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Citation Analysis in the Business Disciplines

Recently a colleague in the management department who was going up for promotion to full professor asked for my assistance in conducting a citation analysis for his publications. It is common for universities to evaluate the impact of a scholar/author's research during hiring, promotion, and tenure and merit pay decisions. The idea is that the more a researcher's work is accessed, read and used, the more the research has contributed to the field. Citation analysis is an increasingly common way to evaluate research impact and is considered to be more appropriate and objective than other metrics such as journal impact factors or rankings. The primary reason that citation analysis is preferred is that it looks at the article or publication itself and not the container in which it is published. (There is a substantial body of research criticizing the use of the Impact Factor).

I began by searching for the faculty member's publications in the **ISI-Web of Science** database. For decades the ISI (Institute for Scientific Information), now Thomson Scientific, citation databases have been used as a starting point and often as the only tool for locating citations and conducting citation analyses, primarily because they were the only general and comprehensive citation databases in existence. The **Science Citation Index** system was initially developed to fill the needs of researchers in the fields of biochemistry and molecular biology and still has the best coverage in the hard sciences with 6,500 journals in 150 disciplines. The **Social Sciences Citation Index**, covering around 2,400 journals in 50 disciplines, and the **Arts & Humanities Citation Index**, about 1,200 journals, were added to Web of Science later and have moderate coverage in these disciplines.

About half of my colleague's publications were listed in Web of Science which only includes citations to journal articles published in ISI indexed journals. This low number is not surprising since journals in the business disciplines are not well covered in the database.

Adequacy of ISI coverage from the point of view of research evaluation

Excellent	Good	Moderate
Molecular biology & Biochemistry	Applied physics & chemistry	Humanities & arts
Biological Sciences related to humans	Biological Sciences related to animals & plants	Business
Clinical medicine	Psychology & psychiatry	History
Physics & astronomy	Other social sciences related to medicine & health	Other social sciences
Chemistry	Geosciences	
	Mathematics	
	Engineering	
	Economics	

(Moed, 2005)

Elsevier's **SCOPUS** citation database reportedly has better coverage in these areas but our institution does not subscribe to this database, so it is not covered in this article.

To locate citation metrics for the faculty member's publications not covered in **Web of Science**, I turned to **Google Scholar** since it also reports the number of times a publication has been cited. **Google Scholar** generally results in more comprehensive citation coverage in the area of business because of its coverage of publications that are not well covered in **Web of Science**. **Google Scholar**'s broader range of data sources is especially beneficial for authors publishing in non ISI journals, books, conference papers, non-US journals, and in general journals in specialized fields.

During the course of researching citation tools for business publications, I came across several articles and papers written by Professor Anne-Wil Harzing, Professor in International Management and Associate Dean of Research at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Dr. Harzing's field of International Management is one of those not well represented in ISI. After being rejected for promotion to full professor the first time she applied, Dr. Harzing realized that she would have to make a case that simply could not be rejected. She developed an academic self-defense arsenal which includes a software program and an accompanying book. The program, called **Publish or Perish**, interfaces with **Google Scholar**, collects data from it and calculates multiple metrics from that data. The program can be downloaded at no cost from her Website at the following URL: <http://www.harzing.com/>. The book is called *The Publish or Perish Book: Your guide to effective and responsible citation analysis* and serves as a manual not only on how to utilize this program but also on how to conduct and interpret citation analysis. Dr. Harzing utilized *Publish or Perish* in her second application for full professor and this time was successful. (Bensman)

I am happy to report that my colleague was successful in his promotion to full tenure and I am now giving faculty workshops on citation analysis so that everyone can present their case for research impact to its best advantage regardless of their field of study.

References

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