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[EDITORIAL COMMENT]

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SAJOT: Current status, progress and editorial activity over the last 12

As many of our users have probably noticed, the SAJOT has seen many changes and improvements over the last year.

When the SAJOT was accepted by Khulisa Journals, a federated publishing platform hosted by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) in 2024, OTASA entered into a service level agreement with this platform. As part of this agreement, Ina Smith (Planning Manager, Scholarly Platform Programme), conducted a detailed evaluation report[1] related to the technical aspects of our Journal early in 2026. We, as the editorial team, found this report and its recommendations to be extremely valuable and are currently in the process of implementing all the recommendations made in order to further improve our publication standards, metadata and other technical requirements as set out in the report. One of the recommendations made in this report, was that the editorial team should make some Journal Statistics accessible to our readers. Hence, in this Editorial, some relevant statistics will be highlighted. A major theme in the journal's most recent development has been greater visibility and accessibility. In January 2026, our Journal was successful in our applications for hosting on the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and last year, on African Journals Online (AJOL). Because DOAJ is a strictly curated whitelist, inclusion proves that our journal meets rigorous publishing and peer-review standards. This builds trust with authors and ensures compliance with major international funder mandates. The main benefits of our acceptance by DOAJ, include:

- **Increased Discoverability & Traffic:** Indexing a journal in DOAJ automatically supplies our metadata to major aggregators and library portals. Traffic to journal websites typically triples after inclusion[2].
- **Credibility and Prestige:** DOAJ enforces strict quality checks for peer review, transparency, and ethical publishing. Listing serves as a globally recognized stamp of quality, separating the journal from predatory publishers[2,3,4].
- **Funder Compliance:** Many major research funders and institutional consortia require or strongly encourage that published research be openly accessible in DOAJ-indexed outlets[1].
- **South African DHET Accreditation:** For local institutions, the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) formally includes the DOAJ as an approved, accredited index. Publishing here counts toward university subsidies and research output[2,3].

In addition, the importance of this listing is that it gives the journal:

- **credibility**: Journals in DOAJ are vetted for editorial quality, peer review, and transparency;
- **visibility:** Articles become accessible to the global scientific community,
- **compliance:** Many funding agencies (e.g., Horizon Europe, Plan S) require open access journals indexed in DOAJ; and
- **trust:** Authors, readers, and institutions recognize DOAJ journals as safe, non-predatory outlets[4].

In order to achieve the above, several updates to our policy documents and author/reviewer guidelines were made. The first of these was the change in our Creative Commons License (CC-BY). We changed from a rather restrictive CC-BY-NC-ND to a CC-BY 4.0 Attribution license. Secondly, where our publisher (OTASA) previous retained copyright of all published material, copyright is now retained by the authors of their work.

The recommendations in this report directly affecting and involving our users and author guidelines included:

- All listed authors now have to be registered on our user database
- All user ORCID's have to be authenticated
- All listed authors' affiliations should reflect their *affiliation at the time of the study,* and this should be verifiable on their ORCID profiles. This is a requirement for DHET subsidy purposes.
- All affiliations should contain the full physical address of the institution
- In cases where funding was received to conduct the study, the funding Grant number should be clearly stated
- Each and every DOI and link included in the Reference list should be in the correct format with the prefix https://doi.org/ and each link should be checked to verify whether it resolves to the correct website/page *before* the manuscript is submitted
- As part of the Title Page supplementary file, author contributions should be submitted in tabular format as indicated in the author guidelines for CREdit purposes. These contributions/CREDit roles will now appear on the article landing page on our website from August 2026 onward.

SAJOT USER DATABASE

Table I: Registered user roles as at 30 June 2026

All Users	404
Editor in Chief	1
Journal Manager	1*
Section Editor	5**
Author	361
Reviewer	301
Reader	344

* Stepped down in December 2025 and took up Section Editor Role

** Total = 6 since January 2026

It is clear from the Table I (above) that the SAJOT has a relatively small reviewer database. As the majority of submissions received are subject to a double-blind peer review, it means that an average of 53% of our registered reviewers are needed for the average of 81 submissions received per annum (see Table II below). This puts tremendous pressure on our registered reviewers, and subsequently, this causes delays in our workflow and article processing. We would therefore encourage our readers across the globe to apply for registration as reviewers. This can be done by sending a request with an abbreviated CV to sajot@otasa.org.za. The benefits of completing a review are outlined on our website https://journals.assaf.org.za/index.php/sajot/cpd.

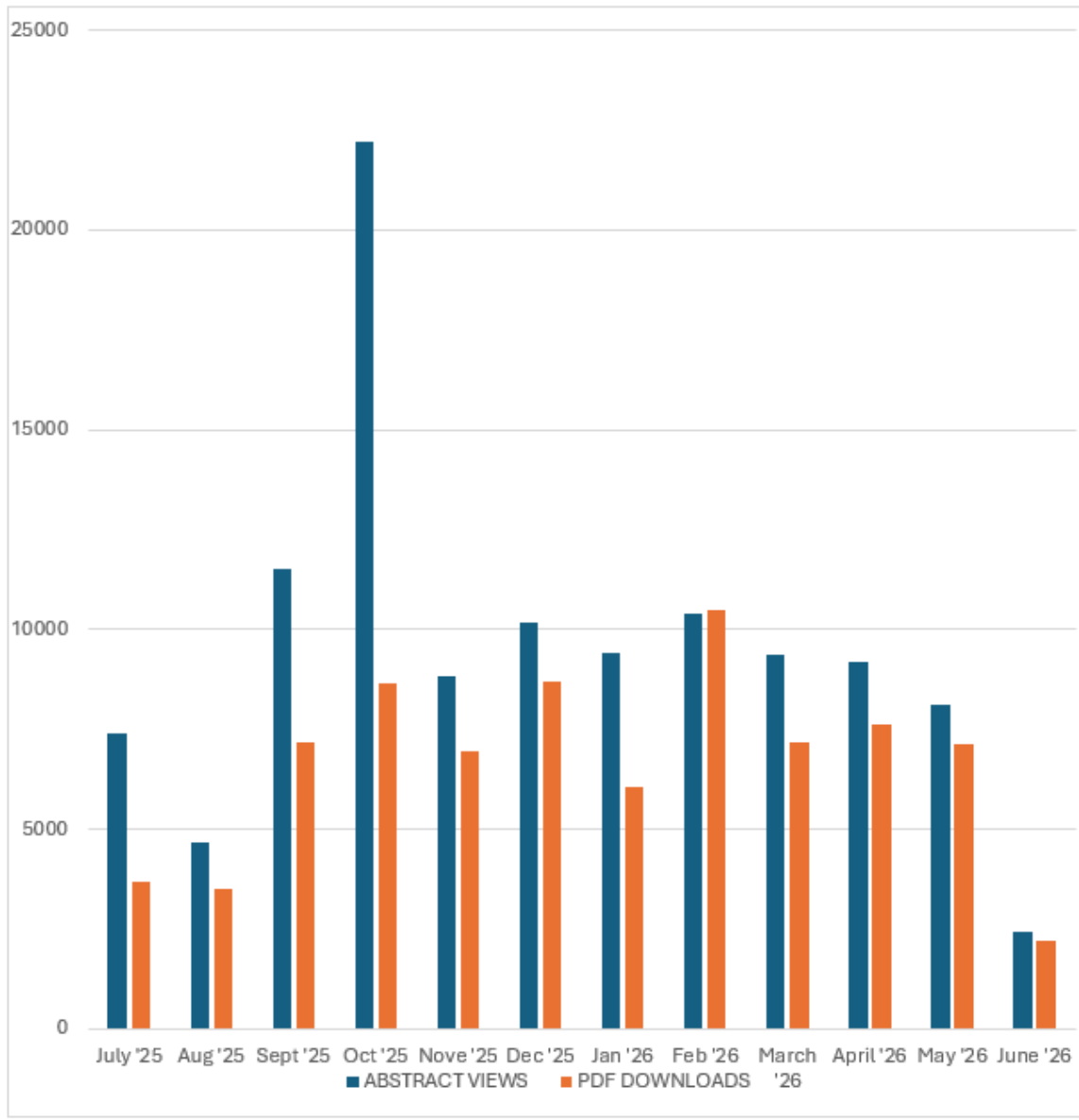
EDITORIAL ACTIVITY

With the introduction of our pre-review desk-edit procedure, where articles are vetted in terms of publication standards, suitability and relevance, the number of submissions finally accepted for review has reduced our turn-around time for article processing from 292 days in 2024-2025 to 160 days as can be seen from Table II below. This is largely due to the fact that articles are 'review-ready' before being accepted for review, as they are either declined outright before the review stage, or 'soft-declined', where authors are asked to revise the submission and re-submit before they are sent for review. . The number of submissions published has also increased from 31 to 44 per annum.

Table II : Editorial activity (July 2025 to June 2026)

Submissions Received	81
Submissions Accepted	45
Submissions Declined	27
Submissions Declined (Desk Reject)	20
Submissions Declined (After Review)	7
Submissions Published	44
Other Submissions	4
Submissions In Progress	4
Imported Submissions	0
Days to First Editorial Decision	24
Days to Accept	160
Days to Reject	27
Acceptance Rate	67%
Rejection Rate	33%
Desk Reject Rate	33%
After Review Reject Rate	0%

ARTICLE VIEWS AND PDF DOWNLOADS



Total abstract views: 113 631 (average per month 9 470)
Total pdf downloads: 796 363 (average per month 6 614)

Figure 1: Abstract views and pdf downloads on our Khulisa website (July 2025 to June 2026)

As our previous website (www.sajot.com) was closed down at the end of 2025, it was not possible to collect these the number of PDF downloads and Abstract Views with the previous year for comparison purposes. However, it is encouraging to note that compared to the previous year, our number of Abstract views and PDF downloads on our Khulisa website have increased from 18 100 to 113 631 (84.07%) and from 84 310 to 796 363 (89.4%) respectively,

In Table III (below), the top 10 viewed/downloaded articles show a wide range of practice fields, including paediatrics, mental health, models, vocational rehabilitation, and hand therapy. The task team appointed by OTASA to investigate the contribution of occupational therapy in fields of practice where gaps in our publications were identified through Rapid Reviews of international and local literature, has proved to be very valuable to our readers, as three of the 10 articles in this list emanated from this initiative taken by our professional association.

Table III : Most viewed/downloaded articles (1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026)

ARTICLE	Abstract views	PDF Downloads	TOTAL
Casteleijn, et al. Exploring the Vona du Toit Model of Creative Ability: Applications, Strengths, Weaknesses in occupational therapy : A Systematic Mapping Review	1009	724	**1733**
Moonsamy et al. Cultural perspectives and experiences of mental healthcare in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa	1185	518	**1703**
Van der Walt et al. Occupational therapy intervention for Cerebral Palsy: A rapid review	1021	637	**1658**
Engelbrecht et al. Occupational therapy treatment interventions for total hip arthroplasty: a rapid review of evidence	854	568	**1422**
Kruger et al. The impact of occupational therapy using Ayres Sensory Integration© on a child with cochlear implants: a case study	925	488	**1413**
Brummer et al. Occupation-based treatment approaches and outcome measures in South African hand therapy: a cross-sectional survey	766	654	**1411**
Meyer et al. The therapeutic impact of occupational therapy groups. on the activity participation of persons with major depressive disorder in an acute mental health setting	958	440	**1398**
Molwana et al. The lived experience of employed patients with spinal cord injury following vocational rehabilitation	802	585	**1387**
Mthembu et al. Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills from parents to their children: An occupational legacy strategy for family-owned businesses	564	727	**1291**
Van der Walt et al. Occupational therapy intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorders: a rapid review	967	292	**1259**

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Although the statistics reflected in this Editorial were taken from our current Khulisa website, it is important to note that SAJOT further increases it's indexing or discoverability through DOAJ, AJOL, SciELO SA, EBSCOhost, CINAHL, ProQuest and OTDBASE, with preservation through Portico.

In her Journal Evaluation Report mentioned above[1], Ina Smith remarked: "In overview, SAJOT can be understood as a long-running national professional journal that has grown into a broader African scholarly platform. It started as a member-oriented, practice-focused print publication and has become a more formal research journal with open-access dissemination, wider indexing and stronger digital infrastructure. Its recent issues still show its characteristic mix of clinical, educational, ethical, rehabilitation and review-based scholarship, which reflects both the diversity of occupational therapy practice in South Africa and the journal's effort to remain relevant to African context"[1p3].

As mentioned above, the editorial team are hard at work to implement all the recommendations outlined in this report, and our goal is that once addressed, applications for listing on SCOPUS and WoS will be submitted, to further increase our visibility and the dissemination of the important research done by you, our users.

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