

Teaching Tips/Notes



Publishing and Citation Analysis: Needed Academic Partners

"Twenty years ago--only 45 % of all articles published in the top 4,500 top science journals were cited within the first five years after publication," and this "has dropped to ~ 41 % in 2009" (Bauerlein et al., 2010). Possible reasons are due to 1) there being an increasingly higher number of scientific journals available for publishing modest information (low-cited publications), 2) increasing demand on reviewers leading to lesser amounts of time for a quality review, and 3) increasing pressure on new faculty members to demonstrate productivity (Bauerlein et al. 2009).

Even the competition among citation search engines may be a cause of inflated publication rates as citation numbers may be used as a measure of productivity and some citation search engines (early in their development and when first introduced to the public) have been shown to bias citation data (Jacso, 2006; this author has written numerous articles on this subject). Consequently, publishing only in journals that are serviced by (say) Google Scholar might result in high citation numbers.....therefore showing higher productivity. Alternatively, use of other citation search engines (like all of ISI products) result in quite low citation numbers (Jacso, 2006). Depending on one's agenda, one might use one citation search engine over others. Realistically, a judicious use of numerous citation search engines and over a lengthy timeframe is required in order to obtain solid citation data (Dodson 2008; 2009).

In the science/teaching/advising business, and regardless of citation search engine used, one needs to publish new knowledge and perform citation analyses on their papers. The published paper needs to be in a journal whereby peers can gain from its appearance. Resulting citations show how well the paper was received, and the strength of its utility. Papers recently published, but already receiving citations, might be viewed as well-received, whereas papers with long-term publication dates and few citations might be viewed as lesser important papers.

As academicians, we work at institutions whereby a budget cut might fall each day. Pressure is increasingly placed on us to "perform" with limiting resources. Publishing papers that impacts one field remains a core measure of productivity. While the (actual) measure of citations (per paper) over time is a bit tedious, it is needed and will be a vital part of justifying existence of departments, programs, and individuals.

References Cited

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