



The Contribution of Bangladesh to Social Science Research: A Scientometric Study

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ABSTRACT

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Science.

In this study, we apply simple mathematical and statistical analyses to author records in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), a database of the WoS. We take into account only authors affiliated with Bangladesh (using the query CU=Bangladesh) in the SSCI. In addition to elementary observations such as identifying the most productive Bangladeshi scientists in different fields and the most productive universities, we also found the most-cited articles, authors, and universities. A regression analysis of the citation and publication data was performed to establish relationships between these variables. Several association measures have also been computed to quantify the yearly strength of the relationship between the number of publications and the number of citations. While the growth of the number of publications each year has been exponential, we noticed some deviations in the case of the number of citations. The results of our analysis indicate an improvement in the quantity and quality of social science research (SSR) in Bangladesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Since her independence in 1971, Bangladesh has made significant advances in various research sectors despite geographical and socio-economic challenges. Reflecting the immediate needs of the newly independent nation, the focus was primarily on population studies, public health and ecology. Over time, the research interest expanded to agriculture, economics, medical studies and more. The establishment of more universities and research centers has played a crucial role in nurturing social science research. In this paper, we aim to

understand the dynamics between research output and its impact in the field of Social Science. Our findings indicate a positive trend in both the quantity and quality of SSR in Bangladesh. There has been an exponential increase in the number of publications each year, suggesting heightened research activity and output. Despite the overall trend for citations being upward, deviations indicate periods where the increase in citations did not match the growth in publications, which might reflect fluctuations in research impact or visibility. The improvement of SSR in Bangladesh can be attributed to several factors such as increased research capacity, increased funding, better collaboration and improved access to global research networks. Future research directions include delving

deeper into the qualitative aspects of highly cited papers to understand what contributes to their impact and assessing the role and impact of international collaboration on the accessibility and citation of Bangladeshi research. This comprehensive analysis provides valuable insights into the constantly shifting landscape of SSR in Bangladesh, suggesting that Bangladesh is on a positive trajectory towards enhancing its research output and impact in the social sciences.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A comparison of scientific research in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka was published in Mahbuba D and Rousseau R (2010) based on citations from the Web of Science (WoS). This investigation resulted, among other results, from preliminary presentations at Collnet meetings. Other studies have been described (Gupta, BM. & Bala, A, 2012; Majumder, NAA...et al, 2012a, b; Jalal, SK, 2019; Hasan, MJ...et al, 2023; Banshal, SK, 2014; Das, RK. & Islam, MSU, 2021; Labib, T, 2022; Kamruzzaman, MA, et al., 2023; (Miah, D, et al., 2008; Khatun, A, & Ahmed, SMZ, 2011; Hassan, MK, et al., 2023; Islam, MA, et al., 2023; Islam, MA., & Roy, PK, 2021; Dhawan, SM, et al., 2015; Gupta, BM. & Mahesh, GA., 2013; Hugar, J. G. & Kannappanavar, BU., 2020; Jalal, SK., 2019), which cover scientometrics of various Bangladeshi research fields and comparative studies on South Asian countries' social science research. Although we found a small number of studies on South Asian publications and field-specific Bangladesh research publications, no attempts have been made yet (at least to the best of our knowledge) to analyze the contributions of Bangladeshi social sciences researchers (SSR). Considering this situation, we have been motivated to pay special attention to studying the Bangladeshi SSR publications as indexed in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) of the WoS. We chose an international database such as the WoS to avoid including predatory journal articles. Moreover, in the scientific research community, the WoS is considered a reliable source of indexed articles from authentic journals.

2. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

2.1 Bangladesh SSR publications: WoS Data

In April 2023, we performed a query (CU=Bangladesh) with no date limit in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) of the Web of Science (WoS) and downloaded all publications from

the SSCI and the Books and the Conferences citation index in .txt format. We converted the downloaded data into an Excel spreadsheet with a selection of tab and comma delimiters for our analysis and later used R and SPSS. We found a total of 9,017 publications (times cited=188,573) of Bangladesh-affiliated authors in social science research. A total of 254 publications (TC=633) on Bangladeshi research were found in the Art and Humanities Citation Index and 1,353 records (TC=3,120) in the Books and Conferences (SOC & Humanities) Index.

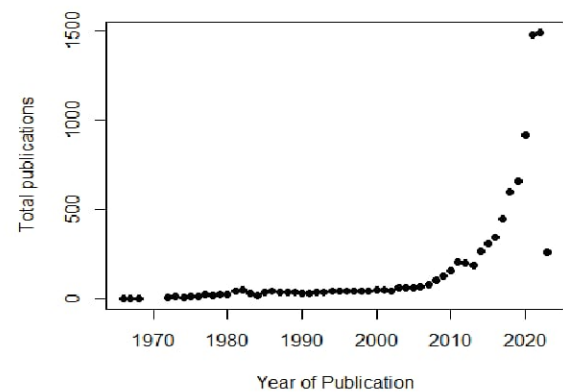


Fig. 1 SSCI Yearly number of publications

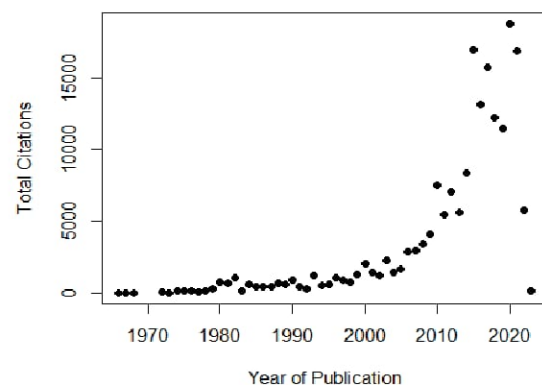


Fig. 2 SSCI Yearly number of received citations

2.2 Data analysis: Social Science Research Journey in Bangladesh since her inception

We take into account the period from 1972 to 2022, the 51 years after the independence of Bangladesh. Since 51 has only divisors 1, 3, 17 and 51, we decided to divide the years into three phases, each containing 17 years for convenience. The three phases are thus Phase 1 (1972-1988), Phase 2 (1989-2005) and Phase 3 (2006-2022). We found 367, 634, and 6,955 publication records during these three phases, respectively. By sorting the data according to document type,

we found 336 articles (documents of article type) in Phase 1. Similarly, we obtained 616 articles in Phase 2 and 6,215 articles in Phase 3. We excluded other records, such as notes, reviews, and letters, from our analysis.

3. RESULT

3.1 Comparative analysis of three periods of Bangladesh

A total of 5689 citations (x 16.9315 per article) were received from journal articles in phase 1 from the publication year to April 2023. The most cited (427 citations) article of this phase is affiliated with the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (icddr,b): Chen, L. C., Huq, E., & d'Souza, S. (1981). Sex bias in the family allocation of food and health care in rural Bangladesh. *Population and Development Review*, 55-70. A total of 18012 citations (x 29.2403 per article) were received from journal articles in phase 2 from the publication year to April 2023. The most cited (527 citations) article of this phase is affiliated with the University of Rajshahi: Islam, M. R., & Hewstone, M. (1993). Dimensions of contact as predictors of intergroup anxiety, perceived out-group variability, and out-group attitude: An integrative model. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 19(6), 700-710. During Phase 3, the total number of publications grew more than tenfold to 6215 articles. A total of 144088 citations (x 23.1839 per article) were received from journal articles in phase 3 from the publication year to April 2023. The most cited (4466 citations) article in this phase is affiliated with the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (icddr,b), which was coauthored by 713 researchers from 461 International organizations: Naghavi, M. & Wang, H...[et al] (2015). Global, regional, and national age-sex specific all-cause and cause-specific mortality for 240 causes of death, 1990–2013: A systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2013. *The Lancet*. 385. 117-171.

We found that population studies were the most-cited and the leading subject area in Bangladesh during phase 1 and phase 2. However, during Phase 3, the Environment took the lead. The most-cited subject area studied in Bangladesh involves medicine, including internal medicine, healthcare science, medical informatics, medical ethics and pharmacology. This is shown in Tables 1-6.

Table 1: Most studied Subject Area in Phase1

Subject	TP	TC
Population Studies	122	2460
Public, Environmental & Occupational Health	45	1661
Environmental Sciences & Ecology	45	161
Medical Studies	30	525
Development Studies	25	92
Physiology	24	780
Business & Economics	22	90
Science & Technology	13	83
Behavioral Sciences	10	115
International Relations	10	45

Table 2: Most Cited Subject Area in Phase 1

Subject	TP	TC
Population Studies	122	2460
Public, Environmental & Occupational Health	45	1661
Physiology	24	780
Medical Studies	30	525
Environmental Sciences & Ecology	45	161
Behavioral Sciences	10	115
Development Studies	25	92
Business & Economics	22	90
Science & Technology	13	83
International Relations	10	45

Table 3: Most studied Subject Area in Phase 2

Subject	TP	TC
Population Studies	274	7385
Environmental Sciences	85	2230
Medical Studies	54	2340
Development Studies	45	1309
Physiology	42	1163
Behavioral Sciences	30	2198
Business and Economics	30	796
Social Sciences	23	125
Public Administration	12	39
Agriculture	10	270
Criminology	1	63

Table 5 : Most studied Subject Area in Phase 3

	TP	TC
Environment	1629	29752
Public Health	1209	24893
Business and Economics	752	13440
Medical Studies	713	47372
Science and Technology	657	15453
Behavioral Sciences	418	6663
Social issues	293	3306
Population Studies	230	3002
Development Studies	222	3899
Agriculture	166	2846

Table 4: Most Cited Subject Area in Phase 2

Subject	TP	TC
Population Studies	274	7385
Medical Studies	54	2340
Environmental Sciences	85	2230
Behavioral Sciences	30	2198
Development Studies	45	1309
Physiology	42	1163
Business and Economics	30	796
Agriculture	10	270
Science & Technology	9	258
Education	9	150
Chemistry	2	4

Table 6 : Most Cited Subject Area in Phase 3

Subject	TP	TC
Medical Studies	713	47372
Environment	1629	29752
Public Health	1209	24893
Science and Technology	657	15453
Business and Economics	752	13440
Behavioral Sciences	418	6663
Development Studies	222	3899
Social issues	293	3306
Population Studies	230	3002
Agriculture	166	2846

University of Dhaka and International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ic dr,b),are leading in the area of social science research over the phases,as shown in Table7.

Table 7: Leading Universities and Research Institutes

Phases	TP	Universities & Colleges	TP	Research Institutes
Phase 3	176	University of Dhaka	161	International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (ICDDR)
	65	BRAC University	99	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee BRAC
	59	Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET)	13	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)
	55	University of Rajshahi	7	Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI)
	52	North South University (NSU)	7	BRAC Research & Evaluation Division (RED)
Phase 2	87	University of Dhaka	141	International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (ICDDR)
	27	Jahangirnagar University	52	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee BRAC
	21	University of Rajshahi	20	BRAC Research & Evaluation Division (RED)
	19	University of Chittagong	9	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)
	16	Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET)	1	Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC)
Phase 1	42	University of Dhaka	47	International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (ICDDR)
	6	Jahangirnagar University	3	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)
	5	University of Rajshahi	1	Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA)
	5	University of Chittagong		
	4	Sir Salimullah Medical College		
	3	Dhaka Medical College		

Research collaboration has increased immensely over the years, especially during Phase 3.

Table 8: Single -authored versus collaborated articles

Intervals	Single authored articles	Collaborated articles
Phase 1 (N=336)	197 (58.63%)	139 (41.36%)
Phase 2 (N=616)	399 (64.77%)	217 (35.23%)
Phase 3 (N=6215)	163 (2.62%)	6052 (97.38%)

Publications and collaborations are visualized with

VoSviewer (Figs. 3 -5).

a. Phase 1 (PY1972-PY1988): New era of the new nation

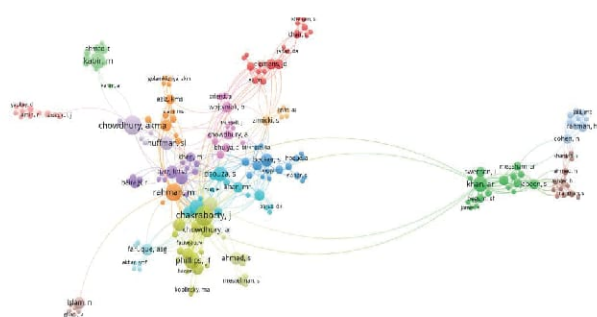


Fig. 3 SSCI Author collaboration network 1972-1988

b. Phase 2 (PY1989-PY2005):

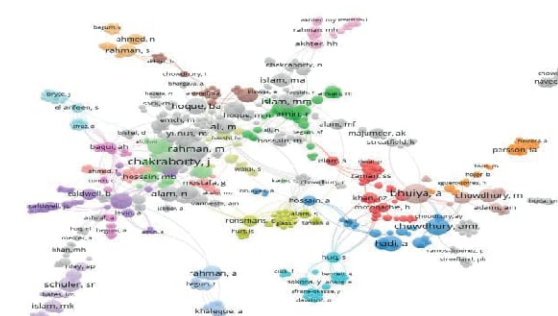


Fig. 4 SSCI Author collaboration network 1989-2005

c. Phase 3 (PY2006-PY2022):

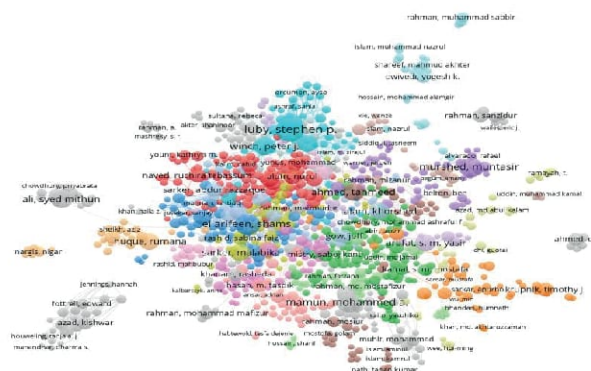


Fig. 5 SSCI Author collaboration network 2006-2022

A lasting international collaboration was found with John Hopkins University over these periods. The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and John Hopkins University collaborated most with Bangladesh during phase 3, whereas the University of London played the leading role in phase 2.

3.2 Publication Citation Relationships

The study examined the publication citation relationship across three phases. Line graphs depicting total publications and citations showed similar shapes, with a slight increase in Phase 2 and a significant increase in Phase 3. The

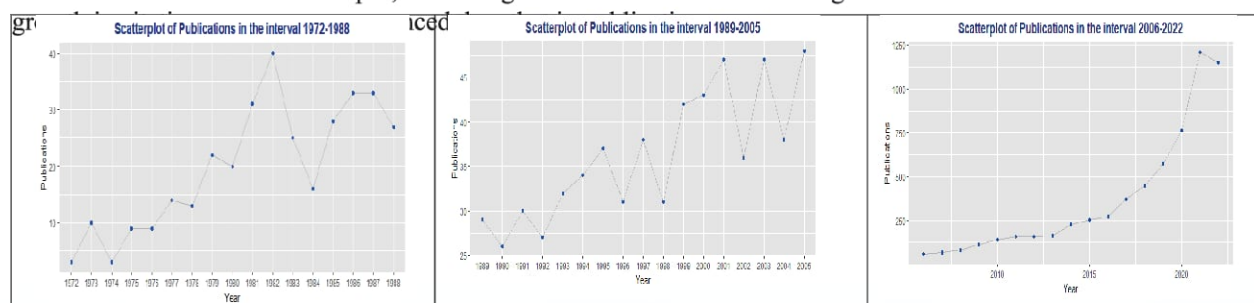


Fig. 6 Scatterplots of Publications

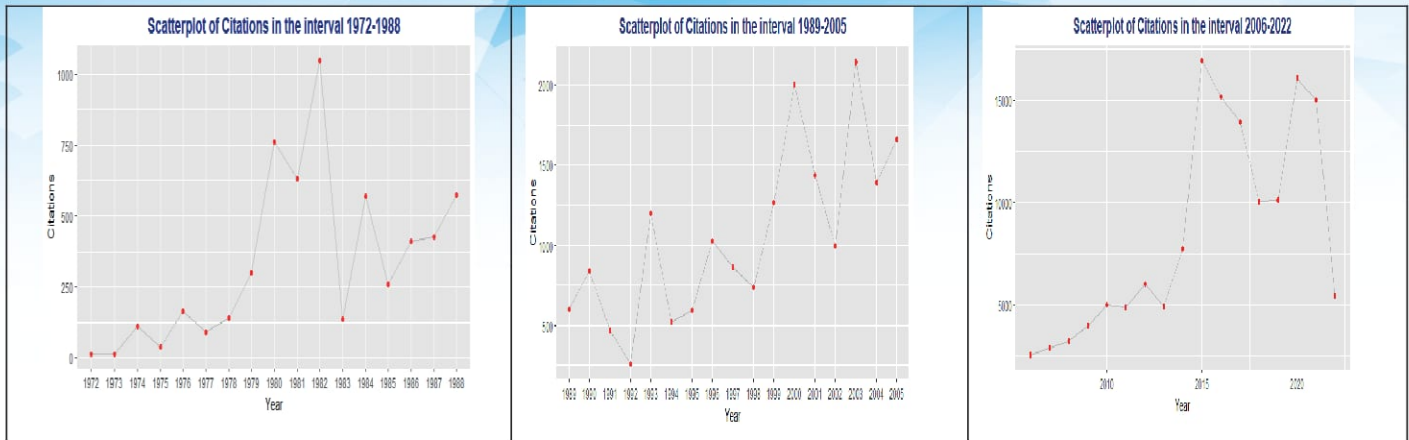
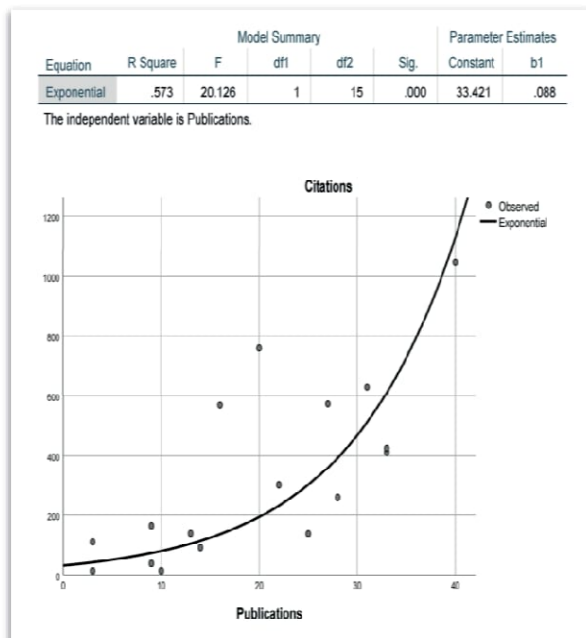


Fig. 7 Scatterplot of Citations

Scatterplots (Figs. 6-7) demonstrated exponential growth for both citations and publications in Phases 1 and 2, with the peak number of Phase 2 publications occurring in the last year. In Phase 3, publications showed exponential growth until 2021, a decline in 2022, and a peak in 2015 before decreasing. Statistical tests confirmed exponential distributions for both publications and citations in Phases 1 and 3, but only citations in Phase 2 followed an exponential distribution. Regression analysis revealed that in Phase 1, an exponential model explained 57.3% of the variation in citations, while in Phase 2, a linear model explained 64.3% of the variation. Phase 3 showed poor model fits for both the exponential and linear models.

The correlation between citations and publications in Phase 2 was strong and positive (correlation coefficient = 0.8019). However, the low explanatory power of the models in Phase 3 suggested the presence of other unaccounted variables influencing the number of publications and citations. We perform regression analysis for each phase, taking the number of citations as the dependent variable and the number of publications as the independent variable. The relationship between publication and citation fits an exponential model. However, a linear model is better suited to explain this relationship. However, in the last phase, we did not find any suitable model to fit this relationship. We also conducted one sample KS test for both publications and citations in each phase to check whether they were exponentially distributed at the 5% significance level; the results are shown in Figures 8-10 below.



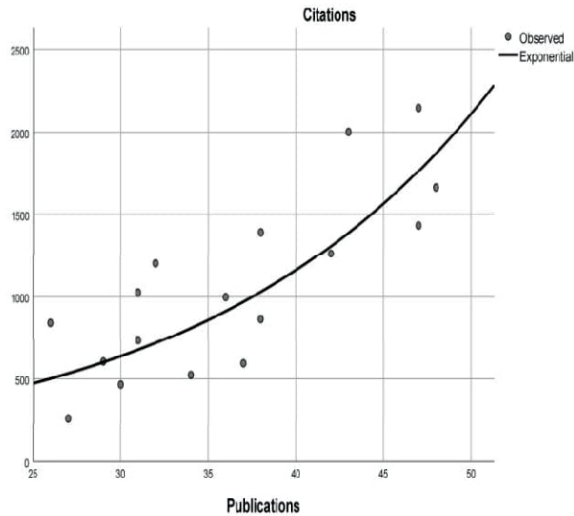
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
Publications		
N		17
Exponential parameter a, b	Mean	19.76
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.248
	Positive	.132
	Negative	-.248
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.023
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.246
a. Test Distribution is Exponential.		
b. Calculated from data.		

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
Citations		
N		17
Exponential parameter a, b	Mean	334.65
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.120
	Positive	.083
	Negative	-.120
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.454
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.968
a. Test Distribution is Exponential.		
b. Calculated from data.		

Fig. 8 Sample KS test for Phase 1

Model Summary						Parameter Estimates	
Equation	R Square	F	df1	df2	Sig.	Constant	b1
Exponential	.580	20.693	1	15	.000	105.779	.060

The independent variable is Publications.



One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Publications		
N		17
Exponential parameter, a, b	Mean	36.24
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.512
	Positive	.266
	Negative	-.512
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		2.111
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

a. Test Distribution is Exponential.

b. Calculated from data.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Citations		
N		17
Exponential parameter, a, b	Mean	1059.53
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.296
	Positive	.132
	Negative	-.296
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.222
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.101

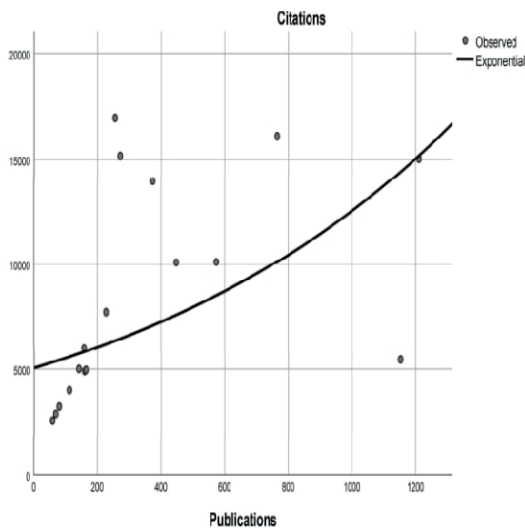
a. Test Distribution is Exponential.

b. Calculated from data.

Fig. 9 Sample KS testfor Phase 2

Model Summary						Parameter Estimates	
Equation	R Square	F	df1	df2	Sig.	Constant	b1
Exponential	.262	5.335	1	15	.036	5051.798	.001

The independent variable is Publications.



One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Publications		
N		17
Exponential parameter, a, b	Mean	365.59
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.147
	Positive	.124
	Negative	-.147
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.605
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.858

a. Test Distribution is Exponential.

b. Calculated from data.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Citations		
N		17
Exponential parameter, a, b	Mean	8475.76
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.260
	Positive	.135
	Negative	-.260
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.073
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200

a. Test Distribution is Exponential.

b. Calculated from data.

Fig. 10 Sample KS testfor Phase 3

Publications and citations are found to be distributed exponentially in the first two phases. The model fit was notably weak in phase three. However, further studies are needed to explore the distribution of pubs/cits and the reasons behind this variation. The examinations led us to the conclusion that there is no simple automatic relationship between the number of publications and the number of citations. This suggests that the relationship between publication volume and citation impact might be influenced by additional external factors which could not be explicitly captured by these regression models. Further methodological refinement might be using multivariate regression models or panel-data techniques is recommended in future studies to capture the complex dynamics of citation performance, especially in Phase 3.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Analytical Findings

Scientometric/bibliometric studies are rarely performed in Bangladesh. In particular, Clarivate's Web of Science (WoS) is not often used by Bangladeshi researchers, probably for financial reasons. However, scientists are well aware of the h-index of an author and the journal impact factor (JIF). Doing any literature review or scientometric study is difficult without consulting at least one of the large international citation databases. We recommend planning and realizing (as quickly as possible) a National Research Publication Index Database containing all locally published journal articles, book chapters, conference papers, and other scientific outputs. The Chinese Science Citation Index (CSCI), the Arabic Citation Index (ACI), the Korean Citation Index (KCI), and the SciELO (Latin America) are examples to follow. Data scientists, information scientists, and communication technologists in Bangladesh could come forward and take the initiative in this regard. This vast project should be developed and managed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Planning in collaboration with other interested partners. The National Archive of Bangladesh and the Publishing Research Organization will play indispensable roles in this project. Access to the WoS, Scopus and, (for the time being hypothetical) the Bangladeshi Citation Index may be a prime trailblazer for attracting Bangladeshi researchers in various fields to perform bibliometric studies and systematic literature reviews. Delving deeper into several free scholarly databases, such as Dimensions, SCIMAGO, and Google Scholar, can also stimulate further bibliometric analysis in Bangladesh. In future studies, we intend to compare Bangla

desh with the other E9 countries: Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan.

4.2 Limitations

Due to the absence of a Central Information Hub, repository, or index database of Social Science Research Literature published in Bangladesh, this study was based exclusively on data retrieved from the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) of the Web of Science (WoS). This reliance has inevitably caused the analysis to exclude a substantial portion of locally published literature from Bangladeshi Journals not yet indexed in WoS. As such, many important contributions in national and regional journals remain outside the scope of this analysis. Thus, the true volume and diversity of social science research in Bangladesh is most likely excluded in this study. In future research, integration of data sources such as Scopus, Google Scholar, BanglaJOL, and institutional repositories may yield a more comprehensive and nationally representative research profile.

5. CONCLUSION

As per our analytical findings, Bangladesh is very promising in the field of Social Science research. The primary purpose of this paper is to bring the social science research of Bangladesh to the attention of the international community, and as a result increase the scope of their utility. If there were more databases as we recommend, more people would have access to their works. Considering the vast amount research work produced by Bangladeshi social science researcher even while facing the limited amount of resources accessible, it can only be interpreted that an increased access to databases will result in a significant increase in both the quality and quantity of the research work produced. In light of this, we hope our paper will encourage the establishment of a National Research Publication Index Database for all locally published research. We also recommend access to WoS and Scopus to encourage research.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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