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A Website Review of AD Scientific Index: Evaluating its Methodology, Applications, and Impact on Research Assessment

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ABSTRACT

The AD Scientific Index (Alper-Doger Scientific Index) is an emerging research evaluation tool that ranks individual researchers based on Google Scholar citation metrics. Unlike traditional scientometric tools such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar Metrics, it provides real-time updates, researcher mobility tracking, and six-year applications, advantages, and limitations of the AD Scientific Index in comparison with other major Scientometric tools. While the AD Scientific Index offers dynamic and transparent ranking. Its heavy reliance on Google Scholar raises concerns about citation inflation, non-peer-reviewed content inclusion, self-citation manipulation, and lack of field normalization. Researchers in highly cited fields tend to dominate rankings, while disciplines with lower citation averages are underrepresented. Despite these limitations, the AD Scientific Index serves as a valuable supplementary tool for evaluating individual research impact. However, for a comprehensive assessment, it should be used alongside established scientometric databases like Scopus and Web of Science. The study concludes that while the AD Scientific Index enhances researcher visibility, its ranking should be interpreted cautiously, with a focus on quality over quantity in research evaluation.

Keywords: AD Scientific Research, Website Review, Research impact, Assessment, Google Scholar.

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INTRODUCTION

Research performance evaluation plays a crucial role in academics, influencing funding decisions, faculty promotions, institutional rankings, and global scientific collaborations. Various scientometric tools and ranking systems have been developed to assess the productivity and impact of researchers and institutions (Shahabuddin 2022). Traditional evaluation methods include citation analysis, impact factor assessments, peer reviews, and institutional rankings like the QS World University Rankings (Sowter, Hijazi, and Reggio 2016), Times Higher Education (THE) Rankings (Sowter *et al.*, 2016), and the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) (Boshoff 2010). However, these global ranking systems primarily focus on institutions rather than individual researchers. With the growing need for a transparent, dynamic, and researcher-centric evaluation system, the AD Scientific Index (Alper-Doger Scientific Index) has emerged as a novel platform that ranks researchers based on their academic productivity and citation impact. Unlike traditional university rankings, this index provides individual-level evaluations by analysing publicly available Google Scholar profiles, offering a comprehensive view of a researcher's H-index, i10-index, and total citation count. Dr. Murat Alper and Associate Professor Dr. Cihan Doger developed the AD Scientific Index to provide an alternative ranking system that directly measures the scientific impact of individual researchers and institutions. Figure 1 shows that the platform ranks researchers globally, regionally, and nationally, covering over 21,000 universities and millions of researchers across multiple disciplines.

Website Objectives

The primary objectives of the AD Scientific Index include:

- Identifying and ranking top-performing researchers within specific disciplines and geographic regions.
- Providing universities with aggregated researcher rankings, helping institutions evaluate their faculty's research output.

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- Promoting academic transparency by allowing researchers to compare their citation impact with peers.
- Tracking researcher mobility, highlighting the movement of researchers between institutions over time.
- Encouraging collaborations by providing a structured dataset for research networking.

METHODOLOGY AND RANKING CRITERIA

The AD Scientific Index is exclusively based on Google Scholar data, distinguishing it from traditional scientometric databases like Scopus (Elsevier) and Web of Science (Clarivate Analytics). It evaluates researchers using the following metrics:

- H-index-A metric that measures both productivity and citation impact.
- i10-index-The number of a researcher's publications with at least 10 citations.
- Total Citations-The overall number of citations received by all indexed publications.
- Last 6 Years' H-index, i10-index, and Citations-A measure of recent research impact.

Figure 2 indicates the AD Scientific Index to differentiate between historically impactful researchers and those with recent influence, making it a dynamic and evolving ranking system.

Relevance and Research Problem

While the AD Scientific Index offers several advantages, such as inclusivity and real-time citation tracking, it also raises several concerns:

Google Scholar Dependency: Unlike Scopus and Web of Science, Google Scholar includes non-peer-reviewed sources, preprints, and self-citations, which may inflate rankings.

Lack of Field Normalization: The index does not normalize citation counts across disciplines, meaning researchers in highly cited fields (e.g., medicine, life sciences) rank higher than those in low-citation fields (e.g., humanities, social sciences).

Potential for Manipulation: Since rankings are based on Google Scholar, researchers can artificially increase citations through self-referencing or non-standard publications.

Despite these limitations, the AD Scientific Index has gained widespread recognition for its researcher-centric approach, providing valuable insights into global academic trends and individual researcher performance.

Methodology

Examining the strengths and limitations of the AD Scientific Index's ranking methodology. Comparing AD Scientific Index with other major ranking systems (QS, THE, Webometrics, etc.). Evaluating its effectiveness in researcher and institutional assessment. Discussing the broader implications of using Google Scholar-based metrics in research evaluation. Identifying potential improvements and future directions for more accurate and fair rankings.

Strength of the AD Scientific Index

Strength	Explanation
Researcher-Centric	Unlike QS or THE, which rank institutions, AD Ranks individual researchers.
Real-Time Updates	Data is refreshed regularly, unlike annual ranking updates from other indicators.
Google Scholar Inclusion	More identifies both established and emerging researchers.
Researcher Mobility tracking	Helps identify both established and emerging researchers.
Researcher Mobility tracking	Unique feature that helps track movement between institutions.

Limitations of AD Scientific Index

Strength	Explanation
Google Scholar Dependency	Google Scholar includes non-peer-reviewed sources leading to possible ranking inflation.
Lack of Field Normalization	High-citation fields (e.g., medicine) rank higher than low-citation fields (e.g., humanities).
Self-Citation and predatory Journal Risks	Google Scholar includes self-citations, which may distort the ranking.
Limited institutional influence	Universities are ranked based on faculty performance only not on infrastructure, teaching quality or reputation.

Pricing and Support

The AD Scientific Index offers various membership options tailored to individuals, researchers, and institutions. Each is designed to enhance visibility and provide strategic insights within the academic community.

Key Features of AD Scientific Index

The AD Scientific Index includes several unique features that distinguish it from other academic ranking systems.

Individual Researcher Rankings

Figure 3 provides personalized rankings for each researcher in: Global Rankings (worldwide comparison), Regional Rankings (e.g., Asia, Europe, North America) Country Rankings (ranking researchers within a specific country), Discipline-Specific Rankings (ranking researchers within a particular field, such as, Library and Information Science, Engineering, Medicine, etc.,). Researchers can track their ranking movements over time.

Institutional Rankings

Figure 4 shows the AD Scientific Index ranks universities and research institutions based on the aggregated performance of their faculty members. Top Universities Globally (based on researcher citations), Top Universities Regionally, Top Universities by Discipline, and Top Universities in a Country. This ranking provides insights into which institutions have the most influential researchers.

Country and Regional Rankings

The AD Scientific Index also ranks countries based on the cumulative scientific impact of their researchers. Ranking of Countries by research productivity and impact. Ranking of Universities within a Country. Comparative analysis of countries in scientific output. For example, it can show how India ranks globally in research impact compared to the USA or China (Figure 5).

Researcher Mobility Tracking

One of the unique features of the AD Scientific Index is that it allows for tracking researcher mobility. It identifies when a researcher moves from one institution to another. It helps, institutions see which top researchers they have attracted or lost. Supports collaboration, and analysis by identifying researchers working across multiple institutions. For example, if a, researcher moves from Kuvempu University to a foreign university, this will be recorded and, reflected in institutional rankings (M, KK, and Bagalkoti 2024).

Discipline-Specific Rankings

The AD Scientific Index ranks scientists within specific fields, allowing for fairer comparisons among peers. Covers major scientific disciplines like Agricultural Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Social Sciences, Humanities, and more. Allows specialized comparisons that are more relevant than general rankings. For instance, an agriculture researcher is ranked against other agriculture researchers, rather than competing with highly cited medical researchers.

Six-Year Citation Performance

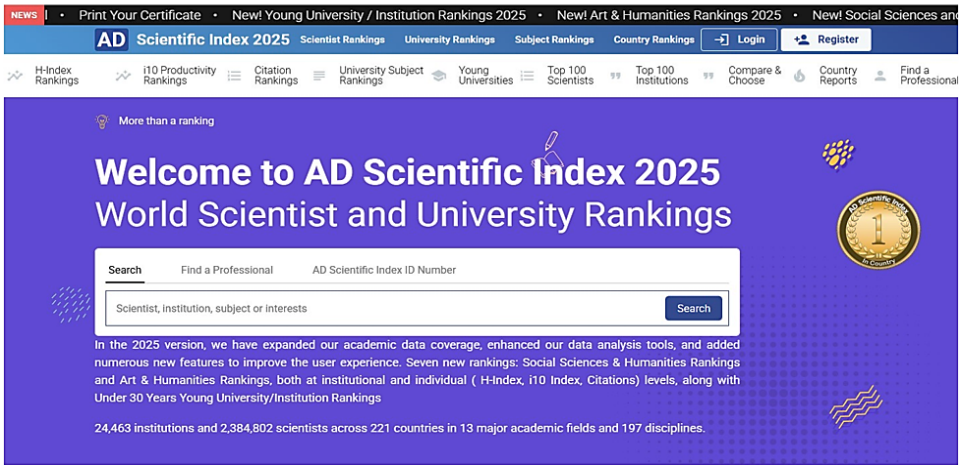
While traditional tools only consider total career citations, the AD Scientific Index ranks researchers based on citations from the last six years. Why It Matters: Helps distinguish active researchers from inactive ones (Chaman Sab, Dharani Kumar, and Biradar 2019). Encourages continuous publication and impact. Provides a balanced view of historical and recent performance. Example: A researcher with high lifetime citations but low recent activity may rank lower than a mid-career researcher with strong recent citations.

Potential Drawbacks of the AD Scientific Index

Despite its advantages, the AD Scientific Index has some notable weaknesses, particularly its reliance on Google Scholar.

Inclusion of Non-Peer-Reviewed Sources Unlike Scopus and Web of Science, which index only peer-reviewed publications,

AD Scientific Index



https://www.adscientificindex.com/

Figure 1: AD Scientific Index Website.

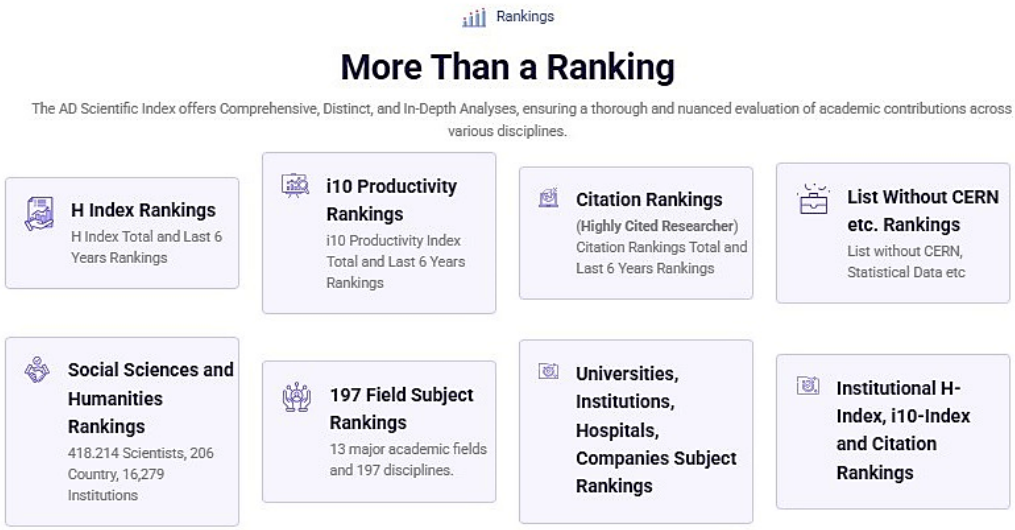


Figure 2: AD Scientific Ranking Index.

Individual Researcher Rankings

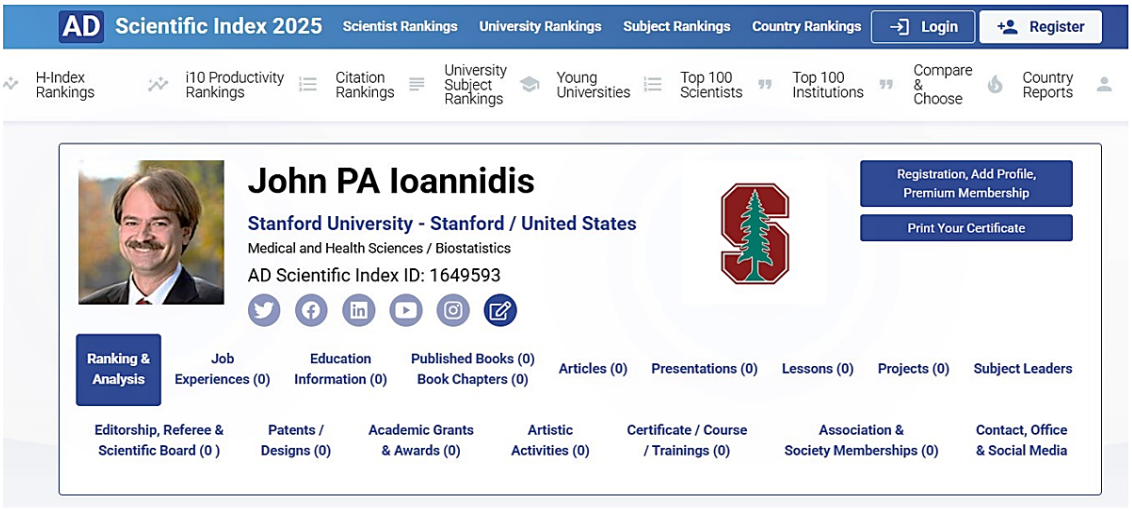


Figure 3: Individual Researcher Ranking.

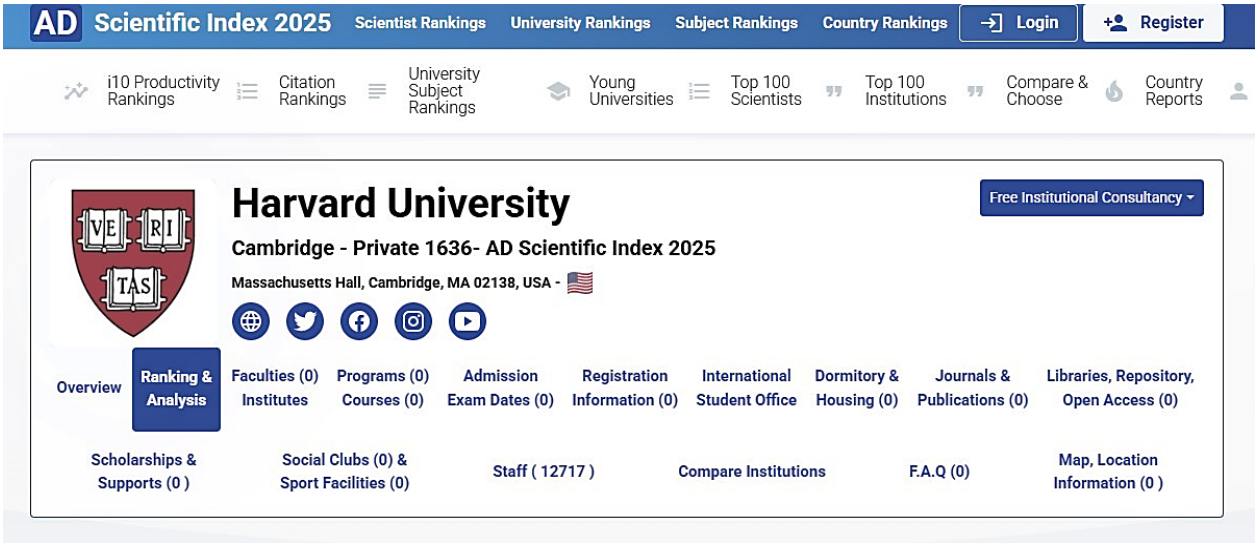


Figure 4: University Ranking Index.

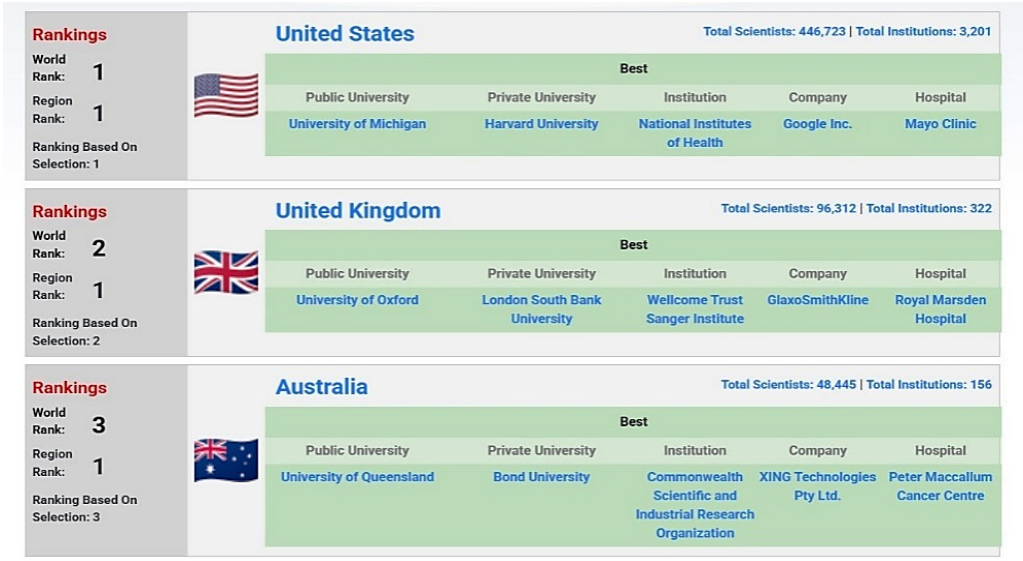


Figure 5: Country AD Scientific Ranking Index.

Google Scholar includes: Preprints, conference papers, book chapters, and theses. Non-peer reviewed or predatory journals. Institutional repositories and self-published content.

Drawbacks

Researchers who publish in non-peer-reviewed sources may get higher rankings than those in top-tier journals. Predatory journals can inflate citation counts unfairly. Example: A researcher publishing in low-impact or predatory journals with many self-citations might rank higher than a researcher publishing in Nature or Science.

Citation Inflation and Manipulation

Google Scholar does not filter self-citations or citation stacking (researchers forming citation groups). Why it's a Problem: Researchers can artificially boost their rankings. Citation rings distort the true impact of research. Difficult to distinguish genuine influence from manipulated citations. Example: A researcher self-citing 50% of their papers may rank higher than a researcher with high external citations.

Lack of Field Normalization

Some scientific fields, such as medicine and AI, receive high citation counts, while humanities and social sciences have lower citation averages. Why it's a Problem: Researchers in highly cited fields dominate rankings. Humanities, arts, and social sciences remain underrated. Example: A medical researcher with 10,000 citations ranks higher than a history researcher with 500 citations, despite the latter has a strong field impact.

No Institutional or Funding Consideration

Unlike Scopus (SciVal) and Web of Science (InCites), which consider institutional funding and research impact, the AD Scientific Index only ranks researchers based on citations. Why it's a Problem: Doesn't account for funding received, patents, or real-world applications. Institutions with strong funding but lower individual citation counts may rank lower. Example: A highly funded AI lab at MIT may rank lower than a smaller institution with highly cited individual researchers. The AD Scientific Index offers a unique, researcher-centric ranking system with real-time updates and broad coverage. However, its reliance on Google Scholar makes it prone to citation inflation, lack of field normalization, and quality concerns. For a balanced research assessment, it is best used alongside Scopus, Web of Science, and other citation analysis tools.

CONCLUSION

The AD Scientific Index represents a significant shift in research evaluation by focusing on individual researcher rankings rather than institutional or journal-based assessments. It's real-time citation tracking, researcher mobility analysis, and six-year citation performance provide valuable insights into academic impact. Unlike traditional scientometric tools such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar Metrics, it offers a dynamic and transparent ranking system. However, the AD Scientific Index has notable limitations, primarily due to its exclusive reliance on Google Scholar. The inclusion of non-peer-reviewed sources, potential for citation manipulation, lack of field normalization, and absence of funding considerations raise concerns about the accuracy and fairness of rankings. Researchers from highly cited disciplines may dominate the rankings, while those from fields with lower citation rates remain underrepresented. Despite these challenges, the AD Scientific Index remains a valuable tool for tracking individual research impact and global researcher mobility. However, it should be used in conjunction with established scientometric databases like Scopus, Web of

Science, and InCites to provide a comprehensive and balanced evaluation of research performance. Recommendations for researchers: Use the AD Scientific Index as a complementary tool but cross-check rankings with Scopus, Web of Science, and other validated databases. For Institutions: Consider the long-term citation impact and research quality, rather than solely relying on citation-based rankings. For Policymakers: Encourage the integration of peer-reviewed publication metrics, funding impact, and field normalization techniques to improve ranking accuracy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All authors contributed significantly to the conception, design, analysis in this study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no Conflict of Interest.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD Scientific Index: Alper-Doger Scientific Index; **THE:** Times Higher Education Rankings; **ARWU:** Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities.

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