

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Redefining the Future of the BCPS Journal: Embracing Digitalization for Global Academic Excellence

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To

The Editor

*Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons
(BCPS) Journal*

Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dear Editor,

Introduction:

The *Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) Journal* remains a cornerstone of medical scholarship in Bangladesh, providing an authoritative platform for clinicians, academicians, and researchers to disseminate original findings, case experiences, and evidence-based perspectives. Its contribution to postgraduate medical education and professional growth within the country is undeniable. Yet, in a rapidly changing era dominated by digital communication, open access publishing, and data-driven metrics, the journal must evolve to remain relevant, competitive, and visible on the international stage. The purpose of this letter is to advocate for a comprehensive digital transformation and indexing strategy for the *BCPS Journal*. Establishing a robust online presence, supported by a dynamic website and formal indexing in major scholarly databases, would not only modernize the journal's infrastructure but also secure its role as a global academic leader. This transformation is essential to ensure that the voices of Bangladeshi physicians and surgeons are heard, cited, and recognized worldwide (1).

Main Body

1. The Rationale for Digitalization

Across the world, medical journals have transitioned from print-dominated dissemination to hybrid or fully digital publishing models. This evolution has democratized access to knowledge, shortened publication cycles, and created vibrant international research networks (2). In contrast, many regional and institutional journals in South Asia continue to rely primarily on print distribution, which limits accessibility, readership, and citation potential. A dedicated journal website serves as the digital identity of an academic publication. For the *BCPS Journal*, such a platform would provide continuous visibility, enabling researchers across time zones to access its content at any hour. The inclusion of digital archives, search functionality, and open-access features would exponentially increase readership and citation frequency. Studies indicate that journals with open-access digital platforms experience a 30–40% increase in citation rates compared with those limited to print circulation (3). Moreover, the BCPS represents one of the highest academic bodies of clinical expertise in Bangladesh. A modern digital interface, carrying the official logo and ISSN, would serve as a symbol of professional prestige and transparency. It would signal to both local and international audiences that the institution values not only academic excellence but also technological innovation and global engagement.

2. Enhancing Editorial Workflow through Online Management Systems

The process of article submission, peer review, and publication can be substantially streamlined through an Online. Platforms such as Editorial Manager, Open Journal Systems (OJS) allow authors, reviewers, and editors to interact efficiently while maintaining confidentiality and accountability (4). An online platform could automatically generate notifications, track

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reviewer performance, and maintain a transparent audit trail of editorial decisions. This reduces administrative workload and turnaround time—critical metrics in maintaining author satisfaction and reviewer engagement. Research has shown that electronic peer-review systems can shorten decision times by nearly 40% while preserving quality and reducing bias (5). Furthermore, automation enhances ethical oversight. Anti-plagiarism tools, conflict-of-interest declarations, and automated reference validation can be integrated directly into the submission process. These elements align with international editorial guidelines set forth by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) (6). For a national academic body such as BCPS, adopting such a system would underscore its commitment to transparent and ethical scholarly publishing. It would also provide valuable editorial data—such as submission trends, author demographics, and citation analytics—to guide long-term policy planning.

3. The Imperative of Indexing for Global Recognition

While digital presence enhances accessibility, indexing transforms visibility into legitimacy. Inclusion in global databases such as Scopus, PubMed Central, represents an external validation of editorial quality, consistency, and scholarly contribution (7). Indexing not only benefits the journal but also elevates the reputation of its contributors. Indexed publications are recognized by academic promotion committees, research grant authorities, and postgraduate training boards worldwide. For clinicians and residents in Bangladesh, publication in an indexed *BCPS Journal* would therefore carry international academic value—encouraging greater participation and scientific rigor. Moreover, indexing stimulates a virtuous cycle of improvement. The requirements imposed by indexing bodies—regular publication schedules, structured abstracts, ethical declarations, and digital identifiers—inevitably raise editorial standards (8). Once indexed, the journal's articles become searchable through platforms such as PubMed or Scopus, dramatically expanding readership and citation potential.

4. Bridging Local Expertise with Global Scholarship

Bangladesh possesses immense clinical expertise and research potential, particularly within tertiary hospitals

and academic medical centers. Yet much of this work remains under-represented in international literature due to limited journal indexing and digital discoverability (9). A globally visible *BCPS Journal* would bridge this gap by showcasing original Bangladeshi contributions in internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics, and other disciplines to an international audience. The journal could further amplify engagement by incorporating digital features such as video abstracts, infographics, and graphical summaries, which have been shown to increase readership and citation rates significantly (10). The website could host a “Focus & Scope” section, author guidelines, ethical statements, reviewer acknowledgements, and links to ORCID integration—all essential components of contemporary scholarly communication.

5. Open Access and Knowledge Equity

One of the most compelling arguments for digitalization is the promotion of open access (OA)—the principle that scientific knowledge should be freely available without financial or geographical barriers. The OA movement has gained widespread acceptance across disciplines, particularly in health sciences where evidence dissemination can influence patient care and public health outcomes (12). Transitioning the *BCPS Journal* to a hybrid or gold open-access model could foster knowledge equity among clinicians, researchers, and students throughout Bangladesh, including those in peripheral institutions with limited library access. According to the World Health Organization, open-access publication improves evidence-based decision-making in low- and middle-income countries by enhancing access to up-to-date medical information (13).

Such a move would also attract international collaboration, as researchers increasingly prefer to publish in journals that guarantee visibility and accessibility. Implementing Creative Commons licensing would ensure authors retain intellectual property rights while granting readers free access to full-text articles.

6. Building a Digital Legacy and Archival Integrity

A digital archive represents the collective memory of a scientific community. Each issue of the *BCPS Journal* embodies decades of clinical observation, innovation, and learning. Converting past volumes into searchable, indexed PDFs—complete with metadata and citation identifiers—would create a permanent scholarly record

accessible to future generations (14). Digital preservation through repositories such as LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) or Portico ensures that content remains secure even in the face of server failures or institutional changes (15). This archival continuity is essential not only for academic referencing but also for recognizing the intellectual contributions of earlier BCPS Fellows and faculty.

7. Educational and Institutional Impact

The proposed transformation aligns closely with the educational mission of the BCPS. By adopting modern publishing infrastructure, the journal can serve as an educational model for residents and postgraduate trainees, illustrating best practices in research methodology, ethics, and communication. Workshops on “Writing for Publication,” “Peer Review Ethics,” and “Scientific Editing” could be conducted under the journal’s banner, thereby nurturing the next generation of medical authors and reviewers. Several international journals—including those affiliated with Royal Colleges—have successfully implemented such training initiatives, leading to improved submission quality and research culture (16). The *BCPS Journal* could also collaborate with national universities and medical colleges to sponsor annual awards for the best original paper, best case report, and best resident submission—further motivating scholarly excellence.

Conclusion

The time has come to reimagine the *BCPS Journal* not merely as a publication but as an institutional instrument of academic leadership. Establishing a comprehensive digital platform—supported by efficient editorial systems, open-access principles, and international indexing—would redefine the College’s visibility in the global medical community. Digitalization will ensure that the collective wisdom of Bangladesh’s physicians and surgeons becomes part of global scientific dialogue. Indexing will validate the journal’s standards, attract international contributions, and stimulate continuous improvement in editorial practice. Together, these initiatives will transform the *BCPS Journal* into a living archive of innovation, compassion, and scientific integrity. Such evolution is not simply technical—it is transformative. It will connect tradition with modernity, national pride with international recognition, and

individual research with collective progress. I am confident that under the forward-looking leadership of the Editorial Board, this vision can be realized. Many Fellows, including myself, would be honoured to contribute expertise toward building this digital and indexed future for our College’s flagship journal.

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