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Core journals of physiotherapy

Richard Bohannon

Prerequisite to accessing current information relevant to practice is a knowledge of information sources. A citation analysis of four physiotherapy journals was performed to identify a list of core journals containing information relevant to practice. The four physiotherapy journals used in the citation analysis were: *Physical Therapy*, *Physiotherapy*, *Physiotherapy Canada*, and *Physiotherapy Practice*. The 25 journals cited most frequently as references in the four physiotherapy citing journals are presented. Four of the 25 cited journals were common to each of the four physiotherapy citing journals. Another nine of the 25 cited journals were common to three of the physiotherapy citing journals. The results of this citation analysis demonstrates some consistency, but a lack of absolute uniformity, in the citing patterns of the four physiotherapy journals used.

INTRODUCTION

Given the rapid rate at which contemporary clinical practice is changing, clinicians wishing to stay current must have access to up-to-date information. Periodical publications are, of course, one source of current information. However, with the number of scientific and technical journals exceeding 30 000 worldwide (Subramanyam, 1975), clinicians may not know which journals are most appropriate for acquisition or review. One possible solution to this dilemma is through citation analysis (Malin and Weinstock, 1975). The simplest citation analysis involves the counting of source items—that is, counting the number of times that journals are cited by authors publishing in a citing journal relevant to the field (Subramanyam, 1975). Citation counts have been published for occupational therapy

(Johnson and Leising, 1986) and physical therapy (Bohannon and Gibson, 1986). The counts were limited, however, to only one journal in each field. The purpose of this report is to document the journals cited most frequently in four citing journals of physical therapy in 1986.

METHOD

The references of each article, editorial and commentary in each 1986 issue of *Physical Therapy*, *Physiotherapy*, *Physiotherapy Canada*, and *Physiotherapy Practice* were reviewed, and the frequency with which journals were cited as references was documented.

RESULTS

The total number of different journals cited were 423 in 12 issues of *Physical Therapy*, 172 in 12 issues of *Physiotherapy*, 148 in six issues of *Physiotherapy Canada*, and 162 in four issues of *Physiotherapy Practice*. The 25 most frequently cited journals in the four physiotherapy citing journals are listed in Table 1. Four citing journals (*Phys-*

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Table 1
 Twenty-five most frequently cited journals in four physiotherapy journals. Cited journals common to all four journals are in bold type, those common to three journals are in italics

Rank	<i>Physical Therapy</i> Journal	<i>Physiotherapy</i> Frequency	<i>Physiotherapy Canada</i> Frequency	<i>Physiotherapy Practice</i> Frequency
1	Phys Ther	328	Phys Ther	49
2	Arch Phys Med Rehabil	121	Arch Phys Med Rehabil	16

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Rank	Physical Therapy		Physiotherapy		Physiotherapy Canada		Physiotherapy Practice	
	Journal	Frequency	Journal	Frequency	Journal	Frequency	Journal	Frequency
1	Phys Ther	328	Physiotherapy	30	Arch Phys Med Rehabil	49	Phys Ther	16
2	Arch Phys Med Rehabil	121	Arch Phys Med Rehabil	22	Phys Ther	37	Physiotherapy	13
3	<i>J Bone Joint Surg [Am]</i>	75	Phys Ther	22	<i>Physiotherapy Canada</i>	33	<i>Br Med J</i>	12
4	<i>Clin Orthop</i>	56	<i>Br Med J</i>	18	<i>J Appl Physiol</i>	24	<i>Scand J Rehabil Med</i>	11
5	<i>J Appl Physiol</i>	30	Neurology	10	J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry	17	Arch Phys Med Rehabil	10
6	<i>Scand J Rehabil Med</i>	29	<i>J Bone Joint Surg [Am]</i>	9	<i>Scand J Rehabil Med</i>	16	<i>Pain</i>	9
7	Dev Med Child Neurol	27	<i>Physiotherapy Canada</i>	9	<i>Brain</i>	10	J Neurosurg	7
8	<i>Pain</i>	26	<i>Brain</i>	8	Am J Phys Med	9	<i>JAMA</i>	6
9	Am J Phys Med	24	<i>JAMA</i>	8	Am J Occup Ther	9	Physiotherapy Practice	6
10	Med Sci Sports Exerc	22	<i>J Appl Physiol</i>	8	<i>J Bone Joint Surg [Am]</i>	9	Am J Phys Med	4
11	<i>Acta Orthop Scand</i>	21	J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry	8	Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy	9	Am J Surg	4
12	JAMA	21	Lancet	8	Med Sci Sports Exerc	9	<i>Ann Rheum Dis</i>	4
13	Physiotherapy	21	Nederlands Tijdschrift Fysiotherapie	8	Pain	9	<i>Brain</i>	4
14	<i>Br Med J</i>	19	Br J Dermatol	7	Appl Neurophysiol	8	Prosth Orthot Int	4
15	Am J Sports Med	18	<i>Clin Orthop</i>	7	Res Q Exerc Sport	8	<i>Am Rev Respir Dis</i>	3
16	J Biomech	18	Cortex	6	<i>Clin Orthop</i>	7	Arch Surg	3
17	<i>Ann Rheum Dis</i>	16	J Bone Joint Surg [Br]	6	Eur J Appl Physiol	7	Br J Psychiatry	3
18	The Physician and Sportsmedicine	16	J Invest Dermatol	6	J Allergy Clin Immunol	7	Br J Surg	3
19	Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy	15	<i>Am Rev Respir Dis</i>	5	J Physiol	7	Chest	3
20	Orthop Clin North Am	15	Australian Journal of Physiotherapy	5	<i>Acta Physiol Scand</i>	6	Int J Epidemiol	3
21	<i>Physiotherapy Canada</i>	15	Am J Phys Med	4	<i>Am Rev Respir Dis</i>	6	Int J Rehabil Res	3
22	Am J Occup Ther	14	<i>Ann Rheum Dis</i>	4	Physiotherapy	6	Journal of the Nigerian Society of Physiotherapy	3
23	J Allied Health	14	Biofeedback Self Regul	4	Chest	5	Occupational Therapy	3
24	Pediatrics	14	Brain Res	4	J Neurophysiol	5	Psychosom Med	3
25	Science	14	Thorax	4	Muscle Nerve	5	World Health Organisation Chronicle	3

ical Therapy, Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Physiotherapy, and American Journal of Physical Medicine) were among the 25 most cited journals of each of the four citing journals. Another nine journals were among the 25 most often cited by three of the physiotherapy citing journals.

DISCUSSION

The results demonstrate some consistency, but a lack of absolute uniformity, in the citing patterns of the four physiotherapy journals used for the citation analysis. Some consistency is also demonstrated in the citing pattern of *Physical Therapy* in this analysis and the citing pattern for the journal in other analyses. Twelve of the 25 journals cited most frequently in *Physical Therapy*, in 1986, were included among the 25 journals cited most frequently in *Physical Therapy* during an earlier 4-year period (Bohannon and Gibson, 1986). Of the 17 journals listed in *Science Citation Index* (Garfield, 1985) as cited most frequently in *Physical Therapy* in 1985, 10 were among the journals cited most frequently in *Physical Therapy* in this analysis.

Inconsistencies between journal citing patterns may be due to a number of factors. For journals such as *Physiotherapy Canada* and *Physiotherapy Practice*, which are not monthly publications, citation analyses of 1 year's publications may not provide a truly representative sample of the citing patterns. Citation patterns reflect, to some extent, the journals available to authors publishing in the citing journal. Available journals may differ, depending on an author's place of residence (e.g., *Nederlands Tijdschrift Fysiotherapie*). The emphasis of physiotherapy in various lo-

cales may also influence the journals cited. In Great Britain and Canada, for example, pulmonary cases probably make up a larger proportion of the patients treated by physiotherapists. This would explain why journals such as the *American Review of Respiratory Disease*, *Chest*, and *Thorax* are not among the 25 most cited journals in *Physical Therapy*, but are among the 25 most cited journals by other physiotherapy journals.

Rather than limiting the usefulness of citation analysis, the diversity of journals cited in the four citing journals is probably indicative of the broad foundation of information relevant to physical therapy practice. The list provides a reasonable, although not exhaustive, list of core journals of the profession. Such a list will undoubtedly evolve over time. For example, as new journals arise or become more established (e.g., *Physiotherapy Practice*), the journals most often cited by authors publishing in physiotherapy journals may change. Whether clinicians choose to use citation analysis or publications such as the British Library's *Physiotherapy Current Awareness Topic Search*, the guides for accessing information relevant to practice should prove helpful.

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Extending the

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This article outlines the inclusion alongside

Malcolm Peat (1986) suggests that this journal that the challenge for the next 10 years is to develop new methods of science. While physiotherapy lacks adequate research methods employed, it is a concerted effort, that requires the input of physiotherapists with research. However, practice should be rationally and reflectively based for scientific enquiry—rather than a tradition for qualifying therapists in clinical practice.

In teaching our students we should to emphasise the learning process and skills to the profession, which might promote change. In this respect, we have been providing a training approach which does not fit the profession, and in need of change.

In 1984 the University of London National Advisory Board issued a statement concerning the aims of higher education which reads:

'Specific knowledge and skills, and the context in which they are used, changes. Initial high standards for the diploma and first

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