

Celebrating the 40th Volume of Pakistan Journal of Ophthalmology with a Glimpse from the Past

Lateef Chaudhary¹, Tayyaba Gul Malik²

¹Lahore Medicare Eye Center, ²Ameer ud din Medical College/Post Graduate Medical Institute

Year 2024 marks the 40th volume of Pakistan Journal of Ophthalmology and I take this opportunity to congratulate the Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan for this milestone. On this occasion let us turn back the time wheel and get a glimpse at the dawn of this journey as it is said, “*Learn from History – Follow the Science – Listen to the Experts*”.

The journey dates back to 14th August 1947, at the time of independence when there were few ophthalmologists left in Pakistan, who could be counted on fingers. Although there was a society in the newly liberated India but none in this part of the partition called Pakistan.^{1,2} At that time, all the ophthalmologists of East and West Pakistan came together under one umbrella of a society by the name of Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan. A meeting was held on Thursday the 19th December, 1957 at 2 PM in Lecture Theatre No. 2, Patiala Block King Edward Medical College, Lahore, for the formation of “Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan”.¹ The society was founded with the mission to improve the professional skills of its members, to encourage its members to conduct meaningful research and to provide quality eye care to the public. At that time Prof Raja Mumtaz used to keep a record of all the events, transactions and communications (local and international) diligently, honestly and unbiased.

At OSP center meeting in Dhaka on 16th November 1968, a decision was taken to start Pakistan

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Correspondence: Prof. Lateef Chaudhary
(Ex-Editor-in-Chief PJO)
Lahore Medicare Eye Center
Email: doclateef@hotmail.com

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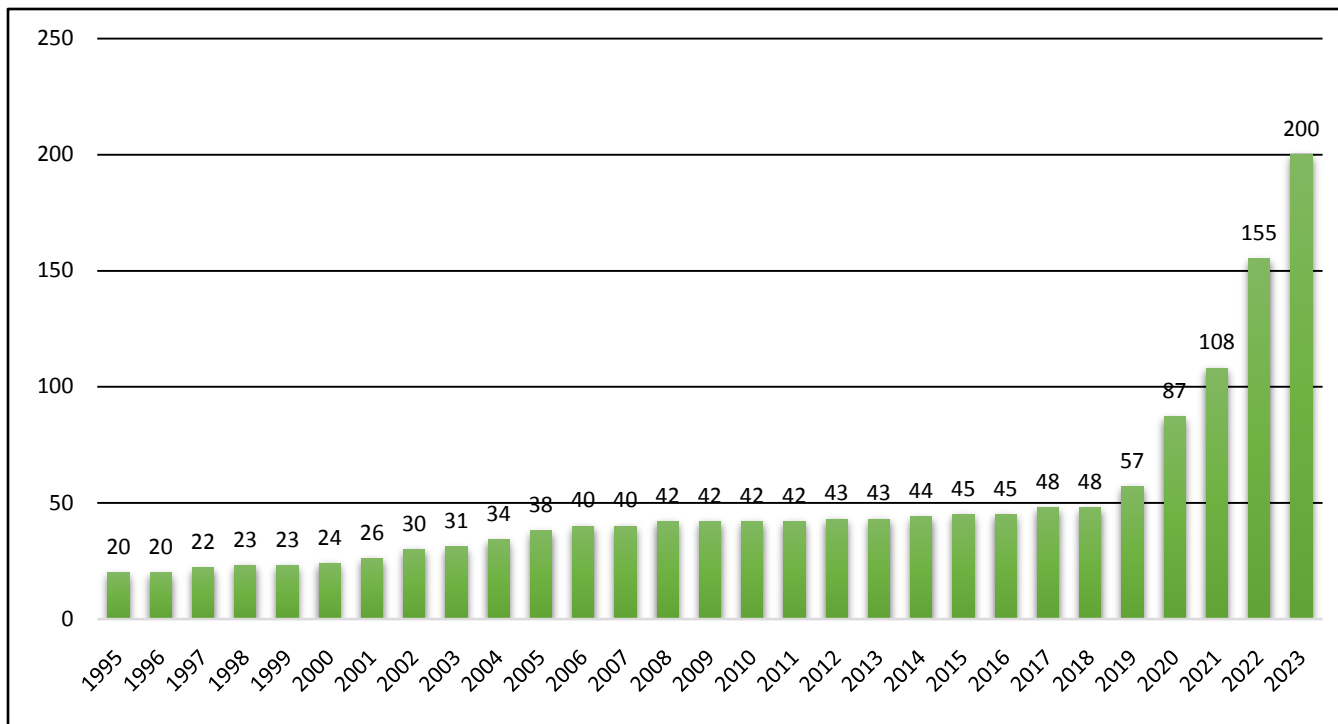


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Journal of Ophthalmology (PJO) which could not be materialized because of the separation of Pakistan in 1971. In 1984 PJO was started with Prof Raja Mumtaz as editor in chief, Dr. Dil Muhammad Mirza and Dr. Iftikhar Qureshi as editors and Dr. Khalid J Awan was made overseas editor. In 1985 Dr. Khalid J Awan became editor in chief, Prof Raja Mumtaz as honorary pioneer editor and Dr. Humayun from Canada as international editor. For some years the journal was published from the United State of America. Ophthalmologists in Pakistan wanted to publish PJO from Pakistan and in 1990, PJO returned to Pakistan with Prof Raja Mumtaz as editor in chief and Dr. Dil Muhammad Mirza, Dr. Iftikhar Qureshi and Prof. Tehseen Sahi as editors. Overseas editors were Dr. Khalid J Awan and Dr. Humayun from Canada. However, PJO continued to be published from USA and Pakistan simultaneously. The 11th issue of PJO was the last issue of to be published from America in 1994. Thereafter, it was solely published from Pakistan.

In 1994, the OSP central council nominated Prof M Lateef Chaudhry as editor in chief and Dr. Dil Muhammad Mirza as senior associate editor and Dr. Tahir Mehmood as assistant editor. It was also decided that President of OSP center would be the chief executive of PJO and president elect OSP center would be the Chief executive elect. Prof. Lateef became President OSP center from 1999-2001 and could not hold two offices. Therefore, during this time Prof Jahangir Durrani became editor in chief of PJO and improved the working of the journal in all spheres. Prof. Jahangir Durrani left for USA in 2001 and Prof. Lateef once again resumed editor in chief slot.

The journal has always been a precious jewel of any society and all the members want it to progress. Prof Lateef remained editor in chief for 15 years and did not leave any stone un-turned for upgradation of the journal. Later on, the Central council devised a transparent process of selecting the next editor in



Graph 1: Number of submissions from 1995 to 2023.

chief. This procedure was established and by the consensus of the Central Council of the Ophthalmological society of Pakistan, Prof. Syed Ali Haider was selected as Editor in Chief for a fixed term of 4 years.³

During the tenure of Prof Syed Ali Haider, the journal grew further with much improvement in the quality and editing of its content till his untimely death in 2013. Prof. Mohammad Moin took over as the new Editor in Chief. He was selected by the central council as editor in chief from March, 2015 to July 2019 and then from July 2019 to July 2023. In 2023, OSP center after much deliberations came up with SOPs for the future Editor in chief of PJO and on 17th July 2023, Prof. Tayyaba Gul was selected as Editor in Chief for the next four years and is currently holding this coveted post.

At this auspicious occasion of celebrating the 40th volume, it is true to say that current status of PJO is bound in gratitude to all the editors in chief, editors, members of OSP, authors and reviewers. It is the blood and sweat of society members that PJO is

recognized by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Pakistan Medical and Dental Council and College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan, nationally and included in Directory of Open Access Journals and Scopus internationally. Recognition by COPE and Web of Science is in process.⁴ Graph 1 shows the number of submissions from 1995 to 2023. The seed which was planted four decades back is now bearing its fruit. It is a Journey of thousand miles and a long way to go.

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