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## Strengthening Equitable Global Health Scholarship: Reflections on the Role of the *Razi International Medical Journal*

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Scientific progress in public health relies not only on methodological rigor but also on the inclusiveness and integrity of the systems through which evidence is shared. Despite substantial growth in global health research over recent decades, marked disparities persist in who is able to contribute to the scientific record and whose findings are ultimately visible. Financial barriers to publication, unequal access to editorial support, and limited representation of research from resource-constrained settings continue to shape the global evidence base. Addressing these structural imbalances is essential if public health scholarship is to remain credible, relevant, and responsive to real-world needs.

The Razi International Medical Journal (RIMJ) was established in recognition of these challenges and with the explicit aim of supporting high-quality, accessible research in public health and related disciplines. By adopting an open-access model without article processing charges, the journal seeks to remove financial obstacles that disproportionately affect early-career researchers and investigators working in low- and middle-income countries. Such an approach is grounded in the principle that the ability to disseminate scientifically sound research should not be

contingent on institutional wealth or geographic location.

The contemporary public health landscape underscores the importance of this mission. Health systems worldwide are confronted with overlapping burdens, including infectious disease outbreaks, non-communicable diseases, mental health conditions, humanitarian emergencies, and the health consequences of climate and social instability. Many of these challenges are most acute in settings that remain underrepresented in high-impact journals. Evidence generated in these contexts is not peripheral; it is central to understanding disease patterns, testing interventions under real constraints, and informing policies that are both feasible and effective.

For journals such as RIMJ, maintaining high editorial and ethical standards is fundamental. Open access must coexist with rigorous peer review, transparent reporting, and adherence to established ethical principles. Quality in scholarly publishing is reflected in clearly articulated research questions, appropriate study designs, transparent analytic methods, and conclusions that are carefully aligned with the data. Emphasizing these standards enhances the reliability of published work and reinforces

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confidence among readers, reviewers, and policymakers.

Looking forward, the continued development of RIMJ offers opportunities to further strengthen its contribution to the field. Encouraging submissions that address implementation challenges, health systems performance, and context-specific interventions can help bridge the gap between research and practice. Greater engagement with interdisciplinary approaches may also enrich the journal's scope, reflecting the complex social, behavioral, and environmental determinants of health. Equally important is the cultivation of a diverse reviewer and editorial community, which supports fair evaluation, methodological breadth, and capacity building within the global research ecosystem.

Ultimately, the value of a scientific journal lies in its ability to serve both the academic community and the broader public interest. By promoting accessible, ethically conducted, and methodologically robust research, the Razi International Medical Journal contributes to a more inclusive and representative global health literature. Sustained commitment to these principles will ensure that the journal remains a credible platform for advancing evidence that informs policy, improves practice, and reflects the realities of health across diverse settings.

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