

From foundation to expansion: A descriptive fifteen-year report on the International Journal of Research Studies in Education 2011-2026

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Abstract

The International Journal of Research Studies in Education (IJRSE) has provided a publication venue for educational research since 2011. This editorial report examines the development of the journal from its establishment to its present position using publication, authorship, citation, disciplinary-classification, Sustainable Development Goal, and network data available through July 30, 2026. Two article-level publication exports were merged, resulting in 1,635 unique DOI-identified publications issued between November 2011 and July 2026. Descriptive analyses examined annual publication output, citation visibility, authorship patterns, productive contributors, highly cited publications, Fields of Research (ANZSRC) classifications, Sustainable Development Goal alignment, and citation and co-authorship networks. IJRSE developed through three broad periods: a *foundation and internationalization* period from 2011 to 2019, a *transition and accelerated-growth* period from 2020 to 2023, and a *period of substantial expansion* from 2024 to July 2026. Annual output increased from 10 publications in 2011 to 310 in 2025, while 329 publications had already appeared by July 30, 2026. The complete corpus had accumulated 2,352 citations in the source database, although citations were highly affected by publication age. Education, curriculum and pedagogy, education systems, language and communication, management, psychology, and human society were prominent areas of coverage. Among publications assigned a Sustainable Development Goal, Quality Education was dominant. The findings portray IJRSE as an expanding and increasingly diverse journal, while also identifying priorities involving metadata quality, author-name disambiguation, controlled growth, editorial quality assurance, and continued internationalization.

Keywords: IJRSE, journal development, bibliometric report, educational research, publication growth, VOSviewer, scholarly communication

From foundation to expansion: A descriptive fifteen-year report on the International Journal of Research Studies in Education 2011-2026

1. Introduction

Academic journals are not static publication outlets. Their identities develop over time through the studies they publish, the scholars they engage, the communities they connect, and the educational and social problems to which they respond (Jandrić & Forsler, 2026). A retrospective examination of a journal's publication record can therefore provide more than a numerical summary (Diodato, 1994). It can document the journal's history, identify changes in its scholarly orientation, recognize the contributions of its authors, and clarify priorities for its future development. The International Journal of Research Studies in Education (IJRSE) was established in 2011 as a venue for research addressing education across cultural, disciplinary, institutional, and national contexts. Over its first years, the journal published studies on teaching and learning, language education, higher education, educational administration, student development, curriculum, assessment, and educational change. Its subsequent publication record expanded to include research conducted in a wider range of school systems and educational settings.

1.1 Journal Mission, Scope, and Development

The IJRSE is an international, open-access, peer-reviewed, and multidisciplinary journal that publishes research addressing education across different levels, settings, disciplines, and methodological traditions. The journal welcomes qualitative case studies, quantitative experiments and surveys, mixed-method studies, action research, systematic and scoping reviews, meta-analyses, and scholarly discussions of conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and policy issues (<https://consortiacademia.org/ijrse/>). IJRSE was established not only as a venue for established scholars, but also as an inclusive publication platform for *emerging* researchers. This mission is particularly relevant in contexts where graduate students, early-career academics, classroom teachers, and institutionally based researchers may have limited access to established international publication networks. The journal consequently seeks to combine accessibility and developmental support with expectations concerning originality, ethical integrity, methodological rigor, and educational relevance.

Its scope includes teaching and learning; curriculum and assessment; educational leadership, administration, policy, and governance; teacher education and professional development; educational psychology, guidance, counseling, and student well-being; educational technology, digital learning, and artificial intelligence in education; inclusive, special, Indigenous, and multicultural education; language education, literacy, multilingual education, and language policy; comparative and international education; and educational research methodology and evaluation. Importantly, the journal also recognizes *Filipino* as a language of scholarly knowledge production. It accepts manuscripts written in either English or Filipino, subject to the same standards of academic quality, peer review, originality, and ethical integrity. Filipino-language manuscripts are encouraged to provide English titles, abstracts, and keywords to improve international discoverability and indexing. This policy supports the development of scholarly knowledge in Filipino, while connecting locally grounded research with wider national and international academic communities.

The journal's support for Filipino-language scholarship is consistent with Article XIV, Section 6 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution and Republic Act No. 7104, which encourage the continuing development and scholarly use of Filipino and other Philippine languages. Within this context, IJRSE provides a peer-reviewed and permanently identifiable publication platform through which scholarship written in Filipino can be disseminated beyond its immediate institutional setting.

The journal's development also occurred during a period of substantial change in education and scholarly

communication. Educational institutions experienced expanding internationalization, rapid technological development, intensified attention to quality assurance and student well-being, and, beginning in 2020, the worldwide disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Stracke et al., 2022). More recently, artificial intelligence, digital learning, sustainability, institutional resilience, and concerns about equitable access have become increasingly prominent (Lund et al., 2023). Journals in education have had to respond not only to changing research topics, but also to increasing submission volumes, evolving publication technologies, and heightened expectations concerning research integrity and peer-review quality (Farber, 2025).

Against this background, the present report documents IJRSE's development from its first publications in 2011 through the publications available on July 30, 2026. The report is primarily descriptive and historical. It does not seek to rank IJRSE against other journals or to claim that citation counts alone represent research quality. Instead, it uses the available publication data to portray how the journal has grown, what areas of knowledge it has represented, which publications and contributors have achieved visibility, and what the available evidence suggests about the journal's future direction.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

The general purpose of this report is to describe the development of IJRSE from its foundation to the present. Specifically, it addresses the following questions:

1. How has IJRSE's annual publication output changed between 2011 and July 2026?
2. What citation patterns are visible in the available publication records?
3. What authorship and collaboration patterns characterize the journal?
4. Which authors and publications have been especially productive or visible?
5. What disciplinary fields and Sustainable Development Goals are represented in the available classification data?
6. What broad stages can be identified in the journal's historical development?
7. What implications do these patterns have for the future editorial development of IJRSE?

2. Data and Methods

2.1 Data sources and coverage

The analysis used two article-level publication exports obtained from the journal's records in the Scilit database (<https://www.scilit.com/>). The two files contained 635 and 1,000 records, respectively. After the files were combined, 1,635 publication records remained. All records contained a (Digital Object Identifier) DOI, and no duplicate DOI was found between the two datasets. The records covered publications dated from November 16, 2011, to July 30, 2026. Variables available in the publication exports included publication title, authors, source title, publisher, volume, open-access designation, citation count, DOI, publication date, and Scilit publication-page link. Abstracts and affiliations were unavailable in the article-level exports, while keywords were present for only a minority of records. The two original publication exports served as the master source for calculating annual output and article-level indicators.

Supplementary files provided aggregated author productivity and citation information from Dimensions.AI (<https://www.dimensions.ai/>), Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification 2020 Fields of Research (ANZSRC 2020) assignments, Sustainable Development Goal assignments, and network data generated for visualization. The author-level dataset contained 867 database author profiles. These profiles should not

necessarily be interpreted as 867 fully disambiguated individuals, because the same researcher could appear under different name forms or institutional affiliations.

2.2 Data preparation

The two publication datasets were merged using the DOI as the principal record identifier. Publication years were extracted from the date-published field. Author names separated by line breaks within each record were counted as individual author appearances. Blank entries in the “*Times of Cited*” field were operationally treated as zero citations for the descriptive calculations. This decision reflects the structure of the exported records, in which uncited publications were generally represented by blank citation fields. Citation counts should nevertheless be understood as database-specific and time-dependent. The 2026 figures cover only publications available through *July 30, 2026*. Comparisons between 2026 and complete calendar years should therefore be interpreted carefully. At the same time, the partial-year total provides an important indication of the current scale of the journal’s publication activity.

2.3 Analyses

The following descriptive analyses were conducted:

- number of publications by calendar year and cumulative publication output;
- total citations, mean citations, and the percentage of publications with at least one recorded citation;
- number of authors per publication and the proportions of single-authored and co-authored publications;
- leading publications by citation count and leading authors by publication and citation counts;
- distribution of Fields of Research classifications and Sustainable Development Goal assignments; and
- descriptive examination of researcher citation and co-authorship networks using the supplied VOSviewer exports.

The network figures retain the researcher nodes, links, coordinates, link strengths, and cluster assignments contained in the exported VOSviewer files. VOSviewer is a software environment developed for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). Because the exact export thresholds were not documented in the files, the network results are interpreted as descriptions of the supplied thresholded maps rather than of every author appearing in the full journal corpus. Lastly, a supplementary title-term examination was also conducted to identify broad changes in the subjects represented during three periods: 2011-2019, 2020-2022, and 2023-July 2026. Because abstracts and comprehensive author keywords were unavailable, these observations are treated as indicative rather than as a formal science-mapping or thematic-evolution analysis.

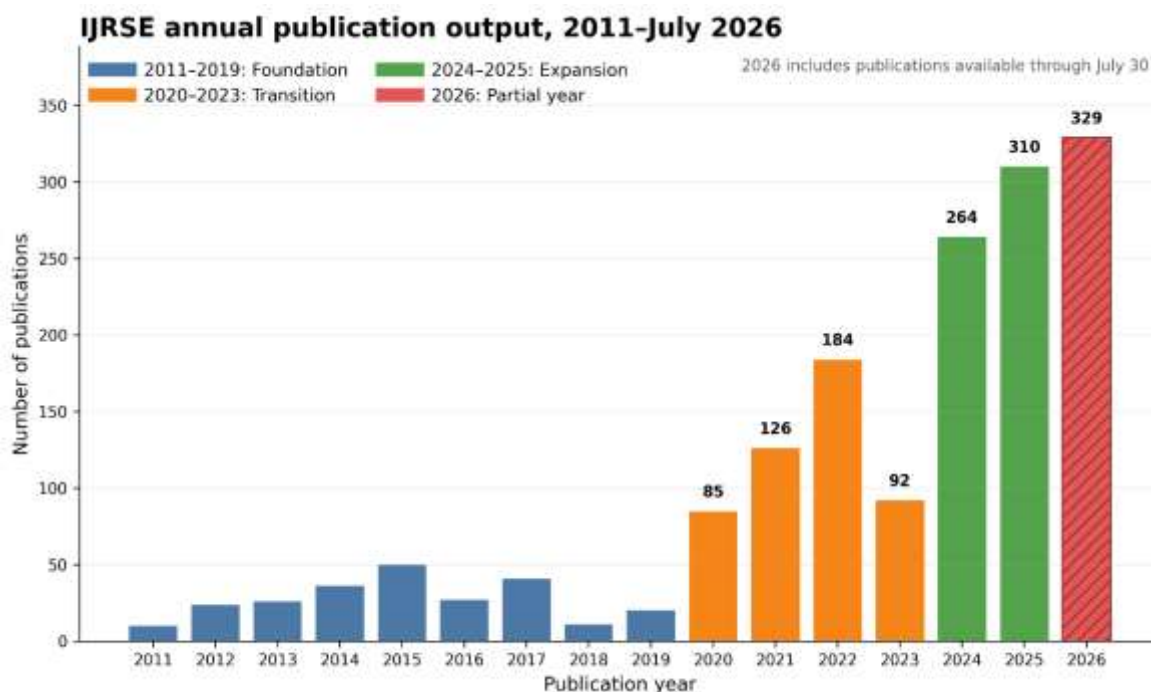
3. Results

3.1 Growth in publication output

A total of 1,635 publications were identified between 2011 and July 2026. Annual output increased considerably across the period, although the growth was not linear. The first nine years, from 2011 to 2019, accounted for 245 publications, or approximately 15.0% of the complete corpus. The seven years beginning in 2020 accounted for 1,390 publications, representing 85.0% of all publications identified in the dataset. The scale of the recent expansion is especially apparent in the period from 2024 to July 2026. These two complete years and one partial year accounted for 903 publications, or 55.2% of all publications issued since the journal began. The 329 publications recorded by July 30, 2026, already exceeded the 310 publications issued during the complete 2025 calendar year.

Table 1*Annual publication output of IJRSE, 2011-July 2026*

Year	Publications
2011	10
2012	24
2013	26
2014	36
2015	50
2016	27
2017	41
2018	11
2019	20
2020	85
2021	126
2022	184
2023	92
2024	264
2025	310
2026 (through July 30)	329
Total	1,635

*Figure 1. IJRSE annual publication output, 2011-July 2026.*

Note. Colors distinguish the three historical phases proposed in the report. The hatched 2026 bar represents publications available only through July 30, 2026.

The annual record suggests three broad developmental periods.

Foundation and internationalization, 2011-2019 - The first period was characterized by modest but generally developing annual output. Publications increased from 10 in 2011 to 50 in 2015, followed by fluctuations from 2016 to 2019. During these years, IJRSE established its international educational orientation and published research from different national and cultural contexts.

Transition and accelerated growth, 2020-2023 - The second period began with a substantial increase to 85 publications in 2020, followed by 126 in 2021 and 184 in 2022. The decrease to 92 publications in 2023 interrupted the upward trend but did not return the journal to its pre-2020 publication scale. The growth during this period coincided with increased educational research activity surrounding online learning, distance education, teaching

during emergencies, school adaptation, educational technology, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Large-scale expansion, 2024-July 2026 - The third period was marked by pronounced expansion. Annual output reached 264 publications in 2024 and 310 in 2025. By July 30, 2026, 329 publications had already been recorded. This growth indicates a substantial increase in the journal's capacity and attractiveness as a publication venue. It also introduces significant editorial responsibilities involving peer-review capacity, publication consistency, metadata management, ethical screening, and quality assurance.

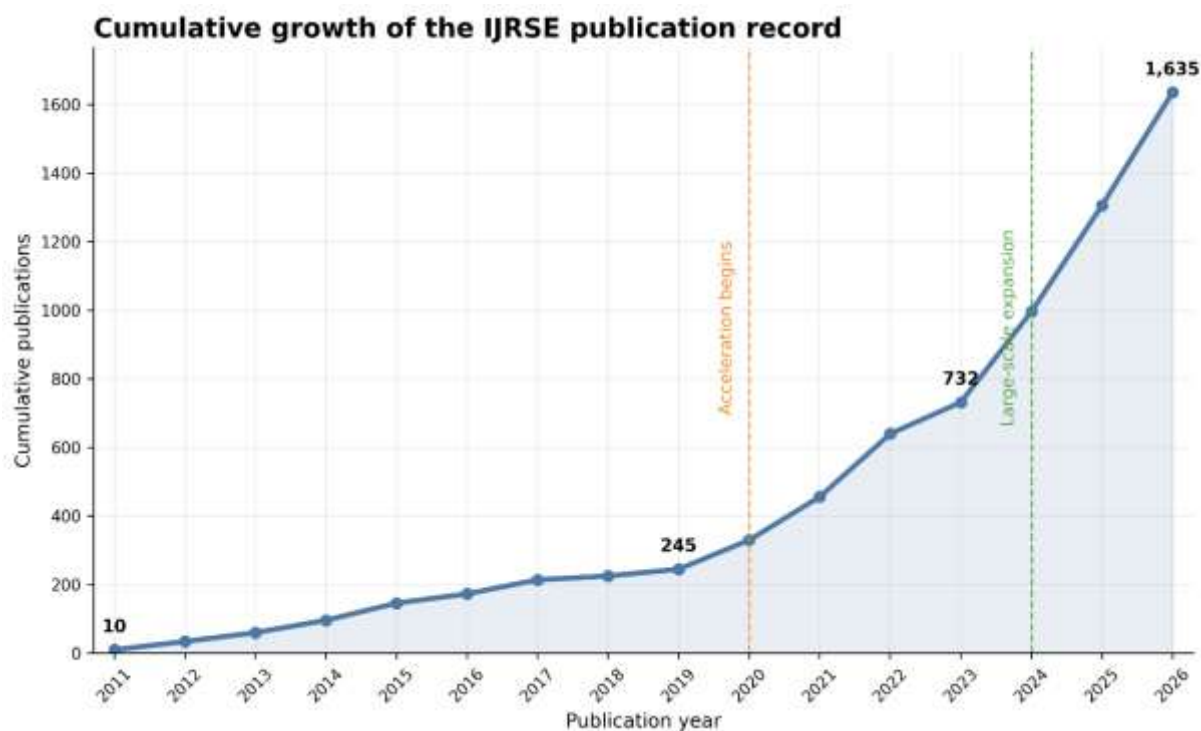


Figure 2. Cumulative growth of the IJRSE publication record.

Note. The cumulative series contains 1,635 DOI-identified publications. Dashed lines indicate the beginning of accelerated growth in 2020 and large-scale expansion in 2024.

3.2 Citation patterns and scholarly visibility

The 1,635 publications had accumulated 2,352 citations in the source records by the data cutoff. When blank citation fields were treated as zero, the corpus had an average of 1.44 citations per publication. A total of 597 publications, or approximately 36.5%, had received at least one recorded citation. These overall figures should not be interpreted without considering publication age. Articles published during the journal's earlier years have had substantially more time to be discovered and cited. In contrast, many publications from 2025 and 2026 had been available for only a few months when the data were collected.

Table 2

Leading IJRSE publications by recorded citation count

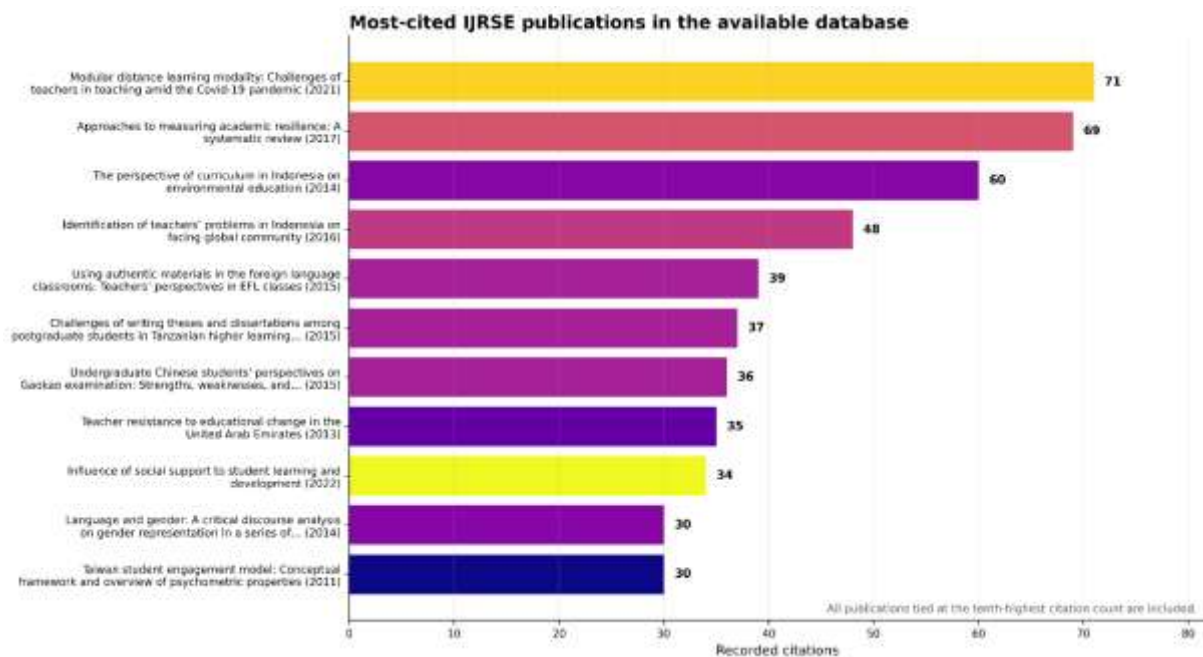
Rank	Year	Publication title	Citations
1	2021	Modular distance learning modality: Challenges of teachers in teaching amid the Covid-19 pandemic	71
2	2017	Approaches to measuring academic resilience: A systematic review	69
3	2014	The perspective of curriculum in Indonesia on environmental education	60
4	2016	Identification of teachers' problems in Indonesia on facing global community	48
5	2015	Using authentic materials in the foreign language classrooms: Teachers' perspectives in EFL classes	39
6	2015	Challenges of writing theses and dissertations among postgraduate students in Tanzanian higher learning institutions	37

Table 2 ...continued

7	2015	Undergraduate Chinese students' perspectives on Gaokao examination: Strengths, weaknesses, and implications	36
8	2013	Teacher resistance to educational change in the United Arab Emirates	35
9	2022	Influence of social support to student learning and development	34
10	2011	Taiwan student engagement model: Conceptual framework and overview of psychometric properties	30
10	2014	Language and gender: A critical discourse analysis on gender representation in a series of international ELT textbooks	30

Note. All publications tied at the tenth-highest citation count are included. Citation counts are specific to the source database and data-collection date.

The highly cited publications represent several recurring areas in the journal: teacher challenges, curriculum, resilience, educational change, language learning, postgraduate education, student support, assessment systems, and responses to educational disruption. The presence of the 2021 modular-distance-learning article at the top of the list also demonstrates the scholarly relevance of research addressing urgent educational conditions.

**Figure 3.** Most-cited IJRSE publications in the available database.

Note. All publications tied at the tenth-highest citation count are included. Citation counts are database- and date-specific and should be interpreted with attention to publication age.

Citation accumulation was concentrated among older publications, as expected. Publications issued between 2011 and 2015 generally had higher average citation counts than those issued after 2022. The low citation rates of recent volumes should, therefore, not be interpreted as evidence of low quality or limited future influence. They primarily reflect the limited period during which these publications have been available.

3.3 Authorship and collaboration

The complete publication corpus contained 3,513 author appearances. The mean number of authors was 2.15 per publication, and the median was two authors. A total of 741 publications, or 45.3%, were single-authored. The remaining 894 publications, or 54.7%, involved two or more authors. These figures suggest that IJRSE has accommodated both individually conducted studies and collaborative research. The author-level data show different forms of contribution. Some researchers were characterized by high publication volume, while others had fewer publications, but comparatively high citation visibility. The database also recorded several contributors with smaller numbers of publications, but high mean citation rates.

Table 3*Leading authors by publication count in the available database*

Author	Publications	Citations
Marbella, F. D.	29	15
Galay-Limos, J. A.	28	4
Vadil, C. F.	24	6
Agustin, A. A.	20	0
Ocampo, I. S.	20	4
Azarias, R. A.	19	20
Ching, G. S.	14	77
Mauhay, R. C. A.	13	2
Moron, B. M.	11	0
Uusiautti, S.	11	70

Note. Author names and counts follow the exported database profiles and have not been completely disambiguated.

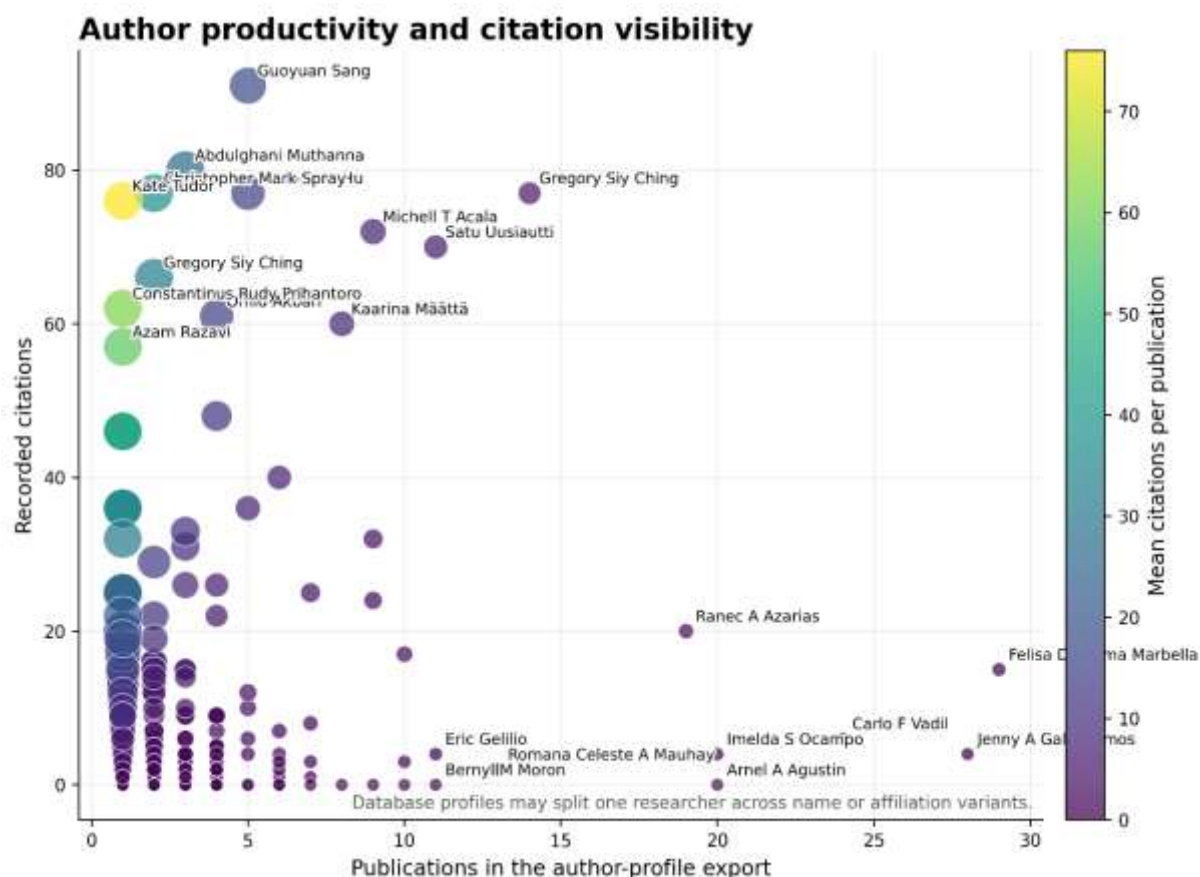


Figure 4. Author productivity and citation visibility.

Note. Each point represents one exported author profile. Point size and shading reflect mean citations per publication. Profiles may contain unresolved name and affiliation variants.

These results must be treated cautiously, because the database occasionally separated the same author into multiple profiles. Changes in *institutional affiliation*, the *use of middle names or initials*, *spelling differences*, and *name-order variations* could cause a single researcher's output to be divided among different entries. Author-name standardization and ORCID integration would improve future analyses.

3.4 Citation and co-authorship networks

Figure 5 presents the researcher citation network generated from the supplied VOSviewer export. The network contained 66 researcher nodes, 128 citation links, and 10 clusters. All displayed researchers belonged to one connected network, although the map showed several visually distinguishable communities. Node size represents

the number of publications associated with a researcher profile, node color represents cluster membership, and line thickness represents the strength of citation relationships.

IJRSE researcher citation network

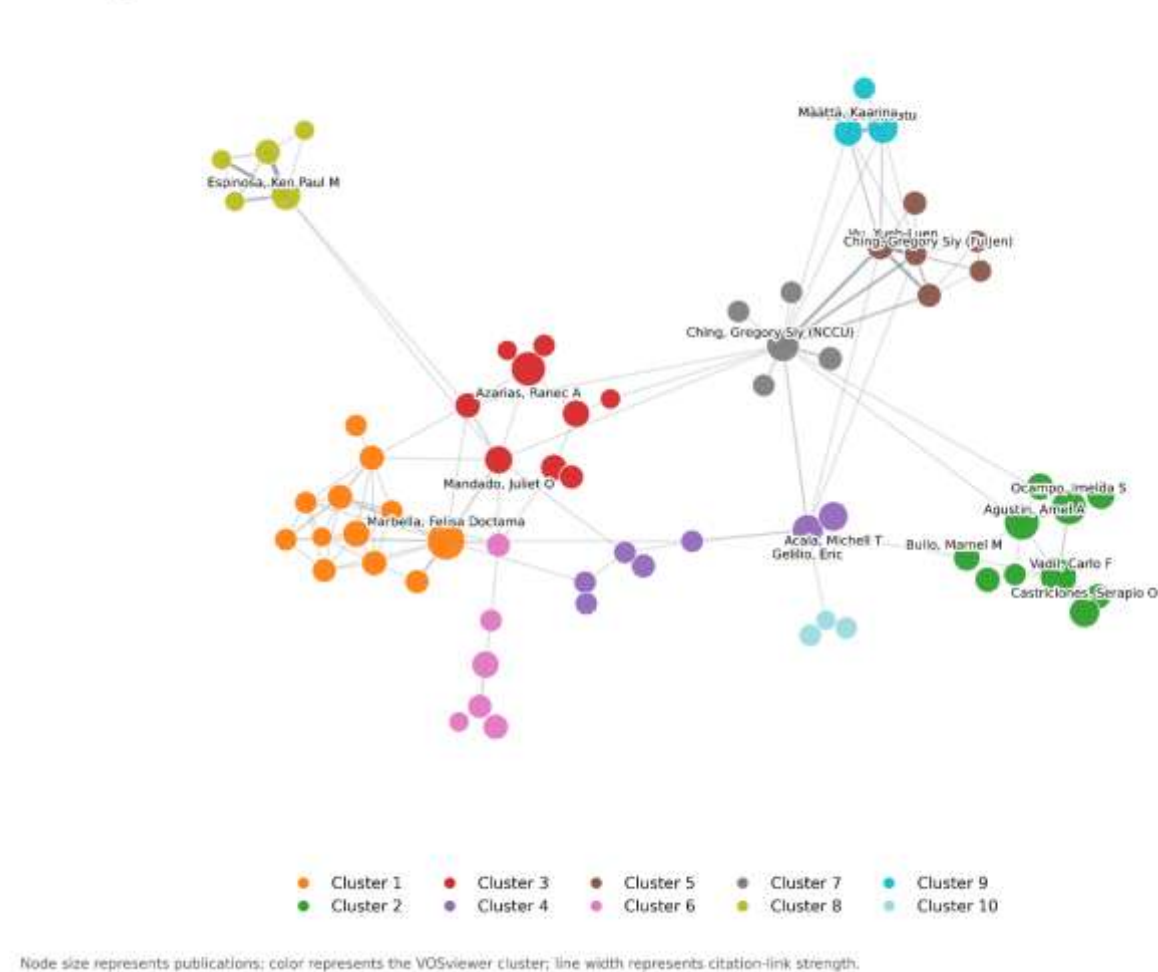


Figure 5. IJRSE researcher citation network.

Note. The supplied VOSviewer export contains 66 researchers, 128 citation links, and 10 clusters. Node size represents publication count; color reproduces the exported cluster assignment; line width represents citation-link strength.

Note that the citation map also reflects different periods in the journal's development. Some clusters contain contributors whose publications appeared mainly during the journal's earlier international-development period, while other clusters contain authors associated with the substantial increase in publications after 2022. The relationships between these groups suggest that IJRSE's current scholarly structure includes both established citation communities and newly developing contributor networks.

Figure 6 presents the researcher co-authorship network. Under the thresholds represented in the supplied VOSviewer export, the map contained 19 researcher nodes, 24 co-authorship links, and five clusters. The network was connected, but it consisted primarily of relatively compact author teams rather than one densely interconnected community. As noted in the figure, *B. M. Moron* occupied a central bridging position in the displayed network, while *D. A. Palmiano*, *J. I. U. Felezmiño*, and several profiles attributed to *M. N. Nolasco* were prominent within collaboration groups. The co-authorship clusters appear to reflect recurring research teams and institutional relationships. One cluster included researchers connected with *Central Bicol State University of Agriculture*, while other clusters represented separate collaborating groups. These patterns suggest that collaboration within the journal is developing through institutionally or project-based teams. Future expansion of cross-institutional and international co-authorship could strengthen exchanges among these currently distinguishable communities.

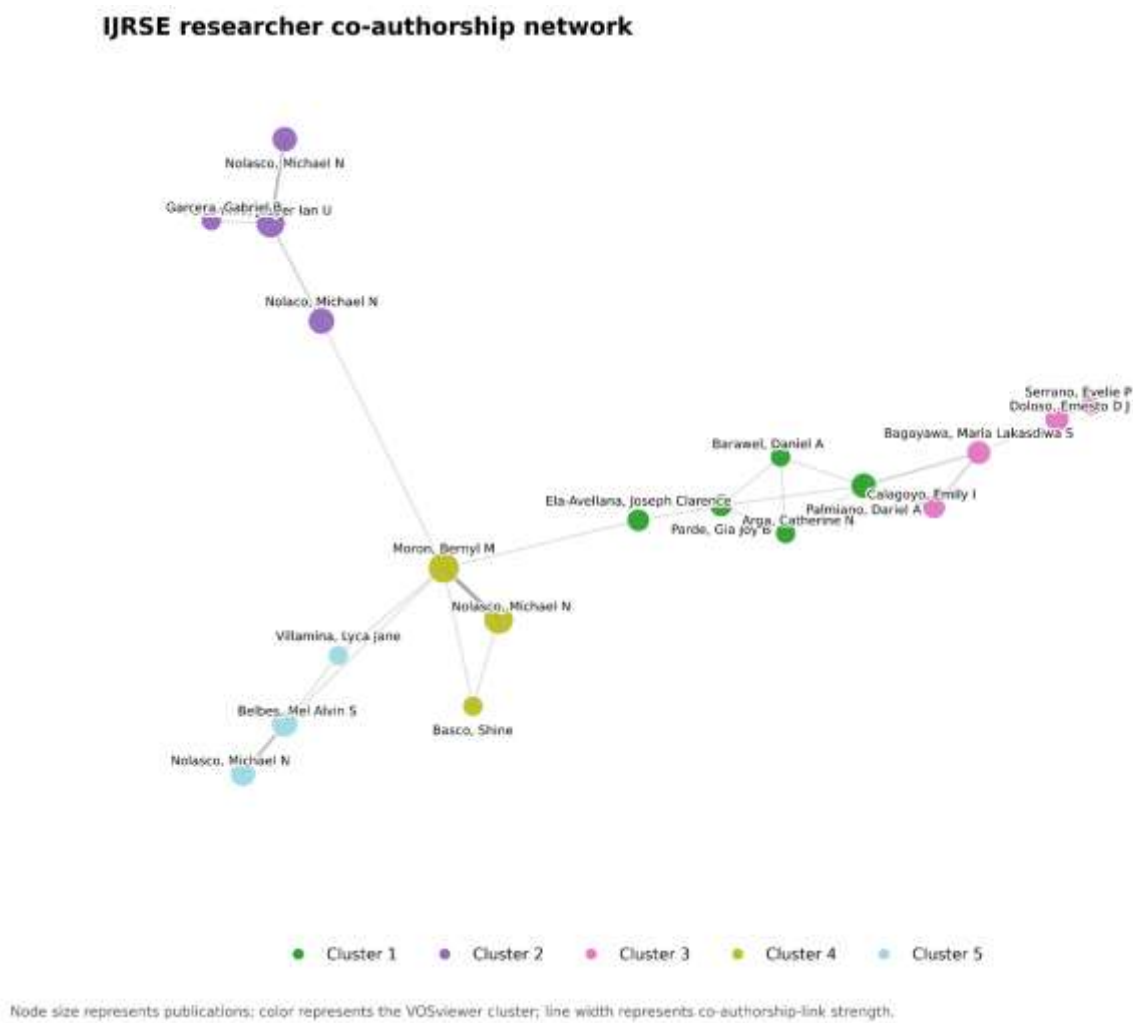


Figure 6. IJRSE researcher co-authorship network.

Note. The supplied VOSviewer export contains 19 researchers, 24 co-authorship links, and five clusters. Node size represents publication count; color reproduces the exported cluster assignment; line width represents co-authorship-link strength.

3.5 Disciplinary scope

The Fields of Research classifications demonstrate that IJRSE is centered on education but also extends into language, management, psychology, society, religion, health, the creative arts, information sciences, environmental studies, and other areas. The dominance of Education, Curriculum and Pedagogy, and Education Systems is consistent with the journal's title and purpose. At the same time, the substantial representation of language and communication reflects the journal's history of publishing studies of English-language learning, multilingual education, Filipino-language education, discourse, literacy, and classroom communication.

Management and organizational-behavior classifications indicate that the journal has also become a venue for studies of educational administration, leadership, human-resource practices, institutional performance, and organizational conditions. Psychology, human society, philosophy, and religious studies further demonstrate the journal's openness to educational research involving well-being, values, identity, culture, social relationships, and human development. Note that these classification counts should not be added together to estimate the number of unique articles because individual publications can receive more than one classification. They indicate the breadth of fields associated with the classified publications rather than mutually exclusive categories.

Table 4
Leading Fields of Research classifications represented in IJRSE

Field of Research	Code	Publications	Citations
Education	39	427	629
Curriculum and Pedagogy	3901	287	377
Education Systems	3903	186	268
Language, Communication and Culture	47	112	222
Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services	35	105	50
Human Society	44	77	118
Education Policy, Sociology and Philosophy	3902	77	81
Linguistics	4704	74	170
Language Studies	4703	70	167
Strategy, Management and Organisational Behavior	3507	62	37
Philosophy and Religious Studies	50	44	58
Psychology	52	37	90

Note. ANZSRC classifications can overlap; counts are assignments rather than mutually exclusive publication groups.

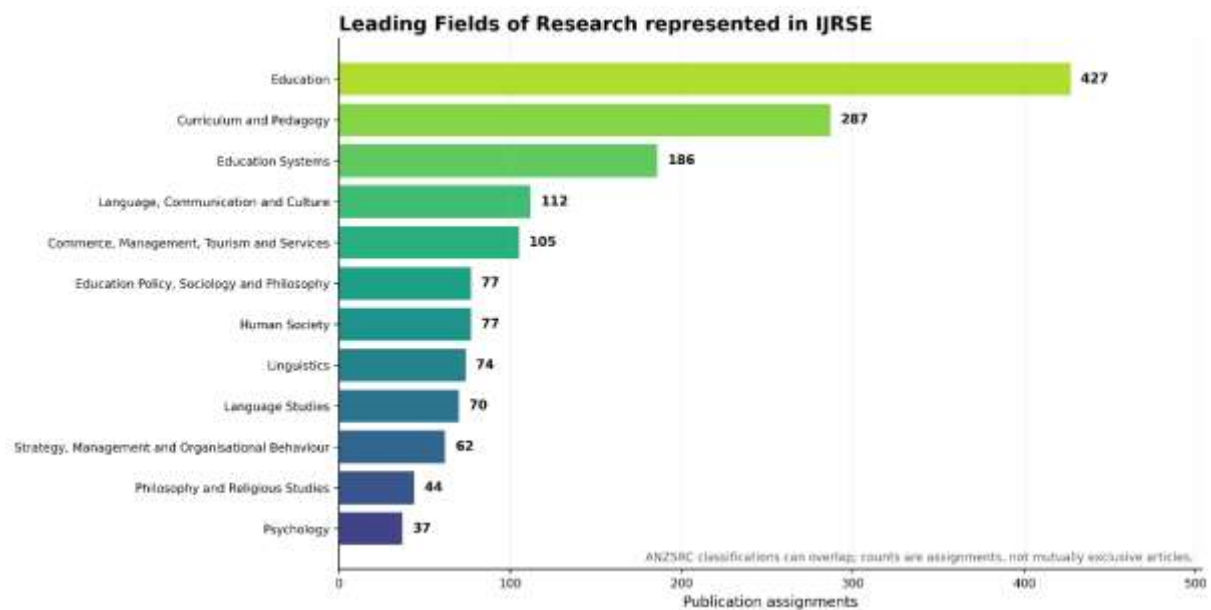


Figure 7. Leading Fields of Research represented in IJRSE.

Note. The figure reports ANZSRC 2020 classification assignments. Categories may overlap and should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive publication groups.

3.6 Sustainable Development Goal alignment

The available SDG classification data contained 192 publication assignments distributed across 15 Sustainable Development Goals. Quality Education was by far the most prominent category, accounting for 132 assignments, or 68.8% of all SDG assignments in the dataset.

Table 5
Sustainable Development Goal classifications represented in the available data

Sustainable Development Goal	Publications	Citations
4 Quality Education	132	200
3 Good Health and Well Being	22	16
2 Zero Hunger	5	0
8 Decent Work and Economic Growth	5	9
11 Sustainable Cities and Communities	5	10
5 Gender Equality	4	39
12 Responsible Consumption and Production	4	20
16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	4	0
13 Climate Action	3	0

Table 5 ... continued

9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	2	20
15 Life on Land	2	0
6 Clean Water and Sanitation	1	0
10 Reduced Inequalities	1	0
14 Life Below Water	1	0
17 Partnerships for the Goals	1	0

Note. Only publications assigned an SDG classification by the source database are represented.

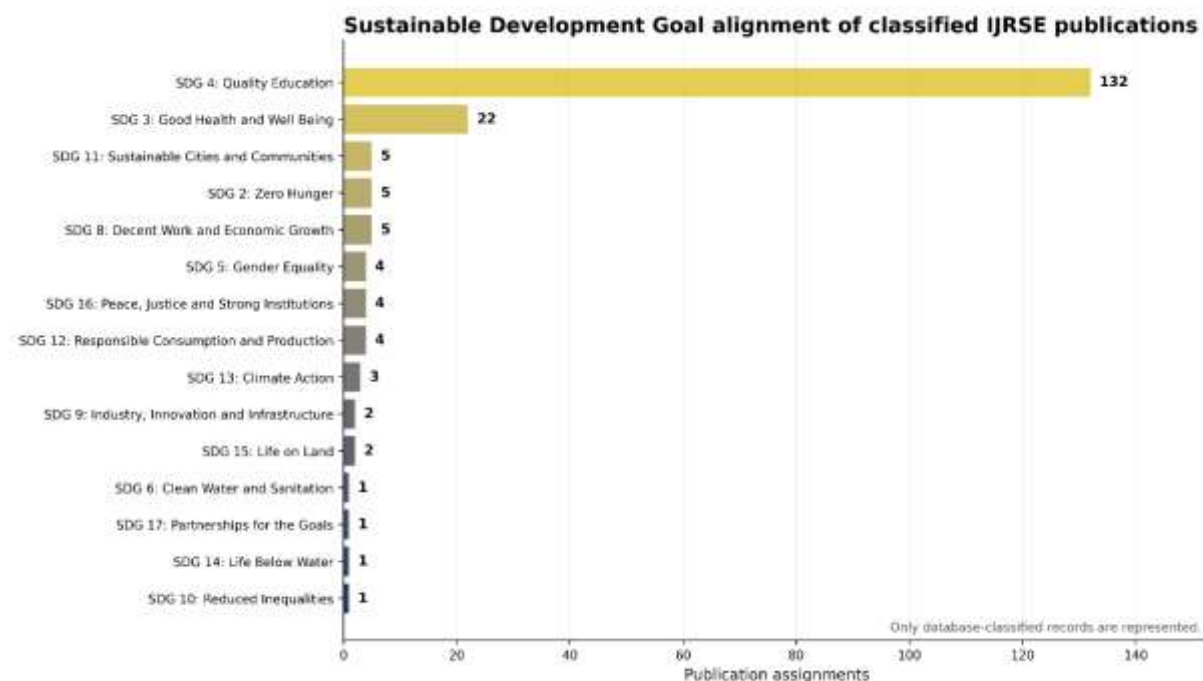


Figure 8. Sustainable Development Goal alignment of classified IJRSE publications.

Note. Only publications assigned an SDG classification by the source database are included.

The prominence of Quality Education is expected, but the representation of health and well-being, gender equality, decent work, sustainability, community development, and institutional integrity demonstrates the wider social relevance of the journal's publications. The comparatively high citation averages recorded for some SDGs with only a few publications, such as Gender Equality or Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, should be interpreted cautiously. A single highly cited publication can substantially affect the mean when the category contains only a small number of records.

3.7 Changes in research emphasis

2011-2019: Foundation period - During the foundation period, recurring title terms included English as a foreign language, academic achievement, mathematics, higher education, classroom instruction, curriculum, and critical thinking. These patterns reflect the journal's early international orientation and its strong engagement with language learning, classroom studies, curriculum, and student achievement.

2020-2022: Educational disruption and adaptation - Titles increasingly referred to online learning, modular distance learning, the COVID-19 pandemic, the "new normal," senior high school, Filipino-language education, teacher challenges, and the implementation of emergency educational arrangements. This period demonstrates the journal's capacity to provide an outlet for research responding to immediate disruptions in educational systems.

2023-July 2026: Expansion and contextual diversification - There was continued attention to classroom and student concerns, accompanied by growth in studies of management, organizational practices, public school districts, Chinese colleges and universities, institutional performance, professional skills, leadership strategies, and

locally situated educational programs. Filipino-language titles also became increasingly visible. These patterns should not be interpreted as a complete thematic map because the analysis was limited to titles. Nevertheless, they show a movement from a relatively concentrated early portfolio toward a larger and more contextually diverse body of educational, organizational, cultural, and interdisciplinary research.

4. Discussion

4.1 From a small international journal to a large publication platform

The most visible finding is the scale of IJRSE's growth. The journal began with 10 publications in 2011 and maintained a relatively modest publication volume during much of its first decade. Beginning in 2020, its output increased rapidly. By July 2026, the journal had published more than six times as many articles in approximately seven months as it had published during the complete 2015 calendar year. This growth can be interpreted as evidence of expanding recognition, increased submission demand, and the development of publication communities that regard IJRSE as an accessible outlet for educational research. The journal has become particularly visible among researchers working in schools, colleges, universities, and educational organizations in Asian contexts, while continuing to include contributors from other regions. *Growth*, however, is not an end in itself. The editorial challenge is to ensure that increased volume is accompanied by dependable peer review, clear methodological expectations, ethical research practices, transparent editorial decisions, and accurate publication metadata. The journal's future reputation will depend not only on how much it publishes but also on how consistently it protects the credibility of its scholarly record.

4.2 Expanding Participation in Research Publication

The increase in IJRSE publications, particularly after 2020, should be interpreted in relation to changes in the wider educational and research environment. Philippine higher education institutions have placed increasing emphasis on research production, dissemination, and publication among faculty members and graduate students. Graduate-program expectations, faculty evaluation systems, institutional research targets, accreditation processes, and professional advancement requirements have contributed to growing demand for credible publication venues. This environment has increased the number of novice and emerging scholars seeking opportunities to communicate their research. Many of these authors possess valuable locally grounded evidence, but may have limited prior experience with international journal submission, academic writing conventions, peer-review responses, publication ethics, and manuscript revision. IJRSE has sought to respond to this need by providing an inclusive scholarly platform, while maintaining peer-review and editorial requirements. Its role is not to guarantee publication to inexperienced authors, but to provide an opportunity for suitable manuscripts to undergo scholarly evaluation and constructive development. Editorial guidance and reviewer feedback can help authors improve the clarity, organization, methodology, interpretation, and presentation of their work. The journal's recent expansion may therefore reflect both increased publication demand and a widening community of researchers seeking international scholarly participation. Nevertheless, support for novice scholars must not be understood as a *relaxation of academic standards*. Inclusiveness is sustainable only when it is accompanied by ethical screening, meaningful peer review, methodological scrutiny, responsible revision, and transparent editorial decision-making. The rapid increase in publication volume also creates an important institutional challenge for IJRSE. As the number of submissions and publications grows, the journal must ensure that its editorial capacity, reviewer pool, quality-control procedures, and publication infrastructure expand accordingly. Future development should therefore balance accessibility and author support with selectivity, quality assurance, and protection of the journal's scholarly credibility.

4.3 Artificial Intelligence, Disclosure, and Scholarly Responsibility

The widespread availability of generative artificial intelligence has changed how researchers prepare

manuscripts. AI-assisted technologies are now commonly used for language editing, translation, idea organization, summarization, coding assistance, literature searching, and the preparation of tables and figures. In multilingual academic settings, the use of such tools for improving written English is becoming increasingly common and may be difficult to separate from ordinary digital writing support. IJRSE does not treat all uses of AI as inherently unacceptable. The journal recognizes that responsible AI assistance may support language accessibility and manuscript preparation. However, the increasing ubiquity of these technologies makes transparency more important rather than less important. Authors are therefore required to declare whether AI or AI-assisted technologies were used and, when applicable, to identify the tool, its purpose, the stage at which it was used, and the extent to which its outputs were checked and revised.

Disclosure does not remove author responsibility. Human authors remain accountable for the originality, factual accuracy, reference integrity, methodological validity, interpretation, and ethical compliance of everything submitted under their names. AI tools cannot be listed as authors because they cannot approve a manuscript, accept accountability, disclose conflicts of interest, or enter into publication agreements. This policy is particularly relevant for a journal that supports novice and multilingual scholars. Responsible assistance should help authors communicate genuine scholarship more clearly; it should not replace intellectual contribution, fabricate references, conceal plagiarism, generate unverified findings, or misrepresent the authors' actual research activities. The journal's approach therefore combines recognition and accountability. It acknowledges that AI-assisted writing and language support are becoming widespread, while maintaining that responsible scholars must disclose material use, verify all outputs, and accept complete responsibility for the final manuscript. This position seeks to preserve trust without adopting an unrealistic assumption that contemporary scholarly writing occurs without technological assistance.

4.4 Responsiveness to changing educational conditions

The publication history indicates that IJRSE has responded to changes in educational practice. Earlier volumes emphasized enduring concerns involving language learning, classroom instruction, academic achievement, curriculum, student engagement, teacher development, and educational systems. The rapid appearance of publications on distance learning, the COVID-19 pandemic, modular instruction, and the new normal from 2020 onward demonstrates the journal's responsiveness to urgent educational circumstances. More recent publications show widening interest in organizational management, school leadership, institutional functioning, well-being, sustainability, multilingual education, and technological change. This responsiveness is a significant strength. Educational research is valuable not only when it contributes to theory but also when it documents how students, educators, and institutions experience and respond to changing conditions.

4.5 Internationalization and contextual diversity

The journal's publication record contains studies from numerous educational settings and cultural contexts. The early highly cited articles include research addressing Indonesia, Iran, Tanzania, China, the United Arab Emirates, Taiwan, and other settings. More recent years show particularly strong participation from Philippine educational institutions and growing contributions concerning Chinese colleges and universities. This contextual diversity can contribute to a more inclusive international literature by providing evidence from institutions and educational systems that may be underrepresented in highly selective mainstream journals. At the same time, internationalization should not be measured only by the number of countries represented. It also involves the diversity of editorial-board participation, peer reviewers, theoretical perspectives, research methods, and international scholarly conversations in which the published work participates.

4.6 Citation impact and the importance of time

The citation analysis shows that IJRSE has produced publications with sustained scholarly visibility. Articles concerning academic resilience, environmental education, educational change, EFL teaching, postgraduate

research, student engagement, and pandemic-related distance learning have been cited by later researchers. However, citation performance is uneven and strongly associated with publication age. The journal's rapid recent expansion means that a large proportion of the complete corpus consists of articles too new to have accumulated many citations. Therefore, the current overall mean should not be used as a final judgment of the influence of the recent volumes. Future evaluations could calculate citations per year, compare articles within publication-year cohorts, and examine citations after fixed windows such as two, three, or five years. These indicators would provide fairer comparisons between older and newer publications.

4.7 The journal's interdisciplinary identity

The Fields of Research results indicate that IJRSE remains anchored in education while extending into other fields. Curriculum, pedagogy, educational systems, language, communication, management, psychology, sociology, religion, health, and the creative arts all appear in the classification record. This breadth is consistent with the complexity of education. Educational problems rarely belong to only one academic discipline. Research on student well-being draws on psychology and health sciences; leadership studies connect education with organizational behavior and policy; language education draws on linguistics and communication; and sustainability education intersects with environmental and social sciences. The journal may therefore be understood not simply as a general education journal but as a platform for interdisciplinary studies that retain a meaningful educational connection. Maintaining that connection is important as the journal's scope expands.

4.8 Collaboration as an emerging institutional structure

The two VOSviewer maps add a relational dimension to the journal's history. The citation network suggests that earlier internationally visible contributors and more recent high-volume contributor groups are connected within one broad structure, although their positions remain clustered. The co-authorship map, by contrast, shows collaboration developing mainly through compact teams and institutional groupings. These patterns imply that IJRSE has already developed recognizable scholarly communities, but has opportunities to deepen relationships among them. The journal could encourage cross-institutional special issues, international co-authored research, methodological collaborations, and thematic collections that bring together authors from currently separate clusters. Such initiatives could broaden the journal's research conversations without requiring collaboration merely for its own sake.

4.9 Implications for the Future Development of IJRSE

Preserve a clear educational identity. Manuscripts from management, psychology, language, technology, health, religion, or social sciences should articulate their contribution to education, learning, teaching, institutional development, or educational policy.

Strengthen metadata quality. Complete author affiliations, ORCID identifiers, abstracts, keywords, funding information, and consistent name formats are essential for indexing, discoverability, bibliometric analysis, and appropriate attribution.

Improve author disambiguation. The current records contain name variants and profiles separated by institutional affiliation. Encouraging or requiring ORCID identifiers would help prevent the division of a researcher's publication record across multiple database profiles.

Support discoverability responsibly. High-quality English abstracts, informative titles, appropriate keywords, accurate references, stable DOIs, responsible online dissemination, and indexing in relevant databases can help publications reach their intended audiences without treating citations as an end in themselves.

Continue strengthening the peer-review community. Rapid publication growth requires a sufficiently large and diverse reviewer pool. Reviewer expertise should correspond to the disciplines, methods, languages, and

national contexts represented in submissions.

Monitor growth and quality together. Publication volume should remain aligned with editorial capacity. Turnaround time, reviewer availability, correction rates, withdrawals, geographic diversity, article quality, and reader engagement should be monitored alongside the number of publications.

Use the journal's network structure strategically. Citation and co-authorship clusters can help identify established communities, emerging contributors, and opportunities for cross-institutional dialogue, special issues, reviewer recruitment, and international collaboration.

4.10 Limitations

1. The article-level records did not contain complete abstracts, affiliations, or keywords. Consequently, the report could not conduct a comprehensive keyword co-occurrence analysis, institutional productivity analysis, country-level analysis, or abstract-based thematic evolution study.

2. Citation counts were obtained from one database and represent a specific data-collection date. Counts may differ across Scilit, Crossref, Google Scholar, Dimensions, Scopus, Web of Science, and other sources.

3. Blank citation fields were treated as zero. Although this is consistent with the apparent structure of the export, future analyses should confirm this convention directly with the database provider.

4. The year 2026 is incomplete. Its publication total should not be interpreted as directly comparable to complete years when calculating annual growth rates.

5. The author data contain duplicate or variant profiles. Counts associated with individual researchers may consequently be underestimated or divided across more than one profile.

6. Fields of Research and Sustainable Development Goal classifications were available only for database-classified publications. The categories can overlap, and their totals should not be interpreted as counts of mutually exclusive articles.

7. The title-term examination was descriptive and was not equivalent to formal topic modelling, co-word analysis, or thematic-evolution analysis.

8. The exact inclusion thresholds used when the VOSviewer maps were exported were not documented in the supplied files. The network results therefore describe the supplied thresholded maps rather than the entire population of authors and relationships in the full publication corpus.

9. The author of this report serves in a member of the editorial team in IJRSE. This position provides knowledge of the journal's development, but also creates the possibility of favorable interpretation. The report therefore emphasizes transparent descriptive results and avoids using publication volume or citation counts as direct measures of research quality.

5. Conclusion

The publication record of the IJRSE documents a substantial transformation from a small journal founded in 2011 to a large and diverse publication platform in 2026. Across its first fifteen years, IJRSE published 1,635 DOI-identified articles covering teaching, learning, curriculum, language, educational systems, administration, leadership, psychology, student development, institutional management, sustainability, and related fields. The journal's history can be understood through three stages: foundation and internationalization from 2011 to 2019, transition and accelerated growth from 2020 to 2023, and large-scale expansion from 2024 to July 2026. Its publications have addressed both enduring educational concerns and urgent developments, including pandemic-related distance learning, student resilience, educational change, well-being, organizational development, and

emerging technological and social challenges. The available evidence demonstrates growth, contextual diversity, an expanding scholarly community, and several developing citation and collaboration clusters. It also emphasizes the responsibility accompanying that growth. The future of IJRSE will depend on its capacity to combine openness and accessibility with methodological rigor, ethical publication practices, effective peer review, accurate metadata, and a clear educational mission. The journal's first fifteen years represent not only a record of publications but also a record of the educators, researchers, institutions, and communities whose work has contributed to understanding and improving education. The next stage should build upon this foundation by strengthening quality, international engagement, research visibility, responsible collaboration, and the journal's contribution to educational knowledge.

Data Availability Statement - The analyses were based on publication, author, citation, disciplinary-classification, Sustainable Development Goal, and VOSviewer network files exported in July 2026. The article-level data contained DOI and publication metadata for IJRSE publications issued from November 2011 through July 30, 2026.

Editorial Positionality and Conflict of Interest - The author serves as a member of the editorial team of the International Journal of Research Studies in Education and has also published articles in the journal. This position provided access to and familiarity with the journal's history, policies, and editorial development, but may also create the possibility of favorable interpretation. The author's publication and citation records were retained in the analysis, because they formed part of the complete database export. Removing them solely because of the author's editorial role would have altered the underlying dataset. All results concerning the author are therefore reported descriptively and are not presented as an independent assessment of scholarly quality, editorial performance, or personal influence. To improve transparency, the report distinguishes database-derived findings from editorial interpretation, acknowledges limitations in the available records, and avoids treating publication volume, network position, or citation counts as direct measures of research quality.

Declaration of AI and AI-Assisted Technology Use - During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, to assist with grammar and language checking and to generate the visual charts based on the data provided by the author. The author independently reviewed and verified the data, numerical results, figures, interpretations, and revised text. The author accepts full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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