

The Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health Celebrates 25 Years

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A quarter of a century ago, Dr U. KoKo and Dr H. Nakajima, the Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific Regional Directors of the World Health Organization wrote introductory articles for the first issue of the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health (APJPH)*. At the time, the international goal for public health was to achieve “Health for All by the Year 2000.” Dr Nakajima commented that active participation of Schools of Public Health would be indispensable in achieving this goal. He wished the journal “success as a genuine forum for dialogue between our institutions of learning, the government and the general public.” The first issue set the scene for an inclusive view of public health that included an emphasis on the most disadvantaged rural areas of our region. The topics addressed included intestinal parasites in rural Sarawak, East Malaysia, motor vehicle accidents, and alcohol and a review of the then new disease of AIDS that was first reported only 6 years earlier. Twenty-five years ago, the Nobel Prize for medicine was awarded to Michael Brown and Joseph Goldstein for their work on the metabolism of cholesterol. At that time, coronary artery disease and other chronic diseases were relatively uncommon in our region. Today, chronic disease is the major public health issue in our region.¹ The journal has now published more than 300 articles on chronic disease in our region, and 9 out of the top 10 cited articles in our journal relate specifically to chronic disease (Table 1). Also 25 years ago, the first blood test for HIV/AIDS was licensed by the US Food and Drug Administration. A disease that was a rarity at the time is now so common that it is one of the few abbreviations allowed without explanation in our journal. In the past 25 years, we have witnessed a major HIV epidemic in our region with currently approximately 5 million cases in our region.² In our journal, we have published 140 articles on HIV that have helped publicize our regional public health initiatives that have resulted in a decline from the peak of the epidemic. However, we must be constantly vigilant and continue to promote messages of “safer sex,” harm minimization, and equitable antiretroviral drugs usage as the basis of public health control of HIV.

Now, *APJPH* celebrates 25 years of success in public health publishing. As the flagship journal of the Asia Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health (APACPH), we have published cutting-edge research articles along with editorials, reviews, and commentaries in almost all areas of public health. We have continued a policy of emphasis on the disadvantaged people of our region and have tried to keep a balance between all the countries that belong to APACPH while accepting contributions of public health importance from beyond our region.

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Table 1. Top 10 Original Articles and Reviews (by Number of Citations) in the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health*

1. Climate change and the transmission of vector-borne diseases: a review. Zhang Y, Bi P, Hiller JE. 2008;20(1):64-76. doi:10.1177/1010539507308385
2. Prevalence of obesity among adolescents (10 to 14 years) in Kuwait. El-Bayoumy I, Shady I, Lotfy H. 2009;21(2):153-159. doi:10.1177/1010539509331786
3. Epidemiology of traumatic spinal cord injury: comparisons between developed and developing countries. Chiu WT, Lin HC, Lam C, Chu SF, Chiang YH, Tsai SH. 2010;22(1):9-18. doi:10.1177/1010539509355470
4. Health risk behaviors, awareness, treatment and control of hypertension among rural community people in Thailand. Howteerakul N, Suwannapong N, Sittlerd R, Rawdaree P. 2006;18(1):3-9. doi:10.1177/10105395060180010201
5. Patterns of smoking among adolescents in Malaysia and Thailand: findings from the International Tobacco Control Southeast Asia survey. Hammond D, Kin F, Prohmmo A, et al. 2008;20(3):193-203. doi:10.1177/1010539508317572
6. Urban-rural disparity of overweight, hypertension, undiagnosed hypertension, and untreated hypertension in China. Hou X. 2008;20(2):159-169. doi:10.1177/1010539507312306
7. Exploring the economics of motorcycle helmet laws: implications for low- and middle-income countries. Hyder AA, Waters H, Phillips T, Rehwinkel J. 2007;19(2):16-22. doi:10.1177/10105395070190020401
8. Association of obesity and chronic diseases in Taiwan. Lin CJ, Liu JT, Liu CH, Nowalk MP. 2006;18(3):8-14. doi:10.1177/10105395060180030301
9. Waist circumference, body mass index, and health risk factors among middle-aged Thais. Narksawat K, Podang J, Punyarathabundu P, Podhipak A. 2007;19(3):10-15. doi:10.1177/101053950701900303
10. Colorectal cancer screening with faecal occult blood testing: Community intention, knowledge, beliefs and behavior. Tong S, Hughes K, Oldenburg BB, Mar CD. 2006;18(1):16-23. doi:10.1177/10105395060180010401

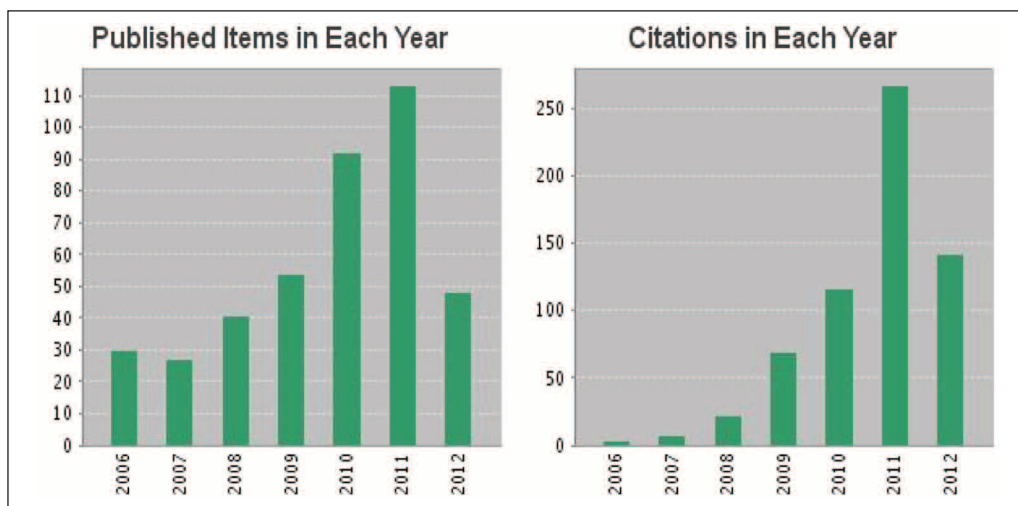
Table 2. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health* Impact Factor and Journal Ranking

Journal Citation Reports (JCR) Year	Impact Factor	Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health (Social Science)	Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health (Science)
2011	1.056	80/131	107/157
2010	0.988	78/116	106/142
2009	0.763	76/95	105/122

The journal began with an impressive first issue but after the initial enthusiasm (and funding) faded, there were fewer issues published. Since its establishment, the journal has published 76 issues in 24 volumes. After initially publishing 4 issues per year, the journal fell onto hard times in the 1990s with a reduced frequency of publication. Today, we are publishing 6 issues per year and several supplementary issues. Our journal has a reputation second to none for quality public health publishing in our region. Five years ago, the publication of the journal was contracted to Sage Publications, an experienced international scientific publishing company who gave us access to modern Internet-based editing tools and included *APJPH* in their international databases. Since it was established, *APJPH* has been included in international databases, including PubMed. It is only when the journal has increased the number and regularity of issues and with support from Sage that the journal has been included in the Web of Knowledge database and has been eligible for the allocation of an impact factor. Our debut impact factor awarded in 2009 was 0.567, which has since risen to 0.988 in 2010 and to 1.057 in 2011 (Table 2). The 5-year impact factor is now 1.271 (Table 3). Based on the Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports 2011,

Table 3. Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health Impact Factor and Citation Data

Total Cites	Impact Factor	5-Year Impact Factor	Citable Items	Immediacy Index	Cited $\frac{1}{2}$ -Life
511	1.056	1.271	99	0.495	4.3

**Figure 1.** Number of publications and citations in the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health* as reflected in the Web of Science (2006 to May 2012)

APJPH is now ranked 107/157 in the Public Environmental, and Occupational Health (Science) and 80/131 in the Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health (Social Science), and the ranking has been rising every year (Table 2).

Since 2006, we have published 352 original articles and reviews with 542 citations (average 1.77 per article) and with a h-index of 9 (Figure 1). The top 5 contributing countries were Australia (20%), Malaysia (16%), the United States (15%), India (10%), and Thailand (10%). The top 5 contributing organizations were the University of Malaya (9%), Mahidol University (5%), Australia National University (4%), and University of Melbourne, Curtin University, Maulana Azad Medical College, Seoul National University, and University of Adelaide with 3% each. The top journals citing articles from *APJPH* include *The Lancet*, *Social Science & Medicine*, *British Medical Journal*, *International Journal of Epidemiology*, *Tobacco Control*, *American Journal of Public Health*, and the *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*. The geographical reach of the readership is wide and includes Europe (32%), Africa (26%), South America (12%), the United States (8%), Asia (8%), and Southeast Asia (6%).

During its first quarter of a century, the journal has established itself as the most successful public health journal serving the Asia Pacific region. We will continue to strive to contribute to the goal set for us by the World Health Organization directors and endorsed by APACPH of achieving "Health for All," emphasizing on equity across all disadvantaged groups. We will select quality articles that are of relevance to public health practice in our region. The journal will continue to welcome manuscripts on all aspects of public health, as well as global challenges in public health, emerging and reemerging infectious diseases, health security, disaster management, and chronic disease. We subscribe to the vision, mission, and values of our parents, the APACPH (<http://www.apacph.org>). This is a very broad mandate and we will remain sensitive to

the need to be inclusive of all countries in our region. While emphasizing quality in public health research, we recognize the importance of recording public health issues in our region. For example, most public health research has moved beyond surveys and small cross-sectional studies. However, we recognize the need to record much of the useful public health information, and we will invite authors to submit these as short communications with additional tables and information to be available online. Because of the demand for articles in *APJPH*, we remind authors that we will strictly enforce our “Rule of Threes.” Be selective in your writing and send us articles that do not exceed 3000 words, no more than 30 references (Reviews have an extra allowance) and 3 illustrations.

We thank APACPH for their continuing support of *APJPH* and its editors as a key component of its public health mission. As editors we would like to thank the thousands of authors who have contributed papers to our journal and the band of loyal reviewers whose work has made the journal possible. Thanks are also due to our past Editors-in-Chief, W. O. Phoon, H. P. Lee, and Anuar Zaini Md Zain. Thank you everyone for supporting *APJPH* and we look forward to another 25 years of providing public health information, “a genuine forum for dialogue between our institutions of learning, the government and the general public” that will move our region toward achieving the ultimate goal of “Health for All.”

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2. WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF. *Towards Universal Access: Scaling Up Priority HIV/AIDS Interventions in the Health Sector. Progress Report 2010*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2010.