CITATION PRACTICES

Coercion, Deception, Impact Factors, and h-index

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Problematic Citation Behaviors

- Authors gratuitously citing their own work
- Reviewers suggesting their own citations to authors
- Journals suggesting authors cite the journal
Authors Citing Themselves

- Creating an $h$-index factory in one paper
  - A few self citations in the original submission
  - Many more added during rounds of review

estimate the potential evapotranspiration. Although the FAO Penman-Monteith (FPM) has been applied in various regions of the world (Estevez et al. 2009; Valipour 2012a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, 2014m, n; Valipour et al. 2013a, b, c, 2012a, b, c, d), it needs too many parameters to estimate the potential evapotranspiration. In most regions, weather data is limited, and researchers cannot use the FPM. To this end, experimental methods have been developed for estimation of the potential increasing precision of radiation-based methods for estimating the potential evapotranspiration after calibration (Abbaspour 1991; Martinez and Thepadia 2010; Thepadia and Martinez 2012; Xu et al. 2013; Valipour 2013a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, 2014a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, k, l, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w; Zhai et al. 2010).


Valipour, M. A. (2013f). “Need to update irrigation and water resources information according to the progresses of agricultural knowledge.” *Agrotecnon*, 5(10), e001.

Valipour, M. A. (2013g). “Scrutiny of inflow to the drains applicable for improvement of said environmental conditions.” *Proc., 1st Int. Conf. on Environmental Crises and Its Solutions*, Kish Island, Iran.


Authors Citing Themselves

- Author published a ridiculous # of papers:
  - At least 19 papers in 2012
  - 11 in 2013
  - 25 in 2014
  - MOST of these papers are in predatory journals with some also being book chapters for OMICS.

- All this as a PhD candidate.

- Discovered when he used his high $h$-index (41) to solicit for a job.

- This ASCE paper cited 39 times since Sept 2014.
Authors Citing Themselves

- At least two known cases with ASCE authors of adding citations in review
- Authors know references not reviewed again after first round
- Production has flagged lots of added references when it happens in proofs
Authors Citing Themselves

- Using self-citation to legitimize shoddy work
  - BusinessWeek Article showed that pharma companies put papers that won’t pass peer review in predatory journals

Jeffrey Curtis, a physician and professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, worked on a rheumatoid arthritis study with Bristol-Myers that was published in an Omics journal within two weeks of submission. Companies “are often in more of a hurry and are willing to accept lower-tier journals,” Curtis says. “They want a citation. They want someone to be able to reference it and have it be official.”
Authors Citing Themselves

- Self-citation in predatory journals
- Papers gain credibility when cited in our journal
- No way to easily check reference lists against predatory journal list
- Journal titles are deceptive:
Revolt Over an Editor

Prominent psychologist apologizes and resigns as journal editor over allegations of aggressive self-citation and more.

By Colleen Flaherty // April 30, 2018

Robert Sternberg

Robert Sternberg, professor of human development at Cornell University, resigned last week as editor of Perspectives on Psychological Science after colleagues raised concerns about his frequent self-citation in the journal and attitudes toward gender and diversity in general, among other issues.

Sternberg refuted many of the claims against him in a formal response to the Association for Psychological Science, which oversees the journal, and in emails to Inside Higher Ed. He also questioned his critics for talking about him online and to the association without first engaging him directly. Yet he repeatedly apologized for what he called certain “lapses in judgment and mistakes.”

Namely, he said via email, “I have sometimes cited myself too much and I was not always as careful as I should have been about ‘recycling’ my own material.”
Reviewers Coercing Citations

- Reviewers expected to review references and note omissions
- Reviewers should NOT provide a list of their papers that are not necessary to the paper
Reviewers Coercing Citations

* In this study, the authors have used optimized values/methods to improve the results. Cite all of the below useful papers on the importance of optimization and optimized values (in other fields) to enhance the literature and to indicate the advantages of your work:
   - Optimization of neural networks for precipitation analysis in a humid region to detect drought and wet year alarms
   - INCREASING IRRIGATION EFFICIENCY BY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: CUTBACK AND SURGE IRRIGATION
   - Study of different climatic conditions to assess the role of solar radiation in reference crop evapotranspiration equations
   - A New Approach for Environmental Crises and its Solutions by Computer Modeling
   - Evolution of Water Lifting Devices (Pumps) over the Centuries Worldwide
   - Number of Required Observation Data for Rainfall Forecasting According to the Climate Conditions
* Focus on the advantages of the proposed method with respect to the obtained results.
* Explain the variations of the building systems vs. rank order correlation coefficient.
* The Results and Discussion section should be broken to sub-sections for better understanding readers.
* The quality of the language needs to improve by a native English speaker for grammatically style and word use.

- Authors almost always add references suggested by reviewers
  - Probably didn’t read the paper
  - Doesn’t care that it’s not relevant
Impact Factor and Self-citations

- Journals are increasing their Impact Factors by encouraging authors to self-cite.
- Clarivate Analytics censures the worst offenders by suppressing their Impact Factor.
- Clarivate Analytics only does this when the increase in the Impact Factor is significant.
- Journals removed make up less than 0.5% of journals indexed each year.
Three journal cartel

- Three journals, *Cell Transplantation*, *Medical Science Monitor*, and *The Scientific World Journal* worked together to cite each other and increase their Impact Factors.
- All three journals were suppressed because of excessive self-citation.
Editorial Coercion

- *Journal of Biomolecular Structural Dynamics*
- Boosted its impact factor from 1.1 in 2009 to 5.0 in 2010.
- Increase in impact factor was based on two things.
  - After a controversial paper on protein folding, 31 laboratories wrote commentaries on the work.
  - Since 2009, *JBSD* encouraged authors to show how their papers related to papers previously published in the journal, in order to enhance the education of doctoral students who read the journal.
Editorial Coercion

- Clarivate includes a self-citation percentage and an IF without self-cites.
- Some journals provide a list of papers to the author relevant to the topic immediately upon submission.
- Some editors are explicitly telling authors to cite the journal during review.
What Can We Do?

- **Authors Self-citing**
  - Reviewers should be asked to look for gratuitous self-citations and ask the authors to justify the inclusion of those references in their rebuttals to reviewer comments.
  - Subsequent versions of reviewed articles should be evaluated for inappropriate references being added.
  - Gratuitously citing your own work in inappropriate contexts should be considered an ethics issue and dealt with as such.
  - Papers found post-publication to have inappropriate self citations should be corrected noting that the identified references should not have been included as they are not relevant to the paper.

What Can We Do?

Citing Predatory Journals

- References should be scanned for citations to known “predatory” journals. Once identified, an editor or reviewer can make a determination whether it’s appropriate to include.
- Stop abbreviating journal titles in references.

Reviewer and Editor Coercion

- Zero tolerance for journal editors to insist on citations to the journal that are superfluous.
- Reviewers should not be permitted to provide a laundry list of their own works unless they are absolutely necessary for the paper.

What Can We Do?

- Coalition of Society Publishers
  - Author a White Paper calling attention to dubious activities
  - Call to action to stop gaming the Impact Factor in these ways
  - Discuss advantages commercially published journals have over society journals in citation rates
  - Attempt to level the playing field