

# Internet Journal of Head and Neck Surgery: Review of articles published in the first three years – Original article

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## Abstract

**Aims and Objectives:** To get a perspective of The Internet Journal of Head and Neck Surgery by reviewing and analyzing all the published articles in this journal over the last three years. **Materials and Methods:** All the articles published in this journal were reviewed from various aspects. The origin of the first author of the articles, the specialty of the authors, the types of the articles and the nature of the diseases focused in the articles were analyzed. **Results:** The study showed that most of the published articles were submitted from Asian countries and most of them were from the specialty of Otolaryngology. It has also been noted that there is a decrease in the number of published articles over the last three years. **Conclusion:** The journal hasn't gained much popularity in Australasia and South America. There has been probably a misconception among the readers and the authors that this is a journal of otolaryngology. With the input from experts from other specialties from all over the world it has a huge potential to improve in future.

## INTRODUCTION

The internet Journal of Head and Neck Surgery has just completed its first three years of web publication. The first issue was published in the year 2007. This is an online, open access, peer reviewed journal. All the articles can be readily accessed free of cost any time from anywhere in the world. This makes it a potential huge resource of knowledge. Including this one, a total of six issues are on the web so far. I have reviewed all the articles published in this journal (including this issue) so far and analyzed the data from various aspects to get a perspective of this web journal

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

All the articles published in this journal (including this issue) so far have been analyzed. The data were collected from the articles mainly to identify the country of origin of the first authors, the nature of the article, the type of case covered in the article, the part of head and neck involved in the topic and the specialty from which the article was submitted.

## RESULTS

A total of 83 articles were published so far. But there has been a decrease in the number of published articles over the last three years. The table below (Table 1) shows that the number of articles published this year (19) is nearly half of that (36) in the year 2007.

## Figure 1

Table 1: number of articles published over the last three years

Total Number of Articles	2007	2008	2009
83	36 (43.3)	28(33.7)	19 (22.8)

Analyzing the country of origin of the first author it was found that maximum number of articles came from Asia (57.8%) and Europe (34.9%). Most of them were from India (37.3%), UK, Malaysia and Turkey. Only 6 articles were published from Nigeria (4) and US (2). There was no publication from Australasia and South America. (Table 2) Indian authors have contributed the majority (64.58%) of the articles from Asia whereas, the authors from UK (15.6) and Turkey (14.4) contributed almost equally from Europe.

**Figure 2**

Table 2: Continent and country of the first author

Continent	Total(%)	Country	2007	2008	2009	Total(%)
Asia	48(57.8)	India	10	11	10	31(37.3)
		Malaysia	5	3	2	10(12.0)
		Nepal	1		2	3(3.6)
		Japan	1			1(1.2)
		Singapore	1			1(1.2)
		Kuwait			1	1(1.2)
		Iran		1		1(1.2)
Europe	29(34.9)	UK	6	5	2	13(15.6)
		Turkey	8	3	1	12(14.4)
		Italy	1	1		2(2.4)
		Spain		1		1(1.2)
		Greece		1		1(1.2)
Africa	4(4.8)	Nigeria	1	2	1	4(4.8)
North America	2(2.4)	USA	2			2(2.4)
Total	83		36	28	19	

Maximum number of articles (80.7%) published was from ENT surgeons. Only sporadically a few articles came from other specialties. (Table 3)

**Figure 3**

Table 3: Articles from various specialties

Specialties	2007	2008	2009	Total(%)
Otolaryngology	31	23	13	67(80.7)
Radiotherapy	1	2	1	4(4.8)
Surgery	1	1	1	3(3.6)
Pathology	1		2	3(3.6)
Anaesthesia	1	1		2(2.4)
Maxillofacial		1	1	2(2.4)
Not mentioned	1		1	2(2.4)
Total	36	28	19	83

One third of the articles published (66.2%) were case reports. Including this issue the journal has so far published 22 original articles, 55 case reports, 3 review articles, and 2 letters to the editor. (Table 4)

**Figure 4**

Table 4: Various types of articles published

Type of article	2007	2008	2009	Total(%)
Original articles	13	5	4	22(26.5)
Review article	2		1	3(3.6)
Case report	20	22	13	55(66.2)
Letter to the editor	1	1		2(2.4)
Editorial			1	1(1.2)
Total	36	28	19	83

The authors covered almost all the areas of neck. The following table (Table 5) shows the distribution of the anatomical areas focused in the articles. A good number of articles covered the most important areas of head and neck from the surgical point of view.

**Figure 5**

Table 5: Showing the anatomical areas focused in the topic

Organs involved	2007	2008	2009	
Skull base	1			1
Face			1	1
Neck	2	3	3	8
Distant organ disease with head and neck involvement	3	1		4
Ear/mastoid		2	1	3
Nose/ Paranasal sinus /Nasopharynx	9	6	4	19
Thyroid		1	3	4
Salivary glands Parotid / Submandibular	6	5		11
Oral cavity/Oropharynx/Tongue	6	5	2	13
Larynx/Vocal cord/Trachea	9	2	1	12
Oesophagus		3		3
Undefined		1	2	3
	36	28	18	82

A total of 38(45.7%) articles were on neoplastic diseases of which 20(24.0) were on benign and 18(21.6%) were on malignant diseases. 38(45.7%) of the cases can be considered as rare presentations of some rare or relatively uncommon diseases. 2 cases were claimed as extremely rare entities by the authors. 5 articles mentioned rare complications. Treatment modality was the theme of 5 articles, and in 4 articles the focus was on the treatment outcome. Investigational technique was mainly described in 5 articles

## DISCUSSION

The introduction of the internet journals has changed the outlook of medical publication over the last two decades. They have generated a huge enthusiasm towards publication among the medical practitioners from all over the world. The formal paper journals are still the leaders in the field. Whereas, the web journals are about to come out of their infancy. They are still in their formative early days in relation to their paper counterparts. But they have a huge potential.

The internet journal of Head and Neck Surgery is an open access where the full article can be accessed anytime from anywhere in the world free of cost. It can be a ready and rich source of knowledge for the academics for research work and teaching.

In this study, I have reviewed all the articles published so far in this journal to get a perspective of this journal.

The result showing the decrease in the number of published articles may be a reflection of overall less number of submissions, less number of publishable article submission, decreasing popularity among the readers or simultaneous publication of an Internet Journal of Otolaryngology.

The most probable reason for the less number of publication (and most probably submission as well) is fewer readerships among the experts in other countries. The English language is a barrier in many non English speaking countries.

There is probably a misconception in the minds of the readers that this is a journal for the otolaryngologists. But interestingly, 2 articles were from anaesthesiologists.

The journal lacks feedback from the authors in the form of letters to the editor.

A wide range of anatomical areas have been covered in the articles. But with the involvement and submission from the other specialties more and more clinical entities will be

covered.

## **CONCLUSION**

As an open access journal The Internet Journal of Head and Neck Surgery has a huge potential. It is a platform for experts from a wide range of specialties. It can be a huge resource of scientific knowledge and medical database for the academics, trainees and students for research and teaching. With more input from authors from various parts of the world dealing with head and neck diseases it has a very bright future.

## **References**

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