



To impact or not to impact, this is not a question for *BioImpacts*!

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Summary

BioImpacts was launched in March 2011 as a peer-reviewed, open-access journal. Now it is the leading scientific journal of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences (TUOMS) targeting the international scientific community. With several excellent review and research papers published in recent issues, it has secured a reputable status among similar journals printed in the Middle East and worldwide. In the last year alone, one-third of its contributing authors were from universities outside of Iran. Its editorial and review boards are similarly diverse. Starting in January 2015, production of *BioImpacts* has increased to six volumes per year, while maintaining the journal's high quality.

Author Biosketch

Mohammad Rafi received his PhD in Animal Biology from the University of Montpellier, France, in 1970. He taught Cell and Molecular Biology for over 17 years at the School of Science, Tabriz University, Iran, where he also served as Chair of the Department of Animal Biology. He is currently a Professor of Neurology in the Department of Neurology with a joint appointment in the Department of Neurosciences at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, USA. Though he has worked on several lysosomal storage diseases, his main research interest is gene therapy of neurodegenerative disorders using animal models of globoid cell leukodystrophy (Krabbe disease). With successful AAVrh10-mediated treatment of murine and canine models, his research is moving towards the treatment trials of human patients.



Since its launch in March 2011, *BioImpacts* has been very successful in attracting scientific papers both locally and internationally. While Tabriz University of Medical Sciences (TUOMS) has a long history of publishing scientific journals in different medical disciplines and specialties, *BioImpacts* is the current leading journal covering multidisciplinary topics and targeting the international scientific community as both readers and contributors.

In the age of the Internet and electronic information, the publishing world is quickly changing, requiring the launch of new open-access journals and e-publications that would allow the rapid distribution of scientific breakthroughs and research initiatives. TUOMS was wise to timely anticipate the rapid transformations in publishing technology. Thanks to the encouragement from TUOMS and the vision and efforts of the journal's Chairman, Dr. M.R. Rashidi, and its Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Y. Omidi, *BioImpacts* is now very well placed to be the major channel for publications that explore new technologies, all with an easy submission and fast publication process.

It is clear that a journal is only as good as the papers it publishes. With several excellent review and research papers published in recent issues, *BioImpacts* has received a strong boost. With continuous improvements in

publishing policies and review processes, the future looks even brighter than the present.

In evaluating the performance of a scientific journal, many criteria should be taken into account. These criteria include the journal's basic publishing guidelines; the international diversity of its authorship, editorial, and review boards; and its citation frequency. Basic guidelines for paper submissions, format requirements, and review processes of *BioImpacts* match the standards of highly reputable open-access and peer-reviewed journals. Last year alone, there was a 1:2 diversity ratio of international versus local academic authors. In other words, just over one-third, or 34%, of last year's contributing authors were from universities around the world, while the remaining two thirds were from various universities within Iran. The editorial and review boards were similarly diverse. By the end of February 2015, papers published in *BioImpacts* had a collective total of 443 citations made to them. According to Google Scholar, the highest number of citations for an individual paper up to this time was 38. Furthermore, *BioImpacts* strongly fully adheres to the "Publication Ethics" rules. It also follows a "Publish Free" and "Access Free" policy to benefit the scientific community, worldwide.

In addition, one should not underestimate the journal's



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impact factor, as well as its comparative evaluation among similar journals published in the same category. Impact factor is a measure reflecting the average number of citations made to the articles published in a journal. The unofficial impact factor for *BioImpacts* is around 1, which is a great achievement for a scientific journal in such a short period of time. Journal's comparative evaluation is usually done by "Scientific Journal Ranking" (SJR: <http://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php?category=3304>). According to SJR assessment in the "Pharmaceutical Science" sub-category, *BioImpacts* was ranked number 1 out of 10 similar journals published in the Middle East, and number 103 out of 211 similar journals published worldwide.

Another outstanding feature of *BioImpacts* is that while taking full advantage of technology, its electronic publication nevertheless largely mirrors traditional hard-

copy journals in both format and content. It also offers a full range of indexing information and easy access to each article as "Abstract", "PDF", "HTML" and "PubMed" right from the journal's home page.

Until the end of 2014, *BioImpacts* was published in four volumes per year. Starting in January 2015, its production has been increased to six volumes per year, while maintaining the journal's high quality.

One potentially valuable addition to *BioImpacts* may be to include a one-page, illustrated summary of "Science News" in each issue, reflecting important findings published elsewhere in the scientific literature. Such an addition will offer another valuable service to readers and will increase the journal's visibility in the international arena.

I am looking forward to another successful year for *BioImpacts*.