

Exploring the evolution of reference services literature using Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy (RPYS)

Afshin Mousavi Chelak

Assistant Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, Payam-e Noor University, mousaviaf@gmail.com

Ali Akbar Khasseh (Corresponding Author)

Assistant Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, Payam-e Noor University, khasseh@gmail.com

Faramarz Soheili

Associate Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, Payam-e Noor University, fsoheili@gmail.com

Received: 26th September 2016; 3th April 2017

Abstract

Purpose: To identify major events in the development of Reference Services literature.

Methodology: Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy (RPYS) technique is used. Initial data was obtained from the Scopus by scientometrics method. A comprehensive search strategy led to the retrieval of 5007 records. RPYS software was used to revise data. Excel application was used for visualization of findings.

Findings: Distribution of publications throughout the 19th century revealed 1 peak in 1876 for "Personal Relations between Librarians and Readers by Samuel Swett Green. Three peaks were identified in the 20th century, respectively in 1964 (related to Rothstein, "The measurement and evaluation of reference service"), 1982 (related to Katz, W. A. "Introduction to reference work: Reference services and reference processes"), and 1986 (related to Mellon, C. A. "Library anxiety: A grounded theory and its development").

Originality/value: The value of the present research is for using RPYS to study historical roots of Reference Services literature. None of the few studies by bibliometric methods in the realm of Reference Services has investigated historical origins.

Keywords: reference services, Scientometrics, the historical origins of the reference services, Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy (RPYS).