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Views of Reference List Accuracy from Social Work Journal Editors and Published Authors

Scott E. Wilks, Christina A. Spivey

Abstract

Objective: The study's purpose was to answer two research questions: (1) In the opinion of social work journal editors, how important is reference list accuracy? and (2) Who is primarily responsible for the accuracy of reference lists published in social work journals? **Method:** A sample of 119 authors and 26 journal editors was surveyed to ascertain their views on the above questions and additional items. **Results:** Regarding the importance of reference list accuracy, editors' responses (Likert scale) averaged between moderately and extremely important. Fifty-three percent of responding editors and 36.5% of authors reported that responsibility is shared between the editor/staff and manuscript authors; the remaining 47% and 63.5%, respectively, responded that responsibility falls upon manuscript authors. Responses from authors, mostly educators, revealed a greater-than-moderate importance (Likert scale) given to instructing students on the accurate construction of reference lists. Implications for social work education and journal publishing are discussed.

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TO CONTACT OUR MAIN CAMPUS:
Indiana University School of Social Work
902 West New York Street
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 46202
Voice: 317.274.6705
FAX: 317.274.8630
TDD/TTY: 317.278-2050

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Comments: iussw@iupui.edu

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