

# Mapping Research Trends In Reference & User Services Quarterly: A Bibliometric Perspective

Mr. Shilvant Ramesh Gopnarayan<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Madhukar Garad<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar

<sup>2</sup>Retired Librarian

<sup>1,2</sup> Ankushrao Tope College, Jalna, Maharashtra.

**Abstract-** *This study presents a bibliometric analysis of articles published in Reference & User Services Quarterly (RUSQ) from 2006 to 2020. Utilizing data from the Library and Information Science subject, the analysis examines authorship, and collaboration networks with country wise. Highlight leading authors and affiliation.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The field of library and information science (LIS) has evolved considerably over the past few decades, particularly in response to the rise of digital technologies and the changing needs of library users. Scholarly journals play a critical role in documenting these transformations by providing a platform for the dissemination of new research, best practices, and innovations in the field. Among these journals, Reference & User Services Quarterly (RUSQ) stands as a prominent publication, focusing on issues related to reference and user services in libraries across various sectors. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis of articles published in RUSQ from 2006 to 2020, aiming to capture.

Bibliometric analysis is a well-established method for evaluating and mapping the trends, productivity, and impact of scholarly publications. By examining patterns related to authorship, institutional affiliations, and geographic distribution of contributions, bibliometric studies offer valuable insights into the dynamics of academic publishing. Such analyses can highlight trends in research collaborations, identify leading contributors to the field, and reveal shifts in the global landscape of scholarly work.

This paper presents a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of articles published in Reference & User Services Quarterly. The study seeks to answer key questions about the authorship and institutional contributions to the journal. Specifically, it aims to analyze:

1. **Authorship Patterns:** Identifying the most prolific authors, their contributions over time, and the nature of collaborative work in the journal.

2. **Institutional Affiliations:** Exploring the affiliations of contributing authors to understand which institutions and organizations are leading the research and discussions in reference and user services.
3. **Geographic Distribution:** Examining the countries from which authors contribute, providing insights into the international reach and diversity of the journal's scholarly output.

By focusing on these dimensions, this study aims to illuminate the research trends within the journal and provide a clearer picture of the key players and regions contributing to the field of reference and user services. The findings will not only help in understanding the evolving landscape of LIS scholarship but also in identifying potential areas for future collaboration and growth.

## II. ABOUT JOURNALS

Reference & User Services Quarterly (RUSQ) is a flagship peer-reviewed journal published by the American Library Association (ALA), specifically under its Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) division. The journal is dedicated to the advancement of reference and user services in libraries, offering a platform for discussing best practices, innovative research, and trends that shape the future of library services. It has become a key resource for professionals in public, academic, and special libraries, focusing on topics such as reference services, user instruction, collection development, and library programming.

RUSQ has a long history of promoting excellence in the field, helping librarians navigate the challenges of modern librarianship, particularly as technology continues to reshape how services are delivered. Each issue of RUSQ features a blend of research articles, case studies, reports, and reviews that reflect both practical applications and theoretical approaches to library services. The journal also fosters a space for discussions around diversity, inclusion, and the evolving needs of various user communities.

Published by ALA, one of the largest and most influential library associations globally, RUSQ benefits from the ALA's broad network and commitment to professional development in the library sector. As a widely respected publication, RUSQ plays a crucial role in informing policy, guiding professional practice, and contributing to the growth of the library profession.

For scholars and practitioners alike, RUSQ remains an essential source of knowledge and discussion on the changing landscape of reference and user services. Its ongoing contributions help shape the strategies libraries use to engage with their communities, support education, and provide equitable access to information.

### III. BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

A bibliometric analysis is a research method used to quantitatively assess the academic literature in a particular field. It involves examining the patterns of publication and citation, helping researchers identify trends, measure the impact of articles, and map the evolution of scholarly topics. Common aspects analyzed include the number of publications, authorship patterns, institutional affiliations, geographic distribution of contributors, and citation networks. Bibliometric analysis provides insights into the productivity of authors, the collaboration between institutions, and the influence of countries in a specific research area. It also helps in identifying leading scholars, key research institutions, and prominent journals within the field. Additionally, it highlights patterns of co-authorship and collaboration, revealing the most influential partnerships in academic publishing.

This method is widely used in various disciplines, including library and information science, to evaluate the influence of scholarly work and to guide future research efforts. In the context of journals like Reference & User Services Quarterly (RUSQ), bibliometric analysis can offer a deeper understanding of how the field of reference and user services has developed over time and identify emerging trends, influential contributors, and geographic shifts in research focus.

### IV. PUBLICATION TRENDS IN RUSQ (2006-2020)

Year	Vol	Issue	Article	Total Article
2006	46	1	46	91
	46	2	45	
2007	46	1	48	185
	46	2	46	
	47	3	44	
	47	4	47	
2008	47	1	47	189
	47	2	53	
	48	3	46	
	48	4	43	
2009	48	1	45	166
	48	2	43	
	49	3	40	
	49	4	38	
2010	49	1	40	155
	49	2	30	
	50	3	39	
	50	4	46	
2011	50	1	41	167
	50	2	36	
	51	3	42	
	51	4	48	
2012	51	1	37	149
	51	2	34	
	52	3	40	
	52	4	38	
2013	52	1	38	160
	52	2	46	
	53	3	38	
	53	4	38	
2014	53	1	54	166
	53	2	32	
	54	3	39	
	54	4	41	

2015	54	1	35	157
	54	2	41	
	55	3	38	
	55	4	43	
2016	55	1	31	129
	55	2	33	
	56	3	33	
	56	4	32	
2017	56	1	33	128
	56	2	27	
	57	3	34	
	57	4	34	
2018	57	1	28	133
	57	2	28	
	58	3	50	
	58	4	27	
2019	58	1	30	117
	58	2	27	
	59	3	27	
	59	4	33	
2020	NA	NA	NA	NA
			Total	2092

- Consistency in Publication:** Most years show a consistent number of volumes and issues, typically 4 issues per year, except for gaps in 2020, where no data is recorded.
- Article Fluctuations:** The number of articles published in individual issues varies, ranging from a high of 54 articles (2014, Vol. 53, Issue 1) to a low of 27 articles in some years (e.g., 2017, 2019).
- Annual Totals:** There’s a general fluctuation in the total number of articles per year. For example, 2007 saw 185 articles published, while 2016 had 129 articles, showing a decline in overall output over time.

The total number of articles published between 2006 and 2019 is **2,092**. This data could serve as the foundation for a deeper bibliometric analysis focused on trends over time, authorship patterns, and the evolution of research topics within RUSQ.

### V. COUNTRY WISE ANALYSIS

Sr.No	Country	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	United States	3744	93.30	1
2	Canada	126	3.14	2
3	United Kingdom	21	0.52	3
4	Australia	19	0.47	4
5	Sweden	14	0.35	5
6	China	11	0.27	6
7	South Korea	10	0.25	7
8	Nigeria	9	0.22	8
9	Saudi Arabia	6	0.15	9
10	New Zealand	5	0.12	10
11	South Africa	4	0.10	11
12	Switzerland	4	0.10	11
13	Indonesia	3	0.07	12
14	Japan	3	0.07	12
15	Macao	3	0.07	12
16	Puerto Rico	3	0.07	12
17	Spain	3	0.07	12
18	France	2	0.05	13
19	Iran	2	0.05	13
20	Jamaica	2	0.05	13
21	Pakistan	2	0.05	13
22	Serbia	2	0.05	13

23	Singapore	2	0.05	13
24	Taiwan	2	0.05	13
25	Turkey	2	0.05	13
26	Bulgaria	1	0.02	14
27	Croatia	1	0.02	14
28	Georgia	1	0.02	14
29	Germany	1	0.02	14
30	Ghana	1	0.02	14
31	Latvia	1	0.02	14
32	New York	1	0.02	14
33	Qatar	1	0.02	14
34	Slovenia	1	0.02	14
<b>Total</b>		<b>4013</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

The country-wise bibliometric analysis of 4,013 contributions shows that the majority of research published in Reference & User Services Quarterly originates from the United States, with 93.30% (3,744 articles). Canada follows with 3.14% (126 articles), while the United

Kingdom and Australia contribute 0.52% (21 articles) and 0.47% (19 articles) respectively. Other countries like Sweden, China, South Korea, and Nigeria have smaller shares, each below 1%. The global distribution of articles is heavily skewed towards the United States, indicating a dominance of American authorship in this journal’s publications. Contributions from other regions remain minimal, highlighting potential gaps in international collaboration.

**VI. AUTHOR WISE ANALYSIS**

Sr.No	Author Name	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	Zabel D.	83	2.05	1
2	Trott B.	80	1.97	2
3	Ryan M.	56	1.38	3
4	Tarulli L.	42	1.04	4
5	Wyatt N.	41	1.01	5
6	Lubans Jr. J.	29	0.71	6
7	Eva N.	28	0.69	7
8	Shea E.	28	0.69	7
9	Van Fleet C.	28	0.69	7
10	Bartlett J.A.	26	0.64	8
11	Phetteplace E.	26	0.64	8
12	De La McCook K.	24	0.59	9

13	LeMire S.	24	0.59	9
14	Antell K.	22	0.54	10
15	Mosley P.A.	22	0.54	10
16	Strothmann M.	22	0.54	10
17	Tyckoson D.A.	20	0.49	11
18	Todaro J.	19	0.47	12
19	Wallace D.P.	19	0.47	12
20	Chelton M.K.	18	0.44	13
21	Polacek K.M.	18	0.44	13
22	Diaz K.R.	16	0.39	14
23	O'Connor L.	16	0.39	14
24	Osif B.A.	16	0.39	14
25	Shoaf E.C.	15	0.37	15
26	Lebeau C.	14	0.35	15
27	Sapp G.	14	0.35	15
28	Shores M.	14	0.35	15
29	Katopol P.	13	0.32	16
30	Leonard E.	13	0.32	16
31	Moran Jr. R.F.	13	0.32	16
32	Kathleen Kern M.	12	0.30	17
33	Kern M.K.	12	0.30	17
34	Nelson E.	12	0.30	17
35	Sosulski N.W.	12	0.30	17
36	Kaspar W.A.	11	0.27	18
37	Arp L.	10	0.25	20
38	Grassian E.	10	0.25	20
39	Shonrock D.D.	10	0.25	20
40	Beck S.J.	9	0.22	21
41	Woodard B.S.	9	0.22	21
42	Anderson C.	8	0.20	22
43	Brown A.K.G.	8	0.20	22
44	Deyrup M.M.	8	0.20	22
45	Graham A.	8	0.20	22
46	Hagan M.	8	0.20	22
47	Luo L.	8	0.20	22
48	Martin J.	8	0.20	22
49	Nixon J.M.	8	0.20	22
50	Oppenheim M.	8	0.20	22
	<b>Only top 50 Authors are selected - Total</b>	<b>4057</b>		

The author-wise bibliometric analysis reveals that Zabel D. is the most prolific contributor to the journal, with 83 articles (2.05%). Trott B. follows closely with 80 articles (1.97%), and Ryan M. ranks third with 56 articles (1.38%).

Other notable contributors include Tarulli L. and Wyatt N., with 42 (1.04%) and 41 (1.01%) articles, respectively.

There is a noticeable drop in article contributions after the top few authors, with a large group contributing between 10 and 30 articles. This indicates a small group of core, highly productive authors contributing significantly to the journal, while a broad set of others contribute more sporadically. These metrics offer a clear view of the key contributors driving research in reference and user services.

## VII. AFFILIATION WISE ANALYSIS

Sr. No.	Name of Institutes	Total	%	Rank
1	Pennsylvania State University, University Park, United States	37	0.91	1
2	Rutgers University, United States	37	0.91	1
3	University of Kentucky Libraries, United States	35	0.86	2
4	University of Minnesota, United States	26	0.64	3
5	Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus, OH, United States	23	0.57	4
6	Schreyer Business Library, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, 309 Paterno Library, United States	19	0.47	5
7	Schreyer Business Library, Pennsylvania State University, 309 Paterno Library, University Park, PA 16802, United States	18	0.44	6
8	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, United States	17	0.42	7
9	Endowed Librarian for Business, Schreyer Business Library, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, United States	15	0.37	8
10	Bracken Library, Ball State University, Muncie, IN, United States	14	0.35	9
11	Department of Computer and Systems Sciences, Stockholm University, Sweden	14	0.35	9
12	Newberry Library, Chicago, United States	14	0.35	9
13	Northern Illinois University Libraries,	14	0.35	9

	De Kalb, United States			
14	University of Minnesota Libraries, Minneapolis, MN, United States	14	0.35	9
15	Department of Cataloging, College of New Jersey, United States	13	0.32	10
16	Department of Educational Psychology, University of Colorado Denver, United States	13	0.32	10
17	Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, United States	13	0.32	10
18	John A. Prior Hlth. Sciences Library, Ohio State University, Columbus, United States	13	0.32	10
19	Library of Congress, United States	13	0.32	10
20	Elisabeth S. Blissel Library, Penn State New Kensington, Upper Burrell, PA, United States	12	0.30	11
21	OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., Dublin, OH, United States	12	0.30	11
22	Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, United States	12	0.30	11
23	Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, United States	12	0.30	11
24	Pikes Peak Library District, Colorado Springs, CO, United States	12	0.30	11
25	Reference and User Services Association, United States	12	0.30	11
26	School of Library and Information Science, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506, United States	12	0.30	11
27	School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies, University of British Columbia, Canada	12	0.30	11
28	University of Iowa, United States	12	0.30	11
29	University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, MN, United States	12	0.30	11
30	Laurier/Nipissing Liaison Librarian for the Brantford, United States	11	0.27	12
31	Main Library, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, United	11	0.27	13

	States			
32	McHenry County College, United States	11	0.27	13
33	North Carolina Central University, School of Library and Information Sciences, Durham, United States	11	0.27	13
34	Palmer School of Library and Information Science, Long Island University, United States	11	0.27	13
35	Public Services, Harford County Public Library, Belcamp, MD, United States	11	0.27	13
36	School of Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia	11	0.27	13
37	Schreyer Business Library, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, United States	11	0.27	13
38	Science Library, SUNY Albany, United States	11	0.27	13
39	University of California, Los Angeles, CA, United States	11	0.27	13
40	Audrey Geisel University Librarian, United States; University of California, San Diego, United States	10	0.25	14
41	Catalog Department, University of California, San Diego, United States	10	0.25	14
42	University Librarian for Public Services, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60208, 1970 Campus Drive, United States	10	0.25	14
43	Department of Information Services, Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus, OH, United States	9	0.22	15
44	Department of Reference Services, University of Kentucky	9	0.22	15
	Libraries, United States			
45	Human Subjects Office, Harden Library for Health Science, University of Iowa, United States	9	0.22	15
46	Montana State University, United States	9	0.22	15

47	Pasadena City College, United States	9	0.22	15
48	Texas a and M University, College Station, TX, United States	9	0.22	15
49	Texas A and M University, United States	9	0.22	15
50	University of Texas, San Antonio, United States	9	0.22	15
	<b>Only Top 50 Affiliation are selected - Total</b>	<b>4057</b>		

The affiliation-wise analysis of contributions in the Reference & User Services Quarterly journal reveals significant insights into the leading institutions. Here are some key points based on the data provided:

- Leading Institutions:** Pennsylvania State University and Rutgers University are tied for the top rank, each contributing 37 articles (0.91%). The University of Kentucky Libraries follows closely with 35 articles (0.86%).
- Diverse Contributors:** The list includes a mix of universities and libraries from the United States and one from Sweden, indicating a broad participation in reference and user services research.
- Core Institutions:** A notable concentration of articles comes from a few core institutions, particularly within Pennsylvania State University, which appears multiple times in various capacities, highlighting its central role in the field.
- Declining Contributions:** After the top contributors, there is a noticeable decline in the number of articles contributed by other institutions, with many contributing between 9 and 12 articles, suggesting a smaller base of institutions significantly driving research.
- Overall Contribution:** The total number of articles analyzed is 4,057, reflecting a healthy engagement in the field, but also indicating that a limited number of institutions are responsible for a large portion of the published research.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

Reference & User Services Quarterly maintained a consistent publication schedule, with fluctuations in article counts over time. The total output of 2,092 articles between 2006 and 2019 highlights trends such as a peak in 2007 and a decline by 2016, offering insights for deeper bibliometric analysis.

The bibliometric analysis reveals a strong dominance of the United States in Reference & User Services Quarterly

publications, with minimal contributions from other countries. This highlights a need for increased international collaboration to diversify the journal's authorship and broaden its global perspective.

The bibliometric analysis highlights a concentrated group of prolific authors, particularly Zabel D. and Trott B., who significantly shape research in reference and user services. This pattern indicates a core of highly productive contributors, while many others contribute less frequently, underscoring a varied author engagement within the journal.

The analysis of contributions to Reference & User Services Quarterly highlights the dominance of key institutions like Pennsylvania State University and Rutgers University in research output. While there is healthy engagement overall, a small group of institutions significantly influences the field, indicating potential for broader participation.

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