

Analyzing Our Systematic Review Service Data: Do We Collect What Matters?

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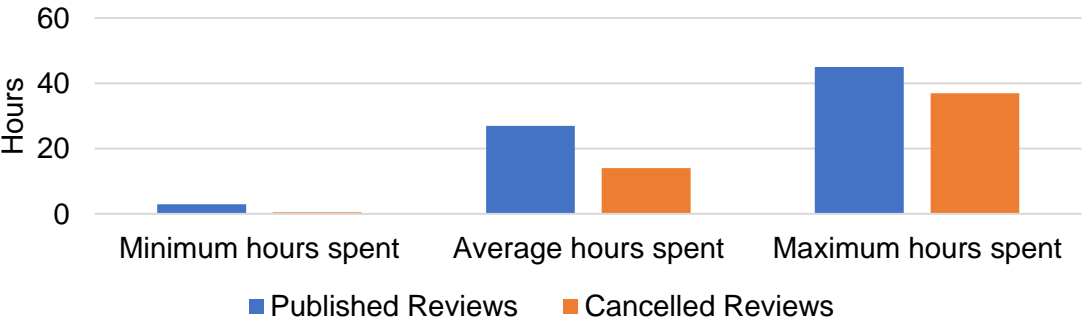
Background

Our hospital library began a formal systematic review (SR) service in 2010, wherein staff provide crucial guidance and support to SR teams [1]. Since then, the need for accuracy and standardization of SR project tracking data has become clear both in our service and in the larger SR field. In one outside study of 326 SR protocols registered in PROSPERO in 2011–2012, 26% had not been published by 2017. Time to publication was a median 16.3 months/495.79 days [2]. One aim of our data collection project is to track our institution's time from request to publication, and to identify factors that may lead researchers to publish or cancel the project. Collecting additional data may result in service improvements.

Description

Library staff changes and requests for search updates motivated our data collection adjustments. By 2019, all original SR service staff members had left the institution. At that time, data collection included the requestor name and department, topic, date request received, date search needed, assigned staff member, time spent on different tasks, search date, and publication date. In 2020, we added additional information to our tracking spreadsheet going forward, including the names of known SR team members, the SR requestor's job title, email address, and whether the project was cancelled, with the reason for cancellation listed if known. We also added tabs for work done on SRs requested in previous years. Data was located on multiple spreadsheets and drives, with some early SRs not found in shared tracking documents. In 2022, spreadsheets from 2018 and onwards were consolidated and moved to Microsoft Teams, where the data became centralized and accessible on the cloud.

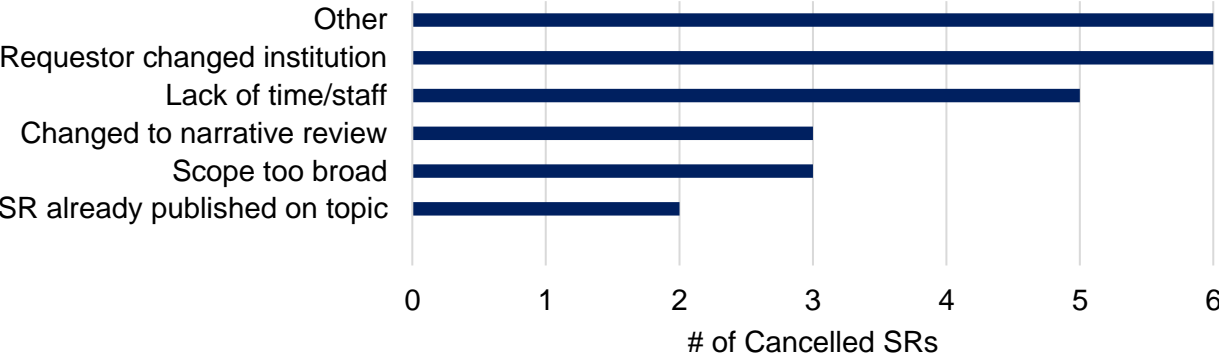
Fig. 1: Time Spent (Hours) on Systematic Reviews, Requested 2019–2022



Conclusion

Staff marked 32 SRs requested 2019–2022 as cancelled, with 25 records listing reasons for cancellation. See Figure 2 for a breakdown of cancellation reasons.

Fig. 2: Reasons for Systematic Review Cancellations, Requested 2019–2022



Eighteen SRs requested 2019–2022 were published, taking a median 524.5 days, with a range of 154–1,071 days. In the future, we will collect information on protocol registration, number of citations to screen, number of screeners, and stage at cancellation. We will also list contact information for multiple SR team members. Finally, we will assign a staff member to check the consistency of the data tracked. The additional data will inform education and intake efforts.

Fig. 3: Time to Publication (Days)



Works Cited

1. Jewell S, Gibson DS. Nine steps to a systematic review service. *MLA News*. 2014 Feb;54(2):11.
2. Tsujimoto H, Tsujimoto Y, Kataoka Y. Unpublished systematic reviews and financial support: a meta-epidemiological study. *BMC Res Notes*. 2017 Dec 6;10(1):703. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s13104-017-3043-5>