

anzjs@statsoc.org.au

Editors' Report ANZJS

The ANZJS editorial team for 2011-12 was Stephen Haslett (Managing Editor), Martin Hazelton and Michael Martin (Theory and Methods Editors), Alan Welsh (Applications Editor), Neville Bartlett (Technical Editor), and Petra Graham (Book Review Editor). Stephen Haslett stepped down on 1 July 2012. Alan Welsh is the new Managing Editor. James Curran has taken over as Applications Editor.

The editorial team ran a phased changeover beginning March 2012. Alan Welsh took over the responsibility for all new submissions plus ANZJS activities up to final acceptance of papers. Stephen Haslett continued with overall responsibility for production, some ongoing matters from 2011 and the papers for which he is handling editor. James Curran also started in March with a phased introduction to the Applications Editor task. This has worked very well and is a good way of managing changes to the editorial team.

The Editors held the annual editors' face-to-face meeting at ANU in Canberra in November 2011 as well as regular skype meetings through the year. These have proved useful in supplementing informal email discussions on pressing issues.

The ScholarOne Manuscripts package we are using for electronic paper submission is working well. It has significantly improved tracking and handling of papers in comparison with the previous, fragmented Excel based method. Nonetheless, we plan to carry out a review of our experience with the system and make some fine tuning adjustments at the next face-to-face meeting.

Book reviews are going well with reviews now appearing in each issue. The Editors have extended invitations to five authors to write invited papers. Such papers tend to have wider readership and a positive effect on the visibility of the journal. It is only by improving the quality of submitted papers that ANZJS can further increase its quality. At present there is a high volume of submissions, but around 40% of these are obviously unsuitable for publication, either because they are minor variations on a known statistical theory, or because they are applications that use only very standard statistical methods. The editors continue to affirm that ANZJS should not become a journal of record for papers that provide only a small increment to statistical knowledge. The editorial aim is to focus on the standard of ANZJS rather than attempt to manipulate impact factor or any other such publication measure, and to focus editorial effort on those papers most likely to be published.

The updated Impact Factor for ANZJS over the last three years was 0.650 in 2008, 0.814 in 2009 and 0.618 in 2010 (ISI Journal Citation Reports, 2008, 2009, 2010). The journal rank was 57/99 in 2009 and 78/110 in 2010. The 2011 figures are not yet available, but considerable variability in these measures is expected, because they are very sensitive to particular papers being in the time window and because ANZJS publishes only thirty or so papers annually. The five year impact factor, which for 2010 stood at 0.811, may be a generally better indicator for statistics journals

given the long lead time required for research, writing and publication. This is particularly so for ANZJS because the longer period means a greater number of papers is included in the longer term measure. The Immediacy Index for 2010 was 0.074. Again, the corresponding figures 2011 are not yet available.

ANZJS is getting better electronic coverage. Online usage continues to increase with over 20,000 uses of full text articles in both 2009 (20483) and 2010 (20683) (Source: Wiley-Blackwell).

The journal has enough papers accepted for publication for all the 2012 issues. Exact acceptance rates are difficult to calculate, because papers submitted in a given year are not generally those published in the same period. However, the current estimate is 10%, based on approximately 327 papers submitted and 32 accepted between 21 June 2011 and 21 June 2012. While this seems a comparatively low acceptance rate, as noted above, around 40% of papers are rejected as either out of scope because they lack a statistical focus, or because they are only minor additions to theory, or because they are reports of applications that use only basic statistical methodology.

The ANZJS Editors continue to encourage all members of SSAI and NZSA to submit sound, original papers in any of the following four categories: Applications, Theory and Methods, Reviews, and Historical and General Interest.

Late last year, Alan Welsh attended a meeting organised by Wiley-Blackwell on Publication Ethics. ANZJS is a member of The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) which promotes best practice in handling difficult ethical issues. The guidelines provided by COPE have proved very useful in dealing with an authorship dispute, a complaint about a book review and a case of plagiarism, fortunately discovered on submission rather than later in the process. All three cases have been or are nearly resolved.

There have been major changes in the Wiley-Blackwell editorial personnel linked with ANZJS over recent years. From being an Australian based operation, in 2010-11, copyediting production moved to Singapore, with overview and marketing in the United Kingdom. A further new copyeditor in Melbourne has recently replaced the UK-based copyeditor. These ongoing changes have provided challenges for the editors, who have made a collective decision that publication standards will take precedence over having quarterly journal issues published to a tightly pre-specified timetable. We had hoped to get back on publication schedule by end-2011, but continued personnel changes at Wiley-Blackwell have meant that this has not been possible.

On balance, although recognising it must remain an ongoing process, the editorial panel are currently pleased with the editorial operation and general direction of the journal. This favourable assessment would not be possible without the support and assistance of the associate editors and the referees, and the overview provided by the ANZJS Management Committee. The editorial panel would like to thank these people, as well as the authors, for their effort and their ongoing contribution to ANZJS.

Stephen Haslett
ANZJS Managing Editor

Alan Welsh
ANZJS Managing Editor Designate

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