

Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science, Vol.3, no.2, December 1998: 49-66

JOURNAL OF MALAYSIAN BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY (JMBRAS) 1987-1996: A TEN-YEAR BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Tiew Wai Sin

SMK Ulu Kelang, Km7, Jalan Ulu Kelang, Selangor DE, Malaysia
E-mail: wstiew@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

Describes and analyses key bibliometric components of articles and book reviews published in the Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (JMBRAS) between 1987-1996.

Keywords: Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society; *JMBRAS*; Bibliometrics; Book reviews; Historical journal; Malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

The *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, popularly known as *JMBRAS* was founded in Singapore in 1877. This scholarly journal is usually published in June and December every year and sent to all subscribing members of the Society. The latest issue of *JMBRAS* is Volume 71, Part 1 (No. 274), 1998 published in June 1998.

JMBRAS is the chief organ through which the Society attempts to disseminate knowledge on matters of a historical nature pertaining to Malaysia and the surrounding region in the form of scholarly articles. For this purpose, it has published original and high quality papers whose contents have not appeared in substantially the same or abbreviated form elsewhere in other journals. The papers to be published in the Journal must be communicated in toto through the medium of English only. In addition, the ideas or information being communicated must be written clearly and concisely, with the

minimum use of jargon to facilitate easy reading and understanding.

It is not too much to state that *JMBRAS* has an impressive publishing history in the sense that it has been publishing without fail from its humble beginning in 1877 to this present day, only with a short break during 1942-1946 due to World War II and the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, which also affected much of the Society's administration and activities.

However, it is sad to say that even though *JMBRAS* is such an established scholarly journal in Malaysia and the surrounding region, no serious attempt has ever been made to carry out a bibliometric study on it. This study is the first such attempt.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine bibliometrically *JMBRAS* 1987-1996, by way of analyzing references, footnotes, notes, citations and bibliographies appended to 111 articles, and 103 bibliographical

Tiew, W.S.

notes containing names of the authors, their occupational status, geographic location and institutional affiliation and 78 book reviews containing the geographical distribution of reviewers, their affiliation and membership to MBRAS.

METHODOLOGY

Two methods were employed for the purpose, namely, descriptive statistics and bibliometric analysis. Descriptive statistics is used to describe the characteristics, quantities and research trends of the articles and book reviews. This provides a holistic picture of the development of the contents of these articles and book reviews. Bibliometric techniques are employed to show and determine the spread and character of the literature used by the authors, apart from the study of gender, occupation, affiliation (geographic and institutional) and extent of authorship collaboration.

Collection of Data

The researcher studied the references, footnotes, notes, citations and bibliographies of 111 articles, 103 biographical notes, 78 book reviews and other relevant information included in *JMBRAS* between 1987-1996 housed in the researcher's own personal library. This journal is also available in most public or academic libraries in Malaysia. The bibliometric data such as titles of articles, names of authors, number of authors, occupation of authors, geographic and institutional affiliations of authors, gender of authors, length of articles, subject of articles, references, footnotes, notes, citations or bibliographies was collected, compiled and tabulated

carefully and counter-checked. Apart from that, names of book reviewers, their country of affiliation and their membership in MBRAS were also collected, compiled and tabulated. Two forms (*JMBRAS* Articles Data Input Form and *JMBRAS* Book Reviews Data Input Form) were designed to gather the necessary information for easy reference and to facilitate compilation. Thereafter, these data were tabulated for analysis where elements and the relevant portions of each record were extracted according to the needs of this study. All these processes of data collection, compilation and tabulation were done manually.

Compilation of Data

After gathering all the data input forms, the data regarding *JMBRAS* articles 1987-1997 and *JMBRAS* book reviews 1987-1996 were transferred into them. The next process was compiling these data into separate tables to facilitate the extraction of records for data analysis. Each separate category included in these tables was then totaled.

Double-checking was done by totaling the number of documents in each article. From the two data input forms, three tables were created, namely article table, reference table and review table. The article table consisted of information pertaining to the names of authors, authorship, occupation, gender, geographical and institutional affiliations, number of words in title, length of each article, subject of the article, type of contribution, number of notes, acknowledgement, appendix, abstract and membership to MBRAS. On the other hand, the reference

table consisted of different types of bibliographic formats, namely, journal articles, books/monographs, theses, conference papers, newspapers, interviews, government documents, incomplete references and other references for each article. In addition, the total of all the documents was also recorded for each article. The review table included information regarding the name of the reviewers, gender, geographical distribution of reviewers, reviewer's membership to MBRAS, country of affiliation and number of contributions per reviewer.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Articles

It was aimed to find out :

- (a) the quantitative growth of articles by year
- (b) the volume-wise distribution of citations
- (c) the range of citations per article and the average
- (d) the ranking of documents in terms of citations
- (e) the authorship pattern
- (f) the author productivity
- (g) the male-female distribution of authorship
- (h) the most prolific contributors
- (i) the ranking of authors by occupation
- (j) the ranking of authors by geographical affiliation
- (k) the ranking of authors by institutional affiliation
- (l) the average length of a title in terms of words

- (m) the average length of an article in term of pages
- (n) the geographical distribution of authorship
- (o) the subject distribution of articles
- (p) the inclusion of notes in the articles
- (q) the acknowledgement pattern
- (r) the inclusion of appendices in the articles
- (s) the inclusion of abstracts in the articles
- (t) the relationship between MBRAS membership and *JMBRAS* article contributors

Quantitative Study of Articles by Year

Table 1 shows the number of articles published from 1987 to 1996 totaling 111. The distribution of articles by year shows that the maximum number of articles, i.e. 15 were published in 1995.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of Articles by Year

Year	Number of Articles	Percent (%)
1987	11	9.91
1988	8	7.21
1989	11	9.91
1990	11	9.91
1991	9	8.11
1992	11	9.91
1993	10	9.01
1994	11	9.91
1995	15	13.51
1996	14	12.61
Total	111	100.00

The range of articles published per year during the period is between 8 and 15. It should be noted here that out of the 111

Tiew, W.S.

articles, a total of 11 articles were actually talks, occasional lectures or annual lectures given at special gatherings of the Society but published as articles in the Journal. It may be noted that except for 1995 and 1996, the number of articles per year varied between 8 and 11. It is not known whether the slight increment in the number of articles published in 1995 and 1996 is indicative of the future trend.

Volume-wise Distribution of Citations

Table 2 presents the distribution of citations appended to the articles in Volume 60 to 69. The articles published in the volumes contained a total of 4045 citations. The distribution of citations by volume shows that the maximum number of citations (656) was in 1996. The number of citations per volume ranges from 285 to 656 with a mean of 404.5. Volume 61 records the highest number of citations per article. The range of average citations per volume varies from 25.91 to 51.50 with an average of 36.44.

Distribution of Citations Per Article

Table 3 indicates the number and percentage of citations per article. Fifteen articles are having no citations at all. Articles having between 1 - 30 citations top the list with a tally of 41 (36.94%) followed by 35 (31.52%) articles having between 31 - 60 citations, 13 (11.71%) articles are having between 61-90 citations, 4 (3.61%) articles are having 91-120 citations and finally 3 (2.7%) articles are having more than 120 citations per article. The range of citations per article varies from 0 to 159, with the mean of 36.44.

Table 2: Distribution of Citations by Volume

Vol.	No. of	No. of	Citations
	Articles	Citations	Per Article
	A	B	B/A
60	11	354	32.18
61	8	412	51.50
62	11	285	25.91
63	11	455	41.36
64	9	381	42.33
65	11	312	28.36
66	10	361	36.10
67	11	386	35.10
68	15	443	29.53
69	14	656	46.86
Total	111	4045	36.44

Table 3: Number and Percentage of Citations Per Article

No. of Citations Per Article	No. of Articles	Percent (%)
0	15	13.51
1 – 30	41	36.94
31 – 60	35	31.53
61 – 90	13	11.71
91 – 120	4	3.61
121 – 159	3	2.70
Total	111	100

Ranked List of Citations by Types of Documents

Table 4 reports the analysis of citations according to types of documents. The ranked list shows that books/monographs top the list, meaning that authors of *JMBRAS* articles rely upon them as major sources of information. Out of a total of 4045 citations, 1525 (37.30%) are books/

Table 4: Ranked List of Citations by Types of Document

Ranking	Types of Documents	Number	Percent(%)
1	Books / Monographs	1525	37.70
2	Journal Articles	827	20.44
3	Government Documents	753	18.62
4	Other Types	421	10.41
5	Newspaper Items	192	4.75
6	Incomplete References	136	3.36
7	Interviews	82	2.03
8	Theses	66	1.63
9	Conference Papers, Data Papers, etc.	43	1.06
Total		4045	100.00

monographs, followed by journal articles 827 (20.44%), government documents 753 (18.62%), newspaper items 192 (4.75%), others 421 (10.41%), incomplete references 136 (3.36%), interviews 82 (2.03%), theses 66 (1.63%) and conference papers, data papers, etc. 43 (1.06%).

Authorship Pattern

Table 5 shows the authorship pattern as reflected in the journal articles. Single-author contributions amount to 105 articles (94.59%) while contributions by two authors have a total of 6 articles (5.41%). It is very clear that articles in *JMBRAS* are normally by single authors. Of the 105 single-author contributors, 87 are male authors and 18 are female authors. As for contributions by two authors, three are co-authored by male authors and the other three by mixed co-authors.

Table 5: Authorship Pattern

Authorship	Number	Percent (%)
Single	105	94.59
Co-author	6	5.41
Total	111	100

Author Productivity and Gender

Table 6 indicates the productivity of the authors. A total of 80 authors contributed 111 articles. Of these authors, 62 (77.5%) contributed one article, 8 (10%) contributed two articles, 5 (6.25%) contributed three articles, 4 (5%) contributed four articles and only 1 (1.25%) contributed 8 articles. Of these 80 authors, 62 (77.5%) are male authors while 18 (22.5%) are female authors as shown in Table 7. In other words, male authors far outnumber female authors.

Table 6: Author Productivity

No. of Articles	No. of Authors	Percent (%)
1	62	77.5
2	8	10
3	5	6.25
4	4	5
8	1	1.25
Total	80	100

Table 7: Gender of the Authors

Gender	Number	Percent (%)
Male	62	77.5
Female	18	22.5
Total	80	100

Ranked List of Most Prolific Authors

Table 8 presents the ranked list of authors according to their productivity. Topping the list is J.M. Gullick with eight contributions, followed by John Bastin, Khoo Kay Kim, Nicholas Tarling and H. S. Barlow with four articles each; Adi Haji

Taha, Virginia M. Hooker, A.V.M. Horton, Cheah Boon Kheng and Mubin Sheppard with three articles each. Altogether these 10 authors contributed a total of 39 articles (35.14%). Of these 10 prolific contributors, four are Malaysians (one Bumiputra).

Ranking of Authors by Occupation

Table 9 reveals the distribution of authors according to their occupational status. It is seen that the top contributing authors are academicians. A total of 52 (69.3%) authors working as academicians in universities, colleges, schools and seminaries contributed most of the articles. Non-academicians rank second with a tally of 7 (9.3%), curators ranked third with a tally of 5 (6.7%), students (undergraduate, postgraduate and re-search) and members of societies and associations rank fourth with a tally of 4 each (5.3%). Authors working as librarians were at the bottom of the list with 3 (4%) articles and hence ranked last. The occupational status of five authors could not be ascertained.

Table 8: Ranked List of Most Prolific Contributors

Rank	Author's Name	Productivity (Articles)	Cumulative Total
1	J. M. Gullick	8	8
2	John Bastin	4	12
2	Khoo Kay Kim	4	16
2	Nicholas Tarling	4	20
2	H. S. Barlow	4	24
6	Adi Hj Taha	3	27
6	Virginia Matheson Hooker	3	30
6	A. V. M. Horton	3	33
6	Cheah Boon Kheng	3	36
6	Mubin Sheppard	3	39

Table 9: Ranking of Authors by Occupation

Rank	Occupation	Number	Percent (%)
1	Academicians	52	69.3
2	Others	7	9.3
3	Curators	5	6.7
4	Undergraduates, Postgraduates & Researchers (non-teaching)	4	5.3
4	Members of Societies or Associations	4	5.3
6	Librarians	3	4
Total		75	100

Ranked List of Authors by Geographical Affiliation

Table 10 shows the ranked list of authors by geographical affiliation. Seventy-six authors belonging to 13 countries worldwide contributed the articles. Most of the contributors as can be expected are from

Malaysia 26 (34.2%). This is followed by Australia 16 (21.2%), United Kingdom 12 (15.8%), Singapore 10 (13.2%), USA 4 (5.3%) and one each from Brunei, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Netherlands, New Zealand and Thailand. The geographical affiliation of five authors could not be ascertained.

Table 10: Ranked List of Authors by Geographical Affiliation*

Rank	Country of Affiliation	Number	Percent (%)
1	Malaysia	26	34.2
2	Australia	16	21.1
3	United Kingdom	12	15.8
4	Singapore	10	13.2
5	United States of America	4	5.3
6	Brunei	1	1.3
6	France	1	1.3
6	Germany	1	1.3
6	Hong Kong	1	1.3
6	Indonesia	1	1.3
6	Netherlands	1	1.3
6	New Zealand	1	1.3
6	Thailand	1	1.3
Total		76	100

*Countries of affiliation of 5 authors could not be determined.

Tiew, W.S.

Ranked List of Authors by Institutional Affiliation

Table 11 presents the ranked list of authors by institutional affiliation. Institutional affiliation of authors is divided into six categories namely academic institutions, archives, libraries, museums, societies/associations and others. Academic institutions top the list with a total of 55 (75.34%), followed by societies and associations 6 (8.22%), libraries and museums four each (5.48%), archives 1 (1.37%) and others 3 (4.11%). The institutional affiliations of seven authors could not be ascertained.

Table 11: Ranked List of Authors by Institutional Affiliation*

Rank	Institutional Affiliation	Number	Percent (%)
1	Academic Institutions	55	75.34
2	Societies or Associations	6	8.22
3	Libraries	4	5.48
3	Museums	4	5.48
5	Others	3	4.11
6	Archives	1	1.37
Total		73	100.00

* 7 authors' institutional affiliation could not be determined.

Words in Titles

Table 12 provides the title length in term of words. Out of 111 article titles, 46 (41.44%) consist of 1 to 5 words, 55 (49.55%) contain 6 to 10 words, 8 (7.21%) have 11 to 15 words, and 2 (1.80%) have more than 15 words in their titles. The number of words in titles

ranges from 2 to 21 words, while the mean length of title is 6.76 words.

Table 12: Words in Titles

Number of Words in Title	Frequency	Percent (%)
1 – 5	46	41.44
6 – 10	55	49.55
11 – 15	8	7.21
16 & Above	2	1.80
Total	111	100

Length of Articles

Table 13 indicates the length of articles in term of pages. Out of 111 articles, 4 articles (3.6%) occupy between 1 to 5 pages and another four articles 41 to 45 pages, 21 articles (18.92%) occupy 6 to 10 pages and the same number occupy 11 to 15 pages. Seventeen articles (15.32%) cover between 16 to 20 and another 17 between 21 to 25 pages. Of the remaining articles 13 (11.71%) occupy between 26

Table 13: Length of Articles

Length of Articles (Pages)	Frequency	Percent (%)
1 - 5	4	3.60
6 – 10	21	18.92
11 - 15	21	18.92
16 – 20	17	15.32
21 - 25	17	15.32
26 – 30	13	11.71
31 - 35	6	5.41
36 – 40	5	4.50
41 - 45	4	3.60
46 & Above	3	2.70
Total	111	100.00

to 30 pages, 6 (5.41%) between 31 to 35 pages, 5 (4.50%) between 36 to 40 pages, and 3 (3.60%) more than 45 pages. On the whole, the length of articles varies from the shortest 2 pages to the longest 86 pages. The average length of an article is 20.48 pages.

Geographical Distribution of the Origin of Articles

Table 14 indicates the geographical distribution of the origin of articles. Out of 111 articles, foreign contributors produced 67 (60.4%) articles, local contributors 38 (34.2%) articles, multinational contributors 2 (1.80%) articles. The geographical origin of four articles could not be determined due to lack of information. The country-wise distribution shows that 22 are from United Kingdom, 19 from Australia, four each from New Zealand and USA, two each from Indonesia and Netherlands, and one each from Brunei, France, Hong Kong, and Thailand. As for the multinational contributors, one is

collaborated by authors from Australia and United Kingdom while the other is between Germany and some other country which is not indicated from the article.

Table 14: Authorship by Geographical Distribution

Geographical Distribution	Frequency	Percent (%)
Foreign	67	60.4
Local	38	34.2
Multinational	2	1.80
Undetermined	4	3.6
Total	111	100

Ranked List by Subject

Table 15 shows the ranked list by subject. Of the 111 articles analysed, 36 (32.43%) belonged to general social history; 17 (15.32%) to Malay social history; 14 (12.61%) to colonial history: the British in Malaya; 9 (8.11%) to economic history; 8 (7.21%) to Malay political history; 7 (6.31) each to Chinese

Table 15: Ranked List by Subject

Rank	Subject	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	General Social History	36	32.43
2	Malay Social History	17	15.32
3	Colonial History: The British in Malaya	14	12.61
4	Economic History	9	8.11
5	Malay Political History	8	7.21
6	Chinese and Indian History	7	6.31
6	Archaeology	7	6.31
8	Others	5	4.50
9	Natural History	3	2.70
9	Traditional Malay Historical Works	3	2.70
11	Anthropology and Ethnography	2	1.80
Total		111	100

Tiew, W.S.

and Indian history and archaeology; 3 (2.70%) each to natural history and traditional Malay historical works and 2 (1.80%) to anthropology and ethnography. Five articles fall under other subjects.

Distribution of Notes in the Articles

Table 16 shows the distribution of notes in the articles. Out of 111 articles, 30 articles contained no notes, 46 articles 1-20 notes, 23 articles 21-40 notes, 9 articles 41-80 notes and three articles (17.72%) more than 80 notes. The number of notes per article ranges from 0 notes to 150 while the mean is 17.88 notes per article.

Table 16: Notes in the Articles

No. of Notes	Frequency	Total no. of Notes
0	30	0
1 - 20	46	442
21 - 40	23	704
41 - 80	9	489
81 & above	3	350
TOTAL	111	1985

Acknowledgement in the Articles

Table 17 depicts the status of acknowledgements included in the articles. Out of 111 articles, 40 articles (36.04%) contained no formal acknowledgement while 71 articles (63.96%) had formal acknowledgement.

Table 17: Acknowledgement in the Articles

Acknowledge-ment	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	40	36.04
No	71	63.96
Total	111	100

Appendix to the Articles

Table 18 reveals the frequency of appendices appearing with the articles. Only 25 articles (22.52%) out of 111 articles contained appendices while the rest 86 articles (77.48%) did not contain appendices.

Table 18: Appendix to the Articles

Appendix	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	25	22.52
No	86	77.48
Total	111	100

Abstract to Articles

Table 19 indicates the frequency of abstracts figuring with the articles. Only two articles (1.8%) in the sample contained abstracts as part of the articles. The rest, 109 articles (98.2%) have no abstracts at all.

Table 19: Abstract to Articles

Abstract	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	2	1.8
No	109	98.2
Total	111	100

Author's Membership in MBRAS

Table 20 shows the relationship between authors of *JMBRAS* articles and their membership in MBRAS, the publisher. The records indicate that out of the 80 authors, 52 (65%) were formal members

of MBRAS while 28 (35%) were non-members. Out of these 52 authors who were members of MBRAS, male members accounted for 42 and female members 10. As to the 28 non-members, 20 were male and 8 female.

Table 20: Author's Membership to MBRAS

Membership	Number	Percent (%)
Yes	52	65
No	28	35
Total	80	100

Book Reviews

It was aimed to find out:

- (a) the year-wise distribution
- (b) the male-female distribution of book reviewers
- (c) the geographical distribution
- (d) the relationship between MBRAS membership and *JMBRAS* book reviewers
- (e) the ranking by country of book reviewers
- (f) the book reviewer's productivity
- (g) the most prolific book reviewers

Quantitative Study of Book Reviews by Year

Table 21 shows the number of book reviews by year. The number of book reviews varied from 5 to 11 during the years. The maximum number (11) of book reviews appeared in 1987 and the minimum number (5) in 1995. The book reviews published during the years total 78. The mean is 7.8 book reviews per year.

Distribution of Book Reviewers by Gender

Table 22 reveals the distribution of book reviewers by gender. A total of 58 book reviewers contributed 78 book reviews between 1987-1996. Out of these 58 book reviewers, 41 (70.69%) are male while 17 (29.31%) are female.

Table 21: Book Reviews by Year

Year	No. of Book Reviews	Cumulative Total
1987	11	11
1988	6	17
1989	6	23
1990	10	33
1991	7	40
1992	9	49
1993	10	59
1994	6	65
1995	5	70
1996	8	78
TOTAL	78	78

Table 22: Distribution of Book Reviewers by Gender

Gender	Number	Percent (%)
Male	41	70.69
Female	17	29.31
Total	58	100

Geographical Distribution of the Origin of Book Review

Table 23 shows the geographical distribution of origin of book reviews. Out of 78 book reviews, 34 books (43.59%) were reviewed by locals, and the remain-

Tiew, W.S.

ing 44 (56.41%) by foreigners. In other words, foreigners reviewed more books than the locals. Of the 44 foreign book reviewers, 15 were from Singapore, seven from Australia, six from United Kingdom, four each from Canada and USA, two each from New Zealand and Japan while one each from France, Brunei, Philippines, and Germany.

Table 23: Geographical Distribution of Origin of Book Reviews

Contribution	Frequency	Percent (%)
Local	34	43.59
Foreign	44	56.41
Total	78	100.00

Book Reviewers and their Membership in MBRAS

Table 24 indicates the membership of book reviewers in MBRAS. Out of 58 book reviewers, 20 (34.48%) were not members of MBRAS while 38 (65.52%) were members of the Society. In other words, more book reviewers were members of MBRAS.

Table 24: Distribution of Book Reviewers by MBRAS Membership

Membership to MBRAS	Number	Percent (%)
Yes	38	65.52%
No	20	34.48%
Total	58	100.00%

Distribution of Book Reviewer's by Country of Affiliation

Table 25 reveals the distribution of book reviewers by country. Malaysia tops the list with 21 book reviewers (36.21%) followed by Singapore 12 (20.69%), Australia 7 (12.07%), United Kingdom 4 (6.90%), Canada and USA 3 (5.17%) each, New Zealand and Japan 2 (3.45%) each, and finally France, Brunei, Philippines and Germany one (1.72%) each.

Table 25: Distribution of Book Reviewers by Country

Rank	Country	Number	Percent (%)
1	Malaysia	21	36.21
2	Singapore	12	20.69
3	Australia	7	12.07
4	United Kingdom	4	6.90
5	Canada	3	5.17
5	USA	3	5.17
7	New Zealand	2	3.45
7	Japan	2	3.45
9	France	1	1.72
9	Brunei	1	1.72
9	Philippines	1	1.72
9	Germany	1	1.72
Total		58	100

Distribution of Book Reviewer's by Productivity

Table 26 indicates the productivity of the book reviewers. Of the 58 book reviewers, 46 (79.3%) contributed one book review, 8 (13.8%) contributed two book reviews, 2 (3.5%) contributed three book

reviews, one each (1.7%) contributed four book reviews and six book reviews respectively.

Table 26: Distribution of Book Reviewer's by Productivity

Productivity	Total Number of Book Reviewers	Percent (%)	Cumulative Total
1	46	79.3	46
2	8	13.8	54
3	2	3.5	56
4	1	1.7	57
6	1	1.7	58
Total	58	100.00	58

Ranked List of Most Prolific Book Reviewers

Table 27 shows the ranked list of most prolific book reviewers. The most prolific book reviewer is found to be H. S. Barlow with six book reviews. He is followed by Khoo Kay Kim (4 book reviews), Cheah Boon Kheng and Joseph Peter contributed (3 each). Altogether, these four book reviewers contributed 16 book reviews (20.5%).

Table 27: Ranked List of Most Prolific Book Reviewers

Rank	Name of Book Reviewer	Number of Contributions
1	H. S. Barlow	6
2	Khoo Kay Kim	4
3	Cheah Boon Kheng	3
4	Joseph Peter	3
Total		16 (20.5%)

Articles and book reviews

The objective was to find out :

- (a) the quantitative growth of articles and book reviews by year
- (b) the productivity of *JMBRAS* contributors (articles & book reviews)
- (c) the ranked list of the most prolific contributors (articles & book reviews)
- (d) the male-female distribution of contributor's (articles & book reviews)
- (e) the geographical distribution (articles & book reviews)
- (f) the contributor's membership status to MBRAS

Quantitative Study of Articles and Book Reviews by Year

Table 28 reveals the number of *JMBRAS* articles and book reviews between 1987-1996, totaling 189. The distribution of articles and book reviews by year show that the number of articles and book reviews were maximum in 1987 and 1996 with 22 each. The range of articles and book reviews published during the period varies from 14 in 1988 to 22 in 1987 and 1996. The mean is 18.9 articles and book reviews per year.

Contributor's Productivity

Table 29 records the author productivity of both articles and book reviews taken together. Some authors of articles also contributed book reviews. As a result, the actual number of contributors was less because 10 authors were book reviewers too. A total of 129 authors produced 189 articles and book reviews. Out of this, 97 (75.78%) contributors produced one item, 21 (16.41%) contributed two items, four

Table 28: Distribution of Articles & Book Reviews by Year

Year	No. of Articles	No. of Book Reviews	No. of Articles & Book Reviews	Cumulative No. of Articles & Book Reviews
1987	11	11	22	22
1988	8	6	14	36
1989	11	6	17	53
1990	11	10	21	74
1991	9	7	16	90
1992	11	9	20	110
1993	10	10	20	130
1994	11	6	17	147
1995	15	5	20	167
1996	14	8	22	189
Total	111	78	189	189

(3.13%) contributed three items, two (1.56%) contributed four items, one each (0.78%) produced six and eight items while only two contributors (1.78%) managed to come out with 10 contributions.

top the list with 10 contributions each, Khoo Kay Kim comes next with eight contributions, and Cheah Boon Kheng with six contributions, John Bastin and Nicholas Tarling have four contributions

Table 29: Contributor's Productivity

Productivity	Number	Percent (%)
1	97	75.78
2	21	16.41
3	4	3.13
4	2	1.56
6	1	0.78
8	1	0.78
10	2	1.56
Total	128	100

Ranked List of Most Prolific Contributors

Table 30 shows the ranked list of most prolific contributors (articles & book reviews). Both H.S.Barlow and J.M.Gullick

Table 30: Ranked List of Most Prolific Contributors

Rank	Name of Contributors	No. Contributions
1	H. S. Barlow	10
1	J. M. Gullick	10
3	Khoo K.K	8
4	Cheah Boon Kheng	6
5	John Bastin	4
5	Nicholas Tarling	4
7	Adi Hj Taha	3
7	A.V.M. Horton	3
7	Mubin bin Sheppard	3
7	Virginia Matheson	3
	Hooker	
Total		54

each, and lastly four persons, Adi Haji Taha, A. V. M. Horton, Mubin Sheppard and Virginia Matheson Hooker all contributed three items each. Of these ten individuals, only one is female that is Virginia Matheson Hooker who contributed three. Also, out of these ten contributors, four are Malaysians of which, one is a Bumiputera. Altogether these ten individuals contributed 54(28.57%) items, more than a quarter of the total contributions.

Contributor's Gender

Table 31 indicates the gender of authors and book reviewers. Of the 128 contributors, 95 (74.22%) are male while 33 (25.78%) are female. Hence, it is very clear that male contributors are contributing more articles and book reviews to *JMBRAS*.

Table 31: Contributor's Gender

Gender	Number	Percent (%)
Male	95	74.22
Female	33	25.78
Total	128	100

Geographical Distribution of Origin of Articles & Book Reviews

Table 32 shows the geographical distribution of origin of articles and book reviews. Out of 189 contributions, 72 (38.10%) are local, 111 (58.73%) foreign and, two (1.06%) multinational. The geographical origin of four (2.11%) is not known. Of the 111 foreign contributions, 28 are from United Kingdom, 26 from

Australia, 25 from Singapore, eight from USA, six from New Zealand, four from Canada, two each from Brunei, France, Indonesia, Japan, Netherlands, and one each from Germany, Hong Kong, Philippines, and Thailand.

Table 32: Geographical Distribution of Articles & Book Reviews

Contribution	Number	Percent (%)
Local	72	38.10
Foreign	111	58.73
Multinational	2	1.06
Undetermined	4	2.11
Total	189	100

Contributors Membership in MBRAS

Table 33 indicates the membership status of contributors of articles and reviews in MBRAS. Out of a total of 128 contributors, 80 (62.5%) are members of MBRAS while 48 (37.5%) are not. Therefore, it can be concluded that majority of the contributors to *JMBRAS* are in fact members of MBRAS.

Table 33: Contributors Membership to MBRAS

Membership	Number	Percent (%)
Yes	80	62.5
No	48	37.5
Total	128	100.0

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper attempts to identify the bibliometric characteristics of *JMBRAS*

Tiew, W.S.

articles, book reviews and their contributors. In the period under study, *JMBRAS* published 189 items, 111 articles and 78 book reviews, which worked out to be about 11 articles and eight book reviews per volume. One hundred twenty eight individuals with different productivity levels authored these contributions. Most of these individuals contributed only one article. The typical author of a *JMBRAS* article is usually a male foreigner academician. More often than not, he is also a member of MBRAS.

On the other hand, a typical bibliometric profile of a *JMBRAS* article is as follows: The article is normally single-authored, covering on an average 20.48 pages, containing 17.88 notes, 36.33 citations, a formal acknowledgement, appendices but no abstract. The average number of words in the title is 6.76 and the majority of the articles are on general social history.

A typical bibliometric profile of a *JMBRAS* book review is as follows: It is written by a male foreigner who is, coincidentally a member of MBRAS. Most of the times, a reviewer contributed only one book review.

The present study also indicates that arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS) scholars contributing articles to *JMBRAS* relied on books and monographs as their major sources of information. Out of 4045 citations, 1525 (37.30%) were from books/monographs. In other words, books and monographs, which made up more than one-third of the cited references are found to be more important than other types of documents. The study also shows that more male contributors are making

contributions either in the form of articles or book reviews. The data show that out of the 95 male authors, nearly three-fourth contributed single articles. Hence, it is very clear that contributing authors to *JMBRAS* are more likely to be men rather than women. Another interesting fact is the publication of lectures delivered by certain individuals to members of MBRAS in the form of articles.

The major findings of this present study support the findings of previous citation studies by AHSS researchers. Heinzkill (1980), Stern (1983), Budd (1986), Hart (1993) and Goi (1997) in their citation studies concluded that books and monographs are more important in humanities scholarship compared to journals. Goi (1997) in her dissertation found that 52% of total citations were to books while this study found a lower percentage of 37.3%. Another interesting finding is the high incidence of single-authored papers among humanities scholars. The present study found that 95% of contributions is single-authored. Goi (1997) reports that 89.94% of total citations used by humanities researchers are single authored. This proved beyond doubt that AHSS researchers prefer to work in isolation, not in collaboration with others (Stevens, 1956; Stone, 1982; Goi, 1997).

JMBRAS is a learned and scholarly journal of international reputation in the field of AHSS published in Malaysia. The visibility and international stature of *JMBRAS* is proved by its being indexed and abstracted by two very well-established abstracting and indexing agencies, *Anthropological Index* and *Historical Abstracts*. Apart from that, the international nature

of its many foreign contributors who come from such developed countries as United Kingdom, USA, France, Germany, Australia and other Asian countries showed its very credentials as an important source of scholarly communication and storehouse of knowledge. Moreover, the number of foreign contributions, around 60% of total contribution in *JMBRAS* indicates its visibility and quality as an AHSS journal.

Nevertheless, the local contribution to this important channel of scholarly communication is not very encouraging considering the fact that only 38.92% contributions originate locally. Hence, efforts should be made to attract and encourage Malaysian scholars to contribute papers in this journal.

Finally, from the findings of this study, *JMBRAS* can stake claim that it is one of the most authoritative, visible and pre-eminent AHSS journal in this part of the world, and an excellent channel of scholarly communication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Adapted from a chapter in a thesis submitted for the degree of Master in Library & Information Science at University of Malaya in May 1998. I wish to thank my supervisor, Prof. B.K. Sen and Assoc.. Prof. Zainab Awang Ngah for their help and guidance in the preparation of this paper.

REFERENCES

Budd, John. 1986. The characteristics of written scholarship in American litera-

ture: a citation study, *Library and Information Science Research*, No.8: 189-211.

Choy Chee Meh nee Lum, et. al.1995. History of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, *JMBRAS* vol.68, no.2: 81-148.

Goi Sook Sze. 1997. "Analysing the research trends and use of information sources amongst postgraduate students in the humanities." MLIS dissertation, University of Malaya.

Gullick, J. M. 1995. A short history of the Society, *JMBRAS*, vol. 68 no.2: 67-79.

Hart, Richard Lukens .1993. "The information-gathering behavior of the faculty of a four-year state college". Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Heinzkill, Richard. 1980. Characteristics of references in selected scholarly English literary journals, *Library Quarterly*, vol.50: 352-365.

Hose, M. A. 1878. Inaugural address by the President, *JSBRAS* vol.1: 1-12.

Makepeace, W. 1918. A review of the forty year's work of the Society, *JSBRAS* vol.78: x-xvi.

Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak .1997. Penerbitan jurnal ilmiah Malaysia. In: *Prosiding MAPIM 1*, edited by Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak . Kuala Lumpur : University of Malaya Press, 1-26.

Tiew, W.S.

Speech of the President of MBRAS at the Centenary Banquet 5th November 1977. 1977. *JMBRAS* vol. 50 no.2: 3-5.

Stern, Madeleine. 1983. Characteristics of the literature of literary scholarship, *College and Research Libraries*, vol. 44: 199-209.

Stevens, Roland E. 1956. The study of research use of libraries, *Library Quarterly*, vol.26: 41-51.

Stone, S. 1982. Progress in documentation, humanities scholars: information needs and uses, *Journal of Documentation*, vol.38: 292-313.

Tiew Wai Sin. 1998. History of Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (*JMBRAS*) 1878-1997: an overview, *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science*, vol.3 no.1:43-60.

Tweedie, M. W. F. 1947. Editorial, *JMBRAS* vol. 20 no.1: I

Zainab Awang Ngah 1997. The coverage of Malaysian scholarly journals by international indexing and abstracting services: an assessment of their visibility and common characteristics, *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science*, vol.2 no.1: 13-30.