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## The H-index

This system, developed by Jorge Hirsch and so also sometimes referred to as the Hirsch Index, enables the analysis of an author's productivity and the impact of published works. It is calculated using the citation rates of individual articles, in descending order by number of times cited. For example, if an author has 10 published articles, 5 of which have been cited 5 times or more, this gives an H-index of 5.

H-indexes can be calculated using a number of tools including Web of Science and Google Scholar. Web of Science provides an automated system to calculate an H-index, however Google Scholar relies on manual counting, unless a complimentary tool such as Publish or Perish is used.

### Perceived advantages

The H-index allows an author's output to be ranked without being unduly influenced by articles which have been very heavily cited, or those which are yet to be cited.

### Perceived drawbacks

The H-index cannot be used to compare across disciplines.

When using Web of Science, the citations refer to those citing articles which are indexed within Web of Science.

Web of Science H-index is based on the years for which an institution has been subscribing to Web of Science. This means that an author can potentially have a different H-index if it is calculated at different institutions.

The same author can have a very different H-index depending on which tool has been used, as coverage of output varies between resources. When comparing different authors, the same tool (Web of Science, Google Scholar) has to be used each time.