ALTERNATIVE METRICS TO MEASURE JOURNAL QUALITY

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Many journals use the Impact Factor to measure performance and journal's impact. The Impact Factor, a measurement in Journal Citation Reports (JCR) from Clarivate Analytics (formerly Thomson Reuters) is calculated annually since 1975 for journals listed in the Web of Science. The Impact Factor became a widely known and sought-after metric for journal prestige. We get questions from authors about our Impact Factor but it has been difficult to get indexed in the Web of Science.

In 2016, Elsevier launched a new metric - CiteScore – to challenge the hegemony of the impact factor and to provide comprehensive, transparent, current insights into journal impact. Journals indexed in Scopus, Elsevier's abstract and citation database, receive evaluation metrics that track the journal's performance and impact. These are Cite Score, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), and Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP).

What are the differences between CiteScore and Impact factor?

CiteScore	Impact Factor
Calculation is based on a three-year period	Calculation is based on a two-year period
Free to access through Scopus Journal Metrics website https://www.scopus.com/sources	JCR is a paid subscription service
Calculated from Scopus much larger journal list	A limited number of journals in the Web of Science
Calculates citations to all documents published in a journal (e.g. articles, reviews, editorials, letters, abstracts, conference papers, book chapters, and data papers)	Calculates citations to "citable" documents (e.g. articles, reviews, and conference papers but not editorials, letters, or abstracts.)

AJFAND Scopus Metrics
Since 2016 AJFAND continues to be active and indexed on Scopus to date. AJFAND receives evaluation metrics that track the journal's performance and impact including CiteScore, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), and Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP). Here I look at the first two.

Cite Score
CiteScore, a new standard for measuring a journal's citation impact, measures average citations received per document published in the serial. CiteScore metrics calculate the citations from all documents in year one to all documents published in the prior three years for a title.

For example, AJFAND CiteScore 2020 counts the citations received in 2017-2020 to articles, reviews, conference papers, book chapters, and data papers published in 2017-2020.

CiteScore 2020

$$0.9 = \frac{281 \text{ Citations } 2017 - 2020}{313 \text{ Documents } 2017 - 2020}$$

Calculated on 05 May, 2021

The higher the CiteScore, the more valuable the journal is deemed to be. AJFAND's CiteScore gradually goes higher since 2017.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020
CiteScore	0.2	0.6	0.9	0.9

SCImago Journal Rank (SJR)

SCImago Journal Rank measures weighted citations received by the serial. Citation weighting depends on the subject field and prestige (SJR) of the citing serial. In other words, the number of article citations in AJFAND and the prestige of the journal where the citations come from. The resulting Q index defines the rank of a journal in a specific field. Q1 refers to journals in the top 25%, Q2 refers to journals in the 25% - 50% group, and so on.

AJFAND's SJR metrics presented below.

Title	Type	↓ SJR	H index	Total Docs. (2020)	Total Docs. (3years)	Total Refs. (2020)	Total Cites (3years)	Citable Docs. (3years)	Cites / Doc. (2years)	Ref. / Doc. (2020)
1 African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development	journal	0.220 Q3	11	88	217	2822	157	210	0.46	32.07

To conclude, we appreciate that authors want to publish in high-quality journals or journals indexed in the major databases. Indexing speaks about the importance and quality of a journal. Even so, let us expand the scope in judging quality and impact. It is difficult for small journals to be indexed in the Web of Science, it has been for AJFAND. The Impact Factor is an important metric but getting it might mean that we change the way we publish and the types of articles that we include. This would leave out many scholars that AJFAND capacity-builds in the process of publishing and hinder publications from Africa and the global South.