresponding author. Keyword searching was not possible owing to the non-uniformity of the way the addresses were registered.

The total number of publications remained fairly constant in the AJO over the two decades (Fig 1A). The percentage of prospective studies increased greatly from 1% to 12% (Fig 1B). Case reports, on the other hand, constituted 34–45% of the published articles (Fig 1C) with no obvious trend. In comparison, there was a steady increase in the total number of articles (Fig 1A) in the BJO. The trends in the percentages of prospective studies and of case reports were similar to that in the AJO (Fig 1B and C).

The native countries (that is, the countries in which the journals are published) were the major contributors of articles for their respective journals (Fig 2A). The United States made a considerably larger contribution to the BJO than the United Kingdom did to the AJO. The top few foreign countries contributing to the respective journals are shown in Figures 2C and D.

Comment

In an ideal world, all studies will be randomised and controlled. In reality, however, this is often not the case for various reasons. In our present study, we arbitrarily and simplistically chose the prospective design as an indicator of a good quality publication. In both the BJO and the AJO, there had been an increasing percentage of prospective studies published (from 3% to 6% and from 1% to 12% respectively) over the past two decades. This is an encouraging sign but the percentages remain small, especially in the BJO, when compared with other types of publications. This is not necessarily the fault of the journals but merely a reflection of the research work done during that period.

Contributions from abroad appeared to be on the increase in both journals when comparing 1990 with 1999 with the BJO.

IN CONCLUSION, OUR STUDY SUGGESTS THAT THE STANDARD OF PUBLICATIONS HAS IMPROVED IN THE AFJO AND THE BJJO, WITH AN INCREASING INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTION OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES.

Proprietary interests: None.

Financial support: None.

A ANG

Department of Ophthalmology, Ipswich Hospital, Heath Road, Ipswich IP4 3FD, UK

L TONG

A BHAN

Department of Ophthalmology, Queen’s Medical Centre, University Hospital, Nottingham NG7 2UL, UK

Correspondence to: Mr A Ang, Department of Ophthalmology, West Norwich Hospital, Broadthorpe Road, Norwich NR2 6TU

Accepted for publication 22 May 2001


BOOK REVIEW


This is a large reference multiauthored, well illustrated text on a multitude of systemic conditions that have ophthalmic manifestations. It certainly is an enjoyable book to "flick through," with some excellent photographs ranging from retinal disorders associated with infection and systemic disease to genetic disorders, including a multitude of pictures on dysmorphic syndrome. There are chapters on relatively rare conditions such as ocular pharyngeal muscular dystrophy, periodic paralysis and myopathies, and encephalopathies associated with vitamin disorders. The list goes on and indeed the book is a useful reference, with illustrations and bullet points on the manifestations seen in these diseases. But, without prior knowledge or other texts to read the book is not easy to use. However, with an impressive 159 chapters every library should have this book on the shelf. It would offer residents and students from all disciplines the opportunity to appreciate how many diseases have ocular manifestations. What a great subject we are involved with!

DICK

NOTICES

Onchocerciasis

The latest issue of Community Eye Health (No 38) discusses onchocerciasis and the impact of interventions, with an editorial by Bjorn Thylefors, former director of the Programme for the Prevention of Blindness and Deafness, WHO. For further information please contact Community Eye Health, International Centre for Eye Health, Institute of Ophthalmology, 11–43 Bath Street, London EC1V 9EL. (tel: (+44) (0) 20-7608 6909/6910/6923; fax: (+44) (0) 7250 3207; email: eyeresource@ucl.ac.uk) Annual subscription £25. Free to workers in developing countries.

International Centre for Eye Health

The International Centre for Eye Health has published a new edition of the Standard List of Medicines, Equipment, Instruments and Optical Supplies (2001) with an increasing inter-referral system on Therapeutics will be held on 6–7 March 2002 at Erlangen, Germany, where European professors will teach European residents. Further details: Priv Doz Dr Ulrich Schonherr, Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuemberg, Department of Ophthalmology, Schwabachenlage 6 (Kopflinkum), D-91054 Erlangen, Germany (tel: +49 9131-853-4379, fax: +49 9131-853-4332, email: ulrich-schonherr@augenmed.uni-erlangen.de).

EUPO 2002 Course Retina

A course on retina will be held on 15–17 March 2002 at Erlangen, Germany, where European professors will teach European residents. Further details: Priv Doz Dr Ulrich Schonherr, Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuemberg, Department of Ophthalmology, Schwabachenlage 6 (Kopflinkum), D-91054 Erlangen, Germany (tel: +49 9131-853-4379, fax: +49 9131-853-4332, email: ulrich-schonherr@augenmed.uni-
erlangen.de).

XXIth International Congress of Ophthalmology

The XXIth International Congress of Ophthalmology will be held on 21–23 April 2002 in Sydney, Australia. Further details: Congress Secretariat, C/- ICMAS Australia Pty Ltd, GPO Box 2609, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia (tel: +61 2 9241 1478; fax: +61 2 9251 3552; email: ophthalm@icmas.aust.com.au; website: www.ophthalmology.aust.com).

International Society for Behçet’s Disease

The 10th International Congress on Behçet’s Disease will be held in Berlin 27–29 June 2002. Further details: Professor Ch Zouboulis (email: zoubbere@zedat.fu-berlin.de).

Singapore National Eye Centre 5th International meeting


CORRECTIONS

In a paper published by Minassian et al in the July issue of the BJO (2001;85:822–9) two authors who made significant contributions to the project were omitted. They are Kaushal, research optometrist, Oxford Eye Hospital, and Nicholas Wingate, research optometrist, Moorfields Eye Hospital. We apologise for this omission.

A translation error occurred in the article by Demailly et al which appeared in the August issue of the BJ0 (2001;85:921–4). In the abstract (p 922, line 16) and the text (p 922, line 8) the dose for carteolol alginate was 0.05%. We apologise for this error.

www.bjophthalmol.com
Analysis of publication trends in two internationally renowned ophthalmology journals
A ANG, L TONG and A BHAN

Br J Ophthalmol 2001 85: 1497
doi: 10.1136/bjo.85.12.1497

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://bjo.bmj.com/content/85/12/1497

These include:

References
This article cites 1 articles, 0 of which you can access for free at:
http://bjo.bmj.com/content/85/12/1497#BIBL

Email alerting service
Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/