

Tiny Sprouts, Heaps of Earth: PJP's Inclusion in the ASEAN Citation Index

“千里之行，始於足下”*

– Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Chapter 64^{1,2}



In what is dubbed as a “21st Century Science Overload,” an average of a quarter of a billion new scientific papers are published each year.^{3,4} Traditional print journals are either shifting to a mixed publication model of print-online or a fully online platform as the world becomes more and more connected by the internet.⁵

Our indexing in ACI is a testament to the quality of our journal and a direct effect of continued support by the Philippine Society of Pathologists. We have met all the selection criteria: 3 years minimum age or at least 6 issues published regularly, citations in national and/or international databases, good diversity in authorship, good diversity in editorial board members, clear journal concepts and policy, uniform journal formats, comprehensive journal website with online submission, and abstract quality; all of these means that our journal is up to standards.

Consequently, the survival of medical journals lies in visibility and accessibility in a virtual sea of digital content. Despite the intention to publish, an invisible manuscript is as worse as an unpublished one. In an increasingly online world, this “visibility” is facilitated through indexing in databases that make it easy for other researchers to find one’s scientific outputs through the scientific “paper deluge.”⁴

The ACI database system was developed through initial funding support from the Thai Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) in 2011, with the objective of increasing the visibility and discoverability of local scientific outputs by ASEAN member states. It is envisioned as a regional platform that shall eventually house all quality publications in ASEAN to stimulate and encourage knowledge sharing, improve journal quality in the ASEAN region, and facilitate indexing in Scopus, Web of Science, and other international indexes. Like the PJP, it is on its own journey of a thousand miles.

I am truly glad to share that our journey to indexing began, not just with a single step, but a leap: our inclusion in the ASEAN Citation Index (Figure 1).

The Tao Te Ching mentions that huge trees grow from tiny sprouts, and terraces nine-storied high are built from heaps of earth,² reminding us that even the longest and most difficult ventures have a starting point. For us, here in our own little corner in the world, hopefully it is one that would lead to a better publishing platform for Filipino pathologists and one that would contribute to a better scientific understanding of disease.

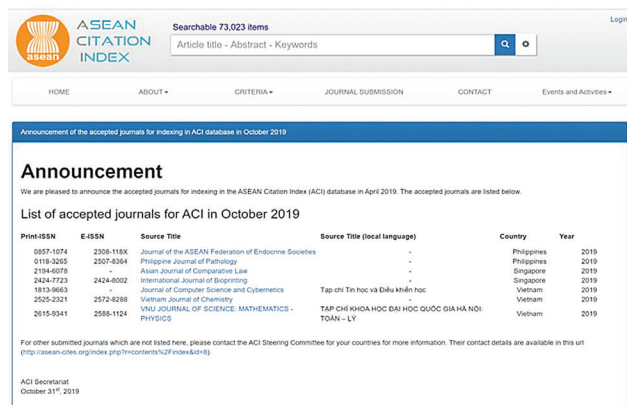


Figure 1. Screenshot of announcement of PJP’s acceptance to the ASEAN Citation Index website.

The ACI is a central regional database established to index bibliographic records of quality research outputs of scholarly journals published by ASEAN countries. The Philippines is a member of the ACI along with Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

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* Chinese proverb literally translating to: “A journey of a thousand miles starts beneath one’s feet.”