A Self-evaluation of My Research Outputs by July 2022

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Abstract: To aid the admission committees in evaluating my research capacity, I compared my research outputs by the end of the second year of my master's program with the current PhD students in five top Library and Information Science (LIS) schools in the US. By the middle of July 2022, there were a total of 232 PhD students in all grades listed on the websites of these five schools. With 9 publications and 5 first-author ones, I could rank No. 3 among the total 233 authors regarding either all publications or leading-author (first or corresponding author) ones. The two authors having more leading-author publications are from UW and UT and graduating this year and next year, respectively. I came to No. 1 when comparing the number of leading-author journal articles. I ranked No. 7 regarding the total number of citations received as the leading author, and I came to No. 2 compared with those that started publishing in the same year as me, while the No. 1 author was from UW and graduating this year.

Background

I'm a master's student from the School of Information Management at Nanjing University. In the 2022 summer, about to enter the third (final) academic year of my program, I'm planning to apply to a PhD program in the United States and start to prepare for the materials. Having studied information science for six years, I am also considering applying to other departments (schools) to diversify my educational background and bridge the knowledge in different communities. I realized that it is difficult for the admission committees in other departments (say, sociology and economics) to evaluate my research capacity because they may not be familiar with what typical information science students can achieve. To provide some assistance, I compared my research

outputs with those of the current PhD students in the top LIS schools in the United States. I have no intention of making judgments on other people and their research. I believe everyone has their own research agenda, interest, and habits. To help me through the application process is the only purpose of my investigation.

My publications by the end of the second master's year (July 2022)

The Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection was chosen as the data source for the comparison. By the time I collected the data, which is 17 July 2022, there were a total of 9 publications co-authored by me in the database. Earlier this July, I just had a research article accepted by the *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology (JASIST)*. This study was led by myself, and I'm the corresponding author. Unfortunately, it is still in production at the publisher's when I write this passage and is not counted in. Among the 9 works already published, there are 5 works of which I'm the first author. They have appeared in four journals and one conference. The journals include *Information Processing & Management (IP&M)*, *Journal of Information Science (JIS)*, *Journal of Informetrics (JOI)*, and *Scientometrics*; the conference is *the 17th International Conference of the International-Society-for-Scientometrics-and-Informetrics (ISSI)*.

About ten years ago, Manzari (2013) conducted a survey in North America on the prestige of Library and Information Science (LIS) scholarly journals. This study provided a ranking of 89 journals in LIS. Regarding the average rating by the respondents, *JASIST* ranked No. 1 among all; regarding the mode rating, *JASIST*, *IP&M*, and three other journals shared the No. 1 place. The *JIS* ranked No. 16 in the average rating. The rest two, *JOI* and *Scientometrics*, are the top journals of subfields informetrics and scientometrics. They were both in the first quantile under SSCI category Information Science & Library Science when we made the submissions. The *ISSI* conference is the top conference of informetrics and scientometrics. In 2019, it was held in Rome, and I attended it in person, sponsored by my department.

So far, I've received 16 citations from the WoS Core Collection. Among them, 15 came to my first-author works. My most highly-cited work is the one in *JOI* entitled "An investigation of the relationship between scientists' mobility to/from China and their research performance." It was published in May 2020 and has received 10 citations up to this July. My work published

in *IP&M* won the *IP&M* 2021 Master Paper Award which is awarded to only one master's student globally each year.

School selection and data collection

I selected the top five LIS schools based on the ranking of "Best Library and Information Studies Programs" by U.S. News & World Report. These include School of Information Science at UIUC, School of Information and Library Science at UNC-Chapel Hill, Information School at UW, College of Information Studies at UMD-College Park, and School of Information at UT-Austin. I obtained the name lists of all PhD students on their official websites. After manually checking the written form of the 232 names, I joined their names with their schools' addresses to form search terms. The initial five search terms are as follows:

#1 AD=((Univ Illinois) SAME ((sch informat) or (sch lib* NOT sch liberal) or isch)) AND AU=(...)

#2 AD=(((Univ North Carolina) or UNC or (Univ N Carolina)) same (sch informat or (sch lib* not sch liberal) or (Dept Lib & Informat Sci) or isch)) AND AU=(...)

#3 AD=((Univ Washington) same ((informat sch) or isch)) AND AU=(...)

#4 AD=((Univ Maryland) same ((informat studies) or isch)) AND AU=(...)

#5 AD=((Univ Texas Austin) same ((sch informat) or isch)) AND AU=(...)

To avoid leaving out the publications whose addresses only included universities' names, I added the five searches as a supplement and manually checked every record that they hit:

#6 AD=(Univ Illinois, Champaign) AND AU =(...)

#7 AD=((Univ North Carolina, Chapel Hill) or UNC, Chapel Hill or (Univ N Carolina, Chapel Hill)) AND AU=(...)

#8 AD=(Univ Washington, Seattle) AND AU=(...)

#9 AD=(Univ Maryland, College Pk) AND AU=(...)

#10 AD=(Univ Texas Austin, Austin) AND AU=(...)

For PhD students (later referred to as "authors") with large numbers of publications, I also searched their names individually to avoid missing any records. After excluding editorial materials, book reviews, and letters, I obtained a total of 299 publications and downloaded their bibliographic records. Each author had 1.3 co-authored publications on average. Some publications were co-

authored by more than one of our focal authors. If we count these publications multiple times, there will be 1.4 per author.

Results

With 9 publications, I share the No. 3 place with two other authors in the ranking of 233 authors. For PhD students, however, it is more important to publish as the first or corresponding author to signify their own contribution. With 5 first-author publications, I'm still the No. 3 (untied) ranked by the number of publications as the first or corresponding author. The two authors with higher ranks than me are from UW and UT and are graduating this year and next year, respectively. My research area prefers publishing in journals to conferences. When ranked by the number of journal articles, I came to No. 1 with 4 articles (untied). The journals, as introduced previously, were all prestigious journals in our field.

I calculated the total number of citations received by each author's first- or corresponding-author publications. With 15 citations to my first-author works, I ranked No. 7 among the total 233. My first paper was published in September 2019. I came to No. 2 compared only with those who started publishing in the same year as me, while the No. 1 author was from UW and graduating this year.

Reference

Manzari, L. (2013). Library and information science journal prestige as assessed by library and information science faculty. *The Library Quarterly*, 83(1), 42–60.