

Peer review: An underappreciated academic exercise

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Happy New Year 2024!

On behalf of the IJDVL editorial team, I wish all the esteemed readers, reviewers, contributors, and publishing staff a very happy and blessed 2024. As my first year as an editor of IJDVL comes to a close, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude, and I hope to receive your continuous support and encouragement in the coming years as well. At the same time, I also wish to reflect on a very important yet underappreciated exercise of peer reviewing articles. Having been the author and peer reviewer for several journal articles and now an editor of IJDVL, I have come to see the value of peer-reviewing from different perspectives.

A peer reviewer's job comes with huge responsibilities as they must critically analyse a paper regarding its originality, innovation and relevance to the field, study design, methods, analysis and findings. They also screen the manuscript for the inclusion and appropriateness of the literature review, study conclusions, limitations and future directions of research. This requires substantial expertise and knowledge of the latest developments in the field and on a particular topic. Based on the aforesaid directives, suggestions from the reviewers are integrated by the authors into the manuscript to enhance the quality and raise its standard. These comments focus on certain problem areas that deserve special attention in terms of filling a minor gap in the information and generally do not ask for amendments that are beyond repair during the publication process. Reviewers' comments help the editor decide on the acceptance/rejection of the manuscript. Therefore, these constructive comments matter significantly to the authors and journal alike. The second and equally important component of the peer review is the time taken. A timely peer review is crucial in reducing the time taken from submission to publication and is beyond the control of the

editorial and publishing teams.¹ In the last one year, I have felt the need for timely review more than ever before.

The responsibility of reviewing manuscripts is generally entrusted to the senior faculty members/professors from the academic institutes, who may have time constraints because of various academic, administrative and organizational responsibilities. Involvement of the residents/junior consultants/private practitioners is relatively less often encountered. I strongly feel that the disruption of this hierarchy is essential. Reviewing scientific articles is an art to be mastered with practice and time, and it has no set rules or road map. So, anyone with the ability to critically analyse a topic can be a good reviewer. Younger reviewers, as in other medical fields, can be mentored by the experienced ones based on their body of work and field of interest, and this will help to expand the reviewer database.² A thorough scrutiny of all the sections of a manuscript should be aimed at. In my opinion, prolific writers/authors should also contribute to reviewing the articles more often than what is being done at present. It is also relevant to have reviewers with diverse backgrounds and clinical interests from different parts of the world to get a global and broader perspective on a subject.

We at IJDVL sincerely acknowledge the efforts put in by our expert reviewers and appreciate their efforts and contributions in building the reputation of the journal. Peer reviewing is a time-consuming and honorary activity. However, it does come with its own sets of perks, like academic and professional satisfaction, keeping abreast of the latest developments in the field much before it is published, honing one's research and writing skills, and building relations with journals and editors. Needless to add, peer-reviewing the scientific articles for a reputed journal adds to the resume.

New, dynamic, and energetic reviewers with individual sets of expertise are always welcome to join IJDVL. We

How to cite this article: Singal A. Peer review: An underappreciated academic exercise. *Indian J Dermatol Venereol Leprol.* 2024;90:1–2. doi: 10.25259/IJDVL_1356_2023

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Received: December, 2023 **Accepted:** December, 2023 **Published:** December, 2023

DOI: 10.25259/IJDVL_1356_2023 **PMID:** ***

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have initiated the felicitation of chosen reviewers for their exemplary contribution and services to IJDVL from this year onwards. A timely and good review will help us improve the quality of manuscript content and curtail the submission to publication time, which is a much-anticipated goal.³

Long live IJDVL! And Long live IADVL!

Editor in Chief

Dr. Archana Singal

Indian Journal of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology

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