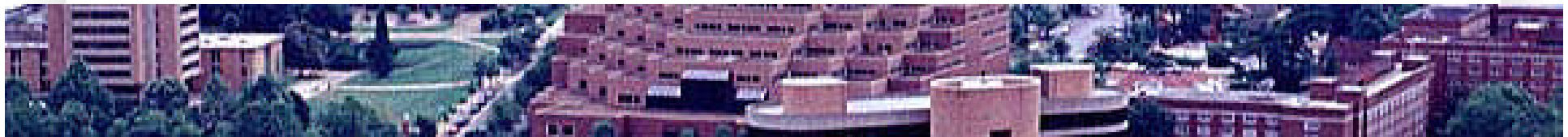




Beyond Topic: How Readers Choose Which Articles to Read

STM Frankfurt Meeting
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The Question:

When faced with numerous articles on their topic, how do scholars make the decision of which articles to read?

A study funded by:



Research Team: Carol Tenopir, Donald W. King, Suzie Allard, Ben Bates, Ken Levine, Ben Birch



International survey with 442 responses from 12 countries





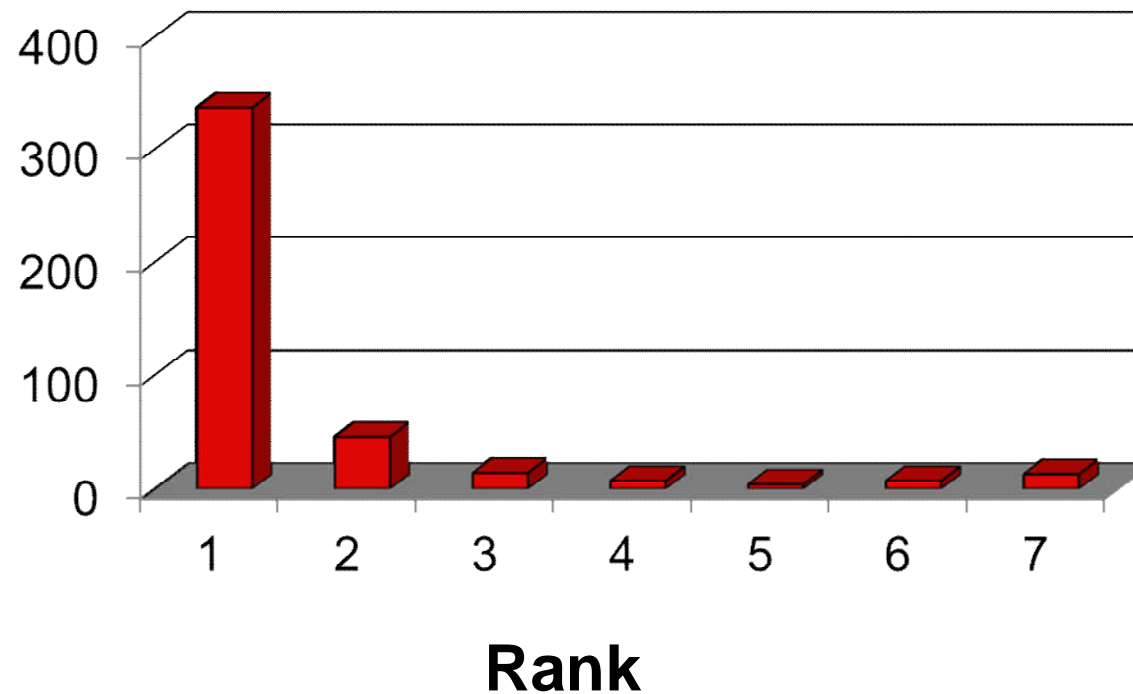
Ranking Article Characteristics

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of seven article characteristics from 1-7 where 1 is “most important” and 7 “least important.”

- Article topic
- Online accessibility
- Source of article
- Journal title
- Author
- Publisher type
- Author's institution



Topic = Number 1 Ranked Characteristic





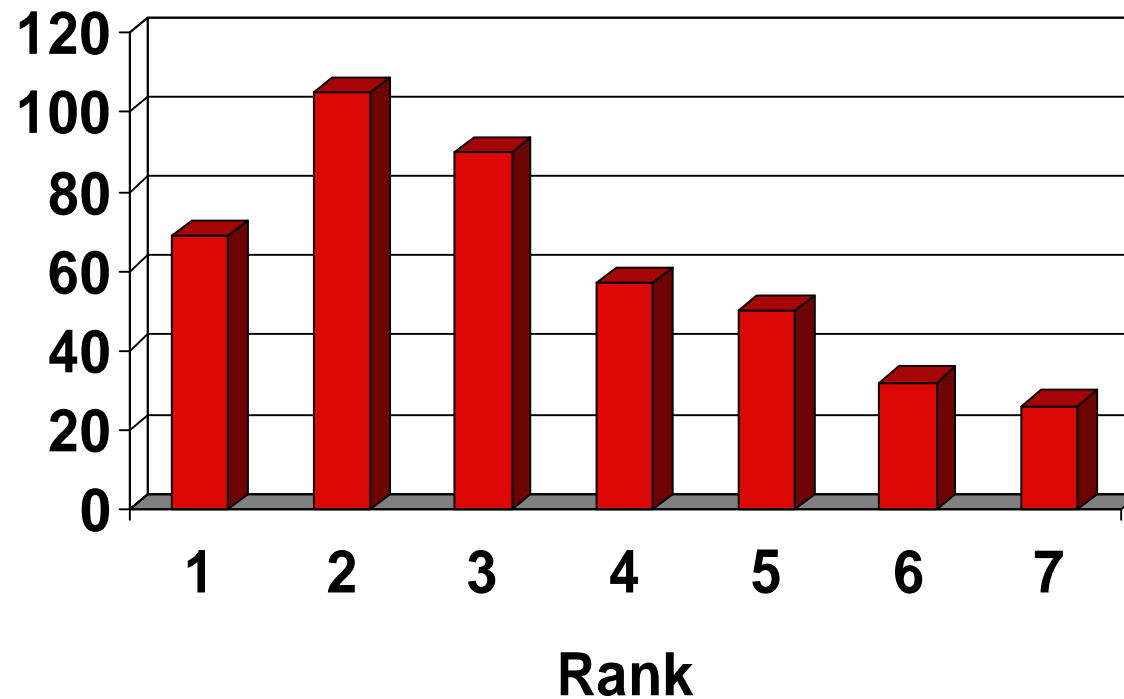
Next Most Important:

Accessibility

(this could range from online articles available at no personal cost to an article available online at modest personal cost to being available only in print)



Online Accessibility (Score 3.27)



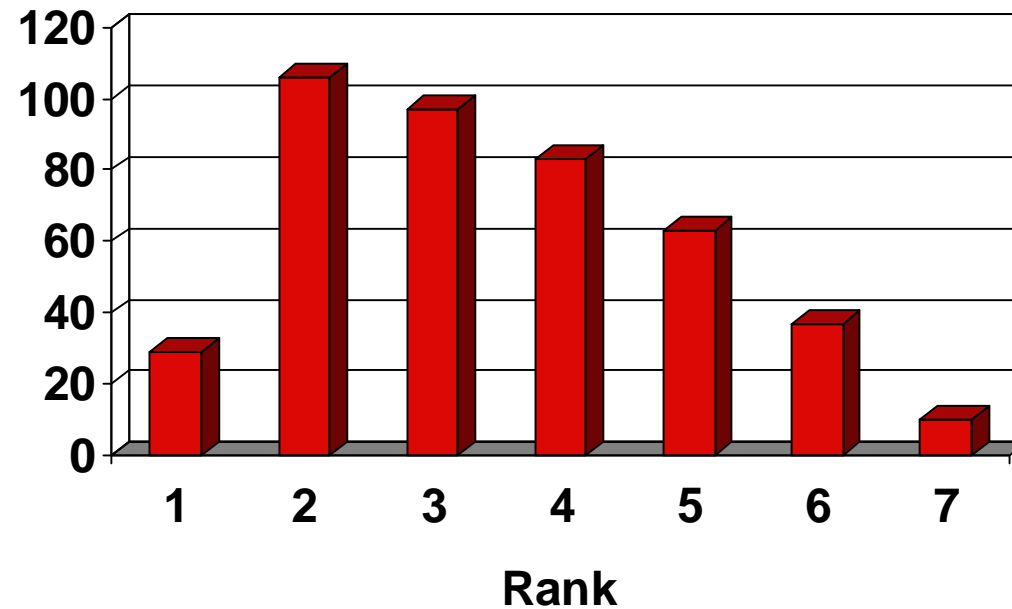


Also Important:

- Source of article (top refereed journals to non-refereed or unpublished articles not in a journal)
- Journal Title (title that you regard highly to a title you find acceptable to a title unknown to you)
- Author(s) (from top scholars to those completely unknown to you)

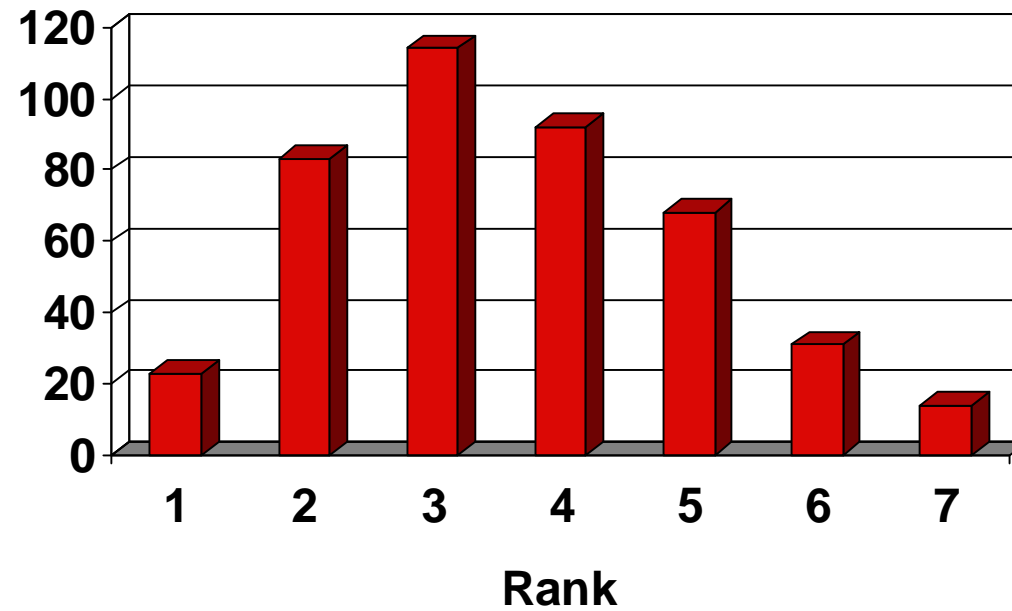


Source of Article (Score 3.46)



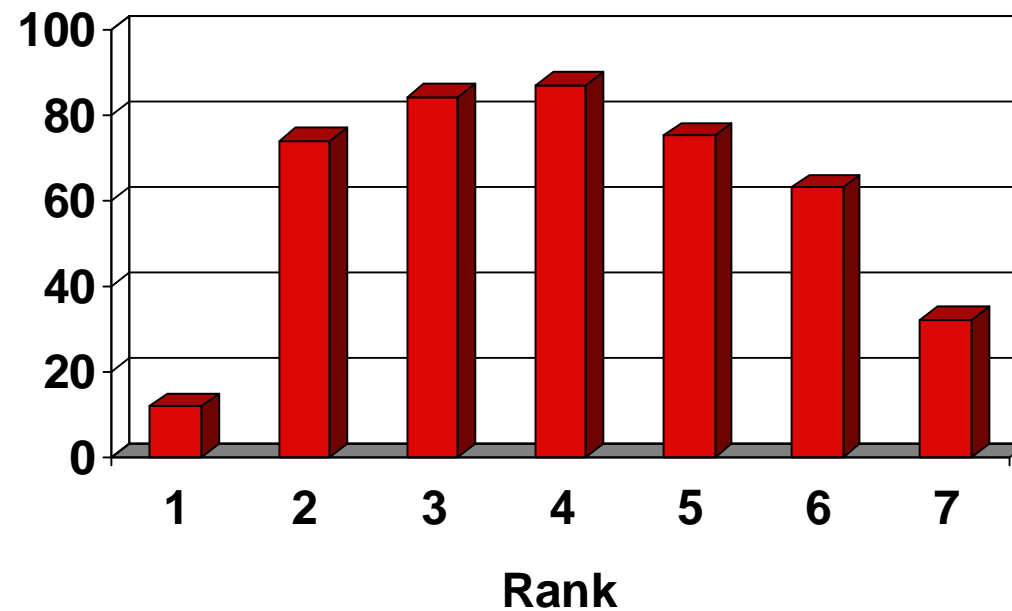


Journal Title: (Score 3.58)





Author(s): (Score 4.07)



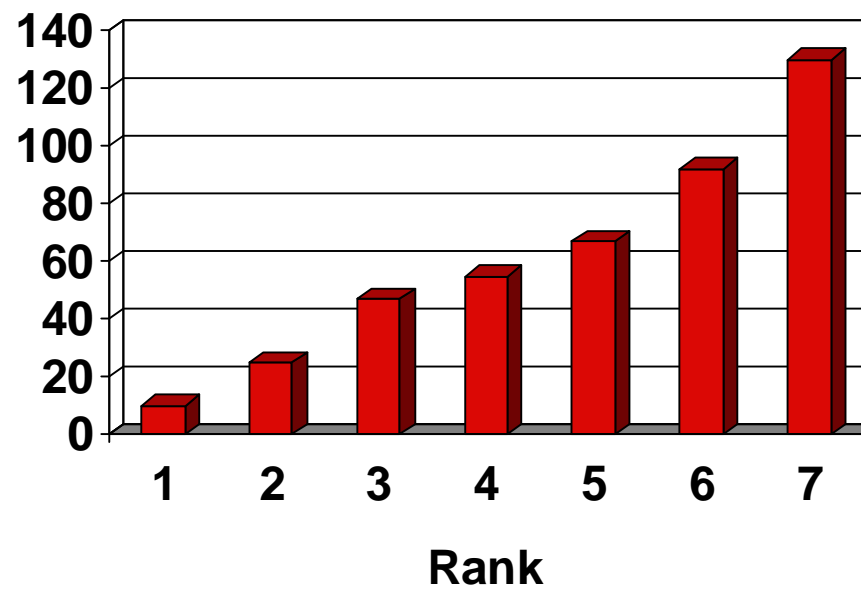


The Least Important:

- Type of Publisher (5.21)
- Author's Institution (5.82)

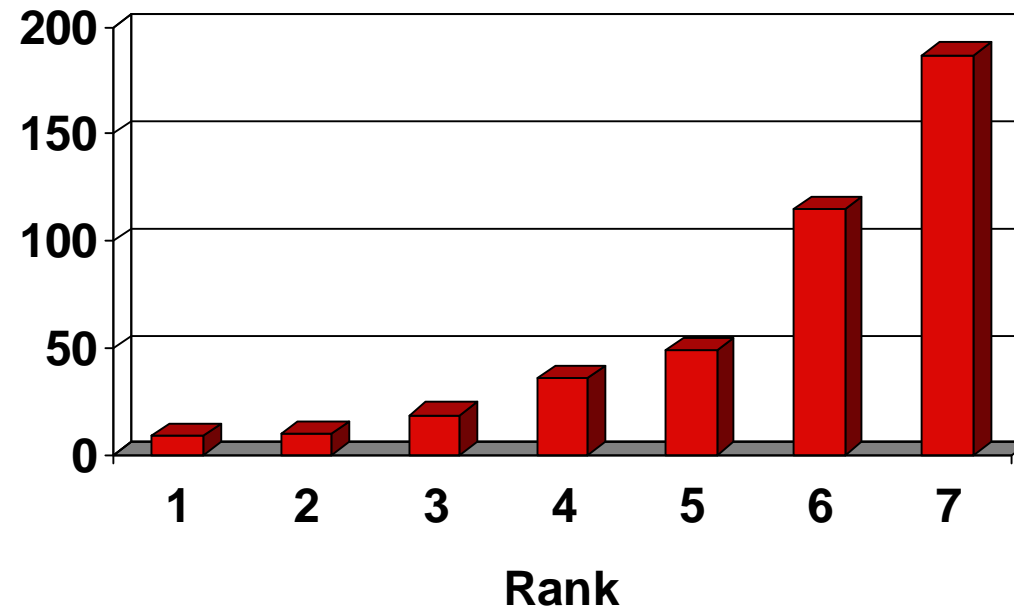


Type of Publisher: (Score 5.21)





Author(s)' Institution: (Score 5.82)





Other Important Characteristics:

- Readability/Design (font, layout, clarity, good graphic design) $n=49$
- Editing Quality $n=21$
- Impact factor/citation counts $n=14$



Ranking of Article Characteristics by Discipline

	Humanities	Sciences	Medical	Social Sciences	Engineering	Professional
Topic	1	1	1	1	1	1
Online Accessibility	3	2	2	2	2	4
Authors	5	5	5	5	5	5
Institution	7	7	7	7	7	7
Source (journal)	2	4	3	3	4	2
Type of Publisher	6	6	6	6	6	6
Journal Title	4	3	4	4	3	3



Conjoint Analysis

- Statistical technique used in market research
- Preferences for different attributes that make up a product or service
- For example: when buying a car: importance of price, style, gas mileage
- Aka
 - “trade-off analysis”
 - “stated preference analysis”

Profile 1

How likely are you (on a scale of 1 to 10) to read an article with these characteristics?

Written by an author I recognize as a good (but not top) scholar, in a peer-reviewed journal outside the top tier, and available online at no personal cost [to reader].

Absolutely would not read → 1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10 ← Absolutely would read

Profile 13

How likely are you (on a scale of 1 to 10) to read an article with these characteristics?

Written by an author I recognize as a good (but not top) scholar, from a source other than a journal, and available online at no personal cost.

Absolutely would not read → 1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10 ← Absolutely would read



Top Rated Profiles (only ones to be scored 7 or better)

- Profile 7 (TOP RATED PROFILE score of 9)
- Written by an author I recognize as a top scholar, in a top-tier peer-reviewed journal, and available online at no personal cost.
 - Profile 1 (RATED 2nd score of 7.7)
 - Written by an author I recognize as a good (but not top) scholar, in a peer-reviewed journal outside the top tier, and available online at no personal cost
 - Profile 3 (RATED 3rd score of 7.6)
- Written by an author I don't recognize, in a top-tier peer-reviewed journal, and available online at no personal cost.



Importance Scores

1. Access
2. Author
3. Journal Source



Access Utility Estimate

Online no personal Cost	1.604	
Online personal Cost	-1.107	
Print Only	-.497	

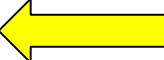



Author Utility Estimate

Top Tier	1.412	
Good	.386	
Weak	-1.193	
Unknown	-.605	



Journal Utility Estimate

Top Peer	1.113	
Other Peer	.376	
Not Peer	-.971	
Not Journal	-.519	



The Question Answered?

When faced with numerous articles on their topic, how do scholars make the decision of which articles to read?

- Topic, but also a mix of many other things, including:
 - Accessibility at no personal cost
 - Top or good author
 - Peer reviewed journal



(% change in ave # of Article Readings/Year & Ave Minutes/Reading by University Faculty in the US)

