

Golden Finish to Golden Journey of *Indian Pediatrics*: Editor, Dr Piyush Gupta (2008-2013)

POOJA DEWAN AND *DHEERAJ SHAH

*Member, Editorial Board and *Associate Editor, Indian Pediatrics.*

Correspondence to: poojadewan@hotmail.com

Greetings! As we bid adieu to the golden years and embark upon another journey towards the centenary of *Indian Pediatrics*, we wish to share the significant achievements made by the journal under its present captain Dr Piyush Gupta. In 2008, he took over as the eleventh editor-in-chief, which was auspicious for *Indian Pediatrics* as the journal grew leaps and bounds under him. Humble and reticent as he is, Dr Piyush Gupta forbade the editorial board members from including a write up on him in the golden jubilee year! However, we felt that this golden journey will be incomplete without a write-up on him, and this piece was planned and executed without his knowledge (till the final proof stage!).

CONTENT OF INDIAN PEDIATRICS

From the beginning of his tenure, the journal focused on scientific robustness with emphasis on evidence-based medicine. Dr Piyush started some new sections; “*From the Cochrane Collection*” included selected material from the Cochrane library with critical (and sometimes statistical) analysis related to implications for pediatric practice and health policy. Some pertinent issues in the management of childhood disease were published in this section like artesunate *versus* quinine for treating severe malaria [1], routine vitamin D/calcium supplementation for preventing nutritional rickets [2], oral antibiotics for severe pneumonia in children [3], azithromycin in enteric fever [4], and treatment duration of acute streptococcal pharyngitis [5]. Electronic linking of these commentaries along with the original source document on ‘Pubmed’ led to their high popularity among international researchers and policy makers. Another new section “*Eureka*” provided an evidence-based insight on child health policies like zinc supplementation for preventing and treating childhood pneumonia [6]. More sections like “*Focus*” and “*Perspective*” were introduced which provided critical appraisal of current child health issues of national and international interest. Short communications were rechristened as “*Research briefs*”. In addition, to enable publication of more manuscripts

with research component, a new section “*Research letter*” was started. Authors, whose research work was not voluminous enough to be published as Research paper or Research brief, now had the option of getting it published in this section.

The author instructions were made more detailed. The reporting of different study designs were elaborated in accordance with ‘Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals’ prepared by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). All research papers now carried a box describing “What is already known?” and “What this study adds”. This was much appreciated by readers as it provided a bird’s eye view of the paper. In each issue important research papers were published along with an accompanying editorial. Authors were encouraged to prospectively register their clinical trials involving human subjects in CTRI (Clinical Trials Registry of India). However, to enable naïve researchers from less developed countries to publish their research, *Indian Pediatrics* did not make this clause mandatory.

During his tenure in *Indian Pediatrics*, 73 issues, including one supplement on “child development” and three special issues, one each on “Immunization with special focus on measles”, “Severe acute malnutrition” and “Acute respiratory infections and tuberculosis” were published. The editor-in-chief’s penchant for novelty is apparent in his initiatives to publish unique research articles. A paper on factors hindering polio eradication in India by Dasgupta *et al.* [7] exposed the readers of *Indian Pediatrics* to research methodology of qualitative research or ethnomethodology. In the September 2010 issue, a simplistic explanation of survival analysis for clinicians was published [8]. Subsequently in April 2011, another paper on use of receiver operating curves in clinical research introduced the readers to another aspect of biomedical statistics [9]. A series of systematic review articles on child health priorities like community based newborn care [10], childhood pneumonia [11], diarrhea

[12], congenital rubella syndrome [13], and inequity in immunization [14] were published in 2011 and 2012 in collaboration with UNICEF and PHFI, which were all well received by the readers.

During this period, a constant attempt was made to analyze the editorial policies on publication and rejection of manuscripts. In 2006, he conducted an in-house analysis to identify the characteristics of the manuscripts which are submitted to the journal, factors associated with their ultimate acceptance or rejection and a thorough dissection of the peer review process [15]. In 2010, an audit of the fate of manuscripts rejected by *Indian Pediatrics* in 2002 was published [16]. As an administrator, Dr Piyush Gupta always tried to provide equal opportunities to all and he analyzed the female participation in the academic and administrative domains of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics [17]. It was shown that while female participation in the academic domain has improved significantly in IAP, there is a significant lag in the administrative domain.

THE LOOK DURING HIS TENURE

In 2009, the journal got a facelift; its appearance was now glossier with the use of finest quality paper for main pages, and the cover displayed the salient contents of the issue in a box. The new cover was a reflection of the personality of the current editor-in-chief with emphasis on clarity and crispness.

WEBSITE

The website of *Indian Pediatrics* (www.indianpediatrics.net) was consistently ranked as the site with the maximum number of hits in its category by Alexa. Despite the enormous workload, Dr Piyush Gupta ensured that every issue of the journal was uploaded within the first week of that month on the journal website so that readers could access the content of an issue ahead of its print version. All research papers and research briefs would be electronically published ahead of the print version on the Pubmed (Epub ahead of print) as well as on the journal website. He also emphasized on the digitization of all past issues of *Indian Pediatrics*; by October 2013 all volumes from January 1991 onwards were made available on the journal website. And in 2013, table of contents of all volumes starting from 1964 was uploaded on the *Indian Pediatrics* website.

PARTNERSHIP WITH SPRINGER

Dr Piyush Gupta started his second innings in Indian Pediatrics in the capacity of editor-in-chief with a bang! *Indian Pediatrics* joined hands with Springer, the international giant in the field of biomedical publishing.

A brand new international edition of *Indian Pediatrics* was launched in January 2010 for overseas distribution. In May 2010, online manuscript submission, tracking and peer review system was started in partnership with “Editorial Manager” at <http://www.editorialmanager.com/inpe/>. The peer review became faster and the average turnaround time for decision on manuscripts also became merely 10.2 days. The submission rate of manuscripts also nearly doubled; by 31st October 2013 the journal already has received about 1000 submissions compared to 750 in the whole of 2007. To curb plagiarism, *Indian Pediatrics* collaborated with Springer to acquire the plagiarism detection software “iThenticate.” *Indian Pediatrics* was now truly global and its popularity soared. Our most recent impact factor is 1.036, a 40% hike from its impact factor of 0.75 in 2008. All this was possible due to the untiring efforts and patience of Dr Piyush Gupta with the support and confidence of his editorial team and the office staff.

WORKSHOPS, BOOKS AND GUIDELINES

To encourage young faculty and to train them in scientific paper writing, under his dynamic leadership, the journal started conducting two-day hands-on workshops on the “Art and science of paper writing”. Till date, eleven such workshops have been conducted all over India. All these workshops were much appreciated by the participants. Another initiative which was met with overwhelming response from practitioners and post-graduate residents was the compilation of all recommendations and guidelines formulated by the IAP, its sub-specialty chapters, and various national scientific groups and committees in the form of a book entitled “Editor’s Choice: The Best of Indian Pediatrics for the Practitioners” which was published in 2009 with another volume in the pipeline.

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR (2013)

Another commendable achievement was the seamless production of twelve special issues in 2013 to celebrate the golden jubilee year of *Indian Pediatrics*. Each of these issues was published in excellent quality paper with a golden cover having a logogram of 50 years of *Indian Pediatrics* embossed in golden ink. The inaugural issue in the golden jubilee year had invited editorials from five of our past editors-in-chief in which they shared their experiences during their respective tenures. Each of these issues also carried a memoir on the past editors-in-chief of *Indian Pediatrics*. The January issue carried commentaries on fifty years of pediatric immunology, tuberculosis control in India, pediatric pulmonology, nephrotic syndrome, immunization and neonatology. A compilation of the ten most cited articles of *Indian*

Pediatrics was also published in the January issue of the golden jubilee year [18]. The February issue carried the address of Honorable Past President of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Azad to the pediatricians of our country [19].

EPILOGUE

The journal now holds a prestigious position in scientific world, and authors look forward to getting their work published in it. Many readers wait eagerly for the next issue, and send a complaint if the journal does not reach them in time. Reviewers and authors for *Indian Pediatrics* originate from more than 50 countries. Dr Piyush Gupta's tenure of six years was indeed a golden finish to this golden journey of *Indian Pediatrics*.

Journeys never end; there is still a long road ahead! We must keep going; sometimes holding others' hands, and at other times allowing someone to hold ours..... (Modified from quote by Vera Nazarian).

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