

## Fate of Award Winning Papers at Annual Conference of Indian Academy of Pediatrics: a 13 years' Experience

The present study was conducted to determine the rate of publication of research papers winning awards at the annual pediatric conference of Indian Academy of Pediatrics. Secondary objective was to identify the factors facilitating their publication, if any. Overall, 75 papers were awarded between 1995 and 2007; of these, 28 (37%) were subsequently published till January 2011. Papers originating from North India, medical colleges, and those with an experimental design had higher chances of subsequent publication.

**Key words:** Award papers, Biomed journals, PEDICON, Pediatrics, Publication.

Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) is a prestigious national body in pediatric subspecialty in India. The annual conference of IAP "PEDICON" is a popular and esteemed event. Scientific research from India and other countries is presented. A maximum of 6 papers are awarded each year. There are 4 prestigious award categories in oral paper presentations with 2 awards each in VB Raju (Child Health) and James Flett (Social Pediatrics) category and 1 each in SS Manchanda (neonatology) and ST Achar (Pediatrics) award category. The best papers with high quality of scientific research are selected for these prestigious awards by an eminent panel of judges after complex scoring system. Thus, winning this prestigious award implies high quality, research work. However, it is not known whether these papers are submitted for publication or if submitted finally clear the peer review procedure in an indexed journal to achieve wider dissemination and recognition. We studied the publication rates of award winning papers at PEDICON from 1995-2007. Secondary objective was to ascertain the factors that facilitated subsequent publication.

The abstract papers chosen for presentation in the award winning category were obtained from the proceeding book of the PEDICON (national conference) from 1995-2007. The year 2007 was chosen to allow sufficient time for the presented papers to reach publication. The published papers were retrieved by exhaustive computerized search by PubMed, Ind Med and Google server as of January 2011. Appropriate key words from the title combined with each author's name were used to identify the corresponding publication. If a hit was not obtained, the process was repeated with each author's name. Individual efforts were also made to contact all the awardees (whose papers could not be traced in the published domain) by email and postal mail.

Data were recorded including award category, sex of awardees, geographical area of origin (as per 5 IAP zones), organization of origin (medical college or other), design of the study (descriptive or experimental). Zonal or institutional predominance in any award category was

noted. The published papers were also analyzed for type of journal and time lag of publication.

A total of 75 papers received awards in past 13 years; and of these 28 (37%) papers were eventually published. Detailed distribution of published papers and its correlation with various factors is detailed in **Table 1**. The papers were published mostly in indexed Indian journals (*Indian*

**TABLE I** FACTORS FACILITATING PUBLICATION OF AWARD WINNING PAPERS AT PEDICON BETWEEN 1995-2007

	Papers Awarded (n=75)	Papers Published (n=28)	P Value
<i>Award Category</i>			
James Flett	27(36%)*	10(37 %)	0.74
VB Raju	26(34.7%)	8(30.8%)	
ST Achar	13(17.3%)	6(46.2%)	
SS Manchanda	9(12%)*	4(44.4%)	
<i>Zonal Distribution</i>			
North	35(46.7%)	20(57.1%)	0.004
South	5(6.7%)	–	
West	20(26.7%)	7(35%)	
Central	14(18.7%)	1(7.1%)	
East	1(1.3%)	–	
<i>Sex of the Presenter</i>			
Male	47(62.7%)	15(31.9%)	0.46
Female	28(37.3%)	13(46.4%)	
<i>Institute of Origin</i>			
Medical College	54(72%)	26(48.1 %)	0.003
Others	21(28%)	2(9.5%)	
<i>Study Design</i>			
Descriptive	62(82.7%)	20(32.2 %)	0.04
Experimental	13(17.3%)	8(61.5%)	

\*SS Manchanda was not awarded for 4 years and James Flett was awarded to 3 papers in the years 2006.

*Pediatr-19, Indian J Pediatr-5*) and 4 in international journals (*Breastfeeding J, Asian J Pediatr, Eur J Child Neurol and Hum Vaccin*). The time from presentation to publication for 28 papers ranged from 2 to 77 months (average  $23.4 \pm 11.79$  months); the majority (20/28) were published in the first two years of presentation. Higher number (46%, 16/35) of the papers presented before the year 2000 were published as compared to those papers presented after 2000 (30%, 12/40).

There is growing pressure in the academia for publication. Granting of awards and constructive criticism of the best papers presented at meetings may also increase the chances of publication. Previous publications on the rate of full paper peer reviewed publications originating from abstracts presented at professional medical meetings, describe rates ranging from 35 to 65% [1-3]. However, whether award winning presentations have higher chances of subsequent publication is unreported. The only study comparing the publication rate of award papers selected at Undergraduate Medical Congress of ABC Foundation School of Medicine, Brazil, documented a publication rate of 47.9% ( $n=71$ ) [4]. Lack of subsequent interest/guidance for preparing the written manuscript as per the journal style and format were also cited as reasons for not getting the publication. Thus, winning an award does not, on its own, appear to be a strong motivation/reason to ensure subsequent publication in a peer reviewed journal. The degree of motivation to publish the paper appears to be the maximum in a medical college setting.

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