

Evaluation of the SJR and SNIP by the research community.

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The Challenge: Ranking that is driven by any single metric cannot effectively represent the concept of 'excellence', which depends on differing factors such as the research field, career stage, the opinion of the assessor, quality of reviews, professionalism, speed of publication, and accessibility/exposure of the journal.

Impact Factor

Strengths:

"Impact Factor is considered one of the crucial citation indicators widely used in research assessment and science administration."

- Pisyakov, 2008, *Scientometrics* p1-10

"You use it as one of the tools to target your publications, or for that matter to look for some of the imminent articles in the field." - Researcher

"We use it for the evaluation of journals for purchase and/or retention." - Librarian

"The metric is easily understood." - Editor

"The thing that worries me most both about SNIP and SJR is that the numbers do not have an intuitive meaning, unlike Impact Factor (average citations per document). I do not know how to resolve this problem, but it still bothers me." - Bibliometrician

Limitations:

"If success of research would be measured by the score of Impact Factor only, some research areas are handicapped for this reason. It is not necessarily good to measure performance, because it is not evenly distributed for all journals." - Researcher

"Your alternatives absolutely must be transparent. There is no access to the ISI Impact Factor database. You always get different results if you do the Impact Factor calculation on your own." - Journal Editor

"Naturally, criteria such as Impact Factors, h-index, number of citations or publications or patents are good indirect indicators of the performance of a researcher. However, if institutional officials follow only these or similar "numbers", a sub-population of cheaters emerges quite quickly..." - Researcher

"Impact Factor evaluation did not take into account traditions of non-English speaking countries." - Researcher

"Impact Factor is good first APPROXIMATION. But then the problem arises of WHO quotes papers from this journal. If a quote comes from an average or worse source, these citations should be counted lower." - Researcher

SJR & SNIP

Strengths:

"I am really impressed with the freely available Excel sheet. It is always difficult to use something you can't reproduce - but on the other hand as the model gets more complex, it gets more difficult to twist and manipulate." - Librarian

"With Elsevier about to start supporting and promoting SJR and SNIP, I think we're officially in the era of second-generation citation metrics." - Librarian

"I very much like the new SNIP indicator. I think it is much fairer overall, and I think it will appeal to many whose work is split between basic and applied sciences - the applied work will get better marks with SNIP than it did with Impact Factor." - Bibliometrician

"Another weak point of citations is that "average people" often quote average people. The best papers are sometimes not understood well and not quoted too often although "everybody" knows that they are excellent. So the strong, essential citations from leaders should be awarded many more points, like in SJR." - Bibliometrician

Limitations:

"It's easy to get lost in the details and calculations. Transparency can be in the form of accessibility to the underlying data, but here there is a challenge with the actual understanding of the variables in the calculation." - Librarian

"It will be challenging to get the metrics to be used widely as the Impact Factor is so deeply entrenched in the publishing industry." - Editor

"Even though SNIP and SJR are more balanced metrics, established researchers are more familiar with the Impact Factor." - Researcher

"Until I am evaluated using anything other than the Impact Factor, I won't use anything else myself." - Editor

"I think that it is excellent to have a variety of measures (including the old and new ones). The question is how the community will react to having a set of measures, especially since SJR and SNIP are often quite different." - Bibliometrician

	Impact Factor	SJR	SNIP
Widely used & accepted	✓	✗	✗
Independently calculated	✗	✓	✓
Simplicity of metrics	✓	✗	✗
3 years citation window	✗	✓	✓
Manipulation-resistant	✗	✓	✓
Applied to a comprehensive database Scopus	✗	✓	✓
Fair to database coverage	✗	✗	✓
Metrics are current	✗	✓	✓
Database transparency	✗	✓	✓
Fair to content - reviews!	✗	✗	✗
Metric transparency	✓	✓	✓
Fair to all subject fields	✗	✓	✓
Flexible ranking	✗	✓	✓
Freely available	✗	✓	✓

"There is no single 'best indicator' that could accommodate all facets of the new reality of journal metrics." Wolfgang Glanzel



www.journalmetrics.com

www.journalindicators.com

www.scimagojr.com