Navaneethkrishnan, S.
W.A.Weerasooriya
PAPER

Challenges in Selecting Humanities and Social Science Journal articles for Bibliometric Analysis at University Level in Sri Lanka

S. Navaneethkrishnan, Library, University of Jaffna,

W.A.Weerasooriya, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya

The century we live in is witnessing a huge disparity between the developed countries and the developing countries. This is also true in creating knowledge. The disparity is especially clear between pure sciences and social sciences. Even with the research studies of the Humanities and Social Sciences and their disciplines done to date, the amount of investigation is considerably less than in science and technology.

Bibliometrics is built to provide an objective approach to assess research outputs of an individual scholar, a research agency, a university or a nation. Based on such outcomes, research funding is allocated and the reputation or credentials of a scholar or an institution are assessed. Although bibliometric assessment has been continuously criticized and improved over time for multi-dimensional measurement, reflecting more accurately the reality of research activities, it has some significant limitations when applied to the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the methodological challenges faced in selecting Humanities and Social Science journal articles for bibliometric analysis at University level in Sri Lanka.This research paper provides a basic understanding to a researcher and formulates guiding principles when dealing with bibliometric analysis of Humanities and Social Science subjects.

Variations in citation patterns, discrepancies due to journals with dual volume-numbering systems or combined volumes, publication gaps due to the war situation, language and regional bias, need of fine-grained delineation at the level of individual articles, defining journal coverage in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences and unavailability of soft forms of printed journals are identified as the major challenges in selecting journal articles for bibliometric analysis at University level in Sri Lanka.

Even though the methodological challenges have been pointed out, responding to these challenges and designing strategies with criteria are necessary to promote a better application of bibliometrics for the evaluation of journal articles. It paves the way for more cautious and sophisticated evaluation systems, rooted in a better understanding of the dynamics of Humanities and Social Sciences.