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# KHOO KAY KIM, PROFESSOR OF MALAYSIAN HISTORY : A BIOBIBLIOMETRIC STUDY

Tiew, Wai Sin School Resource Center Coordinator Hulu Kelang Secondary School, Km 7, Jalan Ulu Kelang, 68000 Ampang, Selangor, Malaysia. E-mail: <u>wstiew@hotmail.com</u>

#### ABSTRACT:

Presents an analysis of the publication productivity, authorship pattern, channels of communication, journal preference and language preference of Professor Dato' Khoo Kay Kim, Professor of Malaysian History in the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. The results of this biobibliometric study indicate that he can be a role model for future Malaysian historians to emulate his various achievements especially in the field of history education

**Keywords:** Biobibliometrics, Bibliometrics; Khoo Kay Kim, Historian, Publication productivity, Authorship pattern, Channels of communication.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Biobibliometrics broadly refers to the biographical study of the individual along with bibliometric analysis of his publications. It has also been defined as the quantitative and analytical method for discovering and establishing functional relationships between biodata and bibliodata elements (Sen and Gan, 1990). This is different from the study of scientometric portrait, which often focuses on the scientists rather than academicians or researchers from the arts, humanities and social sciences. In scientometric studies, much attention is given to the accomplishments of the scientific researcher in terms of qualitative and quantitative count of his published works whether it is books, chapter in books, conference papers, journal articles or other documents.

The study of well-known scientists' has been conducted bibliometrically since the early 1980's. Sinha and Bhatnagar in 1980 attempted to study the works of an internationally reputed plant pathologist born in India but settled in Canada, R. C. Sinha with emphasis on his impact on the world literature through data obtained from the Science Citation Index. Three vears later, Gupta and Chandrasekhar using data collected from Science Citation Index, conducted a citation analysis on S. Chandrasekhar, the winner of the 1983 Nobel Prize for physics. A total of his 401 works were cited 10, 359 times during 1965-1980 of which six were identified as citation classics for receiving 53% of all the citations. They concluded that there is a high correlation in quantity, quality of works, citedness and receipt of honors and awards.

In 1992, Mahapatra measured the degree of influence of Ranganathan's works on Indian library and information science literature. He analyzed the references provided in journal articles and found that after Ranganathan's death, he continues to be cited frequently especially for his works on classification and cataloguing.

Next, Gupta (1993) analyzed the citations for all the publications of Xavier LePichon pertaining to sea floor spreading for the period 1965-1979. He found that out of the 127 cited publications, 13 items were heavily and consistently cited. However, the most cited article is "Sea-floor spreading and continental drift" published in Journal of Geophysical Research ((73) 1968, 3661-3690) which received a total of 642 citations at the time of the study. Sinha and Ullah in 1993 attempted a citation analysis to determine the citation characteristics of periodical articles and books published by Ramachandran in the field of cement and concrete chemistry. They found that he was certainly a highly quoted scientist and more of his books rather than articles were cited.

Kademani, Balakrishnan and Kalyane (1994) presented a detailed scientometric analysis of the publication output of Indian nuclear physicist, P. K. Iyengar by year, research domain, collaboration pattern, channel of communication used and frequency of keywords. It was found that the period 1972-1976 when Iyengar was 41-45 years of age, was his most productive period with the highest publication activity. On the other hand, Kalyane and Kalyane also in 1994 analyzed 254 research publications of M. S. Swaminathan. The results indicated that he could

be considered as a role model among agricultural scientist.

In 1995 Kalyane and Munnolli examined the publications of T.S. West, an analytical chemist to find out the research productivity and patterns of collaboration. They concluded that West is eminently qualified to be a role model for the younger generation to emulate too. Kalyane also in 1995 conducted a study on P. M. Bhargava in terms of publication productivity coefficient, publication density, publication concentration and average Bradford's multiplier.

Kalyane and Sen (1996) carried out a study of 422 articles published between 1956 to 1995 by the Nobel Laureate, Pierre-Gilles de Gennes, a French physicist. The results indicated that the honors and awards received by scientists tend to attract more collaborators and increase in productivity. Kademani and Kalyane in 1996 analyzed 164 papers by R. Chidambaram, a nuclear physicist, published during 1958-1993 to identify highly cited papers as per Science Citation Index. The results indicate that self-assessment by a scientist about the significance of his papers may not always tally with the world opinion.

In 1997, Kalyane and Kademani conducted a study on Barbara McClintock, the winner of Nobel Prize in physiology for 1983. They analysed her publications to identify her peak period of publication productivity, collaborating authors and the extent of collaboration, the scattering of publications in various sources and the keywords used for the titles in her papers.

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The most recent scientometric portrait study is on C. R. Bhatia, a geneticist and plant breeder conducted by Kalyane and Sen (1998). A total of 129 publications published between 1961 and 1994 were analyzed. The study found that C.R. Bhatia has indeed established himself as a leader in the induced mutation breeding programmes of locally important crop plants.

The study of noted and well-known scientists has gained ground internationally but this type of study is yet to take root in this part of the world. The above literature indicates that the focus is mostly on scientists especially from India. There is no study on other researchers from the arts, humanities and social sciences domains. Therefore, this paper is another attempt to study biobibliometrically, a well-known Malaysian historian and his contributions towards a discipline other than science.

# **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the present study are:

- 1. to find out the publication productivity;
- 2. to examine the authorship pattern for publications :
- 3. to identify the channel of communications used ;
- 4. to ascertain the journal preference; and
- 5. to determine the language preference of the author.

# METHODOLOGY

The list of publications of Prof. Khoo numbering 205 comprising 60 journal articles, 15 monographs/books, 79 conference papers, 23 lectures/talks and 28 book chapters published between 1963 to 1998 were collected, verified and analyzed. The curriculum vitae which includes the list of publications of Prof. Khoo was obtained. To this list is added further searches made through telnetting the online public access catalogue of the University of Malaya's Library (telnet 202.185.96.1) and the National Library of Malaysia (telnet 161.142.132.123) to ascertain their holdings of Prof. Khoo's publications. Apart from that, certain biographical details which were not clear or lacking in the curriculum vitae were checked and verified using annual reports of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of which he was President between 1992-1995 and other related sources containing information about the subject under study. Telephone calls were also made to the subject to clarify certain details. From the collected data, analysis of the publication productivity, authorship pattern, channels of communication, journal preference and language preferences were found out. Finally, the subject was given a copy of the paper to verify the accuracy of the data and other information.

Here, it should be noted that this study did not take into account publications edited by the historian and those published in newspapers. In addition, miscellaneous popular historical articles written specially for school students in various local magazines are also not taken into account for the purpose of this study. Translated articles or books from English to Bahasa Melayu and vice versa are counted as one publication only. Further to that, conference papers published as journal articles or book chapters are considered once only.

# **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Khoo Kay Kim was born on 28th March 1937 in Kampar, Perak, Malaysia. He took his Bachelor's degree in 1959 maoring in history from the University of Malaya, Singapore. In 1967 he obtained his M. A. (History) and his Ph.D. in 1974 with the thesis "The beginnings of political extremism in Malaya 1915-1935". Both these higher degrees were from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. He was also the first Malaysian to graduate with a Ph.D. from the Arts Faculty, University of Malaya, since the foundation of the university in 1949. Khoo Kay Kim had the privilege to be trained as a historian under the noted Professor K. G. Tregonning who held the Raffles Chair of History (Tregonning, 1990; Cheah, 1997). After graduating from the university, he started his career as a history teacher in Anglo-Chinese Secondary School, Teluk Intan, Perak. In 1967, after obtaining his M. A., he was offered the post of a lecturer in the History Department of the University of Malaya, his alma mater. Before that, he was a tutor (1964-1966) and temporary assistant lecturer (1966-1967). Here, it should be noted that Khoo, with his Chinese origin, also held the distinction of being the first tutor and lecturer of the History Department, University of Malaya, who used Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), the national language of the country, as the medium of instruction. He started conducting his tutorials for the Malay medium students from the Alam Shah School totally in the Malay language from the 1965/1966 session. This historical achievement of a non-Malay academician made the History Department, one of the pioneering departments in a local university to use the national language as the medium of instruction. Two years later, he commenced his lectures on Malaysian history in the Malay language for the first year history students (Khoo, 1994). In fact, according to the Education Act of 1961, Bahasa Melayu became the medium of instruction in the university only in 1983 but Khoo took a pioneering step in that direction way back in 1965.

In 1974, he was promoted to the post of Associate Professor and in the very next year, he was offered Professorship of the new Chair of Malaysian History. Apart from teaching responsibilities, he also played an active role in administrative work, being the head of the History Department for several years, 1973-1974 and 1982-1984. He was also appointed as the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Science for the years 1984-1986. He held the post of Professor of Malaysian History until 1992 when he reached 55, the mandatory retirement age for Malaysian government servants. However, as his service was still very much needed, he was put on contractual basis in the professorial scale from March 1992-1994 and 1996 to November 1998. During 1994-1996, he was attached to the Sports Center of University of Malaya as its Director, as he was also an ardent sports fan, player and official especially of soccer and athletics. As the Director of the Sports Center, University of Malaya, he launched the first sports degree academic programme in the country during the 1995/1996 academic session. At present, Prof. Khoo is attached to the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore as a research fellow.

As a university academician, he played supervisory roles in numerous M. A. and Ph.D. theses, as external examiner as well as academic assessor for various local and foreign universities. The foreign universities among others include Monash University, Australia; University of Adelaide, New Zealand; National University of Singapore, and University of Brunei. Apart from that, Prof. Khoo was also involved in the university curriculum development. For example during 1990-1995, he was a member of the Malay Studies Academic Planning Committee, University of Malaya and in 1995 he was a member of the Review Committee, History Department, Univer-sity of Adelaide, New Zealand.

Apart from being a distinguished Professor of Malaysian History, he also took interest in cultural and literary fields. He was a member of the National Literary Award Panel (1972-1976); National Advisory Council on Culture (1974-1976, 1990-); Board of Control, Literary and Language Agency; History Terminology Committee, Literary and Language Agency (1968-1977).

In addition, he also found time to serve as honorary editor for numerous historical journals published by various learned and scholarly societies such as Malaysian Historical Society (1979-1987), Malaysian Museum Society (1982 - ), and Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (1994-1998). He is also a member, Board of Directors, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, corresponding member, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Department of History, National University of Singapore and member, Editorial Advisory Board, *American Asian*  *Review.* Prof. Khoo once held the office of President, Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for three years, 1992-1995.

Above all, Prof. Khoo is a prolific contributor of articles, books and monographs on academic subjects and sports. For his outstanding contributions to the study of Malaysian history, the King of Malaysia decorated him with a federal award, Johan Setia Mahkota (Companion of the Most Esteemed Order of the Crown of Malaysia, 3rd Class) in 1982. In 1987, His Royal Highness, the Sultan of Perak bestowed on him the state award, Dato' Paduka Mahkota Perak (Commander of the Order of the Crown of Perak, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class) which entitled him to use the title Dato' before his name. In 1998, the Perak Government in recognition of his being a renowned Perak historian and his many contributions towards the understanding of Perak History made him a "Tokoh Penulis Perak" or Perak Prolific Writer (Khoo, 1999).

The illustrious career of Prof. Khoo provides a virgin field for biobibliometric study. Moreover, biobibliometric study from fields other than science has not yet been attempted as can be seen from the literature review. Hence, this study is going to be a trailblazer in the area of biobibliometric studies conducted from Malaysia.

# FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

# **Publication Productivity**

Table 1 reveals the publication productivity of Prof. Khoo totaling 205 items published between 1963-1998. In all, his total productive age is 36 years as his first

Year	J	В	BC	С	LT	Total	Cumulative Total	Productive Age	Age
1963	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	26
1964	-	-	-	-	_	_	1 2		27
1965	-	-	_	-	-	-	1 3		28
1966	3	-	-	-	-	3	4	4	29
1967	2	-	-	-	-	2	6	5	30
1968	2	-	-	1	-	3	9	6	31
1969	3	-	-	-	-	3	12	7	32
1970	1	-	-	1	-	2	14	8	33
1971	2	-	1	1	1	5	19	9	34
1972	3	1	-	-	-	4	23	10	35
1973	3	-	-	-	-	3	26	11	36
1974	3	-	1	2	-	6	32	12	37
1975	3	1	-	1	-	5	37	13	38
1976	-	-	_	1	-	1	38	14	39
1977	2	-	2	2	-	6	44	15	40
1978	2	-	1	5	-	8	52	16	41
1979	-	1	1	3	1	6	58	17	42
1980	2	-	1	2	-	5	63	18	43
1981	4	1	_	-	-	5	68	19	44
1982	3	1	1	1	-	6	74	20	45
1983	1	1	-	1	-	3	77	21	46
1984	-	2	1	2	-	5	82	22	47
1985	3	-	1	3	-	7	89	23	48
1986	1	-	1	4	-	6	95	24	49
1987	1	-	-	4	-	5	100	25	50
1988	1	-	2	1	-	3	103	26	51
1989	2	-	3	2	1	8	111 27		52
1990	-	1	1	3	3	8	119 28		53
1991	3	2	-	4	-	9	128 29		54
1992	3	-	5	7	1	16	144 30		55
1993	2	-	1	5	4	12	156 31		56
1994	1	1	-	5	6	13	169 32		57
1995	1	-	1	1	-	3	172 33		58
1996	1	2	-	5	3	11	183 34		59
1997	1	1	4	6	3	15	198	35	60
1998	1	-	-	6	-	7	205	36	61
ТО-	60	15	28	79	23	205	205		
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Table 1: Publication Productivity of Khoo Kay Kim 1963-1998

J = Journal/Serial Publication, B = Book/Monograph, BC = Book Chapters,

C = Conference Papers, LT = Lecture/Talk, PA = Productive age, Age = Actual age

publication was published in 1963 when he was 26. Fifty percentile age (the number of years during which 50% of the papers were published starting from the year of publication of the first paper, Kalyane and Sen, 1998) is found to be 27 years when he is 52 and was already holding the post of Professor of Malaysian History in the History Department, University of Malaya, the pinnacle of his university teaching career. It was at this period that he was often chosen as the external examiner in history for various M. A. and Ph.D. thesis for both foreign and local institutions. In other words, by this time, Prof. Khoo has attained international recognition and status as a scholar on Malaysian history.

The average publication productivity per year is 5.7, the highest productive year being 1992, when he produced a total of 16 papers at the age of 55. It is to be noted that in 1992, Prof. Khoo reached the mandatory retirement age but surprisingly it was the year when his productivity level was found to be the highest. Apart from that, from 1992, his productivity almost double compared to the pre-1992 years probably due to lesser administration burden and daily chores allowing him to spend more time on research and writings (Khoo, 1999). This result is comparable to the finding of Kalyane and Sen (1998) which indicates that C. R. Bhatia's most productive period also was when he reached his early and mid-50s of his life. Apart from that, Kalyane and Kademani (1997) also reported that one of the peak period of productivity of Barbara McClintock, the Nobel laureate in physiology for 1983 is when she reached the age of 52-56.

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#### Authorship of Pattern

In all, only 2 out of 205 publications are the result of collaborative research. Of these, one book entitled *Masalah sosial and politik di Malaysia* was written with Alias Mohamed, while one paper presented in an international conference was written with two others (Atan Long and M. Puthucheary). Therefore, it substantiates the findings by Stevens (1956), Stone (1982), Goi (1997) and Tiew (1998) that Arts, Humanities and Social Science scholars tend to work on their own in their research life and does not normally collaborate with others.

Authorship	Number	Percent %
Single	203	99
Two-authored	1	0.5
Three-authored	1	0.5
Total	205	100

# **Channel of Information**

Table 3 reveals the distribution of publications according to various channels of communication. The most popular avenue of communication is the conferences, seminars etc. Prof. Khoo presented a total of 79 papers in various seminars, conferences, workshops, symposia, colloquia, etc. held both in Malaysia and overseas. This makes up 38.5% of the total publication productivity. The next preferred channel of communication is found to be scholarly journals accounting for 60 or 29.3%. Chapters in various books edited by other authors ranks third with 28 contributions (13.7%). The other channels of communication in descending order of

Rank	Channel of communication	Number	Percent %
1	Conferences, etc.	79	38.5
2	Journals/Serial Publication	60	29.3
3	Book chapters	28	13.7
4	Lectures/Talks	23	11.2
5	Books/Monographs	15	7.3
		205	100

Table 3: Distribution of publications in various channels

preference are lectures and talks 23(11.2%) followed by books or monographs totaling 15 (7.3%). One interesting finding is that conferences is the most preferred channel of communication of the scholar. As to whether it is the same with other historians or AHSS scholars' needs to be explored.

# **Journal Preference**

Table 4 shows the journal preference of Prof. Khoo. *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* ranks first with a tally of 16 articles. It is to be noted that of the total 21 journals wherein Prof. Khoo's articles were published, 15

Rank	Title of Journal	No.	Cumulative Total	Period FYP-LYP
1			10181	FIF-LIF
1	Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal		1.4	10.55 1000
	Asiatic Society	16	16	1966-1998
2	Jernal Sejarah (Journal of the Historical			
	Society, Universiti Malaya)	9	25	1966-1978
3	Peninjau Sejarah (Journal of the History			
	Teachers' Association)	5	30	1966-1969
3	Malaysia in History (Journal of the			
	Malaysian Historical Society)	5	35	1972-1982
5	Kekal Abadi (published by the University of			
	Malaya's Library)	4	39	1985-1991
6	Jebat (Journal of the History Department,			
	National University of Malaysia)	3	42	1972-1980
6	Journal of Southeast Asia Studies	3	45	1974-1981
	(Journal of the History Department, National			
	University of Singapore)			
8	Sejarah (Journal of the History Department,			
	University of Malaya)	2	47	1993-1996
9-21	Thirteen other journals	1	60	1969-1997

Table 4: Journal Preference of Prof. Khoo

FYP = First Year Publication, LYP = Last Year Publication

are local, and the rest foreign namely Singapore, Philippines, India and United States of America. The top five journals preferred by Prof. Khoo are local journals published by various historical societies or associations indicating the availability of channels for historians to place their articles in Malaysia. Nevertheless, the number of journals is still small considering the fact that Prof. Khoo published only 60 articles over a period of 36 years from 1963-1998. However, it is clear that scholarly journals publishing history articles are not lacking in Malaysia.

# Language Preference

Table 5 shows the languages used by Prof. Khoo for his publications. In all, 124 (60.5%) publications are in English while the rest are in Bahasa Melayu. This indicates that even though Bahasa Melayu is the medium of communication in Malaysia, English is still widely used in scholarly writings in the field of history. However, it is to be noted that the number of articles in Bahasa Melayu is not too low, i.e. 81 (39.5%).

# Table 5: Language used in various channels of communication

Channels of communication	English	Bahasa Melayu
Journals	48	12
Books	8	7
Book chapters	18	10
Conferences, etc.	36	43
Lecture/Talk	14	9
Total	124	81

# CONCLUSION

Prof. Khoo has indeed established himself as a renowned Malaysian history scholar and intellectual. The results of this biobibliometric study on him indicate that he can be a role model for future Malavsian historians to emulate his various achievements especially in the field of history education. He was the first Professor on Malaysian History, which was created in 1975 in the History Department, University of Malaya. Not only has he contributed significantly to local scholarly journals in the dissemination of historical knowledge pertaining to this part of the world especially Malaysian history, he also presented numerous conference papers in the international arena too. In addition, he was among the first to use the Bahasa Melayu as the medium of instruction in the university, and he also encouraged the writing of Malaysian history from the Malaysian point of view and the using of analytical tools to study history. Till this very moment, he is active and contributing prolifically to the scholarly endeavor of history education for the younger generation as mentor and teacher in Malaysia.

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