EDITORIAL

LAMIC, OJPAS®, SoMHiL, and this scientific update

Dipjyoti Bora, Shyamanta Das

World Bank lists 31 countries as low income.[1] In addition, there are 53 lower middle and 56 upper middle income countries. The rest are high income countries. India belongs to lower middle income countries.

This division is based solely on income. Countries belonging to one particular group show multiple diversities. Yet, this is an accepted concept. So, is the terminology of low and middle income countries; in short, LAMIC.[2]

If we take India as a prototype of LAMIC, we can see the huge patient population in these areas. At the same time exists a big gap between service users and service providers in terms of mental healthcare.[3]

This results in tremendous clinical experience and expertise of the healthcare team. But, when we look into the translation of this experience and expertise into research work, the quality or rather the lack of it strikes out.

It is represented in failure to enter the major bibliographic databases of global scientific literature. Till July 2007, only 4.1% journals from upper middle income countries are indexed there. There was no psychiatric journals from low income countries. All the others were from high income countries.[4]

More than 80% of the world population live in LAMIC. The greatest burden of mental disorders is borne by them.[4] Yet, the representation of scientific literature depicting the plight of this population is conspicuous by its scarcity.

"The 5/95 gap" is what Mari and colleagues[5] termed to denote the indexation in major international bibliographic databases of psychiatric journals coming from LAMIC. Research productivity is indicated by produced articles. Publications are there from LAMIC but at the same time there are barriers to their indexation. They "contribute to the difficulties in achieving fair representation in the main literature databases for the scientific production in these countries".[5] Authors also highlighted that "A major obstacle to disseminating LAMIC research is the scarcity of indexed journals with a strong LAMIC focus".[5]

Still, there are examples to follow: The Revista Brasileira de Psiquiatria (RBP).[6] It cracked the major bibliographic databases even being from LAMIC. Near home, Indian Journal of Psychiatry under the able stewardship of TSS Rao made it there.[7]

The World Psychiatric Association has taken the initiative to uplift the quality of journals published from LAMIC.[8] Subsequently few more entered into the list of indexed journals. Indexed where what matters is the most, like that of Web of Science and Medline.[9,10]

Another similar movement is the journal Global Mental Health that kick started by the Cambridge University Press.[11] These are actions mostly from high income countries. For the first time, a LAMIC, to be precise India gave birth to such an endeavour.

The Open Journal of Psychiatry & Allied Sciences, popularly known as OJPAS® aims to promote behavioural science in LAMIC.[12] To consolidate this noble cause, the Society for Mental Health in LAMIC (SoMHiL) joined hands as publisher.[13]

They strive to form a global consortium where contributors from both LAMIC and non-LAMIC will act in tandem to bring psychiatry related research into the global platform. This shall ultimately translate into reducing the LAMIC—non-Lamic gap and bringing them at par.

In this journey, along with publishing the journal, namely OJPAS®, SoMHiL also jumps into other activities with the same goal in mind. One such is to publish related life science books. And this scientific update is one of them.

With the collaboration of BOOKBELL™[14] on behalf of the Organising Committee of the 27th Annual Conference of Indian Psychiatric Society, Assam State Branch 2017, this scientific update bearing International Standard Book Number (ISBN) saw the dawn of light.

Authors contributed to enrich this endeavour. Happy reading!

References

1. The World Bank. World Bank country and lending groups: country classification [Internet]. 2017 Jun [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/site-content/CLASS.xls

2. World Health Organization. Global Health Observatory (GHO) data: Handbook on health inequality monitoring with special focus on low- and middle-income countries [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: http://www.who.int/gho/health_equity/handbook/en/

3. Kumar A, Phookun HR. Barriers in the treatment of psychiatric disorders. Open J Psychiatry Allied Sci. 2016;7:99-102. doi: 10.5958/2394-2061.2016.00015.X. Epub 2015 Dec 24.

4. Kieling C, Herrman H, Patel V, Mari Jde J. Indexation of psychiatric journals from low- and middle-income countries: a survey and a case study. World Psychiatry. 2009;8:40-4.

5. Mari JJ, Patel V, Kieling C, Razzouk D, Tyrer P, Herrman H. The 5/95 gap in the indexation of psychiatric journals of low- and middle-income countries. Acta Psychiatr Scand. 2010;121:152-6.

6. Revista Brasileira de Psiquiatria. About RBP [Internet]. [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: http://www.rbppsychiatry.org.br/conteudo.asp?Cont=1

7. Indian Journal of Psychiatry. About us [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: http://www.indianjpsychiatry.org/aboutus.asp

8. Herrman H, Kieling C, Mari Jde J. Working with the World Psychiatric Association to promote dissemination of mental health research worldwide. Rev Bras Psiquiatr. 2010;32:4-5.

9. Clarivate Analytics. Master journal list [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: http://ip-science.thomsonreuters.com/mjl/

10. U.S. National Library of Medicine. MEDLINE®/PubMed® resources guide [Internet]. 2016 Dec 8 [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: https://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/pmresources.html

11. Cambridge University Press. Global mental health [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/global-mental-health

12. OJPAS®. About the journal [Internet]. [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: http://www.ojpas.com/about-the-journal.html

13. Global psychiatry: a LAMIC perspective. SoMHiL [Internet]. [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: https://globalpsychiatry.org/

14. BOOKBELL [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2017 Sep 14]. Available from: https://www.bookbell.in/