

Enhancing the visibility and impact of Cambodian scientific journals through Open Journal System (OJS): An editorial review

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Abstract

The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) in Cambodia is currently working on an initiative to enhance the visibility and impact of Cambodian scientific journals by implementing Open Journal Systems (OJS) in the country's higher education institutions (HEIs). During a workshop at Svay Rieng University, MoEYS emphasized its objectives to modernize the administration and publication of scholarly work, thereby facilitating more efficient peer review and open access. The objective of increasing the number of Cambodian journals indexed in international databases, including Scopus, the ASEAN Citation Index (ACI), and Web of Science among others, is a critical component of vision. This will enhance the academic credibility and global visibility of Cambodian research. At present, Cambodia maintains 52 scientific journals in various disciplines, including agriculture, education, health, and technology. While some journals, such as the Cambodia Journal of Public Health and the Cambodia Education Review, continue to operate, others have discontinued publication or encountered difficulties in maintaining consistency. The Ministry's initiative will be instrumental in the revitalization of the academic publishing infrastructure in the country and will offer essential support to journals that are currently grappling with sustainability challenges. Additionally, Cambodian journals can make a substantial contribution to regional and global academic discourse, encourage research collaborations, and attract higher-quality submissions by indexing in international databases. This action is consistent with Cambodia's overarching objective of internationalizing higher education and cultivating a more robust research culture, thereby guaranteeing the extensive recognition and global standards of local research. The strategic endeavor to enhance the quality of research output, establish Cambodia's scholarly community as a critical contributor to addressing national and global challenges, and cultivate academic partnerships is exemplified by the strategic use of OJS and the aspiration to index in prestigious databases.

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1. Introduction

Cambodia is a relatively small country located within the Indo-China Peninsula, sharing borders to the east with Vietnam, to the north with Laos and Thailand, and to the west with Thailand. It is governed by a constitutional monarchical system with a population of approximately 13.4 million residing in an area of 181, 035 square kilometers (Em et al., 2023). It emerged from decades of civil war and conflicts only recently, after signing up to the Paris Peace Agreement of 1991, which established the liberal democratic form of government and led to a constitution being drafted in 1993 (Em, Mok, et al., 2024). Since then, Cambodia has made significant progress in the social, economic, health, and development sectors (Em, 2024d; Em, Chin, et al., 2024).

Being a country renowned for its historical, cultural landmarks, and natural resources, Cambodia has strived to become more integrated with its neighbors and other global economies (Asif et al., 2023). The country has made significant progress toward a market-oriented democratic society (Heng, 2024b). This socially, environmentally, and economically motivated growth and regeneration has been largely driven by the changing patterns and nature of research and development projects which have permeated most aspects of economic and social life, as well as the imminent release of a new study on these influences, Cambodia research landscape (RGC, 2023). Pre-research insights regarding the individuals currently influencing the country's research landscape, their demands, awaited tools, and opportunities are examined and linked (Em & Khampirat, 2024; English Academic Essay, 2024).

This country analysis is expected to clearly understand the methodologies, actors, and experiences associated with the current Cambodian research landscape (Heng, 2024a). The intention is to find the advantages available and the constraints associated with the various options and opportunities, to develop a governance structure that can recommend four levels of micro-intervention by which a respective country can encourage the appropriate types of current and future research, thus building a strong economy through relevant research and sufficient political and social institutions together (Heng et al., 2022). The overall hypothesis is that how a respective country composes its knowledge economy will directly affect its performance in a neo-liberalized globalization market and will indirectly promote access to a high quality of life for the citizenry (Heng, 2024c).

However, despite the increasing discussion and debate on research conduct and output, there is only a limited amount of work exploring research-related issues at the national level to inform the debate (Em, 2024a). The article, therefore, first provides an introduction to the country, explores the current landscape of research activities, and investigates the available data and the process of research development. Data was collected through a desk-based review of the reports produced by scholars, research organizations, academic articles, education ministry, government reports, and the country-related statistical website.

2. Scientific Journals Based in Cambodia

The following table presents the found journals based in Cambodia during the current time. There might be a few more journals not included due to the difficulties of finding them. However, they will be included later.

Table 1 (see appendix) provides a comprehensive overview of 52 scientific journals based in Cambodia as of December 2024, spanning a wide range of academic disciplines including agriculture, education, health, law, technology, and the humanities. The table includes key details such as the publishers, founding years, publication status, and websites for each journal.

Major Cambodian universities and institutions, such as the Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), and the Royal Academy of Cambodia, play a significant role in hosting many of these journals.

While some journals have a long history, such as the Cambodian Journal of Agriculture (founded in 1997), many have ceased publication or have limited recent activity, reflecting the challenges in sustaining academic publishing in the country. However, several journals, such as the Cambodian Journal of Public Health and the Cambodia Education Review, remain active, continuing to provide valuable platforms for research dissemination. Additionally, there is a recent surge in academic publishing, with several new journals established in 2023 and 2024, such as the USEA Research Journal and the Journal of Cambodian Health, which are still in their early phases, reflecting a growing interest in expanding Cambodia's academic output.

The table also underscores the evolving nature of academic publishing in Cambodia, with several journals either planning their first issues or actively seeking submissions, indicating a growing research culture in the country. Journals like the Cambodia Journal for Business and Professional Practice and the Cambodian Journal of Educational and Social Sciences highlight the increasing specialization of research as Cambodian academic institutions work to meet the country's development needs while engaging in the broader regional and global academic community. Notably, two journals, the Cambodian Journal of Educational Research (CJER) and the Cambodian Journal of Educational and Social Sciences (CJESS), utilize OJS for their publication processes.

3. New vision for the Cambodian scientific journals

The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) recently unveiled a bold new plan at a workshop at Svay Rieng University, aiming to increase the awareness and accessibility of scientific journals published in Cambodia. In order to expand the journals' influence and audience, the primary objective of the workshop was to persuade higher education institutions (HEIs) to host their publications on the OJS platform. Academic institutions in Cambodia can expedite the submission, review, and publication procedures, improving the caliber and international visibility of their research output, thanks to the widely used OJS platform (see Em, 2024b, 2024c).

A key element of this new vision is the goal of increasing the number of Cambodian journals indexed in major international databases such as Web of Science, ACI (ASEAN Citation Index), and Scopus among others (see Em, 2024b). The indices play a crucial role in promoting the recognition and citation of Cambodian research, thereby elevating its global significance. These prestigious databases index Cambodian journals, attracting higher-quality contributions and enhancing their influence on the regional and global academic discourse (Heng, K., & Sol, 2024). This move aligns with the overarching objective of internationalizing higher education in the country and elevating Cambodia to a prominent position in the regional research community (Em, 2024b).

Overall, the ministry's program is considered a crucial step in bolstering Cambodia's research infrastructure, cultivating a rigorous academic culture, and guaranteeing that domestic research adheres to international standards. As more journals transition to OJS and work toward indexing, the academic community in Cambodia could expect to witness an increase in research

collaborations, better funding opportunities, and a bigger commitment to utilize high-quality research to address both national and global challenges.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, adopting OJS and pursuing international indexing under the direction of MoEYS is a huge step forward for scientific journals in Cambodia. By updating the publication procedure and making it more accessible, we can enhance the visibility and quality of research output from HEIs. This calculated action raises the profile of Cambodian research in the regional and international academic debate, promotes collaboration, and harmonizes local academic procedures with international standards. As these initiatives progress, we have the potential to fundamentally transform Cambodia's academic publishing landscape, ensuring global and national recognition and serious consideration of local research.

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Appendix

Table 1. Scientific Journals Based in Cambodia as of December 2024

No.	Journals' Names	Publishers	Years of Founding	Status	Websites/Links
1.	Cambodian Journal of Agriculture	Cambodian Agricultural Research and Development Institute	1997	Stopped publishing	http://www.cardi.org.kh/?page=document&topid=8&lg=en
2.	Siksacakr: The Journal of Cambodia Research	Center For Khmer Studies	2000	Last issue in 2021	https://khmerstudies.org/publications/siksacakr-journal-of-cambodia-research/
3.	Udaya Journal of Khmer Studies	Department of Culture and Monuments of the Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap (APSARA)	2000	Last issue in 2020	https://www.yosothor.org/udaya-journal-of-khmer-studies.html
4.	Journal of Agricultural Technology and Rural Development	Royal University of Agriculture	2005	No information	Unknown
5.	Scientific Journal	Chamroeun University of Poly-Technology	2007	No information	Unknown
6.	Scientific Journal	International Relations Institute of Cambodia	2008	No information	Unknown
7.	Journal of National Language Institute of Royal Academy of Cambodia	Institute of National Language, Royal Academy of Cambodia	2008	Still active	https://rac.gov.kh/researchs-categories/6/researchs#main-container

8.	Bulletin of the National Council of Khmer Language	Office of the Council of Ministers	2008	Last issue in 2015	https://rac.gov.kh/researchs-categories/6/researchs#main-container
9.	The Cambodian Journal of Natural History	Fauna & Flora International, Partnership with RUPP	2008	Still active	http://rupp.edu.kh/cjnh/journal.php
10.	Bulletin of Cambodia Chemical Society	Cambodian Chemical Society	2010	Still active	https://www.facebook.com/ccsphnompenh/
11.	Cambodian Communication Review	Royal University of Agriculture	2010	Still active	https://dmc-cci.edu.kh/research/
12.	Cambodia Research Journal	-	2011	Not working	NA
13.	International Journal of Business and Development Research (IJBDR)	Build Bright University	2012	Last issue in 2018	https://www.bbu.edu.kh/site/view_article/199
14.	The Cambodia Law and Policy Journal (CLPJ)	Cambodian Document Center	2013	Last issue in 2014	http://cambodialpj.org/
15.	Techno-Science Research Journal (Techno-SRJ)	Institute of Technology of Cambodia	2013	Not working	https://ric.itc.edu.kh/publication/overview-of-techno-srj
16.	Research Journal	Asia Euro University	2013	Last issue in 2016	http://aeu.edu.kh/site/page/301
17.	NUM Research Series	National University of Management	2014	Still active	https://num.edu.kh/web/web/num/Pages?id=259
18.	Research Journal	Cambodian University for Specialties	2014	One issue	NA
19.	Asian Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Safety (AJEAS)	National University of Battambang	2015	Still active	https://ajaes.org/About.html
20.	The Cambodian Journal of International Studies	University of Cambodia	2016	Still active	https://uc.edu.kh/ucs/Cambodian Journal of International Studies/8/3298/

21.	Cambodia Education Review (CER)	Department of Education Policy, MoEYS	2017	Still active	http://cer.dopomoeys.com/
22.	The UC Monograph Series	University of Cambodia	2017	One issue	http://uc.edu.kh/The UC Monographs Series.php
23.	UC Occasional Paper Series	University of Cambodia	2017	Four issues	http://uc.edu.kh/The_UC_Occasional_Paper_Series.php
24.	UC Working Paper Series	University of Cambodia	2017	Five issues	http://uc.edu.kh/The_UC_Working_Paper_Series.php
25.	Journal of Management, Economics, and Industrial Organization (JOMEINO)	Paragon University	2017	Not working	NA
26.	The Cambodia Journal of Basic and Applied Research (CJBAR)	RUPP	2018	Still active	http://www.rupp.edu.kh/CJBAR/
27.	Journal of the Royal University of Fine Arts	Royal University of Fine Arts	2018?	No information	https://www.rufa.edu.kh/Kh_Cultural%20Research%20Centre/kh_research_Publicity.html
28.	Journal of Greater Mekong Studies	Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace	2019	Not working	https://cicp.org.kh/cat/journal-of-greater-mekong-studies/
29.	Cambodian Journal of Agricultural Sciences (CJAS)	Royal University of Agriculture	2019	No information	https://cicp.org.kh/cat/journal-of-greater-mekong-studies/
30.	AUB Research Series	ACLEDA University	2020	Still active	https://aub.edu.kh/tc/eng/business-research-series
31.	Cambodia Journal of Public Health	National Institute of Public Health	2020	Still active	https://cjph.niph.org.kh/index.php/cjph
32.	Cambodian Journal of Educational Development	Hiroshima University	2020	Still active	https://cjed.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/index.html
33.	Cambodian Journal of Educational Research	Cambodian Education Forum	2020	Still active	https://cefcambodia.com/cjer/ (OJS)
34.	Cambodian Review of EFL Research	Institute of Foreign Languages, RUPP	2020	No information	https://doe.ifl-rupp.com/publications/cambodian-review-of-efl-research/
35.	iTrade Bulletin	Trade Training and Research Institute	2021	Still active	https://commerce-cambodia.com/2022/08/01/itrade-bulletin-vol-2-issue-01-for-july-2022/

		(Ministry of Commerce)			
36.	Action Research Series	Phnom Penh Teacher Education College	2021	Still active	https://www.ptec.edu.kh/2021/03/1184/
37.	Action Research Series	Battambang Teacher Education College	2021	Still active	NA
38.	Cambodian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences	Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Royal Academy of Cambodia	2022	Still active	https://cjhss-journal.com/
39.	Cambodian Journal of Education and STEM (CJES)	Department of Scientific Research, MoEYS	2022	Still active	https://cjser-dsrmoey.com/
40.	Journal Of Accounting, Finance, Economics and Social Sciences	CamEd Business School	No information	Not working	https://cam-ed.com/research/
41.	CamEd Business Review	CamEd Business School	No clear information	Not working	https://cam-ed.edu.kh/camed-business-review/
42.	Journal of Agricultural Sciences and Rural Development	Royal University of Agriculture	No information	Three issues	NA
43.	PIARD Journal	Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia	2022	Call for papers for the third issue	http://piard.puc.edu.kh/
44.	AU Journal of Entrepreneurship and Green Innovation	Angkor University	2023	Still active	https://journal.angkor.edu.kh/
45.	Cambodia Journal for Business and Professional Practice (CJBPP)	ACLEDA University	2024	Planning the first issue	Research and Innovation (aub.edu.kh)
46.	International Journal of Cambodian Education	English Academic Essay	2023	Two issues	International Journal of Cambodian Education (IJCE) – English Academic Essay (EAE)

47.	Educational Psychology and Innovation	Education, Research and Innovation Center	2023	Call for papers for the first issue	https://ericcambodia.com/
48.	Journal of Science and Innovation of National Meanchey University	National Meanchey University	?	Preparing guidelines	http://www.jsinmu.edu.kh/
49.	USEA Research Journal	USEA	2024	Planning two issues a year	https://rj.usea.edu.kh/
50.	The Journal of Cambodian Health	University of Puthisastra	2024	Scheduling a new issue	https://www.journal.puthisastra.edu.kh/index.php/jch/about .
51.	Cambodian Journal of Educational and Social Sciences (CJESS)	English Academic Essay	2024	Still active	https://ejournal.educationalfields.com/index.php/CJESS (OJS)
52.	Research Journal: Social Sciences and Natural Sciences	Khemarak University	2024	One issue	https://khemarakuniversity.edu.kh/en

Source: Adapted from MoEYS (2024, pp. 1-5)