Indian Science: Hesitation or Ignorance?

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Indian Journal of Microbiology has seen 46 years of Indian science particularly in the field of Microbiology. It is something worth celebrating. We must congratulate the entire group of Editor in Chiefs and their associates, who have made efforts to sustain it for such a long period. We must acknowledge the largest group of “workers” (referees) who remain anonymous to ensure the quality of the Journal and we must not over look the authors who believed in IJM and its potential. Now (in 2007) that we (the Members of Association of Microbiologists of India) have taken a big leap by associating us with Springer, our responsibility goes up (especially on the shoulders of Editor-in-Chief).

We all (especially the authors, reviewers and Editors) have to ensure that we put in higher quality work to meet international standards.

An analysis of the articles published in the Indian Journal of Microbiology, 47 (1-2): 1 - 184, 2007 has very interesting information for us to think up on. Incidentally, some of us still stick to 1940s or so. About 13% of the papers quoted were published around 27 to 67 years back (Table 1). On the other hand, in this era of internet, our contributors could not lay their hands on more than 17% of the papers published during the last 5 years.

Table 1 Distribution pattern of papers quoted in Indian Journal of Microbiology.

Year of publication of the quoted paper	1940–1949	1950–1959	1960–1969	1970–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2002	2003	2004–2007
No. of Ref. quoted	5	15	27	44	126	262	94	26	89
Sub-total of Ref. quoted		91 /688			388/688		94/688	105/688	
% of Total Ref. quoted		13.2			56.4		13.7	16.7	

Data pertains to articles published in IJM: 47(1-2), 2007

Table 2 Distribution pattern of papers (published in IJM) as quoted in Indian Journal of Microbiology.

IJM Vol.	Quotation of Papers published by Indian Scientists		Quotation of own/ self publication		Status of Quotation of Indian Journal of Microbiology			
	No. of References	%	No. of Ref.	%	Self	Others	Total	%
47(1)	64/353	18	38/64	60	3	1	4/353	1.0
47(2)	68/335	20	27/68	40	3	5	8/335	2.4
Total	132/688	19	65/132	50	6/688	6/688	12	1.7

Data pertains to articles published in IJM: 47(1-2), 2007

Another observation which strikes very squarely on us is the status of papers published in Indian Journal of Microbiology (Table 2). Although papers published by Indian scientists found place in 27 out of 33 articles, however, these constituted only 19% of the total papers quoted (688). Of the papers of Indian origin, 50% of these were from one of the contributing group of authors. The worst hit is the IJM, which was quoted only at the rate of 1.7% (12/688). The issue which I am hesitant to put in figures is the fact that some of the authors have overlooked contributions of Indian scientist in their respective areas. Incidentally these

overlooked scientists have a good international reputation as evident by their publications in International journals of moderate to high Impact Factors.

We need to shift the trend of quoted papers towards the last 5 years with respect to the year of publication and acknowledge our Indian brother hood. Finally are Indian Scientists allergic to Indian Science and Scientist(s)?

**Yours sincerely,
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Scientist**