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Publication Rates and Publication Times of Studies Presented at the First Four Meetings of the Society of Urological Surgery in Turkey (MSUST)

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What's known on the subject? and What does the study add?

Most of urological associations published their publication rates, following their own meetings. The present study investigates the publication rate of abstracts presented at the four national meetings of the Society of Urological Surgery in Turkey. The present study aims to determine a valid time period for the announcement of publication rates following a meeting, as a means of standardization.

Abstract

Objective: This study determines the publication rates and publication times of studies presented at the first four Meetings of the Society of Urological Surgery in Turkey (MSUST).

Materials and Methods: The first four books of abstracts published by MSUST were examined, and an analysis of the abstracts of authors published between January 1, 2012 and January 1, 2021 identified from the PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar databases were analyzed. The publication time refers to the interval between the date of the congress and the date on which the publication was made available on a journal website.

Results: A total of 1,436 abstracts were reviewed, and the publication rates for the first four MSUST were 50.7%, 33.4%, 28.2%, and 26.9%, respectively, with a mean publication rate of 33.4%. In an assessment of the publications made within 2 years of a meeting, the publication rates were found to be 27.6%, 25.8%, 24.2% and 26.9%, respectively. The mean publication rate within a 2-year period was determined to be 26%. The median time of publication when calculated prospectively, was 22 (-2-88), 12 (-2-60), 10 (-2-39) and 7 (-2-24) months. The ratios of articles from the first three MSUST, published within 2 years to total publication were found to be 54.3%, 77.3%, and 85.5%, prospectively.

Conclusion: The ratio of studies presented at MSUST congresses that are subsequently published is increasing, and more than half of these publications occur within the first 2 years following the congress, which can serve as an indicator of the legitimacy of a scientific meeting.

Keywords: Publication rate, urology, scientific meeting

Introduction

The publication rate is considered an important criterion of success by societies and congress organizers, and such prestigious organizations as the European Association of Urology, the American Urological Association and the British Urological Association publish publication rates following their own events (1-3). These rates, and the impact factors of the journals that feature these publications are viewed as vital indicators of reputation (4). Studies focusing on publication rates can be categorized based on their evaluation of such factors as time period or the types of presentation (oral, poster) (5).

This study investigates the publication rate of abstracts presented at the four national meetings of the Society of Urological

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Surgery in Turkey (MSUST), with an additional aim being to determine a valid time period for announcing the publication rates following a meeting as a means of standardization.

Materials and Methods

The abstract books of four MSUST (held in 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018) were reviewed, and searches of the PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar databases for publications of the presented abstracts were made. A total of 1,485 abstracts (oral presentations, poster presentations and posters) were reviewed from January 1, 2012 to January 1, 2021.

The search of the databases first used the name of the first author of the abstract, and if no results were found, the subsequent authors were searched. Published papers with identical abstracts in terms of hypothesis, study design and conclusion were included as a match. Abstracts published more than 3 months before the meeting were excluded from the study.

The abstracts were subdivided into subspecialties as urooncology, andrology, pediatric urology, endourology, female urology and transplantation, while abstracts related to more than one subspecialty were included in both. The presentation type (oral, poster presentation and poster), study types (prospective, retrospective, laboratory and case report) and origin of the study (multicenter, university, training and research hospital, public hospital and private hospital) were all found to influence the publication rate. The publications were subdivided into three groups, as indexed (SCI, SCI-expanded), international (PubMed indexed but SCI, SCI- expanded) and national journals.

Results

Of the 1,485 abstracts, 49 were excluded as they were published more than three months before the congress, and as a consequence, 1,436 abstracts were studied. The overall publication rate of studies presented at MSUSTs and the overall publication of MSUSTs over a 2-year period were 33.4% and 26%, respectively. The overall publication rates from the first, the second, third and fourth MSUSTs were 50.7%, 33.4%, 28.2%, and 26.9%, respectively, and the publication rates in indexed journals were 32%, 19.9%, 14.1%, and 13.9%, respectively. The publication rates of studies presented at MSUSTs are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1. The publication rates within two years of the first, second, third and fourth the MSUST were 27.6, 25.8, 24.2, and 26.9 percent, respectively, as presented in Table 2 and Figure 2.

The median publication times following the first, second, third and fourth the MSUST were 22 (-2-88), 12 (-2-60), 10 (-2-39) and 7 (-2-24) months. A survival analysis of the abstracts published within 24 months of the first, second, third and fourth the MSUST were 54.3%, 77.3%, 85.5%, and 100%, respectively. The overall publication curve is presented in Figure 3. The median publication rates within two years of the first, second, third and fourth the MSUST were 11 (-2-24) months, 10 (-2-24) months, 8 (-2-24) and 7 (-2-24) months, respectively (p=0.192).

Oral presentations, laboratory studies and multicenter studies recorded the highest publication rates in their categories (37%, 67.6%, and 46.5%, respectively). Publication rates by presentation type, study type and study center are given in Table 3. More than half of the abstract topics were in the fields of urooncology and endourology. Abstracts related to andrology, pediatric urology and transplantation had a higher ratio in overall publications than in overall abstracts. The abstract and publication rates by subspecialty are presented in Table 4.

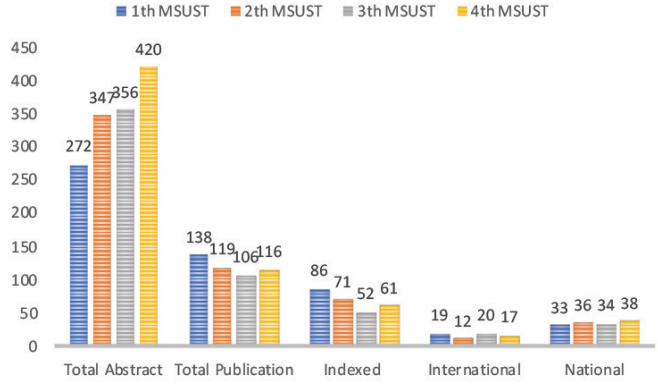

Figure 1. Total abstracts and publications

MSUST: Meetings of the Society of Urological Surgery in Turkey

Table 1. Publication rates

Parameters	1st MSUST	2nd MSUST	3rd MSUST	4th MSUST
Overall publication	138 (50.7%)	119 (33.4%)	106 (28.2%)	116 (26.9%)
Follow up, month	96	72	48	24
Indexed publication	86 (31.6%)	71 (19.9%)	52 (13.8%)	61 (14.1%)
International publication	19 (7%)	12 (3.4%)	20 (5.3%)	17 (3.9%)
Turkish publication	33 (12.1%)	36 (10.1%)	34 (9%)	38 (8.8%)

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Discussion

Meeting of Urological Surgery in Turkey (MSUST) is a biannual scientific meeting held with national and international participation since 2012. The congress keeps attendees up-to-date with the most recent scientific developments, and also serves as a platform for the debate of the key topics in the field. The event facilitates discussion of the received abstracts and the follow-up of new publications, serving as an environment for scientific nourishment, and researchers and other participants compile and submit their abstract papers accordingly. Over the last few years, the publication rates of abstracts sent to such meetings have gained increasing value (5), while studies in this field have sought to clarify the reasons for rejecting abstracts that fail to get published. It is generally accepted that a high publication rate of the studies presented at such congresses would be a point of significant prestige for such meetings and the organizing institutions. A number of noteworthy urological institutions, such as the European Association of Urology and the American Urology Association, like societies that focus on other specializations, share the publication rates of the studies presented at their meetings (1,2).

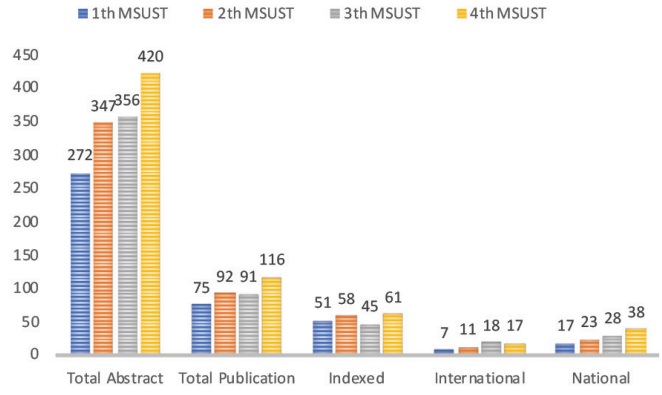

Figure 2. Total abstracts and publications within two years

MSUST: Meetings of the Society of Urological Surgery in Turkey

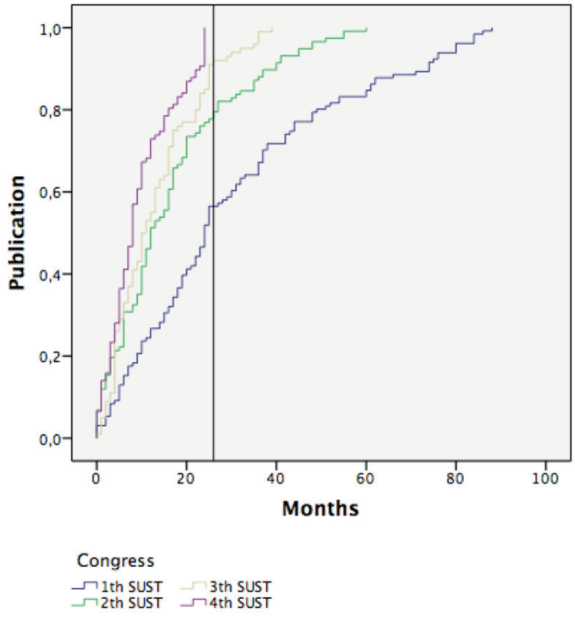

Figure 3. Publication curves for the four MSUSTs

MSUST: Meetings of the Society of Urological Surgery in Turkey

The publication rate from the 2000 European Association of Urology meeting was 55 percent with a mean time of 17 months (6). For the meetings of the European Society for Pediatric Urology (ESPU) (2003-2010) the publication rate was 47 percent, 65 percent within the first two years (7). Autorino et al. (8) reported a 20.5 percent publication rate for the 2001 and 2002 World Congress of Endourology (WCE), with a mean publication time of 14.6 months (maximum 48 months), although 80 percent of the publications were within 24 months. The authors' investigation of randomized controlled studies following the 2004, 2005, and 2006 WCE revealed a publication rate of 47.3 percent (45/94), with 16.4 months being the mean publication time (9). The publication rate was 22.1 percent within a mean of 13 months (1-45 months) following the annual 2002 and 2004 Societè Internationale d'Urologie meetings (10). The same ratio was 61.6 percent for podium or oral presentations with an 11-month median publication time for the 2003 International Continence Society (ICS) Meeting (11).

Publication rates were also investigated at several Turkish scientific meetings. The authors revealed a publication rate of 10.8 percent within an average of 11.77 months (1-33 months) for one a well-known Turkish urology meeting - the Turkish National Urology Congress - based on a search of the PubMed, Google Scholar and Scopus databases (12). The publication rates were 28, 21.9, and 34.5 percent for the Turkish National

Table 2. Publication rates in two years

Parameters	1st MSUST	2nd MSUST	3rd MSUST	4th MSUST
Overall publication	75 (27.6%)	92 (25.8%)	91 (24.2%)	116 (26.9%)
Indexed publication	51 (18.8%)	58 (16.3%)	45 (12%)	61 (14.1%)
International publication	7 (2.6%)	11 (3.1%)	18 (4.8%)	17 (3.9%)
Turkish publication	17 (6.2%)	23 (6.5%)	28 (7.4%)	38 (8.8%)
Median time to publication	11 (-2-24)	10 (-2-24)	8 (-2-24)	7 (-2-24)

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Rhinology Congress, the Turkish National Otorhinolaryngology and Head & Neck Surgery and the National Congress of Gynecology and Obstetrics, respectively (13-15). A search of the abstracts was made from the PubMed, Turkmedline and Ulakbim National databases, and the median times until publication were less than 24 months in all studies. The publication rate for the first MSUST congress was reported in a previous study involving a search of the PubMed and SCI-E databases to be 28.3 percent, with a mean time of 21.1 months (16), although the authors did not specify the time periods and level of compatibility between the paper and abstract. In the present study, the overall publication rate was found to be 33.4% and the same rate in two years was 26 percent. While examining the publication rates within the first two-year period, the publication rates in Turkish journals followed annual upwards trend (from 6.2% to 8.8%), some of which may be submissions of studies to Turkish journals after being rejected by indexed journals, but may also be attributed to the criteria set forth by the Turkish Council of Higher Education.

In this study, oral presentations were found to have better publication rates than poster presentations, while the most publications by study type, from high to low, were laboratory, prospective and case report studies. Multicenter studies recorded higher publication rates than the other forms, and studies linked to private hospitals had a higher rate of publication than those of university hospitals. It was interesting to note that the number of abstracts received from private hospitals was very low. As Scherer et al. (5) suggested in their systematic review, studies with positive results and larger sample sizes, those dealing with basic sciences, and oral presentations, randomized clinical trials, multicenter studies and authors from academic settings had significant effects on publication rates.

Table 3. Publication rates according to presentation type, study type and study center

Parameters		Total abstracts	Publications
Presentation type	Oral presentation	494	183 (37%)
	Poster presentation	794	276 (34.8%)
	Poster	148	20 (13.5%)
Study type	Prospective	212	101 (47.6%)
	Retrospective	912	280 (30.7%)
	Laboratory	74	50 (67.6%)
	Case report	238	48 (20.2%)
Center of study	University	765	233 (30.5%)
	Multicenter	228	106 (46.5%)
	Training and research hospital	334	116 (23.3%)
	Public hospital	69	10 (14.5%)
	Private hospital	40	14 (35%)

Table 4. Abstract and publication rates by subspecialty

Subspecialty	In abstract	In publication	Rate of publication/ abstract
Andrology	12%	16%	45.7% (85/186)
Pediatric urology	11%	12%	37.6% (62/165)
Transplantation	2%	3%	35.9% (14/39)
Continence	17%	16%	32.1% (85/265)
Urooncology	35%	32%	31.1% (171/549)
Endourology	23%	21%	31.8% (113/355)

As mentioned earlier, many institutions and congress organizers report their own publication rates, but when it comes to the comparison of such statistics, science is still taking its baby steps, and there may be many reasons for this, such as the differences in the time period, the differences in different studies, the search criteria, the databases in which the abstracts are scanned, and the level of compatibility between the papers and abstracts. Despite these setbacks, although a comparison is prevented, publication rates can still provide us with a gross estimation of the significance of a meeting. This is at the heart of the need to standardize such criteria as the databases scanned and the various publication qualifications, and a fixed time period must be established. In this study, the four different meetings, although recording different median times, were assessed with a time period shorter than two years, and the publication rates within these two years were found to be similar. Even for the first meeting, which had the longest follow-up time, more than half the publications were made within the first two years. Taking this into consideration, we believe that any given meeting should announce their publication rates for a fixed time frame, and that this should be set at 2 years. This might be attributed to the fact that corresponding authors started to lose motivation to publish their studies after 2 years of attempts.

Another important criterion that needs to be included could be the acceptance rate of submitted abstracts. The lower the acceptance rate the publication rate would be expected to be higher. Generally, studies that are rejected by a congress are not submitted for publication, which may be due to the reluctance of the author to resubmit the study for further assessment in fear or further rejection (17). Interestingly, the authors claimed that this pessimism was not associated with the study quality, originality, sample size, design or results (17). Studies published before scientific meetings are also not submitted to journals for several reasons. Studies rejected by congresses would likely be declined by journals due to the more rigorous peer-review process associated with indexed journals than scientific meetings. Following the rejection by a journal, some authors choose not to submit their studies to other journals (18). Another factor is that authors may not have sufficient time to

prepare a manuscript for publication (18), and some abstracts are prepared specifically for scientific meetings rather than not for journals. The most important reason for this situation is that training programs often pay for the travel costs for national congresses (1).

Study Limitations

The main limitation of this study is its lack of inclusion of rejected studies and its subsequent failure to offer insight into why they remained unpublished. In contrast, the most significant aspect of this study is the information it provides regarding the context of studies and their publication rates following a scientific meeting.

Conclusion

MSUST congresses have a comparable publication rate compared with many other prestigious international meetings, and this rate continues to increase. There is a need to define a threshold for the comparison of the publication rates of such events, and 2 years should be considered appropriate in this regard.

Ethics

Ethics Committee Approval: Some studies that do not require ethical approval include those involving information freely available in the public domain.

Informed Consent: Not necessary.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Authorship Contributions

Concept: M.A., H.S.D., Design: M.A., H.S.D., S.T., Data Collection or Processing: M.A., A.K., K.E.B., P.S., A.C.B., Analysis or Interpretation: M.A., H.S.D., Literature Search: M.A., H.S.D., Writing: M.A., H.S.D., S.T.

Conflict of Interest: No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

Financial Disclosure: The authors declare that they have no relevant financial.

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