

PROMOTING SCHOLARLY INFLUENCE IN EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND LEGAL STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of scientific journals in shaping European economic landscape through an analysis of selected journal citation metrics: ASEJ Scientific Journal of Bielsko-Biala School of Finance and Law. The research will assess current trends, highlight best practices in academic dissemination, and suggest innovative editorial and promotional strategies to boost the observed and similar journals' scholarly influence in the academic community. It attempts to answer the following research questions: what factors are shaping the citation metrics of the scientific economic journals, and how can innovative editorial and promotional strategies be leveraged to boost the role of a scientific journal in European economic research? How can authors and editors in a journal break the closed loop of needing citations to be indexed, while simultaneously needing indexing to be cited? This study employs a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative bibliometric analysis and qualitative content analysis, and it not only evaluates current citation practices but also offers actionable strategies to enhance scholarly impact, making it a valuable resource for editors, researchers, and academic policy makers interested in elevating the influence of scientific journals.

Key words: citations, indexing, journals, ASEJ, Poland.

1. INTRODUCTION

The phrase “publish or perish” is omnipresent; it yields approx. 7.2 million results when searched using Google (March 2025). However, mere publishing is not enough; citation and impact are demanded from publications. This means that both authors and journal editors need to make an additional effort

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in order for their contributions to visibility. To obtain this, the material needs to be published in a journal which is indexed in a respectable database, but for an academic community stemming from emerging countries with developing science, this can be challenging. Excellence is an ideal, but not everyone can be “excellent”; “good enough” is not to be discarded or under-appreciated. Good scientists also need good journals for dissemination, but what they face is a Catch-22 type of closed loop: journals need citations to be indexed, but need indexing to be cited. What can authors and editors do to break this spiral?

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of scientific journals in shaping European economic landscape through an analysis of selected journal citation metrics. For this purpose, Polish “ASEJ Scientific Journal of Bielsko-Biala School of Finance and Law” (ISSN 2543-9103; eISSN 2543-411X) was chosen as representative for being a long-standing (published since 1997), respectable, but still emerging journal. Like many other scientific journals in Poland and Croatia, it strives toward higher visibility, indexation, citations and impact. It is indexed in Polish and international databases such as DOAJ, CEJSH, CEEOL, BASE, ICI Journals Master List, ERIH PLUS, EBSCO, ROAD, Google Scholar, but not (yet) in Web of Science and Scopus, which is an impediment for further development.

This paper attempts to assess current trends, highlight best practices in academic dissemination, and suggest innovative editorial and promotional strategies to boost the observed and similar journals’ scholarly influence in the academic community.

After this introduction, the second chapter delivers applied methodology and describes the data used in this paper. In the third chapter, the literature is reviewed regarding best strategies for enhancing journal visibility and citations, which end with a checklist of suggestions. The fourth chapter presents the ASEJ journal as a case study, followed by conclusion with summarized findings.

2. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining bibliometric analysis with qualitative content review. Quantitative data were retrieved from *Dimensions.ai*, a comprehensive scholarly database selected for its broad coverage of Central and Eastern European journals, including ASEJ. The dataset consisted of all items published in ASEJ between 2018 and 2024 (volumes 22–28), which ensured a complete and recent sample. Non-research materials such as editorials, announcements, and errata were excluded, leaving a corpus

of 218 articles. Metadata including titles, abstracts, author affiliations, and citation counts were exported directly from *Dimensions.ai*.

For citation analysis, the total and average number of citations per article, author, and research field were calculated. Citation distribution by field was derived using Dimensions' subject classifications, while authorship analysis focused on identifying the most-cited contributors and their institutional affiliations. Network analysis of keywords was performed using *VOSviewer* software. From the 4523 extracted terms in titles and abstracts, a minimum occurrence threshold of ten was applied, producing 105 terms. To improve interpretive clarity, *VOSviewer*'s relevance score filter was set at 60%, resulting in a final set of 63 terms, which were then clustered into thematic groups. Visualization maps were generated using fractionalization normalization to highlight interconnectedness between terms and clusters.

Qualitative data were collected through a systematic review of relevant literature on citation practices, journal visibility, and scholarly communication strategies. This review provided the theoretical framework and contextual grounding for interpreting bibliometric patterns. The integration of both methods allows for triangulation: bibliometric results quantify ASEJ's scholarly influence, while the literature review helps explain observed trends and identify best practices. Together, these methodological steps ensure a transparent, replicable, and valid analysis of ASEJ's citation performance and its potential strategies for improvement.

The combined insights from the quantitative and qualitative analyses are synthesized to identify the key factors influencing citation metrics. Based on these findings, the study will propose targeted editorial and promotional strategies designed to enhance the ASEJ's scholarly impact within the European legal and economic community. This integrated methodology not only measures current citation performance but also provides actionable insights to boost academic dissemination and influence.

3. STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE JOURNAL VISIBILITY AND CITATIONS: EVIDENCE FROM THE LITERATURE

The scholarly communication and citation impact have been widely explored through several foundational theoretical models. These frameworks provide a conceptual grounding for understanding the challenges faced by emerging journals such as ASEJ and help explain why certain editorial and promotional strategies are effective.

Citations and other publication metrics have become central indicators of scholarly impact worldwide, influencing funding, promotion, and journal pres-

tige¹. Garfield's pioneering work on citation indexing and the Journal Impact Factor (JIF) in the 1960s–1970s laid the foundation for using citation counts to evaluate journals and research output². Despite its flaws, the JIF became a de facto quality proxy: “*Impact Factor is not a perfect tool to measure the quality of articles but there is nothing better and it has the advantage of already being in existence and is, therefore, a good technique for scientific evaluation. Experience has shown that in each specialty the best journals are those in which it is most difficult to have an article accepted, and these are the journals that have a high impact factor*”³. The rise of these metrics has pressured editors and authors globally to adopt strategies to boost the visibility and citation rates of publications. Sociological insights like “Matthew effect” further explain why highly visible, reputable authors and outlets tend to accumulate ever-more citations, while lesser-known work risks being overlooked⁴. Academic visibility produces impact, and a body of literature (spanning early bibliometric studies to contemporary analyses) has explored how editorial and publication practices can enhance that visibility and increase citation counts.

Early scientometric researchers recognized the unequal distribution of attention in science and the potential to shape it. Garfield⁵ demonstrated that citation analysis could identify influential journals and articles, thus guiding librarians and researchers to high-impact work. Price⁶ showed the exponential growth of scientific literature and stressed the need for new tools to navigate and gain recognition in this “big science” era. Merton's Matthew effect described how eminent scientists often receive disproportionate credit (citations) compared to lesser-known colleagues, simply by virtue of name recognition. This effect underscored that visibility and reputation themselves amplify future citations – success breeds success. As citation indexing expanded, scholars like Moed formalized citation analysis as a set of indicators of research “impact, influence or quality”⁷.

¹ Moed, H.: *Citation analysis in research evaluation*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2005.

² Garfield, E.: The history and meaning of the journal impact factor, *JAMA*, 295(1) 2006, p. 90.

³ Hoeffel, C.: Journal impact factors, *Allergy*, 53(12) 1998, pp. 1225.

⁴ Merton, R.: The Matthew effect in science: The reward and communication systems of science are considered, *Science*, (159)3810 1968, pp. 56–63.

⁵ Garfield, E.: The history and meaning of the journal impact factor, *JAMA*, 295(1) 2006, p. 90.

⁶ De Solla Price, D. J.: *Little Science, Big Science*, Columbia University Press, 1963.

⁷ Moed, H.: *Citation analysis in research evaluation*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2005.

Journal editors and publishers worldwide have strong incentives to increase their journals' impact metrics, especially the JIF, which is calculated based on citations. Over the past two decades, many have experimented with tactics to boost citations (some ethical, others questionable), to the point that one editorial warned the impact factor has "lost most of its credibility" due to widespread manipulation⁸.

Some editors engage in "coercive citation," pressuring authors to add superfluous citations to the editor's journal as a condition of publication. Wilhite and Fong's survey of 6,672 researchers across economics, sociology, psychology and business found that many authors had been required to cite unrelated articles from the journal considering their submission⁹. Junior scholars are often targeted (assuming they are more likely to comply), and while most authors find this practice unethical, a majority reported adding the suggested citations under pressure. These tactics artificially inflate the journal's citation count and JIF, at the cost of corrupting scholarly reference practices.

Beyond self-citation, some journals form mutual citation networks (so-called "citation cartels") to boost each other's metrics. Heneberg (2016) documented an extreme case: a cluster of three physics journals in Romania that were "mutually responsible" for 55–65% of each other's citations within the JIF calculation window¹⁰. By excessively citing one another's recent articles, these journals dramatically multiplied their impact factors in a short time. Such citation stacking has drawn scrutiny from index providers; Clarivate Analytics (which produces JCR) has taken steps to flag or suppress journals with suspiciously high self-citation or inter-citation rates¹¹. These cases highlight how editorial collusion can distort metrics, and why transparency in citation patterns is needed.

Editors have also found ways to game the timing of publications to accumulate citations without increasing the official paper count. One method is the "advanced online release" or online queue tactic: the journal posts accepted papers online early (making them citable) but delays formal issue publication for months or years. Citations to these online-only papers begin to accrue, yet

⁸ Martin, B.: Editors JIF-Boosting Stratagems - Which are appropriate and which not?, *Research Policy*, 45(1) 2016, pp. 1-7.

⁹ Wilhite, A., Fong, E.: Coercive Citation in Academic Publishing, *Science*, 335(6068) 2012, pp. 542-543.

¹⁰ Heneberg, P.: From excessive journal self-cites to citation stacking: Analysis of journal self-citation kinetics in search for journals, which boost their scientometric indicators, *PLOS ONE*, 11(4) 2016, pp. e0153730.

¹¹ Martin, B.: Editors JIF-Boosting Stratagems - Which are appropriate and which not?, *Research Policy*, 45(1) 2016, pp. 1-7.

because the papers are not yet “published” in a volume, they don’t count toward the denominator of the impact factor. This means when the papers finally appear in an issue (often after the 2-year window of the JIF calculation), their citations boost the numerator but the papers themselves were absent from the denominator during peak citation time. Research Policy editor called out this tactic, noting one management journal had a backlog of 160 online-ahead articles over three years¹². By exploiting the lag in citation indexing, such journals artificially inflated their measured impact. JCR officials have acknowledged this problem and, in some cases, adjusted policies or removed journals that engage in this practice.

It is well known that comprehensive review articles often garner more citations than regular research papers, since they serve as key references for a field. Many high-impact journals owe their strong impact factors to this fact. In response, some journals increase the number of review papers or special issues on trending topics to attract citations. However, quality is crucial, and only authoritative, well-written reviews become “super-citation classics” that truly elevate a journal’s visibility. Thus, ethical editors use this strategy by commissioning high-quality topical reviews and “state-of-the-art” papers that naturally draw more attention¹³. Curating content that is useful to the community – whether data-rich papers, methods, or reviews – is a legitimate long-term strategy to increase citations, as it enhances the journal’s reputation and readership.

A more benign editorial strategy is to promote the journal’s articles via press releases, social media, and news coverage, thereby expanding their visibility beyond academia. Studies have shown that mainstream media coverage can dramatically amplify citations of scientific articles. A classic example comes from a study in *New England Journal of Medicine*: researchers found that journal articles covered by *The New York Times* received 72% more citations in the first year than similar articles that were not covered¹⁴. Importantly, when the NYT went on strike (temporarily halting science coverage), that citation boost disappeared for the articles published during the strike; this is strong evidence that media exposure caused the increase in citations, rather than simply coinciding with higher-quality research. Many journals now recognize this “newsworthiness” effect and maintain active press offices or social media

¹² Martin, B.: Editors JIF-Boosting Stratagems - Which are appropriate and which not?, *Research Policy*, 45(1) 2016, pp. 1-7.

¹³ By contrast, aggressively pushing authors to cite the journals past reviews would cross into coercion.

¹⁴ Phillips, D. et al.: Importance of the Lay Press in the Transmission of Medical Knowledge to the Scientific Community, *New England Journal of Medicine*, 325(16) 1991, pp. 1180-1183.

teams. By disseminating research highlights to journalists, blogs, and social media platforms, journals effectively broaden the audience for a paper, which can lead to more scientists reading and citing it. While not every paper will get news coverage, this editorial attention to outreach is a global trend (especially in high-profile journals) aimed at maximizing an article's visibility and eventual scholarly impact.

Individual researchers (as authors) can also adopt deliberate publication and dissemination strategies to enhance the visibility of their work and thus attract more citations. A growing body of research, including recent studies and meta-analyses, has evaluated which author-level strategies are most effective in a global context. Evidence-based practices that scholars can use to increase their academic visibility and citation impact are outlined below.

Making articles freely available to readers is one of the most documented strategies for boosting citations. The open access (OA) citation advantage has been studied across disciplines for two decades. Many studies find that OA articles receive significantly more citations than paywalled articles, and the overall evidence leans toward a positive citation effect for OA publishing¹⁵. The advantage can stem from greater readership and international reach. Notably, authors can achieve OA through different routes: publishing in open access journals or depositing preprints/postprints in repositories (the “green OA” route). Even meta-analyses concur that OA tends to correlate with higher citation counts, although they caution that factors like self-selection (authors may choose to OA their best work) and early-access effects can play a role. In practice, choosing an open access venue (or otherwise ensuring your paper is freely accessible) is a globally relevant strategy to increase the chances of being read and cited by a wider audience.

To maximize global visibility, authors often choose to write and publish in English, which remains the lingua franca of science. Research confirms a strong language effect on citations. A study of six non-English-speaking countries found that articles published in English received significantly more citations than those in the local language, even when both appeared in the same national journals¹⁶. This finding suggests that communicating in a language “understood by most” scholars increases the likelihood of being cited. It's not simply a bias; an author cannot easily cite work they can't read. Thus, for authors in

¹⁵ Langham-Putrow, A., Bakker, C., Riegelman, A.: Is the open access citation advantage real? A systematic review of the citation of open access and subscription-based articles, *PLOS ONE*, 16(6) 2021, pp. e0253129.

¹⁶ Di Bitetti, M., Ferreras, J.: Publish (in English) or perish: the effect on citation rate of using languages other than English in scientific publications, *Ambio*, 46(1) 2017, pp. 121-127.

regions like Central and Eastern Europe, translating work (or directly writing) in English can dramatically broaden the potential readership. The trend toward English as the default scientific language means that important research written only in other languages might be overlooked internationally. While this raises fairness issues, in practical terms authors seeking maximum impact are often “highly rewarded” for the extra effort of publishing in English. In short, language choice is a strategic decision: an English-language publication will typically be more visible in global indexing databases and to researchers abroad, thus garnering more citations on average.

Collaborative research not only pools expertise but also exposes publications to multiple networks, often leading to higher citation counts. When authors from different institutions or countries co-author a paper, that paper is likely to be disseminated in each author’s professional circle, increasing its reach. A 2021 meta-analysis of 92 studies quantifying this effect found a significant (though relatively weak) positive correlation between the number of co-authors/collaborations and citation counts¹⁷. In other words, papers with broader collaboration tend to receive more citations on average, albeit the effect size is modest. The practical takeaway is that collaborating – especially across borders – can tap into new audiences. Large-scale studies (e.g., global team science or multi-center trials) often become widely cited because each collaborator promotes the work in their region. Moreover, high-impact work today is frequently interdisciplinary, and reaching across fields can attract citations from multiple domains. Thus, researchers are advised to build robust co-author networks; doing so not only enriches the science but statistically increases the work’s impact footprint¹⁸.

In the digital era, an author’s visibility is enhanced by active dissemination of their publications via social media (Twitter/X, LinkedIn, etc.), academic networking sites (ResearchGate, Academia.edu), and scholarly comment platforms (although controversial, Econjobrumors.com as a forum is highly influential). This practice – often termed “altmetrics” outreach – can lead to higher awareness and eventually citations. For instance, an influential early study by Eysenbach found that highly tweeted papers were 11 times more likely to become highly cited compared to less-tweeted papers in the same journal¹⁹. In

¹⁷ Shen, H. et al.: The correlation between scientific collaboration and citation count at the paper level: a meta-analysis, *Scientometrics*, 126(4) 2021, pp. 3443-3470.

¹⁸ Of course, collaboration for its own sake is not the goal – rather, effective collaboration often produces higher quality or more relevant research, which in turn earns more citations.

¹⁹ Eysenbach, G.: Can tweets predict citations? Metrics of social impact based on Twitter and correlation with traditional metrics of scientific impact, *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 13(4) 2011, pp. 1-20.

that study, the presence of Twitter “buzz” in the days after publication strongly predicted which papers would be in the top citation tier a couple of years later. The hypothesis is that social media either increases citations by broadcasting the findings to more potential citers, or it at least reflects qualities of the paper that make it inherently citeable. Recent meta-analyses temper the expectations but still support a positive (if modest) benefit: a pooled correlation of ~0.19 between a paper’s Altmetric Attention Score (driven largely by social media mentions) and its citation count was found in the health sciences.²⁰ This indicates a weak but positive relationship – articles that garnered more online attention tended to have slightly higher citations on average. While correlation \neq causation (and many highly cited papers have little social media presence), scholars increasingly recognize that promotion matters. Sharing a new publication (with a link to the full text if possible) on Twitter or LinkedIn, for example, might lead an interested researcher to read and later cite it. Similarly, engaging in discussions (e.g., a blog post about the paper, or a podcast) can raise the work’s profile. The concept of “academic SEO” (search engine optimization) also comes into play: making sure titles, abstracts, and keywords are clear so that search engines and indexing services find the paper easily. Integrating traditional scholarships with online communication certainly enhances visibility.

Embracing open science practices can tangibly increase citations, as it increases the utility and transparency of research. When authors make their underlying data or code publicly available, other researchers can reuse those resources, often leading to additional citations (either to the data or the original paper). Empirical studies back this up. In the field of genomics, a research showed that studies with publicly available data received 69% more citations on average than similar studies without open data²¹. Even after controlling for confounding factors like journal prestige, publication year, and author reputation, the citation boost remained significant. A later, larger-scale analysis looked at over 10,000 studies in gene expression and confirmed a positive citation effect: papers with data in a public repository had about 9% more citations than those without, after multivariate adjustment²². Notably, the 2013 study could rigorously control for many variables (publication venue, number of authors, topic, etc.), lending confidence that open data themselves contribute to the increased

²⁰ Kolahi, J. et al.: Meta-analysis of correlations between altmetric attention score and citations in health sciences, *BioMed Research International*, (1) 2021, pp. 6680764.

²¹ Piwowar, H., Day, R., Fridsma, D.: Sharing detailed research data is associated with increased citation rate, *PLOS ONE*, 2(3) 2007, pp. e308.

²² Piwowar, H., Vision, T.: Data reuse and the open data citation advantage, *PeerJ*, (1) 2013, pp. e175.

impact. The mechanism is straightforward – if your data are accessible, others can cite your paper when they reuse or compare to your dataset. Likewise, sharing methodological details or code can lead to others building upon your work. Beyond data, posting preprints (which provides early access) and permitting others to replicate or extend findings can both increase an article’s visibility and credibility, attracting more citations over time. The open science movement internationally reflects these benefits: transparency and accessibility broaden the reach of research. Researchers are therefore encouraged to make supplemental materials available and deposit datasets in recognized repositories whenever possible. The extra effort to share data is further motivated by the direct payoff of increased literature impact. Practically, this also means intertwining existing networks: requiring and connecting with Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) when submitting a paper, etc.

In implementing these strategies, it’s important to note that quality and relevance of the research remain the biggest drivers of citations. No strategy can compensate for a lack of scientific merit or novelty. However, given two equally rigorous studies, the one that is more visible – openly accessible, well-promoted, written in a widely understood language, linked to shared resources, and connected to a broader network – is far more likely to be discovered and cited by others. Meta-analytical evidence and multi-field studies support this holistic view: improving the accessibility and dissemination of research consistently correlates with higher citation performance across different global contexts.

There are several strategies – some of them more technical and easier to implement than the others – to increase the number of citations of published papers in a scientific journal. Literature and experience suggest the following (not in the order of importance):

- Partner with universities and research institutions to encourage citations from affiliated researchers.
- Encourage collaborative research between authors from different institutions.
- Build an editorial board of well-connected scholars who can promote the journal.
- Focus on trending and interdisciplinary topics that attract citations.
- Encourage papers with strong literature reviews, meta-analyses, systematic reviews, or discussions on trending issues, which are frequently cited.
- Publish special issues on trending topics to draw more attention; attract high-quality submissions by inviting renowned researchers as guest editors.
- Promote Open Access publishing to make articles freely available. Try to avoid fees. Request Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) from authors. Promote European Open Science Cloud (OpenAIRE).

- Improve SEO (Search Engine Optimization) for the journal website to increase discoverability; ensure papers have clear keywords, abstracts, and metadata for better discoverability.
- Provide DOIs for all articles to make citations easier. Make sure they are functioning, and that the links guide towards freely available full texts.
- Require commitment by the authors to promote their papers via academic social networks (ResearchID, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, SSRN, etc.) and social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) before actually publishing them, and/or after they are published, to increase visibility of the publication.
- Engage in specialized online forums (Reddit, Econjobrumors, etc.).
- Create a newsletter regarding every new issue, using AI to create short *TL;DR* of every published paper, with DOI links, and promote this newsletter subscription to authors, reviewers, and other stakeholders.
- Establish a database of potential reviewers, aiming for quality and expedience.
- Upload articles to institutional repositories (universities, institutes, national and regional databases).
- Use dedicated, specialized software such as Open Journal System (OJS), which offers quicker, more efficient and streamlined communication and archiving. Do not communicate with authors (and other stakeholders) regarding submission and reviewing via e-mail, as they are unstructured, non-systematic, and prone to spamming.

By combining these best practices, scholars and journals can synergistically improve academic communication: not just increasing citations as an end in itself, but fostering a wider exchange of knowledge.

4. CASE STUDY: ASEJ SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL (BIELSKO-BIAŁA SCHOOL OF FINANCE AND LAW, POLAND)

Croatia and Poland offer insightful examples of how national contexts shape journal editorial practices and dissemination. Both countries have implemented policies that encourage academic journals to elevate their standards and broaden their reach, albeit through different mechanisms. In Croatia, a significant driver is the strong open science infrastructure. The country's central journal portal, HRČAK²³, provides a free platform that hosts hundreds of Croatian scientific journals, making them instantly accessible worldwide. This has lowered technical and financial barriers for journals to go online and adopt

²³ <<https://hrcak.srce.hr/en>>, last accessed on 27/1/2025.

open access. Croatian journals benefit from HRČAK's support and are often born-digital and open access by default. Additionally, Croatian academic policy emphasizes international visibility: notably, Croatian institutions require faculty to maintain a Google Scholar profile and publish in journals indexed by Web of Science or Scopus²⁴. Such formal requirements in CEE countries aim to ensure that scholars engage with reputable international journals, thereby improving the global dissemination of their work. The impact of these policies is evident in the behaviour of academics and the orientation of journals – there is a clear incentive to meet international standards, be present in key databases, and collaborate across borders. Without these efforts, a substantial portion of scholars remain “globally ‘invisible’” due to lack of indexed publications or online profiles²⁵. This finding underscores the importance of national policies in pushing both individuals and journals toward greater academic dissemination and visibility.

Poland's approach, on the other hand, has been strongly influenced by a formalized journal ranking and evaluation system. The Polish Ministry of Education and Science assigns point values to journals (commonly 20, 40, 70, 100, 140, or 200 points) which directly affect academic career evaluations and institutional funding²⁶. In this system, publishing in a higher-ranked journal yields more points, creating an impetus for journals to improve their standing. The ASEJ journal exemplifies the success of this policy: it has been awarded 70 points by the Polish Ministry, reflecting its rising reputation. Achieving this score implies that ASEJ met criteria such as quality of peer review, citation impact, and indexing in recognized databases. Polish journals are keen to climb these ranks, as moving from one tier to the next (e.g. 40 to 70 points) can happen with joint improvements in editorial quality and international reach. Consequently, Polish journal editors often align their strategies with the ministry's benchmarks – for example, adopting strict peer review, engaging international editors/reviewers, and ensuring timely publication – to secure higher point values and attract better submissions. This dual focus on meeting national quality criteria and global dissemination practices reflects a nuanced strategy that Polish journals employ in response to policy drivers.

A useful comparison can be drawn between Poland and Croatia, since both countries face similar challenges of increasing the international visibility

²⁴ Sajter, D.: Scientific Impact of Central and Eastern European Higher Education Lecturers, *Naše Gospodarstvo/Our Economy*, 67(3) 2021, pp. 17-28.

²⁵ Sajter, D.: Trendovi i teme u hrvatskoj ekonomskoj znanosti, *Ekonomska misao i praksa*, 33(1) 2024, pp. 197-220.

²⁶ SPUBL: *Scoring Criteria for Evaluating Journals from the Ministerial List, Top-10 Journals for Publication*, 2025.

of their journals but pursue different policy solutions. The Croatian model demonstrates how centralized support for open access can lower technical and financial barriers, while the Polish approach shows how formal evaluation criteria can motivate improvements in editorial quality. Taken together, these cases highlight that ASEJ's further advancement may depend not only on its internal editorial strategy but also on adopting best practices from comparable regional experiences, particularly in leveraging open access infrastructure to complement the incentive-driven framework already in place in Poland.

The ASEJ Scientific Journal of Bielsko-Biała School of Finance and Law is an example of a European economic-law journal that has modernized its editorial approach and dissemination strategy. Established in 1997 as a local academic journal, ASEJ underwent a transformation in the mid-2010s to expand its reach beyond Poland. Since 2015, it has been published in both Polish and English (with an English title) and in electronic form, reflecting growing international collaboration and the need for broader audience engagement. ASEJ is a quarterly journal and explicitly cross-disciplinary: while rooted in social sciences, it covers a wide array of topics including finance, economics, business, law, internal security, information technology, and social issues. This broad scope is part of its editorial strategy to encourage diverse submissions and to foster interdisciplinary dialogue on socio-economic development. By not limiting itself strictly to law or economics, ASEJ can publish research that sits at the intersection of these fields (e.g. economic analyses of legal issues, or regulatory perspectives on finance), which is increasingly valuable in tackling complex contemporary problems.

In terms of editorial process, ASEJ adheres to stringent quality control measures. Every submission undergoes double-blind peer review by at least two independent reviewers, as mandated by the journal's policies. The editors enforce a strict scope check (desk rejection for off-topic manuscripts) and an anti-plagiarism screening for all submissions. Notably, ASEJ has institutionalized ethical safeguards such as the ghost-writing barrier per Polish Ministry guidelines, requiring authors to disclose all significant contributions and funding sources for their research²⁷. This ensures transparency in authorship and deters unethical practices, bolstering the journal's credibility. The editorial board of ASEJ includes scholars from Poland and abroad who assist in setting the journal's direction and standards. Having an international editorial and reviewer base has been a conscious strategy to raise the publication's profile and to infuse global perspectives into the content. According to the journal, these efforts aim to promote quality scientific work with local and global impacts

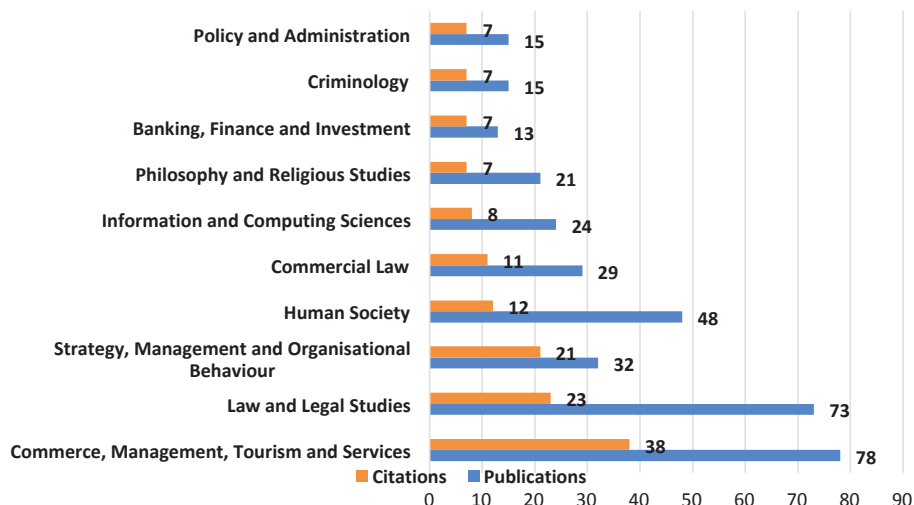
²⁷ ASEJ Scientific Journal of Bielsko-Biała School of Finance and Law: Editorial Policies, 2025.

– a mission that aligns with Poland’s drive for research that is both nationally relevant and internationally recognized.

Dissemination-wise, ASEJ is committed to open access distribution and broad indexing. All articles are published under a Creative Commons CC-BY-NC 4.0 license, which allows free sharing and adaptation of the work (non-commercially) as long as attribution is given. The journal believes that “maximizing the distribution of publications – by providing free, online access – is the most effective way of ensuring that the research can be accessed, read and built upon”²⁸. Practically, this means ASEJ’s content is available on its website without any paywall, and the online version is considered the authoritative edition. However, much work is still to be done, because top-tier databases are not yet indexing ASEJ, which leaves it out of scope of many researchers who rely on these databases only.

Regarding citations and the fields of research, it is clear that the field of Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services in ASEJ acquired most citations (38), but, on average, the field of Strategy, Management and Organisational Behaviour collected 0.66 citations from the 32 publications (Chart).

Chart 1. Top 10 fields of research according to number of publications and citations in ASEJ from 2018 to 2024

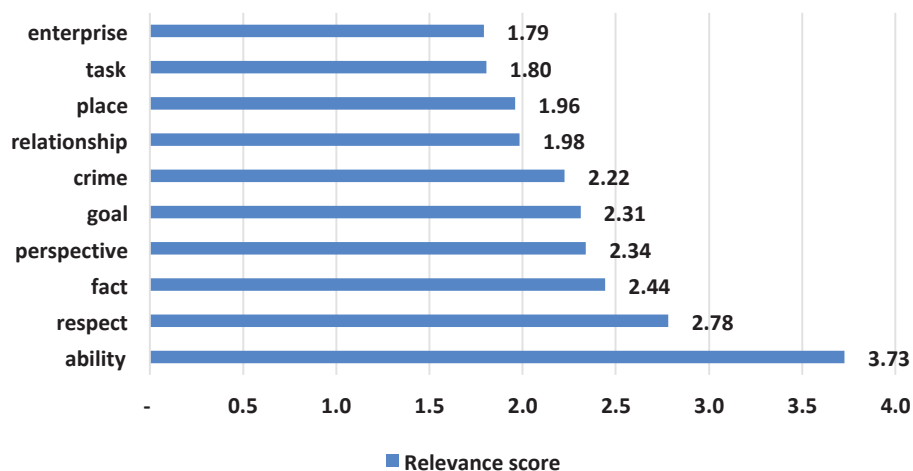


Source: author; data from Dimensions.ai

²⁸ ASEJ Scientific Journal of Bielsko-Biala School of Finance and Law: Editorial Policies, 2025.

Fields of research are closely related to key topics (terms) collected from the titles and abstracts of the published papers in ASEJ. After obtaining the database from Dimensions.ai, key terms were extracted from titles and abstracts of 218 papers published in ASEJ in the period from 2018 to 2024 (volumes 22 - 28). In total, 4523 terms were extracted. From this population, 105 terms with at least 10 occurrences were preselected, and 60% selection with 63 terms remained after considering the relevance score. In VOSviewer, the relevance score measures the degree to which terms or keywords in a document corpus distinguish specific topics or clusters from others. It helps identify the most characteristic or meaningful terms within clusters. A high relevance score means the term is a strongly indicative keyword for its cluster and thus more useful in interpreting or labelling that cluster, while a low relevance score means the term is either too general (appearing in many clusters) or not uniquely representative of a cluster. The terms with highest relevance score are “ability”, “respect” and “fact” (Chart).

Chart 2. Top 10 terms collected from titles and abstracts of 218 papers published in ASEJ from 2018 to 2024



Source: author; data from Dimensions.ai

The observed 63 terms with highest relevance score were categorized in four clusters, with the term “Poland” having the highest number of occurrences.

Table 1. Top 10 authors according to number of citations in ASEJ from 2018 to 2024

Rank	Author	Organization, Country	Citations	Publications	Avg.
1	Iryna Bashynska	AGH University of Krakow, Poland	10	2	5
2	Olha Volodymyrivna Prokopenko	Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences, Estonia	9	1	9
2	Magdalena Wójcik-Jurkiewicz	Kraków University of Economics, Poland	9	2	4,5
2	Dariusz Sala	AGH University of Krakow, Poland	9	1	9
5	Tomasz Marcin Stąpczyński	Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland	8	5	1,6
6	Monika Karczewska	University of Economics in Katowice, Poland	7	1	7
7	Jarmila Sosedová	University of Žilina, Slovakia	4	1	4
7	Aleksander Sapiński	Bielsko-Biała School of Finances and Law, Poland	4	8	0,5
7	Andrea Galieriková	University of Žilina, Slovakia	4	1	4
7	Andrej Dávid	University of Žilina, Slovakia	4	1	4

Source: author; data from Dimensions.ai

European journals in economics and law have increasingly formalized their editorial strategies to ensure quality and international relevance. A cornerstone of these strategies is the implementation of peer review processes. Journals employ double-blind peer review and involve multiple reviewers per manuscript to uphold scholarly standards. By drawing on a diverse pool of reviewers and editorial board members, journals ensure that content is vetted from multiple perspectives, aligning with global disciplinary standards. However, employing referees is always a challenge, since that work is most often non-remunerated, and comes at a cost for the referees, since their resources are scarce, and academic engagements are stretched over various fields. ASEJ's case demon-

strates how a regional journal can successfully implement editorial best practices (robust peer review, ethical standards, international collaboration) and modern dissemination methods (open access licensing, wide indexing) to elevate its profile. The journal serves as a model for how policy (like the Polish evaluation system and open science ethos) can be translated into concrete editorial policies that enhance both academic rigor and outreach.

The case of ASEJ shows both progress and remaining challenges typical for regional journals. Despite its commitment to open access and rigorous peer review, the absence of indexation in Web of Science and Scopus limits its international visibility and citation potential. Current patterns confirm a strong local presence but modest global reach, which reflects the effectiveness of national policy incentives but also the need for more decisive internationalization.

To advance further, ASEJ should sharpen its thematic profile, commission review articles and special issues on globally relevant topics, and attract submissions from authors beyond Poland and its neighboring countries. Strengthening international editorial participation, enhancing digital dissemination through academic networks and SEO, and fostering cross-border collaboration would increase both visibility and impact. By aligning these efforts with international standards, ASEJ can move from a respected regional outlet to a recognized European journal.

5. CONCLUSION

The pursuit of greater visibility and citations is a natural extension of scholarly communication in the modern era. What began as informal knowledge - “publish in a top journal, and your work will be noticed” - has been refined through decades of scientometric research into a set of concrete strategies with empirical support. From the editorial side, ensuring broad dissemination (e.g. through open access and press outreach) and maintaining ethical standards (eschewing metric gaming) are key to a journal’s long-term impact. From the author’s side, strategic decisions around where and how to publish can significantly affect a work’s uptake: choosing accessible formats, collaborating widely, writing in a common language, and actively sharing one’s research all tilt the odds in favor of higher citations. Importantly, these strategies are global – relevant to researchers in developed and developing regions alike – as they fundamentally leverage how academic knowledge spreads, regardless of locale. As meta-analytic studies show, none of these tactics exist in isolation; the highest impacts often occur when multiple approaches are combined in line with good scientific practice (for instance, a high-quality study that is

openly available, well-promoted, and part of an international collaboration). In conclusion, the literature portrays a clear message: enhancing visibility is both an art and a science, built on foundational principles of openness, quality, and engagement. By integrating the insights from both classic works and recent analyses, scholars and editors can make informed choices that not only increase citations but also advance the broader reach and usefulness of research in society.

By investigating the citation metrics of the ASEJ Scientific Journal, this study addresses a gap in understanding how scholarly influence is cultivated within European economic studies. This is crucial as citation metrics often serve as a proxy for academic impact and reputation. The research highlights best practices in academic dissemination, offering data-driven insights into effective strategies for increasing visibility. These recommendations can guide editors and academic institutions in refining their publication and promotional practices.

The bibliometric evidence confirms that ASEJ's scholarly influence remains largely regional, with citations concentrated among Polish and neighboring authors. Field-level analysis shows uneven impact, as some areas attract more citations while others remain marginal, indicating the need for sharper thematic focus. Keyword clustering further demonstrates that the journal's content is strongly tied to national issues, which limits international visibility. Finally, the absence from major databases such as Scopus and Web of Science reinforces the "closed loop" problem of needing citations for indexation while also needing indexation to gain citations. These results directly support the conclusion that ASEJ must internationalize its authorship and editorial board, curate globally relevant content, and pursue inclusion in top indexing platforms to enhance its scholarly role in European economic research.

Of course, this study is not without limitations. The bibliometric analysis relies primarily on Dimensions.ai, which, while comprehensive, does not cover all citation sources equally, and results may differ if replicated in Scopus or Web of Science. Moreover, the sample covers the period 2018–2024 only, leaving longer-term trends unexplored. Finally, the study focuses on one journal, which somewhat restricts the generalizability of findings to other contexts. Future research should therefore expand the analysis to a broader set of journals, compare results across multiple databases, and investigate how national science policies shape journal visibility over time.

Through a detailed analysis of current trends, this paper contributes to the broader discourse on scholarly communication by demonstrating how innovative editorial and promotional strategies can be leveraged. This not only benefits the ASEJ Scientific Journal but can also serve as a model for other

economic and legal journals. For academic leaders and policy makers, the findings provide evidence-based guidance on how to enhance a journal's influence. By aligning dissemination strategies with the evolving landscape of digital scholarship, the paper helps foster an environment where high-quality research gains the recognition it deserves.

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