

## Editorial



# Beyond the First Impact Factor: Editorial Renewal and Direction in Thoracic Research and Practice

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In contemporary academic publishing, journal performance is increasingly discussed through numerical indicators such as impact factors, citation counts, and quartile rankings. While these metrics offer useful measures of visibility, they provide only a partial view of a journal's intellectual direction, editorial rigor, and contribution to clinical practice. For specialty journals affiliated with professional societies, the challenge extends beyond achieving visibility to ensuring that published content maintains sustained scientific relevance and practical value.

Against this background, *Thoracic Research and Practice* represents an example of gradual and deliberate editorial evolution rather than abrupt transformation. The journal's origins date to 2001, when *Türk Toraks Dergisi* and *Turkish Respiratory Journal* independently served the respiratory medicine community. Their merger in 2008 under the title *Turkish Thoracic Journal* marked the transition to English-language publication, while the renaming to *Thoracic Research and Practice* in 2023 reflected an intention to broaden scope and strengthen international orientation.<sup>1</sup>

The journal's first inclusion in *Journal Citation Reports* in 2024 constituted an important indexing milestone. With an initial Journal Impact Factor of 0.6 and a Journal Citation Indicator of 0.20, *Thoracic Research and Practice* entered the global citation landscape of respiratory system journals.<sup>2</sup> These figures are best interpreted as retrospective indicators of accumulated editorial effort rather than as determinants of future strategy. Metrics confirm presence, but they do not define editorial purpose.

Within this context, the editorial board renewal at the end of 2025 represents an opportunity to clarify, rather than redefine, editorial priorities. Emphasis has been placed on maintaining clinical relevance, methodological transparency, and consistency in editorial standards across different submission types. The intention is not rapid metric optimization, but the preservation of a coherent editorial approach capable of supporting meaningful international engagement.

Recent content published in the journal reflects this orientation, with studies grounded in real-world clinical practice, analyses addressing longer-term respiratory outcomes, and surveys highlighting variability in respiratory care across healthcare settings. Such contributions may not always generate immediate citation gains, but they contribute to cumulative clinical knowledge and practice-based evidence.

As the official journal of the Turkish Thoracic Society, *Thoracic Research and Practice* occupies a balanced position. It serves as a platform for society-led scientific initiatives while adhering to the norms of international scholarly publishing. This balance requires editorial independence together with institutional responsibility. Within this framework, guidelines, task force reports, and consensus documents remain integral to the journal's mission, provided they meet the same transparent methodological and editorial criteria applied to original research.

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The *Turkish Thoracic Society Declaration on Peace and Health: The Importance of Breathing in a World Without War* illustrates this approach.<sup>3</sup> By addressing the health consequences of armed conflict, particularly those affecting respiratory health, environmental conditions, and vulnerable populations, the declaration situates peace within a public health framework. Its publication reflects the journal's role as an institutional medium through which scientific evidence, ethical responsibility, and public health concerns can be articulated within established editorial standards.

Looking ahead, the journal's strategic direction emphasizes consolidation rather than expansion for its own sake. International engagement is pursued as a qualitative process shaped by content quality, editorial clarity, and sustained scientific dialogue. Any future growth in bibliometric indicators is expected to follow as a consequence of these efforts rather than as their primary objective.

In an era where editorial success is increasingly quantified, maintaining focus on editorial coherence, clinical relevance,

and methodological integrity remains a deliberate and measured stance. The current phase of *Thoracic Research and Practice* is defined less by the attainment of its first impact factor than by the opportunity to continue developing a stable and credible editorial identity within respiratory medicine.

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