



## SCImago Journal Rank, Worldmapper, Atlapedia

**MY** first pick, SCImago Journal Rank, offers, free of charge, an exceptionally well-designed and informative journal directory with all the facts that you ever wanted to know about a scholarly periodical publication. It is not perfect, and my raving about it may look odd for reasons that I will explain later. The other pick, the Worldmapper database, is a very unusual and fascinating atlas that visualizes, in an avant-garde way, 360 vital (and sometimes not so vital but interesting) statistical data of the countries and regions of the world. My pan is the terribly outdated Atlapedia.



SCImago is a well-designed and informative journal directory, and Worldmapper is an unusual and fascinating atlas. Atlapedia is terribly outdated.



### the picks

#### SCIMAGO JOURNAL RANK

SCImago Journal Rank (SCImagoJR; [www.scimagojr.com](http://www.scimagojr.com)), a project from Spain's SCImago Research Group, includes precious information from almost 16,000 serials. SCImago is a joint venture of the universities of Granada, Extremadura, and Carlos III (Madrid) that is dedicated to information analysis, representation, and retrieval using visualization techniques. Its Journal Rank uses a subset of Elsevier's Scopus as its data source. Information is at the journal (not the item) level. It may seem to be an odd pick as it does not include any of the Information Today, Inc. (ITI) publications, such as *ONLINE*, *Computers in Libraries*, or *Searcher*, although it does have the *Annual Review of Information Science & Technology*. Vanity can be easily put aside when considering such an outstanding free resource.

I will admit to some subjectivity here—my English-language publishing career started when Tom Hogan gave me the opportunity, almost 20 years ago, to write for Information Today, Inc.'s publications. Apart from my personal involvement, the more objective Hirsch index—*ONLINE* (h=10) for the 1996–2007 period that SCImago covers—is far better than many of the other publications it includes among the 85 journals and conference proceedings in the Library and Information Science subject category.

Scopus does indeed cover ITI journals (not nearly as well as ISI Web of Science), so I cannot fathom why the ITI journals were left behind when other, more lackluster publications made it to the SCImagoJR subset. It must be academic haughtiness, as in academia only the publications in purportedly scholarly journals (as opposed to trade publications) count.

I despise this practice. I teach librarians and other information professionals, not library science researchers. The latter can learn much more about making their services better from the practical journals rather than from journals featuring navel-gazing, “deep thought” papers full of irrelevant statistical measures. It is absurd that the journal *Information Professional* (from the Institute of Electrical Engineers) made it to Scopus and then to SCImago. It has an h-index of 0 (zero) for the 165 papers published in 2006 and 2007. None of them were cited even by a single article covered in Scopus. The publisher finally gave it the coup de grâce in 2008. It is at the very bottom of the list, in the company of three Haworth Press journals (now acquired by Taylor & Francis) that show the consequences of incomparably irresponsible management and abuse of the often good manuscripts that have occasionally been published.

For each serials title, SCImagoJR provides essential information, such as the number of documents, citable documents, total references, average number of references per documents, and the number of citations received—for a variety of time windows, in case you wish to calculate the journals’ impact factor on your own. You probably don’t need to do that because the relatively new h-index is presented in the table, along with SCImago’s own impact factor, the SJR factor. I am still testing it and comparing it against other similar measures, such as those in JCR, the Eigenfactor list, but it is very promising since it takes into account the impact, influence, clout, and prestige factor of the citing sources. This is the dream for bibliometricians and scientometricians, and it perfectly complements Scopus.

The details page for the journals provides additional information, such the ratio of cited and noncited publications and the percent of internationally co-authored papers.

Indicators	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
LJR	6,873	6,849	6,845	6,846	6,873	6,904	6,876	6,871
Total Documents	9	9	9	14	12	14	14	14
Total Docs. (Years)	34	34	25	17	23	34	34	34
Total References	1,437	1,388	9	2,177	1,898	1,947	2,872	2,204
Total Cites (Years)	46	23	11	9	23	99	134	118
Self Cites (Years)	19	6	9	1	4	25	23	23
Citable Docs. (Years)	24	24	25	17	23	24	24	27
Cites / Doc. (Years)	1.62	1.28	1.12	0.76	2.33	2.44	2.44	2.38
Cites / Doc. (Years)	1.82	0.83	0.44	0.53	2.56	4.13	2.44	2.19
Cites / Doc. (Years)	1.44	0.44	0.26	0.44	3.15	4.13	2.04	1.59
References / Doc.	212.13	176.44	8.26	167.79	129.58	142.28	148.58	164.57
Cited Docs.	12	11	4	7	14	21	25	21
Uncited Docs.	12	13	19	10	7	9	9	7
% International Collaboration	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	0.00

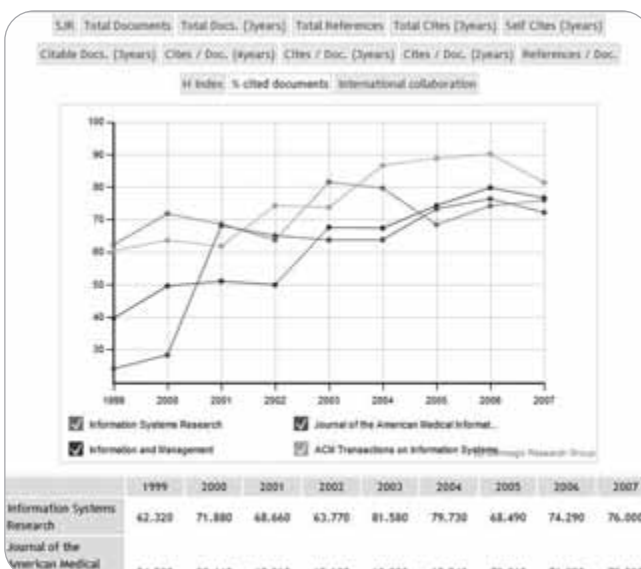
Excerpt from the Details page of the Annual Review of Information Science & Technology

The navigation software is excellent, although the search software could be improved. One weakness in the Journal Search module (which allows searching by title, publisher, and ISSN) is that it does character-string searching that yields odd results, such as many journals for the search term on line that has the adjective “nonlinear” in the title. It does not offer truncation or Boolean operations. However, its primary purpose is not searching but browsing informative data by broad and narrower lists and looking up specific journals. Still, I would like to be able to use **librar\*** to find journals with the words library, libraries, librarians in one fell swoop.

The visualization of the dense results is top-notch. It is elegant and still light rather than heavy and stuffy. The colors are excellent on the screen. But for the printout, especially for the splendid journal comparison graph, there should be a patterned version of the charts for those users who don’t have color printers. Also, for North American users, the U.S. notation system for the decimal point and the thousand delimiters would be useful.

Title	LJR	H Index	Total Docs. (2007)	Total Docs. (Years)	Total Refs. (Years)	Total Cites (Years)	Citable Docs. (Years)	Cites / Doc. (Years)	Ref. / Doc. (Years)	Country
Information Systems Research	6,878	46	7	78	380	282	73	2.69	54.29	UNITED STATES
Journal of the American Medical Association	6,875	33	207	478	6,284	709	796	1.77	29.43	UNITED STATES

Excerpt from the result list of LIS serials



Journal comparison graph of four journals



In spite of some shortcomings, SCImago is an awesome service that can help librarians in journal collection management base their decision on facts.

The group of researchers responsible for SCImago has published many papers and has produced the Atlas of Science for the publications of universities and research institutions in many of the Ibero-American countries. It represents a core of the next generation of scientometricians. SCImagoJR has a twin product, the SCImago Country Rank that is also free and superbly designed, but it has a serious shortcoming in content.

It is also based on Scopus, and it inherits the deficiency that in Scopus—in my estimate—nearly 13 million of the 37.5 million records (34%) have no information about the country affiliation of the authors. In the 1996–2007 subset of nearly 18.4 million records that SCImago uses, the absence ratio is far lower (about 11%). But with the increasing international cooperation and the practice of assigning full credit for each country whose researcher(s) co-author a paper, the impact of this omission is larger. This does not affect the Journal Rank component (except for the international collaboration indicator), but it is a problem in the Country Rank module that should be made clear for the users.

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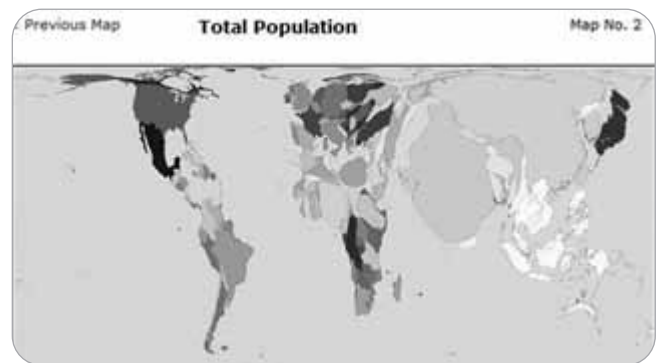
### WORLDMAPPER

Maps and atlases are among my weaknesses. As a very young child, I was a devotee of *National Geographic*, exploring the world through the beautiful maps. As a nearly senior citizen, I still enjoy looking at airlines' maps while waiting for takeoff, even if I have already seen them hundreds of times. It was a joy to find the Worldmapper series ([www.worldmapper.org](http://www.worldmapper.org)) on the web (and then in a marvelous book format).

It has more than 360 maps about geographical and social statistics (and links to the underlying, huge statistical tables). The visualization of the data is light-years ahead of all the other thematic maps that I have seen.

The designers of this database, researchers at the University of Sheffield and the University of Michigan,

came up with the brilliant idea of transforming traditional topographic maps into cartograms. The scientific name for this concept is density equalizing maps. The essence is to resize the countries (preserving their shape—such as the boot of Italy or the teardrop of Sri Lanka—as much as possible), according to the variable that is reported for the countries (such as infant mortality rate or forest loss). Statistics are presented by 32 major categories, ranging from Health to Wealth to Death. One example redraws the land-size-based map to a population-based cartogram to show the dominance of China, India, Japan, and Western Africa and the shrinking of Australia in terms of population size.



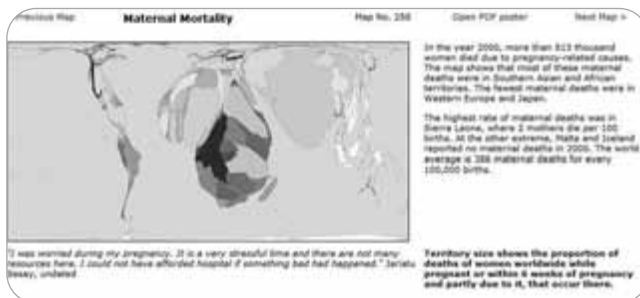
Population-based cartogram

There is information about more than 200 countries and territories. Of course, not all the data are available for every country. But this is nothing new for those who use statistical publications. There are compact but highly informative summaries. However, even a quick glance at the map shows the essence. In the case of suicide, the territorially slim Japan gets chubby and so do the Central and Eastern European countries, while Africa slims down significantly, except for Western Africa. There are also links to related maps and source files.



Cartogram based on suicide rate

Few statistical compendiums have information about maternal mortality rate, but this cartogram shows the devastatingly high proportion of mothers who die when or soon after giving birth in every part of Africa, while Japan and the U.S. almost disappear from the atlas.



Cartogram of maternal mortality rate

The book version has more information for each map. It also shows data in a traditional list and chart format, which cannot be accommodated well online.



the pan

#### ATLAPEDIA

I panned this database years ago for being very outdated. It was outdated when it launched in 1997—coming up with old statistics and mediocre maps. Nothing has changed. The website was updated but only to change the copyright date. This did not matter to the editors of Education World ([www.educationworld.com](http://www.educationworld.com)), who still list Atlapedia as an excellent resource based on its 1997 review. Amazingly, it doesn't include the very good *CIA World Factbook* or the excellent Information Please site in the list of its recommended websites.

The Australian company Latimer Clarke ([www.latimerclarke.com](http://www.latimerclarke.com)), which produces Atlapedia, primarily deals with video and CCTV products, not reference services. In fact, it has several domain names up for sale or licensing, such as Geopedia, Dinopedia, Astropedia, Cartopedia, Factopedia, Mythopedia, Chronopedia, Faunapedia, Florapedia, and Wordapedia.

The history part, for most countries, stops at 1993, although a very few (East Timor is one) have updated histories to 2004. Still, you would not learn from Atlapedia that Nelson Mandela became president of South Africa, that



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Afghanistan was occupied by the Taliban, or that there was a terrorist attack on the U.S. on Sept. 11, 2001. Nor would you learn from the country profiles (which form the pedia part of the name) about the massive earthquakes in Turkey, Iran, or Kashmir, or about the tsunami and its monstrous toll in Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. Also missing are man-made disasters, such as ethnic cleansing in Serbia, Saddam Hussein's genocide, and a few thousand other great events and bad events. Worse, why does Yugoslavia still show on Atlapedia's political map? That is an incredible Atlapedia anachronism.

I would not bother with this if it remained an obscure, unnoticed site. But there are links to it from sites such as the Parliamentary Library of Australia and the Oakridge School District, with hundreds of libraries and librarians in between. This is dangerous.

This site misguides people in more ways than one. It has one strong point: its copyright protection. But the text content looks like someone else's copyright, with no credit given. The same applies to the maps. I can't imagine that the brave guys created this in between two sales-pitch sessions for closed-circuit television. It reminds me of the *KGB Factbook* in the early 1990s, which I tracked down and found out that it is an earlier version of the *CIA World Factbook*.

There are a dozen of excellent websites with current information and far better maps; there are many talented developers who can bring new types of maps and perfectly mashed-up encyclopedias. Unfortunately, they still have to compete with this sorry product for attention.

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