

## Highlights of 2010

In the field of Medical Journalism, it is difficult to define success and the tools to achieve it. On the other hand, what determines quality? In the last decade, after the indexing of SMJ in PubMed, we have focused on many factors to achieve better quality, starting with defining the journal as a 'general medical journal', and thus widening the scope. We applied a processing procedure that ensures high quality peer review, and screening for any ethical misconduct. We have achieved great success at this particular point, currently facing fewer problems with ethical misconduct than before.

We have also increased our participation in medical education by adding MCQ's and the Cochrane Library topic abstracts to the educational section of the journal. This has been well received with interest by our readers. In addition, we reduced the number of articles published monthly, aiming for high selection and better quality. Although we are not anxious about the impact factor, which is known conventionally to measure quality, we are satisfied by its steady increase over the last 3 years. This year it has risen to **0.51**, which tells us that we are heading in the right direction.

Articles published are subject to high selection. The number of total submitted articles for 2010 was **1,548** with a rejection rate of **80%**. This reflects the image of SMJ as the main basin for research publications in Saudi Arabia, and in the region. In addition to the above, is the change in the look and volume of the Journal, which has made it more attractive to read.

**Annual statistics.** This year, we received **1,548** articles of different categories: **1,128** Originals, **51** Reviews, **278** Case Reports, **29** Brief Communications, **8** Clinical Notes, **17** Clinical Quizzes, and **37** Correspondence (Figure 1). Out of these, we published **281 (18%)** articles. Our rejection rate is high because it includes articles rejected due to low scientific evidence (such as, Case Reports and Brief Communication) comprising a large bulk of the submissions, in addition to manuscripts either not fulfilling the criteria of the Journal, authors failure to resubmit revised manuscripts by a given deadline, and those missing necessary requirements for publication. As we are keen to maintain our publication time frame, we do not keep manuscripts on our files for an extended time.

Reducing the number of articles in order to improve quality through high selection has also resulted in lowering the number of pages (Figure 2).

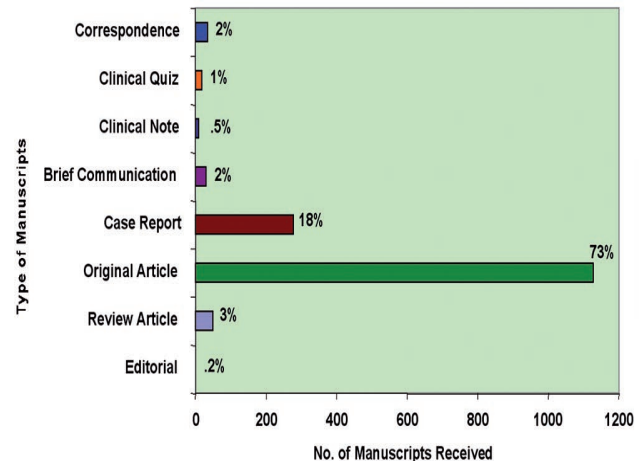


Figure 1 - Type of manuscripts received for the year 2010.

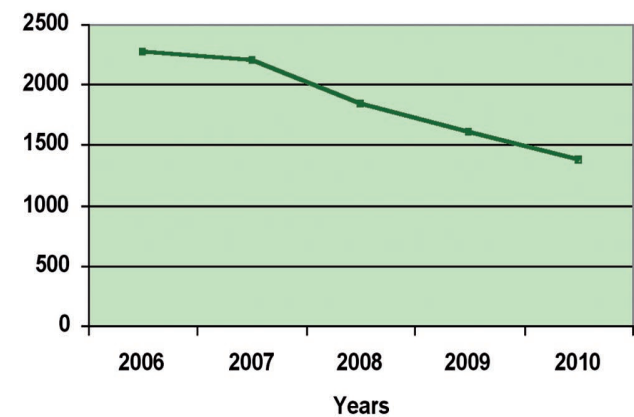


Figure 2 - Number of pages printed in 2006-2010.

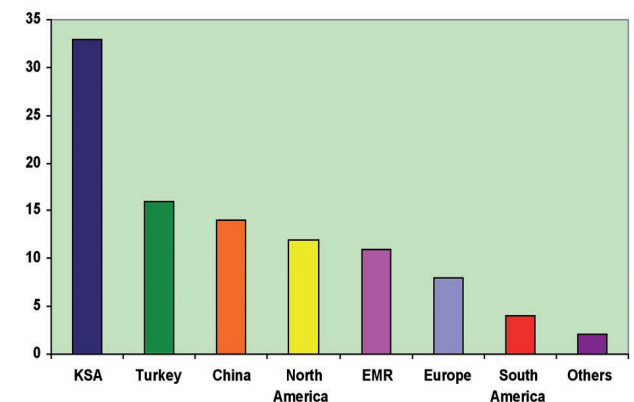


Figure 3 - Most active countries visiting SMJ website for the year 2010.

**Table 1** - Origin of articles published in Saudi Medical Journal for the year 2010.

Origin	n	(%)
<i>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</i>	114	(40.6)
<i>Gulf Countries</i>		
Bahrain	2	(0.7)
Kuwait	1	(0.35)
Oman	3	(1.1)
Qatar	4	(1.4)
United Arab Emirates	1	(0.35)
<i>Arab Countries/Eastern Mediterranean Region</i>		
Egypt	8	(2.8)
Iraq	30	(10.7)
Jordan	9	(3.2)
Sudan	1	(0.35)
Syria	2	(0.7)
Iran	15	(5.3)
Pakistan	5	(1.8)
Yemen	8	(2.8)
<i>Others</i>		
France	1	(0.35)
Turkey	20	(7.1)
Albania	1	(0.35)
United Kingdom	1	(0.35)
Slovakia	2	(0.7)
Italy	2	(0.7)
Nigeria	1	(0.35)
China	35	(12.5)
India	8	(2.8)
United States of America	1	(0.35)
Netherlands	1	(0.35)
Germany	1	(0.35)
Serbia	1	(0.35)
Thailand	1	(0.35)
Taiwan	1	(0.35)
Malaysia	1	(0.35)
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>(100.0)</b>

One of the main indicators of success that we are particularly proud of is the timeframe from receipt of a new manuscript to its publication. This is currently **4.1** months, and reflects the serious work and dedicated Editorial Staff of SMJ. We do however, face problems with some papers that require extensive revision, but we do not receive the revisions from the authors in a timely fashion, and hence this may result in prolonging the processing time.

**Country of origin.** SMJ has always been keen to give a chance to good papers from all over the world to be published, and it is our interest to have a diversity of countries of origin for the published articles (Table 1).

**Website hits.** The average monthly website hits rose to **490,475** hits per month from many different countries, wherein an increment of **30%** has been achieved (Figure 3).

**Editorial Board.** We would like to thank the members of the Editorial Board who have now completed their term: *Abdullatif Al-Arfaj, Abdulrahman Al-Ajlan, Ahmad Al-Malki, Dujanah Mousa, El-Harith A. El-Harith, Hani Najm, Hasaan Baaqeel, Haya Al-Fozan, Khalid Bzeizi, Nora Al-Dohayan, Rabaa Al-Momen, Salih Khalid Al-Rasbeed, Sulaiman Al-Emran, Sultan Meo, Turkia Lammouchi, and Wafaa Al-Sewairi.* We would also like to congratulate *Dr. Mohammed Al-Rukban* and *Dr. Fayek Al-Hilli* for having been promoted from Editorial Board Member to Advisory Board Member. We have invited new members to join us in the Editorial Board in addition to those who remain, and we hope that this will maintain the progress of the Journal. We would especially like to welcome and thank *Dr. Sultan Faya, Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Asmari, Dr. Ashraf Abdrabulnabi, Dr. Ali Al-Barrak, Dr. Mohammad Al-Onazi, Dr. Haider Al-Shurafa, and Dr. Ehab Aly Shehata* for accepting our invitation to join our Editorial Board.

Saud Al-Omani, MD  
*Editor-in-Chief*

Fahdah Alokaily, MD  
*Associate Editor*