

Editorial Foreword

Impact Factor of Journals

The general definition for Impact Factor (IF) of a journal is a measure of the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year. It is commonly used as a measure for the relative importance of an academic journal within its field. The authors as well as journal evaluators consider that journals with higher impact factors deemed to be more important and valued than those with lower impacts. With this definition and its level of recognition number of questions has arisen within the journal community such as authors, readers, editors, publishes, etc. Does it mean that the journals without impact factor or with lower impact factor are inferior in terms of quality and scientific content? Can a journal calculate its own impact factor?

Normally it is observed that journals in social sciences have a comparably low impact factor compared to journals in science, nature, medical sciences and biotechnology. As well we have experienced that journals published in developing countries have low impact factor compared to developed countries. Therefore, is it logical to treat all the journals in similar platform when considering a journal indexing in the world highly recognised journal indexing data bases?

Therefore, there is a general debate on the validity of the impact factor as a measure of journal's importance and quality of the papers published. Quality of the journal must be evaluated by using number of criteria. IF should not be the only or most valid and recognised criteria to evaluate the quality of a journal. It should be one of the criteria among number of other criteria in evaluating the quality, value and importance of a journal. Therefore, a broader discussion on this issue has to be launched at international forums on journals and further, it should be expanded as an online discussion.

The major shortcoming of IF is that only the journals indexed in the source data base are ranked with JIF (Journal Impact Factor). The journals not indexed in Web of Science or SCOPUS do not have impact factor and cannot be measured the quality of the journal.

Currently the JAS has been included in more than 35 journal databases including AGRICOLA, Cabi Abstracts, TEEAL and DOAJ. It shows the wider acceptance of JAS by international citations and journal databases. This is an indicator for our progress in journal quality during past years. There were many people behind this success. This honour must go to Dr. Chandrika Dissanayake - Coordinating Editor of JAS, Mr Prasad C. Iddamalgoda, Ms Sioux Cumming and Andy Nobes of SLJOL, all the authors, reviewers and editorial committee members.

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