Reputation Metrics in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Annotated Bibliography of Selected Sources

PREPARED BY L. RIGLING, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Bastow, S., Dunleavy, P., & Tinkler, J. (2014). The impact of the social sciences how academics and their research make a difference. Los Angeles: SAGE. http://go.utlib.ca/cat/9534795

This book is a study on measuring external impact and academic impact of social science research. Part I, in particular chapters 1, 2 and 4 are especially helpful in determining methods of calculating research impact.

Though it is known that academic impact is assessed through indices more suited towards assessing the sciences, this study suggests that external impact is also measured through indices, like the number of scientific patents registered, frequency of launching new products, and that these indices are irrelevant for social science impact. Social Sciences do not produce "unique discovery," its products are not typically "patentable," nor do they provide "first mover advantages." (section 1.3)

Section 2.1 examines academic impact, using Google Scholar to include monographs/chapters in addition to journal articles and conference papers, and cross checking the information against WoS and CVs of researchers which were available. WoS had an internal coverage rate of only 30 -44 % for social sciences, in contrast to Google Scholar's coverage rate of 95 - 98%. This section examines trends in journal citations and book citations (blogs are not included). They attempt to address the single authored versus co-authored work citation issue by offering graphs comparing the data. They address the h-index, which they calculate using "Publish or Perish" (inclusive of Google Scholar).

To examine external impact (section 2.2) authors used Google and supplementary searches to look through up to 200 relevant search results, and categorized each result. The text provides a number of charts to assess averages across fields. In section 2.3 six underlying variables for academic influence and external visibility are identified, and then researchers are categorized (invisibles, applied researchers, publishers, solid middle, communicators, influentials) and charted. These are then compared to STEM researchers and broken down by age.

Chapter 4 provides case studies of individual academics, which could model a way for an individual to evaluate his/her individual impact. Part II examines the connections between social science research

and different sectors, which could be useful information for identifying better ways to create external impact, as well as identifying where academics are most likely to make external impact, including examining impact in the media and public engagement (chapter 8).

Chen, K., Tang, M., Wang, C., & Hsiang, J. (2015). Exploring alternative metrics of scholarly performance in the social sciences and humanities in Taiwan. Scientometrics, 102(1), 97-112. doi:10.1007/s11192-014-1420-6 http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/462463

This study, though conducted using a very small sample of scholars in Taiwan, provided concrete information on calculating altmetrics. The authors created 18 total metrics, falling in four categories: scholarly output metrics (number of books, articles, conference papers, theses/dissertations, libcitations [library holdings/circulation record]); scholarly impact metrics (citation counts from Scopus, WoS, domestic databases ,citations received in theses/dissertations); public communication output metrics (news articles, non-academic articles); and Web-based Metrics (webometrics, citations in online syllabi, mentions and citations in wikipedia, number of grants, awards received).

The study showed that many of these results correlated with traditional metrics. This study found a disciplinary difference between social sciences and humanities. SS tend to be more influential internationally. Humanities relied on monographs, specifically the data had a strong correlation with the number of books authored and number of library circulation. The 18 metrics created and analyzed in this study all provide valuable insight into scholarly impact, and the article showed not only evidence of correlation between altmetrics and traditional metrics, but also a concrete method for calculating most of these metrics.

Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (2014) Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts Research: A framework for identifying impact and indicators (October 2014). Ottawa, ON http://www.ideas-idees.ca/sites/default/files/2014-10-03-impact-project-draft-report-english-version-final2.pdf

This living paper examines the five areas in which Humanities and Social Science research has an impact: scholarship, capacity through teaching and mentoring, the economy, society and culture, and practice and policy. Most HSS research impact studies focus mostly on scholarship. This study proposes ways to evaluate each of these categories, to look at the impact of HSS research. The study first aims to define "impact" and justify the need for a framework with which to evaluate impact. In section 2, the paper defines the five areas of impact and also provides concrete indicators of impact for each area. For each indicator, it provides advantages and disadvantages. It also provides examples, when applicable, of ways that these indicators have been used. This paper is a living document, and will be expanded upon when more information becomes available. All of the information presented in this paper is available in a condensed summary table.

Hirsch, J. E., & Buela-Casal, G. (2014). The meaning of the h-index*. International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology, 14(2), 161- 164.
http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/470721

This paper is an interview with J.E. Hirsch, the creator of the "h-index." In this interview Hirsch addresses both the positives and negatives of the h-index. He acknowledges that it is not an absolute way of measuring all research impact. The h-index was developed primarily as an indicator for sciences, and because of this, h-indices tend to be lower in Social Sciences and Humanities fields. He also acknowledges that, though a high h-index is often an indicator of a high research impact, the opposite is not always the case. He introduces the m-index, which he uses to account for relative impact, based on the length of the career of the researcher, since the h-index tends to grow over time. This article is essential reading for understanding the h-index, its strengths, and its shortcomings.

Mohammadi, E., & Thelwall, M. (2014). Mendeley readership altmetrics for the social sciences and humanities: Research evaluation and knowledge flows. Journal Of The Association For Information Science & Technology, 65(8), 1627-1638. doi:10.1002/asi.23071
http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/462460

This article explored Mendeley as a valuable tool for altmetric data on journal articles in the humanities and social sciences. It found that Mendeley's data (i.e. readership counts and bookmarking data) had a statistically significant correlation with citation counts. However, the study revealed that this correlation was much stronger with social science journal articles than humanities journal articles.

This study also explored Mendeley as a way to study information flow between disciplines. Web of Science often indexes articles in two categories, while Mendeley can only index articles in one category, which sometimes leads to Mendeley showing a false information flow. Sometimes this information about information flow between disciplines is accurate, and therefore a useful tool.

The article concludes that Mendeley can be a very useful tool for assessing research in the humanities and social sciences because it evaluates more than just the author's perspective, it also evaluates the readers. Readership is a strong indicator of impact. The study shows some valuable tables breaking down Mendeley data by discipline, not just humanities v. social sciences, and shows where the correlation of altmetrics to traditional metrics is strongest and where it is weakest.

Sula, C. A., & Miller, M. (2014). Citations, contexts, and humanistic discourse: Toward automatic extraction and classification. Literary & Linguistic Computing, 29(3), 452-464.
http://llc.oxfordjournals.org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/content/29/3/452.full.pdf+html

This paper is a study of an alternative style of citation analysis, which attempts to address the many ways (15 cited in the article) in which humanities scholars use citations. The authors argue that citation analysis is not as accurate for humanities works because many humanities scholars will cite articles in a negative light. The authors developed a tool that will assess which citations are negative and which citations are positive, in order to provide more accurate citation analysis. The tool scanned for footnotes and then language indicators to assess the citation. The sample size was relatively small, but the tool

worked relatively accurately for many of the journals. They suggest crowdsourcing this tool to get a greater sample, before determining if it would be a useful addition to bibliometrics. The tool does not always accurately pick up citations, because of the format of the journal or because it misreads informative footnotes as citations. This could be a useful study to read, and a useful method for humanities citation analysis.

White, H. D., Boell, S. K., Yu, H., Davis, M., Wilson, C. S., & Cole, F. T. H. (2009). Libcitations: A measure for comparative assessment of book publications in the humanities and social sciences. Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 60(6), 1083-1096. doi:10.1002/asi.21045
http://journals2.scholarsportal.info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/15322882/v60i0006/1083_lamfcaithass.xml

Libcitations (pronounced like "library"citations) is a ready-to-use alternative method for evaluating the research impact of humanities scholars. This article used library holdings (not through WorldCat, although the method is applicable with WorldCat holdings) to evaluate research impact. This method is particularly useful because it makes use of already available data. On pg. 1085 the authors provide a list of reasons to use libcitations. For instance, they can be used with books like textbooks or reference books that are typically not cited, or fiction and poetry. The data is useful very quickly, since most libraries acquire books during the short period in which they are in print. The authors compare the holdings of a book to other books with the same subject headings. This data did not correlate strongly with traditional citation analysis. The authors also argue that librarians are just as qualified as authors to decide what is relevant to the field. It acknowledges the expertise of librarians, and the feat of producing a "library bestseller." This study was conducted with a relatively small sample, purely from Australia, but it seems highly possible to apply this metric to evaluate the research impact of monographs, which is a large part of humanities publications.

Works Consulted

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