

This issue marks the beginning of the third year of JIMA under my direction. I thank Allah who enabled me and the others, who have participated in the efforts, to make JIMA what it is now.

I believe that we have made a lot of progress. The journal has been published consistently and on time. JIMA has acquired a distinctive character and personality all of its own. The articles that have been published are all good to excellent. The style and format that we devised has been followed consistently throughout the journal.

The articles submitted undergo rigorous reviewing with a lot of editing before they appear in the journal to assure this consistency.

We have received several articles from overseas. Many have appeared in the journal. This stresses the international character of our journal and emphasizes the importance of JIMA as a link between Muslim scholars worldwide.

The breadth of the topics covered in the journal is quite noticeable and pleasing. The topics covered include, in addition to clinical medicine, history of medicine, Islamic teachings relevant to health sciences, and Islamic medical ethics. This is what makes our journal unique. You cannot find such a collection of articles in any other medical journal.

I have introduced the transliteration system that is an officially recognized system of specific spelling and punctuation of Arabic words when written in English. This is particularly important because it keeps the original names of the Muslim scholars and their respective publications/books intact and unadulterated. Unfortunately, because this has not been the practice by most orientalist and because Muslim writers over the ages have neglected this aspect, many of the original names have been lost and sometimes it is very difficult to know the exact original names when reading about them in contemporary literature. I believe it is our obligation to preserve this heritage. We have to use a consistent system of writing these names and other Arabic words so that everybody reads, pronounces, and understands them the same way. To accomplish this and keep it as accurate as I possibly can, I have often had to correspond with the authors more than once and to go to several sources in an attempt to decipher the correct Arabic name. This has been one of the hardest and most time-consuming duties in my job as the editor.

Another aspect that I believe is as, if not more, important is references to the Ahadith. The new editorial policy has been that if a Hadith is referred to in an article, the author should take the responsibility of referring the Hadith to the primary source, i.e., one of the authenticated Hadith books.

I believe that we owe it to ourselves to have full documentation of the Ahadith so that weak or undocumented Ahadith do not get the same relevance as the fully documented ones. More importantly, as in any other reference to a scientific article, we should give the interested reader a chance to go back to the original source rather than relying on the interpretation of the author of such a reference or Hadith in this case. I sincerely ask the prospective authors to observe this policy. I know it is sometimes difficult but at the same time I believe it is a necessary policy and should be a model for other journals in the Islamic world to follow.

We have made a lot of progress in the last two years; however, much more work is needed to get JIMA in its proper place as a major Islamic medical journal. This needs the commitment of all Muslim physicians, especially in the U.S.A., and especially those in academic positions. They should submit at least some of their original work to JIMA. On the other hand, there is plenty of room for "non-academic" physicians to submit articles to the journal: guest editorials, case reports, clinical quizzes, book reviews, letters to the editors, etc.

We need the cooperation of the respective authors in following the style and format as detailed in the Instructions to Authors and by timely responding to the suggested revisions.

We need the financial support of all concerned. Donate to JIMA Endowment Fund (see page 45).

We all have responsibility towards the strengthening of our organization, IMA, and our journal, JIMA.

We should all do our part.

Allah says.

"And say: Work (righteousness). Soon will Allah observe your work and His Apostle and the believers, . . ." (Chapter 9, Verse 105)

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