Measuring Nursing Faculty Impact: Web of Science versus Scopus

Kimberly Powell, Emory University
Shenita R. Peterson, Emory University

Conference Name: Medical Library Association Annual Meeting
Publication Date: 2014-05-19
Type of Work: Poster
Permanent URL: https://pid.emory.edu/ark:/25593/rrm3j

Final published version:
https://figshare.com/articles/Measuring_Nursing_Faculty_Impact_Web_of_Science_versus_Scopus/4210119

Copyright information:
This is an Open Access work distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Accessed April 28, 2020 5:03 AM EDT
Measuring Nursing Faculty Impact: Web of Science versus Scopus

Kimberly R. Powell, MLS and Shenita Peterson, MPH
Woodruff Health Sciences Center Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia 30322

Introduction

Web of Science has long been the forerunner for publication analysis and citation tracking. In recent decades, Scopus joined the scene, offering a choice for citation tracking of scholarly publications. However, the high cost of these two databases, in comparison to other library resources, precludes many institutions from maintaining access to both products. This poster looks at how our library addressed the growing interest in Scopus and validated the utility of acquiring both tools.

For several years the Woodruff Health Sciences Center Library has offered a Web of Science based service for annual reporting to health sciences schools and departments. These reports include publication counts, citation analysis, faculty h-index, and annual journal metrics. While appreciative of the service, the School of Nursing voiced concerns that their publications and related impact were not being fully captured by the Web of Science-based service. In the summer of 2013, several anonymous libraries tried Scopus in part to address this perceived gap in coverage. The timing presented us with the opportunity to use the 2012 School of Nursing citation report as a case study to compare the Web of Science and Scopus databases.

Study Questions

A. Which database offers the widest Journal Coverage in the field of Nursing?
B. Which database offers the widest coverage for Emory Nursing Faculty publications?
C. How does nursing faculty h-index compare between the two databases?
D. Which database reflects the greatest Impact of nursing faculty publications?

Database Overview

- **Web of Science**
  - Science Citation Index Expanded (1980-present)
  - Social Sciences Citation Index (1981-present)
  - Arts & Humanities Citation Index (1977-present)
  - Conference Proceedings Citation Index - Science (1991-present)
  - Book Citation Index - Social Sciences & Humanities (2005-present)
  - Current Chemical Reactions (1896-present)
  - Index Chemicus (1996-present)

- **Scopus**
  - Content includes: peer-reviewed journals, trade publications, books, reviews, conference papers, scientific indexed webpages, patents
  - 45%-post-1996 records include references
  - 57%-post-1996 records index data as far back as 1823
  - Scopus coverage update in April 2013

Methods

Two independent searches collected faculty publication records and citation count data from each database. Data were exported into a citation manager program for analysis. Data were collected in May 2013.

Web of Science data were collected using the database’s basic search feature. Scopus data was collected using the author search feature. Affiliations and available author identifiers were used to limit results.

Relevant journal coverage and quality was compared between the two databases. Journal impact was determined by SJR (SCImago Journal Rank). Current inclusion in MEDLINE® and a refereed status in Ulrich’s Periodical Directory were consulted as measures of journal quality.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Results were limited to articles, proceedings or conference papers, and reviews. When article types were inconsistent between the two databases, Web of Science designations were used. Online profiles and available curriculum vitae (CV) were consulted for inclusion determinations only. Publications were included for journal impact analysis only when SJR and Scope/Subject Category data was available.

Summary of Findings

I. Scopus showed the widest coverage in the field of Nursing and in the journals in which Emory Nursing faculty were publishing.

II. Scopus indicated a larger faculty h-index when compared to Web of Science data.

III. For 2012 faculty publications, Web of Science journals had a higher SJR (SCImago Journal Rankings). By expanding coverage, overall journal impact decreased.

IV. For 2012 faculty publications, Web of Science journals had a higher SJR and included more indexed papers.

V. For 2012 faculty publications, Web of Science reported journals were more likely to be peer-reviewed.

Conclusions and Final Decision

These data were presented to administrators in the School of Nursing to demonstrate annual reporting comparisons between the two databases. They were shown that Scopus offered increased journal coverage in both the general subject area of nursing, as well as in specific publication titles in which faculty were publishing. Scopus reported increases in h-index were highlighted as well as those specific cases where the reported h-index would be higher using Web of Science. Particular attention was given to the use of SJR as a measure of journal impact. Faculty familiarity with the alternative Impact Factor led to some concern, as did the overall decrease in perceived journal quality of publications reported by Scopus.

After these discussions, the decision was made by the School of Nursing to continue annual reporting using Web of Science.

The perceived journal quality was a major influence in this decision. The School of Nursing was understandably hesitant to move to the alternative database for other fields, departments, and campus centers may highlight additional strengths and weaknesses between the two databases. As campus wide interest in impact reporting continues to grow, it will be important for the library to be prepared to answer bibliometric inquiries and provide relevant expertise and analysis.