

Libraries: Culture, History, and Society Journal Metrics

Library History Round Table
Assessment and Advocacy Committee
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Introduction

In Fall 2021, the Assessment and Advocacy Committee (AAC) met to discuss methods by which Library History Round Table (LHRT) could begin assessing, evaluating, and documenting the organization's impact on 1. Library and information science as a discipline and profession; 2. The study of library history; and 3. Initiatives and goals outlined by the American Library Association (ALA). While the development of assessment plans is an effective method for creating a culture of continuous improvement, which is beneficial for any organization, the need for this work has become even more important in light of ALA's Forward Together Initiative. Thus, AAC set to work brainstorming potential assessment strategies, and one area identified focused on LHRT's scholarly, peer-reviewed publication, *Libraries: Culture, History, and Society* (LCHS).

Method

Since LCHS is too young to have its own impact factor, the efficacy and impact of the journal had to be assessed manually. While LCHS still produces physical issues on a biannual basis that are distributed to LHRT members, electronic copies of current and former issues are also made available via JSTOR.¹ Each issue was accessed through JSTOR, and citation information was pulled for each peer-reviewed article; for the purposes of this assessment plan, editorials and book reviews were omitted from analysis. Each article's citation information was then entered into GoogleScholar. GoogleScholar was chosen for its *Cited By* tool, which provides citation information and access, if available, to resources listed as having been cited by a particular source.² The title and DOI of each cited LCHS article was placed in an Excel spreadsheet, along with the full citation information for each citing resource. Additionally, citing resources were classified as being LIS-focused or not (when enough data was not present to make a determination, entries were marked as N/A).

¹ <https://www.jstor.org/journal/libraries>

² For example, please see the GoogleScholar entry for Wiegand, W. A. (2017). "Any Ideas?": The American Library Association and the Desegregation of Public Libraries in the American South: https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cites=702197028427141385&as_sdt=800005&scioldt=0,15&hl=en

At present, the citation lists generated for each LCHS article by GoogleScholar have been taken at face-value. The next stage, at least until an external impact factor can be generated, will require accessing each resource listed to verify that the corresponding LCHS article has indeed been cited. AAC recognizes the limitations of using this methodology for generating a comprehensive understanding of the journal's impact but feels that the data collected is comprehensive enough to act as a general indicator of the impact, influence, and importance of LCHS, both to LIS and non-LIS scholarship.

Results

At the time of data collection (October 2021), LCHS had produced 10 issues across 5 volumes, spanning 2017 – 2021. Collectively, 45 peer-reviewed articles were evaluated for assessment purposes. The following table outlines the number of articles per issue and the number of those articles that have been cited in the literature:

Libraries: Culture, History, and Society					
Journal Metrics (2017 – 2021)					
Year	Volume	Number	Number of Articles	Number of Cited Articles	Percentage
2017	1	1	6	6	100.00%
2017	1	2	5	4	80.00%
2018	2	1	4	1	25.00%
2018	2	2	5	1	20.00%
2019	3	1	5	0	0.00%
2019	3	2	4	2	50.00%
2020	4	1	4	0	0.00%
2020	4	2	4	0	0.00%
2021	5	1	5	0	0.00%
2021	5	2	3	0	0.00%
Total:		2017-2021	45	14	31.11%

Overall, with $N = 45$ and the number of citations equaling 14, we can confidently say that approximately 31.1% of articles published between 2017 and 2021 have been cited. Of these 14, 10 (71.4%) are located across both issues of Volume 1, making it the most cited of all volumes. Of the 6 articles published in 1(1)

and the 5 articles published in 1(2), 6 (100.0%) and 4 (80.0%) were cited, respectively. Considering the fact that 1(1) is open access, a 100.0%-citation rate is not surprising.

Based on the nature of scholarly publishing practices, including often long periods between submission and publication, it became apparent that Volume 5 could be potentially skewing the data downwards. To combat this, an additional analysis was conducted omitting anything published in 2021. The following table presents that updated data:

Libraries: Culture, History, and Society					
Journal Metrics 2017 – 2020)					
Year	Volume	Number	Number of Articles	Number of Cited Articles	Percentage
2017	1	1	6	6	100.00%
2017	1	2	5	4	80.00%
2018	2	1	4	1	25.00%
2018	2	2	5	1	20.00%
2019	3	1	5	0	0.00%
2019	3	2	4	2	50.00%
2020	4	1	4	0	0.00%
2020	4	2	4	0	0.00%
Total: 2017-2020			37	14	37.84%

Looking at citation rates between 2017 and 2020, with $N = 37$ and the number of citations still equaling 14, the citation rate increases from the original 31.1% to 37.8%, indicating that over one-third of LCHS articles go on to impact scholarship and practice.

During data analysis, it also became clear that LCHS articles were impacting scholarship and practice beyond LIS. The following table gives a rough breakdown of how citing resources were classified:

Total Citations	LIS	Non-LIS	Unknown
48	35	11	2
Percentage	72.92%	22.92%	4.17%

Here, the *Total Citations* column indicates the total number of times LCHS articles have been cited; in the previous tables above, data focused on whether or not an article was cited at least once. Thus, while 72.9%

of citations are being used within LIS-focused literature, 22.9% move beyond library and information science as a discipline and practice. These data suggest that LHRT, through LCHS, is not only contributing to library history but also expanding beyond LIS to have cross- and interdisciplinary impacts, as well.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Lee Proctor II, M.L.S.

Faculty | Assistant Librarian

Coordinator of Access Services

Accreditation Project Manager

Indiana University Southeast | Library

4201 Grant Line Road

New Albany, Indiana 47150

(812) 941-2486

clprocto@iu.edu