

INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP 5

Alternative Metrics to Drive Research Priorities: Useful or Not?

Valeria Scotti*

Alicia Fatima Gomez**

Annalisa De Silvestri***

Luigia Scudeller****

Abstract

The first source of research waste chain is the limited relevance of many research questions to patients. Taking into account their opinion in selecting research priorities should lead to improvement in research and decrease of waste¹. Alternative metrics claim to measure research impact² outside the academic community³.

We argue that designing research not only based on systematic reviews of the available evidence (Evidence-Based Research), but also on papers and themes more discussed by the public could bring to a less wasteful research.

We will discuss opportunities and caveats about employing alternative metrics into setting research priorities in light of the developments of open access and the recent pandemic.

Opportunities:

- the more close to patient's needs, the more useful research could be
- closer scrutiny to research quality and conflicts of interest
- more patient's ownership of research, with potentially higher compliance to study procedures, and better data quality

Caveats:

- the public interest in disease with highly active advocacy groups could be overrepresented; more common diseases that people don't like to talk about (STD, zoonosis) will be penalized
- sentiment analyses to distinguish between positive and negative comment not easy to perform
- volatile nature of social media interest.

And many other thing.

* IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo di Pavia, Italy, v.scotti@smatteo.pv.it

** Technische Universität Wien Library, Austria), alicia.gomez@tuwien.ac.at

*** IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo di Pavia, Italy), A.DeSilvestri@smatteo.pv.it

**** IRCCS Azienda Ospedaliero Universitaria di Bologna, Italy, luigia.scudeller@aosp.bo.it

Two teams made up of 2 members each one in favor of alternative metrics and one against) debate on these issues, in order to bring out the various facets of a subject that is still young in itself, but increasingly rooted in the research community and beyond.

Types of activities: We propose a 75' interactive session, with two 25' minutes presentations (with interactive multiple choice, multiple answers questions) and 20' guided final discussion Technical and logistics requirements: PC with mouse, video, facilities for voting system embedded into slides, recording of the session (to facilitate the minutes and the drafting of the position paper), online survey to collect participants' contact details and comments.

Learning outcomes: A position paper on incorporating alternative metrics into setting research priorities, considering their application, benefits, as well as their limitations.

Bibliography

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- 3 Meyer HS, Artino AR Jr, Maggio LA. Tracking the Scholarly Conversation in Health Professions Education: An Introduction to Altmetrics. *Acad Med*. 2017 Oct;92(10):1501. doi: 10.1097/ACM.000.000.0000001872. PMID: 28795974.

About the trainers

Valeria Scotti, IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo di Pavia, Italy:

Biomedical librarian in love with alternative metrics since 2011 she has held courses, workshops, and oral presentations trying to address this issue both from the point of view of the research community and of society. She co-founder of the EAHIL EVALUATION AND METRICS special interest group.

Alicia Fatima Gomez, Technische Universität Wien Library, Austria:

Librarian and scholarly communication specialist, with international professional experience in several areas of research and knowledge management (open science, scientometrics, research data and library management). Co-founder of the EAHIL EVALUATION AND METRICS special interest group.

Annalisa De Silvestri, IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo di Pavia, Italy:

Biostatiscian and clinical epidemiologist involved in research planning and study design. Evidence based medicine is among her main interests.

Luigia Scudeller, IRCCS Ca' Granda Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico di Milano, Italy:

Clinical Epidemiologist and biostatistician involved in clinical and biomedical research, evidence-based medicine, development of clinical guidelines.