



A new opportunity for *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice* to make a great leap forward as a Science Citation Index Expanded journal

Jeonghwan Lee^{1,2}, Sungjin Chung^{1,3}, Tae-Hyun Yoo^{1,4}

¹Editorial Board of *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice*, Official Journal of the Korean Society of Nephrology, Seoul, Republic of Korea

²Department of Internal Medicine, Boramae Medical Center, Seoul National University College of Medicine, Seoul, Republic of Korea

³Department of Internal Medicine, College of Medicine, The Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, Republic of Korea

⁴Department of Internal Medicine, Yonsei University College of Medicine, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Introduction

Kidney Research and Clinical Practice (KRCP, ISSN 1975-9460), the official journal of the Korean Society of Nephrology (KSN), has recently been indexed in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) in the field of Urology & Nephrology by the editorial board of the Web of Science, Clarivate Analytics (Philadelphia, PA, USA) for issues published after January 2018. Registration of KRCP in the SCIE-indexed journal list had been a long-cherished ambition of the KSN, and it has taken 8 years since KRCP was first published in English. In this article, we summarize the history and progress of KRCP to present and suggest upcoming goals to overcome competition with both classical and emerging journals. We hope that this article will be helpful to other academic journals seeking SCIE registration and to be established as an international journal.

Genesis of *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice*

The official journal of the KSN, "*Taehan Sinjang Hakhoe chi*

(*The Korean Journal of Nephrology*)," was first published in Korea on a biannual schedule in 1982. Initially, the main title of the journal was presented in Korean, and it translated to "Magazine of the KSN" (Fig. 1A). In 1989, the journal's Korean name was changed to "*Journal of the Korean Society of Nephrology*", and the frequency of publication was increased to quarterly (Fig. 1B). From 1998, it was published six times a year on a bi-monthly schedule. Until 2006, the journal's main title and all other contents were presented in Korean. In 2007, the name of the journal was officially changed to an English title, *The Korean Journal of Nephrology*, and manuscripts included a title, author name and affiliation, abstract, keywords, and bibliographic information in English, but the main text was in Korean (Fig. 1C). From 2008, the official logo of the KSN was established as the shape of both kidneys in orange and yellow color, as it is now, and the cover design of the journal was changed (Fig. 1D).

Since the 2000s, publication of academic research work in SCIE-indexed journals has been considered important in the evaluation of investigators and institutions. In addition, other academic journals in other domestic societies have

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Correspondence: Tae-Hyun Yoo

Department of Internal Medicine, Yonsei University College of Medicine, 50-1 Yonsei-ro, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul 03722, Republic of Korea. E-mail: yoosy0316@yuhs.ac

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9183-4507>

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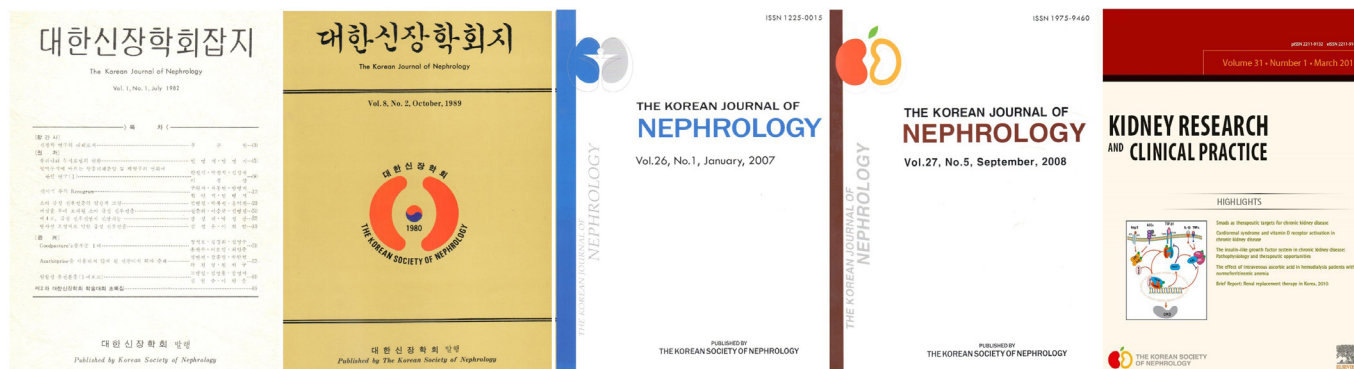


Figure 1. Historical changes in the cover of *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice*. First publication of the *Taehan Sinjang Hakhoe chi* (The Korean Journal of Nephrology) as the official journal of the Korean Society of Nephrology in January 1982. The Korean Journal of Nephrology in October 1989. The Korean Journal of Nephrology in January 2007, published with titles and abstracts in English. The Korean Journal of Nephrology in September 2008, using the official logo of the Korean Society of Nephrology. *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice* in March 2012 with a new name and all contents in English in the order of the figures.

been registered in the SCIE one by one. The necessity of achieving SCIE registration was raised by many members in the KSN for continued publication of high-level research and survival and progress of KRCP in academia.

A new beginning for *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice* in English

In 2010, the KSN began to plan an upgrade of the journal with the aim of future registration in the SCIE. At that time, there were many opinions within the KSN that the publication of the journal in English was essential for SCIE registration. However, there was also considerable concern that when manuscripts were published in English, many studies submitted by members in the KSN might not be accepted. The executive board, under the leadership of the president of the KSN, promoted a new project for the journal’s complete conversion into English, and formed a new Editorial Board (publication director, professor Gheun-Ho Kim) in May 2010.

While some sought to maintain the existing English journal name (*The Korean Journal of Nephrology*), it was decided to choose a new English name that would represent its future success on the global academic stage. After discussion in the Editorial Board, several candidate English journal names were proposed, and the new name “*Kidney Research and Clinical Practice* (abbreviated as *Kidney Res Clin Pract*)” was finally selected through public voting among the members of the KSN during the 31st Spring Meeting of the KSN in May 2011.

In line with confirmation of the English journal name,

overall work related to preparation of the English journal began. The instructions to authors were reorganized in English, the role of the Editorial Board was redefined, a pool of reviewers from among KSN members was secured, and foreign members of Editorial Board (two in the United States, two in Denmark, one in Thailand, and one in China) were newly recruited before conversion of the journal into English. A statistical editor was selected to improve the quality of accepted manuscripts. Five types of papers would be accepted in the new English journal: editorials, review articles, original articles, case reports, and letters. After July 1, 2011, only manuscripts written in English were accepted, and the publication of Korean literature was stopped in December 2011. The general information, cover design, manuscript layout, and front and back content of the journal were confirmed. Elsevier was selected as the new publisher, and, in March 2012, the first KRCP, an open-access and peer-reviewed international journal, was published in English as a whole, distributing a total of 1,500 copies (Fig. 1E).

Growth and advancement of *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice*

Since the first publication of the KRCP, various activities have been carried out to improve the quality of the journal. The Editorial Board selected a high-quality English editing service and encouraged authors to submit their articles for professional English editing before final acceptance. The submission system has been improved so that all co-authors

can be notified of the submission by e-mail at the time of initial submission. The review system has been reorganized so that statistical editors can be selected as reviewers in order to facilitate statistical consultation. Based on these efforts, in March 2013, KRCP was listed on Elsevier's Scopus journal list. Scopus is an accredited tool for evaluating the research power of authors, journals, and affiliations, and it was an opportunity for KRCP to grow in quality. The Editorial Board held a workshop for KRCP Editorial Board members and discussed various agenda matters including maintenance of a consistent style of literature, streamlining the review process, recruitment of excellent reviewers, improvement of different levels of review, and invitation of the highest-level thesis. In May 2014, the Editorial Board organized the KRCP special session program during the 34th Spring Meeting of the KSN and dealt with publication ethics focused on thesis plagiarism, dual publication, and thesis similarity check systems. We discussed together with Elsevier ways to correct editorial errors and long-term plans to improve editing quality.

Receiving many excellent papers was identified as an important prerequisite for improving the quality of KRCP. The principles and rules of the KSN's research funds were revised to increase the submission of excellent academic papers in KRCP. The publication of at least one research article in KRCP was set as a requirement when applying for KSN's research funds. The results of research funded by the KSN could be preferentially submitted to KRCP. To expand the scope of review papers and improve their level, the Editorial Board invited outstanding domestic and foreign speakers to KSN conferences to increase the contribution of review papers to KRCP. In particular, we focused on topics that were of high interest among the speakers invited to the KSN annual academic conference. In order to attract excellent papers, members of KSN who had recently attended overseas training were asked to submit manuscripts based on their new knowledge and research experience. A series of review articles have been published on research methodology and controversy in clinical practice, which is of high interest to many researchers and physicians. Skilled foreign researchers were continuously recommended and selected as new editorial board members. A newsletter that introduced studies in KRCP and noteworthy studies citing KRCP was produced and released to the public. This allowed more excellent studies listed in

the KRCP to be referenced and cited in subsequent studies.

Based on these efforts to improve the level of submitted manuscripts, KRCP was approved for PubMed scientific evaluation on August 7, 2015 and listed in PubMed Central on October 22, 2015. Due to these achievements, an initial application letter of journal evaluation for SCIE registration was sent to Thomson Reuters (Web of Science) but was not successful. However, KRCP was listed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) in August 2016. Additional efforts and activities were carried out to progress toward KRCP's SCIE registration. Submission and contribution rules have been continuously improved for the publication of high-quality studies. Instructions for authors and reviewers were revised to facilitate the submission of excellent original and review papers, and to allow more foreign researchers to participate in the peer-review process. Reviewer evaluation was strengthened to enable high-quality reviews. The layout and design of the homepage were improved to increase the accessibility of KRCP papers. The Editorial Board also developed a public relations and publicity program to promote citations of published papers.

In 2017, the publisher was switched from Elsevier to Inforang/Medrang, and the journal's design was improved once again to simplify the submission and review process. Case report articles were eliminated from consideration to create more space for influential original articles. Submission ethics and regulations were reinforced. The role of each author was designated by the Editorial Manager, and the approval code/number of each institution, such as the Institutional Review Board or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee number, was required for submission. In addition, notation of all authors' ORCID identifiers was set as mandatory. The Editorial Board also reviewed the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice guidelines.

Kidney Research and Clinical Practice prepares for a new leap forward

In May 2020, professor Gheun-Ho Kim, who had been the Editor-in-Chief of KRCP for approximately 10 years, resigned, and professor Tae-Hyun Yoo took office as the new Editor-in-Chief in June 2020. With the aim of SCIE registration, priority tasks were the submission of many high-quality papers, reorganizing the website, strengthening ethical regulations, and improving the proofing and editing

Table 1. *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice's journey to Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE)*

Date	Events
1980. 7	Establishment of The Korean Society of Nephrology (KSN)
1982. 7	First publication of <i>Taehan Sinjang Hakhoe chi</i> as the official journal of the KSN
2007. 1	The main title changes to <i>The Korean Journal of Nephrology</i>
2012. 3	Complete reorganization of the journal in English: <i>Kidney Research and Clinical Practice</i>
2015. 10	Approval for PubMed and registration in PubMed Central
2016. 8	Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) registration
2020. 11	SCIE registration

process. Along with the growth of KRCP, the number of manuscripts had increased, so a higher level of peer-review had become necessary. The new Editorial Board established new awards for excellent reviewers. In addition, plans were made to increase the journal's reputation and recognition, including public relations activities for KRCP at overseas academic conferences. Based on the overall growth of KRCP, the number of citations of KRCP increased to more than 300 per year. It was rated as within the top 25% of urology journals with 0.91 points in the 2019 Scimago Journal Ranking (SJR 2019). In July 2020, a letter was sent to Clarivate Analytics to inquire about the evaluation of KRCP for SCIE listing. On October 31, 2020, we received a recommendation from Clarivate Analytics with regard to changes that could be made to the submission regulations and homepage contents, raising expectations for SCIE registration in the near future. Finally, on November 4, 2020, we received a confirmation letter for KRCP's SCIE listing from Clarivate Analytics, Web of Science. The timeline of the official journal of KSN from first publication to recent SCIE registration is summarized in [Table 1](#).

The reasons for the success of KRCP's SCIE listing were as follows. First, there was full support from the KSN for KRCP's growth and development. The Editor-in-Chief, with the 5-year term, was able to maintain a consistent and stable editorial direction. Next, the great interest and commitment of the members of the KSN to KRCP has contributed to the submission of high-quality papers, active citation, and promotion of academic research. Through the dedication of many editors, various problems were discovered and improved. KRCP published timely topics such as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Korean clinical practices guidelines in hemodialysis facilities and disaster preparedness for earthquakes in hemodialysis units, and played a leading role in academic society [1,2]. In addition, by strengthening

cooperation with other international academic societies and organizations, the publication of papers in KRCP on important topics worldwide is increasing. A special article on nomenclature for kidney function and disease, an executive summary and glossary discussed at the Kidney Disease: Improving Global Outcomes (KDIGO) Consensus Conference, was published in conjunction with the International Society of Nephrology [3,4].

In January 2021, the Editorial Board selected M2PI Publishing Inc. as KRCP's new publishing company, improved the design of the homepage, improved mobile accessibility, and changed the system to full online publishing. Although KRCP succeeded in SCIE listing, there are many challenges to be addressed in order to continue to move forward. The intense competition among various classical and new journals must be overcome. Recently, a number of research papers have been preoccupied with competitively establishing open-access sister journals in renowned journals. In order to increase the competitiveness of KRCP, efforts should be made to publish leading research papers or review articles on topics of interest in nephrology. Inviting guest editors for special editions on specific topics could also attract new readers and citations. The publication of clinically controversial contents in a series within a single volume can also raise readers' interest. Based on its growth so far and the dedication of its many researchers and reviewers, KRCP will continue to develop into an even more highly-ranked international journal.

Conflicts of interest

All authors are Editorial Board members of the Korean Society of Nephrology, serving as editor-in-chief and deputy editors of its official journal, *Kidney Research and Clinical Practice*. No other competing interests are declared.

Authors' contributions

Conceptualization: SC, THY

Visualization: All authors

Writing–original draft: JL

Writing–review & editing: SC, THY

ORCID

Jeonghwan Lee, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3199-635X>

Sungjin Chung, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9886-8339>

Tae-Hyun Yoo, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9183-4507>

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