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Editorial

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EDITORIAL



Dear reader,

Spring is in the air, and this is the time that new citation scores are being published. The JAEE can also report the citation score for 2017. Using Cite tracker of Scopus (Elsevier), the citation score fell down a bit (around – 10%) to 1.06. The Cite Score of Scopus is calculated by dividing the number of citations in a given year by the number of documents published in the three preceding years. For the year 2017, these numbers were 104/98. Since the citations of the latest year can grow a bit because of late registrations (sometimes the last issues of a volume appear later in the next year) the new Cite Score can slightly increase during the first months of the year. In 2016 the cite score was 1.17. Remember that the citation score 2015 was 0.64, which was a record at that time. So, compared to 2015 the score is still around 65% up. However, the 2015 score was also down from the year before, so it is better to look at the trend in the citations scores since 2011. These scores were 2011 (0.32), 2012 (0.66), 2013 (0.80), 2014 (0.87). So, we can definitely see a positive trend. But of course, it remains important to further raise the bar by publishing high-quality articles.

As a side remark about the Cite Score of 2017, the denominator raises questions, since this is 98. However, on average we publish 5 articles per issues and 5 issues per year. Counted over 3 years this would be a total number of 75 articles. I checked this, and we had two issues with four articles and a long editorial of guest editors, and we had one issue with 7 articles. That total does not add up to 98 articles, so ‘documents’ must be a wider concept than articles. It probably includes editorials and book review which we published earlier. This is something we have to find out.

Cite Score of Scopus is one of the metrics of journal performance. The SJR (Scimago Journal Rank) is another indicator which is used a lot. The SJR not only accounts for the number of citations but also for the importance of the journals where citations come from. Obviously, it makes a difference if a journal in the lower part of the Scopus journal list is citing a JAEE article, or that a citation comes from a top journal. That is why the SJR is called size-independent since it measures the ‘average prestige per article’ (<http://www.scimagojr.com/>). The JAEE SJR developed over the years as follows: 2011 (0.217), 2012 (0.348), 2013 (0.432), 2014 (0.576), 2015 (0.451), 2016 (0.460).

To give a feeling of what an SJR score of 0.460 means: the journal with this highest SJR in the subject area ‘Development’ is the Journal of Development of Economics, which has an SJR score of 4.008, and the journal with the lowest SJR in that category has an SJR score of 0.100. So, for the JAEE there is a lot of room for improvement.

Interesting to note is that the SJR score of 0.460 in the subject area Education places the JAEE at rank number 365 out of the total of 1006 education journals listed in Scopus.

Another indicator, SNIP (the Source Normalized Impact per Paper) places the meaning of citations in the context of the subject area of the journal. This is fair since citation practices and numbers vary considerably between science field. For example, the SJR score of Nature is 18.134, Science has an SJR score of 13.535, Cell 26.947 and CA (a journal on cancer) 39.285. In the field of care planning, the maximum journal SJR score is 0.307. On average, the science journals have a much higher impact factor than those of the social science journals. Even within the social sciences citation practices and related maximum SJR scores in subject lists vary quite a lot.

SNIP is calculated by dividing the number of times an article is cited by the potential the article has of being cited in the given scientific domain (as measured by Scopus). As is being stated on the website <http://www.journalindicators.com/>, using SNIP makes it possible to make ‘... more accurate between-field comparisons of citation impact’.

The JAEE has a SNIP score 0.845. By comparison, the SNIP score of the Journal of Development of Economics is 2.732, which is the highest within the subject area Development.

Interesting is also to look at the number of citations received by documents which are published in the JAEE divided by the total number of documents published in that journal. This score is equivalent to the journal impact factor as published by Thomson Reuters. This score has developed well over the years. The scores were 2011 (0.500), 2012 (0.904), 2013 (1.070), 2014 (0.839), 2015 (0.700), 2016 (1.296).

Another interesting thing to look at is the number of self-citations, which is a number of times JAEE articles are citing other JAEE articles. This number developed well. The scores were 2011 (12), 2012 (47), 2013 (84), 2014 (98), 2015 (78), 2016 (119). This means that articles which appeared in the previous years have been getting more important for authors. Of differently put: it seems as if the JAEE is more and more interesting for a certain community, which starts to refer to one another. Of course, it is important to take self-citations out of the journal impact-related metrics, which has been done. It must also be noted that although the JAEE encourages authors who publish in the JAEE to cite other JAEE articles, it does not urge them to do so, as that would be unethical editorial practice.

A rough indicator of which journals are also often compared is the quartile. The first quartile, or Q1, is the first quarter of the set of journals with the highest SJR values within a given subject. Q2 is the second quarter, Q3 the third quarter, and Q4 the fourth quarter. The JAEE is ranked in three areas, Agricultural and Biological Sciences (miscellaneous), Education, and Geography, Planning and Development. Since 2011, when the JAEE was in Q3, it ranked Q2 in all areas most of the time. These are the specifics: Agricultural and Biological Sciences (miscellaneous) 2011 (Q3), 2012 (Q2), 2013 (Q1), 2014 (Q1), 2015 (Q2), 2016 (Q2), Education 2011 (Q3), 2012 (Q2), 2013 (Q2), 2014 (Q2), 2015 (Q2), 2016 (Q2), and Geography, Planning and Development 2011 (Q3), 2012 (Q2), 2013 (Q2), 2014 (Q1), 2015 (Q2), 2016 (Q2).

Another way of looking at the development of journals is by its external citations (thus: excluding internal citations). Scopus presents data about the number of external citations publications in a journal received divided by the total number of documents published in that journal during the three previous years. The scores for the years 2011–2016 for this indicator are as follows: 2011 (0.417), 2012 (0.692), 2013 (0.802), 2014 (0.917), 2015 (0.697) and 2016 (0.975). As can be seen, apart from the dip in 2015, this indicator developed well, up to 0.975 in 2016.

Finally, international collaboration is often seen as a sign of the quality of a journal. The Scopus score for International Collaboration is the proportion of articles which are published in a journal which are authored by researchers from different countries from the total number of articles published. JAEE is a journal which in our opinion is very international as manuscripts are being submitted from all continents. This view is being corroborated by the proportion of articles which have been published by authors from different countries. The International Collaboration scores developed as follows: 2011 (12.12), 2012 (29.41), 2013, (30.30), 2014 (21.28), 2015 (36.00), and 2016 (34.48).

Summarizing: the bibliographical metrics of the JAEE are developing well. Only one push is needed to arrive at the Q1 level. To be specific about this: journal number 265, which is the cut-off point of Q1, has an SJR of 0.621. So, there is a gap of 0.161.

There are some other issues to be mentioned regarding the editing of the JAEE. As mentioned earlier, I will be stepping down from the honourable position of Editor-in-Chief of

the JAEE. Whether that will be at the end of 2018 or in the course of 2019, that remains to be seen. I have always said that if Editorial Assistant Angela Pachuaui would have to leave, I would also leave. The point is that the Editorial Assistant has been paid for her role as Editorial Assistant from the budget of the chair group of Education and Competence Studies. I found it particularly important that the chair group in the field of education of the world's leading university in the field of agricultural and environmental sciences should support the journal. That is also why I approached Taylor and Francis around a decade ago to publish the journal. I never regretted that decision. It looked like the chair group now called Education and Learning Sciences, was facing budget deficits, and that the Editorial Assistant should leave the journal. It has now been decided that the revenues from the journal will be used to finance the contract of the Editorial Assistant, although the monies that come in only cover 0.1 fte. This effectively means a budget cut of 0.4fte. Nevertheless, we are all delighted that Angela Pachuaui can continue with the journal, and can take care of the essential communication needed to keep the journal going. The new situation will take effect starting January 2019. As per July 2018, the contract will be cut down to 0.3 fte already.

My successor, Professor Perry den Brok, Dr. Harm Biemans, who was Editor-in-Chief of the journal a short while before it was published by Taylor and Francis, Angela Pachuaui and I have been talking about the consequences of this change. We decided to examine the possibility of following the model of the journal Learning Environments Research of which Perry den Brok is a Regional Editor. That journal has an Editor-in-Chief, four Regional Editors, and an Editorial Board. The Editor and Regional Editor deal with all manuscripts without any assistant editor. This model should also be feasible for the JAEE. The tasks which have to be divided are quite simple: screening manuscripts to see if they can go into the review process, allocating reviewers, go through reviews, take a decision and compose a decision letter, and follow-up on revisions. If five active professionals would share the work equally, they each should edit five manuscripts which are published a year per person. As said, this should be feasible.

A small group of colleagues from the JAEE, Julie Ingram and Kristin Davis, both active as Editorial Committee members, and Rasheed Sulaiman, associate editor, Angela Pachuaui and I had a virtual meeting about these issues a couple of weeks ago. Some very important remarks have been made during that meeting: 1. The institutional memory of the JAEE needs to be protected; 2. Find out what the publisher can do more to support the editorial process; 3. Prepare a job description for the Editor-in-Chief and Co-Editors; 4. Find colleagues who would be able and willing to serve as active associate editors. Various suggestions have been made regarding these points, and we will follow this up during the coming months to arrive at a new work process as of the beginning of 2019. We will further review the composition of the groups involved in the current editing of the JAEE. The Editorial Committee has been renewed not long ago, and we are very content with its functioning. However, we do not see much added-value anymore of the Editorial Advisory Board. This Board was originally created to support the journal in its initial stages, but we think we could do with an Editorial Committee only. So we will contact the members of the Editorial Advisory Board to ask them about their intentions with the JAEE, and move them to the Editorial Committee, or thank them for their contributions in the past and let them disengage from the Board.

Finally, I would like to mention the most recent change in the Editorial Committee of the JAEE, which is that Kristina D. Hains replaced Robert Strong as Executive Editor of the Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education and JIAEE representative in the Editorial Advisory Board. Kristina is Associate Professor & Extension Specialist in Leadership

Development at the Department of Community & Leadership Development of the University of Kentucky. We wish Kristina a productive year as JIAEE Executive Editor, and a good time with us in the JAEE, and we thank Robert for his contributions to the journal, and wish him success in his further career.

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