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AN OVERVIEW OF HIGH IMPACT LAW JOURNALS IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

Academic research journals play a significant role in the field of academia. Its major functions in producing, disseminating and exchanging academic knowledge are important to showcase the research performance of individuals. Publication of academic papers has been considered as a criteria for appointments, hiring, promotions and tenure decisions, worldwide. The current requirement to consider publishing in high quality journals is in its indication of the quality of a person's research output. It is measured through the quality of the academic research publications, the number of citations of specific papers and the total number of citations. Accordingly, it is important to examine the issues regarding high impact publication of Scopus law journals in Asian countries. This is to enable all new SCOPUS law journals to study and practice good governance in publishing quality articles and for the board of editors to enhance the quality of

journal management. The objectives of this paper are: (i) to examine the profiles of law journals in Asian countries indexed by Scopus and Web of Science (WoS); (ii) to examine citations and impact factors of law journals in Asian countries indexed by Scopus and WoS; and (iii) to study the ranking of Scopus law journals in Asian countries. This was an exploratory research and thus qualitative research method was adopted. An online survey and an interview(s) were conducted by the researcher to gather data. The chief editor and managing editors of the Scopus law journals were the respondents via the online survey and an interview was conducted with the expert in managing high impact publications i.e. the Director of Citation and Infometrics Division, Ministry of Education, Malaysia. Besides, secondary data was gathered from Scopus and WoS. In brief, the challenges in managing high impact journals are securing and maintaining high quality articles published by the journals. There must be periodic review of standard operating procedures by the board of editors in order to maintain an effective and efficient reviewing process, together with engaging staff with excellent proofreading skills. Additionally, the publisher must continuously upgrade the online publication system and maintain a friendly website for authors, subscribers and readers. Ethical practices and a focus on high quality and standard of article publication must be upheld by writers, editors, publishers including the indexing body.

Keywords: Law journal, legal publication, indexing, citation, high impact.

INTRODUCTION

Academic research journals play a substantial role in the academic field. Its major functions in producing, disseminating and exchanging academic knowledge are important to present the research performance of individuals. The publication of these journals has been considered as a basis for appointments, hiring, promotions and tenure decisions, worldwide. It also reflects the development of academic efforts at three levels: academic field, journal and institution, and the individual (Cheng et al., 2011).

Moreover, the current situation that requires considering publishing in a high-quality journal is that it implies sufficient information on the quality of the research output of a person. It is measured by the

content of academic research publications, the number of citations and the total number of citations for individual articles (Chang & McAleer, 2012).

Scopus is the largest peer-reviewed literature abstract and citation database: scientific journals, books, and conference proceedings since its introduction in 2004. Of about 11,678 publishers worldwide, Scopus covers nearly 36,377 titles (22,794 active titles and 13,583 inactive titles) (Elsevier, 2020). It has a total of 34,346 titles in the life sciences, social sciences, physical sciences, and peer-reviewed journals. Three types of outlets are covered: book series, magazines, and trade journals. Scopus offers a detailed overview of the world's research success in the fields of science, technology, medicine, social sciences, arts and humanities with intelligent resources to track, interpret and visualise research (Elsevier, 2020).

The other high impact indexing body is WoS. It is the abstract database and one of the world's most extensive resources for citation, indexing, and citation analysis of a wide variety of scientific works in all possible scientific fields. This database was created by Thomson Reuters (Clarivate Analytics, 2020), which regularly indexes thousands of various scientific journals and periodicals, which is why many experts and researchers prefer it, to prepare new materials or to improve their qualifications. Thomson Reuters Media Company is the creator and developer of many of the most significant citation databases in a variety of scientific fields. It is this corporation that owns the international platform of Web of Knowledge, which includes dozens of other smaller databases that form a single experimental media space.

Hence, this paper discusses the findings of a study in relation to the profile, position and quality of law journals in Asian countries which have been indexed by Scopus and WoS.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly journals are undisputably important for the dissemination of knowledge to society. Research-related information including issues, findings and recommendations should be made visible to people for

the betterment of the future. The endeavour of creating a scholarly journal should be considered a major long-term commitment to authors, and professionals to maintain manuscripts published and work to ensure the long-term success of the journal. Authors put a tremendous amount of work into their articles, which play a crucial role in the success of their careers in academia. By submitting their manuscripts for publication in stipulated journals, it shows that they entrust their work to the publisher. Meanwhile, the publisher has an obligation to maintain the availability of the articles published and to ensure that the journal thrives.

Issues related to the publication of journals can be divided into several aspects: (i) quality; (ii) citation; (iii) impact factor and (iv) ranking.

Quality of Journal

Evaluation of the quality of academic journals is becoming a huge concern within the ambit of research performance evaluation. Quality journal is evaluated through different types of evaluations. Biometric/bibliometric data is one of the criteria and whether the journal is internationally accredited and has been listed officially, the magnitude of its print run, and author reputation (Carnelley, 2018). In addition, it also includes the rejection percentage, amount of usage based on library scrutiny and electronic databases, and citations in other journals including the quantity (Carnelley, 2018).

It has been generally agreed that publications in leading journals reflect the quality, credibility, and citation frequency. Nevertheless, it has also been criticized by Serenko (2010), who stated that Impact Factors (IF) have its own limitations. Among these include, (1) readership is limited to the number of readers subscribing and this will reduce citations; (2) Thomson Reuter's Journal Citation Report (JCR) cover especially journals, whereas Google Scholar conceals all virtual mediums and in various languages; and (3) JCR indexes only a minor fragment of all refereed journals (Serenko, 2010). This situation is true in the field of tourism where less than 30 percent of tourism-related journals are included in the JCR. Moreover, the number of citations is not related to the quality of the article. The citation of an article can take a long period of time after it has been published (Law, 2012).

Conventionally, journals have been graded by peer review lists or though journal impact factor (JIF). Nonetheless, several new benchmarks have been developed, such as the h-index, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP)¹ and the Eigenfactor which apply taking into account different considerations and as a result have their specific preferences or preconceptions (Mingers & Yang, 2017).

Issues of Impact Factor

Eugene Garfield introduced a measurement to assess the performance of a journal based on the citations received and it is known as impact factor (IF). The citation frequency of a journal reflects the status and prestige in the academic sphere (Glanzel & Moed, 2002). Garfield proposed an indicator for evaluating academic impact journals whereby the number of citations received in the current year is considered as a numerator for published articles in the journal for the past two years. The denominator is the number of citable articles published in the same two years. The crux of the matter is deciding what to state in the numerator and the denominator. According to the definition of IF by Garfield (1999), the numerator includes citations to any items published in the journal. The numerator of the IF in a year is the number of citations received in the current year for published articles in the journal in the preceding two years. However, the denominator should only include citable articles, which are research articles and review articles. With regard to other types of publications such as correspondence, letters, commentaries, perspectives, news stories, obituaries, editorials, interviews, and tributes, these are not included in the JCR's denominator.

This calculation leads to major glitches which includes an indistinct concept of citable articles which is not clearly specified by Thomson Reuters. Previous studies have shown the flaw of IFs of some journals because of the imprecise categorisation of citable items (Glanzel & Moed, 2002). Different journals consist of different categorisations of article types. It is based on human decision concerning the integration of articles to include in the calculation of Thomson Reuters and the status of citable articles. Moreover, although there are types of

¹ SNIP is a sophisticated metric that intrinsically accounts for field-specific differences in citation practices. It does so by comparing each journal's citations per publication with the citation potential of its field, defined as the set of publications citing that journal.

articles including letters, editorials, and commentaries which are excluded from the denominator, such articles are sometimes cited. Nevertheless, these citations will only contribute to the numerator but not the denominator, thus the impact of the journal is inflated. This misrepresentation may largely affect the accuracy of IFs of certain journals because the pool of citation is relatively smaller than other disciplines (Law, 2012).

Issues have also been raised concerning different classes (status) of journals. An article published in a commonly cited journal cannot be said to be of high quality itself. Furthermore, this ranking system is “overly sensitive to the presence of one or two remarkable articles” getting many citations. Hence, editors could be attracted to publish articles that is to their knowledge would be debateable and thus, more likely to be cited. They also tend to publish articles by more famous authors who are likely to be cited. It is not essentially because of the quality of the article itself (Korobkin, 1998). A journal may also be cited for the “wrong” reasons. Korobkin (1998) named a few instances where the citing of a journal “provides little or no evidence of scholarly value.” For example, the article may be easily accessible but does not have a genuine argument; the source may have come from the author’s friends and associates; the author may wish to astonish the source (Carnelley, 2018); the source may be erroneous or present a contrasting view (Korobkin, 1998). Furthermore, other undesirable elements of the citation system have been noted whereby scholars working in the same field tend to cite one another, resulting in “strong geographical and regional tendencies” and using English language as the mode (Carnelley, 2018).

With regards to citation impact, it has been debated by many researchers. Information on the number of citations is among the measurement of a journal’s impact factor. Among the ones perceived to be most legitimate citation report are Science Citation Index (SCI), the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI) devised by The Institute for Scientific Information (ISI). Journal impact factor is not the same as article impact factor, but since both are based on the same citation analysis, this may cause misunderstanding in its calculation. However, in the context of journal rating, its citation analysis is based on the significance of the journal to the extent that other journals cite it (Law

& Li, 2015). The notion of citation-based journal ranking comes from ISI's SSCI Journal Citation Report (JCR) that quantitatively ranks, evaluates, categorizes and compares journals that applies the concept of numerator and denominator.

Together with the influence of journal impact factor and its wide usage, the current journal impact factors have generated several comments which are commonly mentioned in different disciplines (Jones, 2002; Neuberger & Counsell, 2002). Critiques on journal impact factors have grown alongside its increasing influence and use. The following are commonly noted in different disciplines and study areas. Articles such as editorials, letters and news items are classified as "non-source" items and do not count towards the total number of articles used to calculate the impact factor. However, such items may attract numerous citations that are counted towards a journal's impact factor. Journals may increase the number of non-source items to artificially increase its impact factors. It has been recommended that the calculation provides a method for comparing journals irrespective of their size. However, journal size may be a confounding factor whereby journals publishing more articles tend to have higher impact factors per se. Small journals may be underprivileged by this bias. Most notably, the impact factor does not reveal any information about the citation distribution to the reader (Jamal et al., 2008).

It is inappropriate to combine general journals, focused journals and review journals using the same standards because these journals have different characteristics according to the discipline of knowledge. Certainly, focused and generic journals cannot be compared together as they have different targeted viewers. Besides, the approach taken by using citation calculations to contrast the influence of writers from diverse disciplines is completely misleading. According to Law (2012), it is proved through a search on Google Scholar's "My Citations" which revealed, authors who displayed their biodata for public access, for example, the topmost authors in the field of medicine had received 155,000+ citations while the topmost authors in the field of tourism only received 6000+ citations. This argument concurred with Yu et al., (2009) where the parameter used in measuring scale and citation of articles in different journals must be based on the specific area of the journal.

With regard to information content and distinct disciplines, according to Nicolaisen and Frandsen (2008), articles in scientific and medical journals should be published immediately to avoid obsolete data and these journals also have a large readership thus prompting them to have high IFs. This is in contrast to journals in other fields that are more likely to publish theories and concepts that have extensive impact. It does not need to hasten the process of publishing data because the data will gradually become obsolete (Law, 2012). Thus, articles in journals in the area where data will be promptly obsolete, will receive more citations within the first two years after they are published. In addition, review articles are usually highly cited and have strongly influenced IFs.

Issues of unconstructive citations, self-citation, collegial citation or selective citation have been among problems raised concerning citation impact. These types of citations inevitably reveal the excellent status of the journal. Although the number of citations may decline over the years, citations are inherently vulnerable to older journals. The degree of publication scope may influence the number of citations as it can increase the total number even if the published work may be ordinary. The advantage of full articles published online is that they are more likely to get higher citations compared to articles published only in print (Carnelley, 2018).

Citations provide significant impact on the journal and performance of individual academicians. Citation evaluation has been denoted as a basic method to measure the standing of authors and their scholarly works. Chang and McAleer (2012) stated that it comprised calculating the number of citations to specific authors, articles, or journals.

Further the achievements and performance of individuals in research are evaluated through citation analysis. The present trend has shown that the use of h-index is fundamentally accepted not only to measure the number of publications but also the quality of a writer's publications (i.e. citations to the work over time) (Hirsch, 2005).

An article that has a 'Hirsch core' or "h" citation has the biggest impact and it is included in the list of scientific publications (Burrell, 2007). The WoS by ISI Thomson has integrated the H-index in their new citation report. Nevertheless, it only takes into account a small

number of journals in the social sciences and humanities and focuses more on journals listed in the ISI (Hirsch, 2005). Findings by many researchers have shown that the h-index is not only employed in quantifying and measuring individual achievements (Bornmann et al., 2009; Braun et al., 2006) but also in ranking journal topics of concern (Banks, 2006) and library loans per category (Liu & Rousseau, 2007).

The IFs differ in terms of discipline, document type and journal size (Tome & Lipu, 2004). This is because the reason for citation convention in the legal field is also varied. An article which is referenced will not be equal in value due to the inconsistencies of citation-measurements which occur in general law journals and also specialist law journals (Korobkin, 1998). Particular fields of the law that can have more attention-grabbing topics at a particular moment can positively influence the number of citations. For this reason, law journals are constantly recognized with their low impact indices as noted in the London School of Economics. Perry (2006) found that the normal h-index score in law was 1.25 as opposed to 4.83 in Economics and 5.04 in Geography.

Thus, in mitigating the aforementioned problem, journals that are concerned with citations have attempted and adapted to their citation system, and in a way created various citation indices that could provide different results. It has been argued that, the use of ISI in legal field is unsuitable as it is understated and biased towards the sciences, and may be damaging to scholarship (Carnelley, 2018). Thus, an approach suggested by Washington and Lee Law Journal Ranking Project called Combined Factor could balance raw citations with impact factors to give a more accurate measure of influence. This system offers a wider scope of readers in legal resources such as practitioners, judges, academics and policymakers. It should be noted that compared to ISI, it has been labelled as “surprisingly inconsistent, with no statistically significant correlation” (Carnelley, 2018).

Issues of Journal Ranking

A journal ranking system could perform as a medium to promote the quality and impact of scholarship. Therefore, it would benefit journal editors to choose and issue only good articles and consequently, this would in turn motivate academics to strive in producing articles of higher quality. A study by Smyth (2012) revealed that a ranking

system may “stifle diversity and innovation.” Editors of journals will possibly favour to publish conventional articles in order to improve their position instead of publishing contemporary and/or experimental research. As a result, this may unintentionally be a disturbing effect on young academics who are cautious of rejection, or, academics who do submit their work but think that the editors may reject them because in their view, editors only publish high quality outputs (Carnelley, 2018).

However, academics could gain advantage from a ranking system as it could portray a database to select a good journal according to their preference. Authors’ reputation could be elevated through published articles in higher-ranking journals as it would indicate prospective excellent quality (Van Gestel, 2015). Generally, it could result in beneficial outcomes with regard to promotion and career advancement (Korobkin, 1998). According to Brophy (2006), the position of law schools will rank high if their journal acquired a high ranking. In fact, it will further benefit stakeholders because the journal will achieve a high subscription, get more readers and authoritative writers are more likely to utilize the prestigious journal (Korobkin, 1998).

METHODOLOGY

As this was an exploratory research, qualitative research method was adopted in gathering data via online survey and interview conducted by the researcher. Editors-in-chief and managing editors of the SCOPUS law journals in Asian countries were the respondents via an online survey and an interview was conducted with the expert in managing high impact publications i.e. the Director of Infometric and Citation Department, Ministry of Education, Malaysia. In addition, secondary data was gathered from Scopus and WoS database (data until June 2020). The respondents of the online survey were from 48 Asian countries. However, there were only eleven (11) law journals indexed by Scopus and three (3) law journals indexed by WoS.

The instrument of survey was divided into five parts i.e. profile of respondent, profile of journal, quality of journal, journal’s strategy, and challenges and recommendation. The interview protocol was divided into six parts i.e. profile of respondent, profile of journal, journal performance, ranking, quality, and challenges and recommendation.

The researcher used Excel software to analyse the survey data as there were only three editors-in-chief who responded to the survey. Additionally, the data from the interview was recorded, transcribed and analysed using Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). TCA is a method for classifying, analysing and recording patterns of the study (Anderson, 2007). As for the secondary data which was collected via Scopus and WoS database, these were also analysed using TCA. The data was divided into four parts: (i) profile of Asian law journals indexed by Scopus, (ii) profile of Asian law journals indexed by WoS, (iii) Citation, impact factor and ranking of law journals in Asian countries in Scopus and (iv) Citation, impact factor and ranking of law journals in Asian countries in WoS.

RESULTS

Discussion of the research results is divided into three parts. Firstly, the discussion will be focused on the profile of law journals in Asian countries indexed by Scopus. Next, the profile of law journals in Asian countries indexed by WoS and lastly, an analysis on the performance of law journals based on their number of citations, impact factor (h-index) and ranking by quartile (Q) according to Scopus and WoS.

Profile of Law Journals in Asian Countries Indexed by Scopus

Table 3 shows the profile of law journals from Asian countries which are registered with Elsevier and indexed by Scopus. The data in tables 3, 4 and 5 were extracted from the Scopus CiteScore journal metric. There were eleven (11) law journals classified under the All Science Journal Classification Codes (ASJC) – 3308, indexed by Scopus in the Asian region. Four (4) journals from India, two (2) from Taiwan, two (2) from China, one (1) journal each from Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore.

With regard to the information of journal publishers, Table 3 specifies that the publishers are of different organizational status. Four journals were published by the University Press, three journals by professional societies/organizations, two journals by companies, one journal by a research centre, and the other journal by a sole proprietor.

Table 3*Profile of Asian Law Journals Indexed by Scopus*

No.	Name of Journal	Publisher	Country	1st Issue/ Year/ Period until 2020				Coverage	Open Access	Fee/Free
				1st Publication	P	1st Indexed in Scopus	P			
1.	J1 (3308)	Company	China	1992 Vol. 1 Issue 1	28	2008 Vol. 16 Issue 2	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of law-related disciplines in the Asia Pacific region. • Development of professional legal practice in the region. 	✓	NA
2.	J2 (3308)	Company	China	1971 Vol. 1	49	1985 Vol. 15 2010-2014, 2016-2017	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative law. • Jurisprudential, international, and interdisciplinary material relevant to the study of law. 	✓	NA
3.	J3 (3308)	Sole Proprietor	India	June 2007 Vol. 1 No. 1	13	January 2012 Vol. 6 Issue 1	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of cyber/computer crime. • Forms of cyber crime. • Impact of cyber crimes in the real world. • Policing cyber space. 	✓	Free

(continued)

No.	Name of Journal	Publisher	Country	1st Issue/ Year/ Period until 2020			Coverage	Open Access	Fee/Free
				1st Publication	P	1st Indexed in Scopus			
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International perspectives of cyber crime. • Developing cyber safety policy. • Cyber victims, cyber psychopathology. • Geographical aspects of cyber crime. • Cyber offender behaviour. • Cyber crime law. • Cyber pornography. • Privacy & anonymity on the Net. • Internet fraud and identity theft. • Mobile phone safety and policy issues. • Online gambling. • Copyright and intellectual property law. 		
4.	J4 (3308)	Professional Society/ Organisation	India	January 1996 Vol 1 No. 1	24	2008	12	√	Free
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copyright. • Intellectual property. • Patent. 		

(continued)

No.	Name of Journal	Publisher	Country	1st Issue/Year/ Period until 2020			Coverage	Open Access	Fee/Free
				1st Publication	P	1st Indexed in Scopus			
5.	J5 (2307; 3308; 3005; 2734)	Professional Society/ Organisation	India	2007 Vol. 1 Issue 1	13	January 2008 Vol. 2 Issue 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair use. • Innovation. • Intellectual property rights. • TRIPS • IP strategy. • Trademark. • Traditional knowledge. 	No	US\$454
6.	J6 (3308)	Professional Society/ Organisation	India	January 2006 Vol. 1 No. 1	14	Jan-June 2017 Vol. 12 Issue 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forensic medicine • Forensic science • Toxicology • DNA fingerprinting • sexual medicine • environment medicine 	✓	Free
7.	J7 (3308; 3312)	University Press	Malaysia	2010 Vol. 1	10	2018 Vol. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminology. • Criminal justice. • Victimology. 	✓	Free
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas within the law, or related to the law (but not limited to) • Law and semiotics. • Law and psychology. 		

(continued)

No.	Name of Journal	Publisher	Country	1st Issue/ Year/ Period until 2020			Coverage	Open Access	Fee/Free
				1st Publication	P	1st Indexed in Scopus			
8.	J8 (3308)	Research Centre	South Korea	2008 Vol. 1	12	2011 Vol. 4 Issue 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of international and comparative law applicable to East Asia. 	No	Free
9.	J9 (3308; 2739; 3320; 2002;3306)	University Press	Taiwan	2006 Vol. 1	14	March 2009 Vol. 4 No. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International trade law. • International economic law (mainly WTO and investment). • International health law (including the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. 	No	US\$ 50-55

(continued)

No.	Name of Journal	Publisher	Country	1st Issue/ Year/ Period until 2020			Coverage	Open Access	Fee/Free
				1st Publication	P	1st Indexed in Scopus			
10.	J10 (3308; 1408; 1403)	University Press	Taiwan	2012 Vol. 1 Issue 1	8	2012 Vol. 1 Issue 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International health regulations. • International arbitration (including commercial and investor-state arbitrations). • All aspects of intellectual property issues. • American IP laws. 		US\$50
11.	J11 (3308)	University Press	Singapore	July 1959 Vol. 1	61	July 2012 Issue 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private and public international law. • Comparative law. 		S\$10

(Source: Scopus CiteScore journal metric 2019 and researcher's analysis)²

² Coding Information: 1403: Business and International Management; 1408: Strategy and Management; 2002: Economics and Econometrics; 2307: Health, Toxicology and Mutagenesis; 2700: Medicine (all); 2734: Pathology and Forensic Medicine; 2739: Public Health, Environmental and Occupational Health; 3005: Toxicology; 3306: Health (social science); 3308: Law; 3312: Sociology and Political Science; 3320: Political Science and International Relations – available at https://service.elsevier.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/15181/supporthub/scopus. Accessed on 16 July 2020.

Table 3 shows that the establishment period of law journals is lengthy from 8 years to 61 years and the period of being indexed by Scopus varies from 2 years to 12 years according to journals whether they are continuously active from the time that they are indexed by Scopus or inactive during a certain period of time. For example, the journal, J2 was indexed by Scopus in 1985, 2010–2014, 2016–2017 and currently it is recorded as inactive in the Scopus Sourcedata 2020.³ The newcomers of Scopus law journals in Asian are J7 (two years) and J6 (three years). The findings also indicated that the majority of law journals were indexed by Scopus from 2006 onwards. Only one journal was indexed in 1985. Although Scopus was established in 2004, it is possible that Scopus had backdated the indexing date of both journals. In terms of the facilities provided by the journals, six journals provided an open access facility without fees while, the other six journals provided access with fees.

Profile of Law Journals in Asian Countries Indexed by Web of Science

Table 4 shows the profile of law journals in the Asian region indexed by WoS. The data were extracted from the InCites Journal Citation Reports. There were three law journals indexed by WoS in the Asian region: two journals from China and one from Taiwan. There were two journals indexed by both, WoS and Scopus i.e. J2 and J3.

Table 4 shows that the journal publishers are from two different organizations i.e. university press and companies.

Table 4 shows that the establishment period of law journals is lengthy, from 14 years to 52 years and the period of being indexed by WoS are also different, according to journals. The duration varies from 8 years to 23 years. The findings also indicated that the majority of law journals were indexed by WoS from 2009 onwards. Only one journal was indexed in 1997. In terms of the facilities provided by the journals, only one journal provided an open access facility without fees while there is no information regarding this for the two other journals.

³ Refer to <https://www.internauka.org/en/scopus-list>. Accessed on 7 December 2020.

Table 4

Profile of Asian Law Journals Indexed by WoS

No.	Name of Journal	Publisher	Country	1st Issue/Year			Coverage	Open Access	Fee/Free
				1st Publication	P	1st Indexed in WoS			
1	J9	University Press	Taiwan	2006 Vol. 1	14	2009 Vol. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health policy & services. • International relations. • Law. 	No	US\$ 50-55
2	W1	Company	China	1968 Vol. 1	52	1997 Vol. 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law. • Politics. • Government. 	No	NA
3	J2	Company	China	1971 Vol 1	49	2012 Vol. 42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative. • Jurisprudence international, and interdisciplinary material relevant to the study of law. 	Yes	NA

Citation, Impact Factor and Ranking of Law Journals in Asian Countries by Scopus

Table 5 shows the performance of citation, impact factor and ranking quartile of law journals indexed by Scopus in Asian countries.

Scopus no longer uses the Impact factor of Thomson-Reuters. It has introduced the new CiteScore journal metric. This is a new metric computed as $\text{CiteScore} = \text{Number of citation in 2016} / (\text{number of documents from 2013 to 2015})$. In general, the CiteScore gives a higher number than the Impact Factor.

Table 5

Citation, Impact Factor and Ranking of Asian Law Journals Indexed by Scopus

No.	Name of Journal	Indexed by SCOPUS	2018 CiteScore	Impact Factor	Ranking Quartile
1.	J1	2008-ongoing	0.40	0.135	Q4
2.	J2	1985 from 2010-ongoing	0.07	0.100	Q4
3.	J3	2012 - ongoing	2.17	0.417	Q2
4.	J4	2008-ongoing	0.14	0.115	Q4
5.	J5	2008-ongoing	0.08	0.155	Q3
6.	J6	2017-ongoing	0.10	0.109	Q4
7.	J7	2018-ongoing	-	-	Q4
8.	J8	2011-ongoing	0.24	0.160	Q3
9.	J9	2009-2012, 2016-ongoing	0.19	0.101	Q4
10.	J10	2012-ongoing	0	0.101	Q4
11.	J11	2012-ongoing	0	0.107	Q4

Based on Table 5, the majority of the law journals (8 journals) were ranked in Q4 journals, two journals in Q3 and one journal in Q2. There was no law journal in Asian ranked in Q1. The highest impact factor of law journals in Asian was 0.417 and the CiteScore was only 2.17. The citation degree defined by scientometric indicators is reflected by a quartile, which is a group of scientific journals. As a result, publications vary from the most to the least cited, by quartile. The Q-ranking of journals divides journals into four quartiles: Q1 (highest) to Q4 (lowest). The first two quartiles - Q1 and Q2 - contain the most authoritative papers. The journals are distributed by quartile automatically based on complex scientometric calculations involving their citations, which in turn are converted into ordinary percentages.

Citation, Impact Factor and Ranking of Law Journals in Asian Countries by WoS

Table 6 shows the performance of citation, impact factor and ranking quartile of law journals indexed by WoS in Asian countries.

Table 6

Profile of Asian Law Journals Indexed by WoS

No.	Name of Journal	Indexed by WoS	Total Cites	Impact Factor	Ranking Quartile
1	J9	2009-2019	60 (2019)	0.333 (2019)	Q4
2	W1	1997-2010	18 (2010)	0.048 (2010)	Q4
3	J2	2012-2019	186 (2019)	0.500 (2019)	Q4

Based on Table 6, all law journals (3 journals) indexed by WoS were ranked in Q4. The highest impact factor was 0.500 (2019) – J2. The other two journals scored below 0.5 impact factor.

It is important for academic journals including law journals to be indexed in a national and an international data base. As mentioned by the Content Selection and Advisory Board (CSAB) of Scopus, it is important to enhance international visibility. Additionally, it can

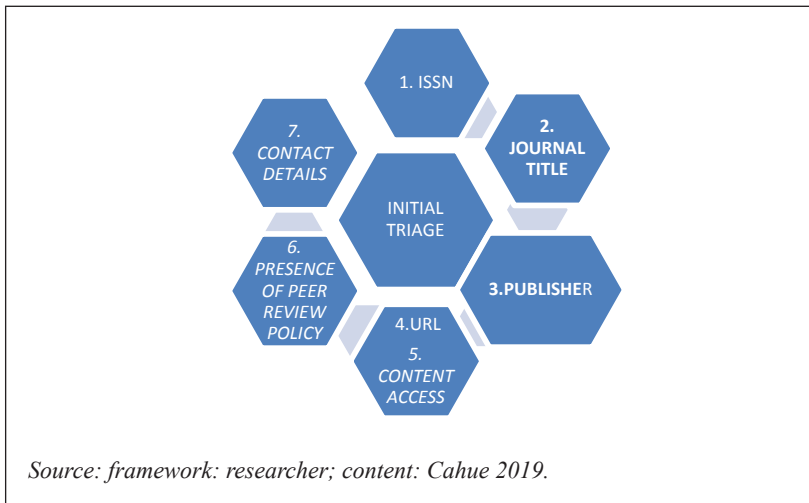
increase citations for individual researchers including the journal and enhances the opportunity for collaboration with other researchers from around the world (Duncome & Servellen, 2019).

According to Cahue (2019) the Head of Editorial Outreach, WoS Group Clarivate Analytics, the WoS uses 28 criteria to evaluate journals before they can be indexed by WoS. The criteria is divided into two categories: (i) 24 quality criteria and (ii) four impact criteria. There are three stages of evaluation: initial triage; editorial triage and lastly, impact triage.

The journal must pass the above initial triage (seven criteria) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Initial Triage



Then it will go to the editorial triage where they will evaluate 17 quality criteria as shown in Figure 2. Any journal that fails to meet all the 24 quality criteria will be removed from the WoS Core Collection.

The final stage evaluation is the impact criteria which consists of four criteria as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2

Editorial Triage

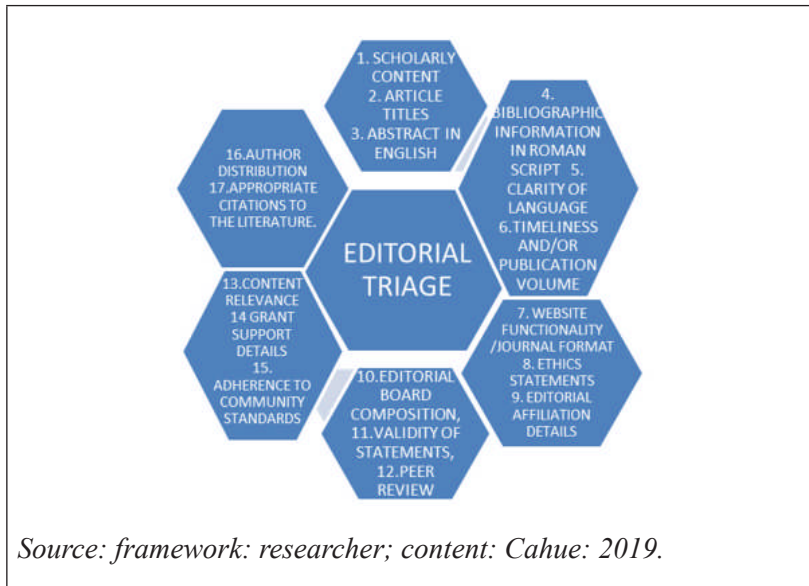
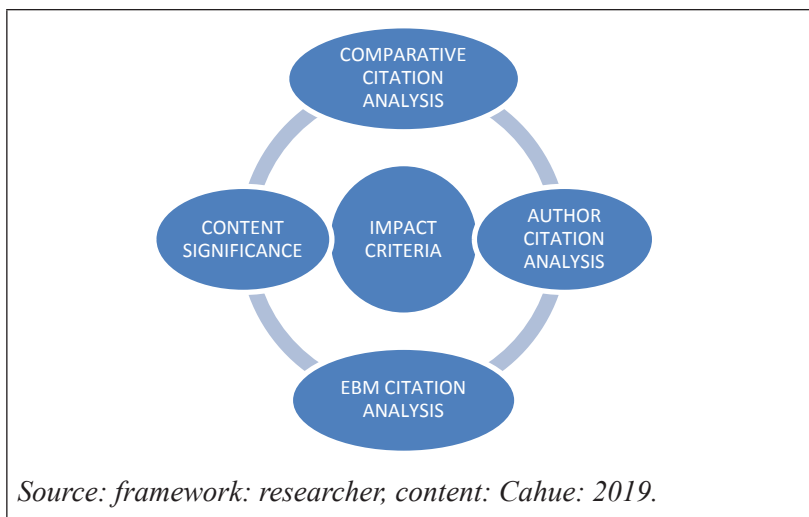


Figure 3

Impact Criteria



According to the Scopus CSAB (Duncome & Servellen, 2019), the requirements for indexing in Scopus is designed to reflect best practices in scholarly publishing. The requirements are high quality and original content, well edited and with longevity, focused upon their roots and subject area(s), make significant, measurable and valued contribution to its target audience and field, international/global relevance but also valuable locally and honest, ethical and focused on high quality and standards.

If we refer to the profile of law journals indexed by Scopus and WoS, the cite score and impact factor of those journals are lower than other journals from the area of management, information technology and sciences although these journals have been indexed for quite some time.

In discussing this issue, the former Director of Citation and Infometrics Division, Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education, Malaysia⁴ opined that:

That's why I think for these practitioner journals, it's high time to see them in terms of other metrics. You cannot use the same metric as the usual scholarly publication. You need to have different metrics. So in this case I do not know if there is an alternative metric maybe it's high time we include this societal impact. But there must be another body to capture this societal impact.

Factors which influence the success of journals and from the analysis below it demonstrates the characteristics of high impact journals

There are many factors which influence the success of journals and from the following analysis it demonstrates the characteristics of high impact journals. Table 7 (a & b) show the opinion of three editors-in-chief of law journals⁵ in Asian with regard to factors influencing the success of a journal and other required characteristics in order to be classified as a high impact journal.

⁴ Interview conducted by researcher in October 2019 at the Higher Education Department, Kuala Lumpur.

⁵ Online Survey conducted by researcher in November 2019.

Table 7a

Factors Which Influence the Success of Journals and Characteristics of High Impact Journals

Title of Journal	Factors Influencing Success of a Journal	Content of Academic Journal Plays An Important Role in Contributing to the Success of Academic Journal	Only Journal Indexed by SCOPUS or WoS is a High Impact Journal	Diverse Editorial Board Members	Characteristics of Good Editorial Members
Journal A (Scopus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established publisher; Diversity of editorial board. 	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Attract more authors to refer and cite.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Accessible and variety of authors from different countries with similar discipline.</p>	Yes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An active writer; Academic background; high commitment to delivering task.
Journal B (Scopus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established publisher; Experienced editor-in-chief; Diversity of editorial board; Efficient managing director. Commitment of editors and reviewers. 	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>United Kingdom, Australia, Korea and Malaysia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An active writer; Publication cited by others; Impactful publication; Academic background; high commitment to delivering task.
Journal C (Scopus)		<p>Yes.</p> <p>Many authors from other countries submit their research to the journal.</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Taiwan, Norway, Japan, Bulgaria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An active writer; Publication cited by others; Impactful publication; Academic background.

Table 7b

Factors Which Influence the Success of Journals and Characteristics of High Impact Journals

Title of Journal	Select Your Peer-reviewers	Type of Peer-review of Journal	Role of Peer-reviewers	Diverse Pool of Peer reviewers	Criteria of a Quality Journal
Journal A (Scopus)	Based on area of expertise.	Double-blind peer-review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce quality reviews; On time submission of peer review report. 	No.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to access - online availability; Indexed by international body; Regular publication; High quality and original content; Well edited and longevity; Focused on their subject area; Honest, ethical and focused on high quality and standard; International/ global relevance but also valuable locally.
Journal B (Scopus)	Expertise, experience, commitment.	Double-blind peer-review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce quality reviews; On time submission of peer review report; Committed. 	Yes. Malaysia, Australia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, UK and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to access - online availability; Indexed by international body; High citation; high impact; Regular publication; High quality and original content; Well edited and longevity; Focused on subject area; Honest, ethical and focused on high quality and standard; International/ global relevance but also valuable locally.
Journal C (Scopus)	To find reviewers from the field of the art network.	Double-blind peer-review.	Produce quality reviews.	Yes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to access - online availability; High citation; High impact; High quality and original content.

Based on the analysis, factors which influence the success of a journal include the following characteristics:- the journal is published by established publisher; experienced editor-in-chief; diversity of editorial board; efficient managing director; good commitment of editors and reviewers; good quality articles, etc. as stated in Tables 7a and 7b. The process of reviewing articles also play an important role including quick and easy accessibility of journal by readers, researchers and writers will contribute to high citation and impact.

Table 8 illustrates three huge efforts to obtain high quality articles for journals through multi-marketing strategies, by providing honorarium/monetary payment and acknowledgement to reviewers. Moreover, the initiative to be indexed by reputable indexing bodies such as Scopus and WoS will enhance international visibility, increase citations for individual researchers including the journal, and strengthen opportunities for collaboration with other researchers from different jurisdictions.

Table 8

Strategy

Name of Journal	Journal Promotion	Peer-reviewers payment/honorarium	Acknowledgement of Reviewer's Services	Importance of Being Indexed in International Databases
Journal A (Scopus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email to journal chief editors; • Invitation to specific writers to get high impact papers; • Build a journal website; • Establish a system of online submission; • Collaborate with conference organizer. 	Yes. USD70	Letter of appreciation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International visibility; • Increase citation for individual researches and the journal; • Increase opportunity for collaboration with other researchers.

(continued)

Name of Journal	Journal Promotion	Peer-reviewers payment/honorarium	Acknowledgement of Reviewer's Services	Importance of Being Indexed in International Databases
Journal B (Scopus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email to journal chief editors;• Invitation to specific writers to get high impact papers;• Build a journal website;• Establish a system of online submission;• Collaborate with conference organizer.	Yes. RM250	Letter of appreciation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International visibility;• Increase citation for individual researches and the journal;• Increase opportunity for collaboration with other researchers.
Journal C (Scopus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invitation to specific writers to get high impact papers;• Build a journal website;• Establish a system of online submission.	No honorarium.	Provide review thanking mail and certificate.	International visibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The challenges in managing a high impact journal is to secure and maintain high quality published articles by the particular journal. Consequently, the board of editors must review the standard operating procedure, periodically in order to maintain a good and efficient reviewing process and engage staff with excellent proofreading skills. Additionally, the publisher must continuously upgrade its online publication system and maintain a friendly website for authors, subscribers and readers.

It is undisputed to conclude that in positioning a journal to be classified as a high impact journal, tremendous effort, financial resources and facilities need to be considered by the publisher of a journal. Concerted effort and commitment must come from the editor-in-chief, editorial board members, the entire publication staff

including quality and committed reviewers. A well established and experienced publisher with a strong financial position is capable of supporting an efficient publication system i.e. online publication system, publication equipment and requirements. The publisher can motivate and engage excellent reviewers with appropriate honorarium as a token for their hardwork and commitment in evaluating articles. Even though, the publisher needs strong financial resources to sustain the publication of a good journal, the objective of the academic journal should not be managed as though it is a lucrative business. The main objective of the publication of an academic journal is to disseminate the findings of research to the public, researchers, students, government organizations including private organizations or other beneficiaries. The findings will help these parties to upgrade or enhance, develop projects/tasks/policies/legislation, etc. The issue of ethical practices and an unwavering focus on high quality and standard of article publication must be practised by writers, editors, publishers including the indexing body. In sum, cooperation between players of the academic publication industry is crucial to establish more high impact, quality journals especially law journals in the market.

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