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Conflits d'intérêt : Aucun

Abstract:

African & Middle East Epilepsy Journal (AMEEJ) is a bilingual (English and French) journal specializing in epilepsy. It is published in Marrakech from 2012 and printed at the rate of 6 issues per year. Professor N. Kissani took care to develop this journal by inviting a committee of renowned readers. It started off as an epilepsy journal in North Africa and the Middle East, but after 2015 it has been indexed in CAMES (High African and Madagascar Council of education) and expanded across all Africa and became an African epilepsy journal. The geographical distribution of the AMEEJ is international and diversified, focusing on Africa and the Middle East. We analyzed all the published volume over the past 8 years. Of the 232 published papers from 36 different countries, the majority comes from Africa while the rest is distributed on all the other continents. Through our study we ranked into 3 categories the 36 countries according to their number of articles appeared in the AMEEJ. All over these 8 years, AMEEJ facilitate the health research for all medical and paramedical staff, in order to advance the research level on epilepsy in Africa.

Keywords: Epilepsy – African and Middle East Epilepsy Journal - Publications

Résumé:

Journal de l'épilepsie en Afrique et au Moyen-Orient est une revue bilingue (anglais et français) spécialisée dans l'épilepsie. Il est publié à Marrakech à partir de 2012 et imprimé au rythme de 6 numéros par an. Professeur N. Kissani a pris soin de développer cette revue en invitant un comité de lecteurs de renom. Il a commencé comme un journal sur l'épilepsie en Afrique du Nord et au Moyen-Orient, mais en 2015, il s'est étendu à toute l'Afrique et devient un journal africain sur l'épilepsie. La répartition géographique du Journal de l'épilepsie en Afrique et au Moyen-Orient est internationale et diversifiée, centrée sur l'Afrique et le Moyen-Orient. Nous avons analysé tous les volumes publiés au cours des 8 dernières années. Sur les 232 articles publiés de 36 pays différents, la majorité vient d'Afrique tandis que le reste est distribué sur tous les autres continents. Grâce à notre étude, nous avons classé en 3 catégories les 36 pays en fonction de leur nombre d'articles parus dans le Journal de l'épilepsie en Afrique et

au Moyen-Orient. Tout au long de ces 8 années, le Journal de l'épilepsie en Afrique et au Moyen-Orient a facilité la recherche en santé pour l'ensemble du personnel médical et paramédical, afin de faire progresser le niveau de la recherche sur l'épilepsie en Afrique.

Mots-clés: Epilepsie - Journal de l'épilepsie en Afrique et au Moyen-Orient - Publications.

Introduction:

African & Middle East epilepsy journal is one of the rare African journals specialized in epilepsy. As we know epilepsy represents a huge health problem for the African countries, with a social dimension that goes beyond the etiological and nosographic representations of this disease. Also, the lack of qualified personnel and the need of contextualized medical information on epilepsy, forced the creation of a journal interested to epilepsy in Africa. Moreover Africa's research capacity remains feeble [1]. The reasons for this are varied, including low funding, inadequate research infrastructure, the relatively low number of active scientists and scientific journals [1]. Consequently the AMEEJ was created in 2012 by Professor Najib Kissani, to fill the gap of specialized journals in epilepsy in Africa. Add to that the higher number of patients with epilepsy, and the social dimension of epilepsy which is clearly further than the etiological and nosographic representations. The main journal mission is to make scientific information on epilepsy more available for health professionals in Africa, and to give a chance to senior and junior neurologists to publish their works concerning epilepsy. Furthermore, this journal has increased the number of publications on epilepsy in the continent. The aim of this paper is to describes the number and the origins of publication during eight years from 2012-2019, to make a rank of the countries in terms of publication and to look for limitations and difficulties faced to sustain this product. These results will help bringing to light the experience of the AMEEJ, developing a medium and long term vision for empowering the journal and index it in Scopus then in Pubmed and to encourage the expansion of knowledge in the African scientific community.

Methods:

We reviewed retrospectively all the publication of AMEEJ between January 2012 and December 2019, at the neurology department, Mohamed VI university hospital of Marrakech; where we established our editorial AMEEJ office. We consult the archives at the journal website. We analyze the numbers, type, and origin of publications from all the published volume. Each volume corresponds to one year, it contains 6 issues numbers, each issues number includes one editorial and 4 articles. The country classification was based on the number of publications. All data were stored and analyzed by Microsoft Excel software for Windows (version 2007).

Results:

Of a total of 232 published papers, over eight years from January 2012 to December 2019. The number of published articles is variable, with a high rate in 2013 with 46 articles and a low rate in 2019 with only 12 articles (**Figure 1**).

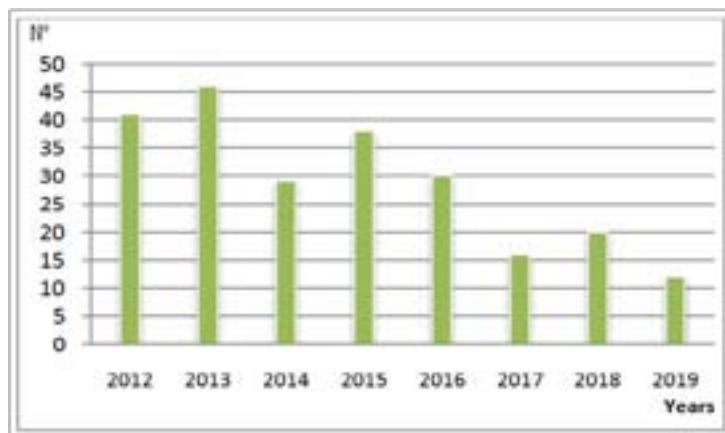


Figure 1: Number of AMEEJ papers by years

The average number of publications was around 29 articles per year, which makes 5 articles per issue. The articles came from 36 different countries, distributed on all continents. The majority of the articles published came from Africa with 195 articles, followed by Europe with 17 articles and North America with 12 articles. Unfortunately, the Middle East is in fourth place with less than 5 articles; Latin America has the lowest publication rates of all 5 continents (**Figure 2**).

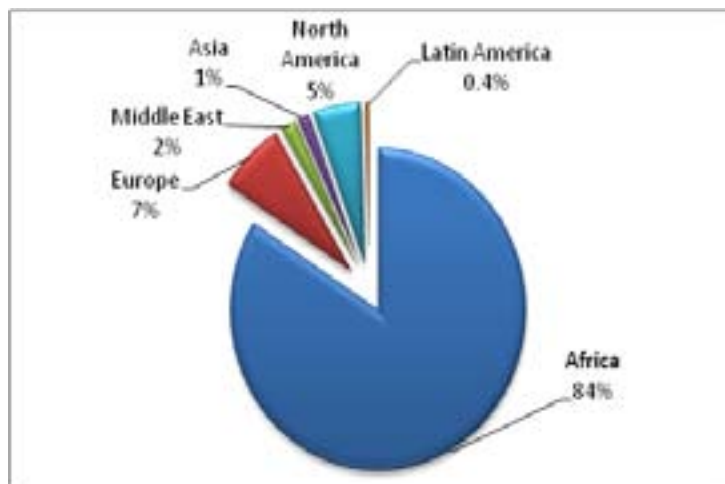


Figure 2: Percentage of AMEEJ papers by continents.

Morocco, Senegal and Mali represent 70% of all the African publications, while France and USA comes first in their continents. Through our study we ranked the 36 countries according to their number of articles appeared in the AMEEJ (Figure 3). Three categories were proposed, the first one regroup countries with a publication rates more than 6% (> 13 articles) of the all papers in AMEEJ, the second one countries with a publication rates between 2% and 5% (4 to 11 articles) then the third category with a publication rates of 0% to 1% (0 to 2 articles).

All the publications are free to access and download from the website AMEEJ, which allow the share and citation of papers. During the review, we found an article from Mali 'Epilepsy genetics in Africa challenges and future perspectives' published in Pubmed Central 'North Afr Middle East Epilepsy J. Sep-Oct 2014;3(5):5-7. PMID: 26413584'.

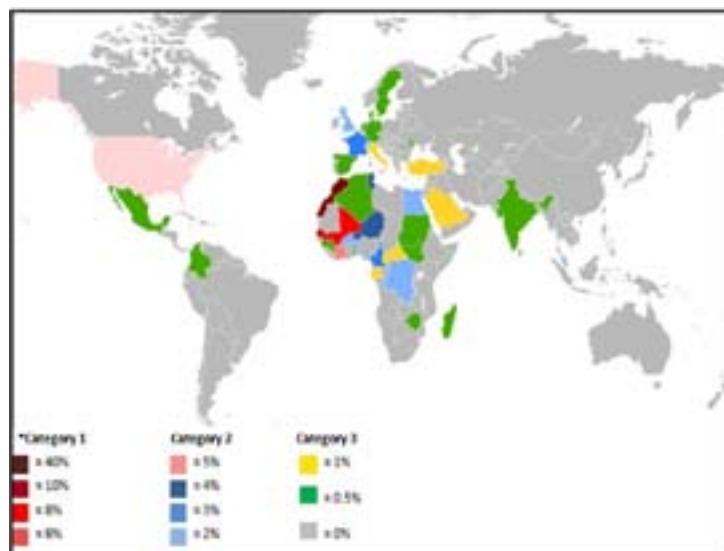


Figure 3: Rank and origins of published papers in AMEEJ from different geographical locations

Discussion:

AMEEJ provides an international forum for the publication of papers on topics related to epilepsy, including the natural history, epidemiology, differential diagnosis and practical management of epilepsy. Our dataset highlights that the productivity of epilepsy articles in Africa is at an all time high, while the number of neurologist on the continent remains feeble compared to total African population. Epilepsy in Africa is not always viewed as a neurological disease. Instead, patients suffering from epilepsy may be thought possessed by evil spirits. Consequently they may not seek medical treatment but may instead turn to a traditional healer [2]. The important thing is to change people's attitudes and recognize that epilepsy is a chronic disease like any other disease [2]. For these reasons the AMEEJ

was created to spread the current information available on different aspects of seizures and epilepsy.

AMEEJ represents an example of rare journals specializing in epilepsy in Africa, since its creation in 2012; growing interest is increasing regarding the number of presented manuscripts, the upgrade of scientific spectrum and volume of the journal. It provides an opportunity for all African practitioners to share their experiences, to present the current situation of epilepsy in each African country and to discuss effective strategies to improve the overall management of epilepsy patients.

Scientific collaboration represent a bright side of AMEEJ, on national and international level, the possibilities of expansion and of internationalization of research underway in Africa will increase. The creation of African journals would have major implications for the capacities of scientific leadership in all different areas especially medical field.

Limitations:

The limitations of the study are the lack of number in some volume.

Perspectives:

Through this paper we traced the evolution of such a specialized journal with the aim to index AMEEJ in Scopus subsequently in Pubmed.

Conclusion:

African and Middle East Epilepsy Journal count up eight-year of a rich editorial path. Such journal increases the motivation to undertaking epilepsy research. So AMEEJ facilitate the health research for all medical and paramedical staff, in order to advance the research level on epilepsy in Africa.

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