

Table 4. Authorship pattern of papers

Authors	Period							Total
	1948–	1955–	1965–	1975–	1985–	1995–	2005–	
	54	64	74	84	94	2004	14	
1	175	287	110	54	57	40	29	752
2	169	311	149	69	35	15	10	758
3	45	102	52	42	24	9	3	277
4–5	11	24	29	27	25	14	7	137
6–10		2	15	9	6	17	12	61
11–50			2	3	3	9	19	36
51–100							6	6
100+						1	9	10
Total	400	726	357	204	150	105	95	2037

Indian scientists have preferred foreign journals to report their work, but from the declining number of papers in *Nature* it seems that *Nature* does not seem to be the first choice for publishing their work. Or perhaps *Nature* is not considering Indian papers for publication. NPG has started publishing many discipline-specific journals (92 journals in 2015

in the Web of Science Core Collection database). Also, a large number of multi-disciplinary journals have come up in recent times, which may have led Indian scientists to consider publishing in them. As can be seen from Table 1, the number of articles published in other NPG journals has been considerably increasing.

1. Wikipedia contributors, *Nature* (journal), Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopaedia; [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nature_\(journal\)&oldid=677340463](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nature_(journal)&oldid=677340463) (accessed on 25 August 2015).
2. *Nature*, 2009, **459**, 1045; doi:10.1038/4591045f.
3. Mahesh, G., *Curr. Sci.*, 2012, **103**, 127.
4. Varma, R. and Mayor, S., *Nature*, 1998, **394**, 798–801.

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IISERs

I read with great interest and deep appreciation the recent guest editorial by Sathyamurthy¹. He argues forcefully that IISERs are jewels in the crown of higher education in India, a fact that all Indians can take pride in. IISERs owe their success in large part to the passion and vision of the five founding directors, to the granting of autonomy in the appointments of faculty members, and to substantial support from the Indian government. The students I have met from different IISERs confirm the wisdom and power of this approach. Of course, good things can always be made better, and the article by Avinash Khare² raises some important concerns. It is so tempting for politicians to build new edifices rather than address improvements to the infrastructure of those institutions that already exist.

From Sathyamurthy's guest editorial, it might appear to some that all is well with Indian higher education. In the eyes of this foreigner, I would challenge that perception. Soon after 5 IISERs were

started, 14 central universities were also started, but it seems to me with much less success. Moreover, some much more established jewels, such as the University of Hyderabad, the University of Delhi, and JNU, to name just a few, are losing their luster. They seem not to receive adequate support and they have difficulty acting autonomously. Of course, I cannot appreciate the situation so well as those who are closer to these institutions, but that is what it seems from afar by someone who truly wants to see Indian higher education achieve its full potential.

1. Sathyamurthy, N., *Curr. Sci.*, 2016, **110**, 747–748.
2. Avinash Khare, *Curr. Sci.*, 2016, **110**, 763–765.

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Response:

It is nice to receive a feedback from somebody like Zare, a well-known scientist and an educationist, who has a ring side view of what is happening in science in India and the rest of the world.

However, I would like to emphasize that the guest editorial focused on an experiment in higher education in science carried out recently by India and the indicators of initial success. The emerging success of the model offers hope for the Indian higher education system, if it could be adapted and adopted with suitable improvement. I remain hopeful.

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