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**Bibliometric indicators of science and technology output: The case of abstracts from natural sciences presented at SLAAS annual sessions from 1998-2009**

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Bibliometric indicators are important to understand the science and technology status, the scientific growth, and the strong and weak areas of research in a particular country. The country's bibliometric indicators would also provide an insight to the Sri Lankan policy planning process as well as for the R & D funding agencies for judicious allocation of R&D funds to researchers, Institutions as well as in monitoring progress of S &T. The main objective of this study was to conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the nature and trends of research papers presented at the annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Association for the advancement of Science (SLAAS). The bibliometric data on all abstracts presented at the annual sessions under the three selected sections of the SLAAS namely a) life and earth sciences-D; b) physical sciences-E1, and c) chemical Sciences -E2 during the period from 1998-2009 were downloaded from the SLAAS database. There were 1380 total abstracts that were identified as life and earth sciences (42%); chemical sciences (29%) and physical sciences (28%). Contribution to life and earth sciences was found to be the highest during the period of 2000-2001, when compared to chemical sciences and physical sciences fields during the same period. The number of abstracts published under the three sections D, E1 and E2 has decreased over the years. When the contribution to R and D by the university sector is considered, the highest contribution was from the general chemistry area (48%), followed by Zoology (16%), plant sciences (13%), and physics (12%). However, the new fields of application of technology viz., computer science (3%), biochemistry (4%), agricultural chemistry (1%) etc. plus biotechnology and molecular biology having less than five papers during the period considered. Of the local universities, only four universities namely the University of Peradeniya (UOP), University of Colombo (UOC), University of Kelaniya (UOK) and University of Sri Jayawardanapura (USJP) were prominent in publication of research in selected sections of the SLAAS annual sessions, but the contributions of the newly established universities were almost negligible. Based on the findings, this study highlights policy insights for a) strengthening of research culture in the country; b) developing the infrastructure of new institutions while strengthening the existing ones, and c) promoting publication of research by providing incentives and awards to the scientists who frequently publish their significant research outputs.