

## Journal club: a step forward in promoting the research culture

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Pakistan Journal of Nuclear Medicine  
Volume 10(1):2-3

Pakistan Society of Nuclear  
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This essay is in continuation with one published in the last issue [1], which started with a dot (.) in the title, and the last paragraph concluded with four unseen dots (linkages, modification, expansion, and discussion) signifying the dire need of initiation of research right at your place.

A small dot (.) can stop all the expression of a sentence and few more dots (...) can give continuity. Amazing and True!

Research is a characteristic that makes a scientist different from a common man. It helps a researcher to establish one's legacy. It introduces a researcher to the world by broadcasting his efforts and stamps his legacy when research gets published. The question remains, how to paddle this rocking boat. Many experts are of the opinion to develop it up as a field separate from routine clinical work. Still others believe that it may be carried out simultaneously, along with routine clinical workload. What so ever may be the case, seniors need to promote the concept among younger colleagues, to play a role model for the young researchers, and to promote awareness through workshops and articles in journal, etc. One simple, but very important and big, step may be a "Journal club." Journal club might be a good jumping board for the one to start "his first flight" in a wider universe of research and to promote the culture of research.

Journal club is an excellent activity to promote a number of skills among the participants and young potential researchers. It would induce the habit of reading and select a good quality paper to share at the journal club. It will help to develop the skill of critical analysis among the participants. A well-written article usually includes the shortcomings of that study too. It may even identify the areas of knowledge gaps and further avenues to undertake. Hence, either a clinical query or a simple research question, in response to a certain study presented at journal club, may provide a vital kick for further research [2].

Journal club may be much of a facilitating hub for research work. A fairly enough volume of the required knowledge is already at hand. Knowledge gap in question may easily be explored and then organized in a sober way to initiate a required activity. Consequently, the research

in such cases would chase for knowledge gaps and push for positive momentum following a clinical query or a research question. If this very myth is properly unfolded for the beginners in the field of research and publication, it may facilitate them to enter into this culture more easily, comfortably, and smoothly, without any fear of hardship. Moreover, once it becomes an habit, they will be acquainted with the field and will propagate the word to their colleagues and then to subordinates.

Technological developments have a potential to make journal club more versatile. Recently, COVID-19, in spite of all adverse impacts, has opened new horizons for academic and research gatherings. On this horizon, the journal club meetings can be scheduled even without the physical presence of everyone and still with full board benefits of group discussion. National or even international participation can be made possible with such online meetings [3].

To start a journal club, it needs to have a group of doctors from a specialty (or relevant specialties), participants from a group of different wards, and a group of different institutions having a field of common interest, as show in Table 1 (Toolkit). Importantly, this needs to be headed preferably by a person from the first tier of power. If not, may be from the second tier but with designated powers of admin and who can act as, or directly report to, the first tier for smooth functioning of the activity. Furthermore, it is necessary to get more people involved to keep the energy and momentum of this academic cum research activity. The crowd of sensible people enlightens the sense of participation and elevates the responsibility to a higher level. Moreover, a diligent manager, at the start of such activity, may incorporate rewards, incentives, or even some penalties to accelerate the momentum to a certain level. Person taking this responsibility will have to give time, energy, and support for this activity and must be good at managerial skills and delegation of power [4].

There is a never-ending list of easy rewards and incentives which may not involve much of resources yet making this activity very productive. These incentives may be used for administrative/promotion/research purposes, and journal club activity may be reflected in ACRs/PERs

<https://doi.org/10.24911/PJMMed.175-1594624620>



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**Table 1.** Journal Club Toolkit and strategy.

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- Identify learning objectives
  - Share responsibilities
  - Charter ground rules
  - Task management
  - Build a community and circulate the schedule and agenda well in advance
  - Choose relevant articles and read them thoroughly
  - Prepare in advance and make engaging presentation according to the level of audience and in line with objective already defined
  - Develop questions and arrange them in learning style without creating fear
  - Keep the activity exciting
    - Initiate discussion
    - Manage discussion
    - End discussion
  - Look for ways to improve
  - Associate the activity with upcoming social events, whenever feasible
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(annual service reports), award of special increments for obtaining future projects or grants.

Although such professional activities carry much bigger benefits and outcomes, at times, these may be made a part of certain social gatherings. These journal club meetings may not only be held at tea club, but these may include social events such as farewells to outing colleagues, welcome for the newcomers, and cake cutting for those who had some celebrations such as birthday or any anniversary. Food and cake cutting may add further attraction and flavor for the younger and newcomer colleagues making this otherwise dry academic gathering but a palatable and softer activity where anyone who comes even for food and flavor, inadvertently gets into the culture of research, which must be an ultimate vision.

We stop this essay here with quote “Every ending can be a new beginning.” Lets begin with a new amazing beginning.

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