

Editorial 33(2): (i) IIER's 2022 review outcomes; (ii) Approaching IIER's first one third of a century

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This Editorial begins with IIER's usual annual presentation of the details of article review outcomes, now covering eight years, 2015 to 2022 (Table 1). This Editorial's second section proposes that we celebrate an "under-represented" anniversary.

(i) IIER's 2022 review outcomes

Table 1: Article review outcomes IIER 2015-22

Year of receipt	No. rec'd	No. rejected editorially (a)	No. reject ext review (b)	No. with-drawn (c)	No. accept (d)	No. publ-ished (e)	% accep-ted (f)	Date fin-alised (g)
2022	645	525 (81.4%)	43 (6.7%)	6 (0.9%)	71	82	11.0%	17/04/23
2021	662	531 (80.2%)	39 (5.9%)	6 (0.9%)	86	73	13.0%	30/05/22
2020	670	556 (83.0%)	40 (6.0%)	2 (0.3%)	72	80	10.7%	13/04/21
2019	475	365 (76.8%)	48 (10.1%)	7 (1.5%)	55	71	11.6%	03/04/20
2018	469	349 (74.4%)	44 (9.4%)	6 (1.3%)	70	60	14.9%	20/05/19
2017	306	205 (67.0%)	33(10.8%)	3 (1.0%)	65	50	21.2%	24/04/18
2016	196	116 (59.2%)	28 (14.3%)	5 (2.5%)	47	40	24.0%	17/04/17
2015	124	75 (60.5%)	2 (1.6%)	4 (3.2%)	43	31	34.7%	22/04/16

- a. Review advice composed by IIER editorial staff.
- b. Review advice composed by IIER's external review process. Note that for both categories a. and b. some of the rejected articles may appear again as receivals later in the same year or in a subsequent year. The reasons for counting these instances as rejections are to enable a clearer cut off for each year's outcomes, and to align data collection with the editorial advice, used in a small but important proportion of cases, 'Reject. Invite resubmission of a revised or expanded work for a new review process', or similar.
- c. Withdrawn means withdrawn at the request of the authors.
- d. The number of articles accepted from a particular year's receivals does not correspond to the number published in each year (column 7), owing to time taken for review and revisions, and fluctuations in the speed of these processes.
- e. The number published in a calendar year.
- f. % accepted = No. accepted x 100/No. received
- g. Date of completion of the year's advice to authors on rejection or acceptance.

After eight years, perhaps Table 1 could be showing us a very tentative glimpse of a "steady state" characterised by a self-imposed cap of about 80 articles published per year from about 660 submissions per year, resulting in an acceptance rate of about 12%. We do need a "steady state", though it does lead to disappointments, as illustrated in this excerpt from IIER editorial correspondence:

Hello Dr [redacted],

You have sought a review of our review advice concerning your submission (numbered #[redacted] in our logging system) and I have undertaken that duty. After another reading, I regret to advise a confirmation of our [date redacted] advice.

I use the phrase "regret to advise" for two main reasons. Firstly, we can give positive advice (i.e. acceptance advice) for only a relatively small proportion of submissions. Our acceptance rate is becoming consistently about 12% and we are very likely to retain our cap of about 20 articles per issues or about 80 per year.

Secondly, we do make frequent use of the sentence "Owing to time constraints and recent high numbers of submissions, our editorial staff advice cannot offer a comprehensive description of all the possibilities for improving a submission, to attain publication in IIER or similar international journals." Frequent, which is a regrettable admission that we cannot do more under the current circumstances. A severe rationing has to be imposed, otherwise the "wait time" in queues can "blow out" (Australian idioms). Editor fatigue with long queues is a very real problem for educational research journals worldwide, especially in cases such as IIER which has become "exposed" owing to our policies of open access, no article processing charges, and a reputation for trying to provide mentoring advice, in contrast to many other journals that give rejects without any formative advice.

For more detail on IIER editorial activities, including capacity problems, please see: <http://www.iier.org.au/about/iier-contents-editorials.html>

We reiterate the invitation to browse in the IIER website's editorial contents file, at <http://www.iier.org.au/about/iier-contents-editorials.html> [1]. To add a little to the "broad suite of recent actions" listed in Editorial 30(2) [2], sometimes we now have a month (hopefully only infrequently) during which we have to use template advice that is intended to reduce "wait time" to no more than several days:

Thank you for your submission to *Issues in Educational Research*. However we regret to inform you that, owing to the very large number of articles we are currently receiving and the problem of long queues waiting for responses, we are unable to consider any new submissions at present.

Please send your article to another journal.

Our best wishes for your endeavours.

(ii) Approaching IIER's first one third of a century

IIER's first quarter century was celebrated in 2015, marked by Editorial 25(4) [3]. Our first half century will be celebrated, we hope, in 2040. However, as 2040 is "far, far away", we could put something into the gap by celebrating IIER's first one third of a century. There is a little difficulty here in the English language, because "quarter century" and "half century" are precise and readily understood, but there seems to be no equivalent and accepted term for the "first one third of a century". One could argue that IIER 33(2), this issue, is closer to the one-third mark than IIER 33(1), or 33(3), but IIER 33(3) may sound better when reading aloud, being "all threes", so it can be nominated as the celebratory issue, target date for publication September 2023.

There is another, very positive and quite appealing association for thirty-three and one third years. Because 33.333 ... is a recurring decimal number, for which characteristics include "repeats forever"; "never ends"; "infinitely repeated"; "keeps on infinitely"; and "repeated over and over again forever". Thank you Dr Google [4], these are helpful encouragements or even (very hopefully) accurate and highly motivating forecasts for the future of IIER as a small scale, independently published, zero APC (article publishing charge), open access educational research journal.

At present, IIER Editorial 33(3) has no clearly defined topics, or themes, or reflections. Suggestions would be welcomed. However, let's rule out further mention of "editor fatigue", because there is, very unfortunately, such a vast number of people in the world who are being subjected to other kinds of "fatigue" that are much more momentous than "editor fatigue". So, instead of "fatigue", let's use an optimistic perspective from Curtin University [5], "look ever forward".

References

1. IIER (2023). Contents of IIER editorials. <http://www.iier.org.au/about/iier-contents-editorials.html>
2. Atkinson, R. (2020). Editorial 30(2): (i) IIER's 2019 review outcomes; (ii) Unprecedented. *Issues in Educational Research*, 30(2), ii-ix. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier30/editorial30-2.html>
3. Atkinson, R., McBeath, C. & Power, A. (2015). Editorial 25(4): Surfing the waves of change in IIER's first 25 years. *Issues in Educational Research*, 25(4), ii-vi. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier25/editorial25-4.html>
4. Copy and paste the following web address and search string into your web reader address box:
<https://www.google.com.au/search?q=maths+recurring+decimal>
5. Curtin University (2017). *Look ever forward*. [viewed 24 June 2023] <http://50years.curtin.edu.au/look-ever-forward/>

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