

**Editorial Commentary**  
**Indexed Does Not Mean International: Perspectives for Bangladesh Medical Publishing**

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In more than 25 years of editing medical journal articles, a persistent challenge has been misconceptions regarding journal classification—especially what distinguishes a *national* journal from an *international* one, and how indexing relates to academic evaluation. This issue is particularly relevant in Bangladesh, where academic promotion and research assessment are guided by the **Bangladesh Medical & Dental Council (BMDC)** and university authorities.

A **national journal** is typically published by a local institution or professional body, with editorial leadership, authorship, and readership predominantly drawn from within the country. Such journals play an essential role in strengthening national research capacity and professional discourse. An **international journal**, however, is characterized by sustained global engagement, including multinational authorship, an internationally representative editorial board, a research scope extending beyond national boundaries, and consistent visibility in major international indexing databases.

Indexing services are often mistakenly interpreted as indicators of international status. **PubMed** functions as a search interface that includes citations from MEDLINE and other sources, whereas **MEDLINE** is a selectively curated database maintained by the U.S. National Library of Medicine through a rigorous evaluation process. Inclusion in MEDLINE reflects editorial quality and scientific merit, but it does not automatically confer international status if

the journal's scope and participation remain primarily national.

Similarly, **Crossref** provides Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) to ensure persistent article identification and citation linking. While DOI assignment is an important technical standard, Crossref does not evaluate peer-review quality, editorial independence, or international reach. Databases such as **Scopus** and **Web of Science** apply structured selection criteria and are frequently used by universities as indicators of broader international visibility.

In Bangladesh, the **BMDC recognizes a number of medical journals** published by medical colleges, universities, and professional societies for academic purposes. BMDC recognition confirms acceptability for professional and academic evaluation but does not imply international indexing or global scope. Confusion arises when indexing status, recognition, and international classification are treated as interchangeable, leading to inconsistent academic judgments.

In conclusion, **indexing and international status are related but distinct concepts**. PubMed/MEDLINE indexing reflects editorial and scientific standards; Crossref indexing reflects technical publishing infrastructure; and true international status reflects global participation and reach. Clear understanding of these distinctions is essential for fair academic assessment, responsible editorial practice, and alignment with BMDC and university promotion policies.

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