EDITORIAL

IJO & HNS - AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

Now that I have run the journal as its editor for one complete year, I presume it is prudent to share with you some facts and figures after a thorough analysis of our academic treasury (i.e. your articles) and our financial position. The former is directed to the readers and the contributors of the scientific articles in the journal, and the later to the proprietors of the journal i.e. the members of AOI.

My primary objectives have been to :-

1. Publish as many of the approved articles, as possible, in each issue so that the stupendous backlog of articles approved for publication long back, but yet unpublished, is reduced .
2. Bring out an attractive but not gaudy, and sober but not dull journal, in which the quality of printing and paper is such that the intricacies of medical photographs are not blurred. Our journal is the only official scientific publication of AOI, and an attractive journal (not only in contents but also in looks) will enhance the prestige of our association.
3. Raise as much money as possible from advertisements and sponsorships.
4. Get for the journal its due share of money from the AOI, and if possible, increase it further.

Table I shows that the number of articles published has been significantly increased (65% increased over last year) in the year 2000 (Volume - 52). This is essential to reduce the huge backlog of unpublished articles. Table III shows that we have a backlog of nearly 250 articles waiting for publication. If the articles accepted for publication till March 2001 is considered alongwith the backlog will be of about 300 articles.

In the March 2000 issue (the first issue brought out by me), I had to print articles which had been approved for publication as back as 1993-1994. In all the subsequent issues there are some articles which have been waiting for publication for more than 5 years or so. Out of the 25 articles in this issue (Vol 53 No. 1), only 10 are recent articles, 15 are articles approved between 1995 to 1999. The year-wise break-up of articles accommodated in this issue (Vol 53 No.I) is shown in Table II. This delay in publishing the articles of our contributors is detrimental to the very purpose for which AOI publishes the journal . The purpose of publishing the journal, is to present to the scientific community, the research work done by the

Table- I : Number of scientific papers published in each issue of the journal for the last 9 years.

Year	Mar	June	Sept	Dec	Total Articles
1992	14	15	16	17	62
1993	16	20	20	18	74
1994	12	10	16	20	58
1995	13	11	17	14	55
1996	17	15	22	19	73
1997*	19	20	14	20	73
1998	23	15	22	17	77
1999*	21	15	23	19	78
2000	38	30	37	22	127

* A special issue had been brought out in 97 and 99 in each of which about 17-18 articles had been published.

Table -II : Break-up of articles in this issue (March 2001) according to the year of acceptance of the articles.

Year of acceptance	No. of Articles
1995	5 Articles
1996	1 Article
1997	2 Articles
1998	1 Article
1999	6 Articles
2000	9 Articles
2001	1 Article

Indian otolaryngologists. By keeping somebody's scientific work unpublished for an unreasonably long time, we are only delaying the exposure of the author's scientific work and making it stale. This deprives the researcher of his due credit for the research work he has done. The same work, if done by somebody else in a different part of the world and published in some foreign journal will take away

Table-III : Break-up of articles received by the journal office over the last 6 years.

Year	Published already	Rejected	Accepted but not yet published	Not yet received from referee	Not yet received from author after revision	Total Articles
1995	79	14	9	1	3	106
1996	100	13	2		1	116
1997	122	25	11	4	8	170
1998	64	15	61	6	8	154
1999	47	28	93	14	20	202
2000	33	38	68	18	17	174

the credit of the Indian otolaryngologist because we have not been able to expose his scientific work at the proper time. The credibility of the scientific work is lost if it is not published within a reasonable time. The only way to do this is either to shove in more articles in each issue of the journal (at least 35 articles per issue) or reject more articles so that the number of articles accepted for publication each year, does not exceed 80-85 (at present this is about 140). The latter option is best avoided as IJO&HNS is the only officially recognised scientific forum where the work of Indian otolaryngologists (many of whom do not have the infrastructure for writing articles in the standards acceptable by reputed foreign journals) can be published. Table III shows the analysis of our academic treasury. It is evident that the number of

unpublished articles keep on increasing every year by leaps and bounds.

Table IV shows the number of articles that we have been receiving each year since 1995. A very alarming finding from this table is that the number of articles submitted to the journal last year has come down. This is unfortunate and indicates that our contributors are sending their articles to foreign journals as no genuine researcher will want to wait for 4 -5 years to see his scientific work in print . Articles submitted to foreign journals are published just within 8-10 months in most cases. So, the best scientific work of our Indian otolaryngologists is not unreasonably being drained to the foreign journals. We must try and put a stop to this and ensure that IJO&HNS gets priority among Indian otolaryngologists for publication of their best scientific work. This will be possible only if the waiting period between acceptance and publication is reduced and for this we will have to publish more articles in each issue. That our journal IJO & HNS is held in very high esteem by our readers and contributors is borne out by the fact that in the 127 articles published in the 4 issues in the year 2000, references of IJO & HNS have been cited 44 times (Table VII). This is inspite of the fact that articles published in our journal had not been available in the internet so long.

Table -IV : Number of articles received from 1995 to 2000.

Year	Articles Received
1995	106
1996	116
1997	170
1998	154
1999	202
2000	174

Table II shows only 33 articles out of 174 articles submitted last year have been published so far (including 9 in this issue). To ensure that our journal does not look stale and back-dated, I try to reserve 30% of the pages in each issue for current articles i.e. articles received in the last 6 months. The rest 70% space is used up in clearing the backlog of pending articles. Once the backlog is reduced to a reasonable level, the popular columns like medical education, drug-news, words of wisdom, journal scan, notable men etc. can be started again. At this stage,

Table - V : The rising cost of posting each journal since 1995. It shows the tremendous increase in postal charges.

Year	March	June	Sept	Dec
1995	Rs.1.00	Rs.1.00	Rs.1.00	Rs.1.00
1996	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.50
1997	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.50
1998	Rs.1.50	Rs.1.10	Rs.1.05	Rs.1.65
1999	Rs.1.65	Rs.5.15	Rs.5.10	Rs.5.10
2000	Rs.9.00	Rs.5.00	Rs.7.00	Rs.5.30

■ March ■ June ■ September ■ December

Table - VI: Costs Incurred in Publishing each issue of the journal in 2000.

Volume	Paper	Printing	Posting+ Envelope	Total Cost
March	Rs.93,000	Rs.50,000	Rs.30,333.80	Rs1,73,333.80
June	Rs.78,000	Rs.41,800	Rs.17,235.00	Rs.1,37,035.60
Sept.	Rs.1,05,000	Rs.56,000	Rs.23,798.40	Rs.1,84,798.40
Dece.	Rs.65,000	Rs.35,000	Rs.18,000.00	Rs.1,18,000.00

The charges incurred in the March 2000 and Sept 2000 issues are high as the number of articles published in them is 38 and 37 respectively which is nearly double the number of articles published in each issue.

Table - VII : Some Interesting Figures:-

Total of Pages Printed in Vol.52 - 426
Cost of each Page Printed(average)-Rs.1439.35
Total No. of Articles Printed in Vol.52 - 127
Cost of Printing each Article (average) - Rs.4716.68
Cost of Sending an Article to Referee for review : Rs40/-
Cost of Printing 1-4 pages in Color - Rs. 3600/- extra
No. of times references of IJO&HNS cited in IJO & HNS in Vol.52:-23(Mar)+1(Jun)+4(Sept)+16(Dec)= 44 times.

when we have such a huge number of scientific articles waiting for publication, it would be injudicious and extravagant to utilise pages for these columns. The priority

of the journal is to publish the research work of our Indian otolaryngologists.

The Tables V and VI depict various aspects involved in running the journal which show the spiralling costs with which the journal has to cope with. The costs are exorbitant. The prices of paper, printing, postage and also manpower have gone up tremendously over the last 2-3 years. Until some drastic steps are taken to augment the income of IJO&HNS, there will be an acute financial crisis. Shortage of funds will lead to less number of articles being published. The backlog will hence increase. The bigger the backlog, more will be the period a contributor will have to wait to see his article published in the journal. This will result in our members sending their articles to foreign journals, thereby depriving our own journal of their best work. Moreover, our journal will also look backdated

Table- VIII : Amount of revenue obtained from advertisements every year since 1995.

Year	Rupees
1994-1995	Rs.41,170/-
1995-1996	Rs.60,600/-
1996-1997	Rs.95,900/-
1997-1998	Rs.35,820/-
1998-1999	Rs.38,760/-
1999-2000	Rs.1,53,310/-
2000-2001	Rs.2,55,334/-

■ REVENUE FROM ADVERTISEMENTS

and substandard if we publish only 4-5 year old articles. This vicious cycle will have to be broken and the only way this can be done is by getting more money from advertisements / sponsorships and by getting more funds from the AOI, if possible. Though the revenue earned from advertisements could be significantly increased in the year

Table-IX : Yearly contribution received from AOI since 94-95, as obtained from the audited accounts of the past 6 financial years.

Year	Contribution of AOI
1994-1995	Rs.2,12,700/-
1995-1996	Rs.2,00,000/-
1996-1997	Rs.4,60,000/-
1997-1998	Rs.3,20,000/-
1998-1999	-
1999-2000	Rs.4,57,066/-
2000-2001	Rs.2,50,000/-*

* Another Rs.50,000/- has been promised by the Hony. Treasurer of AOI which is due to be received very shortly.

2000-2001, (Table VIII) - thanks to the support I received from of our ex-president Dr. K. P. Morwani, yet the contribution from AOI did not increase at all. On the contrary it has been reduced substantially. The contribution of AOI to the journal over the past 6 years has been shown table IX.

The income of the journal needs to be augmented so that the journal can be kept in proper shape and the huge backlog of unpublished articles can be cleared early. I take this opportunity in appealing to our members once again to try to procure some sponsorships / advertisements for IJO&HNS. The only way the income of IJO&HNS can be increased is either by increasing the revenue earned from advertisements, by seeking donations / contributions from the members of AOI, or by AOI contributing more money to IJO&HNS.

The income of the journal in the current financial year (from 01-04-00) till date (25/03/01) is shown in table X. To augment the funds of IJO&HNS, the members of AOI had resolved in the annual general meeting of AOI held on

Table - X : The income of IJO & HNS (Corrected till 25/03/01)

1. From Advertisements -	Rs. 2,55,334/-
2. AOI's Contribution -	Rs. 2,50,000/-
3. Printing of Figures / Tables -	Rs. 31,525/-
4. From subscribers -	Rs. 69,970/-
5. Donation from Research & Education Foundation by Dr. L. H. Hiranandani -	Rs. 50,000/-

and printing of photographs in the journal. The new charges as fixed by the members of AOI at the above-mentioned meeting is Rs.2000/-. This will include 5 reprints and free printing of 2 figures or 2 tables or 1 figure and 1 table. Though this will give some breathing space to IJO&HNS, yet this is probably a bit too harsh to our junior colleagues who have just entered the profession. I hope they too will accept this decision of AOI gracefully in the best interest of IJO&HNS. If our members can pool in their resources and procure more advertisements / sponsorships for the journal, or if AOI can increase its contribution, this hike in charges for printing of figures / tables and for reprints can be scaled down, partially at least.

If the number of articles published in the journal every year is kept at 70-75 articles only as was being done over the past 8 years (see Table 1) the amount of money obtained from AOI would be sufficient. But if the backlog is to be cleared i.e. if we have to publish above 125 articles every year (which I believe is necessary to do justice to our contributors), ways and means of enhancing the income of IJO&HNS will have to be sought. The decision of the AOI members at the AGM in Chandigarh is only a step in that direction.

This has been a rather very unconventional editorial. The purpose of presenting this non-academic data to you is to give you an insight into the running of the journal. A feedback from you will help your editor in formulating future strategies and in identifying the priorities.

Dr. Anirban Biswas
(Editor)