

The scholarly and societal contribution of South African research in the social sciences: A study of three disciplines

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Outline

- Problem statement
- Research questions
- Study design and methods
- Work so far
- The way forward

Problem Statement

- Research evaluation methods in the SS borrow from/ are dependent on methods used in other fields of science
- But SS is unique and requires unique treatment in research evaluation, e.g.:
 - SS not homogenous
 - Book-oriented: often low representation in main citation databases
 - Different citation profiles
- Expand the knowledgebase regarding the evaluation of SS research – two main foci:
 - Citation profile of books (new citation metrics)
 - Societal contribution ('impact') of the SS
 - Using three fields as study foci (psychology, sociology, political science)

Research questions (Bibliometric focus)

- What are the trends and patterns of (mainly university) research output in the three disciplines and how do the trends and patterns differ between disciplines?
- For a selection of **books and book chapters** in each of the three disciplines:
 - What is the citation profile of the books and book chapters, according to **Google Scholar**? Who cited those books and book chapters?
 - What is the citation profile of the books and book chapters, according to **Google Books**? Who cited those books and book chapters?
 - What is the libcitation profile (world-wide library holdings) of the books and book chapters, according to **WorldCat**? Can some books claim an international or regional profile?
 - What are the **amazon.com** metrics for the books and book chapters?
 - What are the relationships between the different measures above?

Research questions (Bibliometric focus – cont.)

- What are the publication patterns of **authors** when it comes to **article** and **book** publications?

ARTICLES: 2004-2016

BOOKS: 2004-2012

Authors are the unit of analysis
(Author dataset)

Research questions: Societal contribution

- What research-society **interactions/engagements** characterise research in the three disciplines selected?
- What are the **contributions to society** of research in the three disciplines?

Study design and methods

- Mixed-methods design
 - Bibliometric analysis of articles and books
 - Originally SIAMPI/ 'productive interaction' approach for case studies (one case study per field)
 - Will now replace three case studies with three national surveys (of academics) in the light of the DST SS project, to determine:
 - Contributions to practice
 - Contributions to policy
 - Other contributions to society

Work done so far

- Data cleaning from *SAK*
 - Coding or classification of author ID (1st phase)
- Preliminary literature review on Ch. I (Social Sciences in SA)
 - History of SS in SA

The way forward

- Want to graduate in December 2020
- Want to complete literature by end-2018
- Want to have clean datasets for bibliometric analysis by early 2019
- Complete all data analyses by end 2019
- Run three surveys in 2019
- Final write-up/articles in 2020

Thank you 😊