INDIAN DRUGS: TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE

Dear Reader,

I have followed the progress of Indian Drugs for more than three decades, and have the privilege of being on its editorial board for the last many years. Currently, the journal is in its 55th year, since its inception in 1963. There are many stalwarts, many of them still living, who have nurtured this journal in different roles, through its journey of more than five decades. They did their best, and that is the reason the journal has survived all through these years, without even being handled by a commercial publisher. The Editors, Advisory, and Editorial Board members of the journal and staff of IDMA deserve congratulations for their all-out efforts and making sure that the journal is timely published month after month, year after year. The journal has even been modernizing over the period, and now for several years (since 2012) it is available on-line, apart from being circulated in the print form. It is also abstracted widely presently.

Yet, in my personal opinion, the transformation of journal must keep pace with competition, in particular, considering the introduction of large number of newer National and International journals, both on-line and print. Despite the rapid and magnificent growth of pharmaceutical industry under umbrella of IDMA, the rise of stature of the journal has not been in parallel with the achievements of the member industries of IDMA. The journal has not been graded with high journal metrics due to its relatively recent online presence (H-index 30, Scimago). While the purpose of initiating such a journal in the 1960s was to provide Indian Scientists a medium to publish their research; the journal has remained local even till date with minimal contributions from International researchers or scientists. Most manuscripts remain restricted to analytical method or formulation development, or exploration of herbal materials for their constituents or activity, with minimal to moderate novelty. Truthfully, I also owe somewhat to this slow growth state, being a member of the Editorial board.

Factually, the present times are much different from the past, and the future is projected to be much more different than the present. We are in the era of knowledge explosion and fast pace of technological advancements. I am of the confirmed belief that old and established journals shall also pick up speed to modernize themselves, so that they continue to be relevant even in future. This has to be done by overcoming emotions, which usually get tagged with any decades-old effort of such kind.

I have the following multiple suggestions for serious consideration by the present editorial team:

- i) The name of the journal 'Indian Drugs' suggests it be a National journal, publishing only local research. To make it more globally accepted, consider if the name can be changed to 'Indian Drugs International'.*
- ii) The editorial board should be expanded to include more leading International experts.*
- iii) Like other leading journals, the cover page may be made more dynamic by including a coloured figure from one of the best papers published in that particular issue.*

- iv) *Start a review/commentary series, published may be bimonthly or quarterly, from leading Indian and International (including those of Indian origin) experts/scientists on current and futuristic topics. For this, a list of scholars shall be prepared on the suggestions of editorial board members, and personal invitations should be sent by The Editor from time to time.*
- v) *More and more Industry experts shall be provoked to submit manuscripts on industry-related topics. Experts in Indian industry these days are at par with the world, and many of them have worked in best innovative world companies. They shall be provoked to submit articles on contemporary and burning topics. Some current topics of great interest to the Indian and International generic drug industry include challenges of complex generics; bio-similars; genotoxic impurities; elemental impurities; novel formulations for paediatrics and animal health; implementation of non-destructive technologies in QbD-PAT environment; data integrity; quality metrics; risk and lifecycle management, etc.*
- vi) *In due course, if the journal can attract articles on topics related to futuristic revolution happening around drug discovery, development and manufacturing, the same will take the journal to very new heights. Key aspects of this emerging revolution include use of automation and robotics; six-sigma and lean manufacturing; continuous manufacturing; artificial intelligence and machine learning; trend towards personalized and precision medicines; the emergence of 3-D printing technologies and their use in patient bedside and commercial drug product manufacturing; dependence upon modelling and simulation in drug discovery and development; big data analytics; meta data analysis, etc.*

Some senior citizens like me, may be bit slow to agree towards overnight changes in the journal style and the format. But if a joint effort and opinion is developed within the team and peers, and a new wave of effort can make this IDMA journal more sought after, it is duly worth trying.

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About The Guest Editor

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