

Surveying the Landscape: A Bibliometric Analysis of Global Health Literature

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Background:

Global Health is an emerging, interdisciplinary field comprising medicine, public policy, environmental sciences, engineering, sociology, economics, and other areas. A bibliometric analysis of the cited references of faculty, graduate students and undergraduates will enable collection development and identify instructional opportunities.

Methods:

Samples of cited references were collected for three user groups.

Citations were analyzed for their publication type, subjects, and age.

Up to two subjects from a predefined list were selected for each cited reference.

Faculty

We ran an affiliation search for Duke Global Health Institute faculty in Web of Science from 2010 – 2013.

Of the 304 results, every 15th paper was selected to create a pool of 877 cited references.

Masters Students

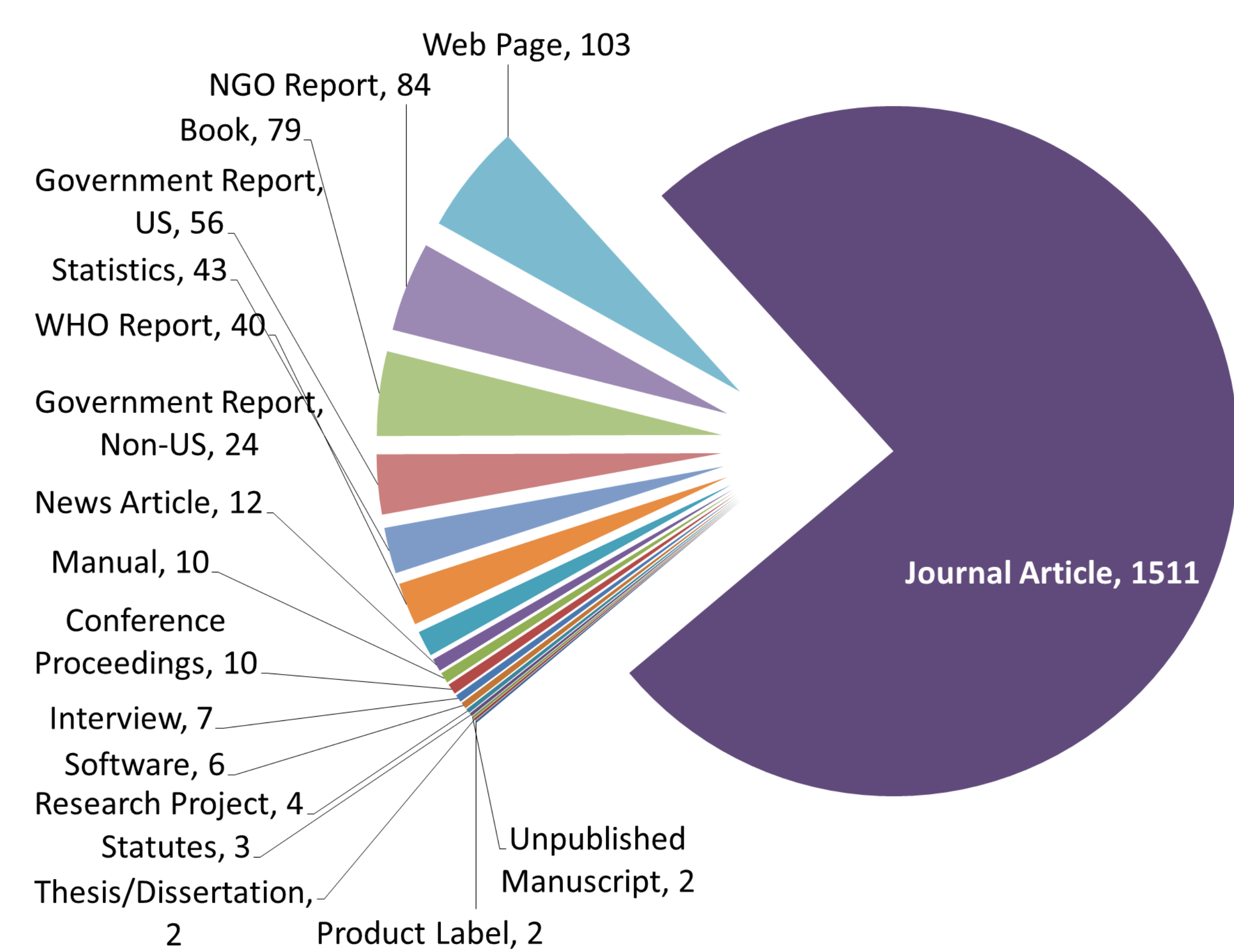
The works cited pages of 23 Masters Theses from 2010 – 2013 were pulled to create a pool of 866 cited references.

Undergraduate Students

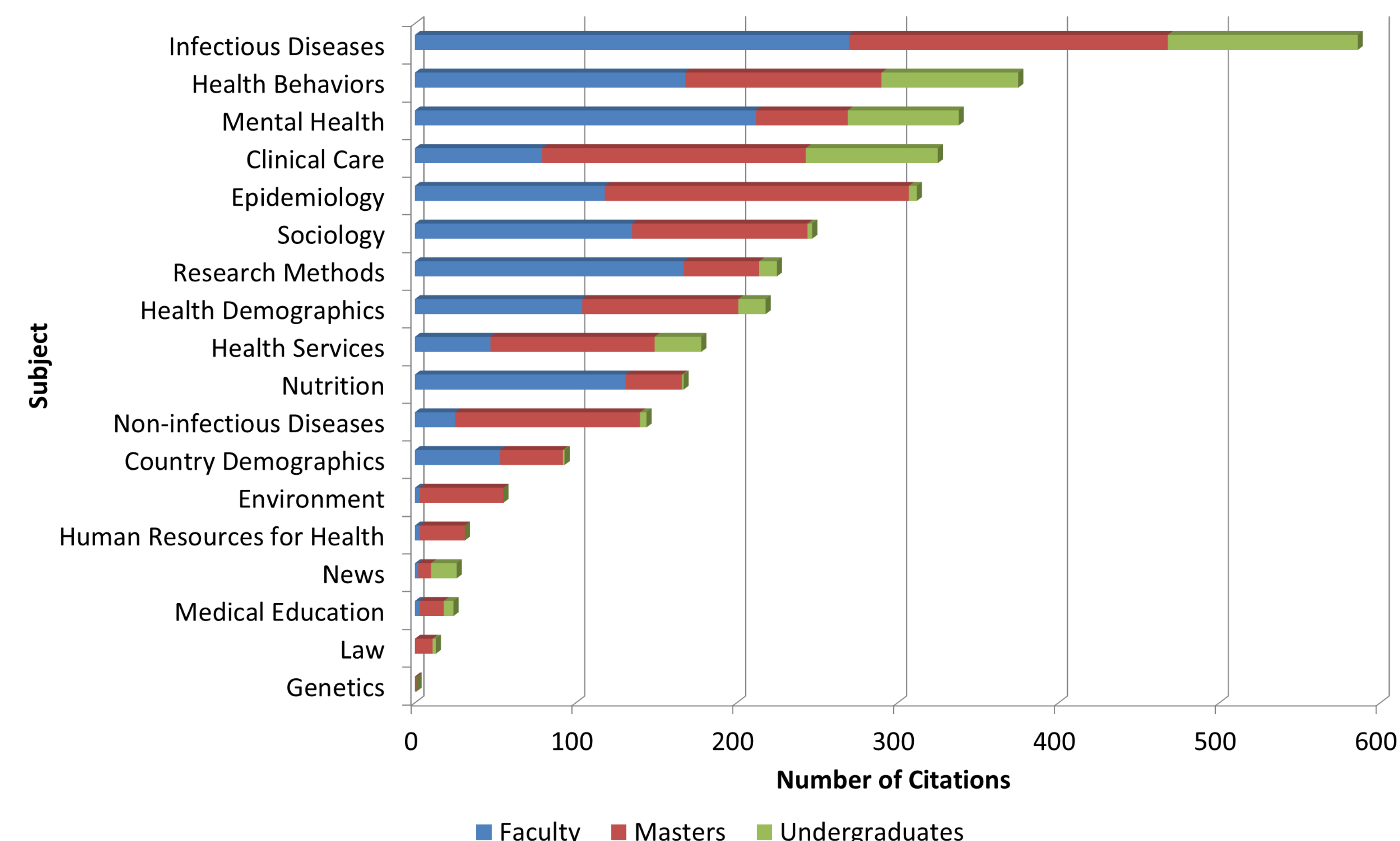
The works cited sections of 4 Undergraduate group capstone projects from 2010 – 2013 were pulled to create a pool of 255 cited references.



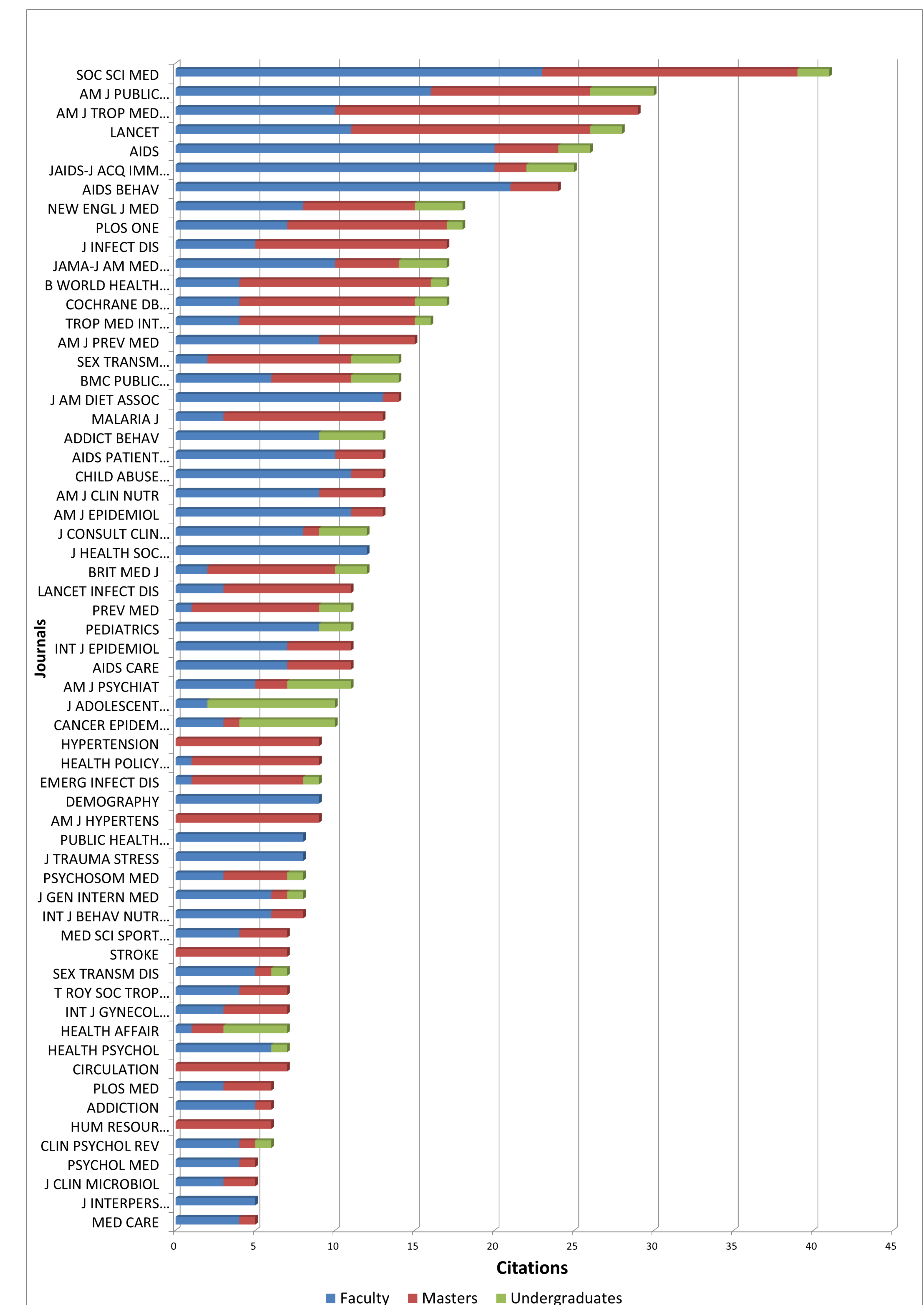
Top Publication Types Cited



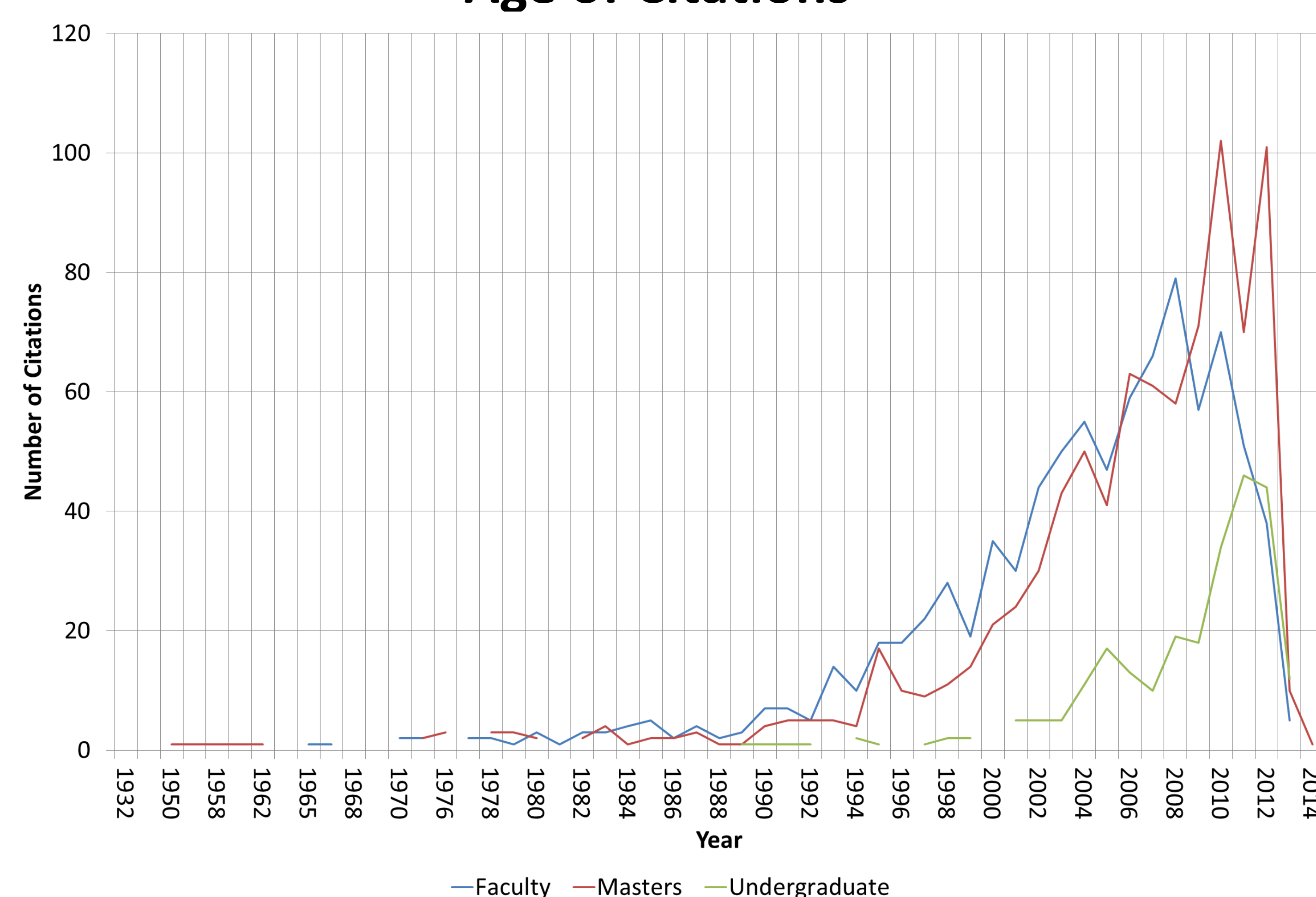
Top Subjects of Cited References



Top Journals Accounting for 50% of All Citations



Age of Citations



Observations

- Accounting for 1511 (76%) of the 1998 citations, journal articles are the most frequently cited sources used by students and faculty in global health. Books were cited only 79 times (4%).
- While infectious diseases (29%) and health behaviors (19%) remain top subjects, faculty research interests are diverse and can be a driver for student research. At Duke, these include mental health, nutrition, and the environment.
- 567 journals were cited: the top 25 (4%) accounted for 38% of total citations. 61 (11%) account for 50% of citations.
- Faculty tend to cite sources that are slightly older than students.
- Graduate and undergraduate students are highly inconsistent and not thorough in citations. This is particularly true for web pages and publications found online.

Implications for Collections and Services

- A broad collection of journals is required for global health research.
- Instruction to researchers in global health should focus on finding relevant articles (as opposed to catalogs or other book sources) and include how to use citation management tools effectively.