Reviewer's report

Title: The bibliometrics of systematic reviews: analysis of citation rates

Version: 1 Date: 7 August 2013

Reviewer: Donna White

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Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The statistical section would benefit from some editing to aid readability and clarity. Also, per a correction, you mention use of ANOVA for categorical variables. ANOVA is performed with a continuous outcome when there are more than two groups. I believe this is what was done but be explicit. Also, the next to last sentence of final paragraph of methods that begins 'The statistical significance ....was tested' should be rewritten. Finally, one of the main outcomes of interest in your multivariate linear models is the amount of explained variation or R-squared as opposed to just the beta coefficient. You may wish to mention that in your methods section, though it is not critical.

2. In the results section in paragraph above insert table 3 here---the final sentence needs to make clear that the variation explained by other factors when presumptively added to JIF alone accounted for xx% and xx%, respectively. Right now, it seems as if those were added to model that already explained over 80% and therefore more than 100% of variation is explained.

3. In both the methods section and in the results section, the category 'not an intervention' needs to be explained in much more detail (perhaps an example of what type of study would fall in this category). Right now, the introduction really focuses on systematic reviews of health care interventions, yet the study itself has a large proportion that are 'not an intervention' and it is a little confusing to the reader.

4. In the discussion where you address other bibliometric models, please provide more information on what covariates were included and also more discussion of how they are similar or different to yours.

5. In the paragraph beginning "The present study..." above Distribution of citations---remove the phrase 'only looked this study' as it is redundant.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests.